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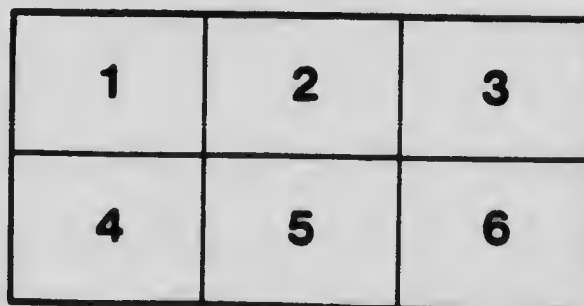
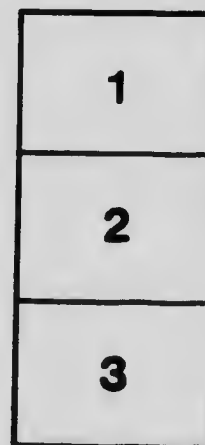
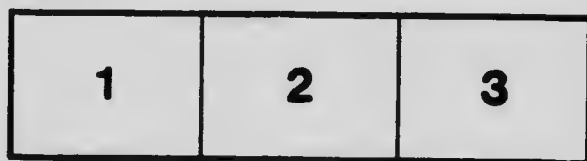
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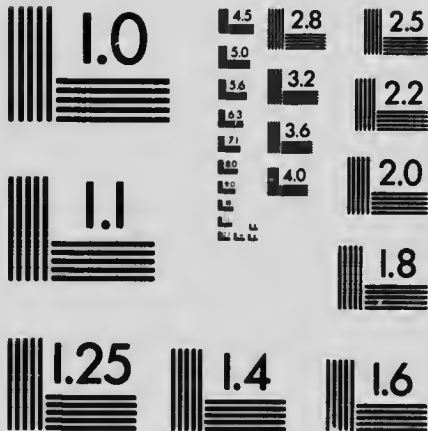
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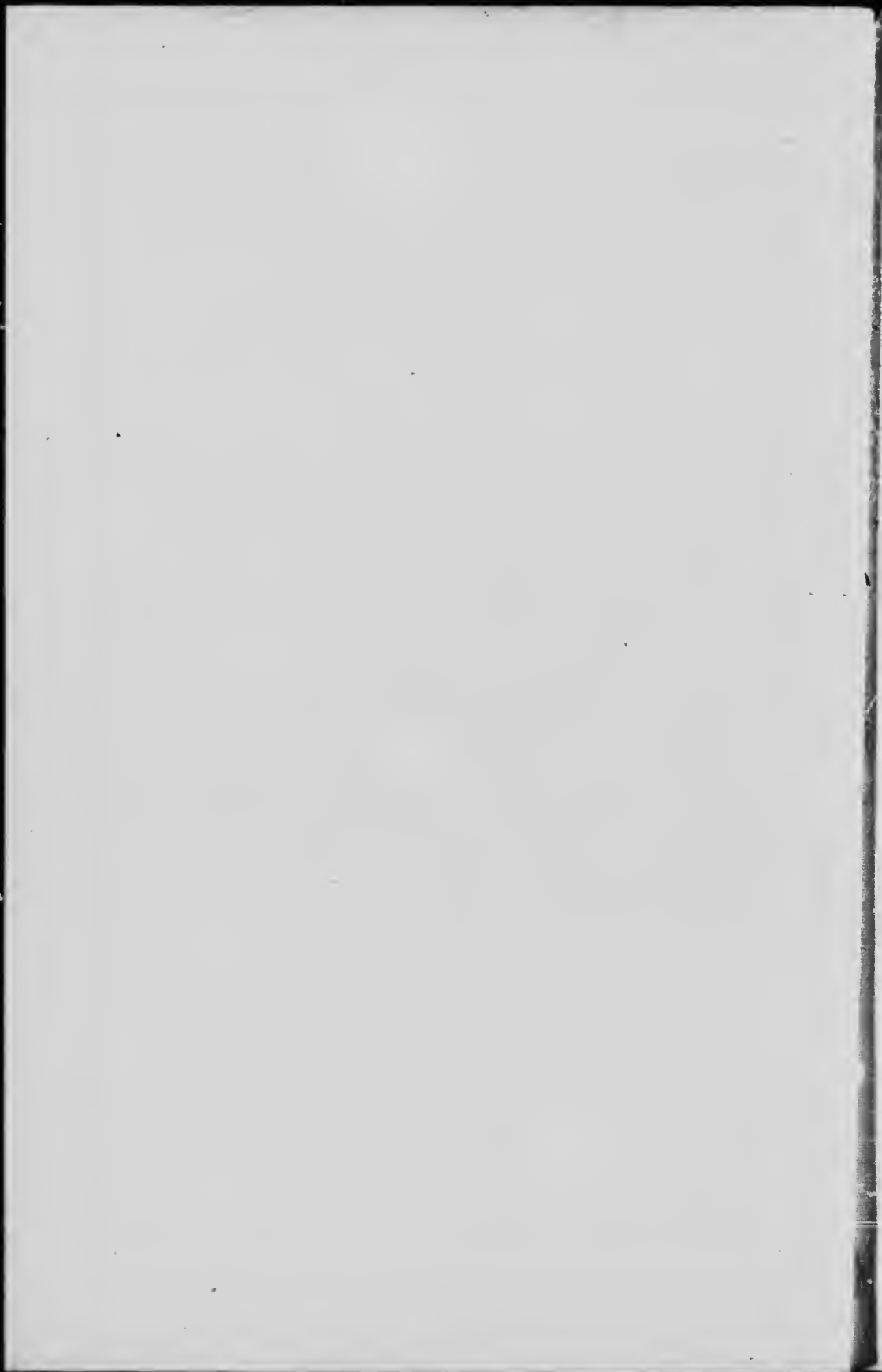
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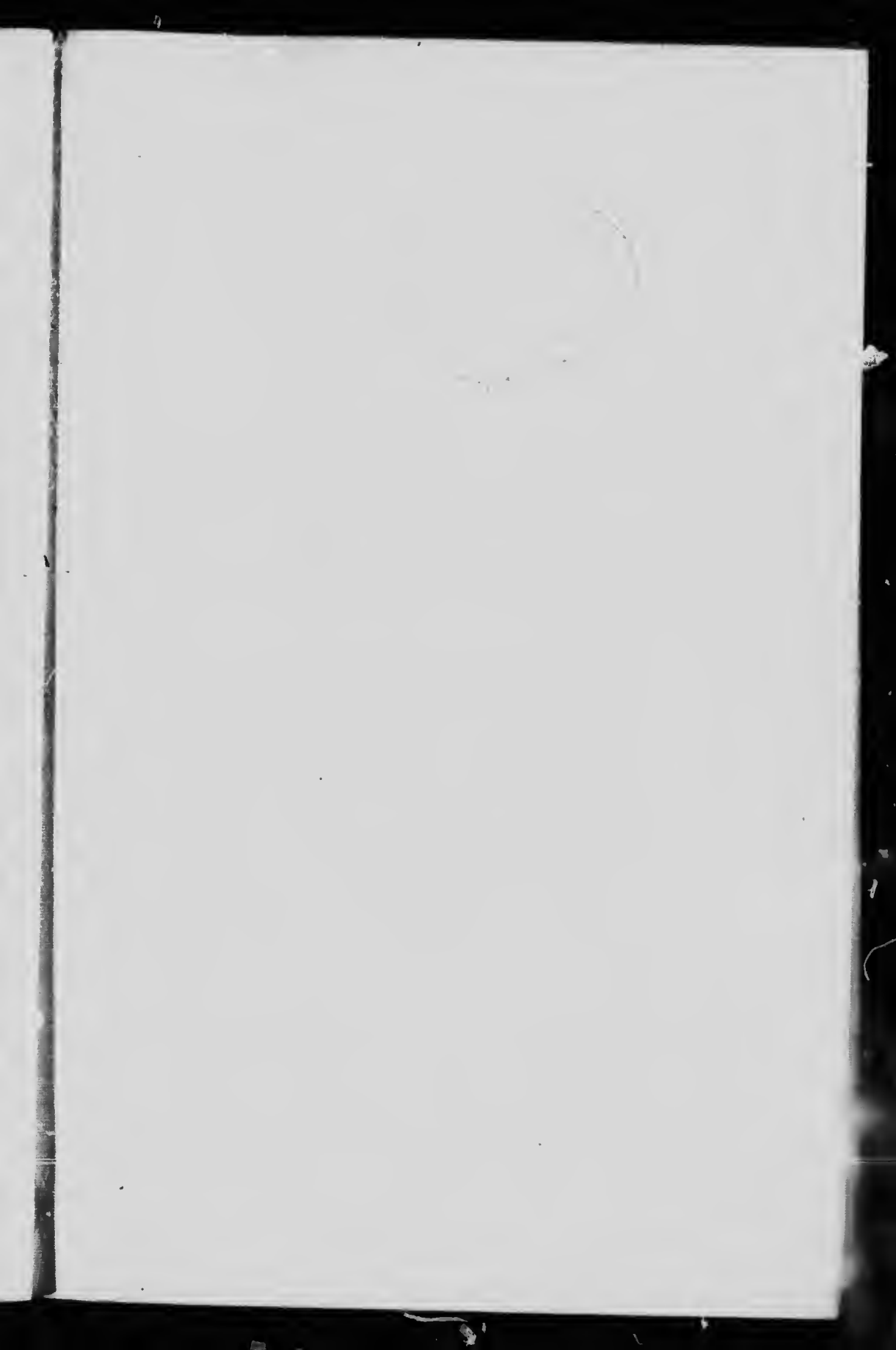
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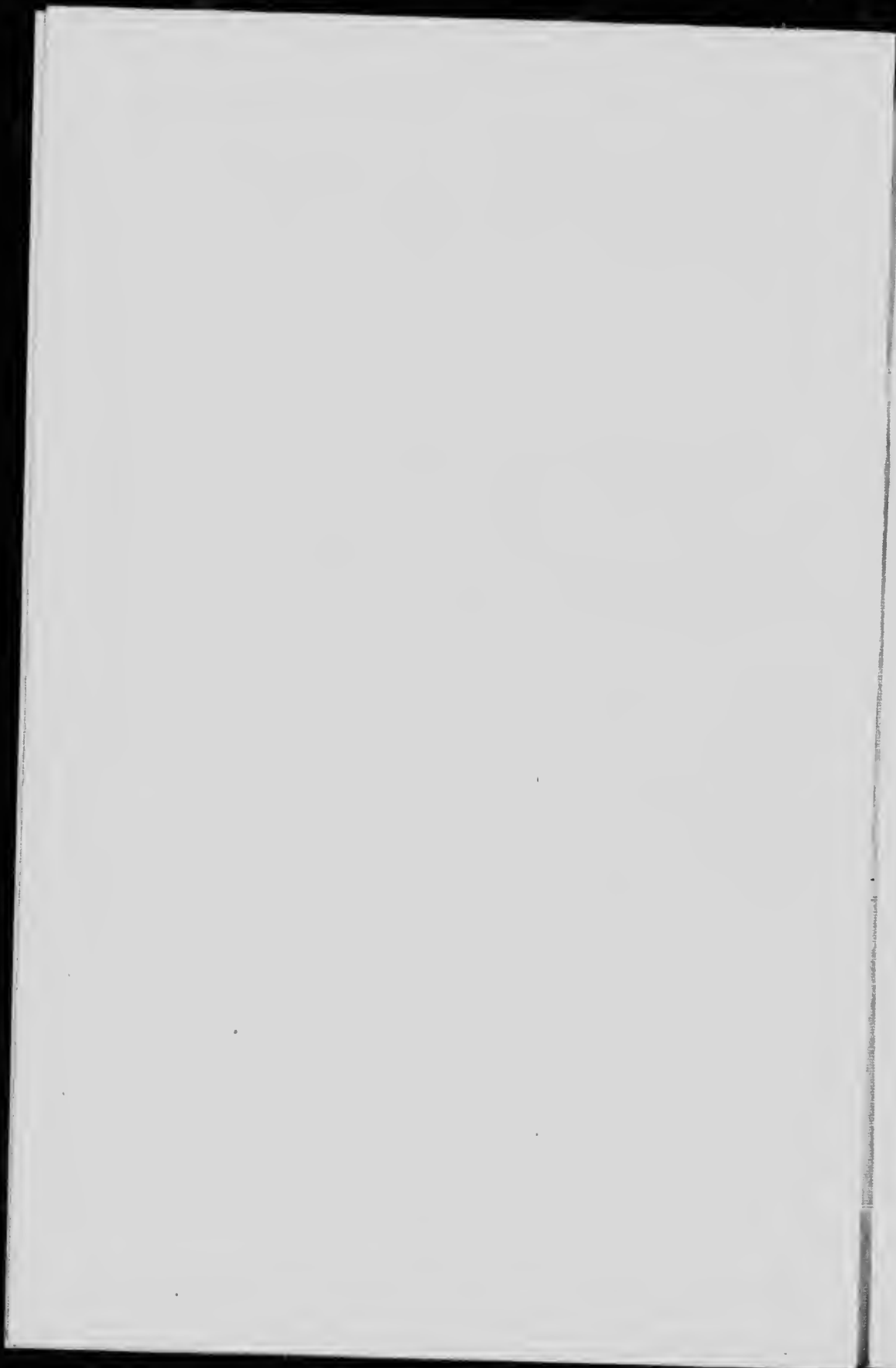


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The Symbol of the Apostles.





*Wm. F. Kelly P.O.  
Lansburg*

THE  
SYMBOL OF THE APOSTLES

A VINDICATION OF THE APOSTOLIC AUTHORSHIP  
OF THE CREED ON THE LINES OF  
CATHOLIC TRADITION.

BT  
993  
M135  
1903

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BY THE  
VERY REV. ALEXANDER MACDONALD, D.D.,  
Vicar-General of the Diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

\_\_\_\_\_



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TO  
THE RIGHT REVEREND  
**Monsignor Gustave Conrado,**  
FORMER RECTOR OF THE  
URBAN COLLEGE OF PROPAGANDA FIDE,  
MY SUPERIOR FOR FIVE YEARS,  
MY TRUE FRIEND ALWAYS,  
THIS  
LITTLE WORK IS LOVINGLY  
DEDICATED.

Ἐκ τῆς δὲ τῆς ὁμολογίας τῆς πίστεως εἰς Πατέρα καὶ Ἰὸν καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα ἐκ ποίων γραμμάτων ἔχομεν;—ST. BASIL, *Lib. de Spirit. Sanct.*, c. 27, n. 67.

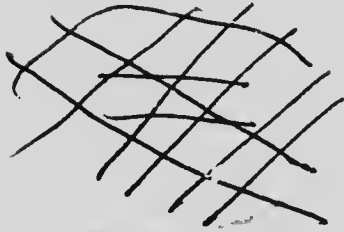
Ἐποῦ τῷ Θεῷ . . . τὸ σὸν, τὸ ἀγαρὸν, τὸ ἀναφαίρετον μόνου, τὴν εἰς τὸν Θεὸν πίστιν, τὴν εἰς τὸν παθόντα ὁμολογίαν . . . κεκτημένος.  
—ST. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.*, l. 2, c. 3.

In symbolo fidei et spei nostræ, quod, ab Apostolis traditum, non scribitur in charta et atramento sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus, post confessionem Trinitatis et unitatem Ecclesiæ, omne Christiani dogmatis sacramentum carnis resurrectione concluditur.—St. JEROME, *Contr. Joan. Hierosol.*, n. 28.

## PREFACE.

THE nucleus of the present work is a series of articles which ran in *The Ecclesiastical Review* from January to July of the current year. They are reproduced from that Magazine by kind permission of the Editor, and, with sundry changes and additions, form the contents of chapters one to six inclusive. The rest is new matter, including the Introduction on the Discipline of the Secret, which is the foundation whereon the whole work rests. For convenience of reference, the several chapters are divided into sections, having each its proper heading.

While these pages were being written, one or two notable articles on the Name of the Church appeared in *The Ecclesiastical Review* and *Dolphin*, over the pen-name "PROPAGANDIST." By special request the writer of those articles has contributed the closing chapter on the origin of the Catholic Name.



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## INTRODUCTION.

### I.

From immemorial time the Apostles' Creed has gone by the name of the Symbol, or the Symbol of the Apostles. This word is from the Greek *σύμβολον*, "token," in military language, "watchword," in commercial parlance, "bargain" or "agreement." It is made up of *βάλλω* and *σύν*, whence *συμβάλλω*, "I throw or put together." The root-meaning of the word is, therefore, a putting together, a putting this and that together, and the thing so put together. Rufinus (A.D. 390 or 400) held that the Apostles themselves gave the Creed this name of Symbol. He tells us that there were "good reasons and sound" why they should so name it. "For, in Greek, the word *symbol* may mean both a sign and a collation—a collation being what many bring together into a

MEANING OF  
"SYMBOL."  
.....

## INTRODUCTION.

common fund. This the Apostles did in their conference; they brought together into a common fund what each thought. And it [the Creed] is called an index or watchword, because at that time, as the Apostle Paul tells us, 1 Cor. c. 11, and [as we are told] in the *Acts of the Apostles*, c. 15, there were many Jews who pretended that they were apostles of Christ, and went about for the sake of gain, or of making a living, naming indeed the name of Christ, but not preaching Him after the full lines of the tradition. Therefore the Apostles fixed upon this index, whereby might be recognized the man who preached Christ in truth according to the Apostolic rule."—*Comm. in Symb. Apost.* n. 2.

## II.

CONFUSION OF:  
IDEAS.

..... "As early as the time when the commentary ascribed to Rufinus was composed," writes Swainson<sup>1</sup> "doubts had arisen amongst Latin writers as to the origin of this designation: confusion

<sup>1</sup> *The Nicene and Apostles' Creeds*, p. 172.

## INTRODUCTION.

had arisen between *σύμβολον*, a mark or sign, and *συμβολή*, a collation or joint contribution: or rather, attempts were made to ascribe to *σύμβολον* the signification of *συμβολή*." This is far from a true account of the matter. Rufinus was too good a Greek scholar to confound *σύμβολον* with *συμβολή*. What he did was to distinguish between the received meaning of *σύμβολον* and its etymological meaning, which the author (St. Ambrose?) of the *Explanatio* calls "rationem nominis," and to put forward the very plausible suggestion that, whether you consider the one meaning or the other, the word is a fitting designation of the Creed. Harnack is equally wide of the truth when he writes: "The contention that this later creed or symbol [the *Textus Receptus*] traced its origin to a *συμβολή* or *collatio* involves a confusion between *συμβολή*, which also bears the meaning of *summa* or *brevis complexio*, and *σύμβολον*, that is *signum*, *indicium*, in the sense not only of a distinction between Christians and heretics, but also in the sense of *tessera militum*, a token or deed of agreement" <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 10.

## INTRODUCTION.

This is, in the words of our homely English proverb, to put the cart before the horse. The contention, or rather the tradition, of the men of old was that the Apostles composed the Creed by putting their heads together, as we say in English, to determine what portions of their common Faith it should embody. This being the tradition, those same men of old saw in it one reason why the Creed was called the Symbol, not confounding *σύμβολον* with *συμβολή*, but going back to the common root of both words. Harnack would have us believe that they found an indication of the joint composition of the Creed by the Apostles in the name "symbol," whereas, on the contrary, they conceived that they found warrant for the name in the fact of the joint composition. The contention of the old commentators, from Rufinus down, is not that the Creed was the joint work of the Twelve because it is called the Symbol, but that it is called the Symbol because it was the joint work of the Twelve. It is Harnack, not they, that has got things mixed up.

INTRODUCTION.

III.

Rufinus has it that the Symbol : RUFINUS AND  
served as a tessera and watchword : SWAINSON.  
from the time of the Apostles, .....

first to enable the faithful to distinguish true from false teachers of the Gospel, and again to enable them to recognize one another. "In fine, as happens in civil war," he writes, "where men wear the same dress, and speak the same language, and fight after the same fashion, each leader gives his soldiers a distinct watchword, in Latin called *signum* or *indicium*, so that there may be no room for deceit or treachery. And if anyone is suspected, on being asked to give the watchword, he will show whether he is an enemy or a friend." Swainson (*loc. cit.*) deems it needless to dwell on "the futility of this explanation. Rufinus forgot," he says, "that followers of the Apostolic tradition might become schismatics or even heretical as to points not distinctly enunciated in this document (*sic*), and then carry away their watchword into the enemies' camp. We must look out," he goes on to say, "for another



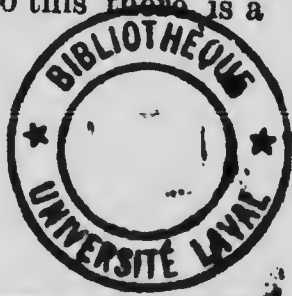
## INTRODUCTION.

explanation : and we have it in the circumstances of the third century, when the precept of the Saviour, that the Gospel should be preached to every creature, became checked by the prevalent persecutions ; and the example set by St. Paul, when he stood before Agrippa, was, from the same causes, deprived of its force. Driven unwillingly to secrecy, the Christians, with a not unnatural aptitude, began to represent to themselves and others that this secrecy had its advantages ; that in point of fact it was in itself desirable."

There are many things here set down that will not bear close scrutiny. First of all, the reason relied on by Swainson to prove the futility of the explanation given by Rufinus is itself futile. Rufinus did not forget: it is Swainson rather who forgot, though he had the words of Rufinus before his eyes while he wrote. The latter distinguished two uses of the Symbol as a watchword, one of which was to serve as a badge of the true apostle of Christ in the preaching of the Gospel, the other to serve as a badge of the true Christian and mark him off from the unbeliever. "And

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thus they ['majores,' 'forefathers in the faith,'] handed it down," are the concluding words of the passage in Rufinus as reproduced by Swainson himself (*loc. cit.*), "that their watchword should not be written on paper or parchment but retained in the hearts of the believers, so that there could be no doubt that, if anyone knew it, he must have received it from the Apostles by tradition, and not by reading it in a book; for a book perchance might fall into the hands of unbelievers." Certainly as against the "Jews who pretended to be apostles of Christ, and named His name but did not preach Him after the full lines of the tradition," the Symbol must have proved a serviceable device; for it followed faithfully the lines of the tradition, and could not therefore be adopted by men who did not keep to these lines. Those "false brethren" would not give the watchword even if they could. As for the pagans, on the other hand, they could not if they would. But what if "followers of the Apostolic tradition should become schismatics or even heretics, and carry away the watchword into the enemies' camp?" To this there is a



## INTRODUCTION.

threefold rejoinder. (1) Traitors may be found in every camp, but not the less do leaders still give their men the Watchword. (2) The greatest possible precaution was taken in the early Church to guard the Symbol: it was only after a long period of probation, years even, that it was delivered to the catechumen, who was required, on the day of his baptism, to take a solemn oath that he would not betray it. The instances, then, would be exceedingly rare in which a Christian would do the base thing that Swainson suggests—carry away the watchword into the enemies' camp. (3) It was not from the schismatic nor the heretic that Christians had to apprehend the betrayal of their Symbol, but from the apostate to paganism. Schismatics and heretics were in the same case with orthodox believers when there was question of persecution on the part of the pagans. If they fell into the clutches of the persecutor, they, too, would have been called on to renounce Christ, and, failing this, would have been put to death. As a matter of fact we find Tertulian upbraiding the heretics of his day with their want of care in hiding the mysteries from

INTRODUCTION.

the uninitiated. "In the first place," he says, "it is doubtful who is a catechumen, who a believer among the heretics. They have all access alike, they hear alike, they pray alike; even if heathens come in upon them, they will cast that which is holy unto dogs, and pearls, false though they be, before swine."<sup>1</sup>

IV.

Swainson's objection recoils : A BOOMER-  
upon himself. If "Rufinus for- : ANG.  
got that followers of the Apos- : .....  
tolic tradition might become" apostates in the  
first century, "and then carry away their watch-  
word into the enemies' camp," Swainson forgot  
that the same thing might happen in the third  
century with the same result. It could have  
happened but very, very seldom, it is true ;  
for, besides the reason given above, it would  
have proved difficult for a pagan, even should  
he succeed in getting the Symbol, to give  
it out article by article, and word by word, so  
as not at least to arouse suspicion, not being

<sup>1</sup> *De Praesc*, 41.

## INTRODUCTION.

to the manner trained. But there can be no doubt that it did happen once in a while, and that traitor lips betrayed believers with the Symbol, even as Judas betrayed the Master with a kiss.

And as there were traitors in the first century as well as in the third, so were there persecutors, so was there persecution. Swainson tells us it was not till the third century the prevalent persecutions drove the Christians to secrecy, and that it was then the *Disciplina Arcani* arose. But surely this is to fly in the face of history. The history of the Church for the first three hundred years of her existence is little else than a record of the persecutions, fierce and frequent, which the Christians bore with such heroic constancy. First the Jews persecuted in Palestine, and when they themselves were crushed and all but extirpated by the conquering Romans, paganism persecuted to the full extent of its power, for well-nigh three centuries, until no amphitheatre was there in Rome's world-wide empire but had rung with the cry of *Christianos ad leones*, no arena but had run red

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with the blood of martyrs. If persecution gave rise to the Discipline of the Secret, then as surely as persecution raged when Stephen won his crown in Jerusalem, and Peter in Rome had a like passion with his Master, so surely did there exist the Discipline of the Secret from the very infancy of the Church.

V.

What then was this Discipline of the Secret, and when was it first set in operation, and why?

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SECRET.

The name *Disciplina Arcani* is relatively recent; the system described by the name is as old as the Catholic Church. They read the New Testament to little purpose who fail to find in it clear traces of a fixed resolve from the very first, on the part of the Founder of Christianity, to withhold the mysteries of His religion from the profane, and commit them only to members of the household of the faith. He distinctly forbids His disciples to cast their pearls before swine (Matt. 7: 6), and as distinctly declares that unto them "it is given to

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know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God" (Ib. 13: 11), while "unto those that are without all things are done in parables" (Mark 4: 11). St. Paul lays special emphasis everywhere on this principle of secrecy. He sees in the ministers of Christ "the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4: 1). He would have "the wisdom of God, a wisdom which is hidden," spoken "in a mystery," and only "among the perfect" (Ib. 2: 6, 7)—the *competentes* of a later day. He asks the Ephesians to pray for him that he may "with confidence make known the mystery of the Gospel" (Eph. 6: 19), but elsewhere explains that it is "to the saints" of God the mystery in question is to be unfolded (Col. 1: 26). Finally, he requires of deacons that they should hold "the mystery of faith in a pure conscience." (1 Tim. 3: 9).

## VI.

SACRAMENTS, :  
SACRIFICE, :  
AND SYMBOL. :  
..... :  
As for the things which came  
under the rule of secrecy, we  
learn that they were chiefly the  
words which make up what is now known as

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the "form" of the several Sacraments, the Eucharistic service, and the Symbol, not only as enshrining the principal mysteries of religion but especially as being the Watchword given to the soldier of Christ in his warfare with the pagan world. On this head Professor Zahn extracts valuable testimony from the *Didaché* or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," a work composed some time between 80 and 130 A. D. "This book," are his words, "with deliberate intention, gives only fragmentary directions with reference to baptism, as with reference to the Lord's Supper. For example, the service of Holy Communion itself is not described at all. Only forms of prayer are given which are to be used before and during the celebration. Already at the time of St. Paul's first missionary journey, that the candidate for baptism was accustomed to offer a confession of faith when he received baptism, was borne witness to by St. Paul himself—superfluously, for it is self-evident. He reminds Timothy of the beautiful confession he once made before the assembled community when he followed the call to eternal life"



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(Cf. 1 Tim. 6 : 12, 13).<sup>1</sup> In his famous letter to Trajan, Pliny the Younger bears witness that the Christians in Asia Minor were in the habit of holding secret meetings before daylight, and that they bound themselves by oath not to give up a "deposit," which is identified, in a later chapter of the present work, with the Confession of Faith.<sup>2</sup> It appears also from this letter of Pliny's that the Christians were regarded as members of an extensive secret society, whereof the brotherhoods (*hetaeriae*) were proscribed by an imperial edict.<sup>3</sup>

In the Acts of the martyrdom of Pope Alexander First, we find decisive evidence of the existence of the discipline of secrecy in sub-apostolic times. Alexander suffered for the Faith in the last year of Trajan's reign. The precise date is May 3, A. D. 117. The Acts of his martyrdom, which the Bollandists speak of as "sincerissima," plainly genuine and free from interpolation, were drawn up before the

<sup>1</sup> *The Articles of the Apostles' Creed* (translated by C. S. and A. E. Burn), pp. 79, 80.

<sup>2</sup> See Chap. VII.

<sup>3</sup> *C. Plin. et Traj. Epist.* 96 (97).

## INTRODUCTION.

persecution under Decius (A. D. 249-251). "Count Aurelianus," we read, "ordered Pope Alexander to be brought before him, and said to him: 'I require you first to reveal to me all the mysteries of your sect, that I may know why you choose to be put to death for one Christ, I know not whom, rather than yield.' Saint Alexander replied: 'What you ask for is holy, and we are not permitted by Christ to give that which is holy unto dogs.'" Here we have an authoritative declaration by the head of the Church, the successor of Peter, that what are known as the mysteries were to be jealously guarded. Rather than reveal them he himself gave up his life. He became a martyr, though by no means the first, to the Discipline of the Secret. And it is especially worthy of note that he, not less than the Fathers of the third and fourth centuries, as we shall presently see, finds the reason and sanction of this Discipline in the precept of the Master.

Tertullian testifies to the stringency of this law of secrecy in the early Church. He takes it for granted that a Christian woman who

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should marry a pagan would be strictly bound to hide the mysteries from her husband, and uses this as an argument against mixed marriages. "Will not your husband know," he asks one whom he supposes to have wedded a pagan, "what you taste in secret, before every other food? And if he knows of the bread, will he not believe it to be what it is said to be?"<sup>1</sup> *i. e.*, bread dipped in the blood of an infant, as the common pagan calumny of the day represented the Eucharist to be.

## VII.

REASONS FOR : There were various reasons for  
SECURITY. : this law of secrecy. The Chris-  
..... : tians were subject to persecution  
from the first, as our Lord expressly fore-  
told they should be. Common prudence would  
therefore dictate that they should not parade  
their religion in the open view of those who  
were on the alert to seize and drag them  
before persecuting tribunals. Again, the mys-  
teries of faith were precisely those pearls that

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Uxorem*, l. 2 ; c. 5 (Migne, tom. 1, col. 1296).

## INTRODUCTION.

the Master bade them not cast before swine. The Fathers give yet another reason. St. Basil draws attention to the fact that overmuch familiarity with sacred things is apt to breed contempt. He points to the mystery which surrounded the Holy of Holies in the Old Law as enhancing the reverence and awe with which the Israelites regarded it. "This is the reason," he says, "why certain teachings (which he has just spoken of as having been received in a secret manner from the tradition of the Apostles), have been handed on without writing."<sup>1</sup> The same principle is strongly insisted on by St. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Eusebius. The first-named cites Plato as counselling his disciples not to commit the deep things of God to writing, and on the words of St. Paul (1 Cor. 2: 6, 7; 3:1, 2, 3,) observes: "By milk is meant the catechism, the first nutriment of the soul, as it were."<sup>2</sup> The allusion is plain to the ancient discipline which kept the Symbol from the catechumens,

<sup>1</sup> *De Spir. Sanct.* c. 27; nn. 65, 66, 67 (Migne, P. G., tom. 32.)

<sup>2</sup> *Strom.* 1, 5; c. 8 (Migne, P. G., tom. 9).

## INTRODUCTION.

while yet they were "babes in Christ," and gave it only when, after careful drilling and a lengthened probation, they were "able to bear" the "meat" or stronger food reserved for the soul in the mysteries of the Faith. Eusebius likewise cites the words of Plato, and adds: "To the same purpose also is that salutary precept which we have, '*Give not that which is holy to dogs*' (Matt. 7:6), and again, '*The animal man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*'" (1 Cor. 2:14).<sup>1</sup> "But after those whom we admonish have advanced in virtue," are the words of Origen, ". . . then at length they are initiated in the mysteries. For, *we speak wisdom among the perfect*" (1 Cor. 2:6.)<sup>2</sup> He, too, cites Plato, and adds: "But I make bold to affirm, . . . that the disciples of Christ, after they were imbued with the grace of God, knew far better than Plato what things were to be written and how, and what was to be made known to the people without writing; what things were to be

<sup>1</sup> *Præpar. Evang.* 1, 12; c. 7 (Migne, P. G., tom. 21).

<sup>2</sup> *Contra Celsum*, 1, 3; c. 59 (Migne, P. G., tom. 11).

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spoken, and what to be kept secret.”<sup>1</sup> And, once more, in his homily on Lev. 5, n. 3 (Migne, tom. 12), he observes: “I know that there are other things that the children of Israel, that is, laics, can come in unto; not, however, strangers, unless they are already admitted to the Church of God; ‘For the Egyptian in the third generation shall enter into the assembly of the Lord’ (Deut. 23:8). I take it that the third generation is said in a mystic sense, because of the faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in whom every one who is joined to the Church of God believes.” Here is a distinction drawn between those that are without and those that are within, and again, in the number of the latter, between laymen and clerics. Those that are without have no part in the “mysteries;” of those that are within, laics have access to some, not to all. What they have access to are the mysteries of the faith embodied in the Symbol, “the faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in whom all who are members of the Church believe.” Origen

<sup>1</sup> Ib. 1, 6; c. 6.

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seems to discern in the Egyptian children of the third generation who were admitted into the synagogue, a mystic and subtle allusion to the three classes of catechumens, *incipientes*, *proficientes*, *competentes*, of whom only the third were initiated into the mysteries and received in the Symbol of the Faith, the Watchword of the Army of Christ.

VIII.

THE PRECEPT:  
OF THE  
MASTER.

.....: Tertullian, in the passage from which the citation is given above, traces the law of secrecy to the precept of the Master (Matt. 7: 6), which he quotes as follows: "Cast not, He says, your pearls before swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you." Christians in the first, second, and third centuries, who had before their eyes the spectacle of a rampant paganism, savage and ferocious to the last degree, wallowing, also, in the mire of every abomination, were keenly alive to the wisdom of this divine precept, and in no wise slow to act upon it. On every side were these

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swine: did not the words of the Master find here their most pointed application? Clement and Origen and Basil, too, as the reader will have observed, discern in the words of our Lord and in the Scriptures both of the Old Testament and the New the origin and sanction of the discipline of secrecy, which they all of them regard, not as a thing of recent growth, but as a something that existed in full vigor from the very beginning. It is important to note this, and to lay due stress upon it. The root-reason for the Discipline of the Secret, the reason which our Lord Himself assigns, existed in all its force and peremptoriness, in the first century as in the fourth; nay, with tenfold greater force and peremptoriness in the first century than in the fourth; therefore the Discipline of the Secret existed in the first century, and was enforced with tenfold greater rigor, as the need was greater. To have decked Christianity in its pearls while yet it lay in its cradle, in open view of the pagan swine that ran about on all sides, rampant and furious—this surely had been a fatuous and suicidal policy.



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If some of the earlier writers, such as Irenæus, Theophilus of Antioch, Justin, Ignatius, and Minucius Felix, make no mention of the law of secrecy, or only hint at it, this may be either because we have not to-day all their writings, in some cases, but mere fragments, or rather, perhaps, because they are silent of set purpose. How could they more effectually hide the mysteries than to act as if they knew not of the concealment? "Minucius Felix and Arnobius," writes Newman, "in controversy with Pagans, imply a denial that then the Christians used altars; yet Tertullian speaks expressly of the *Ara Dei* in the Church. What can we say, but that the Apologists deny altars in the sense in which they [Pagans] ridicule them; or that they deny that altars such as the Pagan altars were tolerated by Christians? . . . It would be wrong indeed to deny, but it was a duty to withhold, the ceremonial of Christianity; and Apologists might be sometimes tempted to deny absolutely what at furthest could only be denied under conditions."<sup>1</sup> Some of these writers, however,

<sup>1</sup> *Development of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 27, 28.

## INTRODUCTION.

drop an allusion here and there, from which we may infer that the rule of secrecy must have been known to them, as when Ignatius speaks of "the deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ" (*Ad Trall.*), and Justin, in words to be cited again later on, of "guarding the Confession in the Christ of God."

### IX.

Our greatest witness to the Discipline of the Secret is St. Clement of Alexandria. He flourished in the latter part of the second century, and had "treasured up memoranda against old age," as he tells us himself, gleaned from men who had "preserved the true tradition of the blessed doctrine directly from Peter and James and John and Paul, the holy Apostles, having received it in succession the son from the father." He, too, traces the law of secrecy to Christ's express precept, saying: "And even now I hold it a matter of religion, as it is said, not to cast pearls before swine, lest perhaps they trample them under their feet and turn

A SECOND  
CENTURY  
WITNESS.

## INTRODUCTION.

and tear us.”<sup>1</sup> He looks forward, however, to a time when it will be no longer needful thus to guard the mysteries, where he says: “Now it is forbidden to give that which is holy to dogs, so long, that is, as they remain savage.”<sup>2</sup> “These books [the Stromata],” he writes,<sup>3</sup> “will contain the truth mixed up with the doctrines of philosophy, or rather concealed and covered by them, as the eatable part of a nut by the shell; for the seeds of the truth ought to be guarded solely for the husbandmen of the faith.” And, towards the close, he congratulates himself on having written his work “in such a way as to render the discovery of the holy traditions no easy task for any of the uninitiated.”<sup>4</sup> That the Symbol came within the Discipline of the Secret in Clement’s day is shown below.<sup>5</sup> After an exhaustive study of the matter in Clement, the editor and compiler of *The Faith of Catholics*,

<sup>1</sup> *Strom.* l. 1, n. 12 (Migne, P. G., tom. 8).

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* l. 2, c. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* l. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* l. 7, Migne, tom. 9).

<sup>5</sup> See Chap. I.

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thus sums up the question : "Clement's system, therefore, on this subject seems to be the following : 1. That Christ revealed some parts of His doctrine but to a few. 2. That he enjoined a similar system on His Apostles. 3. That they followed that system. 4. That those secret doctrines were preserved by tradition, and that an oral tradition, descending from father to son, amongst the true gnostics or believers. 5. That Clement, when treating of these doctrines, intended to be understood solely by the gnostic, and not by the catechumen, nor unbeliever, and therefore wrote obscurely on purpose." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Strom.* Vol. II., p. 159. This valuable work is, if I mistake not, out of print. It has one serious drawback, which should be removed in another edition, and that is the lack, in some instances, of specific references to the text of the passages cited from the Fathers. The translator seems to have taken it for granted that the special edition used by him would be accessible to the reader, and often, after a general reference to the text, refers the reader to the page.

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X.

A CLOUD OF : To the discipline of secrecy we  
WITNESSES. : have, in the third and fourth  
.....: centuries, a cloud of witnesses.

They represent it to us, not as a custom of recent origin, but as coming down from Apostolic times, and closely bound up with the very system of Christianity. And so, indeed, it was closely bound up with Christianity until, to adopt Clement's expressive phrase, the wild pagan dog had been tamed and thoroughly domesticated. This has been already pointed out, but will bear pointing out once more, and emphasizing. "Celsus frequently calls our doctrine hidden," says Origen, who reverts again and again to this subject, "though the gospel of the Christians is, almost throughout the whole world, better known than the opinions of the philosophers. . . . But that there should be, besides the exoteric doctrines, some things which are not manifested to the crowd, is not peculiar to the doctrine of Christians only, but is common to that of the philosophers as well, amongst whom some discourses

## INTRODUCTION.

were exoteric, and some also esoteric.”<sup>1</sup> And St. Hippolytus, the disciple of Irenæus, after citing the words of Paul to Timothy about guarding the deposit and commending it to faithful men who should be fit to teach others also (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:2), “If then the blessed Apostle delivered with circumspection those things which were easy of attainment to all, seeing in spirit that all men have not faith (2 Thess. 3:2), how much greater danger shall we run if, without caution and indiscriminately we commit the oracles of God to profane and unworthy men.”<sup>2</sup> So again, a little later in the same century, St. Cyprian: “And we are also ordered to keep what is holy within our own knowledge, and not expose it to be trodden on by swine and dogs,”<sup>3</sup> and straightway cites the oft-cited precept of the Master (Matt. 7). And, to quote one more third century witness, Archelaus in his work against Manes, says: “These mysteries the

<sup>1</sup> *Contr. Cels.* n. 7 (Migne, P. G., tom. 11.)

<sup>2</sup> *Demons. de Christo et Antichr.* (Galland. tom 2, n. 1).

<sup>3</sup> *Lib. ad Demetrianum*, n. 1 (Migne, P. L., tom. 4, col. 544).

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Church now unfolds to thee, who art passed from the class of catechumens; to Gentiles it is not the custom to manifest them. For to no one amongst the Gentiles do we make known the mysteries concerning Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; neither do we speak openly before the catechumens concerning the mysteries, but we often say many things in an occult manner, in order that the faithful, who are acquainted with the matter, may understand, whilst those who are not thus acquainted may not be injured.”<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine also, in the fifth century, speaks of the Discipline of the Secret as a “custom.” It appears to have been, in his day, of immemorial standing; it was founded upon Apostolic tradition; and it had, as have indeed all old customs that are reasonable and right, from this very fact itself, the force of law.

<sup>18</sup> *Disp. cum Manete* (Galland, tom. 3, p. 610). I have not been able to trace this reference in Migne, and so give it and one or two others as found in *The Faith of Catholics*. I must add that some authorities attribute these words to St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

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### XI.

It is not necessary to cite the testimony of fourth century writers, so notorious is it that the law of secrecy was still in full force then. A few citations may be given, however, by way of specimen, or as having some direct bearing on the subject of this work. Speaking of St. Cyprian's writings, Lactantius says: "Beyond the mere word, he cannot please those who are ignorant of the mystery, inasmuch as the things he has written are mystical, and purposely designed to be understood by the faithful only."<sup>1</sup> Athanasius cites the Lord's precept (Matt. 7), and adds: "For the mysteries ought not to be publicly exhibited to the uninitiated, lest the Gentiles, who understand them not, scoff, and the catechumens, becoming curious, be scandalized."<sup>2</sup> At this time the heathen swine could but "scoff" and, perhaps, show their fangs; they could no longer "rend." The need for reserve was slowly passing away.

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TESTIMONY.

<sup>1</sup> *Divin. Instit.* 1, 5; c. 1 (Migne, P. L., tom. 6).

<sup>2</sup> *Apol. contra Arian.* n. 11 (Migne, P. G., tom. 25).



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“You are summoned to the mysteries,” says St. Ambrose, “though you know not what they are. You learn when you come.”<sup>1</sup> And St. Cyril of Jerusalem, addressing the grade of catechumens known as *competentes*: “But thou art now standing on the borders; see thou tell nothing; not that the things spoken of are not worthy of being told, but that the ear is not worthy to receive. Thou also wast once a catechumen [of the first grade, *incipientes*, or the second, *proficientes*]; I did not tell what was before thee.”<sup>2</sup>

## XII.

IN THE HEART:  
OF THE NEW  
TESTAMENT.  
.....: In the writings of the New  
Testament, or, to be more specific,  
in the Pastoral Epistles, there  
are numberless references to what is variously  
and vaguely described as an “outline of teach-  
ing” (Rom. 6: 17), “this teaching” (2 Jo.:  
11), “confession” (Heb. 4: 12), “pattern of  
sound words” (2 Tim. 1: 13), “deposit” (1

<sup>1</sup> *De Elia et Jejun.* c. 10, n. 36 (Migne, P. L., tom. 14).

<sup>2</sup> *Procatech.* n. 12 (Migne, P. G., tom. 23).

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Tim. 6 : 20).<sup>1</sup> We are not now concerned to

<sup>1</sup> "The word 'deposit' used by St. Paul for the same body of doctrines [Kerygma or Rule of Faith], is not employed by the early Fathers; but Tertullian explicitly recognizes its meaning to be, not an 'occultum evangelium,' but the public teaching of the Church." Thus Dom Gasquet in *The Dublin Review* for Oct. 1888, p. 279. The reference he gives is *De Praesc.* 25. Tertullian is there combating the views of certain heretics of his day who maintained (*solent dicere*) that some things there were which the Apostles themselves did not know, or, if they knew, did not communicate to all their disciples (*De Praesc.*, c. 22). The great African sledge-hammer of heretics (for such he was and still is, though he seems to have become himself, in the event, a castaway), first shows how absurd it is to suppose that the Apostles, to whom was given the Spirit of truth, could have been ignorant of any truth divinely revealed. (*Ib.* and cc. 23, 24). Next (c. 25), he shows that the Apostles did not withhold anything from any of their disciples, in the sense intended by the heretics. This is what he means, though he does not say it in so many words; for those heretics alleged that it was precisely their distinctive tenets which were so withheld. They cited, in support of their contention, 1 Tim. 6 : 20, and 2 Tim. 1 : 14, where St. Paul commits to the keeping of Timothy "the good deposit." Tertullian points out that the "deposit" in question could not have contained such secret doctrines as they alleged it did, for the reason that it was given "before many witnesses" (2 Tim. 2 : 2). "And," he says, "if they will not admit that by these many witnesses the Church is meant, it does not matter, seeing that nothing could be secret which was brought forth before many witnesses" (*Ib.*). Tertullian does not deny the existence of the law of secrecy in the

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ascertain what this teaching was. Enough for the present to know that it was some part of the Christian Revelation; that it had been already formulated, that is to say, couched in a definite form of words, else it could not be spoken of as an "outline of teaching" and "pattern of sound words"; and that it was to be "guarded" and committed only to "faithful men" who should be "fit to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2: 2). Search the New Testament from beginning to end, and you will not find this doctrinal formulary. You will find allusions to it in plenty, fragments of it, a few phrases or sentences picked from it, perhaps,

Church, to which, as we have seen, he bears witness himself. The very words he employs to denote the Creed, "sacramentum," "tessera," "symbolum," would prove this, even were there no other proof. What he says is that of the whole doctrine of Christ none was kept back from the beginning, but all was taught openly *coram Ecclesia*, that is, to the faithful. He does not say nor dream of saying that it was all taught openly before the catechumen and the heathen. So, too, Origen says that the "Kerygma of the Church" was taught "manifestissime," (as Rufinus renders it) "most plainly," rather than "most openly." But plainly or openly, it was "to the faithful" it was delivered, not to the catechumen, and much less to the unbeliever.

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but the formulary itself—nowhere. Can clearer evidence be asked for of the existence, from the very beginning, of what has been aptly called the Discipline of the Secret? For here in the very heart of the New Testament is a secret, and a secret which it passes the art of man to pluck from it. There is just one key, and one only, that can unlock this mystery, and that is Apostolic Tradition. Of this key the Catholic Church is the divinely appointed custodian. But some of her sons to-day, votaries of a criticism that calls itself historical, seem wishful to wrest the key from the hands of their Mother, and fling it away.

### XIII.

Vast is the ground that has to be gone over by the one who would trace the Symbol to its source. The way is long and devious. It lies, for the most part, in a wilderness, and winds at times through tangled forest shrouded in gloom. Pick your steps never so carefully, you still are liable to stumble and to fall. Entering

: "LEAD, KIND-  
LY LIGHT,"

## INTRODUCTION.

upon this difficult way, where the light of nature so often fails one and the footing is so insecure, I look to Faith for guidance, and to Catholic Tradition to lend me a helping and sustaining hand. And all my steps I give into the keeping of Mother Church, the guardian of the Symbol, the organ of Apostolic Tradition, the teacher of the true Faith, unreservedly submitting to her unerring judgment and censure whatever is written in these pages.

## CHAPTER I.

### APOSTOLIC AUTHORSHIP OF THE SYMBOL.

#### I.

ANCIENT tradition ascribes the authorship of the primitive Creed of the Church to the Apostles. Ever since the fifteenth century this tradition has been a target for criticism at the hands mainly of men not of the household of the faith. To-day it is freely called in question even by Catholic scholars, among whom may be mentioned the Benedictine Baumer in Germany, the Benedictine Dom Morin in France, and the Barnabite Giovanni Semeria in Italy. The last-named, in a work fresh from the hands of the printer,<sup>1</sup> regards the received

THE TRA-  
DITION.  
.....

<sup>1</sup> *Dogma, Gerarchia e Culto nella Chiesa primitiva.*  
Roma : F. Pustet. 1902.

## THE SYMBOL

account of the origin of the Creed as legendary. He sets the old tradition aside, as not of a nature to win our belief on the score either of its antiquity or its universality, and follows Harnack in fixing upon the middle of the second century as the probable date on which our most ancient Symbol of Faith was formulated.

I propose, first, to review briefly the explicit testimony that we have as to the Apostolic authorship of the Creed; next, to point out how the Discipline of the Secret was rigidly enforced and religiously observed in regard to it; and, lastly, to consider the bearing of this fact on the question of its authorship.

### II.

WITNESSES :  
TO THE :  
TRADITION. :  
..... :  
Between the latter half of the  
fourth century and the middle of  
the fifth, several writers of excep-  
tional standing, in respect of their learn-  
ing and their critical acumen, explicitly and  
categorically affirm the Creed to be of Apos-  
tolic origin. Chief among these are St. Am-  
brose, St. Jerome, the Presbyter Rufinus,

OF THE APOSTLES.

and St. Leo the Great. The last-named calls the Creed the "Catholic and Apostolic Symbol,"<sup>2</sup> speaks of it as the Rule of Faith "which has come down to us with the authority of apostolic institution,"<sup>3</sup> and puts those who "contradict the Symbol instituted by the holy Apostles" in the same category with men who deny the doctrine of the Incarnation.<sup>4</sup> The testimony of St. Ambrose is contained in these words: "Let the Symbol of the Apostles be believed, which the Roman Church ever has in its keeping and preserves inviolate."<sup>5</sup> St. Jerome bears witness that "the Symbol of our Faith and Hope, which has been handed down to us from the Apostles, is not written with ink on paper, but graved on the fleshly tablets of the heart."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Serm. 24, c. 6 (Migne, tom. 54).

<sup>3</sup> Serm. 62, c. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Serm. 96, c. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Ad Siricum* (Migne, tom. 23; ep. 42; col. 1125).

<sup>6</sup> In Symbolo fidei et spei nostrae, quod, ab Apostolis traditum, non scribitur in charta et atramento sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus, post confessionem Trinitatis et unitatem Ecclesiae, omne Christiani dogmatis sacramentum carnis resurrectione concluditur.—*Contra Joan. Hierosol.* n. 28. (Migne, tom. 23. col. 380).



THE SYMBOL

III.

TESTIMONY :  
OF RUFINUS. :  
..... :

The testimony of Rufinus, who writes towards the close of the fourth century or the opening of the fifth, is, though no whit clearer or more categorical, fuller and much more specific. The others make but a passing allusion to the Symbol; Rufinus has a whole treatise upon it.<sup>7</sup> At the outset of his commentary (for such it is) on the Creed, he deals with its origin. "The subject of his exposition," notes Zahn,<sup>8</sup> "is the baptismal Creed of the Church of Aquileia, in which in 370 he received Baptism, and at the same time the Creed. But he does not discuss it without casting side-glances on the baptismal confessions of other Churches. He had not lacked opportunities for becoming acquainted with them," continues the author, attesting the competency of Rufinus. "He had passed six years in Alexandria and very nearly twenty in Jerusalem and the neighborhood. He had also made a long stay in Rome before settling in Aquileia for the rest

<sup>7</sup> *Comment. in Symbol. Apost.* (Migne, tom. 21.).

<sup>8</sup> *The Articles of the Apostles' Creed*, pp. 18, 19.

OF THE APOSTLES.

of his life. He had also read some sermons on the Creed by famous preachers of foreign Churches."

Rufinus tells us how the faithful in his day held it as a tradition, handed down from their forefathers in the faith, that the Apostles, after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, and before they dispersed to preach the Gospel throughout the world, being gathered together, composed the Symbol to serve as the norm of their teaching in the after time; how they collaborated in drawing up this brief outline (*indicium*) or index of the truths they were about to preach, and agreed to deliver it to believers as their rule or standard; also, how they gave it the name of Symbol, a name, observes our author, which signifies at once a putting together or collaborating and a distinctive mark or badge, whereby the preachers of the true faith, as well as true believers, may be known. He adds the significant words: "Therefore they delivered these [truths embodied in the Symbol], not to be written on paper or parchment, but to be retained in the hearts of believers, so that it might be certain

## THE SYMBOL

that nobody had learned them from writings which are known at times to fall into the hands of unbelievers, but from the tradition of the Apostles."

According to Rufinus the Apostles not only composed the Creed but gave it the name of Symbol, which it still bears. Harnack has not been able to discover any trace of the term symbol as a designation of the Creed in the writings of the first two centuries. It would seem to have been for the first time employed in this sense by St. Cyprian.<sup>9</sup> But this should not be held to weaken the force of the testimony of Rufinus to the fact, or rather the tradition, of the Apostolic authorship, which is, after all, the only matter of importance. The learned presbyter of Aquileia cannot be supposed to mean that the Apostles used the very word *Symbolum* itself (from the Greek *συμβολον*), but rather the equivalent for that word in their own language; the more so that, as he expressly tells us, they did not deliver the Creed in writing, but by word of mouth. In any case, it is far from clear that

<sup>9</sup> See, however, below. Chap. vi; sect. 3.

## OF THE APOSTLES.

he is citing the circumstance of the name as part of the old tradition. Nor is there anything in the text or context of the passage to warrant Father Semeria in imputing to Rufinus the statement that the Creed was composed by the Apostles on the very day of Pentecost.<sup>9</sup> On the contrary, his *Discessuri igitur* implies it to have been the mind of Rufinus that the Creed was not drawn up by the Apostles till the eve of their dispersion.

In the beginning of his exposition of the Symbol, Rufinus notes the fact that the text is not exactly the same in all the Churches. Thus the Eastern Churches profess belief in "One God the Father Almighty." In the Creed of the Roman Church, as in that of Aquileia, the word "one" is wanting. Nor does the Old Roman Creed contain the addition, "maker of heaven and earth," found, with variations, in the Creeds of the Eastern Churches. Again, the words "He descended into hell," found in the Creed of Aquileia, are wanting in the Roman as well as in the Eastern Creed. Rufinus, however, observes that the

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 321.

### THE SYMBOL

truth expressed in these words is implied in the words "was buried," that precede; for as the body went down into the grave so the soul went down into the place where the souls of the faithful departed awaited the coming of the Redeemer. Belief in "the communion of Saints" is not expressed in any of the earlier forms, even in that which St. Augustine expounds in his homilies.<sup>10</sup> But this, too, is implied in the preceding article, "the holy Church." Finally, the words, "life everlasting," with which the Creed now closes, though found in some at least of the Eastern formularies, are only implied in the words, "resurrection of the flesh," which invariably form the conclusion of the Western Creed up to and including the time of St. Augustine.

The foregoing, with some other slight differences in the wording, constitute the variations in the formula of the Apostolic Faith which served as the Baptismal Creed in the Church of the fourth and fifth centuries. Variations, as they are, apparent rather than

<sup>10</sup> *In traditione Symboli*, Serm. 212, 213, 214 (Migne, tom. 38).

OF THE APOSTLES.

real, in the words, but not in the underlying ideas, they do but witness to the unity of the primitive and archetypal form of the Christian Confession of Faith. But where, if anywhere, was this archetypal form preserved? Rufinus testifies that in "divers Churches" words were added to the Creed originally delivered to the faithful. He agrees with St. Ambrose in affirming that the Roman Church ever kept the Symbol of the Apostles inviolate. "And this," he adds, "I believe to be owing to the fact that no heresy ever had its origin there." For additions were made elsewhere, as he proceeds to point out—not indeed from without but from within, not by way of putting forward a new truth, but by way of bringing into clearer light the old—to meet the rising heresies.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> It is interesting to note that Dr. Kattenbusch, in the second volume of his monumental work on the Symbol of the Apostles, published two years ago, traces all Eastern Creeds of the fourth century to one archetype in the Old Roman Creed, though he does so only as a working hypothesis. See the *Church Quarterly Review* for October, 1902, pp. 216-221.

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IV.

THE TRADI-  
TION AND  
THE LEGEND  
.....

At the close of the fourth century, therefore, and the beginning of the fifth, the Creed delivered to the class of catechumens known as *competentes* was the self-same, in substance and meaning, throughout the whole Christian world. And of this Creed Rufinus and Jerome and Ambrose and Leo the Great declare the Apostles to have been the authors, or at any rate declare this to have been the received tradition in their day. Whatever is to be thought of this tradition, one thing is clear, and ought to be kept clearly in view by anyone who really wishes to reach the truth in this matter: the tradition in question stands upon an altogether different footing, and should be kept quite separate from the legend which, in the after time, grew out of it, or rather was woven around it, to the effect that each of the Apostles contributed a distinct article to the Creed, Peter contributing the first and Mathias the twelfth and last. This incongruous appendage to the old tradition is first met with

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in a sermon long believed to have been written by St. Augustine, but now known to be the work of some anonymous scribe at a later date. Its legendary character is sufficiently attested by its spurious origin. It is true that St. Leo the Great, in his epistle to Pulcheria (ep. 31, 4), speaks of the Symbol as being *duodecim apostolorum totidem signata sentiis*, but this should not be taken to mean more than it says, to wit, that the Creed is stamped with the seal of Apostolic authorship by the fact of its containing as many articles as there were members of the Apostolic College from the beginning. As a matter of fact, the words *vitam aeternam* which constitute the article ascribed to Mathias by the author of the sermon above referred to, were not part of the Creed known to St. Augustine, nor of the Old Roman or Apostles' Creed.

The legend has been relegated, and with reason, to the limbo of vain things fondly invented. But what of the tradition? Must it, too, go the same way? That it must appears to be the verdict of what many look upon to-day as the court of last resort in all



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questions of this kind—the school of historical criticism. Before accepting the verdict as final, it will be well to inquire whether the method by which it has been reached is such as would be likely, in this instance, to lead those who employ it into the truth. We have to consider whether the Symbol of Faith known as the Apostles' Creed came within the Discipline of the Secret, and whether, if it did come within the Discipline of the Secret, this does not logically bar all movement looking to the discovery of its authorship along the path trodden by historical criticism.

V.

THE SYM- :  
BOL AND :  
THE DISCI- :  
PLINE OF :  
THE SECRET :  
..... :  
The reader will have gathered from what has been said in the Introduction why the Discipline of the Secret was inaugurated in the nascent Church, and how strictly it was enforced. It was only after persecution ceased and the old pagan Empire of the Romans was converted and baptized in the person of Constantine, that the *Disciplina Arcani* was gradually relaxed. That it extended to the Sym-

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bol, and held it fast even in the days of St. Augustine, is a fact that can be established on unimpeachable testimony. We have, first of all, the witness of Augustine himself. Over and over again he repeats in his homilies that the Symbol is not given in writing. "Nobody," he says, "writes the Symbol that it may be read."<sup>12</sup> When delivering it to the catechumens a week or two before their baptism, he warns them: "In no wise are you to write down the words of the Symbol in order to commit them to memory. You are to learn them by ear (*audiendo*); and even after you have learned them, you are not to write them, but to retain them in memory and rehearse them." He goes on to say that everything which they

<sup>12</sup> *De Symb. ad Catech.* (Migne, tom. 40, col. 627.) Migne decides in favor of the genuineness of this homily on intrinsic grounds. But in homilies on the Creed, which are unquestionably St. Augustine's, the "resurrection of the flesh" is the last article; in this one, on the other hand, the words "in vitam aeternam" are cited as part of the Creed. This would seem to cast a doubt on its genuineness. Neither in the homilies certainly genuine, nor in his *De Fide et Symbolo*, nor in his *Enchiridion de Fide*, etc., does St. Augustine cite as part of the Symbol the words in question. See on this subject, Chap. IV., Sects. 2 and 3.

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are about to hear in the Symbol is contained in Scripture, but that, as gathered together and reduced to a certain formula, it is not lawful to write it (*non licet scribi*). This he conceives to have been foreshadowed in those words of the Old Testament: "This is the covenant that I shall make with them after those days, said the Lord; I will give my law in their bowels, and in their hearts will I write it." "In token of this," he adds, "the Symbol is learned by ear; nor is it written on tablets, or any kind of material, but in the heart."<sup>13</sup> In another homily,<sup>14</sup> when he comes to the point where the delivery (*traditio*) of the Symbol took place, he says: "These are the words that you are faithfully to learn by heart and recite from memory," that is, on the day set for their baptism. The Saint adds, within brackets, the following words, which he set down when he first put the sermon in writing: "(After this preface the whole Symbol is to be given out, no word of comment being interspersed therewith: *I believe in God the*

<sup>13</sup> Serm. 212 (Migne, tom. 38; col. 1060).

<sup>14</sup> Serm. 214 (Ib., col. 1066).

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*Father Almighty*, and the other words that follow. It is not the custom, as you know, to put the Symbol in writing; which being said, the following discourse is to be added)." St. Augustine thus scrupled to write the words of the Creed even in the manuscript of his own sermons. All this tallies with the testimony of St. Jerome, already quoted, that the Symbol of Faith, "handed down from the Apostles, is not written with ink on paper, but engraved on the fleshly tablets of the heart;" and with the words of Rufinus, also cited above, that the truths contained in the Creed formulated by those whom Christ first sent to teach and baptize all nations were not delivered to men to be written on paper or parchment, but to be preserved in the hearts of believers, so that it might be known for certain that "no one had learned them from books, which at times fall into the hands of unbelievers, but from the tradition of the Apostles."

Other witnesses, in the West, to the law of secrecy which guarded the Symbol, are St. Peter Chrysologus and the author of the *Explanatio Symboli*. The former in almost all

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his sermons on the Symbol, cautions his hearers not to put the Creed in writing, lest it should fall into the hands of the unbeliever. Enough to cite from one. "The Faith," he says, "which we believe and teach, not with the pen, but with the living voice, let us consign to the secret closet of the heart, not to paper. Let it be committed to memory, not to writing, lest the divine gift be profaned by contact with earthly things; lest the uninitiated beholder seize upon the heavenly secret, and what is life to the believer prove to the unbeliever a source of spiritual ruin."<sup>15</sup> The author of the *Explanatio*, reputed to be St. Ambrose, tells us that tradition forbade the writing of the Symbol, and maintains that the living memory will conserve it better than the written page. The passage runs: "I wish you to bear in mind, since you have to recite the Symbol, that you must not write it. Let no one write it. Why? Because such is the tradition. What, then, is to be done? It is to be held fast. But how can it be held fast, you will say to me, if it is not written. Rather can it be held fast if it be not written. How

<sup>15</sup> Serm. 60. (Migne, tom. 52).

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do you mean? Let me explain. What you write you do not set to work to bring home to yourself by thinking over it daily; you feel so sure about it because you can read it over any time. But what you don't write, you are afraid it will slip away from you, and you therefore set to work at once to rehearse it day by day" <sup>16</sup>

To know the Symbol by heart was to the early Christians a matter of life and death. In a letter "to the aged Alypius" <sup>17</sup> St. Augustine relates how a pagan of the name of Dioscorus had a dearly loved daughter whose life was despaired of, and how, upon his taking a vow to become a Christian, she was restored to health. Failing to keep his vow, he was struck blind. All at once he bethought him that his blindness was a judgment of God upon him for having broken his vow. A second time he vows he will perform his first vow if he recovers his sight. This he does, and is duly baptized, but he has not got the Symbol by heart, alleging as excuse that he is not able. He is now struck with paralysis, which extends to his tongue.

<sup>16</sup> Migne, tom. 17; col. 1160.

<sup>17</sup> Migne, tom. 33, col. 1012.

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Admonished in a dream that this has happened to him because of his not having recited the Symbol from memory, he makes a confession to this effect in writing, learns the Symbol by heart, and is freed at length from all his infirmities. Modern incredulity may smile at the childlike simplicity of him who tells the story. But the great bishop of Hippo, were he still with us, could say, as Newman said under like circumstances: Hippocrides doesn't care.

### VI.

TESTIMONY : We will now turn to the Eastern  
OF EASTERN : Church. Our first witness shall be  
FATHERS. :  
..... :  
St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who became  
Bishop of that ancient See about the middle  
of the fourth century. His testimony is so  
explicit, and so much to the purpose, that it  
must be given at length in his own words.  
He is addressing the class of *competentes*  
on the eve of their baptism :

“But take thou and hold, as a learner, and in profession, that faith only which is now delivered to thee by the Church, and is fenced

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round out of all Scripture. For since all cannot read the Scriptures, but some as being unlearned, others by business, are hindered from knowledge (of them), in order that the soul may not perish from want of instruction, we comprehend the whole doctrine of the faith in a few sentences. This I wish you to remember in the very phrase, and to rehearse it with all diligence amongst yourselves, not writing it on paper, but graving it by memory on your heart; being on your guard in your exercise, lest haply a catechumen should overhear the things delivered to you. This I wish you to have as a provision by the way during the whole period of life, and besides this never to receive any other."—*Catech.*, 5; n. 12.<sup>18</sup>

"And I could wish to say this openly," are the words of St. Chrysostom in his fortieth homily on the First Epistle to the Corinthians<sup>19</sup> "but I dare not on account of those who are not initiated. They render the exposition of the subject more difficult to us, inasmuch as we are constrained either not to speak plainly, or to make known the mys-

<sup>18</sup> Migne, P. G., tom. 33.

<sup>19</sup> Migne, P. G., tom. 61.



### THE SYMBOL

teries to them. But I will speak, as far as may be, covertly and in a veiled manner. For after the recital of those mystical and dread words, and the awful canons of doctrine that have come down from heaven, we add this also at the end, when we are to be baptized and are bidden to say, *I believe in the resurrection of the dead.*"

St. Basil the Great witnesses for the Church in Cappadocia. "Of the dogmas and teachings preserved in the Church," he writes, "we have some from the doctrine committed to writing, and some we have received, transmitted to us in a secret manner, from the tradition of the Apostles; both these have the same force in forming religion; and no one will gainsay either of these, no one, that is, who has the least experience of the laws of the Church."<sup>20</sup> Again: "Dogma is one thing, and preaching another; for the former is guarded in silence, while preachings are openly proclaimed." That he means by "dogma" especially the Symbol appears from the words he uses a little further on: "The very Con-

<sup>20</sup> *De Spirit. Sancto*, c. 27; n. 66 (Migne, P. G., tom. 82).

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fession of Faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," he asks, "from what written records have we it."<sup>21</sup>

In Clement of Alexandria we have a witness whose testimony dates over a century and a half further back than that of any writer hitherto cited, for he flourished in the latter half of the second century. His references to the Symbol are not so explicit as are those of the other writers; the Discipline of the Secret was even more rigorously enforced in his day; yet no one who reads his words can doubt that the Symbol is in his mind. He tells us how he was himself personally acquainted with men who "preserved the true tradition of the blessed doctrine, directly from Peter, and James, and John, and Paul, the Holy Apostles, having received it in succession, the son from the father."<sup>22</sup> He calls it "the celebrated and venerable rule of tradition, commencing from the origin of the universe," which seems to point to the profession of faith in the "Creator

<sup>21</sup> αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς πίστεως εἰς Πατέρα καὶ Υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα ἐκ ποίων γραμμάτων ἔχομεν;—Ib. n. 67.

<sup>22</sup> Strom. l. 1; c. 1 (Migne, P. G., tom. 8).

## THE SYMBOL

of heaven and earth" contained in the first article of the Creed. He speaks of it as knowledge "which has come down, transmitted without writing to a few by successions from the Apostles," and distinguishes between it and the apostolic doctrine contained in Scripture, saying: "For as the doctrine, so also was the tradition of all the Apostles, one."

Now, this "blessed tradition," which was handed down orally from the Apostles, and which, being a tradition of "doctrine," must at the least have included the Symbol, whatever else it may have included, he affirms to have been guarded as a secret. He conceives it to be "the delineation of a soul that loves, to guard the blessed tradition so that it may not escape." He says that, "Secret things, like God, are entrusted, not to writing but to oral teaching," with much more to the same purpose.

Let me make an end of citation with a passage from the *Stromata* :

"Some of these secret things I deliberately pass by, making a selection after reflection,

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being afraid to commit to writing things which we are upon our guard even to speak about; not from any envy, for that is not lawful, but from fear lest those who may meet with them, taking them in a wrong sense, might fall into error, and we should thus be found to be giving, as they say who use proverbs, a sword to a child. . . . There are some things which my writing will obscurely indicate; and on some things it will dwell; others it will only name, and will attempt, while concealing, yet to declare, and though hiding to manifest, and though silent to point out; and it will lay before the readers the dogmas that have been taught by celebrated heresies, and will oppose to them all that ought to be premised to the interior contemplation of knowledge, which will be proceeded in by us according to the celebrated and venerable rule of tradition, commencing from the origin of the universe. . . . ”  
—*Strom.*, l. i.

VII.

There has been produced evi- : CONCLUSION.  
dence enough and to spare that .....  
the Creed of the early Church was hedged  
about and jealously guarded by the Disci-

## THE SYMBOL

pline of the Secret, that the early Christian writers religiously refrained from reproducing it in their works, and even from putting it at all in writing. But consider how fraught with significance is this, and how effectually it serves to discredit the method of historical criticism, so-called, as applied to the question of the authorship of the Creed. Your ingenious critic, with his vast apparatus of learning, with an industry and patience in research beyond all praise and worthy of all emulation, ransacks the writings of sub-apostolic and early times for the Symbol, and declares he cannot find it. No marvel that he cannot find it: he seeks the living among the dead. The Creed is in the heart and on the lips of the Church of the living God; he is looking for some fossil remains of a casket that might be thought to have enclosed it, but didn't; for, to cite once more the words of St. Jerome: "The Symbol of our Faith and Hope, handed down to us from the Apostles, is not written with ink on paper, but graved on the fleshly tablets of the heart." To the weary and sore-perplexed critic, peering into ancient tomes, grop-

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ing in the twilight of those early times, seeking in vain the source whence came the Symbol, the words of Augustine and Jerome and Rufinus, of Basil and Cyril and Clement, should have been as the legend on the sign-post to give timely warning of NO THOROUGHFARE. But he heeded not the warning; he had no eyes for it; he would plod his way, groping ever, till at length he has fetched up in a blind alley. For this is just where its failure to find other than an anonymous author for the great Creed of Christendom has left historical criticism—in a cul-de-sac.

To the searcher for the Symbol among the literary remains of the early ages, we might almost say as the Angel said to those who sought in the sepulchre the Lord of the Symbol—*surrexit non est hic*, "He is risen; He is not here." For those in whose minds and hearts the Symbol came from the Apostles down to later generations have mounted to that "house of many mansions" where Faith is merged in Vision. "When we reach that place where we shall reign," says St. Augustine, in his fifty-eighth homily, "there

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will be no more need of our saying the Symbol; we shall see God; God Himself will be our Vision, and the vision of God will be the reward of this our Faith.”

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CHAPTER II.

THE QUEST OF THE SYMBOL.

I.

WHAT the living Church of God handed down from generation to generation of believers as the Symbol of the Apostles was, with slight variations affecting neither its substance nor its essential meaning, the Baptismal Creed of Christendom in the fourth and fifth centuries. St. Leo the Great, who became Pope in 440 A.D., writing to the monks of Palestine, refers to it as "the Symbol of salvation which you recited before many witnesses when you received baptism."<sup>1</sup> And again, in a letter against Eutyches, addressed to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, he says, speaking of that arch-heretic: "What instruction has he

TRUE START-  
ING-POINT.

<sup>1</sup> Ep. 124; c. 8 (Migne, tom. 54, col. 1068).



## THE SYMBOL

got from the sacred pages of the New Testament or the Old, when he does not understand even the elements of the Symbol? Of the Symbol which is on the lips of all candidates for baptism throughout the whole world, that old man has not yet grasped the meaning.”<sup>2</sup> This period, then, in which it is matter of historical record that the Symbol was the Baptismal Creed of the Universal Church, is the true starting-point in the quest of its origin.

## II.

THE SYMBOL :     Before setting out on our  
ONE.                 quest, we shall do well to con-  
.....                 sider what our real objective is, and by what  
                          way we are to reach it. At the period  
we have taken for our starting-point, the  
Church of Rome has its Symbol, and the Church  
of Aquileia has its Symbol, and the Church of  
Antioch has its Symbol, and the Church of  
Alexandria has its Symbol. In short, the prin-  
cipal Churches throughout the world have  
each its own Symbol. Are we to seek a diverse

<sup>2</sup> *Ad Flav.* ; c. 1 (Migne, tom. 54, col. 757).

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origin for each of these Symbols, or for all a common origin? We must find one origin for all. And why? Because, after all, in spite of variations in the form and wording, the Symbol is one—one in its scope, one in its meaning, one in its structure, one in type, one in all its essential elements. So little does St. Leo regard these variations in the form of the Symbol as affecting its unity that he affirms it to be, not only one in all the Churches, but “unchangeable” as well.<sup>3</sup> From the beginning there is “one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all.” The Faith of the One Fold is one from the first: therefore is the Symbol or Confession of the Faith one. The one Church can have but one Creed—this needs not even to be pointed out to those that are of the household of the faith. As for those that are without, they have only to glance into the writings of the early Fathers to find how accordant their testimony is on this point. St. Leo does but echo the words of Christian Antiquity, as we shall have occasion

<sup>3</sup> *Ad Epis. Gall.* ; c. 2 (Minge, tom. 54, col. 986).

## THE SYMBOL

to point out presently, when he speaks of the one and unchangeable Confession of Faith.

The conclusion thus reached on logical, theological, and historical grounds regarding the unity of the Symbol, is borne out also by analogical considerations. In living organisms unity of structure implies unity of type, and unity of type involves unity of origin. Organisms sprung from the same source will vary; variation, indeed, is the very condition of their growth; but the unity of structure and type that is discernible in them will ever attest their common origin. So it is with the formularies of the Faith in the fourth and fifth centuries. Despite the variations that are visible on the surface, it is but an unpractised eye that will not detect the underlying sameness of type and lineament which bespeaks their common authorship. Even those who deny the Apostolic origin of the Symbol realize that there is an archetype to which all variant forms must be traced, though they are at a loss to know what that is, or where they are to look for it. Dr. Kattenbusch identifies it with the Old Roman Creed; Dr. Loofs follows the lead of

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Caspari in tracing it to the Johannine circle in Asia Minor.<sup>4</sup> Strange that none of these critics has been led to trace the archetypal Symbol to the Mother Church of Jerusalem. The cradle of Christianity would have been a not unlikely place to look for the aboriginal Creed of Christianity. And it might not have proved, it should seem, a bad "working hypothesis," that the men whom Christ Himself commissioned in Jerusalem to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," had, in virtue of that commission and in accordance with it, drawn up the Formula of Faith which should serve all nations for their Baptismal Creed. But the method of historical criticism barred this hypothesis. Besides, it is not pleasant for people to be made to feel as the swart Moor of Venice felt when he exclaimed:

Othello's occupation's gone.

<sup>4</sup> *The Church Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1902, pp. 218-22.

## THE SYMBOL

### III.

METHOD OF :  
HISTORICAL :  
CRITICISM. :  
..... :

For the one Symbol, therefore, which, as Cassian, the disciple and deacon of St. Chrysostom, puts it, "expresses the Faith of all the Churches,"<sup>5</sup> we shall seek one origin. The variations in its form are easily accounted for by the necessity that arose in particular Churches for a more explicit statement of the doctrines it contained. And by what way shall we proceed in our quest? Not by the way of historical criticism, for that way is blocked. It leads those who follow it, as has been already pointed out, into a cul-de-sac. The historical critic searches for the Symbol, or traces of the Symbol, among the remains of early Christian literature, after much the same manner as the biologist seeks for a species, or traces of a species, among the fossil remains of early geological epochs.<sup>6</sup> This is all well enough. But in the eagerness of his search, he overlooks a point of capital importance. Between literary re-

<sup>5</sup> *De Incar. Christi*, l. 6 ; c. 3 (Migne, tom. 50, col. 145).

<sup>6</sup> *Dogma, Gierarchia e Culto*, p. 322.

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mains and the fossil remains of plant or animal there is a radical distinction. The latter are mute and voiceless ; the former, being the product of the living mind, have a tongue and can deliver their message to those who find them. Now, here is where the method of historical criticism is at fault. It takes the Symbol, by dint of piecing together the scattered elements of it, from the writings of Cyril and Rufinus and Augustine, and pays not the slightest heed to the warning which these same writings deliver at the same time. The very same writers who are the first to describe ~~and~~ expound the Symbol, and in the very act of ~~describing~~ it, tell us, in the most distinct way, and with patient iteration, that they did not themselves get the Symbol from written records, but ~~from~~ from the lips of the living Church. What ~~sort~~ of criticism is it that is willing to trust these writers when they tell us what the articles of the Symbol were in their day, and in what order they were arranged, but will not trust them when they tell us how the Symbol was transmitted to them by their forefathers in the faith? It is silly of the critic to fancy that he can run with the

## THE SYMBOL

hare and hunt with the hounds after this fashion. "I will accept nothing," he declares, "but what I can find documentary evidence for." All very well. But let the whole evidence be taken. It will not do to take this because it fits in with a preconceived theory, and reject that because it doesn't. The method that picks and chooses in this way is neither critical nor historical. "The very Confession of Faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," says St. Basil, "from what written records have we it?" The critic may, if he likes, put this statement of St. Basil's to the test, and proceed to ransack written records for the Confession of Faith. He has a perfect right to do this. But he has no warrant, and no shadow of warrant, on failing to find it, as he was foredoomed to fail, to say that the Symbol did not then exist at all. This is an assumption so arbitrary that it is difficult to speak of it with composure. His assumed first principle will not let the critic see that he has been looking in the wrong place for the Symbol.

In our quest for the origin of the Creed,

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then, we shall set out, not with an assumed first principle, but with a fact proved by documents, and proved up to the hilt, namely, that the Creed was not transmitted in writing to the Christians of the fourth and fifth centuries, but handed on by word of mouth, and "graved on the fleshly tablets of the heart." The knowledge of this fact will be as a lamp unto our feet. In the light of it we shall not look for the Symbol itself in the writings of the earlier time, assured beforehand that it is not to be found there. We shall look only for traces of it, tokens of its existence in the minds and hearts of believers, in the mouths and on the lips of the neophyte and the martyr, and these we shall find in plenty.

Of course, no comprehensive or minute search into original sources can be made here, nor shall it be attempted, nor is it, indeed, needful. We shall pick up in passing one or two allusions to the Symbol from third century writings, and proceed straightway to the second century, which is to-day the battleground of the rival theories as to its origin.



THE SYMBOL

IV.

THE CREED :  
IN THE THIRD :  
CENTURY. :  
..... :

Eutychianus, who became Pope in 275, A.D., says in the course of a pastoral charge to the Roman clergy: "See that you teach your flocks the Symbol and the Lord's Prayer."<sup>7</sup> In his letter to Magnus, written before the middle of the third century, St. Cyprian declares that, while those who are cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church "are baptized in the same Symbol as we are," yet they "have not the same law (interpretation) of the Symbol as we have, nor the same interrogatory."<sup>8</sup> In the time of St. Cyprian, therefore, the Baptismal Creed was known as the Symbol.<sup>9</sup> And the Saint draws a clear distinction between this Creed and the *trina interrogatio* or triple interrogatory which is in use in the Church to this day. It is important to note this. The Symbol goes before the in-

<sup>7</sup> *Exhort. ad Presby.* (Migne, tom. 5, col. 166).

<sup>8</sup> *Ep. ad Magnum*, c. 7 (Migne, tom. 3, col. 1143).

<sup>9</sup> Semeria says, in the work already cited: "S. Cypriano . . . forse usa nello stesso nostro senso la voce simbolo." Tutt'altro che "forse."

OF THE APOSTLES.

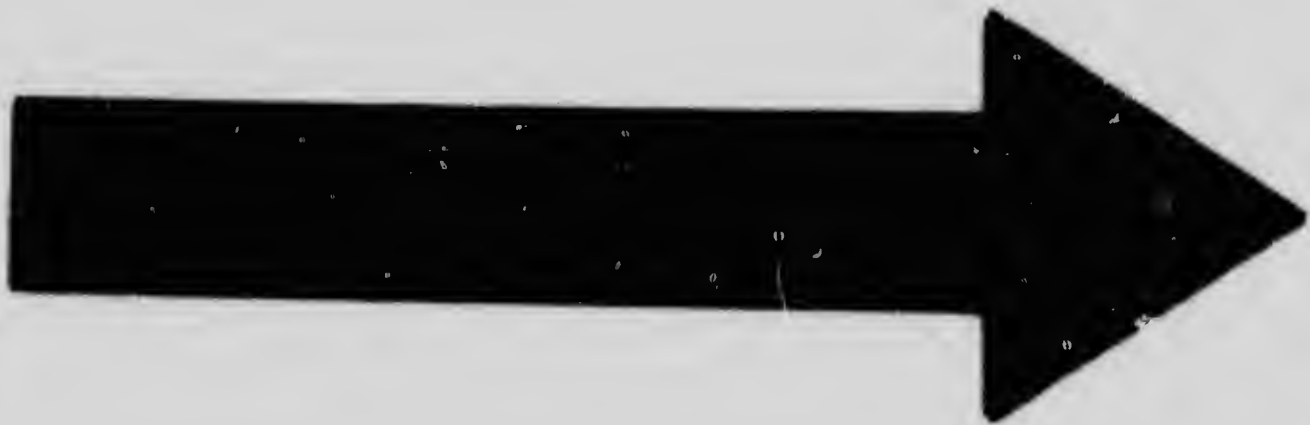
terrogatory in Cyprian, and this is the logical order. For the triple query of the minister of baptism supposes a knowledge of the Symbol in the candidate for baptism, else he could not make an intelligent reply. From this we may conclude that the Symbol is not derived from the interrogatory, but conversely, the interrogatory from the Symbol. Finally, there are distinct traces of the Symbol, nearly all the elements of it, indeed, to be found in a treatise on the Trinity written by Novatian, the schismatical anti-Pope and founder, conjointly with Novatus, of the Novatian heresy, about 260, A.D. The opening words are: "The Rule of Truth requires that we should first of all believe in God the Father and Lord Almighty."<sup>10</sup>

V.

Tertullian is a witness to the faith and traditions of the second century, his most notable works having been written in its closing years, or in the opening years of the century that

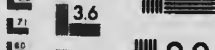
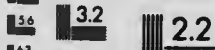
THE CREED  
IN  
TERTULLIAN.

<sup>10</sup> *De Trinit.* c, 1 (Migne, *ib.*, col. 885).



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## THE SYMBOL

followed. There are in his writings references almost without number to the Creed of the Church in his day. He does not call it by the name of Symbol, though he does use in describing it the word "tessera," which is also from the Greek and has the same meaning. To Tertullian the Creed is "the doctrine," "the tradition," and more especially the "Law" or "Rule of Faith." In three several works<sup>11</sup> he gives us a more or less explicit statement of its articles, with a certain slight variation in each case. These are exhibited below in a tabular form for purposes of comparison with one another and with the Old Roman Creed.

### CREED FORMS IN TERTULLIAN.

Old Roman Creed.	De Praescript. c. 13.	Adv. Prax. c. 2.	De Virg. Vel. c. 1.
(1) I believe in God the Father Almighty	(1) I believe in one God, maker of the world,	(1) We believe one only God,	(1) Believing in the one only God Almighty, maker of the world,
(2) and in Christ Jesus His only Son, our Lord,	(2) the Word called His Son, Jesus Christ,	(2) and the Son and Word of one only God, called Jesus Christ,	(2) and His Son, Jesus Christ,

<sup>11</sup> *De Praescript., Contra Praxeam, De Virginibus Ve-*  
*landis*; Migne, tom. 2, cols. 26, 156, 889.

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Old Roman Creed	De Praescript. c. 13.	Adv. Prax. c. 2.	De Virg. Vel. c. 1.
(3) Born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary,	(3) by the Spirit and power of God the Father made flesh in Mary's womb, and born of her,	(3) born Man and God of the Virgin,	(3) born of the Virgin Mary,
(4) Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried,	(4) fastened to a Cross,	(4) Him suffered, dead, and buried,	(4) crucified under Pontius Pilate,
(5) Rose again the third day from the dead.	(5) He rose the third day;	(5) brought back to life by the Father,	(5) on the third day brought to life from the dead,
(6) Ascended into heaven,	(6) was caught up into heaven,	(6) taken again into heaven,	(6) received in heaven,
(7) Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,	(7) sat at the right hand of the Father,	(7) sits at right hand of the Father,	(7) sits now at right hand of Father,
(8) whence He shall come to judge quick and dead.	(8) will come in glory to take the good into life eternal, and condemn the wicked to perpetual fire,	(8) will come to judge living and dead,	(8) will come to judge living and dead,
(9) And in the Holy Ghost,	(9) Sent the vicarious power of His Holy Spirit,	(9) From the Father the Holy Ghost Paraclete,	
(10) the holy Church,	(10) to govern believers,		
(11) remission of sins,			
(12) resurrection of the flesh.	(12) restoration of the flesh.		(12) through resurrection of the flesh.

We have here, in the writings of Tertullian, all the articles of the Old Roman Creed except

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the tenth (which is implied in one instance) and the eleventh. Are we to infer, because these two articles are wanting, that they were not to be found in the Creed that was in use in his day? By no means. Tertullian does not pretend to cite that formulary word for word. The words given above in parallel columns are picked from their context, where they are found, in some instances, mingled with extraneous matter. Besides, the phrases in the several columns do not tally exactly with one another, nor with the words of the Old Roman Creed. Nor is the same number of articles given in each case, nor are the same ones. Thus, the twelfth article is wanting in *Adversus Praxeam*, and the ninth in *De Virginitibus Velandis*, wherein the form approaches most closely to that of the Old Roman Creed. But who can doubt that the Rule of Faith which Tertullian so often refers to, and which he declares to be "absolutely one, sole, unchangeable, and irreformable,"<sup>12</sup> had its setting of words fixed uniform, the same for all?

<sup>12</sup> *De Virg. Vel.*, loc. cit.

OF THE APOSTLES.

We may surmise that Tertullian's object in varying, as he does, the words in which he conveys the doctrines of the Creed was to veil from the uninitiated the Sacred Symbol of the Faith, in accordance with the prevailing Discipline of the Secret. The economy of his language recalls that passage in the *Stromata* of St. Clement of Alexandria, where he says that there are some things which his writing "will only name, and will attempt, while concealing yet to declare, and though hiding to manifest, and though silent to point out." One is at a loss otherwise to account for the curious circumstance that, in the three several places where Tertullian professes to be setting forth the content of the Rule of Faith, once and once only does he use exactly the same form of words, as a glance at the table given above will show.

But be this as it may, certain it is that we cannot rightly infer a given article to have been wanting in the Creed of Tertullian from the mere circumstance of his not making explicit mention of it. In the very passage in which he professes to be giving the "one, unchange-



## THE SYMBOL

able, irreformable" Rule of Faith, he omits the ninth article, which he nevertheless gives in the other two places. What is more, we gather from a passage in his *Liber de Baptismo* (c. 6) that the tenth article, embodying belief in "the holy Church," was part of the Creed in his day. "Since, however," he there says, "the profession of faith is made and the pledge of salvation given in the name of the three, mention of the Church is necessarily added. For where the three are, that is, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, there is the Church, which is their body."<sup>13</sup> The Baptismal Creed, therefore, included the tenth article in Tertullian's time. And if one were to infer from his not mentioning it in any of the three passages referred to above, that it was not included, the inference would be false and contrary to fact. Is there not the very strongest kind of presumption that a similar inference drawn from the same premises with regard to the eleventh article would similarly be unwarranted? Besides, the doctrine of the remission of sins is expressly

<sup>13</sup> Migne, tom. 1, col. 1206.

OF THE APOSTLES.

affirmed in the treatise on Baptism (chaps. 6 and 10).

VI.

Irenæus, the disciple of that Polycarp "who had not only been trained by the Apostles, and had conversed with many of those who had seen Christ, but also had been constituted by the Apostles Bishop over Asia, in the Church of Smyrna" <sup>14</sup> is our most authoritative witness to the existence from the beginning and the Apostolic authorship of the Creed. He speaks of it in one place as "this outline" <sup>15</sup> (in the Greek, *χαρακτῆρα*) which corresponds to "symbol," the "tessera" of Tertullian, and the Latin "indicium" of Rufinus), but usually as the Tradition, and specifically as the Rule of Truth. With him, too, as with Tertullian, this "Rule of Truth which he received by his

THE CREED  
IN  
IRENÆUS.

<sup>14</sup> *Adv. Haer*, Bk. 3, c. 3, § 4. I cite the English translation by Keble. Of the Greek original of this great work of Irenæus only some fragments have come down to us. The Latin version, very ancient, is the basis of all modern versions.

<sup>15</sup> Bk. 2, c. 28, § 1.

## THE SYMBOL

baptism,"<sup>16</sup> is one and the same in all the world. After setting forth the principal articles of it, as exhibited in the first column of the syllabus given below, he goes on to say :

“ This preaching and this faith, the Church, as we said before, dispersed as she is in the whole world, keeps diligently, as though she dwelt but in one house ; and her belief herein is just as if she had only one soul, and the same heart, and she proclaims and teaches and delivers these things harmoniously, as possessing one mouth. Thus while the languages of the world differ, the tenor of the tradition is one and the same. And neither have the Churches situated in the regions of Germany believed otherwise, nor do they hold any other tradition, neither in the parts of Spain, nor among the Celts, nor in the East, nor in Egypt, nor in Libya, nor those which are situate in the middle parts of the world. . . . Nor will he who is weak in discourse abate aught of the Tradition. Yea, the Faith being one and the same, neither he that is able to speak much of it hath anything over, nor hath he that speaks but little any lack.”<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Bk. 1, c. 9, § 4.

<sup>17</sup> Ib., c. 10, § 2.

OF THE APOSTLES.

As in Tertullian, so in Irenæus, we find three different forms of the Creed. They are arranged, article by article, in the following syllabus :

SYLLABUS OF CREED FORMS FOUND IN  
IRENÆUS.

Book First, c. 10, 1.	Book Third, c. 4, 2.	Book Fourth, c. 33, 7.
(1) Faith in one God the Father Almighty ;	(1) Who believe in one God the Framers of Heaven and Earth,	(1) His faith is entire in one God Almighty, of whom are all things ;
(2) and in one Christ Jesus, the son of God	(2) by Christ Jesus, the Son of God	(2) and in the Son of God, Jesus Christ.
(3) made flesh for our salvation, of a Virgin,	(3) who submitted to the birth which was to be of the Virgin ;	(3) the Son of God become man
(4) and the Passion,	(4) who suffered also under Pontius Pilate.	(4)
(5) and the Rising from the dead	(5) and risen again,	(5)
(6) and the bodily Ascension into Heaven,	(6) and being received in brightness	(6)
(7)	(7)	(7)
(8) And His Coming from the Heavens in the glory of the Father . . . that He may administer just judgment to them all,	(8) will come in glory as the Judge of them that are judged	(8)
(9) and in the Holy Ghost,	(9)	(9) And in the Spirit of God

## THE SYMBOL

Book First, c. 10, 1. (10) who declared . . . the Economies,	Book Third, c. 4, 2. (10)	Book Fourth, c. 33, 7. (10) the original sys- tem of the Church in the whole world <sup>18</sup>
(11) such as . . . per- severed in His love, whether from the first or after penitency,	(11)	(11)
(12) and to raise up all flesh of all human nature.	(12)	(12)

From all of these forms the seventh article is wanting and the eleventh, which latter, however, is very clearly implied in the words cited in the first column. We note the same peculiarity in these as in the forms found in Tertulian—a marked difference in the wording of the several articles, which one can hardly

<sup>18</sup> To Irenæus the Church is not so much an article of the faith as its teacher and guardian. Not the less was there mention of it in his Creed, as appears even more clearly from the summary of the Creed that he gives again in Bk. 5, c. 20: "But those who are of the Church have a regular path, encircling the whole world, the tradition thereof from the Apostles being secure; which path grants us to behold that all have one and the same faith, since all teach one and the same Father, believe the same Economy of the Son of God's Incarnation, and know the same gift of the Spirit, and meditate on the same precepts, and maintain the same form of government over the Church, and wait for the same coming of the Lord, and maintain the same salvation of the whole man, *i. e.*, of the soul and body."

OF THE APOSTLES.

believe to have been accidental. One thing is plain : neither Tertullian nor Irenæus gives us the very words, the *ipsissima verba*, of their Rule of Faith. Those words were written in their memories from the day of their baptism, but as if to baffle the curiosity of the curious, they do not choose to write them out. To try, therefore, to piece together from their writings the fabric of the Creed just as it stood in their day, were as futile as the act of one who should essay to build upon the shifting sands. But knowing what we do and what they tell us of the veneration in which this Rule of Truth was held, the jealous care with which it was guarded, the pains that were taken to grave it "on the fleshly tablets of the heart" of lettered and unlettered alike, the absolute oneness of the Faith of which it was the authorized Formula, the quality of unchangeableness that belonged and still belongs to it, we seem certainly not to lack warrant for affirming that the Creed learned by Irenæus from Polycarp was, article for article, if not word for word, the same as that which was recited two centuries after in the Church

## THE SYMBOL

of Smyrna ; and that the Creed in which the catechumen Tertullian professed his faith on the day of his baptism, was, in like manner, the same as that which St. Augustine expounds in his homilies.

This Rule of Truth, Irenæus assures us in the passage cited above, was the same in the East as in the West. And it was, he further assures us, transmitted by word of mouth. "To this Rule," he says, "consent many nations of the barbarians, those I mean who believe in Christ, having salvation written by the Spirit in their hearts, without paper and ink, and diligently keeping the old Tradition, who believe in One God the Framer of Heaven and Earth and of all things that are in them, by Christ Jesus the Son of God." After which he goes on to give the other articles that are to be found in the second column of the syllabus.

## VII.

.....: CONCLUSION. : Let us here pause to consider how untenable is the position of the votaries of historical criticism. Re-

OF THE APOSTLES,

lying mainly, if not wholly, on the testimony of Tertullian and Irenæus, they affirm that the Symbol existed in the latter half of the second century. But it did not exist in the earlier half of the same century say the critics, because it is not to be found in any writings. Consequently, it must have been composed about the middle of that century. By whom, and where? Probably at Rome, by some one or other whose name has been withheld.<sup>19</sup> We are asked to believe that the Creed of the Christian Church, the Creed which we know on the testimony of witnesses who lived at the time, to have been, already in the second half of the century, the unvarying Standard of the Christian Faith in all the Churches from the West even to the farthest East, was composed about the middle of that same century by an anonymous somebody. This Creed, which all the Bishops assembled at Nice could scarce venture to change by the addition of words that did but more explicitly declare the meaning of one or two of its articles, is assumed to have been framed and imposed

<sup>19</sup> *Dogma, Gerarchio e Culto*, p. 324.



### THE SYMBOL

upon the Christian world less than two centuries before by somebody or other whose very name is buried in oblivion. *Credat Judaeus!*

But this is not all. The very men, on whose testimony the existence of the Creed in the latter half of the second century is known to the critics, declare repeatedly, in the most explicit and emphatic way, that it came down from the Apostles. This, however, as well as some other points, must be dealt with in another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

HARNACK ON THE CREED.

I.

I have said that Irenæus is our greatest witness to the Apostolic authorship of the Symbol. The disciple of Polycarp, he is but one step removed from St. John the Evangelist; hailing from Asia Minor, Bishop in Gaul, he is the connecting link between the East and the West. Before citing his testimony, however, and that of Tertullian, some notice must be taken of a singular opinion of Harnack's. This view of the Rule of Truth cited by Irenæus is part of Harnack's general theory regarding the origin of the Symbol, and cannot profitably, or indeed at all, be dealt with apart from it. Also, we must take account of the methods and mental equipment of the man.

: HARNACK'S  
MENTAL  
EQUIPMENT.  
.....

## THE SYMBOL

Harnack has said his last, or rather his latest, word on the origin of the Symbol in an article written for the third edition of Herzog's *Reälencyclopädie*, which has been translated into English by the Rev. Stewart Means and edited by Thomas Bailey Saunders.<sup>1</sup> Splendidly equipped, as this distinguished German writer is, in respect of mental gifts and scholarship, he yet lacks some qualifications that are simply indispensable to the one who would trace the origin of the Symbol. He lacks the gift of Faith, to begin with; he lacks the conception of the Church of Christ as one in all nations—one Fold in which there is one Faith and one Baptism; and he lacks the knowledge, or, at any rate, the realization of the fact that the Symbol was not first given in writing, nor handed down from one generation to another in writing, nor suffered to be put at all in writing until the Discipline of the Secret began to be relaxed. As a consequence of these deficiencies, there are some things that Harnack does not see at all; and, in the case of the

<sup>1</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, by Adolf Harnack. London: Adam and Charles Black. 1901.

OF THE APOSTLES.

things that he does see, he not infrequently magnifies what is trifling in itself, and makes little of, or ignores, what is important. Groping in the dim light of those early ages, he reminds one of the blind man in the Gospel whose sight was being given back to him, and who at first saw "men as trees walking." In short, Harnack lacks the clearer insight which Faith gives, and he lacks the sense of perspective which would enable him to see things in their true proportions.

II.

Let me give a few examples of Harnack's work as a critic from the little book before me.

SPECIMENS OF  
HIS CRITICAL  
WORK.

At page 4, he says: "Indeed, the Eastern Church has at no time traced any creed to an Apostolic origin." This is a case of ignoring positive testimony. The Fathers of the Eastern Church will be cited later on in rebuttal. At page 27, he draws attention to the position of "remissionem peccatorum, resurrectionem carnis et vitam aeternam per sanctam ecclesiam" in the Creed of the Carthaginian Church.

## THE SYMBOL

Here, being dim of vision, he mistakes the baptismal interrogatory for the Symbol. The heretics, says St. Cyprian, from whom the words are taken, "lie in the interrogatory when they say, 'Dost thou believe in the remission of sins . . . through the Holy Church?' since they have not the Church."<sup>2</sup>

At page 17 we read: "I cannot, however, convince myself that twelve divisions [of the Creed] were originally intended. No one who wanted to construct a creed with twelve articles in three main divisions would be so clumsy as to divide it into 1 + 7 + 4, or rather 2 + 6 + 4." It is pretty safe to say that twelve divisions were not directly intended; but indirectly or incidentally, they were. In building the fabric of their Creed on the lines of the Trinitarian Formula laid down for them by the Master, the Apostles found it needful to use seven explicit words in telling all that was to be told about the Word of the second article, and four more

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Magnum* (Migne, tom. 3, col. 1144). The words "carnis resurrectionem" are not in Cyprian's formula, which occurs in this epistle, and also, with the order of the phrases inverted, in *Ep. 70 ad Januarium*.

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to describe the Spirit of the third, His work, and His gifts to men. The result is that what was originally  $1 + 1 + 1$  became  $1 + 7 + 4$ . Had they been guided solely by a sense of symmetry, like Harnack, the  $1 + 1 + 1$  would have issued in tetrads, thus:  $4 + 4 + 4$ . As it is, the Apostolic Symbol, comprising twelve articles, which the German Rationalist, looking at it from an æsthetical point of view, finds so unsymmetrical, has ever edified and still edifies Faith. And Faith in its fulness has a symmetry of its own. The Author and Finisher of it, too, who is the Architect of this our earthly dwelling, uses Faith as enshrined in the Symbol to build Himself a stately mansion—"a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." It is not symmetry of form but adaptability to a purpose that is sought in an instrument.

At page 15 we read: "The Greek text [of the Old Roman Creed] must be regarded as the original, for at Rome the Symbol was for a long time used only in Greek. It was not until long after the Greek text was in use that the Latin text was adopted as a parallel form."

## THE SYMBOL

According to Harnack himself the Symbol was the Baptismal Creed of the Roman Church from the middle of the second century, when he supposes it was drawn up. Now, while large numbers of the converts in Rome even in the days of St. Paul were Greeks, as appears from the last chapter of his *Epistle to the Romans*; and while Greek was largely used by the lettered among the Christians in the first centuries, as is shown by inscriptions found in the Roman Catacombs; the fact remains that the language of the Roman people was never any other than the Latin,<sup>3</sup> and that many, not to say the greater number, of the candidates for baptism were unlettered, and spoke no other tongue than the Latin. Therefore the Roman Church must have used the Symbol in Latin from the first. And the Latin form must have existed from the first side by side with the Greek form. Harnack, in this case, ignores the fact that the Symbol was not given from the first, nor transmitted, in writing. And he forgets that the catechetical and con-

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Cursus Scripturae Sacrae*, Auctoribus R. Cornely, S.J., et al., (Editio altera), vol. I, p. 382.

OF THE APOSTLES.

fessional use of the Symbol antedates the liturgical.

III.

Is it quite certain that even the Greek text of the Roman Symbol existed before the Latin? that the Roman Symbol, when first committed to writing, was written in Greek? It is not; it is a probable or plausible conjecture; perhaps not even that. The text of the Symbol of Marcellus of Ancyra, which Harnack points to in proof of his statement, cannot be accepted as proof, for two reasons. The first is that the original text of the Symbol of Marcellus has not come down to us. That which has come down to us is found in the pages of Epiphanius,<sup>4</sup> who wrote in Greek, and of course would cite the Symbol in Greek. It is more than likely that Marcellus, had he written his Confession of Faith to Pope Julius from Ancyra, would have done so in Greek. But he

..... ORIGINAL  
..... TEXT OF THE  
..... OLD ROMAN  
..... CREED.  
.....

<sup>4</sup> *Adv. Haer.*, lib. 3, Haer. 72 (Migne, P. G., tom. 42).



## THE SYMBOL

wrote in Rome, after a stay in that city, as he tells us himself,<sup>5</sup> of one year and three months—quite long enough to enable him to present his Confession of Faith in the language of the Latin Church, if he were so minded.

But there is another and more cogent reason why we cannot take the text of this Symbol of Marcellus, which would be the earliest known, as proof that the Greek text of the Roman Symbol was the original one. The Symbol of Marcellus is not the Roman Symbol at all. How is this shown? It is shown by the testimony of Marcellus himself, who declares distinctly in his Letter to Julius that he got his Symbol from his forefathers in the faith; <sup>6</sup> hence not in Rome, nor in the West, but in Asia. And the Symbol itself witnesses to the truth of his testimony, for it ends with the words “ζωήν αιώνιον,” which were not part of the Roman Symbol for many a long day after the time of Marcellus, but are found, in terms or equivalently, in the earliest Eastern Symbols. There still remains the text cited in the *Psalterium*

<sup>5</sup> Migne, P. L., tom. 8, col. 916.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

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*Athelstani.* But the MS. of the *Cod. Laudianus*, which embodies the Latin text, is earlier by well-nigh three centuries than that of the so-called Psalter of Æthelstan.<sup>7</sup>

At page 80, Harnack says: "That the Roman Church after the sixth century gradually let itself be separated from and finally robbed of the symbol which it had previously guarded so faithfully, is a striking phenomenon which has not yet had its causes clearly explained." As a matter of fact, the Roman Church never for one day let itself be separated from its Symbol, and never was robbed of it. What, then, happened? This is what happened. From about the beginning of the sixth century and for a period of some two or three hundred years, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed took the place of the Old Roman in the *Traditio* and *Redditio Symboli*. This was owing to the spread of Arianism in the West. But the Roman Creed still remained in use in the baptismal interrogation, in the baptism of infants, as Burn shows at page 232 of the work

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Burn, *An Introduction to the Creeds*, p. 199.

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already referred to, in the recitation of the Divine Office, and in private worship. When the shorter Symbol becomes once more the Baptismal Creed given to catechumens in the Roman Church, it is found to be no longer the Old Roman but the New Roman, or, as some prefer to regard it, the Gallican Symbol, which is identical with the Apostles' Creed of to-day.

### IV.

MEASURING : If we are to measure Creeds  
CREEDS WITH : with a tape line ; if we are to  
A TAPE LINE : distinguish one from another by  
..... the lesser or greater number of words they  
contain, Harnack is, to a certain extent, right.  
But if the true way to measure Creeds is by  
their meaning, by the articles of Faith which  
they embody, then Harnack is wrong, ridicu-  
lously wrong. The twelve articles of the Rule  
of Faith need not be of exactly the same length,  
like the twelve inches that make up the car-  
penter's rule. Faith is not reckoned in feet  
and inches. The second article of the Nicene  
Creed contains almost as many words as the

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twelve articles of the Old Roman Creed.<sup>8</sup> But the Fathers of Nice could have said with truth that the second article as expounded by them was no longer than before. Exposition sets forth more clearly and defines more accurately the meaning of a statement, but does not alter it, nor add one iota to it. The best way to show how lack of perspective has led Harnack astray here is to place side by side the Old Roman Creed and the Apostles' Creed as we have it to-day. The additions to the former, which are in every case but an explicit setting forth of what was implicit, are put in italics.

OLD ROMAN CREED.

(1) I believe in God the Father Almighty ;

(2) And in Christ Jesus, His only Son, our Lord,

(3) Born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary,

APOSTLES' CREED.

(1) I believe in God the Father Almighty, *Creator of heaven and earth ;*

(2) And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,

(3) *Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,*

<sup>8</sup> The Creed contains 57 words, the article 54, by actual count.

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### OLD ROMAN CREED.

(4) Crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried ;

(5) Rose again the third day from the dead ;

(6) Ascended into heaven,

(7) Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,

(8) whence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

(9) And in the Holy Ghost,

(10) the holy Church,

(11) the remission of sins,

(12) the resurrection of the flesh.

### APOSTLES' CREED.

(4) *Suffered* under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, *died*, and *was* buried. *He descended into hell ;*

(5) The third day He rose again from the dead ;

(6) Ascended into heaven,

(7) Sitteth at the right hand of *God* the Father *Almighty*,

(8) whence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

(9) *I believe* in the Holy Ghost,

(10) the holy *Catholic* Church, *the com<sup>m</sup> union of saints*,

(11) the remission of sins,

(12) the resurrection of the body, *and the life everlasting*.

It may be remarked, in passing, that this division of the Creed into articles, being that of the Old Roman Creed, should be regarded as the true one, although it is not the one generally given by theologians. The words added to the first article are clearly implied in

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“Almighty”; “born” of the third article implies “conceived”; “crucified” of the fourth, “suffered” and “died”; “buried,” the descent into “hell,” seeing that the soul as well as the body is to be assigned its locus. “God Almighty” of the seventh article serves but to identify the Father at whose right hand Christ sitteth, with the “Father” of the first article. Expounding the tenth article, which affirmed “the holy Church” merely in the African Creed of his day, St. Augustine adds, “Catholic of course.”<sup>9</sup> And elsewhere, in his exposition of this same article, he declares that “Church” is to be understood here, “not only of that which holds its pilgrim way on earth,” but also of “that which in heaven ever cleaves to God.”<sup>10</sup> The words “communion of saints” have thus been inserted to indicate that the “Church” signifies the Kingdom of God in its widest sense. Finally, the adjunct “life everlasting” defines the true meaning of “the resurrection,” which is not a resurrection

<sup>9</sup> *De Fide et Symbolo*, c. 10 (Migne, tom. 40, col. 195).

<sup>10</sup> *Enchiridion*, c. 56 (Ib., col. 258).

## THE SYMBOL

unto a mortal life, but a resurrection unto a life without end.

All this is very plain and simple to one who sees with the eyes of Faith. But Harnack's eyes were holden; he could not see it. And so, having no rule but the tape line to measure Creeds withal, he has committed himself to the unhistorical and astonishing statement that the Roman Church actually allowed herself to be robbed of her ancient Symbol. He marvels much how she could have done so, and seeks a solution of what is to him a puzzling problem. A Catholic child could easily have solved it for him.

There are other instances of inaccurate, misleading, and false statements in this little work of Harnack's, but the foregoing will be enough to show how unsafe a guide he is in tracing the Symbol to its origin.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> There is one statement more, in a footnote at page 11, which must not go unchallenged. In reference to the legend that each of the twelve Apostles contributed an article to the Creed, he observes: "The Roman Catechism has nevertheless retained it." The Roman Catechism has done nothing of the kind. The compilers give as an alternative explanation of the name Symbol having been be-

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V.

It is now time to say a word : HARNACK'S  
about Harnack's own theory of : THEORY ON  
the origin of the Symbol, and to : THE ORIGIN  
deal with his attempt to prove : OF THE CREED.  
that the Rule of Truth cited by Irenæus was  
neither a Baptismal Creed nor identical with  
Tertullian's Rule of Faith. Briefly, his theory  
is that the Old Roman Symbol was composed in

stowed, as they take it, by the Apostles, that it was composed (conflata) of the combined sentiments of all (ex variis sententiis quas singuli in unum contulerunt), the other explanation being that it was to be a "tessera" or badge of the Christian Faith. Rufinus uses words which convey the same meaning as those of the Catechism in relating, not simply how the Symbol came by its name, but how it was composed by the Twelve—"in unum conferendo quod sentiebant unusquisque." In fact the compilers of the Catechism are but citing once more the ancient tradition given by Rufinus as to the origin of the Symbol. And they do not commit themselves so definitely as he does to the statement that each of the twelve Apostles had a hand in the composition of it. They simply say that the Apostles "drew out distinctly the most important points of the Christian Faith in the twelve articles of the Creed." And yet Harnack himself, at page 18, tells us that Rufinus "knows nothing about" the legend; "all that he knows was the common composition of the Roman symbol by the Apostles soon after Pentecost and before the separation."



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Rome about the middle of the second century, and that it was not till the early part of the fourth century, when the Churches of the East, as he supposes, first came to know and value the Roman Symbol, that the formation of symbols began in the East. Before that time, the East, he maintains, had indeed an "old, flexible, christological rule," also "ceremonial or polemical formulas of belief in One God the Creator, and His Only Son Christ," but no "established baptismal confession of faith."<sup>12</sup> Now, this theory is simply pulverized by the testimony of Irenæus, if it be but fairly interpreted. Hence Harnack's attempt, by all the plausible arts of which he is master, to turn the edge of this testimony and save his theory from destruction. How does he set about doing this? He starts with the assumption that no fixed baptismal Confession of Faith existed in the East in the time of Irenæus. This he bases on the fact that none but fragmentary formulas, of a flexible character, are to be found in the early Christian writings of the East. Against this we set the words of Ire-

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

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næus that "the real Church hath one and the same Faith throughout the world,"<sup>13</sup> and that, while the languages of the world differ, "the tenor of the Tradition is one and the same."<sup>14</sup> Where Faith is one and Baptism one there is but one Baptismal Creed. Why, then, those varied and fragmentary creeds? "For this reason," says the Anglican Blunt, "the creeds never occur in an unbroken form in the first centuries. They were committed to memory by the faithful, but never to writing, that heresy might not learn to simulate the faith."<sup>15</sup> It would seem that the *Disciplina Arcani* still withholds its secrets from Harnack. Nor does he appear to realize that one and the same formulary may serve now a catechetical or confessional purpose, now a liturgical; be used at one time as a token of membership and communion, at another as a test of orthodoxy. It is this last use of the Symbol of the true Faith

<sup>13</sup> *Adv. Haer.*, Bk. I, c. 10, n. 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 2.

<sup>15</sup> Blunt's *Theological Dictionary*, edited by the Rev. John Henry Blunt. Art. "Creeds." As to the reason here assigned see *Introduction*, pp. 17-23.

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that is brought prominently into view in the East during the second, third, and fourth centuries. As new forms of heresy arose, new adaptations of the one and unchangeable Creed of the Church were devised to meet them, and we find St. Hilary bitterly bewailing this multiplication of "faiths" in his day.

### VI.

IRENÆUS : The famous German scholar  
MISCON- : and critic constructs a "confes-  
STRUED. : sional formula" out of frag-  
..... : ments gathered from four or five different  
sources ; and, as he was "enabled to make  
a similar conjecture in Justin's case, so it is  
probable that not only in Irenæus' time but  
also in Justin's" the formula so constructed  
"existed in the East." Now, this formula,  
fashioned, be it remembered, though out of pre-  
existing material, by Harnack himself, "Irenæus  
made the foundation of his *κάνων τῆς ἀληθείας*,"  
or Rule of Truth. But it is probable that  
Irenæus had to incorporate in his Canon, be-  
fore it reached its final completion, an "his-

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torico-christological formula of confession containing the sentences about the birth, suffering under Pontius Pilate," etc., because this latter formula "is perhaps, or even probably, to be distinguished" from the one that was made the foundation of the Rule of Truth.<sup>16</sup>

This bit of scientific guesswork is interesting, if not very instructive. But what does Harnack take Irenæus for? Does he take him for a fool that he should make him try to refute the heresies of his day by the help of so crazy a piece of furniture as this patched-up formulary? And where is there room for conjecture when Irenæus himself still lives in his works, and is able to speak for himself? It is so far from being true that there is anything in the writings of Irenæus to show "that he is compiling" his Canon "independently out of a large number of fixed confessional formulas of the Church,"<sup>17</sup> that the very reverse is the case. Irenæus never cites this Rule of Truth, never appeals to this Rule of Truth but as to a something objective, a something quite in-

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

<sup>17</sup> *Ib.*

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dependent both of himself and of those he is addressing, a something that existed in the Church throughout the world from the first, a something that was always and everywhere the same, a something, in fine, that had the authority of Apostolic institution. He declares that the Rule of Truth is bestowed "by Baptism" on every Christian, for Baptism alone gives a right to the Symbol. The description that he gives of it tallies with that which Tertullian gives of the Rule of Faith which the African Church followed. He tells us that the Churches throughout all the world followed this same Rule of Truth,"<sup>18</sup> and Tertullian in Africa tells us the same thing. He distinguishes it from "the preaching of the Apostles, and the teaching of the Lord," as "that which is put into our mouths by the Apostles."<sup>19</sup> He testifies that Polycarp "received from the Apostles that one and only truth, which hath been handed on by the Church," and that this "Tradition which" the Apostles "delivered to those whom they entrusted with the Churches"

<sup>18</sup> *Adv. Haer.*, Bk. 1, c. 10, n. 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Ib.*, Bk. 2, c. 35, n. 4.

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is the "Rule" to which "consent many nations of the barbarians," who receive it "without letters," and who, "if one should tell them of the inventions of the heretics," would "by that old Tradition Apostolic . . . admit not even to a passing glance of the mind any of their monstrous sayings."<sup>20</sup> Lastly, he appeals to the "Tradition" of the Roman Church, "which it hath from the Apostles," "which Tradition proclaims One God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth."<sup>21</sup>

If this Rule of Truth, the same in all Churches, was bestowed by Baptism, what becomes of Harnack's assumption that there was no "established baptismal confession of faith" in the East during the second and third centuries? Irenæus himself lived in the East, came from the East, and ought to know better. As for the word "canon," if it does not mean an "established" rule, one would like to know what it does mean. Again, if the "Rule" of Irenæus was an "Old Tradition Apostolic," could it have been also drawn up by himself?

<sup>20</sup> *Ib.*, Bk. 3, c. 4, n. 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Ib.*, c. 3, n. 3.

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Finally, if this Rule existed in Rome, too, and in Africa, what else could it be but the Symbol of the Roman Church and Tertullian's Rule of Faith?

### VII.

TERTULLIAN :     Let us leave Gaul and cross  
NOT DULY         into Africa. Harnack tells us  
WEIGHED.         that he has "traced the old

.....  
Roman symbol to the time of Tertullian."<sup>22</sup>  
We shall help him to trace it a good bit farther.  
And Tertullian is the very man who will enable  
us to do so. Where did Tertullian get his  
Rule of Faith? That sturdy champion of  
Christianity does not leave us one instant in  
doubt as to where he got it. He got it from  
the Church, the Church got it from the Apos-  
tles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God.<sup>23</sup>  
At any rate this is what he tells us; and we  
seem to catch a hint of what is passing in his  
mind from those words in Matthew where our  
Lord tells His Apostles that "all power is given"  
Him "in heaven and on earth," and where, in

<sup>22</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>23</sup> *De Praescript.*, c. 37 (Migne, tom. 2, col. 50).

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virtue of that power, He bids them go forth to teach and baptize all nations. We understand Tertullian to mean that the Apostles got the Rule of Faith from Christ, in the sense that they got from Christ the Faith itself and the authority to formulate such points of it as they deemed needful to grave "on the fleshly tablets" of the hearts of those who were first to "believe" before they could be "baptized." If one thing more than another is clear from the writings of Tertullian, it is that there did not dwell in his mind the shadow of a shade of doubt that the Apostles themselves drew up the Rule of Faith. He regards it as "incredible" that they should not "have set forth to all every clause of the Rule in order (omnem ordinem regulae)." <sup>24</sup> He points out how impossible it would be for "so many and so great Churches to stray into the one Faith," and that what is "one among many comes not by hap, but by tradition." <sup>25</sup> He declares that "this Rule was in use from the beginning of the Gospel, even before the earliest heresies." <sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> ., c. 27.

<sup>25</sup> *Ib.*, c. 28.

<sup>26</sup> *Adv. Prax.*, c. 2.



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### VIII.

“CONTESSER-  
ARIT.” : But Harnack’s own words  
..... shall serve to show how Tertul-  
lian witnesses to the Apostolic authorship  
of the Symbol. He tells us (p. 70) that it  
“is this [the Roman] symbol he [Tertullian]  
means when he writes *de praescr. haer.*  
36;” and cites in part the following  
passage :

“But if thou art near to Italy, thou hast Rome, whence we also have an authority at hand. That Church how happy, into which the Apostles poured all their doctrine with their blood; where Peter has a like passion with the Lord; where Paul is crowned with an end like the Baptist’s; where the Apostle John, after he is plunged into boiling oil, and has suffered nothing, is banished to an island. Let us see what she learned, what she taught, when she gave the Symbol also to the Churches of Africa. She confesses one God, the Creator of the universe, and Christ Jesus, the Son of God the Creator, born of the Virgin Mary, and the resurrection of the flesh.”

It is of these last words that Harnack says :  
“This is the symbol that he means.” Just so.

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Rut Tertullian testifies that the Church of Rome got this Symbol from the Apostles, and gave it to the Churches of Africa, *i.e.*, of pro-consular Africa and the parts adjacent. This is "what she learned" <sup>27</sup> from Peter and Paul, her first teachers in the Faith, and this is "what she taught, when she admitted the Africans also into fellowship in that Faith by delivering to them its Symbol." <sup>28</sup> Tertullian answers his own question, and he answers it by citing the "tessera" or Symbol of the Faith. The words of the text are, "cum Africanis quoque ecclesiis contesserarit." This "contesserarit," a word coined by Tertullian himself, wherein to hide his Symbol, seems to have puzzled editors and translators alike. Some of the editors have changed it into "contestatur," which is never found with a dative, which as a present tense would not follow an aorist, and which gives no meaning; others into "contesseratur," which is from the right verb, but

<sup>27</sup> It is not "quae" but "quid," not "what things" but "what thing."

<sup>28</sup> Nothing short of a paraphrase can bring out the full meaning of "contesserarit."

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not in the right mood nor tense. The translator of this passage, in *The Faith of Catholics*, renders it: "Let us see what she hath learned, what taught, what fellowship she hath had with the Churches of Africa likewise." But "didicerit" and "docuerit" are aorists, not present perfect tenses, for it was from the Apostles the Roman Church "learned" that Faith which she afterwards "taught" the Churches of Africa. And "cum Africanis quoque ecclesiis contesserarit" does not yield the meaning "what fellowship, etc." but rather "when she gave the symbol of fellowship in Christ to the African Churches."<sup>29</sup> Her

<sup>29</sup> It would seem that the translator based his rendering on the reading of this passage given by Burn at page 49 of his work. "Videamus, quid didicerit, quid docuerit, quid cum Africanis quoque ecclesiis contesseravit." This I take to be another attempt at mending a text, which stood in need of interpretation, not mending. Of course there should be no comma after "Videamus;" "quid" is the interrogative, and introduces a dependent question. Obviously, then, "contesseravit" is a mistake. There is a parallelism of construction in the "quid" clauses, and one needs not to have studied the classics at Eton or Oxford to know that a dependent question never has its verb in the indicative. But perhaps "contesseravit" is a misprint. The "cum" of this reading is a preposition; the "cum"

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Apostolic Symbol was the incorrupt germ whence the virgin Mother Church of Rome begot her virgin daughters in Africa also. And, to vary the metaphor with the varying use of the Symbol, this was the signet ring she put upon their fingers on the day she clothed them in the white robes of their Baptism—the seal and sure token of their birthright in God, their espousals in Christ, and their fellowship in the one Faith. The word “tessera,” from which Tertullian boldly coined the verb “contessere” (not the first nor yet the last sample of his work in this line), means “symbol,” and we all know, or ought to know, that the symbol of fellowship among the early Christians was no other than the Apostolic Symbol. A few chapters back, in the same work, Tertullian uses the expression, “contesseratio hospitalita-

of Migne's text, a conjunctive adverb; but between the two readings there is no essential difference of meaning. Whether “Africanis ecclesiis,” in Migne's, is a dative or an ablative we can only conjecture. The privilege of coining a new verb must carry with it the privilege of saying what case it shall govern—*saeviant quantumvis grammatici*. (The word *contesseravit* given above is so printed in Burn's book. The *u* of the last syllable is old Latin spelling for *v*.)

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tis" to signify how the Symbol of their common Faith served the early Christians as a token whereby they could recognize and, recognizing, give the right hand of fellowship and hospitality to their pilgrim brethren. The Symbol was their test of Church membership, by means of which, as the Anglican Blunt well expresses it in the work already cited, "in the first troubled years of the Church, Christians proceeding from one point of the world to another were at once known and received into unreserved communion as brethren in one common Lord."

### IX.

CONJECTURES. ∴ Readers of the Breviary will  
..... remember that in the Office of  
St. Cecilia we are told how the Saint sent  
Vespasian for baptism to Pope Urban, and  
how "signo quod acceperat invenit sanctum  
Urbanum." What was this "sign" if not  
the Baptismal Symbol? We may con-  
jecture, also, that when our Blessed Lord likens  
the Kingdom of Heaven to a woman who takes  
a little leaven and hides it in three measures

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of meal, till the whole mass is leavened (Matt. 13: 33; Luke 13: 21), He has the Symbol in His mind's eye. The woman is the Church, and the leaven is the Symbol which she takes and hides away for a space in the multitude of all nations and tribes and tongues, till the whole mass is leavened—till the power of paganism is broken, and the peoples of the earth gather, in the open day, around the standard of the Cross. The Gospel was to be preached from the housetops from the very first. But the Symbol, which was not given openly to men, nor "written with ink on paper, but graved on the fleshly tablets of the heart," was, like the leaven in the meal, secretly doing its work in all the world.

So far as I have been able to see, the only one of the Fathers who notes and lays stress on the use of "hid" in the parable of the leaven is St. Clement of Alexandria, who lived at a time and in a place where the Discipline of the Secret seems to have been observed with more than ordinary strictness. "Now even also by means of the parable of the leaven," he observes, "does our Lord signify the conceal-

### THE SYMBOL

ment (τὴν ἐπικρυψιν), for He says, "*The kingdom of heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took and hid in three bushels of meal, until the whole was leavened.*"—*Strom.*, l. 5, n. 12.

We have next to see what answer can be made to those who say that the tradition of the Apostolic authorship of the Symbol was not only unknown in the East, but that even in the West, St. Augustine, so far from adhering to it, says expressly that the very words which compose the Symbol were taken from the Scripture.

CHAPTER IV.

ST. AUGUSTINE AND THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE  
SYMBOL.

I.

It is urged that St. Augustine contradicts the ancient tradition of the Apostolic authorship of the Symbol.<sup>1</sup> The passage to which appeal is made occurs in a letter of St. Augustine on the Symbol, and runs as follows: "The words you have heard are scattered here and there in the Sacred Scriptures, but have thence been gathered and put into one formula."<sup>2</sup> Now, the tradition has it that the Apostles composed the Symbol on the eve of their dispersion, which took place before the books of the New

ST. AUGUSTINE AND THE  
ANCIENT TRADITION.  
.....

<sup>1</sup> *Dogma, Gerarchia e Culto*, p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> Verba quae audistis per divinas Scripturas sparsa sunt, sed inde collecta et ad unum redacta. *De Symb. ad Catech.* Migne, tom. 40, col. 627.



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Testament were written. Hence the passage in question runs counter to the tradition.

One way of meeting this difficulty, undoubtedly a grave difficulty because of the great authority of St. Augustine, would be to make the Saint mean by Sacred Scriptures the Old Testament only. But this would be rather an evading of the difficulty, for the expression "Sacred Scriptures" includes the New Testament as well as the Old. It is more than doubtful, too, whether all the words of the Symbol are to be found in the Old Testament. The words "under Pontius Pilate," at any rate, are not. Happily there is a better way.

First of all, let us see what St. Augustine says in his other sermons on the Symbol. Two of those given in the fifth volume of Migne's edition of the Saint's works, namely, 212 and 214, are unquestionably genuine. In both of these it is not the words of the Symbol but the doctrine which St. Augustine says is contained in the Scriptures. Nor does he say or in any way imply that the doctrine was taken from the Scriptures in the first instance. "All that you are about to hear in the Symbol," he tells

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his catechumens, "is contained in the Scriptures." And again: "This, then, is the Symbol, with the contents of which you have been made familiar already through the Scriptures and the preaching of the Church."<sup>3</sup> He opens his mind even more fully in the other sermon.<sup>4</sup> "The truths," he there tells his hearers, "which you are about to receive in a compendious form, to be committed to memory and orally professed, are not new to you nor unheard. For in the Sacred Scriptures and in sermons you have been wont to find them set forth in many ways." St. Augustine plainly does not mean here that the authors of the Symbol picked the words which compose it from various parts of the Scriptures—an utterly unlikely thing, in any case. Nor does he even mean that they actually took the truths embodied in it from the Scripture, where, of course, they are to be found, with many other truths besides. He simply means that catechumens could learn and did learn from the Scripture, as well as from the preach-

<sup>3</sup> Serm. 212 (Migne, tom. 38, col. 1058).

<sup>4</sup> Serm. 214 *ad init.* (Ib. col. 1066).

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ing of the Church, all the truths contained in the Symbol, long before the Symbol itself was given to them.

### II.

THE HOMILY :  
DE SYMBOLO :  
AD CATECHU- :  
MENOS. :  
.....

It will still be urged that, in the homily which is entitled *de Symbolo ad Catechumenos*, it is declared in set terms, as cited above, that the very words of the Symbol were taken from the Scriptures. Granted; but it is only so much the worse for the homily that it should affirm a thing so improbable. That homily has too long masqueraded under the great name of Augustine. The proofs of its spuriousness that I am able to put my finger on seem to me at least overwhelming.

To begin with, the homily in question is tainted in its source. It was found from the first in bad company, so to say. It is one of four which, in codices dating from 800 A.D., are styled *De Symbolo Libri Quatuor*, and attributed to Augustine.<sup>5</sup> Three of these are

<sup>5</sup> Migne, *loc. cit.*

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to-day rejected as spurious on all hands. The fourth is, from the nature of the case, suspect. Possidius knew only of three such discourses on the Symbol by St. Augustine, which he cites as "De Symbolo, tractatus tres."<sup>6</sup> Two of these are readily identified as the sermons numbered respectively 212 and 214, already cited. The third, whether it exists among the writings of St. Augustine that have come down to us or not, is not any of the four *ad Catechumenos*. It remains to show this of the only one of them which is generally admitted as genuine,<sup>7</sup> that one, namely, which comes first in order in Migne's collection.

In a footnote at page 59, it was pointed out that the author of this homily cites "in vitam aeternam" as part of the Creed, which St. Augustine never does in any of the writings that are certainly his. Nor did these words form part of the Creed known to the contemporaries of Augustine in the West,

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Migne's Index to the works of St. Augustine, col. 20.

<sup>7</sup> Pearson, however, in his volume of critical notes on the Creed, gives the reference simply as "auctor homiliae de Symbolo ad Catechumenos."

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Rufinus, St. Jerome, and St. Ambrose, if the last-named be indeed the author of the *Explanatio Symboli ad Initiandos*. The author of the homily seems to have borrowed the idea, if not the very words, from Sermon 40 of St. John Chrysostom,<sup>8</sup> where we read: "And as the word 'resurrection' is not enough to convey the whole truth (for many who rose again died again, as did those who rose again under the old dispensation, Lazarus, and those who rose when Christ died), we are taught to say, *And in the life everlasting.*"

At page 213 of his work, Burn says: "The addition *vitam aeternam* had been in use in the African Church since the third century." He means that it had been in use as part of the Symbol, and in this he is astray. The African Church got its Symbol from the Roman and kept it unchanged till after St. Augustine's time. How can it be maintained that St. Augustine, expounding the Symbol to Africans in the African Church, deliberately left out so notable a part as this would be of the Faith in which they had been baptized?

<sup>8</sup> Migne, P. G., tom. 61.

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Immediately after his comment on "the resurrection of the flesh," in *De Fide et Symbolo*, he says: "This is the Faith which is summed up in a few words in the Symbol, and given to neophytes to be kept by them." *De Fide et Symbolo*, as the Saint himself tells us (*Retract.* xvii) was originally a discourse given at a Plenary Council of the African Church, and afterwards put in writing. The theory that Augustine knew of two Symbols, one learned from Ambrose at Milan when he was baptized, another which he found in possession of the African Church, breaks down completely in face of the fact that it is the Symbol of Milan and of Rome that he expounds to the African Bishops in synod assembled and gives to his African neophytes. The only prop the critics have for this theory (doubtful or spurious sermons are worse than valueless, being themselves without a prop or in need of one) is too frail to support it. They find the *vitam aeternam* in the baptismal interrogatory, as cited by Cyprian. But Cyprian got his Symbol from Tertullian, and *vitam aeternam* is no part of Tertullian's Symbol, which is the Old

## THE SYMBOL

Roman pure and simple. The presence of *vitam aeternam* in Cyprian's formula does but show that what is obviously implied in "carnis resurrectionem" of the Symbol was from a very early time expressed in the interrogatory.

### III.

FURTHER : There is yet more cogent proof  
PROOFS OF ITS: that the homily *de Symb. ad*  
SPURIOUS- *Catech.* is spurious. In the Old  
NESS. .... Roman Creed, the fourth article  
runs: "Crucified under Pontius Pilate, and  
buried." So we find it cited, not only by St.  
Augustine, but in the works of contemporary  
and even later writers of the same century, such  
as St. Maximus of Turin,<sup>9</sup> and St. Peter Chrys-  
ologus.<sup>10</sup> Nay, a full hundred years after the  
time of St. Augustine, and in the Church of  
Africa, St. Fulgentius knows of no change in  
the fourth article, but gives it as it stood in  
St. Augustine's day.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, the

<sup>9</sup> *De Trad. Symb.*, Hom. 83 (Migne, tom. 57, col. 434).

<sup>10</sup> *In Symb. Apost.*, Sermon 57 (Migne, tom. 52, col. 359).

<sup>11</sup> *Defens. Symb. contra Arianos* (Migne, tom. 65, col. 825).

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author of the homily *de Symb. ad Catech.* cites the fourth article just as we have it today—"Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried." The inference is that he either was not of the African Church at all, or, if he was, that the homily was not composed till more than a hundred years after the death of St. Augustine. It may seem a trifling thing to add that the form of address employed by the author of the homily is never once used in a single one of the three hundred and forty sermons to be found among the genuine writings of St. Augustine, nor in any one of the thirty and three more recently discovered and published as his in an appendix to the volume which contains the index to his works in Migne's collection.<sup>12</sup> With St. Augustine it is "brethren," "dearly beloved brethren," "dearly beloved," "your charity," "your holiness." Once he has, "sons of light, brothers dearly beloved," and once in the course of a sermon *ad infantes*, as the neophytes were called, we find "my brothers, my

<sup>12</sup> Of course, one naturally looks for it in the opening paragraph.



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sons, my daughters, my sisters," but this is not a form of address. The author of the homily, on the other hand, uses "sons" simply.

Nor are there wanting other tokens of the spurious character of this homily. The author borrows freely from St. Augustine, copies his style pretty closely, essays to think his thoughts, but these are sometimes beyond him. It is here especially that he betrays the 'prentice hand. He lacks Augustine's mastery of his subject, his mental grasp, his logical exactness, his sense of proportion. To give one instance of the man's deficiency in this last particular, there is in this homily on the Symbol more than a column and a half of a digression on the patience of Job. Speaking of God's omnipotence, he says: "Facit quidquid bene vult, quidquid juste vult; quidquid autem male fit, non vult." Now, this is not exact. It should be: "Facit quidquid vult, et quidquid vult, bene vult, juste vult." The second part of the statement, too, needs to be supplemented by some such words as, "eo tamen bene uti novit." "For [St. Augustine himself it is who says it] as the wicked make an evil use of

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a nature which is good, that is, God's good work, God, being good, makes a good use even of their evil doings, so that His Almighty Will is not frustrated in aught."<sup>13</sup> Again the author of the homily says: "Deus non dimittit peccata nisi baptizatis." This is worse than inexact; it is untrue, and in open contradiction to the teaching of St. Augustine, where he says that not only martyrdom may supply the place of baptism, but also "faith and sincere repentance, if haply time be wanting to administer the sacrament."<sup>14</sup> Even had he said "Ecclesia" instead of "Deus," his statement would have been true only of what the Church does in the tribunal of penance. An unbaptized person in good faith, who should have only attrition for his sins, would obtain the forgiveness of them by receiving Holy Communion from the hands of the Church.

<sup>13</sup> Serm. 214.

<sup>14</sup> *De Bapt. contra Donat.*, lib. 4, c. 22 (Migne, tom. 43, col. 173).

THE SYMBOL

IV.

A PARADOX :  
AND ITS ELU- :  
CIDATION. :  
..... :

It is in his treatment of the Divine Omnipotence and its relation to things impossible, that the deficiency of the author of this homily is most marked. In what purports to be an instruction to persons who were novices in the deep things of the Faith, he sets out, the very first thing, with a startling paradox. "God is almighty," he says, "and because He is almighty, He cannot die, He cannot be deceived, He cannot lie." This is bad enough, bewildering as it must have been to the catechumen. The reason assigned for the puzzling statement is worse: it is trivial, not to say childish. "For," he proceeds to enlighten his hearers, "if He could die, He would not be almighty; if He could lie, or deceive, or be deceived, or deal unjustly, He would not be almighty; because if He could do any of these things, He would not be worthy of being almighty." As if the attribute of omnipotence were a gift bestowed upon deserving Deity! Contrast with this imbecility the masterful way

OF THE APOSTLES.

in which St. Augustine grapples with the difficult point in Sermon 214 on the Symbol. He does not begin with a paradox, but feels his way cautiously along, as it were. He points out first that belief in the omnipotence of God implies belief also in there being absolutely nothing in nature which He did not create. After developing this point fully, he goes on, in the next paragraph, to show that, while the wicked do many things against God's will, this does not derogate from His omnipotence, nor defeat His purpose in the long run. If He were not able to make the wicked serve His good and just ends, He would not have suffered them to be born or to live; "whom He did not make wicked, since He made them men; for, not the sins, which are against nature, but the natures themselves He made. Prescient of the future, He could not, indeed, but know that men were going to be wicked. As He knew, however, the evil they were going to do, so He knew the good that He was going to bring out of this evil." He instances the good that God wrought for mankind out of the malice of Satan, of the Jews, and of the traitor

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Judas. Next comes a paragraph in elucidation of the paradox referred to above, which is well worth giving word for word :

“ But, as I have said that the only thing the Almighty cannot do is what He does not will to do, if any one should be tempted to think me rash in saying that there is anything the Almighty cannot do, let him call to mind that the blessed Apostle says so also. *If we believe not, He who continueth faithful cannot deny Himself* (2 Tim. 2 : 13). But it is because He will not that He cannot; because He even cannot will. For justice cannot will to do what is unjust, nor wisdom will to do what is foolish, nor truth will what is false. From this we gather that there are many other things, besides this that the Apostle speaks of, *He cannot deny Himself*, which the Almighty cannot do. I say it openly, and I am emboldened by His truth to say that which I dare not gainsay : God Almighty cannot die, cannot change, cannot be deceived, cannot but be blessed, cannot be overcome. Perish the thought that these and the like things could be predicated of Omnipotence ! And so the force of truth constrains us to believe, not only that God is Almighty, because these things are not true of Him, but that He would not at all be

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almighty, if they were. For, whatever God is He is as willing to be. He is eternal, therefore, as willing it; unchangeable, veracious, blessed, and unconquerable, as having a will to be so. If, then, He could be what He does not will to be, He would not be almighty; but He is almighty; therefore, what He wills to be He can be. And therefore what He wills not, cannot be, being called, as He is, the Almighty, because He can do all that He wills. Of him the Psalmist says: *All things whatsoever He willed He hath done in heaven and on earth* (Ps. 104:6)."

This is somewhat subtle reasoning. We shall be able to follow it more easily if we do but keep clearly in view what the Saint is aiming to show. He assumes as being of faith that God is omnipotent, eternal, veracious, and the rest. He shows, in the first place, that what God cannot do is such that He does not and cannot will to do it; for God is justice, and justice cannot will to do what is unjust; God is truth, and truth cannot will what is false. He sets Himself to show, in the second place, that so far as God's not being able to do what He does not will to do from being deroga-

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tory to His omnipotence, that if it were possible for anything to be without His willing it, He would not be omnipotent at all. He points out that God's will is really one with His other attributes, and with His essence. As His will, then, is one with His eternity, with His unchangeableness, with His truth, He must needs will to be eternal, to be unchangeable, to be veracious. Now, the very idea of omnipotence includes the power to be and do whatever one wills. But, as God must needs will to be eternal, He cannot will to die; and as He must needs will to be veracious, He cannot will to deceive or to lie. If He could die, then, or deceive, He would not have the power of being and doing whatever He willed, and would not, therefore be omnipotent. But He is omnipotent; therefore, whatsoever He willeth that He is and that He doeth in heaven and on earth.

All this may look like a digression from the main topic; but really it is not. The objection founded on the passage in the homily now shown to be spurious, lay right across the path of the tradition which traces back to the Apos-

OF THE APOSTLES.

tles the origin of the Symbol. The only effective means of getting it out of the way was to blast the homily. And it is something to have cleared the way. It is something to have got from a great authority, who is represented as unfriendly, free leave to follow our quest up to the very gates of Jerusalem and into the full light of the Apostolic Day.

V.

It may still be said that, at any rate, St. Augustine does not help as in our quest. His silence, too, is taken to indicate that he knows nothing of the tradition of the Apostolic authorship of the Symbol. It is never too safe to argue from the silence of an author. Two of the contemporaries of Augustine, themselves voluminous writers, just happen to mention the tradition once. But their passing allusion to it ranks them among our most important witnesses to its existence. Is it likely that the disciple of St. Ambrose and the friend of St. Jerome could have been in ignorance of

THE FALLACY  
OF SILENCE.  
.....



### THE SYMBOL.

a tradition so notable, the existence of which is vouched for in his day by both of them? About a century after St. Augustine's time, and in the African Church, we find St. Fulgentius testifying that "the Symbol of the Christian Faith was . . . drawn up by the Apostles in accordance with the rule of the Truth."<sup>15</sup> This famous Bishop of Carthage lived so near the times of St. Augustine, and made so close a study of his works, that he may well be styled his disciple. Again we ask, Is it likely the master was ignorant of the tradition?

There is another reason why it is unsafe to argue from silence, especially in the case of so voluminous a writer as St. Augustine. It is that one can hardly ever be quite sure of the truth of one's premise. Who can say that he has read all the works of St. Augustine through, and noted what he says or has left unsaid? Besides, there are two ways in which a writer may witness to a fact; explicitly, and by implication. Now, St. Augustine certainly

<sup>15</sup> *In Defens. Symb. adv. Arianos.* Migne, tom. 65, col. 822.

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does witness at least in the latter of these two ways to the traditional teaching of the Church about the origin of the Symbol. In his controversy with the Donatists, defending the validity of baptism conferred by heretics, he says: "This custom I believe as coming down by tradition from the Apostles. So, there are many things not found in their writings, nor in the canons of Councils of a later date, which, because they are observed by the universal Church, are believed to have derived their origin and received their sanction from no other than the Apostles."<sup>16</sup> Again: "A custom which the men even of that day, looking farther back, did not find to have been established by those who went before them, is rightly believed to have originated with the Apostles."<sup>17</sup> And once more, in the form of a general proposition: "That which the whole Church holds, and which has not been instituted by Councils, but has been always held fast, we have every reason to regard as the tra-

<sup>16</sup> *De Bapt. contra Donat.*, tom, 9, lib. 2, c. 7, n. 12 (Migne, tom. 43, col. 133).

<sup>17</sup> *Ib.*, lib. 4, c. 6, n. 9 (*Ib.*, col. 159).

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dition of the Apostles." <sup>18</sup> But the whole Church held the Baptismal Creed known as the Apostolic Symbol in St. Augustine's day ; it was not instituted by Councils, but had been always held fast ; therefore, according to St. Augustine, we have the very best reason to regard it as having been handed down by tradition from the Apostles.

### VI.

AN IMPOR-  
TANT TESTI-  
MONY.

St. Augustine's belief in the Apostolic origin of the Symbol is logically and necessarily implied in the principle he lays down with regard to Apostolic tradition. But we have in the following passage, or I am greatly mistaken, if not an explicit statement of his belief, at least the very next thing to it. He is combating the view that baptism may be given offhand to anyone who makes a profession of faith in the Divine Sonship of Christ, such as the eunuch baptized by Philip made (Acts 8 : 35-38). I translate with almost literal exactness from the text in Migne :

<sup>18</sup> Ib., c. 24 (Ib., col. 174).

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“That eunuch, they tell us, whom Philip baptized, said no more than, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;’ and, on making this profession, forthwith received baptism. Are we, then, willing that men, on giving this response only, should incontinently be baptized? that not one word should be said by the catechist, nothing professed by the believer, about the Holy Ghost, the holy Church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the dead, in fine, about the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, except that He is the Son of God;—not a word about His incarnation in the Virgin’s womb, the passion, the death on the cross, the burial, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension, and the session on the right hand of the Father? For, if the eunuch, when he had made answer, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,’ thought this was all that was needed, and that he could at once be baptized, and go his way, why do we not take pattern by his case, and dispense with the other things that we deem necessary to bring out by questioning and get an answer to from the candidate for baptism, even when time presses and it is not possible for him to learn them by heart? But if the Scripture is silent, and leaves these other things which Philip did when baptizing the eunuch to be

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taken for granted, and in saying, *Philip baptized him* (Acts 8: 35-38), gives us to understand that everything was done which had to be done, as we know from the tradition that has come down from one generation to another, although Scripture, for the sake of brevity, does not mention it; in like manner, when we find it written that Philip *preached* unto him the Lord Jesus, we cannot at all doubt that in the catechism those things were dealt with which bear upon the life and conduct of him who believes in the Lord Jesus. For, to preach Christ is not only to teach what must be believed concerning Christ, but also what he has to observe who becomes a member of Christ's body; nay, in sooth, to teach all that is to be believed of Christ, not merely whose Son He is; to set forth whence He is as to His Divinity, of whom born according to the flesh, what things He suffered and why, what the virtue of his resurrection is, what gift the Spirit has promised and given to the faithful. . . ." <sup>19</sup>

Historical criticism assumes that the primitive Baptismal Creed of the Church was the simple profession of faith in Christ recorded in

<sup>19</sup> *De Fide et Operibus*, c. 9, cols. 205-6 (Migne, tom. 40).

## OF THE APOSTLES.

the eighth chapter of the Acts.<sup>20</sup> St. Augustine, so far from holding this view, maintains that even in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, which might well seem an exceptional case, Philip carried out the baptismal service in substantially the same way as it used to be carried out in the fourth and fifth centuries, and as it continues to be carried out down to this day. The Scripture, he grants, does not say so in terms, but leaves it to be inferred; and "we know" that it was done. How did they know? By Apostolic tradition—"serie traditionis," an unbroken chain of oral communication whose first links were forged in the workshop of the Apostles. And what was the very first thing to be done, according to the Apostolic tradition? St. Augustine does not leave us to conjecture. He is clear that the very first thing to be done was to instruct in the Faith the person to be baptized, to deliver the Creed to the catechumen. But what Creed, according to St. Augustine, was delivered to the catechumen, the "eunuch of great authority under

<sup>20</sup> *Dogma, Gerarchia e Cullc*, p. 326. Burn, *An Introduction to the Creeds*, p. 32 and p. 43.

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Queen Candace," whom Philip instructed in the Faith? Was it a formula that contained only the second article of the Symbol known to Augustine? Nothing of the kind. It was the whole Creed, the whole Symbol—"imo vero cuncta dicere que sunt credenda de Christo." Tradition said nothing of what passed between Philip and the eunuch. But the Apostolic origin of the Symbol was known "serie traditionis," and from this the inference was an easy one that the eunuch was taught all the truths contained in the Symbol. We claim, therefore, the great Bishop of Hippo as another witness to the tradition of the Apostolic authorship of the Creed.

## VII.

THE GOSPEL :  
IN A NUT-  
SHELL.  
.....

The Master had charged His Apostles, when he sent them out into all the world, to give baptism only to believers: *He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.* Believes what? The Gospel, of course. The whole Gospel? Yes. *In extenso*, as we have it in

## OF THE APOSTLES.

the New Testament writings and in Tradition? The thing was not to be thought of for one moment. How, then, the whole Gospel? In a compendious form, in a nutshell—in the Symbol, in short, universally known in the East during the second, third, and fourth centuries as “the Faith,” because it was the sum of what candidates for baptism were required to believe and make profession of. Can we conceive the Apostles to have been so neglectful of their plain duty as not to have drawn up this Formula of Faith when the Master had charged them to exact a profession of the Faith from every soul who should seek at their hands the boon of regeneration in the waters of baptism? The question of what was to be believed by the candidate for baptism, and in what “form of sound words” this Faith should find expression, pressed for solution from the very first. Therefore the Apostles took no steps to solve and settle it once for all. The school of historical criticism, denying the Apostolic origin of the Symbol, must bear the burden of this incredible consequence.

We have yet to glance at the parallel line



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of tradition in the East before seeking in the New Testament writings for tokens and traces of the existence of the Symbol. What we know of the secrecy observed regarding it will serve to make us content with this. It forbids us at the same time to look for more.

CHAPTER V.

THE SYMBOL IN THE EAST.

I.

AT the close of the first quarter of the fourth century, the three hundred and eighteen Fathers assembled at Nice, reaffirmed, in what has ever since been known as the Nicene Creed, "the Faith once for all delivered to the saints." As set forth by the Council, this Creed ends abruptly at the ninth article. "There was question then of Arius, not of Origen," says St. Jerome, "of the Son, not of the Holy Ghost. The Fathers affirmed what was denied, and passed over in silence what no one called in question."<sup>1</sup> So, too, the Anglican Blunt, at page 175 of his *Theological Dictionary* :

THE NICENE  
NO NEW  
CREED.  
.....

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Pammach. et Ocean.*, ep. 84; c. 4 (Migne, tom. 22, col. 747).

## THE SYMBOL

“The Nicene Creed as preserved to us by Eusebius, breaks off with the words, *and in the Holy Ghost*, as being all that was germane matter to the pending controversy; but, within a few years Epiphanius supplies to us the fuller form as the Creed of the Church of Cyprus, which was reproduced almost verbatim by the Council of Constantinople.” Epiphanius, in fact, (*Ancoratus*, 118) cites the fuller form as the Symbol “prescribed by the three hundred and ten odd” in the Nicene Council, assuming, certainly not without reason, that the Fathers neither would nor could curtail the ancient Creed of the Church.

It needs not, however, the testimony of Epiphanius or of Rufinus (who attests the agreement of the Eastern with the Western formulary in all but one or two trifling details) to assure us that the Creed of Nice is no new Creed. He who runs may read and see for himself that this is but a second edition, with explanatory notes, of the ancient formulary which St. Leo the Great commends to us as “the Catholic and Apostolic Symbol.” Article for article, though not word for word, they are

OF THE APOSTLES.

one and the same. The later Creed is but an elaborated form of the older and simpler one. The same features, cast in their primitive mould, still look out at us familiarly from their new and more ornate setting.

II.

Now, this ancient and simple Creed, twin-sister of the Old Roman Symbol, nay, the very counterpart and *alter ego* of it, existed in the East from the first. The framework of it was the same Trinitarian Formula; it comprised twelve articles; it was a Baptismal Creed as well as a Rule of Faith and test of orthodoxy. St. Athanasius admires the fabric of it, wherein the "so great glory of the Most Holy Trinity is set forth in twelve distinct phrases," and declares that to "add to or take away aught from it were a sacrilege."<sup>2</sup> Eusebius cites the

:COUNTERPART  
:OF OLD RO-  
:MAN SYMBOL.  
:.....

<sup>2</sup> *De Profess. Reg. Cathol.*, ad init. This work, written in Latin and purporting to be a translation, is set down as genuine in the edition of the works of St. Athanasius published at Paris in 1726, and republished at Cologne sixty years later. The citation given above is made from the

## THE SYMBOL

epistle sent by the Synod of Antioch, in 268 A.D., to Pope Dionysius, in which Paul of Sa-

later edition. Migne (P. G.) decides against its genuineness, and ascribes it to Idatius. He admits, however, that in all the MSS., and in all the editions of the work (*Libri S. Athanas. de Trinit.*, of which *De Profess. Reg. Cath.* is the seventh) it is ascribed to Athanasius; and the MSS. date from the twelfth century. Migne (P. L.) seeks to show that "Idatius" does but hide the identity of the real author, whom he makes out to be Vigilius of Thapsus, an African by birth, who flourished in the latter half of the fifth century. Driven from his see by the Arian Vandals, he took up his abode in Constantinople for a season, and there wrote a book against Eutyches. Cf. Migne, P. L., tom. 62, cols. 94 and 493. The work from which the citation is given above is in the form of a dialogue between Athanasius and an Arian heretic. Well may the author, whoever he be, speak of the Baptismal Creed as "setting forth the so great glory of the Most Holy Trinity in twelve distinct phrases." The Council of Nice framed no new Creed, nor did it, as we have seen, set forth all the articles of the old and unwritten Creed of the Catholic Church. This was from the first and continued to be, in the words of Leo the Great, *duodecim apostolorum totidem signata sententiis*—recognizable as Apostolic by its having the Apostolic number of articles. The Fathers of Nice did but declare more clearly and fully the meaning of the ancient Creed by way of safeguarding "the Faith once for all delivered to the saints." "And anyhow," are the words of St. Athanasius (*De Synod.*, n. 43; Migne, P. G., tom. 26), "the three hundred did not set down in writing anything newly invented." Hence, despite the fact that the Roman Church still clung to her ancient

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mosata is condemned as having "departed from the Rule of Faith and embraced a spurious doctrine."<sup>3</sup> The implication is that the Rule of Faith was the same in the East as in the West, the same at Antioch as at Rome. But the Roman Church never knew of any Rule of Faith, never recognized any Rule of Faith, other than the Apostolic Symbol. The profession of Faith presented by Arius and Euzoius to Constantine, some sixty years later, is still the ancient Symbol of the Church, with the seventh and eleventh articles left out, the second expanded somewhat, and the tenth thrown into the last place, as we find it also in a sermon (215) attributed to St. Augustine.

"We believe," they write, "(1) in one God the Father Almighty, (2) and in Jesus Christ His Son, who was born of Him before all ages; God the Word, by whom were made all things in heaven and earth; who descended, (3) and

Symbol, the same Leo, writing to the Emperor Leo, could say with truth, "There is no question but that we preach and defend the same Faith which the holy Synod of Nice confirmed, declaring: *We believe in one God the Father Almighty.*" (Epis. 165, Migne, tom. 54, col. 1159).

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Eccl.*, lib. 7, c. 30.

### THE SYMBOL

was made man ; (4) who suffered, (5) and rose again, (6) and ascended into heaven ; (8) and is to come again to judge the living and the dead, (9) and in the Holy Ghost, (12) the resurrection of the flesh, and in the life of the world to come and in the kingdom of heaven ; (10) and in the one Catholic Church of God, which extends from end to end of the earth.”<sup>4</sup>

Further evidence of the existence in the East, long before the time of the Nicene Council, of a Baptismal Creed held to be of Apostolic origin, is to be found in the *Didascalía*, whence Zahn has conjecturally restored it. The *Didascalía*, as Burn observes, was written in the third century, probably not far from Antioch. It attributes to the Twelve the composition of the Creed. “There is no trace here of Western influence,” writes Burn, after citing a passage from it, “Yet we find a Trinitarian Creed traced back to an Apostolic Council.” (*An Introduction to the Creeds: Appendix F.*)

<sup>4</sup> Socrat. *Hist.*, l. 1, c. 26 ; Sozom. *Hist.*, l. 2, c. 27.

III.

In the writings of St. Basil we have abundant evidence of the existence in the East, from the very earliest times, of this primitive Ante-Nicene Creed. At the outset of his work against Eunomius, he says that if all upon whom the name of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ was invoked "had been content with the tradition of the Apostles and simplicity of the Faith, there would have been no need at this time of our discourse."<sup>5</sup> He cites Eunomius as saying :

TESTIMONY OF  
ST. BASIL.  
.....

"The more simple and common Faith of all who wish to appear or to be Christians, to state it in a condensed and compendious form, is as follows : We believe in one God the Father Almighty, from whom are all things ; and in one only-begotten Son of God, God the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things ; and in one Holy Ghost, the Paraclete."

Eunomius here gives us expressly to understand that he is presenting but "a summary

<sup>5</sup> *Adv. Eunom.*, l. 1, n. 4.



## THE SYMBOL

and compendium" of the primitive Creed. Plainly it was a Baptismal Creed, based upon the same Trinitarian Formula as the Old Roman Symbol. He appeals to it as "that pious tradition which prevailed from the first amongst the fathers as a kind of gnomon or rule." St. Basil says that Arius "presented this same profession of Faith to Alexander, deceiving him." He does not deny, he freely admits rather, that it was the ancient Creed of the Church; but he complains that the Arians put their own interpretation on it. "And having," he says, "set down the profession of Faith, he at once passes on to his interpretations; for this reason among others, that the profession in question is not enough to do away with the charges under which he lies. . . . Tell me, this pious tradition of the Fathers, and, as you yourself have termed it, this rule and gnomon and safe criterion, is it now, on the contrary, proclaimed to be an instrument of deceit and a means of deceiving?"<sup>6</sup> Elsewhere,

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, n. 5. "For the Old Roman Creed, as any one may easily convince himself, is neutral with regard to the opposition between orthodoxy and Arianism. An Arian can

OF THE APOSTLES.

dealing with its use as a Baptismal Creed, he says: "Shall I, then, give over that tradition which brought me to the light, which gave me the knowledge of God, by which I became a child of God? . . . Nay, rather do I pray that it may be my good fortune to go hence to the Lord with this Confession (*ὁμολογίας*) on my lips."<sup>7</sup> Of this Baptismal Creed he says later on (c. 27; n. 65), "The very Confession of Faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, from what written records have we it?" Now, the Creed of the Council was a written Creed.

IV.

This same Confession of Faith, which he calls "the Faith" simply, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, a contemporary of St. Basil, presents to us

CREED OF  
JERUSALEM.  
.....

perfectly well recite it, for he does not deny that Christ is the only Son of God, but, on the contrary, maintains it, together with all the other statements which are combined in the Creed.—*The Apostles' Creed*, by Dr. Adolf Harnack (translated from the German for *The Nineteenth Century*, July, 1893, by Mrs. Humphry Ward).

<sup>7</sup> *Liber de Spiritu Sancto*, c. 9; n. 26 (Migne, P. G., tom. 32).

## THE SYMBOL

in his discourses to catechumens. "The Faith" was not written by Cyril; it is not to be found, as Migne notes, in any of the MSS. of his works; he forbore putting it in writing, as did St. Augustine, conformably to the Discipline of the Secret. Still, it may be reconstructed from his writings, as it has been from those of St. Augustine. Migne (*i. e.*, a writer cited by that editor) has picked out of his sermons and pieced together the Symbol of the Mother Church of Jerusalem, which is set forth in the following table, side by side with the Old Roman Symbol:

### Old Roman Symbol.

(1) I believe in God the Father Almighty;

(2) And in Christ Jesus, His Only Son, our Lord;

(3) Born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary;

### Symbol of Jerusalem.

(1) We believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

(2) And in one Lord Jesus Christ, only-begotten Son of God, born true God of the Father, before all ages; by whom all things were made;

(3) Who came in the flesh, and was made man of the Holy Virgin and the Holy Ghost [*Catech.* 4<sup>a</sup>; n. 9];

## OF THE APOSTLES.

### Old Roman Symbol.

- (4) Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried,
- (5) Rose again the third day from the dead,
- (6) Ascended into heaven.
- (7) Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
- (8) Whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
- (9) And in the Holy Ghost;
- (10) The Holy Church,
- (11) The remission of sins;
- (12) The resurrection of the flesh.

### Symbol of Jerusalem.

- (4) Crucified and buried,
- (5) Rose again the third day;
- (6) And ascended into heaven.
- (7) And sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
- (8) And is to come in glory to judge the quick and dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
- (9) And in one Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, who spoke by the prophets;
- (10) And in one holy Catholic Church;
- (11) And in one baptism of penance for the remission of sins;
- (12) And in the resurrection of the flesh, and the life everlasting.

Here, then, we have the Baptismal Creed of the Mother Church of Jerusalem. Immediately on finishing his exposition of it, St. Cyril says to his catechumens: "We have discoursed upon the holy and Apostolic Faith (Symbol) that has been delivered to you, and that you

### THE SYMBOL

are to make profession of.”<sup>8</sup> The fact that this Symbol was in use in the Church of Jerusalem in the fourth century serves to dissipate the doubt raised by Harnack, where he says: “But if the Cæsarean symbol is not one framed for a particular community, then we know absolutely nothing of any definite, detailed, ancient communal symbols in the East of any date preceding the Nicene Creed.”<sup>9</sup> For here is a definite, detailed, ancient Eastern Symbol, “communal, such as the Roman,” for the Church of Jerusalem formed the nucleus of a great religious community in the East, as the Church of Rome did in the West; and demonstrably older than the Nicene Creed. It speaks an earlier stage of development than that Creed, as any one may see who will be at the pains to compare the two; it wants several of the additions made at Nice, notably the *ἁποστολικὸν τῶν πατρῶν*; it is the simpler formulary, and therefore the older. Besides, how comes it to have been still the Baptismal Creed of

<sup>8</sup> *Cat.* 17 : 32.

<sup>9</sup> *The Apostles' Creed* (translated from the German by the Rev. Stewart Means), p. 43.

OF THE APOSTLES.

Jerusalem in St. Cyril's day, after the promulgation of the Nicene decrees, but that it already was in possession there time out of mind, and so could claim exemption, even as did the Old Roman Creed, on the score of its Apostolic origin?

V.

But what is the relationship of St. Cyril's Creed to the Old Roman Symbol? Harnack finds it to be "so close that Cyril's Symbol can only be the daughter or the sister of the Roman one."<sup>10</sup> The sister it cannot well be: it bears about it the tokens of too ripe a growth for that. Therefore, Harnack concludes that it must be the daughter. Unfortunately for this conclusion, his disjunctive is not complete. Cyril's Symbol may stand in the relation of a sister's daughter to the Roman one. And this, as will now be shown, is just the relationship. Harnack's guess as to the Roman origin of St. Cyril's Creed rests on the assumption that there

: A SISTER'S  
: DAUGHTER.  
: .....

<sup>10</sup> *Ib.*, p. 47.

### THE SYMBOL

was no Baptismal Creed in the East before the Council of Nice promulgated its Creed—an assumption that has not the faintest shadow of warrant in fact. As well might he maintain that the Mother Church of Jerusalem got her Faith and Baptism from Rome as that she got her Symbol thence. And here let me say, with all the deference that is due to Harnack's undoubted scholarship, that when he commits himself to the statement that "there was no established baptismal confession of faith in the East in the third century," he does but declare his own unfitness to give expert testimony on the question that is under discussion. There never yet has been a Church within the pale of Christ's world-wide Kingdom but has had some fixed Baptismal Confession of Faith. "The Faith" in which St. Cyril baptized his catechumens, was not, he tells them expressly, the Faith of the East alone, or of the West alone, but of the Catholic Church—the Church of all ages and of all lands, the same in Jerusalem as in Rome, the same in the first century as in the fourth. "The Catholic Church," he says, "teaches you in the Confession of Faith to

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believe in one Holy Spirit.”<sup>11</sup> But since “baptism bestows the Rule of Truth,” or Confession of Faith, which Irenæus tells us it did even in the second century, then as surely as there was baptism in the East before the Council of Nice, so surely was there in the East a fixed Baptismal Creed.

VI.

Stripped of its additions (all : CREED OF  
of them of a strongly marked : MARCELLUS.  
Eastern character), Cyril’s Creed :  
is the primitive Creed of the Church ; the  
ancient Confession in which Athanasius (or  
is it Vigilius ?) finds the “so great glory of  
the Most Holy Trinity set forth in twelve dis-  
tinct phrases ;” the “gnomon and rule and safe  
criterion,” based upon the Baptismal Formula,  
to which Eunomius and the other Arians of  
his day appeal as to “the common Faith of all  
who wish to appear or to be Christians ;” the  
Creed, in fine, which Marcellus of Ancyra  
brought with him from the East and presented

<sup>11</sup> *Catech.* 17, n. 3.



## THE SYMBOL

to Pope Julius, some time between 337 and 341 A.D., as the Confession learned "from my [his] forefathers in God." It is true that Marcellus says he learned it also from the Scriptures; but so say many of the Fathers, among them some who say in the same breath that it was composed by the Apostles.<sup>12</sup> They mean, of course, as Marcellus meant, that they found in the Scriptures every truth set forth in the Creed. There is one thing, however, that Marcellus does not say: he does not say that he learned his Creed in Rome. And yet the critics, in the very teeth of what he does say, namely, that he got his Creed from his "forefathers in God" (who were not Romans), tell us that the Creed of Marcellus is the Old Roman Creed. In this the critics are true to their method, but false to fact, or rather what they take to be the fact. If the Old Roman Creed was drawn up at Rome some time between 100 and 150 A.D., as certain of the critics believe, then the Creed of Marcellus is

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Cassianus, *De Incarnat.* l. 6, c. 3 (Migne, P. L., tom. 50); St. Cyril, *Catech.* 5; 12 compared with *Catech.* 17; 32.

OF THE APOSTLES.

emphatically not the Old Roman Creed. If, on the other hand, the Old Roman Creed is what Hilary and Ambrose and Jerome and Leo and Rufinus say it is—the Symbol of Faith composed by the Twelve before their separation, the Creed of Marcellus, with “Father” added to its first article, and “life everlasting” dropped from the twelfth, is the Old Roman or Apostles’ Creed.

The fatal mistake made by the critics in dealing with the Creed of Marcellus is to have judged of it by the later polemical formularies which sprang up like mushrooms in the East after the rise of the Arian heresy.<sup>13</sup> The Creed of Marcellus is older than any of these formularies, is not a polemical Creed, and was not a written Creed till he put it in writing for the first time. Marcellus himself was one

<sup>13</sup> “Sprang up like mushrooms” is a strong expression, but will hardly appear exaggerated in view of what St. Hilary, a contemporary witness, tells us in *Ad Constantium*. “For we bear witness one to another,” he writes, “how that, ever since the Synod was convened at Nice, there is nothing but creed-writing. . . . Yearly and monthly Creeds (faiths) are issued, those issued set aside, those set aside defended, the defenders anathematized, . . .” (*Ib.*, lib. 2, n. 5.)

## THE SYMBOL

of the three hundred and eighteen Fathers who gave to the world the Nicene Symbol, and was distinguished at the Council for his championship of the Orthodox Faith. The Creed that he got from his "forefathers in God" existed in the East, therefore, long before Arius was born.

### VII.

TESTIMONY OF:      Let me cite, in further proof  
ST. HILARY.      of this, one or two passages from  
.....      the writings of so competent  
a witness as St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers.  
Hilary knew the East thoroughly in the first  
half of the fourth century, having striven  
earnestly there with the Arians, on their own  
ground, for "the Faith once delivered to the  
Saints." An exile in the East, he writes to  
the Emperor Constantius. Here is the context  
of the passage just given in the footnote :

"Recognize, excellent and most pious Emperor, the Creed which you formerly desired to hear from the (Arian) Bishops, and did not. For when it was sought from them, they wrote out their own creeds, and taught not the things

OF THE APOSTLES.

of God. They have carried their error round the everlasting globe, and with it a strife that ever returns upon itself. Man in his feebleness ought to have been modest, and to have kept the sacrament (mystery, symbol) of the knowledge of God in his conscience within those terms wherein he (first) made an act of faith. It behooved him not, after confessing under oath in baptism the Faith *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, to doubt aught, or innovate aught. But through presumption, or complaisance, or error, some have deceitfully confessed the unchangeable ordinance<sup>14</sup> of the Apostolic doctrine; others have boldly gone beyond it; while the true, natural meaning of the Confession in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is evaded, lest that meaning should remain which ought to be confessed in the sacrament of regeneration. . . . *Ib.*, n. 4.

"A Creed, then, is sought, as if there were no Creed. The Creed must be written, as if it were not in the heart. Born again by faith, now we are taught unto Faith, as if that second birth were without Faith. We learn Christ after baptism, as if there could be any baptism without the Faith of Christ. . . .

<sup>14</sup> "Constitutionem" may properly be rendered "rule" or "symbol."

## THE SYMBOL

As it is the safest course for those who sail the stormy sea in winter, when shipwreck threatens, to return to the port whence they set sail; and as it behooves inexperienced young men, who have gone beyond the bounds observed by their father, and, in keeping up the home, have spent their patrimony with too prodigal a hand, now, for fear of losing their all, to go back to the way of their father, as the needful and only safe way; so, amid such shipwreck of the Faith as we see around us, when the heritage of our heavenly patrimony is all but squandered, the safest course for us is to hold fast the first and only Evangelical Creed, learned and confessed in baptism. . . . This I have so believed in the Holy Spirit that I cannot now be taught any Faith beyond it concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: not thereby dissenting from the Faith of the Fathers (Nicene Creed), but following the Symbol of my second birth, and the knowledge of evangelical doctrine, which are in no wise at variance with that (Creed).”—*Ib.*, n. 6–11.

Thus does Hilary, writing to Constantius, take for granted, as something known to all, the existence, in the East, too, of a Baptismal Creed based upon the Trinitarian Formula; of a Creed which antedated all written Creeds, in-

OF THE APOSTLES.

cluding the Nicene. He calls it "the first and only Evangelical Creed, learned and confessed in baptism," the "Apostolic Faith" (n. 6), *i. e.*, Symbol, and sets forth as its content (n. 11), approved also by Scripture, as many as seven articles of the Old Roman Creed. In short, he makes it plain that he is referring to what has been ever known in the Church as the Symbol of the Apostles. He counsels to Christians in the East, under the Emperor Constantius, a return to this the Creed of their baptism. Perhaps those who say that "there was no established baptismal confession of faith in the East in the third century," will tell us how there can be a return to that which never existed.

VIII.

Upheld by St. Hilary, and borne, as it were, upon his shoulders, we can see far into the third century, and descry in the East the object of our quest—a counterpart and *alter ego* of the Old Roman Symbol. But there is

THE UNWRIT-  
TEN CREED.  
.....

### THE SYMBOL

yet another passage in the writings of St. Hilary which must be cited. It is found in the *Liber de Synodis seu de Fide Orientalium*. We learn from it that while the Creed was never written in the West in Hilary's time, polemical formularies, written Creeds based upon the Symbol, began to be published in the East owing to the spread of heresy. He is addressing his brother Bishops in Germany and other parts of the West :

“But blessed are ye in the Lord and full of glory, who hold fast, in the confession of the conscience, the perfect and Apostolic Creed, and as yet know nothing of written creeds. For you stand not in need of the letter, abounding as you do in the spirit. Nor do you want the help of a hand to write what you believe with the heart, and confess with the lips unto salvation. Neither was it needful for you to read out to a bishop what you held (in memory) when you stood at the baptismal font. But necessity has introduced the custom of setting forth creeds in writing and subscribing to them. For where the inmost sentiment of the mind is in question, there the letter is required. And certainly there is no bar to the writing of that which it is salutary to confess.”—*Ib.*, n. 63.

## OF THE APOSTLES.

Later on, however (n. 84), he deems it needful to offer this justification of his having reproduced in writing the Nicene Creed: "And the Symbol itself which was at that time piously put in writing, it will not be impious in us to have inserted in this our work."

From these passages we gather that the Baptismal Creed, which Hilary plainly implies to have been the same in the East as in the West, and which he speaks of as an "unchangeable ordinance," or "rule" of Apostolic doctrine, was not at all a written Creed, and is not to be confounded with any of the numerous polemical confessions called forth by the Arian controversy. These, indeed, were built on the foundation of the unwritten Creed, but so fashioned as the exigencies of each case required. Hence we find the second article, about which the main controversy raged, to be abnormally developed in most of these formularies, while the third is often rudimentary.<sup>15</sup> To Hilary it appeared as if, amid this multiplica-

<sup>15</sup> Writers on this subject usually refer to the ninth article with those that follow as the "third" because it introduces the last of the three main divisions of the Symbol.



## THE SYMBOL

ity of creeds, Faith in the East had parted from her old moorings, and, tossed about on an angry sea of controversy, could escape shipwreck only by a return to the safe anchorage of her ancient Symbol.

### IX.

ORIGEN'S : We have traced this Symbol  
"PLAIN : in the East, through Basil,  
RULE." : Hilary, and Marcellus, back to  
..... : the third century. Both Hilary and Marcellus  
first saw the light towards the close of that  
century, and "the forefathers in God," from  
whom the latter got the Symbol, belong to an  
earlier period. Among them we may reckon  
Origen and Clement of Alexandria. Here are  
the elements of what Origen calls "the sure  
outline and plain rule of Apostolic teaching,"  
as given in *Of Beginnings*, bk. 1, n. 4.

(1) "There is one God who created and ordered all things", (2) "this God . . . sent our Lord Jesus Christ," (3) "who . . . took a body, . . . born of the Virgin and the Holy Ghost"; (4) "suffered truly, . . . truly died"; (5) "truly rose from the dead";

OF THE APOSTLES.

(6) "and after His resurrection . . . was taken up." (9) "Then . . . they have handed down (the belief in) the Holy Ghost." (12) "After this, that the soul, . . . when it quits this world, will be dealt with according to its deserts; will possess the heritage of eternal life, or be banished into everlasting fire; . . . but also that a time will come when the dead shall rise again." <sup>16</sup>

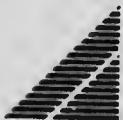
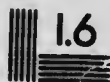
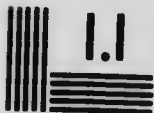
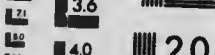
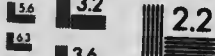
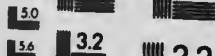
The numerals point to the corresponding articles of the Old Roman Creed. It will be noticed that mention is made of the Holy Ghost in the article on the Virgin Birth—an uncommon thing in the written creeds of the century that followed. Who can doubt that we have here the Apostolic Symbol, so far as the Discipline of the Secret admitted of its being given in writing? Origen tells us that it was "handed down from the Apostles through successive generations," and that "that alone is to be received as true which in no wise disagrees with the ecclesiastical and Apostolic Tradition."—*Ib.*, n. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Migne, P. G., tom. 11.



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THE SYMBOL

X.

About the middle of the third century, shortly before the death of Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, writing to Dionysius of Rome, who afterwards became Pope, tells him that Novatian has strayed so far from the truth as to "overturn the Confession of Faith (*πίστιν καὶ δμολογίαν*) which precedes baptism."<sup>17</sup> Here is further evidence, not inferential, but direct and categorical, of the existence in the East, in the third century, of what Harnack has so egregiously failed to find there, "an established baptismal confession of Faith." Dionysius makes no manner of doubt that his Roman namesake will know what truths are embodied in the Baptismal Creed which he does but mention merely; the same Faith and the same Baptism would involve the use of the same Symbol within the pale of the same Catholic and Apostolic Church. It is this Symbol of the Church of Alexandria that Origen summarizes for us in the passage cited above. He

: SYMBOL OF  
: ALEXANDRIA.  
: .....

<sup>17</sup> *Hist.*, bk. 7, ch. 8.

OF THE APOSTLES.

got it when a boy from St. Clement, Bishop of that Church; for Eusebius tells us that Origen attended the catechetical instruction given by St. Clement.<sup>18</sup> We can picture to ourselves the precocious boy eagerly drinking in those words of the venerable old Bishop who had "been worthy to hear" men who "preserved the true tradition of the blessed doctrine, directly from Peter, and James, and John, and Paul, the holy Apostles, having received it in succession, the son from the father, though few resemble their fathers."<sup>19</sup> "Follow God," St. Clement exhorted his hearers, ". . . holding fast what is thine, what is good, what cannot be taken from thee, the Faith in God, the Confession in Him who suffered."<sup>20</sup> This he calls "a most precious possession," and well he may, for it is no other than that pearl of great price, the Symbol of the Apostles, which sums up in twelve arti-

<sup>18</sup> *Ib.*, ch. 6.

<sup>19</sup> *Stromata*, bk. 1.

<sup>20</sup> *την εἰς τον θεον πιστιν, την εἰς τον παθοντα ὁμολογίαν.*" *Paed.* l. 2; c. 3. "Eusebius and the Nicene Council." the observant Pearson notes (vol. 2, p. 14) "have *παθοντα* only in their Creeds."

## THE SYMBOL

culate words "the Faith once for all delivered to the saints." In a later chapter (l. 6, c. 10.) he defines it for us as "the knowledge, in a brief and compendious form, of those things that are necessary to be known."

### XI.

JUSTIN AND : Of this same Symbol we find  
IGNATIUS. : clear traces—more we may not  
..... look for—in the writings of  
Justin and Ignatius, the disciple of St. John.  
"As many as are persuaded and believe,"  
writes the former, "that the things we teach  
and declare are true, and give assurance that  
they are able to live accordingly, . . . are  
then led by us where there is water, and are  
regenerated after the manner of regeneration  
whereby we also are regenerated."<sup>21</sup> The ref-  
erence to the catechetical instruction and pro-  
fession of faith which precede baptism is ex-  
plicit, and the renunciation of Satan, his  
works, and his pomps, is clearly implied. St.

<sup>21</sup> *Apol.* 1, n. 61 (Migne, P. G., tom. 6). Cf. also *Ib.*, nn. 21, 42, 46; *Dial.* 15, 132.

## OF THE APOSTLES.

Justin adds that "they are then washed in that water, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost;" and later on varies the mention of the Second Person, saying "in the name of Jesus Christ crucified under Pontius Pilate," where the addition "under Pontius Pilate" carries the mind back to the profession of faith in the words of the Symbol, which preceded baptism. He had already (n. 31) given, from the prophetic books of the Old Testament, a summary of what critics call "christological attributes," which plain people are familiar with as that part of the Creed that concerns the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

In St. Ignatius' *Ad Trallianos* the early use of the Symbol in its recommendatory character, as a test of Church membership, is not obscurely hinted at. The passage runs (the numbers once more refer to the articles of the Old Roman Creed):

"Close, then, your ears to any one who speaks to you apart from (2) Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David; (3) who was of



## THE SYMBOL

Mary, who was truly born, ate and drank; (4) truly suffered persecution under Pontius Pilate; was truly crucified and died, in the sight of those who are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; (5) who also truly arose again from the dead, His Father having raised Him; (12) as His Father will raise in Jesus Christ, without whom we have no true life, after the likeness of Him, us also who in Him believe."—*Io.*, c. 9. Cf. also *Ad Smyr.*, c. 1, where with other elements of the Symbol, "one body of His Church," is included.

## XII.

A SIDE-  
GLANCE.  
.....

It may be well, before going further, to cast a side-glance at the futile attempt of Kattenbusch and Harnack to free their theory from straits. The difficulty which they had to find some way out of was this. If the Symbol originated in Rome in the second century, how came it to be the Baptismal Creed of the Eastern Church in the fourth? When and where did it gain official entrance into the East? The failure of the two German writers to answer this question satisfactorily is con-

OF THE APOSTLES.

spicuous and complete. Both of them seem to regard "the period of struggles with Paul of Samosata"<sup>22</sup> as a likely one for their attempt at smuggling the Old Roman Creed into the Orient. But we have given chapter and verse of Eusebius to show that, during this very period, the East had its Rule of Faith, and that the Church of Alexandria was in peaceful possession of her Baptismal Creed some years before the heresiarch of Samosata was deposed from the See of Antioch. We say "some years," so as to be strictly within the letter of our historical warrant.

Now, Dionysius of Alexandria, Origen, and Clement got their Symbol or Baptismal Creed in the East, where they were "born again" unto God in baptism. For baptism, as Irenæus tells us, "bestows the Rule of Truth," which is no other than the Baptismal Creed. This is "the true tradition of the blessed doctrine" which came down from the Apostles, the son receiving it from his father in God and Christ. And as all succession in Christ from father to son had its source in the East, it fol-

<sup>22</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 49.

THE SYMBOL

lows that the Baptismal Creed, handed down in the direct line of that succession, had in the East its origin. Baptized in the East within about a half century of the passing of St. John, Irenæus got the Creed there with his baptism. He brought it with him to the West, too, whither it had been brought long before his day. And he assures us that the Church of the second century, various as were the languages in which she spoke, professed her Baptismal Faith, wherever in all the world she begot children to God, in terms of one and the same Apostolic Rule of Truth.

XIII.

“ HANDED  
DOWN FROM  
THE APOS-  
TLES.”  
.....

The Church in the East, from the fifth century upward, witnesses, with the Church in the West, to the Apostolic authorship of the Symbol. Some of the Eastern Fathers give no more than an implicit declaration of their mind in the matter, as St. John Chrysostom, when he says: “ Hence it is plain that they (the Apostles) did not deliver everything in

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writing, but much also without writing; and this too is worthy of belief. Wherefore, we account also the tradition of the Church worthy of belief. It is the tradition: seek nothing further."<sup>23</sup> We have also explicit testimony. St. John Cassian, disciple and deacon of St. Chrysostom, bears witness that the Symbol "was put together by the Apostles of the Lord."<sup>24</sup> "I have delivered to you the Apostolic Faith," writes St. Athanasius to Serapion, "as it has been handed down to us by the Fathers."<sup>25</sup> In his *Liber de Spiritu Sancto* c. 27 (Migne, P. G. tom. 32), St. Basil enumerates the "Confession of Faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," among "the teachings transmitted in a secret manner from the tradition of the Apostles." "May we, to the last breath of life," write St. Gregory Nazianzen, "confess with great confidence that excellent Deposit of the holy fathers who were nearest to Christ; that Confession of the primitive Faith which has been familiar to us from childhood, which

<sup>23</sup> *Hom in Ep. 2 ad Thessal.*, c. 2—*Hom. IV* (Migne, P. G., tom. 62),

<sup>24</sup> *De Incar. Christi*, l. 6, c. 3.

<sup>25</sup> *Ep. ad Serap.*, n. 33 (Migne, P. G., tom. 26).

## THE SYMBOL

we first uttered and with which may we depart this life, bearing godliness with us hence, this, if nothing else." <sup>26</sup> Again he refers to the Symbol as "that excellent Deposit which we received from our fathers; adoring the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost . . . in whose name we have been cleansed in the waters of Baptism." <sup>27</sup> St. Epiphanius testifies that the Church "received the Faith (Symbol) as a sacred trust from the Apostles;" and, having cited the Nicene Symbol, with the addition of the articles omitted by the Council, adds: "This Formula of Faith was handed down to us from the holy Apostles, and prescribed in the holy city by all the Bishops, in number, three hundred and eighteen." <sup>28</sup> Here Epiphanius speaks by the book, for the Fathers of Nice did not draw up the Symbol—that was the work of the Apostles. They did but de-

<sup>26</sup> Καὶ ὁμολογοίημεν μέχρι τῆς ἐσχάτης ἀνανοῆς ἐν πολλῇ παρρησίᾳ τὴν καλὴν παρακαταθήκην τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων, τῶν ἐγγυτέρῳ χριστοῦ, καὶ τῆς πρώτης πίστεως τὴν συντροφον ἡμῖν ἐκ παίδων ὁμολογίαν, ἣν πρώτην ἐφθεγξάμεθα, καὶ ἡ τελευταῖον συναπέλθοιμεν, τούτο, εἰ μὴ τι ἄλλο, ἐνθτεῦθεν ἀποφερόμενοι τὴν εὐσέβειαν.—*Orat.* 11, alias 6 (Migne, P. G., tom. 35, col. 832).

<sup>27</sup> *Orat.* 6, n. 22 (Migne, P. G., tom. 35.)

<sup>28</sup> *Ancoratus*, 118 (Migne, P. G., tom. 43).

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fine the meaning of it more clearly, and reaffirm, with all the authority vested in them, the truths which it embodied. Finally, the two hundred Bishops assembled at Ephesus in 431, in their *Relation* to the Emperor Theodosius, speak of "the Faith (*i. e.* Symbol), originally delivered (to the Church) by the Apostles, and afterwards expounded by the three hundred and eighteen Fathers in the metropolitan city of Nice."<sup>29</sup> The testimony of Irenæus to the existence in the East as well as in the West, in his day, of a Baptismal Creed and Rule of Truth handed down from the Apostles. has been cited in a preceding article.

At the fourth General Council of Chalcedon (A. D. 451), the Letter of Pope Leo the Great to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, was read to the assembled prelates. In this letter the Roman Symbol is cited in sections word for word, and commended as the common Confession of all the baptized on earth. (*Uf.*, above, Chap. II. Sect. 1). Directly after the reading of the letter, the Greek Bishops at the

<sup>29</sup> Bollandist's *Acta Sanctorum*, 15 Julii.

### THE SYMBOL

Council exclaimed: "This is the Faith of the Fathers. This is the Faith of the Apostles."<sup>30</sup> "Even more than this was done at the Trullan Council, the so-called *Concilium quinisextium*," says Zahn.<sup>31</sup> "The fathers of this council in their first canon confess 'that which was delivered by the eye-witnesses and servants of the Word, the Apostles of the Church chosen by God.' They then acknowledge the faith more exactly determined by the 318 fathers of Nicaea against Arius, as well as the five Œcumenical Councils which followed. We can only understand by this that the Greeks wished to point to that confession which was in use among them as a baptismal confession before, and for a considerable time after, the Council of Nicaea, as an inheritance from the times of the Apostles, even as a work of the Apostles."

<sup>30</sup> Hefele, *Conzilien* ii. 440 ff., 453 f., 547.

<sup>31</sup> *The Articles of the Apostles' Creed*, pp. 220, 221.

XIV.

At page 4 of a now oft-cited work, Harnack tells his readers that "the Eastern Church has at no time traced any creed to an Apostolic origin, or designated any as Apostolic in the strict sense of the word." The evidence that has now been brought forward in disproof will make it needful for Harnack to buttress his assertion with some more substantial prop than the declaration of a Greek Archbishop at Florence some fourteen hundred years after Paul preached the risen Christ to the men of Athens.

A BELATED  
WITNESS.  
.....

Harnack's authority is cited in a footnote, as follows: "*Cf.* the testimony of Archbishop Marcus Eugenicus at the Council of Florence, in 1438, as given by Sylvester Sguropolis, *Hist. Concil. Florent.*, sect. 6, c. 6, p. 150, edit. Rob. Creighton, 1660." The testimony of a fifteenth century witness, is accepted; the testimony of fourth century witnesses, of Basil, and Gregory, and Epiphanius, is ignored. Great is historical criticism, and great are its prerogatives.



## THE SYMBOL

We have traced the Symbol back to the Apostolic Age, following our quest in the East as in the West, along a trail of light, in the path of the ancient tradition. It remains to point out vestiges of it in the New Testament and decipher the allusions to it which are to be found in that inspired record.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SYMBOL IN THE SECOND CENTURY.

I.

It may be well, at this stage, to take some notice of Professor McGiffert's theory of the origin of the Symbol. On his hypothesis, the Church might still have been without her Creed, had not Marcion, driven from Pontus, sought an asylum in Rome, some time after the middle of the second century, and there set himself to teach a form of heresy, which was not, however, original with him.<sup>1</sup> McGiffert maintains that the Symbol was drawn up to meet the errors of Marcion. The work in which he essays to make good his contention<sup>2</sup> shows him to be a

: A FLIMSY  
THEORY.  
.....

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Irenæus. *Adv. Haer*, bk. 3, c. 4, n. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, by Arthur Cushman McGiffert : Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902.

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man of well-trained mind, a man who has learned to think for himself. He does not take his data at second hand, nor does he let others draw the conclusions for him.

It must in fairness be granted that Professor McGiffert pleads his case with not a little skill. But, given a bad case, the cleverest of pleaders can do no more than make it plausible: he cannot make it good. The theory that the Symbol was framed to head off the heresy of Marcion, however much labor and skill may be employed in setting it up, is but a house of cards, which a very slight puff of wind would blow down. A gust or two from North Africa will sweep it clean into the Adriatic.

## II.

DEMOLISHED : In *De Praescript.* 36, Tertul-  
BY : lian testifies that the Roman  
TERTULLIAN. : Church got her Symbol from  
..... the Apostles Peter and Paul, and afterwards  
gave it to proconsular Africa (*cum Africanis  
quoque ecclesiis contesserarit.*) He proceeds,  
in the very next paragraph (37), to confute,

OF THE APOSTLES.

after his own strenuous fashion, the heretics of his day :

If these things be so, that the truth may be adjudged to us, as many as walk according to that Rule which the Church has handed down from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God, the reasonableness of our position is plain, that heretics are not to be allowed to appeal to the Scriptures, seeing that we prove them without the Scriptures to have nothing to do with the Scriptures. . . . . To such it may be justly said : Who are you ? When and whence came ye ? Not being mine, what do ye in that which is mine ? In short, by what right dost thou, Marcion, cut down my wood ? By what license dost thou, Valentinus, turn the course of my waters ? By what power dost thou, Apelles, remove my landmarks ? This is my property. Why are the rest of you sowing and feeding here at your pleasure ? Mine is possession ; I possess of old ; I have sound title-deeds from the first owners whose property it was. As they bequeathed it to me by will, as they left it in trust, as they solemnly charged me (*adjuraverunt*, gave under oath), so I hold it ; you certainly they have ever disinherited and disowned as aliens, as enemies. But whence are

## THE SYMBOL

heretics aliens and enemies to the Apostles if not from the diversity of doctrine, which they either fashion according to their own caprices, or receive, in opposition to the Apostles?

Thus does the man trained in the law-schools of Carthage confute "Marcion, the skipper<sup>3</sup> from Pontus" (*Ib.*, c. 30), by the argument of prescription. He finds this argument on the possession by the Roman Church of the Apostolic Symbol long before the "skipper" in question crossed the Black Sea. He disallows the appeal to Scripture. The Church is in possession of the truth, of "the Faith once delivered to the saints." She can point to "sound title-deeds from the first owners whose property it was." She produces her Apostolic Symbol. This is the "rule" and "tessera" of the orthodox Faith, which the Apostles committed to her. This, as St. Ambrose bears witness, some two centuries later, she "ever preserves inviolate." And this in the words of Leo the Great, is "a weapon so cunningly

<sup>3</sup> This is the meaning of "naulerus" in *Acts* 27: 11, and seems to fit the context of this passage in Tertullian better than "ship-owner."

OF THE APOSTLES.

forged in the workshop of heaven that it cuts off all heretical opinions at one stroke."— *Ad. Pulch.* c. 4. McGiffert would make the Roman Church wait till Marcion had come and was spreading his heresy before she cast about for a means of defending the Faith—as if there were no doctrinal error before Marcion, and no use for a Baptismal Creed but to fight heresy withal! Tertullian, skilled in the law and familiar at first hand with the facts of the case, represents the Church to us as wiser, more far-seeing, and more faithful in guarding the deposit. When she finds Marcion cutting down her wood, felling the trees that had been planted by the Apostles, she warns him off, she bids him begone. And her Apostolic Symbol is, Tertullian tells us, at once the weapon with which she drives away the intruder and the deed of trust whereby she makes good her claim to the property.

## THE SYMBOL

### III.

In *Adv. Marc.* v. 1, Tertul-  
lian, addressing directly and by  
name, this same "skipper from  
Pontus," (he was a "skipper" from Pontus in  
more than one sense) says to him: "If thou  
hast never received stolen or contraband goods  
into thy schooners, if thou hast never appro-  
priated any of the cargo to thy own uses or  
adulterated it, thou art more careful, of course,  
and faithful in the things of God. Tell us, then,  
pray, by what symbol thou hast taken the teach-  
ing of the Apostle Paul on board, who stamped  
the label on it, who handed it over to thee, who  
put it on board, that thou mayest be able fear-  
lessly to land it." Marcion held that the God re-  
vealed by Christ and in Christ was not the God  
of the Old Testament, and maintained that St.  
Paul was with him in holding this. Tertul-  
lian intimates that "the skipper from Pontus,"  
who, he insinuates, had been a smuggler, and  
had been in the habit of tampering with the  
goods that he carried for others, is no more to  
be trusted in handling the wares of God than  
in the handling of worldly wares. He chal-

.....  
: "THE SKIP-  
PER FROM  
PONTUS."  
.....

OF THE APOSTLES.

lenges him, therefore, to produce his bill of lading as a guarantee that he has not smuggled the doctrine of the Apostle aboard his ship, or adulterated it. The teachings of St. Paul were spiritual wares which belonged to the Church, as the Apostle himself belonged to her. If, therefore, Marcion had these wares on board his ship he should be able to show that the Church had put her label on them and consigned them to him. The bill of lading would show this; he therefore bids him exhibit it. Need it be pointed out that the bill of lading (symbolum) in question is no other than the Apostolic Symbol?

The passage runs thus in the original Latin.

*“Quamobrem, Pontice nauclere, si nunquam furtivas merces vel illicitas in acatos tuas recepisti; si nullum onus avertisti vel adulterasti, cautior utique et fidelior in Dei rebus, edas velim nobis quo symbolo susceperis Apostolum Paulum, quis illum tituli caractere percusserit, quis transmiserit tibi, quis imposuerit, ut possis eum constanter exponere.”*

It is true that the context shows it to have been the God of the Old Testament, who,



## THE SYMBOL

according to Tertullian, would have to consign St. Paul and his teaching to "the skipper from Pontus." But as Tertullian everywhere insists that, in controverted questions, the appeal does not lie to Scripture, and that the Church alone has the office of guarding the Scripture, and guaranteeing it to men as the Word of God, it is only through the Church that the God of the Old Testament could make the consignment, and the "bill of lading" would be the Symbol just the same. It was with the "Father Almighty" of the Symbol that the "skipper" had entered into the "agreement." But he had tampered with the goods, interpolating the Epistles of St. Paul and taking liberties with the text. He had therefore violated the terms of his "agreement" or "covenant" (symbol) with the Church, and would not venture to produce it on demand because it would bear witness against him. In other words, he could not land the adulterated goods "constanter," that is fearlessly.

IV.

Irenæus, too, bears direct testimony to the pre-Marcionite existence of the Symbol, over and above the indirect testimony that is implied in his witnessing to its Apostolic origin. "As for Cerdon," he writes (Bk. 3, c. 4, n. 3), "who was before Marcion, he too under Hyginus, who was ninth Bishop, came to the Church, made his confession, and so continued, sometimes teaching privily, sometimes again doing penance, and sometimes under censure for the evil he was teaching, and separated from the assembly of the brethren. And Marcion succeeding him flourished under Anicetus who occupied the tenth (eleventh) place in the Episcopate." The form of words, "made his confession," does not, at least in the formal and first intention of Irenæus, bear the sense here that it has in current Catholic use. It means to make a formal profession of Faith, and such a profession supposes a fixed formula already existing in Rome before the man from Pontus ever set foot there.

: THE PRE-  
: MARCIONITE  
: CONFESION.  
: .....

## THE SYMBOL

This is more evident from the words of the Greek original, a fragment of which fortunately remains at this point. Ἐκκλησίαν ἔλθων, καὶ ἐξομολογηθεὶς, οὕτως διετέλεσε, ποτὲ μὲν λαθροδιδασκικῶν, ποτὲ δὲ πάλιν ἐξομολογηθεὶς. The verb ἐξομολογῆναι means to "make a full confession," whether of sins, or of the Faith, or what not, is to be gathered from the context. The context here shows that Cerdon made at least a confession of the Faith. "He came to the [Roman] Church [from Syria], made his profession, and so continued, now teaching [his heresy] secretly, now making anew his profession." It is with Cerdon's doctrinal standing, not with his moral status otherwise, that Irenæus is concerned; for his whole work, as the title itself witnesses, is directed against heresy. His πάλιν ἐξομολογηθεὶς is therefore to be rendered "making again a profession of the Faith," or "recanting his errors," and not simply "again doing penance," as Keble has it. Would Irenæus deem it worth while stating that Cerdon, who had come from the East to Rome, went to confession there? And who would care to know whether he did or not? The

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second ἐξομολογοθμενος means what the first means, as πάλιν attests; and the whole drift and purpose of Irenæus indicates that the first has to do with Faith, at least primarily. Add to this that the "confession," which Cerdon made the second time was called for by reason of his having taught his errors secretly after he had made the first. Now, the very first thing that one who had taught false doctrine would have to do, before being reconciled to the Church, would be to recant his errors and profess the true Faith. It would be interesting to know what Harnack would make of ἐξομολογοθμενος in this passage. The matter of course way in which Irenæus uses the word implies that the people of Gaul, for whom particularly he wrote, were familiar with the ὁμολογία in question.

V.

In his great work, *De Pre-* :THE OATH OF  
*scriptionibus* Tertullian rests his :ALLEGIANCE.  
whole case against heresy upon :.....  
the prior possession by the Church of "the

## THE SYMBOL

Faith once delivered to the saints." And this prior possession he proves by her Symbol, which is the deed of trust she got from the Apostles. The whole argument of the book assumes the existence of the Symbol from the beginning. By the Apostolic Symbol men were known to be in communion with the Church of the Apostles, which was one. And the Symbol was guarded by the Discipline of the Secret, whence it got the name of "sacramentum," that is, "oath," "mystery," "secret." Let me cite one or two passages in point. "Thus," he writes (*Ib.*, c. 20), "so many Churches and so great are that one primitive Church from the Apostles, whence all have sprung. All by one prove their unity. Between all there is the communication of peace, and the greeting one another as brethren, and the interchange of hospitality through the Symbol (*contesseratio hospitalitatae*). And no other principle governs these privileges but the one (common) tradition of the same mystery (*ejusdem sacramenti una traditio*)." In military language "sacramentum" meant, in the olden time, "the pre-

OF THE APOSTLES.

liminary engagement entered into by newly enlisted troops ;” also, “the military oath of allegiance.”<sup>4</sup> No word could better express the purposes of the Symbol, which was the preliminary engagement entered into by the neophyte or newly enlisted soldier of Christ in the Church Militant, and was professed, as we have seen, in baptism with an oath of fealty to Christ and to His Church. It was also “sacramentum” in three of the four meanings which the word bears in ecclesiastical Latin. It came within the Discipline of the Secret, and was therefore a “secret.” For “to hide the secret of a king” (Tob. 12 : 7) the Vulgate has “sacramentum regis abscondere.” It enshrined the mysteries of the Faith, and therefore was itself, by a common figure of speech, a “mystery.” “And evidently great is the mystery of godliness,” says St. Paul (1 Tim. 3 : 16), where the Vulgate reads “sacramentum pietatis.” Once more, the Symbol was the whole revelation of God in a compendious form, and was therefore fittingly called “the gospel revelation,” which is the

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Harper's Freund's Latin Dictionary.

THE SYMBOL

meaning of "sacramentum" in a passage in Prudentius.<sup>5</sup>

VI.

THE CHRIS- :  
TIAN PASS- :  
WORD. :  
.....

The expression "ejusdem sacramenti una traditio," in the passage cited above, may be rendered "the exchange of the same password." When the little army of Christ, sworn to make war on sin and error only, moved out from Jerusalem to subdue the world, its password was the Symbol. "We are called to the warfare of the living God," says Tertullian (*Ad. Marty.* 3) "from the moment that we return the password (*cum in sacramenti verba respondimus*)." This password it was that "governed" the "privileges" specified by him, namely, "the communication of peace, the greeting of brethren, and the interchange of hospitality," in the early Church. The pilgrim from afar gave the Symbol, and got in return the salutation of peace, the name of brother, the privileges of the welcome guest. So we read further on that heretics "are not

<sup>5</sup> Cf. the Dictionary above cited.

OF THE APOSTLES.

received into peace and communion by the Churches that are in any way Apostolic [i. e. as having been founded by an Apostle or mothered by such as were so founded], precisely because of the diversity of their Symbol in no wise Apostolic (*ob diversitatem sacramenti nullo modo apostolici*)."<sup>6</sup> When heresy unfurled its banner of revolt, it corrupted the Symbol of the Faith. This is what Irenaeus implies when he tells us that "by no Rule of

<sup>6</sup> (*De Praesc.* c. 32.) Marcion appears to have openly "innovated upon the Rule of Faith," as Tertullian puts it in a passage to be cited later on, while Valentinus kept it to the Church's ear but broke it to her hopes. Irenaeus, indeed, tells us as much (*Adv. Haer.*, bk. 4 ; c. 33 ; nn. 2, 3). Marcion, he says, held that "there are two Gods, by an infinite distance separated one from the other (n. 2). On the other hand, those who belong to Valentinus, . . . while with tongue they confess one God the Father, and all things of Him, they nevertheless say that this Maker of all things is Himself the fruit of defection or decay ; and in like manner, confessing with their tongue one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, while yet in their doctrine they allow one special emanation to the Only Begotten, another to the Word, one to the Christ, another to the Saviour, . . . their tongues alone tend toward unity. . . . But they shall be accused by a prophet of their own, even Homer, . . . whose words are, For he is hateful to me even as the gates of hell who hides one thing in his heart and utters another" (n. 3).



## THE SYMBOL

the heretics was the Word of God made flesh" (Bk. 3 ; c. 11 ; 3). Or, if heretics kept the Symbol, they kept the letter and not the spirit of it. "When you tempt them [the Valentinians] subtly," says Tertullian (*Adv. Valent.* 1), "by double-tongued ambiguity they affirm the common Faith." St. Cyprian says of the partisans of Novatian that they had indeed the same Symbol, but not "the same law of the Symbol," as Catholics (Ep. 69. 7).

## VII.

To Tertullian the Symbol is "lex fidei," the law and norm of Faith. When we "enter the water," he says, and profess the Christian Faith in the words of its law (*christianam fidem in verba suae legis profiteremur*), we testify with our lips that we have renounced the devil, his pomp, and his angels"<sup>7</sup> He can no more conceive of the Church without her Symbol than he can conceive of civil society without its fundamental law. And as Christ Himself

THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW.

<sup>7</sup> *De Spect.* 4.

### OF THE APOSTLES.

is the Founder of the Church, which rests on Faith as her fundamental law, so, according to Tertullian, Christ, the Author and Finisher of the Faith, is the Author of the Symbol also. This does not prevent him from holding at the same time and affirming that the Apostles are the authors of the Symbol. Christ is the Founder of the Church, yet the Apostles also are her founders. Christ laid the foundation, the Apostles built upon it ; " For no one can lay another foundation but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus " (1 Cor. 3 : 11). So Christ laid the foundation of the Symbol, the Trinitarian Formula, and the Apostles built upon it. In short, we may say of the Church, her Symbol, and her Sacraments, that Christ laid the foundations and gave specific directions how the work should be done ; the Apostles did but build upon the foundations laid by Him, and faithfully carry out His directions.

THE SYMBOL

VIII.

Any one who keeps these distinctions in view will see how Tertullian can say that "this Rule," *i.e.* the Symbol, "was instituted by Christ<sup>8</sup>" while affirming also that the Apostles were "the authors" of it.<sup>9</sup> McGiffert (p. 64) says that in this latter passage "the word *regula* evidently refers, not to any definite creed or symbol, but to the gospel preached by both" the Twelve and St. Paul. The adverb "evidently" is used here in a purely subjective sense. The objective evidence is all the other way. Here is a literal translation of the passage:

: EVIDENCE  
SUBJECTIVE  
AND  
OBJECTIVE.  
.....

"Even if Marciou had brought in his Gospel in Paul's own name, the document by itself alone (*singularitas Instrumenti*) would not be enough to win our belief, without the support

<sup>8</sup> *De Praesc.*, c. 14.

*Adv. Marc.*, iv. 2. At page 49, Burns says: "He (Tertullian) traces its (the Symbol's) origin in the teaching of Christ, without showing any acquaintance with the later legend (sic) of its composition by the apostles." This does not indicate any wide or careful reading of Tertullian on the author's part.

OF THE APOSTLES.

of those going before. For there would be required the Gospel which Paul found, in which he believed, and [that] with which he presently rejoiced to find his own in agreement. And in fact, for this reason he went up to Jerusalem to make the acquaintance of the Apostles and to consult with them, lest perhaps he had run in vain (Gal. 2: 1.), that is, lest his faith and his preaching should not be in accordance with theirs. In fine, he conferred and agreed as with its authors about the Rule of Faith; they gave him the right hand of fellowship, and thereupon apportioned the task of preaching, they going unto the Jews and Paul going unto the Jews and Gentiles."

IX.

Marcion rejected the Gospel of : THE RULE  
Matthew, of Mark, and of John. : OF FAITH.  
He received the Gospel of Luke, :  
but only to mutilate it. Tertullian argues :  
that, as St. Paul had to get the Gospel :  
which he preached accredited by the older :  
Apostles, much more would the Gospel written :  
by Paul's disciple, Luke, need to be accredited :  
by them. There are several reasons why

### THE SYMBOL

*regula fidei* in this passage can mean only the Symbol. (1) The context seems to exclude any other meaning. In the preceding sentence Tertullian says that St. Paul consulted with the Apostles about "his faith and his preaching," i. e. the Gospel that he preached. Is it at all likely that a writer who is scarce less niggard of his words than Tacitus would repeat the same thing in the very next sentence? But this is just what he did if we understand *regula fidei*, with McGiffert, to mean "gospel." The fact seems to be that Tertullian wants Marcion (or rather his disciples) to understand that St. Paul, and therefore St. Luke, too, not only preached the same Gospel as the Twelve, but also followed the Symbol of Faith which the Twelve had delivered to the Church, "every clause" of it as he says elsewhere.<sup>10</sup>

(2). The Gospel is not a Rule of Faith, and is not therefore the *regula fidei* spoken of by Tertullian in this passage. The Gospel is the whole revelation of God in Christ, the *res credenda* or body of truths to be believed, not

<sup>10</sup> *De Praesc*, c. 27.

OF THE APOSTLES.

the *lex credendi*, or rule of belief. The Symbol, on the other hand, is a *lex credendi* or *regula fidei*, first because it embodies just such and so many Gospel truths as the law of Christ, promulgated by the Apostles, makes it obligatory on all Christians to believe explicitly and profess; secondly, because it serves as the "rule" or standard of orthodoxy in the Christian Church.

(3). McGiffert makes it abundantly evident that "regula" is not always used by Tertullian of a definite creed. In the passage that we are now dealing with, however, the expression is, not "regula," but "regula fidei." Now, I make bold to affirm two things, first, that Tertullian nowhere else speaks of the Gospel as "regula fidei;" and second, that wherever else he uses "regula fidei" it denotes, if not the Creed (which it does in every case but one), at least a creed or formulary of faith. The proof of this latter statement involves, as is obvious, the proof of the former. The expression "regula fidei" occurs twice in *De Praesc.* (chaps. 12 and 13), once in *Adv. Prax.* (c. 3), once in *De Virg. Vel.* (c. 1),

### THE SYMBOL

once in *De Monogamia* (c. 2), once in *Adv. Marcionem* (IV. n. 36), once in *De Jejuniis* (c. 1), and lastly in the passage under consideration (*Adv. Marc.* IV. 2). If it occurs anywhere else, I at least have been unable to find it. Well, in the first six cases it stands for the Symbol; in the seventh, for a symbol or creed. In the sixth place (*Adv. Marc.* IV. 36), "reward" is coupled with "rule" of the faith. But the allusion to the "Virgin" and her descent from David (whence our Lord is the "Son of David") in the very next sentence, suggests at once the "Virgin" of the Creed. In the seventh place (*De Jejuniis*), the words are, "rule of faith or hope." He says that Montanus and Priscilla and Maximilla do not "preach another God [as Marcion did], nor divide Jesus Christ (1 Jo. 4: 3), nor overturn any rule of faith or hope, but teach forthwith that we should fast oftener than marry." (This is sarcastic; Tertullian is by this time a Montanist, and here defends their tenets). The reference is to "a symbol" (*aliquam regulam*, not to the Symbol. But even here "regula fidei" denotes at least a creed or for-

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mulary of faith; it certainly does not denote the Gospel. Our conclusion, therefore, stands that "regula fidei" in *Adv. Marcionem* IV. 2. means the Symbol, and that Tertullian ascribes the authorship of it to the Twelve.

X.

With Tertullian "regula fidei" is the Creed. He often calls it "regula" for short. But "regula" has also other meanings. Whether it signifies the Creed in a given case, therefore, is to be gathered from the text of the passage and the context. There is a passage in *Adv. Marc.* 1. 20 which Kattenbusch cites in support of his thesis that the Old Roman Creed was drawn up before Marcion's time. It runs: "They [his disciples] say that Marcion did not so much innovate upon the Rule, by his severance of the Gospel from the Law, as restore the Rule that had been adulterated in the time going before." McGiffert takes issue with Kattenbusch here; he has to prove the latter's reading of the passage wrong, or the theory that he has been at so much pains

MEANING OF  
"REGULA."  
.....



### THE SYMBOL

to prop up collapses utterly. He succeeds, indeed, in showing that "regulam," of itself, need not mean the Symbol here, but he fails completely to find any other meaning for it that will fit. He tells us that "an examination of the context makes it evident that he [Tertullian] is thinking not of a creed but rather of the Canon of Scripture." Here, again, the word "evident" has no objective value. On the contrary, it is evident, or rather clearly demonstrable, that Tertullian is thinking of the Creed, not of the Canon of Scripture. The Canon of Scripture embraced, first of all, the books of the Old Testament, and these Marcion rejected every one. How, then, could his disciples say that he had not so much innovated upon this Rule as restored it to its pristine form, when all the world knew that the books of the Old Testament were in the Canon centuries before a word of the First Gospel was written? On the other hand, there was, properly speaking, no Canon of the New Testament, in Tertullian's time, which could be appealed to as a "regula." Nor would Tertullian, in any case, admit the Scripture, or any part of it, as his "regula."

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The context shows that "regula," in this passage, means the Gospel. But it does not mean the Gospel as preached by the Apostles, for thus the Gospel, instead of being a "rule," is itself, as has been already pointed out, subject matter of the "rule." "Faith," says Tertullian himself, "is set in a Rule—*Fides in regula posita est.*"<sup>11</sup> Moreover, a rule, from the nature of the case, must be something that is available for everyday use. But how could the preaching of the Apostles be made use of in this way, or even be known to the faithful of the post-apostolic age? There was only one way in which they could know it—aside from the New Testament, which Tertullian does not acknowledge as his "regula"—and that was Apostolic Tradition. Now the whole preaching of the Apostles did not come down through this channel, at least in a fixed and compact form that would serve as a Rule of Faith. But the gist of it, set forth in terms of the Apostles' own choosing, came down in the "summary of sound words" (2 Tim. 1: 13) known as the Symbol. This it is that St.

<sup>11</sup> *De Praesc.*, c 14.

## THE SYMBOL

Clement of Alexandria describes as “ the knowledge, in a brief and compendious form, of those things that are necessary to be known. . . . ”<sup>12</sup> “ For this,” says Irenæus, and his words are wholly to our purpose, “ is the essence (*επιλογή*) of the Apostolic doctrine and of the most holy Faith which was delivered to us, which the unlettered receive, and men of small learning taught, who give not heed to endless genealogies, but rather give diligence for the amendment of their life, lest they, deprived of the Divine Spirit, miss of the Kingdom of Heaven.”<sup>13</sup> This, then, as Kattenbusch rightly inferred, is that “ regulam ” which Marcion innovated upon,—the “ regulam ” which proclaims one “ God the Father Almighty, and Christ Jesus, His only Son, our Lord.” For this was the head and front of Marcion’s offending against the Faith, that he declared Christ was not the

<sup>12</sup> *Paed.* 1. 6 ; c. 10.

<sup>13</sup> *Works* (translation by Keble) Frag. XXXV. p. 554. *Ap-ropos of επιλογή* rendered “ essence,” Keble says : “ As the verb is used of picked men, I have ventured to translate the noun thus, as though the very choice part.” And certainly the “ medulla Fidei,” the very marrow of the Faith is contained in the Symbol.

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Son of the Father Almighty "shamelessly blaspheming," says Irenæus,"<sup>14</sup> Him who is declared God by the Law and the Prophets; affirming Him to be an evil-doer, and fond of wars, and inconstant also in His judgment, and contrary to Himself; and as for Jesus, that He came from that Father who is above the God who made the world, into Judæa in the time of Pontius Pilate the Governor, Tiberius Cæsar's Procurator, and was manifest in human form to the inhabitants of Judæa, to do away the Prophets and the Law and all the works of that God who made the world, whom he also calls Ruler of the world (Cosmocratorem)."

XI.

The Marcionites seem to have : A GUESS.  
affirmed (*aiunt*) what historical .....  
criticism affirms to-day, though for a different  
reason, that the primitive Creed was the  
simplest of simple formularies, being but a  
profession of belief in the Father, Son, and

<sup>14</sup>Ib. bk. 1; c. 27; n. 2.

## THE SYMBOL

Holy Spirit, in the very words of the commission given by our Lord to the Apostles (Matt. 28 : 28), without addition of any sort. Such a Creed would have lent itself admirably to Marcion's purpose, who might have maintained with some degree of plausibility that it was Christ's own Creed, that *παντοκράτορα* of the first article was an unwarranted addition, and therefore that he did not so much innovate upon the Rule of Faith as restore it to its simple and pristine form. This guess (it purports to be no more) is strongly supported by the context. For Tertullian goes on to say that the disciples of Marcion "point to the fact that Peter and the other pillars of the Apostolate were brought to book by Paul (Gal. 2) because they did not walk the straight way of truth in the Gospel." For Marcion, be it borne in mind, maintained that St. Paul was with him in severing the Gospel from the Law, and, with a view of making good his contention, mutilated Paul's Epistles, as Irenæus bears witness, "by taking out whatever is plainly spoken by the Apostle of the God who made the world, how that He is

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the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and whatsoever out of the prophetic writings the Apostle hath quoted in his teaching as predictive of the coming of the Lord.”<sup>15</sup>

XII.

Tertullian shows that the passage in Gal. 2, cited by the Marcionites, does not bear them out. The issue between Paul and the other Apostles, he observes, turned on a point of discipline merely; “the faith in the Creator and His Christ was never in question. For, had this been in question, it would figure prominently in the writings of the Apostle (Paul).”<sup>16</sup> He then clinches his case with an argument that converts the guess with which we have started out into a certainty, and once more reveals the firm persuasion of the Christians of that day that the Symbol had been handed down from the Apostles. Here are his words :

: CONVERTED  
: INTO A  
: CERTAINTY.  
: .....

<sup>15</sup> Bk. 1 ; c. 27 ; n. 2.

<sup>16</sup> *Adv. Marc.* l. 1 ; c. 21.

## THE SYMBOL

Now, if after the time of the Apostles the truth got adulterated in respect of the rule of God, then Apostolic tradition in the time of the Apostles themselves was still incorrupt touching this Rule ; and no tradition can be admitted as Apostolic save that which is set forth to-day in the Apostolic Churches. But you will find no Church of Apostolic rating that does not christen in the Creator (*quae non in Creatore christianizet*). Or, if the Apostolic Churches were corrupt from the beginning, where shall sound ones be found ? Those opposed to the Creator, forsooth ? Produce, then a Church of yours that is rated as Apostolic, and you will have made out your case. [This the Marcionite could not do]. Since, then, it is in every way clear that there was no other God but the Creator in the Rule of that sacrament (*in regulæ sacramenti istius*) from the time of Christ to the time of Marcion, our position is now made secure enough : we have shown that the belief in the God of the heretic [Marcion] dates from the severance [by Marcion] of the Gospel from the Law.

How could it be shown that no Church of Apostolic rating, as Tertullian words it, was to be found which did not christen in the Creator ? Not by the *πατρός* of the Baptis-

OF THE APOSTLES.

mal Formula, which Marcion could interpret in his own sense, but by the *πατέρα παντοκράτορα* of what Tertullian here calls the "Rule of the Sacrament," i. e. the Baptismal Creed. And this Rule Tertullian proves by the tradition of the Apostolic Churches to have existed, speaking broadly, "from the time of Christ."

To sum up Tertullian's argument. The Marcionites maintain (*aiunt*) that their founder did not tamper with the Rule of Faith, but rather restored to its pristine form the Rule which the Twelve had tampered with. For proof they point to the passage in Gal. 2. Tertullian shows that the dispute referred to in this passage concerned discipline merely, and that St. Paul preached the same doctrine as the Twelve. He next shows that this doctrine was anti-Marcionite. How does he do this? By means of the Apostolic Symbol. All the Apostolic Churches "christen in the Creator," a fact which is attested by the Symbol or "Rule of the Sacrament," and only by the Symbol. His adversaries might still maintain, however, that "after the time of the Apostles the truth got adulterated in respect of the Rule of God."



## THE SYMBOL

But surely not in all the Apostolic Churches, is Tertullian's answer (though not very clearly expressed), else has the truth perished from the face of the earth. Either the Apostolic Churches hold the true Faith, or there is no true Faith to be found anywhere. If the Marcionites could point to even one Apostolic Church which christened in God or in the Father simply, and not in the Father Almighty, Tertullian would be willing to grant that they had gone some way toward making out their case. "But since it is clear that there was no other God but the Creator in the Rule of the Sacrament from the time of Christ to the time of Marcion," he feels that the bottom has been clean knocked out of the Marcionite contention.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> When St. Justin says that the Christian "received the washing with water in the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe" (*Apol.* 1. n. 61), he, too, is citing the Baptismal Creed, not the Baptismal Formula, and bearing witness to the truth of Tertullian's saying that all the Apostolic Churches "christened in the Creator."

XIII.

It is instructive to note how : AN INSTRU-  
Protestants stand to-day where : TIVE PAR-  
the Marcionites stood in the : ALLEL.  
second century, and have the same watch-  
word. "Back to Christ!" cried the disciples  
of Marcion; "Back to Christ!" is the cry  
that is echoed in our own day. "Marcion in-  
troduced no new Rule of Faith, made no in-  
novations," said his disciples; "he did but re-  
store the Faith of Christ in its pristine purity."  
Put Luther for Marcion, and how strangely  
familiar the words sound! Luther, forsooth,  
was not an innovator, but a reformer; and the  
word "Reformation" is made to confer im-  
mortality on the unblushing falsehood. It  
was the Apostles themselves, according to  
Marcion, who perverted the truth; according  
to Luther, it was the Church founded by the  
Apostles. But the falsehood is fundamentally  
the same, for is it not written, *and lo I am  
with you always even to the consummation of  
the world?* If there are to-day—and we have  
no less an authority than Professor Harnack

### THE SYMBOL

for saying that there are—"numerous members of the Evangelic churches who, being sincere Christians [forsooth], feel themselves oppressed in conscience by many clauses of the Apostles' Creed,"<sup>18</sup> and would fain be rid of the formulary, this does but attest once more the tendency of history to repeat itself. So felt Marcion and his followers, "oppressed in conscience by many clauses of the Apostles' Creed, and they made all haste to cast them away. But the Church of the living God still stands where she stood, still holds fast the "Symbol of our Faith and Hope,"<sup>19</sup> still walks in the way of that Tradition which she has "received from the Apostles; which Tradition proclaims one God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *The Nineteenth Century*, July, 1903; p. 154.

<sup>19</sup> St. Jerome, *Contra Joann. Hier.*, n. 28.

<sup>20</sup> St. Irenæus, *Adv., Haer.*, bk. 3; c. 3; n. 3.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SYMBOL IN THE SUB-APOSTOLIC AGE.

I.

Before going to the New Testament for traces of the Symbol, it may be worth our while to look into a passage that is to be found in the pages of a pagan writer of the sub-apostolic age. Pliny the Younger, who became Governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor, in the first decade of the second century, has this to say of the Christians in a letter to the Emperor Trajan :

: A PASSAGE IN  
: PLINY.  
: .....

They [the Christians] declared this to be the sum of their wrong-doing or error, that they were wont to gather before dawn on a given day and say with one another a form of words (religious formula) to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by oath . . . not to commit theft, or robbery, or adultery; not to break their word, and not to deny (or give up)

## THE SYMBOL

what was committed to their keeping, when summoned (before the courts).<sup>1</sup>

Newman (*Development of Christian Doctrine*, ch. VI., sect. 1, n. 18) cites "How doth this chief sorcerer mock us, skilled by his Thessalian charm (*carmine*) to laugh at punishment"<sup>2</sup> as illustrating the force of *carmen* in this passage. *Carmen* also means a formula in religion or in law, as, *diro quodam carmine jurare*," Liv. 10. 38. 10; "*legationis carmen recitare*," Id. 3. 64. 10. It is difficult to conceive of anything that fits the *carmen dicere Christo quasi deo secum invicem* of Pliny better than the recitation of the Symbol in the assemblies of the faithful as it is done, in alternate parts, to this day. No other ancient formulary has made its way down from those early days which has a place in the Christian

<sup>1</sup> Adfirmabant autem hanc fuisse summan vel culpæ suæ vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem, seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent.—Epist. LXXXIII inter Epist. C. Plinii Trajano Imperatori.

<sup>2</sup> Prud. in hon. Rom. V. 404, 868.

OF THE APOSTLES.

worship and is at the same time a distinct profession of faith in Christ as God. Schaff, in his *Creeeds of Christendom*,<sup>3</sup> says that the Apostles' Creed is "a liturgical poem and an act of worship," and so it is, and so it has been from the first. In the fifth century Faustus speaks of it as *symboli salutare carmen*<sup>4</sup> and again calls it *cælestis sapientiae vitale carmen*.<sup>5</sup>

Pliny, in his letter to Trajan, asks how he is to deal with the Christians in his jurisdiction. On various occasions already he has had some of them before his tribunal, and the evidence they gave is under his eyes, or at any rate, fresh in his mind, as he writes. It is but natural, therefore, to conclude that what they had to say for themselves, as set forth in the passage cited above, is given in their own words. The reader will note the expressions "fidem fallerent" and "depositum abnegarent." The former of the two has an obvious classical sense. But it does seem likely that

<sup>3</sup> Vol. I, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> (*De Spir.*, I. 1).

<sup>5</sup> *Hom. 1 de Symbolo*.

THE SYMBOL

it bore a deeper meaning for men who were willing at all times, as Pliny himself bears witness in this letter, to lay down their lives rather than prove false to the "Faith once delivered to the Saints." There would have been little reason for swearing that they would not break their word, much for swearing that they would be true to the Faith.

II.

GUARDING : The second of the two expres-  
THE : sions is even more significant. It  
DEPOSIT. : might seem at first that the clause  
..... :  
"ne depositum appellati abnegarent" is to be construed to mean no more than this, that Christians took an oath "not to refuse to give up what was committed to them in trust when called upon" to do so. This is how the annotator of the edition of *Pliny's Letters* that lies before me interprets the clause, for he comments, "A frequent temptation, on account of the want of securities." But had this been the meaning intended, we should have "appellanti," not "appellati." "Abnegare" takes a dat-

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ive of the person from whom the thing is withheld, as "Rex tibi conjugium abnegat" <sup>6</sup> "Appellati," in the context of the passage before us, can mean only "when summoned before the courts," or "informed against," which comes to the same thing. Now it would be absurd for any one to swear that he would give up the thing committed to him in trust on being cited before the courts, when he could not choose but give it up, the law compelling him. Hence the word "depositum" must bear a special meaning in the present instance.

The meaning that it bears is not far to seek. We have seen how St. Gregory Nazianzen refers to the Sym<sup>l</sup> 3 "that excellent Deposit of the fathers that were nearest to Christ." We read how one of these "fathers" bids his disciple, "Guard the good deposit committed to thy trust, by the Holy Ghost who abideth in us."—2 Tim. 1:13. The words of the Apostle find an echo in Justin Martyr. The same word *φυλασσω* is used to express what we render in English "guard," but instead of "deposit" St. Justin has "Confession."

<sup>6</sup> Virgil.



## THE SYMBOL

“With guarding,” he writes, “the Confession in the Christ of God.”<sup>7</sup> So, too, St. Clement of Alexandria, in a passage already cited, considers it “the mark of a soul that loves to guard,” not the “Deposit,” nor the “Confession,” but what is another name for the same thing, “the blessed Tradition, so that it may not escape.”<sup>8</sup>

### III.

“ABNEGARE.”: The verb “abnegare,” which, during the classical period of the language, is found only in the poets, is but a strengthened form of “negare” as used by them. In post-Augustine prose it is used in the sense of “renouncing” or “giving over.” The Latin of the old *Versio Itala*, which the Vulgate largely conserves, belongs to this period. In Tit. 2 : 12, ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν of the original text appears in the Vulgate as “abnegantes impietatem,” which is more correctly rendered “renouncing” or “giving up” than “denying ungodliness,” as

<sup>7</sup> (*Dial.* 47).

<sup>8</sup> *Strom.* 1. 1.

OF THE APOSTLES,

in our English versions.<sup>9</sup> This is also the meaning "abnegare" has in a well known passage of the thirty-eighth homily of St. Gregory the Great, on Matt. 16: "Minus quippe est abnegare quod habet; valde multum est abnegare quod est—It is a little thing to give up what one has, but a very great thing to give up what one is." It would appear, therefore, that the clause "ne depositum appellati abnegarent" may mean either "not to give up the deposit," or "not to renounce that which was committed to their keeping, when cited (before the tribunal)." In the former case, "depositum" would signify the Symbol of the Faith; in the latter, the Faith itself.

IV.

Now this is precisely what catechumens bound themselves to do on the day of their baptism. They bound themselves to hold fast "the Faith in God, the Confession in Him who suffered," as Clement of Alexandria expresses it;

THE OATH  
OF THE  
CATECHU-  
MEN.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Robinson's *Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament*, ἀρνέομαι, (2 b).

### THE SYMBOL

in other words, "not to betray the Faith, not to give up the Symbol," but to guard sacredly the "blessed tradition, lest it should escape." The "word" which they as Christians pledged themselves to keep, or, "not to break," was not their word but *the* word (*ὁ λόγος*), the "summary of sound words" (2 Tim. 1: 13) which contained the whole Gospel as in a nutshell, the Symbol of the Apostles, "the Faith once delivered to the saints." This we know from other sources. And what is even more to the purpose, bearing out as it does the interpretation put upon the passage in Pliny, we know that it was customary with the early Christians to take an oath to guard their Baptismal Symbol. The custom still survived in the early part of the fourth century as appears from the words of St. Hilary in *Ad Constantium* l. 2, n. 4, where he speaks of "confessing under oath in baptism the Faith *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" A passage from Zahn, bearing on this same point, which Burn introduces with some words of his own,<sup>10</sup> must be cited entire.

<sup>10</sup> *An Introduction to the Creeds*, p. 57.

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It goes even beyond our immediate purpose, serving not only to prove the existence of the custom above referred to, but also to discredit Professor McGiffert's theory that it was "over against" the errors of Marcion the Old Roman Creed was framed.<sup>11</sup> Here are the words of Zahn as reproduced by Burn :

"In the one passage of the New Testament, as revised by Marcion, we find the mysterious passage, Gal. iv. 24, remodelled by the addition of words from Eph. i. 21, and others. We read there about the two covenants: 'The one, from Mount Sinai, which is the synagogue of the Jews after the law, begotten into bondage; the other, which is exalted above all might, majesty, and power, and over every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; which (covenant) is the mother of us all, which begets us in the holy Church, which we have acknowledged (or to which we have vowed allegiance). Marcion does not say, or rather does not allow the apostle to say, 'which we acknowledge,' but he looks back to the confession and the oath taken once for all with reference to 'the holy Church.' The word used here, 'repromittere,' 'επανγγέλλεσθαι,' de-

<sup>11</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 13 and *passim*.

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scribes such an oath, and had been used earlier by Ignatius of the oath taken on the confession of the Christian faith . . . Marcion thought much of the Church as he understood her, and considered the Christian relation to her a very close one. . . . As far as I can see, it follows from the passage quoted from his Epistle to the Galatians that the words 'a holy Church' were contained in Marcion's Baptismal Confession, and therefore in the Roman Creed of A. D. 145." Zahn, pp. 32f.

V.

THE OLD : It remains but to give what ap-  
ROMAN : pear to be the very words of the  
CREED. : oath taken by the early Christians  
..... :  
on the Symbol when Mother Church begot  
them in baptism, whom she fed on "milk,"  
"the first elements of the oracles of God," as  
having "need of" it, "and not of strong  
food."—Heb. 5 : 12. I am again indebted to  
Burn for these words, who in his turn cites  
them from Caspari, who found them in what  
I take to be a recovered fragment of St. Clem-  
ent's first Epistle, for they are no part of the  
text published by Migne in his *Patrologiae*

OF THE APOSTLES.

*Cursus Completus*, tom. 1, Parisiis, 1857.

The passage in Burn runs :

“ Caspari, indeed, quotes the oath found in that epistle (c. 58. 2): *Ξη γάρ ο θεός και Ξη ο κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός και τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἢ τε πίστις και ἡ ἐλπίς τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν*,<sup>12</sup> where the words *ἡ πίστις* stand in apposition to the preceding sentence. He compares with it Jerome against John of Jerusalem (c. 28). “ In symbolo fidei et spei nostrae . . . omne dogmatis christianae sacramentum carnis resurrectione concluditur.” Then he asks whether these words do not point to the neighborhood where the Old Roman Creed was composed.”<sup>13</sup>

Rather do they point to the Old Roman Creed itself. For, as Irenæus tells us, “ In the time of this Clement no small tumult having arisen among the brethren which were in Corinth, the Church in Rome wrote a most effective letter to the Corinthians, urging them to be at peace with one another, and renewing their faith, and [setting forth] the tradition which it had recently received from the Apostles, which tradition proclaims one God Al-

<sup>12</sup> Op. cit. p. 64.

<sup>13</sup> “ As God lives and the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, the Faith and Hope of the elect.”

### THE SYMBOL

mighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth."<sup>14</sup> The phrase "pointing to" might, with advantage to the meaning, take the place of "setting forth" supplied by Keble. Nowhere in Clement's first Epistle is "the tradition recently received from the Apostles, which tradition proclaims one God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth," set forth. But there is a distinct allusion to it in the words of the oath cited above, and again (c. 7. 2) where Clement calls it the glorious and venerable rule (*κανόνα*) of our tradition (*παραδόσεως αἰ κλήσεως*) "calling," and adds significantly: "Let us see what is good and pleasing in the eyes of Him who made us;" to wit, "the Father Almighty" of the Symbol.

<sup>14</sup> *Adv. Haer.* 1. 3, c. 3, n. 3 (as in Keble's translation).

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SYMBOL IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

“MANY attempts have been made,” says Burn,<sup>1</sup> to extract a formal Apostles’ Creed from the New Testament by comparison and combination of various passages. However ingenious, they always fail to prove more than this—that there was an outline of teaching (*τύπος διδαχῆς* Rom. vi. 17) upon which apostolic preachers and writers were agreed.” So far as we have any means of knowing, no “formal Apostles’ Creed” was ever put in writing before the time of Marcellus of Ancyra, in the fourth century. Even he

1. Op. cit. p. 8. The reverence and scholarly reserve of this writer are in pleasing contrast to the flippancy and cock-sureness of Harnack. Had the latter gone as deeply into original sources as Caspari and Kattenbusch, those patient investigators who performed the labor into which he has entered, he would show more sobriety of judgment than he does, and be much less confident in his denials.



## THE SYMBOL

does not profess to be setting forth such a formula, though we know from other sources the one he does set forth to be such. Neither Tertullian nor Irenæus gives us a formal Apostles' Creed. Both of them witness to the existence of a Baptismal Creed in their day; both of them trace it to an Apostolic origin; but neither of them, as we have seen, set before us the *ipsisima verba* of this Creed, nor all the elements of it. The East is one with the West in bearing witness that the Apostles' Creed was not first given in writing, nor transmitted from one generation to another in writing, but handed on by oral tradition in a secret manner, and "graved on the fleshly tablets of the heart."

## II.

AN OBJECTION:     Read in the light of this as-  
MET.                     sured fact, the second sentence of  
.....                     the following passage from Burn overthrows  
the objection raised in the first—an objection  
which he styles "the final and most formi-  
dable."

OF THE APOSTLES.

“If the Creed was really written by the Apostles, how could the next generation presume to alter its wording? In every Church, not excepting the Church of Rome, later generations still permitted further alterations, consistently if they need only to desire to maintain continuity of sense, impiously if they were really bound by the letter of their law of believing.”—p. 66.

As the Creed was not given in writing but orally, it is the sense that was regarded as sacrosanct, not the wording which must needs vary among the many-tongued generations of believers. The wording was important so far as it served to convey and to fix the meaning. From this point of view, which is the true one, the Nicene Symbol was Apostolic, while the Symbol of Arius, though much simpler and nearer the archetypal form aboriginally delivered, was really at variance with that formula. It is worth while pointing out, too, that, as the Creed was handed on by oral tradition only, neither Burn nor any one else can know that the next generation after the Apostles presumed to alter its wording.

THE SYMBOL

III.

THE STREAM OF TRADITION. : The attempts made to extract  
..... : a formal Apostles' Creed from  
the New Testament were all of  
them ill-advised and foredoomed to failure.  
The only way to trace the Creed to its origin is  
to follow the path of the tradition by which  
it came down to those who first set it before  
us ; just as the only way to find the source of  
golden sands washed down by a stream from  
the mountains is to follow upward the channel  
down which they have come. The Creed of  
the Apostles has been brought down to us by  
the same stream of Apostolical Tradition  
which has brought to us the work known as the  
*Acts of the Apostles*, with this difference that  
the latter was conveyed openly, the former in  
a secret manner. The original MS. of St.  
Luke's work perished long ages ago. It is  
Tradition that accredits the work as well as the  
fact of its inspiration. By Tradition here I  
mean all knowledge of the teachings, sayings,  
and doings of the Apostles that has come down  
to us outside of the books of the New Testa-  
ment, whether in writing or by word of mouth.

IV.

In tracing the origin of the Symbol, Burn has gone, unconsciously no doubt, on the Protestant assumption that the New Testament is the one and only source of all that we know or can know of the Apostles, of what they taught, of what they said, of what they did. He therefore begins his search for the Symbol in the New Testament writings, and not finding it there, draws the conclusion that it was not as yet in existence. The inference is logical, but the conclusion is false, because the assumption of the major premise is not founded on fact. That premise ignores and leaves out of account nothing less than what Newman has called "this broad fact of Catholicism, as real as the Continent of America or the Milky Way." The Catholic Church, the ever living Church of the living God, was already organized, was already carrying on her mission, was already preaching the Gospel to the nations, was already begetting children to God in baptism, had already her Baptismal Creed, before one word of the New Testament was put in

THE BROAD  
FACT OF  
CATHOLICISM.  
.....

### THE SYMBOL

writing. "As the creeds," says an Anglican authority whose words ring truer here than Burn's, "were the earliest development of the formal faith of the Church, so they are the first and most authentic form of her oral tradition. They were learned and confessed by the candidates for baptism, and openly recited as the rule of faith, one and the same from one generation to another. The creeds subserving in this way the growth and edification of the Church, are anterior to the Gospels. There are traces of them in fact observable in Scripture."<sup>2</sup> All that is needed to bring this into complete harmony with Catholic truth, and with fact—an obvious fact—as well, is to write "Creed" for "creeds." The one Church, of the one God and the one Lord, having one Faith, and one Baptism, surely can have but the one Creed.

<sup>2</sup> *Blunt's Theological Dictionary*, art. "Creeds."

V.

This one and Catholic Church, then, comes down the stream of time freighted with the whole Tradition of the Truth, the Word of God in its integrity. In her hand she holds the Scripture, but in her heart the Symbol of the Faith. The Scripture she reads and expounds openly to all men ; the Symbol, for a space, she hides from the profane, she recites not in the hearing of the stranger, she gives only to her children, and to these as a sacred trust, under oath, to be jealously guarded. Burn, and with Burn the whole school of historical criticism, have seen the Church of the first centuries bearing in her hand the Scripture, have heard her expound it, and have been present as spectators in the assemblies of the faithful until the signal was given for all those who were not initiated in the mysteries to withdraw. But they have never been privileged to witness a *Traditio* or *Redditio Symboli*, they have never heard the Symbol recited, and know no more of its existence than did those who

: THE SYMBOL  
AND THE  
SCRIPTURE.  
.....

## THE SYMBOL

were turned away at the same time. They can therefore no more discern a reference to the Symbol in the "good deposit" which Paul consigned to Timothy than the pagan Pliny could in the "deposit" which the Christians of Asia Minor in his day so nobly kept at the cost of their lives, what time he ordered them to be put to death for no other crime than their "unbending stubbornness," as he calls it, in confessing "the Faith once for all delivered to the saints."

## VI.

SCRIPTURAL:  
ALLUSIONS: ..... discern in the New Testament "an outline of teaching upon which apostolic preachers and writers were agreed." This is quite enough for our purpose. Even the critics will be driven by the inexorable law of logical consistency to admit that this outline can be no other than our Symbol. But first let us look into some of the allusions to the Creed, veiled indeed but unmistakable, that are to be found in the New Testament.

OF THE APOSTLES.

The "outline" in question it is that St. John refers to when he bids his disciples not to receive into their houses nor give greeting to the one who "bringeth not this teaching" (2 Jo. 11). "Whoso," says Polycarp, describing somewhat more fully for us "this teaching" of his master, "confesses not that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, he is Antichrist; and whoso twists the words of the Lord after his own caprices, and says that there is to be no resurrection and no judgment, he is the firstborn of Satan. Wherefore renouncing the vain conceits of the many and their false doctrines, let us return to that word which was delivered to us from the beginning."<sup>3</sup> This "outline," this "word," was a summary of Apostolic teaching, the Gospel in a compendious and portable form, which could be "brought" and set forth by the pilgrim and the stranger, and which should serve those to whom they brought it as a test or tessera of orthodoxy. Christian Antiquity knows of no formulary that answers this description but the Symbol of the Apostles.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. A. Lapide's *Commentaries* (in 2 Ep., 8 Joh.)



## THE SYMBOL

“Baptism,” we read in 1 Peter, 3: 20–22, “consisteth not in a cleansing of the impurities of the flesh, but in the examination of a good conscience toward God.” On this the Abbé Fouard remarks: “The Greek commentators explain the word *επερώτη* by the synonyms *εξέτασις*, *εξετήσις*, and the Vulgate translates it by ‘interrogatio.’ De Wette and Huther (in Meyer’s Commentary) recognize the fact that this is an allusion to the Baptismal interrogation, and consequently to the Profession of Faith—the Credo—demanded of every catechumen. It is worthy of note that three articles of the Apostles’ Creed are mentioned here by St. Peter as making part of this interrogation of a good conscience before God, this interrogation which saveth us by *the Resurrection of Jesus, Who . . . . is ascended into Heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God.*”<sup>4</sup> One is reminded of the words of Tertullian,<sup>5</sup> “The soul is sanctified, not by the washing, but by the response;” and again,<sup>6</sup> “After this

<sup>4</sup> *St. Peter and the First Years of Christianity* (translated by G. F. X. Griffith. Longmans, 1898) p. 239, footnote.

<sup>5</sup> *De Resurr. Carnis.* 48.

<sup>6</sup> *De Cor. Mil.* 3.

OF THE APOSTLES.

we are thrice dipped, answering somewhat more fully than the Lord determined in the Gospel," to wit, the Faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

In 1 John, 5: 5, 6, where Faith in Christ is the theme, Westcott, cited by Burn (p. 18), notes how the aorist points to the single moment of baptism. "This is the victory that overcame (*ἔνικησασα*) the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh (*ὑπεκών*) the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God."

VII.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul speaks of the "first elements of the oracles of God" (5: 12) given to those who were born again by baptism, even as "milk" is given to a "babe" (v. 13). This appears to be "the confession (*τῆς ὁμολογίας*)" that he had referred to in a preceding chapter (4: 12). This "outline," which suggests the *χαρακτῆρα* of Irenaeus and the "indicium" of Rufinus, was in the nature of a "deposit" (1 Tim. 6: 21; 2 Tim. 1: 12,

: THE PATTERN  
OF SOUND  
WORDS.  
.....

## THE SYMBOL

14) or sacred trust to be guarded by the faithful; a "form" or "pattern" or "summary" of "sound words" first "heard among many witnesses," and to be committed to "faithful men" who should be "fit to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2: 2). On these passages of St. Paul's letters to Timothy, the Anglican Blunt observes: "It is almost impossible to find any other meaning for the Apostle's words if they do not refer to such a formulary as the Creed." And the Abbé Fouard<sup>7</sup> points out that the word *υποτύπωσις* rendered "form" in the English version, is employed by Sextus Empiricus to denote "an abridgment of a doctrine or philosophy." There are further allusions to the Creed in the writings of St. Paul as well as in the other Pastoral Epistles, but enough to have cited these.

## VIII.

SUMMING UP : Let us now sum up the case  
THE CASE : for the Apostolic authorship of  
..... the Symbol so far as it rests on the evidence  
to be found in the New Testament. There

<sup>7</sup> *Loc. cit.*

## OF THE APOSTLES.

existed in the Apostolic Church an "outline of teaching," a "summary of sound words," a "confession," a "deposit," which was to be guarded with jealous care, which was closely bound up with the sacrament of baptism, which was a tessera of orthodoxy, which was committed by the Apostles to faithful men who were charged, in their turn, to hand it on to the succeeding generation of believers. A century glides away, and we find Irenæus, who is brought up in the East, and Tertullian, who is brought up in the West, setting forth a "doctrine," a "tradition," an "outline," a "tessera," a "Rule of Truth," a "Rule of Faith," which served as a Baptismal Confession in their day, and which we identify with the Old Roman or Apostles' Creed. Both of these witnesses, one of whom is the disciple of Polycarp who got the "teaching" and tessera of the Apostolic Faith from St. John, assure us that the Rule of Truth and Faith which baptism bestowed on them was everywhere the same within the pale of the world-wide Church, and that it was instituted by the Apostles.

## THE SYMBOL

Briefly, then, the case stands thus. Historical criticism will either admit the "teaching" of St. John, the "deposit" and "pattern of sound words," and "outline of teaching," spoken of by St. Paul, to be identical with Irenæus's "outline" and "Rule of Truth," with Tertullian's "tessera" and "Rule of Faith," or it will not. If it will, then it acknowledges the Apostles to be the authors of the Symbol. If it will not, let it first settle its account with Irenæus and Tertullian, to whom it has given the lie, and then find for us, in the writings of the second century, the "teaching" of St. John, and the "deposit" which Timothy was to keep himself and hand on to faithful men, as he had been solemnly charged to do by the Apostle. Its quest of this lost formulary is like to prove more laborious and, if that were possible, even less fruitful than its quest of the source whence came the Symbol.

IX.

Let me try by means of a : A SIMPLE  
simple parable to bring the matter ..... PARABLE.  
home to the minds and understandings of  
the critics, if haply those doubting Thomases  
can be got to believe when it has been  
given them to "touch and see." A writes  
to B to inform him that he is sending a  
parcel by C, who is well known to both. In  
due time C arrives with the parcel, and hands  
it to B, telling him that this is the parcel A  
had sent him. B jots down in his notebook  
the fact of his having received from A the  
parcel in question, and gives a description of  
its contents. In ordinary life, X, Y, or Z, on  
reading the entry in B's notebook, would  
never dream of doubting that it was correct—  
unless he had positive proof that B was a liar  
and deceiver. Well, A is the Apostle John,  
C is Polycarp, his disciple, and B is Irenæus,  
who sat at the feet of Polycarp and got from  
him the Creed which he describes for us in his  
works, and describes in such a way as to enable  
us to identify it with Tertullian's Rule of Faith

## THE SYMBOL

and the Symbol of the Roman Church. Either, then, Irenæus is a liar, or his Baptismal Creed has the Apostles for its authors.

If earlier writers of the second century, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin, or the nameless author of the *Didaché*, gave us a definite "outline of teaching" or "pattern of sound words," other than the Creed of Tertullian and Irenæus, and assured us that they got it from the Apostles, the case would be different. But either they are silent altogether, or the allusions they do make to a form of teaching are just such as we should expect from men who had a definite Creed but forbore, as did the Apostles before them, to set it forth in writing.

### X.

HARNACK'S : When, therefore, Harnack,  
GUESSWORK. : with his customary assurance,  
..... tells us that, "There did actually exist in  
the East (in Asia Minor or, as the case may  
be, Asia Minor and Syria), as early as the  
beginning of the second century, *inter alia*  
a christological *μάρτυμα* which is most inti-  
mately related to the second article of the

OF THE APOSTLES.

Roman creed" (p. 69), he does but thrust his crude guesses upon us for historical facts. What warrant has he for the assumption of a plurality of formulas implied in his *inter alia* and expressed in his christological *μάθημα* related to but not identical with the second article of the Roman Creed? Not the least shred of real warrant. Ignoring the so patent fact that the Symbol was not a written creed, and taking no account of the Discipline of the Secret, he mistakes for confessional formulas what are really but fragments of the Symbol. St. John has but one "teaching" for his disciples to believe in, and for the stranger to "bring" to them in token of fellowship in the same Faith. St. Paul knows of but "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism," one "outline of teaching," one "pattern of sound words," one "deposit," which his disciples are to guard and to hand on to other faithful men. St. Polycarp speaks of but one "word delivered to us from the beginning," and St. Justin of one "Confession in the Christ of God." Irenæus has but one "Rule of Truth" which one Baptism bestows on believers throughout all the



## THE SYMBOL

world, and Tertullian's Tesseræ is "one, sole, unchangeable, and irreformable." We conclude, then, that Harnack's *alia* exist only in his too exuberant imagination, and that in reality even his "christological μαθημα" is but another name for the many-named Symbol. In matter of fact, we have it on the authority of the Emperor Justinian, in his *Adv. Origenem*, that, in the East, *mathema* and Symbol were used interchangeably to denote the Baptismal Creed. For he tells us that, in the Council of Chalcedon, the Fathers "followed in all things the aforesaid symbol or *mathema*," i.e. the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and that the Fathers at Ephesus "anathematized those who should give candidates for baptism another [i.e. a different] definition of Faith, or symbol, or *mathema*."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Migne, tom. 69, col. 246.

CHAPTER IX.

DRAWN UP BY THE TWELVE.

I.

Not the least interesting chapter of a deeply interesting book is that in which the Abbé Fouard discusses the origin of the Apostles' Creed.<sup>1</sup> He traces it to an Apostolic source, but not to the traditional one. Because of variations which are "incontestable," he finds that he cannot "accept without reservation the tradition which credits the composition of the Symbol to the Twelve on the eve of their separation" (p. 237). He says :

: THE ABBE  
: FOUARD'S  
: THEORY.  
: .....

The time was not one likely to produce forgeries. The Church, being still oriental

<sup>1</sup> *St. Peter and the First Years of Christianity* (translated by G. F. X. Griffith). Longmans, 1898.

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to all outward seeming, preached and meditated without feeling any need of dogmatizing on her beliefs. The disciples' only anxiety was to treasure up every one of the Master's words, and thus embrace the whole body of the truth, not to compress it into a precise form. When Rufinus credits the Apostles with so much anxiety lest they should fail to teach the one same doctrine, after their dispersion, he forgets that the Holy Spirit spoke by their mouth, and was to assist them to the very last hour of their lives. So, then, we conclude that the Creed had its origin, not in Jerusalem but at a later date, in Rome, when Peter and Paul were nearing the close of their lives."

The reasons given by the learned Abbé in support of this view are more specious than solid. The ancient tradition has to be taken without reservation or not at all. In Leo the Great we have a most trustworthy exponent of it, and one who certainly would not abate by as much as a jot or tittle the prerogatives of the See of Peter. Yet he knows of no Symbol composed by SS. Peter and Paul. His is *duodecim apostolorum totidem signata sententiis*—the joint composition of the Twelve.

II.

Let us take the Abbé's reasons in order. Variations in the form of the Symbol are by no means incontestable, in an unqualified sense. The Symbol, as has been so often observed, was not first given in writing, nor is it found in writing earlier than the fourth century, though Irenæus and Tertullian embody the drift and meaning of it in words of their own, and there are fragments of it scattered here and there in almost all the early writings. Rufinus is our first witness to the precise form in which it was recited by the candidates for baptism. And he tells us that, while additions, all of them inconsiderable, were made "in divers Churches, yet this is not found to have been done in the Church of the city of Rome."<sup>2</sup>

THE UNAL-  
TERED SYM-  
BOL.  
.....

Rufinus gives two reasons why the Roman Church "kept her Symbol inviolate," as St. Ambrose puts it: (1) that "heresy never had its origin there," and (2) that "it was customary in Rome from the olden time for those

<sup>2</sup> *In Symb. Apost.*, n. 3 (Migne, tom. 2, col. 339).

## THE SYMBOL

who were about to receive baptism to recite the Symbol publicly, that is, in the hearing of the faithful; and certainly those who went before us in the faith would not bear to hear even a single word added" to the Creed. Burn questions the historical accuracy of what Rufinus says in the first place, and remarks that, "The comparative freedom from the assaults of heresy which the Roman Church enjoyed during the fourth century, when Rome was the refuge of Athanasius and Marcellus, tended to obscure the fact that during the second and third centuries the city was the favored resort of false teachers" (p. 58). But Rufinus does not say that heresy was not taught in Rome; what he says is that it did not originate there. And this seems to be true, at least in the sense that those who taught heresy there were not members of the local Roman Church, but came from without. Thus Valentinus, and Cerdon, and Marcion, heresiarchs of the second century, came to Rome from the East, where they were imbued with the errors "of Simon and his sect," as Irenæus bears witness; <sup>3</sup> also (*Ib.* n. 4),

<sup>3</sup> Bk. 1; c. 27; n. 1;

OF THE APOSTLES.

where he describes them as the "disciples and successors of Simon the sorcerer of Samaria." Novatus and Novatian, in the following century, were not Romans, the one being an African, the other a Spaniard; and they taught no new heresy. The false doctrines which they spread had their root in the Montanist error.

St. Ambrose, or whoever the author is of *Explanatio Symboli ad Initiandos*, touches the fundamental reason why the Roman Church kept her Symbol unchanged when he calls attention to the singular veneration with which the See of Peter, the Apostolic See, regarded the Apostolic Symbol. "If," he says, "we may not take anything from or add anything to the writings of one Apostle, we certainly may not take anything from or add anything to the Symbol which we accept as having been composed and handed down to us by the (twelve) Apostles. This is the Symbol which the Roman Church possesses—the Church over which Peter, the chief of the Apostles presided, and to which he brought the common formula (of Faith)—*communem sententiam.*"

THE SYMBOL

III.

But let us grant the variations (in the form, not in the articles of Faith embodied) in the Symbol, incontestable. Is not the objection which the Abbé bases upon them a sword that cuts both ways? Is a Creed composed by the Apostles Peter and Paul, in Rome, when nearing the close of their lives, in any essential respect less venerable or sacrosanct a formula than a Creed composed by the Twelve, in Jerusalem, on the eve of their dispersion? Singularly enough, this objection, which Burn, too, urges, as we have seen, and, without being aware of it, satisfactorily solves, is solved by the Abbé also, in the following passage, without being himself the wiser for it:

A TWO-EDGED  
OBJECTION.  
.....

“ Nevertheless let us call to mind the fact again that it [the Symbol] was never regarded as an inspired witness, an immutable text, in the same sense as our Holy Books. It was a formula of initiation, a Profession of Faith, hence Christians were careful in preserving its exact terms; but it was not a document of revelation, and hence the perfect freedom with

OF THE APOSTLES.

which, outside of Rome, in the first centuries, and later on in Rome itself, they proceeded to modify its primitive form.”<sup>4</sup>

While this disposes of the objection, it is not itself correct in every particular. The Symbol was not regarded as an “immutable text,” for the simple reason that it was not from the first a “text” at all. But it was regarded as immutable, the truths it embodied being immutable. A “document of revelation” it was not, it is true, but an authentic summary of the Christian revelation, an “outline” of oral teaching, a “pattern of sound words.” It was not, nor did it purport to be a new revelation, but a summing up of what had been already revealed. At the same time, there is no reason for assuming that it was not held to be an inspired witness, seeing that the authors of it were inspired and infallible—not less inspired and infallible when they delivered their message by word of mouth than when they delivered it in writing. In point of fact, the author of the *Explanatio* deems the Sym-

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* 245.



## THE SYMBOL

bol to have greater authority than the writings of any one Apostle, as being the joint work of the Twelve; just as a definition of Faith given by a General Council carries more weight with the run of men than one set forth by the Pope alone, though it has no greater intrinsic authority.

### IV.

RUFINUS : The Abbé does Rufinus less  
SPEAKS FOR : than justice when he represents  
HIMSELF. : him as "crediting the Apostles  
..... :  
with so much anxiety lest they should fail to  
teach the one same doctrine, after their dis-  
persion." Let Rufinus speak for himself :  
"Being thus about to separate from one an-  
other," he says, "they [the Apostles] first drew  
up in common a norm for their preaching in  
the after-time, lest, when they had gone in  
different directions, one should set forth to  
those who were invited to receive the Faith of  
Christ something different from what was set  
forth by another." Rufinus is thinking of the  
Profession of Faith which would be required,  
according to the Divine command (Mark 16 :

OF THE APOSTLES.

16), of all those who should seek to enter the Church by baptism. Now, while there was not the least danger that the Apostles themselves would fail to teach the same doctrine, in a general way, there was grave danger that those who came after them should not. What is more, nothing short of a miracle would have made the Apostles individually embody the self-same points of faith and the same number of articles in the formulary that was to be tendered to the candidates for baptism, had they not collectively agreed upon it before their separation.

V.

Here we have a fresh proof, and an irrefragable one, of the truth of the ancient tradition.

: AN ADDI-  
: TIONAL  
: PROOF  
: .....

In the latter half of the second century, the Baptismal Creed of all the Churches, both in the East and in the West, was, so Irenæus and Tertullian assure us, one and the same. How came it to be one and the same? If it had been composed in Rome by SS. Peter and Paul, as the Abbé Fouard supposes it to have

## THE SYMBOL

been, it could not have made its way into the other Churches, for each Church founded by an Apostle would cling to its own Confession. If, on the other hand, its own Confession, the Confession it got from its founder, tallied exactly with the Roman one, this, failing a pre-existing agreement between the founders, could not be without a miracle—and miracles hold a first place in the great category of *entia* that are not to be multiplied without necessity.

It will be said that this reasoning rests on an assumption which may be challenged, the assumption, namely, that each of the Apostolic Churches had a Baptismal Creed from the first. "The Church," we are told, "being still oriental to all outward seeming [what time the Apostles were all together in Jerusalem], preached and meditated without feeling any need of dogmatizing on her beliefs." This, rather, is the assumption, and one not reconcilable with known facts. The Church from the Day of Pentecost onward, in obedience to the Master's injunction, did more than preach and meditate—she baptized, and, when there was question of adults, baptized only such as

OF THE APOSTLES.

made a profession of faith in the truths of the Christian Religion. Is it not fatuity (the word is almost a mild one) to think that the Apostles failed to realize that it was their place as the first and supreme pastors of the Church to determine, once and for all, what truths of the Christian Religion should be embodied in that profession, and in what "form of sound words?"

VI.

One more citation from the Abbé, and we have done with this phase of the subject. He is setting forth the reasons which led him to conjecture that the Symbol was composed in Rome:

:PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE SYMBOL.....

"Here in Rome place and time alike had changed. Difficulties and divisions came to trouble the unanimous faith of the first day . . . The doctrines of these innovators were not so much to be feared as their speech, for it spread like a cancer, masking its inward corruption under a profane show of new words (2 Tim. 2: 17). To shun these pitfalls of speech. . .

## THE SYMBOL

it behooved their leaders to arm themselves with certain fixed terms. Hitherto the Apostolic preaching had aimed solely at making Jesus better known and loved. Now the hour was come for embodying their teaching in a few essential dogmas, which all could commit to memory, and hold as a safeguard against heresy." (p. 238).

This takes it for granted that the primary purpose of the Symbol was to serve as a safeguard of the Faith and a test of truth and error, whereas its primary purpose was confessional and catechetical. "With the heart," says St. Paul, "we believe unto justice, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. 10:10. It is pleasant to find oneself for once in accord with Harnack, who says on this point: "The purposes for which it [the Symbol] was composed can be determined with certainty from our knowledge of its uses: it sprang out of the missionizing and catechizing function of the Church, and was originally merely the confession to be used at baptism (*ter mergitaur, amplius aliquid respondentes quam Dominus in Evangelio determina-*

OF THE APOSTLES.

vit.—Tertullian).”<sup>3</sup> It is singular that one who was clear-sighted enough to see this should not also have seen the consequence logically involved in it. Since the missionizing and catechizing function of the Church began on a world-scale when the Apostles set themselves to “preach the Gospel to every creature,” the formulary which has ever been the basis of catechetical instruction in the Church must have come into existence about the same time. Furthermore, error was to be met from the very first. The Apostles knew from the first that heresies would arise, for the Master had clearly foretold this (Matt. 7:15). It was needful, therefore, that, from the first, they should make provision against heresy.

<sup>3</sup> *The Nineteenth Century*, for July, 1893; art. “The Apostles’ Creed,” translated from the German by Mary A. Ward.

CHAPTER X.

THE KERYGMA AND THE SYMBOL.

I.

THE RULE OF:      The more recent writers on  
FAITH.            the Creed assume Tertullian's  
.....            "Rule of Faith" and Irenæus's "Rule of  
"Rule of Faith"    Truth," (which he, too, in one place names the  
"Rule of Faith")<sup>1</sup> to be identical with the  
Apostolic Symbol. It is true that Harnack  
tries to show that the Rule of Irenæus was not  
at all a Baptismal Creed; that it was drawn up  
independently by Irenæus himself. But this  
opinion of Harnack's, singular in every sense  
of the word, has been shown elsewhere to be  
untenable.<sup>2</sup> One who should read only the  
later works on the Creed would not even know

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Haer.* bk. 1; c. 22; n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Chap. III.

OF THE APOSTLES.

that there ever has been question at any time of the "Rule of Faith" being other than the Symbol. Yet the Catholic Probst and the Anglican Swainson have maintained that the two are not identical. And Dom Gasquet, in an article contributed to *The Dublin Review* for October, 1888, deems their arguments "conclusive."<sup>3</sup> At the same time he holds that "the distinction between the Creed and the Rule of Faith must not be too strongly pressed." The fact that the later critics simply overlook these arguments seems to imply that they attach little weight to them. Nor are they undeserving of being thus ignored.

II.

We are told that the Creed and the Rule of Faith "are clearly distinguished by Clement of Alexandria." Let us first of all try to get a right understanding of this matter. When it is said that the Creed and the Rule of Faith are distinct, the implication is that the latter, too, is a definite formulary.

: NOT A DEFINITE FORMULARY.  
: .....  
: .....

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 279.



## THE SYMBOL

Swainson in fact speaks of both the one and the other as "documents,"<sup>4</sup> though all Christian Antiquity attests that the Creed was not a "document" at all from the first, but an oral confession of the Faith. If by the "Rule of Faith" we understand, not a definite formula, but Apostolic Tradition in general, or the teaching of the Church or the Fathers, or the exposition of the Creed given orally by those intrusted with the task of preparing candidates for baptism, the distinction between the Symbol and the Rule of Faith is freely granted. But then it is a perfectly futile distinction. No one would dream of identifying the Symbol with Apostolic Tradition, of which it is but a small, though exceedingly important part, or with the preaching of the Church and teaching of her doctors, of which it is but the briefest kind of summary.

<sup>4</sup> *The Nicene and Apostles' Creed*, p. 9.

III.

As regards Clement of Alexandria, the only thing that really is clear in his works touching this question of the Creed is a plentiful lack of clearness. He is vague and obscure of set purpose. Whatever else he makes a mystery of, of this he makes none. Over and over again he warns the reader that it is only "to him who is capable of receiving in secret the things traditionally delivered that that which is concealed shall be made known."<sup>5</sup> Clement shows himself ever most careful not "to commit to writing things which," as he says a little further on, "we are on our guard even to speak about." He does in one place, after making a distinct reference to the Baptismal Creed as *τὴν ὁμολογίαν τὴν πρὸς ἡμᾶς*—"the Confession that we have"—, go on to mention "the ecclesiastical rule, and especially that profession which is made about things of supreme importance."<sup>6</sup> That "profession "

:A PLENTIFUL  
LACK OF  
CLEARNESS.  
.....

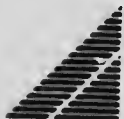
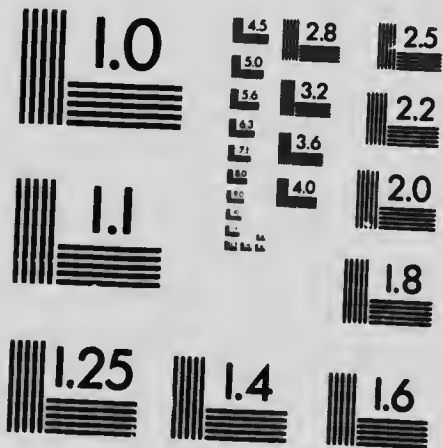
<sup>5</sup> *Strom.* I. 1. c. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Strom.* VII. c. 15: n. 90.



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THE SYMBOL

(ὁμολογίαν) is again the Creed. What "the ecclesiastical rule" is we can only guess. But as he speaks in the preceding sentence of the duty of "the good man not to lie, and not to go back on what he has promised," where the context implies an allusion to the baptismal vows, we may infer that "the ecclesiastical rule" which it is the duty of the Christian not to transgress is the whole obligation taken in baptism, which binds the neophyte, among other things, especially to keep the Confession of the Faith. For the rest, so effectually has St. Clement concealed the mysteries from the uninitiated that Harnack is in doubt whether the Saint does or "does not in one place assume the existence of a fixed symbol," and says that, in either case, "there is no art that can discover how this symbol ran." <sup>7</sup>

IV.

: ST. CYPRIAN'S St. Cyprian is said to distin-  
: RULE. guish "even more explicitly"  
: ..... than St. Clement between the  
Creed and the Rule of Faith. If it could be

<sup>7</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 67.

OF THE APOSTLES.

shown from other sources that there existed in Cyprian's time a doctrinal formulary akin to the Creed but distinct from it, his "lex," in one instance, might perhaps be taken to mean this formulary. As it is, the assumption that it does mean a formulary at all is founded on nothing better than a blind guess. Cyprian says that "we and the schismatics (Novatian) have not one law of the Symbol, nor the same interrogation."<sup>8</sup> But the Symbol itself in Cyprian's time was known as the "law" and "rule" of the Faith. So Tertullian, in the earlier part of the third century, always calls it, and if any man can be said to have known Tertullian by heart, that man's name is Cyprian. Now, what a law needs to apply it is not another law but authentic interpretation, and this seems to be the force of "symboli legem" in Cyprian. "For when they ask," he goes on to say, "Dost thou believe in the remission of sins and eternal life through the holy Church? they lie in the interrogation itself, seeing that they have not the Church." Yet, plain it is that they had the Church, as to

<sup>8</sup> *Ad Magnum*, c. 7.

### THE SYMBOL

the letter. But "holy Church" meant one thing to them and quite another thing to Catholics. In other words, they differed from Catholics, not in the letter of the Symbol, but in the interpretation of it.

In the earlier part of this same paragraph, Cyprian distinguishes between "law" and "symbol," where he states the objection that "Novatian holds the same law which the Catholic Church holds, and baptizes with the same symbol that we do." But who can say for certain what "law" means here? It may mean the whole discipline of the Church regarding baptism and its administration, or it may mean the same as "law of the symbol" above referred to—or it may bear any one of several other possible meanings. "I conceive," are the words of Swainson, the first word 'law' represents what Tertullian calls the rule of faith" (p. 43). Now, everybody to-day takes Tertullian's Rule of Faith to be the Symbol. So much for the conjectures of historical criticism. When men leave the beaten path of Catholic tradition, and try to make their way by the feeble and fitful light of individual

OF THE APOSTLES.

reason, they do but grope about in the dark and guess at the truth. The ground to be gone over in the quest of the Symbol is very uncertain and difficult ground. With Faith to light one's steps, and by following the footprints of Tradition, one may hope to find one's way. Without such help as this, one is as apt to go astray as is the traveler who has to make his way at night and alone in a trackless wilderness.

V.

But St. Cyril of Jerusalem : LIGHT AND  
and St. Isidore are said to be : DARKNESS.  
"decisive witnesses" to the distinction in  
question. Of St. Cyril and his witness I  
am not in position to say anything.  
But perhaps it will not be unfair to judge  
his testimony by that of the Saint who  
is bracketed with him. Swainson cites St.  
Isidore "to show that early in the seventh  
century a distinction was made between the  
Symbol and a Rule of Faith," and then passes  
on to the consideration of his subject, the



## THE SYMBOL

origin of the Creed, to wit, "with the assistance of the light which" said distinction "pours forth" (p. 10). But if the light be darkness, how great is the darkness! It is clear from St. Isidore's words and the description he gives of the so-called "Rule of Faith," that it is not at all a definite formulary.<sup>9</sup> In fact it is more than doubtful whether the title of the chapter in which he treats of it, "De Regula Fidei," is the Saint's own: it is more likely the editor's. St. Isidore himself speaks of what he calls "after the Symbol of the Apostles, the most certain faith which our doctors have handed on," and at the end says: "This is the Catholic tradition of the Faith in its true integrity." A glance at the contents of this chapter is enough to show that what St. Isidore presents is a summary of the traditional teaching of the Church as set forth by the Fathers, and especially by St. Augustine. Among the items of this "most certain faith" we find, "And that the origin of the soul is uncertain." St. Augustine had so

<sup>9</sup> *De Eccl. Officiis*, c. 24 (Migne, tom. 8., cols. 817, 818, 819, 820).

OF THE APOSTLES.

ruled it in his day.<sup>10</sup> Again, "That no one by his own unaided power is incorporated in Christ," where we recognize once more St. Augustine's teaching against the Pelagians. In short, nothing can be plainer than that St. Isidore's "most certain faith" was not at all a definite formulary. Nor does it bear any but the remotest resemblance to the "Kerygma" of Origen, and the "Rule of Faith" to which Tertullian and Irenæus so often appeal. It ill becomes Canon Swainson, therefore, to rail at Pusey and Newman because of some trifling inaccuracies in translation, when he himself founds his spurious distinction between the Symbol and the Rule of Faith, first of all, on what St. Isidore sets forth in this chapter. A man with half an eye, let alone a person of Swainson's perspicacity, might have seen that Isidore's "most certain faith" is but the Saint's own summary of what the Fathers teach. To have set it side by side with the

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Ep.* 153, al. 7 (*Op. Aug.* tom. 2), where the Saint speaks of the origin of the soul as "involved in densest darkness" (n. 7), though he affirms the soul to be a created thing and immortal (*Ib.*). Cf. also his works *passim*.

## THE SYMBOL

Symbol as a distinct formulary and "Rule of Faith," was, if not consciously dishonest (which no one supposes), very uncritical of Swainson, very misleading, and very mischievous.

### VI.

A CASE OF : We are further told that, "The  
*Felo de Se.* : Rule of Faith, as St. Irenæus  
.....: says, (IV. 26, 4.) was committed to the Bishop·  
while the Creed was intended for the laity."<sup>11</sup>  
Turning to the passage in Irenæus to which the reference is given, we find what the Saint says to be that "those who have Church succession from the Apostles . . . both guard that Faith of ours, the object of which is one God who made all things ; and increase that love which points to the Son of God, . . . and expound to us the Scriptures without any danger." If one brings to the reading of this passage a mind imbued with the preconceived idea that there is a distinction between the Creed and the Kerygma or Rule of Faith, he

<sup>11</sup> *The Dublin Review*, Oct. 1888, p. 280.

may possibly find evidence in it of the truth of the statement cited above. Otherwise he will discern in "that Faith of ours, the object of which is one God who made all things," a plain allusion to the Symbol, of which we have here the first article. But the whole matter may be cut short by a *reductio ad absurdum* of the argument for the alleged distinction. On the preceding page<sup>12</sup>, Dom Gasquet had said: "They—St. Irenæus, Tertullian, and Novatian—use a term for the Kerygma which we do not find in Scripture; *κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας*, 'Regula fidei' or 'veritatis.' But in comparing the passages I refer to, it will be seen that the same thing is intended by all these different phrases." Now, St. Irenæus tells us expressly that the Christian "receives by his baptism the unchangeable Rule of Faith."<sup>13</sup> If, then, the Symbol and Rule of Faith were not one and the same, and if it were to the Bishop only the latter was committed, it would follow that, according to Irenæus, only Bishops were baptized in the early Church! Under-

<sup>12</sup> *Ib.* p. 279

<sup>13</sup> Bk. 1; c 9; n. 1.

## THE SYMBOL

stand what you will by *χανῶν τῆς ἀληθείας*, it is certain, if Irenæus is a trustworthy witness, that baptism bestowed it on believers, on laymen, priest, and bishops. "And neither he who is altogether mighty in speech among those who preside in our Churches, will utter anything different from this; nor will he who is weak in discourse abate aught of the Tradition."<sup>14</sup> And again. "This Faith such as have believed without letters, in our discourse indeed are barbarians, . . . but because of their faith are extremely wise, and please God . . . And if any one should tell them of the inventions of the heretics, conversing in their language, presently they would shut their ears, and think they could not fly far enough, not enduring so much as to hear the blasphemous talk. Thus by that old Tradition Apostolic, they admit not even to a passing glance of the mind any of their monstrous sayings."<sup>15</sup> What is this "old Tradition Apostolic"? It is the Rule of Truth—"this rule" to which "con- sent many nations of the barbarians, those I

<sup>14</sup> Bk. 1; c. 10; n. 2.

<sup>15</sup> Bk. 3; c. 4; n. 2.

OF THE APOSTLES,

mean who believe in Christ, having salvation written by the Spirit in their hearts, without paper and ink, and diligently keeping the old Tradition: who believe in one God the Framer of Heaven and Earth and of all things that are in them, by Christ Jesus the Son of God. Who for His surpassing love's sake towards His creatures, submitted to the birth which was to be of the Virgin, Himself by Himself uniting Man to God; who suffered also under Pontius Pilate, and rose again, and being received in brightness, will come in glory as the Saviour of them that are saved, and the Judge of them that are judged, and to send into eternal fire them that counterfeit the truth and despise His Father and His coming." <sup>16</sup> These passages serve to discredit utterly the distinction which critics have sought to foist into Irenæus, between a "Rule of Faith" alleged to be "committed to the Bishop" alone, and a "Creed intended for the laity," wherein were not contained "the strictly theological portions of the former, which were directed against heresy." Irenæus himself disowns and spurns

<sup>16</sup> Ib.

## THE SYMBOL

the spurious distinction, delivering the "rule" to men who receive it "without letters" and use it to some purpose, as he makes plain to us, against heresy.

### VII.

THE RULE : Justly have the later critics con-  
AND SYMBOL : cluded that the "Rule" of Ire-  
ONE. : næus and Tertullian is the "Sym-  
..... : bol" of Rufinus and Augustine, which the latter  
also calls a "Rule." In form only do they  
differ; in substance and meaning they are the  
same. Either the "Rule of Faith" is another  
name for the Creed in Tertullian and Irænæus,  
or these ancient writers lay a trap for the  
reader into which he cannot choose but walk.  
If *κανών* or "rule" means one thing when com-  
mitted to the keeping of the Bishop and  
another when delivered to the unlettered bar-  
barian—well, we ought to have been warned  
that it does, or a different word should have  
been used in the one case from what is used  
in the other. And, then, a "canon" or "rule"  
is, by its very definition, fixed and unchanging  
in its sense and in its wording. But if you

## OF THE APOSTLES.

apply this test to the formularies and fragments of formularies set forth in Irenæus and Tertullian, you will find not one canon or rule but many canons and many rules. And yet both Irenæus and Tertullian emphatically declare their "Rule" to be "one" and "unchangeable." There is just one way out of this tangle, but they have strayed far from that way who make confusion worse confounded by introducing a "Kerygma" or "Rule of Faith," distinct from the Creed but so nearly related to it that the plain man cannot for the life of him see where the distinction comes in. The key to the whole situation is furnished by the Discipline of the Secret. Both Irenæus and Tertullian are kept back from giving us the Creed in the very phrase by the prohibition against putting it in writing and the obligation of secrecy in regard to it. Neither of them tells the reader so in terms, but this only serves to hide more effectually the words and structure of their Symbol. On any other hypothesis, the reticence of these writers and the studied care with which they vary the unvarying Rule of the Faith is an



THE SYMBOL

insoluble conundrum to be everlastingly given up.

VIII.

CORROBORATIVE PROOF. : But if "Kerygma," "Rule of Faith," and "Rule of Truth" are but different names for the same formulary, and if that formulary is the Creed or Symbol of the Apostles, the following passage, in which the learned English Benedictine sums up the observations of Probst upon the Apostolic Kerygma, furnishes strong corroborative evidence of the truth of the ancient Catholic tradition :

" We find in the Acts several expositions of Christian doctrine, in the sermons of St. Peter and St. Paul (Acts ii, iii, iv, x, xvii), all remarkably alike, and covering the same ground as the Creed. This similarity arose, no doubt, from the requirements the Apostles had to meet. They had to testify to the Jews the Godhead, public life, death, and resurrection of our Lord, with their consequences—the resurrection and judgment of all mankind ; and to these doctrines when preaching to the heathen, St. Paul had to prefix that God was

## OF THE APOSTLES.

the creator of heaven and earth. The similarity between these discourses extends, however, to the language and turn of the sentences, as will to some extent appear when I presently compare the Creed with the New Testament, and as can be more completely seen by reading them together; and this fact suggests that there must have been an agreement among the Apostles as to the form as well as the matter of their teaching—an agreement reached, of course, before their dispersion. The same conclusion follows from a study of the several descriptions of the public teaching of the Church in the New Testament and Apostolic Fathers. Perhaps the most interesting is connected with the word *κηρυξ* and its derivatives. It was evidently adopted from the Septuagint in order to claim for Christian teachers the infallibility belonging to the inspired prophets of the Old Law. St. Paul significantly connects the act of preaching with being sent, and in his own case laid the Gospel which he preached privately before the heads of the Church in Jerusalem (Rom. x. 14, 15; Gal. ii. 2). *κηρυξ*, again, is twice used by him in a manner which implies that it had acquired a definite connotation at the time the Pastoral Epistles were written (1 Tim. i. 7; 2 Tim. i. 11). There is still more evidence that the

## THE SYMBOL

word *κηρυγμα* gradually obtained a technical sense, in St. Paul and the early Christian writers, for the defined and official teaching of the Church. This is inevitably obscured in the Latin and other versions, where "prædicatio," "preaching" has to do duty for the act of preaching as well as for the things preached, the matter of the doctrines taught by the Apostles. Probst avoids this ambiguity by using the word "Kerygma" wherever it is possible to do so. When this is done, the significance of the word comes out in such passages as—"the foolishness of the Kerygma" (1 Cor. i. 21); "that through me the Kerygma" might be fully proclaimed (2 Tim. iv. 17); "the Kerygma wherewith I was intrusted" (Tit. i. 3)."

### IX.

A little further on Dom Gasquet points out that, in fragments from the early Christian writers preserved by Eusebius, the word is constantly used in the same sense, the most remarkable instance being a passage in Irenæus where the "tradition of the Apostles" is sharply distinguished from the "Kerygma of the truth,"

: A SPURIOUS  
: CRITICISM.  
: .....

OF THE APOSTLES.

the distinction being that which obtains between the whole and its part. He also cites Origen, *De Princip.*, sect. 2, where we find the words: "Let the Kerygma of the Church, delivered by the order of succession from the Apostles, be observed." In this same place Origen gives a summary of the contents of this "Kerygma," reproduced in an earlier chapter of the present work,<sup>17</sup> which, as far as it goes, corresponds exactly to the Symbol of the Apostles. Thus Probst and Dom Gasquet<sup>18</sup> trace the "Kerygma" from the Apostles, its authors, down to Origen; so far as its contents are made known to us, it tallies with the Creed; according to the ancient tradition of the Church, the Creed was composed by the

<sup>17</sup> Chap. V., Sect. IX.

<sup>18</sup> Original research in historical fields nearer home has won for Dom Gasquet, now the Abbot Gasquet, merited distinction. To such research the two articles on the Creed, referred to above, while they bear the imprint of his scholarship, do not pretend. He trusted too implicitly his blind leaders, Probst and Swainson, and, of course, fell with them into the same pit. There has been altogether too much trusting to blind leaders by Catholic writers on this subject. Probst, in his turn, followed some "higher" critic than himself. "They are lifted up on high that they may be broken by a heavier fall."

### THE SYMBOL

Apostles; yet these two Catholic writers set aside that venerable tradition, admit and uphold the Apostolic authorship of a "Kerygma," shrink from affirming the Apostolic authorship of the Creed. This is one of the absurd refinements of a spurious criticism which arrogates to itself the name, now of "higher," now of "historical," without any valid claim to either title.

CHAPTER XI.

MEETING OBJECTIONS.

I.

AT page 23 of the first volume of his *Creeeds of Christendom*,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Schaff sums up the case against the Apostolic authorship of the Creed. "After having first been called in question by Laurentius Valla, Erasmus, Calvin, the apostolic origin," he tells us, "has been so clearly disproved long since by Vossius, Rivetus, Voetius, Usher, Bingham, Pearson, King, Walch, and other scholars, that it ought never to be seriously asserted again." The arguments which those critics have brought forward he finds "quite conclusive." Let us review them one by one :

DR. SCHAFF  
HOLDS A  
BRIEF.

<sup>1</sup> Fourth Edition Revised and Enlarged (Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1899).

## THE SYMBOL

1. The intrinsic improbability of such a mechanical composition. It has no analogy in the history of symbols; even when composed by committees or synods, they are mainly the production of one mind. The Apostles' Creed is no piece of mosaic, but an organic unit, an instinctive work of art in the same sense as the *Gloria in Excelsis*, the *Te Deum*, and the classical prayers and hymns of the Church.

This objection strikes at the legend which assigns to each of the Apostles a distinct article as his contribution to the common Creed. As against the legend it has much weight, though it is not altogether conclusive; for, after all, highly unlikely and out of keeping with analogy as the thing appears, no one can say that the Symbol could not in fact have been composed in that way. But the legend, as has been pointed out elsewhere, is one thing; the tradition is quite another. And it is not to the credit of historical criticism that it should have bundled the two together. The legend dates from the seventh or eighth century, and finds its fitting source in a sermon falsely attributed to St. Augustine;

OF THE APOSTLES.

the tradition, as has been shown in the course of this work, mounts up to the apostolic age. It is quite true, as Schaff says, or rather reasons out from analogy, that the Creed is "mainly the production of one mind," for the Apostles had but one mind in the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, who is the real Author of the Symbol.

IV.

2. The silence of the Scriptures. Some advocates indeed pretend to find allusions to the Creed in Paul's "analogy" or "proportion of faith," Rom. xii. 7; "the first principles of the oracles of God," Heb. v. 12; "the faith once delivered to the saints," Jude, ver. 3; and "the doctrine," 2 John, ver. 10; but these passages can easily be explained without such assumption.

THE FALLACY  
OF SILENCE  
AGAIN.  
.....

3. The silence of the Apostolic Fathers and all the ante-Nicene and Nicene Fathers and synods. Even the Œcumenical Council of Nicaea knows nothing of a symbol of strictly apostolic composition, and would not have dared to supersede it by another.



### THE SYMBOL

These two objections grow out of the same root. They rest on the common basis of silence. Here, too, are lumped together, in most uncritical fashion, things that should have been kept carefully separate. We must distinguish the Creed and the tradition of its origin; again, in the Creed itself, the doctrine and the form of words in which it is embodied. The ante-Nicene Fathers are not silent about the tradition. On the contrary, they affirm it, Irenæus and Tertullian explicitly and repeatedly, others, such as Clement of Alexandria, equivalently and by implication. As for the Creed itself, it is true that no writer of the second or third century sets it before us in the very phrase. But Irenæus and Tertullian give us the contents of it, article by article, in their own words, the one supplying what the other omits. Other writers, like the same Clement, allude to it and "attempt, while concealing yet to declare, and though hiding to manifest, and though silent to point out." Such silence as this is an eloquent silence, eloquent of affirmation, not of denial. It is a silence that says Yes, while seeming to say No. Such, too, is

OF THE APOSTLES.

the silence of Scripture, so far forth as Scripture is silent. It is a silence that is suggestive, suggestive of a settled policy followed from the first, a policy that was carried out by a rigorous enforcement of the Discipline of the Secret. But Scripture is not silent as to the existence of the Creed. The point, however, has been fully dealt with elsewhere. Finally, nothing could be truer than that the Nicene Fathers would not have dared to supersede the Apostolic Symbol by another. But what of that? The Nicene Symbol is not "another" Symbol. It is still the same ancient formulary, with such added words as bring out more clearly and fully the true meaning of it. See Chap. V.

III.

4. The variety in form of the various rules of faith in the ante-Nicene churches, and of the Apostolic Symbol itself down to the eighth century. This fact is attested even by Rufinus, who mentions the points in which the Creed of Aquileia differed from that of Rome. Such variations in the form of the Creed

: TWO MORE  
: WORTHLESS  
: PLEAS.  
: .....

## THE SYMBOL

forbid the supposition of any fixed system of words, recognized and received as the composition of the Apostles; for no one, surely, would have felt at liberty to alter any such normal scheme of faith (Dr. Nevin).

This objection, too, has been anticipated. As for the sage observation of Dr. Nevin, the value of it may be gauged by the fact that at the very time the whole Christian world recognized and received the Creed as the composition of the Apostles, not one only but many, whole Churches, indeed, felt at liberty to alter the form of it, and did alter it. They knew full well it was not the words that mattered but the meaning. To alter the wording or add to it was not to add to "the normal scheme of faith."

5. The fact that the Apostles' Creed never had any general currency in the East, where the Nicene Creed occupies its place, with an almost equal claim to apostolicity as far as the substance is concerned.

The alleged "fact" has been shown to be a fiction. It is of the Nicene Creed Epiphanius says, "This Formula of Faith was handed down to us by the holy Apostles, and pre-

OF THE APOSTLES.

scribed in the holy city by all the Bishops, in number three hundred and eighteen.”<sup>2</sup>

It would seem, after all, that it is to the arguments for the Apostolic origin of the Symbol the quality of conclusiveness belongs.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancor.*, 118. See Chap. V., Sect. XIII.

THE SYMBOL

CHAPTER XII.

THE ARTICLES OF THE CREED.

I

THE OBJECT :     “ Without faith,” says St. Paul,  
OF OUR             :     “ it is impossible to please God.  
FAITH.             :     For he that cometh to God must  
.....             :     believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder  
of them that seek after Him.”—Heb. 11 : 6.  
Now the Creed is a “ *br viarium fidei*,” a summary of the Faith. It must contain, therefore, and set before us in a compendious form, the teaching of the Faith about God as He is in Himself, and about God as He is the rewarder of those who seek after Him, that is, about God in relation to us. God in Himself, as the object of our Faith, is One in Three, one God in three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. On this mystery of the Holy Trinity our Creed rests as on its foun-

OF THE APOSTLES.

dition. All that it contains beside, all that is built on this foundation, serves to define God as He is in relation to us, or, more properly speaking, to define the relation in which we stand to Him, for in Him is no real relation to aught that is outside of Himself. We, on the other hand, enter into relations with the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity; with the First Person as our Creator, with the Second Person as our Redeemer, with the Third Person as our Paraclete, as the Spirit who guides us into the truth, frees us from our sins, and comforts us in this mortal life with the blessed hope of a glorious resurrection. All this is set forth in the twelve articles of the Creed.

II.

We understand by an "article of faith" a distinct point of revealed doctrine, an item of religious belief complete in itself, that is, not logically included in any other, at least so far as the reason of man can discern such inclusion. Thus "crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried" of the Old Roman Creed logically im-

THE OBJECT  
OF OUR  
FAITH.  
.....

## THE SYMBOL

plied "suffered," and "died," neither of which additions, therefore, constitutes a new article of faith. Of such points of revealed doctrine there are twelve in the Apostles' Creed. Now as in Leo the Great's day it is *duodecim apostolorum totidem signata sententiis*. And each of the twelve embodies a revealed truth, a truth such as the reason of man could never have learned by its own unaided light. For faith, as St. Paul defines it, is "the foundation (*υπόστασις*) of things hoped for, the assurance (*ἔλεγχός*)<sup>1</sup> of things not seen.—Heb. 11 : 1. The formal object of Faith as of Hope is the unseen, "for who hopeth," says the same Apostle, "for that which he seeth?" Rom. 8 : 24. "The unseen in the things of God" says St. Thomas,<sup>2</sup> "is the object of Faith. Hence wherever we find a thing that is in a special sense unseen there we distinguish a special article."

<sup>1</sup> *ἔλεγχος* signifies that which gives assurance or produces conviction. The function of Faith is to produce conviction of the truth of things that lie beyond the utmost reach of reason left to itself, i. e. acting in the order of nature.

<sup>2</sup> 2a. 2ae q. 1 ; art. 6.

III.

The mystery of the Trinity, THE UNSEEN  
ELEMENT.  
embodied in the first, second, and  
ninth articles of the Creed, is unseen in  
the most absolute sense. Not only is it be-  
yond the power of unaided reason to know  
that God is One in Three, but it is be-  
yond its power to understand this truth even  
after it has been made known by revelation.  
The same is to be said of the mystery of the  
Incarnation, set forth in the third article. But  
what of the fourth? Was the crucifixion,  
was the burial, of Christ unseen? It would  
appear not. The whole tragic scene on Cal-  
vary had many witnesses. It is a fact of his-  
tory that Christ was crucified, and that his  
body was laid in the sepulchre. It is proved  
by documentary evidence like any other histo-  
rical fact. How, then, can it be of divine  
faith? how can it be an article of the Creed?  
It might be said that, while the crucifixion and  
burial were in themselves visible facts, the fact  
of the One crucified and buried being the Son  
of God was invisible. But this would be no



## THE SYMBOL

adequate solution of the difficulty, for our faith in the invisible fact in question is already implied in our faith in the mystery of the Incarnation. If the Son of God can be born of woman, He can die on a cross and be buried, just as any mere man that is born of woman can. The unseen element of this article of the Creed is to be sought in the idea expressed by the word "buried." For "buried," as Rufinus pointed out so long ago, in his *Commentary on the Symbol*, logically, or, at any rate, theologically includes the "descent into hell," which found a place, even at that early day, in the Creed of the Church of Aquileia.<sup>3</sup> Now, the fact of the existence of the disembodied spirits in Limbo, and the fact that the Soul of Christ went thither after its separation from the Body are in the strictest sense, unseen facts, which we know not by reason, nor on the testimony of men, but by revelation from God. The subject of the complex predicate "was crucified and buried" is "Jesus Christ," and Jesus Christ, as we are taught in the

<sup>3</sup> "Vis tamen verbi eadem videtur in eo quod sepultus dicitur." *Ib.* n. 18 (Migne, P. L. tom. 21).

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Catechism, had a body and soul like ours. We are, therefore, bound to believe that the entire Christ was "buried," His Body in the sepulchre, His Soul in the Limbo of the Fathers. Our Lord Himself, in the parable of Lazarus and the rich glutton, after saying of the latter that he "died and was buried," passes right on to say in the next sentence, "and in hell he lifted up his eyes,"<sup>4</sup> which can be understood only of the disembodied spirit. It is instructive to note that the same word is used in this passage of Luke and in the Creed to signify what we express in English by "buried." In Luke it is *ἐταφί* the Creed has *ταφέντα*. It is also instructive to note that, in the Canon of the Mass, which is perhaps as old as the Creed itself, the resurrection is spoken of as being "ab inferis," that is, from "hell" or the lower world, rather than from the sepulchre. The words run: "Ejusdem Christi Filii tui, Domini Nostri, tam beatæ passionis, nec non et ab inferis re-

<sup>4</sup> So the passage runs in the original Greek. The Douay Version has: "And the rich man also died, and was buried in hell,"—Luke, 16 : 22.

THE SYMBOL

surrectionis, sed et in caelos gloriosae ascensionis—Of the so sacred passion of the same Christ Thy Son, our Lord, as well as of His resurrection from the lower world, and also of his glorious ascension into Heaven.”

IV.

FOUR OTHER :      And now for the other articles.  
ARTICLES.        :  
.....            :      The Resurrection was not only  
unseen of men but is a something that  
passes comprehension. The Ascension was  
visible in its first stage, on the Mount of  
Olives, but unseen even of those who stood  
there gazing upward, from the time that “the  
cloud received” Our Lord “out of their  
sight.”—Acts. 1 : 9. It was “the two men”  
who “stood by them in white apparel,” the  
Angels of God, to wit, who revealed to the  
men of Galilee that, “this Jesus was received  
up from” them “into heaven” and should  
“so come in like manner as” they had beheld  
“him going into heaven.” The session “on  
the right hand of the Father” is veiled from  
mortal vision, as is the coming again “to judge

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the living and the dead," which is foretold in the eighth article. The ninth article completes the statement of our faith in the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

V.

Of the three remaining articles : HOLY  
only one offers any difficulty on : CHURCH.  
this score. The remission of sins and the  
resurrection of the body belong to an order  
of truths that are far beyond the ken of un-  
aided reason. But (and here is where the  
difficulty lies) the Church is visible, "a city  
set upon a hill." So it is. But so was the  
"Man Christ Jesus" visible, and yet He it  
is with whom the third article of the Creed  
is concerned. When Peter said to the Man  
who stood before him, "Thou art Christ,  
the Son of the living God," he saw one  
thing, as St. Gregory puts it, and believed an-  
other. He saw One who "was found in fashion  
as a man," and believed Him to be God. And  
so it is with us in the case of the Church.  
We see one thing, we believe another. Indeed

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“ the holy Church ” is, in the logical order, the first article of the Creed. We see the visible society which, from its centre in Rome, branches out into all the world,—“this broad fact of Catholicism, as real,” aye, and as visible, “as the continent of America or the Milky Way;” we believe it to be “the Church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth.” In the Church, even as in her Founder, we distinguish the human element and the divine, the visible element and the invisible. It is the former that is prominently before our minds when we say “the holy Catholic Church;” the latter when we add, “the communion of saints.”

## VI.

TWO CITATIONS IN POINT. : This is what was in St. Augustine's mind when he prayed that exquisitely touching prayer, on the death of his mother: “And inspire, O Lord my God, inspire Thy servants my brethren, Thy sons my masters, whom with voice, and heart, and pen I serve, that as many as shall

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read these Confessions may at Thy Altar remember Monica, Thy handmaid, with Patricius, her sometime husband, by whose bodies Thou hast brought me into this life, how I know not. May they devoutly remember my parents in this transitory life, my brethren under Thee our Father in our Catholic Mother, my fellow-citizens in the eternal Jerusalem, which Thy pilgrim people sigh after from their going forth even unto their return thither.”<sup>5</sup>

*But you are come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of Angels, and to the Church of the first-born who are written in the heavens, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and to the sprinkling of blood which speaketh better than that of Abel.—Heb. 12.*

<sup>5</sup> Conf. Bk. 9.

VII.

THE DRAMA :  
OF REDEMP- :  
TION. :  
..... :

What has been not inappropriately called the "Christological section" of the Creed; from the second to the eighth article inclusive, embodies the great drama of the Redemption. The second article is in the nature of a prologue, the eighth an epilogue, while the intervening ones constitute the drama proper. It has five acts, the Incarnation, the Death and Burial, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Session on the right hand of the Father. Most of its scenes are familiar to us in the mysteries of the Rosary. It was presented once for all on the world's stage, at Nazareth and Bethlehem, on Calvary, on the Mount of Olives, and is ever since rehearsed on the altars of our churches in the Holy Mass. The Word, who was "with God in the beginning," leaves His home in heaven, and presently on earth "is found in fashion as a man"; goes down into the grave and even into hell; rises from thence again; goes up into heaven; and once more is with God, "sitting on the right hand of the Father";

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for He who was "born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary" has won for Himself this place of pre-eminence. The stupendous drama has its catabasis and its anabasis, its coming down and its going up again. And the "descent into hell" is part of the catabasis.<sup>4</sup> The anabasis begins to unfold itself on the morning of the resurrection.

VIII.

Here, then, is another reason : THE FOURTH  
why the "descent into hell" must : ARTICLE.  
be deemed part of the fourth article. The  
putting it in with the fifth is clean against the  
canons of dramatic art. This might not be a  
very serious matter by itself. But it gives added  
weight to theological and historical considera-  
tions. Theologically, as has been pointed out  
above, the addition is needed to bring out the  
full meaning of the fourth article. And to the  
fourth it belongs also on critical and historical  
grounds. "The oldest interpreters," says  
Harnack, "make *descendit* equivalent to *sepul-*



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*tus.*"<sup>6</sup> The fourth article, therefore, is : "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell." The Soul of Christ was in hell before His Body was in the sepulchre.

IX.

CREATOR, :	It is one of the commonplaces of Catholic theology that a special work is appropriated to each of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. To the Father is appropriated the work of creation, to the Son the work of redemption, to the Holy Ghost the work of sanctification. Now, the Symbol expresses our faith in each of the three Divine Persons, and in the work appropriated to each. Our faith in the Third Person is expressed in the ninth article, and our faith in the work that He has done, is
REDEEMER, :	
SANCTIFIER. :	
..... :	

<sup>6</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 88. The point was a moot one in the Middle Age, as appears from a passage in *The Formula of Concord*, Art. IX. "It hath also been disputed," say the authors, "whether this article [the descent into hell] is to be referred to the passion, or to the glorious victory and triumph of Christ." Cf. Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. III. p. 159.

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doing, and is to do on the last day finds expression in the three articles that follow. Our faith in the Second Person is embodied in the second and third articles, while the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh tell us what He has done or is doing, and the eighth foretells what He is yet to do. Our faith in the First Person we profess in the opening article.

It seems strange at first sight that a separate article is not given to the work appropriated to the Father. But when we look into the matter a little more closely, we see the reason for this. The work of creation, though it does involve the exercise of omnipotent power, lies, after all, in the order of nature, as it is by it that nature and nature's laws came into being. It is only facts of the supernatural order that can find a special place in the Creed. Again, Faith has for its formal object the unseen. But God the Creator is not unseen, "For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; so that they are without excuse, because, knowing God,

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they glorified Him not as God, nor gave thanks."—Heb. 1 : 20–21. The word "almighty," therefore, which stood in the Creed from the first, and the addition "Creator of heaven and earth," serve but to mark off the First Person from the other two. They embody no new revealed truth, no truth of revelation at all, in fact, save by way of preamble, and so do not constitute a separate article.

### X.

THE SEVENTH ARTICLE. . . . . One more point, touching the division of the Creed into articles, remains to be dealt with. The session on the right hand of the Father is today coupled with the ascension in the sixth article. All the ancient commentators on the Symbol, Cyril, Rufinus, Augustine, Peter Chrysologus, Maximus of Turin, make the Session a separate article, putting it in the seventh place. And surely this is a distinct point of revealed doctrine, a separate item of our belief, which should therefore form a distinct article. It corresponds to the second

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article, in which the Word is revealed as resting from eternity in the bosom of the Father; for here the Word-made-flesh rests on the right hand of the Father, after the battle with sin and death has been fought and won. The two articles which relate the story of the catanabasis, or exinanition, and the corresponding two that tell of the anabasis, or exaltation, come in between.

XI.

It would seem that the sixth THE TWELFTH and seventh articles of the Old AND LAST. Roman Creed were fused into one in the Apostles' Creed as it stands to-day, in order to get "the life everlasting" by itself into the twelfth and last place. But "the life everlasting," is not in any of the creed-forms that are to be found in Tertullian or Irenæus, nor was it in the Old Roman Creed even in the time of St. Leo the Great. Yet Leo's Creed comprises twelve articles; it is *duodecim apostolorum totidem signata sententiis*. One of two things, then: either a new article has been

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added to the Creed, or the present division of it into articles is faulty. Will any one maintain that the Apostles' Creed contains more than twelve articles? If not, plain it is that "the life everlasting" is not at all the twelfth article, but only a gloss on "the resurrection of the flesh," which is the real twelfth article.

### XII.

A LEGEND :        But how account for the pres-  
AND ITS        :        ent division, which has behind it  
SOURCE.        :        quite a hoary past, and would be  
.....        :        venerable were it possible for error ever to be-  
                  :        come venerable? It would seem to have had  
                  :        its origin in a sermon on the Symbol falsely  
                  :        attributed to St. Augustine. St. Augustine's  
                  :        word has ever carried great weight, and down  
                  :        to a comparatively recent date, his word was  
                  :        understood to be pledged for the truth of what  
                  :        is now known to be a purely legendary account  
                  :        of how the Twelve Apostles composed the  
                  :        Creed. I transcribe the legend from the text  
                  :        in Migne, omitting the comment interspersed  
                  :        with the words supposed to have been contrib-  
                  :        uted by each Apostle. The reader will see

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that the divisions of the Creed correspond exactly to those that we have to-day :

On the tenth day after the ascension . . . the disciples composed the Symbol. Peter said : (1) "I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth." Andrew said : (2) "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord." James said : (3) "Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary." John said : (4) "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried." Thomas said : (5) "He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead." James said : (6) "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." Philip said : (7) "Thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead." Bartholomew said : (8) "I believe in the Holy Ghost." Matthew said : (9) "The holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints." Simon said : (10) "The remission of sins." Thaddaeus said : (11) "The resurrection of the flesh." Mathias said : (12) "The life everlasting." <sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Sermon 240 (Migne, tom. 30).

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE ADDITIONS TO THE CREED.

I.

THE APOS- : IN the second volume of his  
TLES CREED : great work on the Apostles'  
AND THE RO- : Creed, Dr. Kattenbusch says em-  
MAN SYMBOL. : phatically that the Received Text,  
..... : which includes the additions made to the Old  
Roman Symbol, is not to be regarded as a new  
form.<sup>1</sup> Critical and historical considerations  
led the German investigator to this conclusion.  
The same conclusion has been reached in these  
pages, mainly on theological grounds. It re-  
mains to discuss these additions, which distin-  
guish our Apostles' Creed from the Old Ro-  
man Symbol. They are "Creator of heaven  
and earth," in the first article; "conceived,"  
in the third; "suffered," "died," "descended

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *The Church Quarterly Review*, Oct., 1902; p. 221.

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into hell," in the fourth; "God" and "Almighty," in the seventh; "Catholic" and "communion of saints," in the tenth; "and the life everlasting," in the twelfth.

II.

The bulk of these additions are self-explaining. The first lays stress on the exercise of that almighty power which is appropriated to the Father. The Nicene Creed has it, as well as the Creed of Jerusalem. In Irenæus it appears as "framer of heaven and earth," and in Tertullian as "maker of the world." These, and phrases of like import, we may suppose to have been the watchwords of orthodox believers in their controversy with the Marcionites, who denied that Christ was the Son of the Creator. In the course of time they would take the one stereotyped form that we are familiar with to-day. "Conceived," of the third article, "suffered" and "died," of the fourth, "God" and "Almighty," of the seventh, call for no special comment. The addition, "descended into hell," which first occurs in the Creed of

SELF-EX-  
PLAINING AD-  
DITIONS.  
.....



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Aquileia, was dealt with in the preceding chapter. There remain, "the communion of saints," and "the life everlasting."

The latter of the two is but a gloss on the "resurrection," of the twelfth article. St. Chrysostom and the author of the homily *de Symb. ad Catech.* tell us expressly that the words were added to define the meaning of that article. They do not occur in any of the forms cited by Tertullian or Irenæus. But they were part of the Eastern Creed from a very early time, how early we have no means of knowing. We find them in St. Cyril's Creed, and in the Creed of Marcellus, which is much older than Cyril's Creed. In the West, or at any rate in the Church of Carthage, they seem to have crept into the Creed from the baptismal interrogatory.

### III.

THE COMMU- :  
NION OF :  
SAINTS. :  
..... :

The "communion of saints" is a much later addition. It is first found in an exposition of the Symbol by Nicetas (? 400 A. D.), and in the

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Creed of Faustus of Riez, who flourished in Gaul during the latter half of the fifth century. Nicetas uses the words in the traditional Catholic sense. They serve but to unfold more fully the idea contained in "the holy Church" of the Old Roman Creed. The Church, which is so often spoken of by her Divine Founder as the Kingdom of God, or the Kingdom of Heaven, is in the world, but not of it. She knows no bounds of space or time; she mocks at the barriers of the tomb. She fights sin and error here on earth, where now she "holds her pilgrim way;" she comforts with her suffrage those who "fast in penitential fires;" she is comforted in turn by those who "in heaven ever cleave to God." Such is the Catholic conception of the communion of saints: a bond which holds together all the children of God; a bond which death does not sever, which stretches into the unseen, which is transfigured in the world of light, and unites eternally all of Christ's flock "in the fold upon the everlasting hills."

IV.

THE WORD :  
"CATHOLIC." :  
..... :

The addition "Catholic" did not find its way into any Western Creed till well on in the fifth century. In the East, it was taken into the Creed at a much earlier date. It is in the Creed of Jerusalem, in that of the so-called *Apostolic Constitutions*, and was finally incorporated in what is known as the Nicene Creed. Many of the Eastern Churches being of Apostolic foundation, got the Creed immediately from one or other of the Apostles. But none of them, it would appear, kept it in the very phrase, without any addition whatever, as did the Apostolic Church of Rome. If we could only be quite sure that Marcellus of Ancyra gives us the *ipsissima verba* of the Creed which he got from his "forefathers in God," we should be able to point to at least one Eastern Creed, and that the earliest known of formal Eastern Creeds, in which the word "Catholic" does not occur. But we cannot be sure of this; for Marcellus was mainly concerned to set forth all the articles of his Baptismal

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Creed, and would not be over solicitous about reproducing the exact words. Even if he had learned from his forefathers in God to confess his faith in "the holy Catholic Church," he would feel that there was no great need of writing the word "Catholic" down, as being something that could be taken for granted. And in fact, St. Augustine, in whose Creed the word found no place, does take it for granted, saying, "the holy Church, Catholic, of course."<sup>2</sup> The Symbol had long outlived its use as the Christian Watchword when Marcellus came to Rome, and the precise wording of its several clauses was therefore a matter of much less moment. This serves, too, to account for the readiness with which the Creed of Marcellus was received and approved in the East, a few years after, at the Council of Sardica,<sup>3</sup> a fact which, in its turn, confirms

<sup>2</sup> *De Fide et Symbolo*, c. 101.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. St. Athanasius, *Hist. Arian. ad Monach.* n. 6 (Migne, P. G. tom. 25, col. 700). The Saint gives us to understand that Marcellus was now an old man when he "deemed it needful," as he phrases it himself (Migne, P. L., tom. 8), to come to Rome to clear himself of the charge of heresy brought against him by the Eusebians.

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the traditional Catholic view of the Nicene Creed as being but an elaborated form of the ancient Symbol of the Apostles, which existed from the first in the East as well as in the West. The "descent into hell" was not as yet in the Baptismal Creed of the East in the time of Marcellus, as Rufinus bears witness; neither had "the communion of saints" been added at the time anywhere, whether in the East or in the West. But while Marcellus does not cite "Catholic," he does cite the only other notable addition to the Apostolic Symbol, namely, "the life everlasting." Perhaps, too, he may have omitted Catholic, supposing it to have been in the Creed of his baptism, because it was not so much part of the Symbol as part of the name of the Church, which it is not always needful to give in full. "Catholic Church" means neither more nor less to the Catholic than "Church," or the "holy Church" of the Old Roman Creed.

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V.

And this brings us to another point, the use of "Catholic" with "Church" as the distinctive and peculiar name of the religious society founded by Jesus Christ. We have seen that it was in the East the word first made its way into the Creed, at what time we know not. It is not a little significant that it is in the East, too, the time-honored appellation "Catholic Church" makes its first appearance in written records. In the New Testament the one word "Church" is the name given to that visible organization of which Christ is the Founder and chief cornerstone, and in which Peter is by Christ's own act made the foundation and the key-bearer, and given, not conjointly with the other Apostles only (Matt. 18 : 18), but by himself alone supreme power to bind and to loose (Ib. 16 : 19). The reader is referred to the following chapter for an account of the way the word Catholic would appear to have first come into use as the distinctive element in the name of the Church. It "was not intended," ob-

THE NAME  
CATHOLIC.  
.....

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serves on this head the keenly critical Professor McGiffert, "to mark the distinction between the Church at large and the individual church or congregation, for the latter might be as truly καθολική as the former,<sup>4</sup> but rather apparently to indicate the universal purpose or significance of the Church. The Church was universal, not simply because it was spread everywhere, but because it was for every one, and so belonged to and had a meaning for the whole world."<sup>5</sup> To St. Ignatius, in whose writings the term Catholic first occurs, "Church" and "Catholic Church" mean one and the same thing. "Let no one do anything pertaining to the Church," he writes, "apart from the bishop; let that be esteemed a sure Eucharist which is administered either by the bishop or by those to whom he has committed it. Where the bishop is seen, there let the body of believers be; even as where Christ Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church."<sup>6</sup> That the word Catholic was already used in

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ignatius, *Smyrn.* 8; *Mart. Polyc.* 16, 19.

<sup>5</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 198.

<sup>6</sup> *Smyrn.* 8.

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the first half of the second century without special reference to its meaning, and simply as a proper name, appears from a passage in the Epistle of the Church of Smyrna which was written on occasion of the martyrdom of Polycarp. It is related there how the holy Bishop and Martyr made mention in his prayer "of the whole Catholic Church throughout the world" (sect. viii).<sup>7</sup> Here the epithet "Catholic" would be pleonastic, were it descriptive and not appellative, for its meaning is fully expressed by "whole" and "throughout the world." This tends further to confirm the tradition of the Apostolic authorship of the Symbol. Had not the Creed been composed till some time in the second century, the Church would have been known in it from the first by her distinctive name. And as no hypothesis can withstand the shock of even one opposing fact, it also serves to overturn Professor McGiffert's theory of the later origin of the use of "Catholic" as an appellative.

<sup>7</sup> Migne, P. G., tom. 5, col. 1041.



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VI.

FROM AN :  
HISTORICAL :  
POINT OF :  
VIEW. :  
.....

The passage in which Professor McGiffert puts this theory forward must be cited in full. It is of especial value. It embodies the testimony of a witness who has gone into the original sources for his facts, and who looks at the matter from a purely historical point of view. He assures us that the word "Catholic" has been from a very early time "simply part of a title," the formal and distinctive part of the name of the historic Church of Christ.

"As time passed and false teaching began to make trouble within the church and to require the exclusion of individuals and bodies of Christians, the phrase *καθολική ἐκκλησία* came to mean the true Christian church—the one only orthodox church—in distinction from all heretical and schismatical bodies which might call themselves churches, but which in the eyes of Christians in general were not really so. This meaning appears already in the Muratorian fragment, and is common from the third century on. (Cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetics*, XVIII. 26.) This true Christian church being a particular visible organized institution, dis-

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tinguishable from other institutions claiming the name of Christian and more or less similar to it in character, the phrase καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία acquired the force of a mere title or proper name, and so might be used, as it commonly was after the third century, without any thought of the meaning of the word catholic. [It has been shown above that it was so used already in the earlier half of the second century]. When the title was reflected upon and analyzed it was commonly interpreted to mean existing everywhere and to refer to the universal spread of the church over against the local character of the schismatic churches: thus, for instance, by Optatus and Augustine in their controversy with the Donatists. But there is no reason to think that the word catholic was added to the creed in order to express a belief in the universality of the Church [that it was added to the *name* in order to draw attention to the universality of the Church is the thesis maintained in the next chapter], or in any other of its attributes, but simply as a part of the common and familiar name by which the church was known. Nothing more was meant by *sanctam ecclesiam catholicam* than by *sanctam ecclesiam* alone. To read into the word *catholicam* in the creed therefore a special meaning of its own [which Zahn does, *The Articles of*

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*the Apostles' Creed*, p. 180] is not historically justified. It is simply part of a title, just as to-day 'The Catholic Church' is the popular title of the Roman communion."—pp. 199-200.

### VII.

A QUESTION :  
OF VITAL  
MOMENT.  
.....

Here comes up a question that has greatly exercised the critics, a question, too, of vital moment.

What did the expression "Catholic Church" stand for in the minds of the early Christians? Harnack, who incidentally mentions the interesting fact that the addition of Catholic was abolished by the Protestant Churches in Germany, under Luther, and replaced by Christian, contends that "Originally it meant nothing more than the universal Church, the whole Christian community called of God on earth. The idea of applying it to the concrete, visible Church was not," he alleges, "yet, i. e. in the second century, thought of."<sup>8</sup> Zahn holds that in "its original meaning the word Catholic re-

<sup>8</sup> *The Apostles' Creed* (The Nineteenth Century, July, 1893, p. 173).

## OF THE APOSTLES.

minds us only of an attribute of the Church which contributes essentially to make her an object of faith." Following the received Protestant theory, he makes the Church of the Creed an invisible Church. But he admits that "another use of the words Catholic Church developed itself in the second century side by side with the original one." Out of this use "arose the opposition of the one great Catholic Church and the smaller heretical communities, which nevertheless called themselves Churches also, and were even so called occasionally by their opponents." This second use, however, he deems an "unfortunate mode of speech." The Anglican Swete combats this view which would make of the early Catholic Church "an invisible abstraction, realized by a mental process, but possessing as yet no tangible form." He points out that "this is true of the Church in the same sense as it is true of every world-wide society which cannot be presented to the eye in its completeness; but it is no less true of the later Catholic Church than of its earliest beginnings. On

• *The Articles of the Apostles' Creed*, p. 183.

## THE SYMBOL

the other hand the units which compose the Catholic Church were as concrete and visible in the days of Ignatius as in those of Cyprian. When Ignatius argues that the Bishop is the centre of the particular Church, as Jesus Christ is of the whole Society, he certainly means by the Catholic Church the aggregate of all the Christian congregations, which were visible and concrete bodies." <sup>10</sup>

### VIII.

THE CHURCH :  
ONE AND :  
VISIBLE. :  
.....

To enter here into this question fully would carry us too far afield.

Yet something must be said. It is obvious to remark, at the outset, that the "Catholic Church" of the sub-apostolic age is identical with the "holy Church" of the Creed and the "Church" of the New Testament. The Faith of the sub-apostolic age is the Faith of the apostolic age and of the New Testament. Now, the Church of the New Testament is a visible Church, and it is one. Many local churches are mentioned, but one is

<sup>10</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 76.

## OF THE APOSTLES.

the Church which Christ founded. In the prophetic writings of the Old Testament it is outlined as (1) one, "a Kingdom" which "the God of heaven shall set up, which shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2 : 44) ; as (2) visible, aye, "the mountain of the Lord's house established in the top of the mountains" (Is. 2 : 2). Christ Himself, the Founder, always speaks of it in the singular number, as "my Church" (Matt. 16 : 18) and "the Church" (Ib. 18 : 17), never in the plural. He means it plainly to be a visible Church, "a city set upon a hill" (Matt. 5 : 14). He draws a sharp line of demarcation between it and the great invisible congregation of all believers which mounts up to the beginning of the race, when He says to Peter, *upon this rock will I build my Church* (Matt. 16 : 18).

And this is the conception of the Church which prevailed, too, in the sub-apostolic time. Ignatius "means by the Catholic Church the aggregate of all the Christian congregations, which were visible and concrete bodies ;" this is quite true, but it is only half of the truth. These visible and concrete bodies are no mere

### THE SYMBOL

aggregate, but one great communion, one society, held together by a close organic bond. They coalesce into what the Saint calls "one body of His Church."<sup>11</sup> The institution of the Papacy and the Holy Spirit acting in and with the Apostles solved once for all and from the beginning what has been happily described as the problem of "throwing a network of ecclesiastical organization over" all nations "without its breaking along the lines of national cleavage." As a consequence of this the member who was cut off from the communion of one of those "Christian congregations" was, by that very fact, cut off from the communion of all—of the Catholic Church, in short. Hence we find Ignatius saying, "All that are of God, and Jesus Christ, these are with the Bishop; and all that shall repent and turn to the unity of the Church, these also shall be of God" (Phil. 3). Hence, when Marcion is cast out of the Church, in Pontus, he seeks in vain to gain admission into the Church in Rome. Hence, too, one of those "concrete and visible units" which composed the Church

<sup>11</sup> *Ad Smyr.* c. 1.

## OF THE APOSTLES.

of Christ in the sub-apostolic age, can describe itself as "the Catholic Church of Smyrna,"<sup>12</sup> conscious of its organic connection with "that Church which is in each several place";<sup>13</sup> conscious of seeking "the union of the Church," and of having no part with those who "sever and distract Christ's great and glorious Body, and, as far as in them lies, make away with it."<sup>14</sup> To Zahn, in view of "the meaning of the word (Catholic) and of" what he conceives to have been "the original use of the term, it seems an absolute contradiction in terms to speak of the Bishop of the Catholic Church of Smyrna."<sup>15</sup> It could not so have seemed to those men of the sub-apostolic age, else they would never have used it. The usage is at least partly accounted for by the explanation given above. We reach the full explanation when we call to mind that "Catholic Church" is used in the same document as the distinctive name and title of the one true Church of

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Martyr. Polyc.* 16 and 19.

<sup>13</sup> Irenæus, *Adv. Haer.* bk. 4; c. 33; n. 8.

<sup>14</sup> *Ib.* n. 7.

<sup>15</sup> *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 183.



THE SYMBOL

Christ. No congregation of the Nicolaites, or of the Valentinians that might then have existed in Smyrna would dare call itself the "Catholic Church."

IX.

A SPECIOUS : But here an objection must be  
OBJECTION. : met, which shall be stated at  
..... length in the words of Zahn :

"If faith is a steadfast waiting for things hoped for and a proving of things not seen (Heb. 11 : 1), then the thought of primitive Christianity expressed in the words: *I believe a Holy Church* was very important. For in her being and in her essential character the Church is invisible, however visible and tangible her embodiments and her manifold modes of appearing may be. Without the indwelling Holy Spirit, whom we cannot see, the Church would be a corpse; without the Christ who is ascended into heaven she would only be a trunk; and again without the risen Christ as the corner and the key-stone on which her faithful ones, like Him, build themselves up as living stones, she would be a house of cards. Without those generations of the faithful, who have gone before, the Church at any moment,

OF THE APOSTLES.

even without taking into account the divisions and the equally unnatural alliances existing at the time, would be but a fragment. And not only would she be this, but she is in fact. I hold the holy Church only in the hope that one day all will be reunited, who belong to one another but are now separated, by time and place, by the imperfection of human knowledge, and by death; and that all the children of God who have ever lived, perfected and reunited, will one day appear that which Christ would have them to be. Until the fulfilment of this hope the Church is a mystery which I either believe or, otherwise, do not possess.—  
Op. cit. p. 179.

And at page 184 :

“It cannot be an article of faith to believe the palpable fact that the local communities, whose Bishops were a Polycarp or an Augustine, possessed the same confessions as the large Christian communities of other towns and lands, and were in communion with them, while the same did not hold good of the followers of a Marcion or an Arius,”

The gist of this may be put briefly thus. Belief in the holy Church, or the holy Catholic Church, is part of the Creed and an article

### THE SYMBOL

of Faith ; therefore the Church is invisible. We must distinguish the sense of the conclusion. The Church, so far forth as it is an article of faith, is invisible ; this we grant. The Church, so far forth as it is a Society composed of a ruling and teaching authority and the multitude of believers in every land who hold the same Faith, is invisible ; this must be denied. Zahn's error on this head comes of his failing to distinguish the human element in the Church from the divine, the visible from the invisible. The self-same Church is at once visible and invisible, visible in respect of her body, invisible in respect of her soul. Zahn all unconsciously brings his Protestant preconceptions to the study of this subject. But his treatment of it throughout is so reverent that it lends an added pathos to the last words of the first citation given above. And one is glad to be able to believe that he belongs to what theologians have not inaptly named the "soul" of that one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church with which he plainly feels himself not to be in visible communion.

X.

Zahn is "near the kingdom : A DIVINE  
of God" when he says that : ORGANISM.  
"without the indwelling Holy Spirit, whom .....  
we cannot see, the Church would be a  
corpse." Therefore it is a living body, and  
living because the Holy Spirit gives it life.  
And this life is visible, in the activities of a  
living body, the Catholic Church. To many  
it is an object of sight only. To others it is  
an object of both sight and faith. So was  
Jesus Christ on earth an object of sight to all,  
and of both sight and faith to "those who had  
eyes to see." He was an object of faith, even  
before He became invisible. It was not flesh  
and blood but the Father in Heaven that  
enabled Peter to believe in Him as the Son of  
God. For the same reason it is unnecessary to  
suppose the Church invisible in order to make  
it the object of an act of faith. By sight we  
see that the Church is alive. By faith we be-  
lieve that this life is divine, proceeding from  
the indwelling Holy Ghost and containing all  
the supernatural means of truth and grace. It

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is only the Protestant preconceptions of Zahn which make him argue on the hypothesis that whatever is divine in the Church is necessarily invisible and that whatever is visible is necessarily human. Applied to Our Lord this hypothesis results in a denial of His divinity. Applied to the Church considered as an object of faith it results in a denial of her visibility. The Protestant doctrine of the sacraments is an instance of the tendency to separate the divine from the visible, a tendency altogether foreign to the Catholic Church of the first age or of any age.

XI.

THE ROMAN :  
SYMBOL UN- :  
REVISED. :  
..... :

There is one more point, which may as well be dealt with before concluding the present chapter

The text of the Old Roman Creed, which is the Apostolic Symbol in its primitive form, is assumed in these pages to have remained unchanged till after the fifth century. That the additions made since then have in no wise changed, but only unfolded, its meaning, has been, it is hoped, clearly shown in the course

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of this work. But certain of the critics try to make out that a word was dropped from the first article of the Roman Creed and another added, in the course of the third century. Zahn is of opinion that the form ran, during the second century, "I believe in one God, the Almighty." It would be tedious to enter here upon the reasons which he brings forward in support of this theory. That the Roman Church omitted the word "one" from her Creed to counteract the Unitarianism of Praxeas is, on the face of it, utterly unlikely. This would have been not so much a confession of the Faith as a confession of weakness. Certainly the burden of proof rests with him who asserts that the word "one" was at first in the Roman Creed, and it is no proof to show that it occurs in the creed-forms that are to be found in Irenæus and Tertullian. Neither of these writers cites or pretends to cite the Creed word for word. And as the oneness of God was clearly implied in the first article, they would not scruple to set forth the idea explicitly in their controversy with the dualists of their day.

## THE SYMBOL

When Leo the Great, in his letter to Flavian of Constantinople, declared, "All the Faithful profess to believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His Only Son," one of the Eutychians queried, "Why did he not say in one God the Father, and in one Jesus, according to the decree of the Council of Nice?" To this Vigilius of Thapsus was able to make the following reply: "But in Rome, even before the Nicene Council met, from the time of the Apostles onward, and under Celestine of blessed memory, . . . the Symbol was so given to the faithful; nor does the wording matter so long as the sense remains unimpaired. This profession of the Faith, too, is more in accord with the words of Jesus Christ, where He says: You believe in God, believe in Me also (John 14 : 1). He did not say in one God the Father, and in one Christ; for who is there but knows that God the Father is one, and that His Son Jesus Christ is one?"<sup>16</sup> This seems decisive of the matter. The Apostles would use the simpler form "God" rather than

<sup>16</sup> *Def. Ep. S. Leonis Papæ*, n. 1 (Migne, P. L., tom. 62, col. 119).

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“one God,” the more so that the Master, so far as His words have been embalmed in the Gospels, never uses the expression “one God,” excepting once in the form of a citation from the Old Testament (Mark, 12 : 29), and even in this instance “one” stands in the predicative, not in the attributive, relation to “God.”

XII.

Neither does Zahn succeed in showing that “Father” was added to the primitive Creed. On the contrary, in his attempt to show it, he does but contradict himself. At page 56, he considers it “as proved that the Creed of the Gallican Church, the Churches of Asia Minor [including, of course, that of Ephesus] and Africa, and also of the Roman Church, which was the mother of the African, ran thus during the second century : “I believe in one God, the Almighty.” But at page 74 he tells us that “something more may be said with tolerable certainty about the contents of Justin’s baptismal confession than that it contained the names of God the Father, Jesus Christ, and

: THE WORD  
“FATHER.”  
.....



## THE SYMBOL

the Holy Ghost in this order." If this is so, then the word "Father" was in the Creed, after all, during the second century, and the statement proved in the first citation is disproved in the second. And indeed the place of "Father" in the Creed was as secure from the first as that of Son and Holy Ghost. For the Creed, as Zahn himself maintains, is based on the baptismal formula, which runs "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

### XIII.

THE FORGET- : Had Zahn but kept in view  
FUL CRITIC. :  
..... the fact to which he himself  
so unequivocally bears witness at page 43,  
he would have seen that the formulary  
which he pieces together from second century  
writings is, and from the nature of the case  
needs must be, conjectural, at least so far as  
the precise wording of it goes. For if "it is  
true that neither Irenæus nor Tertullian has  
given the exact form of the rule of truth,"  
being "kept back by the principle maintained  
for hundreds of years in the Church, that this

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confession should not be written with pen and ink, but should be imprinted on the heart and memory"; and if it is furthermore true that "We cannot in every case determine what belongs to the formula contained in the author's memory and what is his own addition, explanation, or definition, suggested by the occasion and the opposition at the time"; what basis of stable fact is left us whereon to build a certainty? Singular, isn't it? the critics almost every one note the fact that the early Christian writers either are silent about the Symbol, or, if they cite it, of set purpose interject words of their own to keep the uninitiated from learning their Watchword;—they note the fact, I say, and then proceed straightway to dogmatize about the origin of this same Symbol, and to determine what the exact form and wording of it was at a time when, on their own showing, they have no data whence they can reach any certain conclusion on the subject. Verily in this is the votary of historical criticism "like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and forthwith forgetteth what manner

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of man he was" (James, 1: 23, 24). Another signal instance of this fatal facility in forgetting is furnished by Zahn at page 91, where he assumes that the words "of David's seed" found a place in the Creed known to St. Ignatius. This assumption he bases on the fact that these words occur in the summary of "christological attributes" that Ignatius sets before us. Zahn again forgot what he had written at page 43. In order to imprint his words on the heart and memory of the reader they are once more cited here, and will serve to close this chapter. "It is true that neither Irenæus nor Tertullian has given the exact form of their rule of truth. They were kept back by the principle maintained for hundreds of years in the Church, that this confession should not be written with pen and ink, but should be imprinted on the heart and memory."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NAME CATHOLIC.

I.

Of the name Catholic Church : A REJECTED  
in the first century all that writ- : HYPOTHESIS.  
ten records enable us to say is that it was  
already in use. The mention of it by St.  
Ignatius in a way which supposes it to have  
been already well known proves this much;  
but there is no positive evidence of the way  
the appellation first came to be used. Inquirers  
have therefore to resort to hypotheses, and of  
these there are three which claim to account  
for its origin.

Some suggest that as the word "Church" was used sometimes to mean the whole Church and sometimes a particular church, as that of Corinth, for instance, the word "Catholic"

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was adopted to mark the distinction. The Rev. R. E. Bartlett, late Fellow of Oxford University says :

“The Catholic Church meant originally the whole congregation of Christian people scattered throughout the world, as opposed to the smaller congregations of Christians dwelling in separate cities or meeting in a particular house.”

This hypothesis is excluded by the records of antiquity. It has been shown in the preceding chapter that particular Churches were also called Catholic in the sub-Apostolic age.

## II.

ANOTHER : Other writers suggest that the  
HYPOTHESIS. : rise of heresies was the occasion  
.....: of the Church being called Catholic, to  
distinguish her from the sects. St. Pacian,  
in a well known passage, puts forth this  
hypothesis, not because he thought it well  
founded, for his own opinion was that the  
word had a divine origin, but as a passing con-  
cession to his Novatian correspondent when

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some hypothesis became necessary in his argument. There is a sense in which this hypothesis may be well founded. Individual members may have adopted the name of the Church for themselves in this way. For some centuries they called themselves Christians; but when heretics persisted in claiming the Christian name and it was found impossible to refuse it to any who were baptized and who professed belief in Christ, members of the true Church had, in course of time, to adopt the name of the Church and call themselves Catholics to mark the distinction between themselves and heretics. But the word was applied to the Church first, and was applicable to the members only when it came into use as the proper name of the Church. As an explanation of the way the Church herself came to be called Catholic the second hypothesis is but an improbable guess. It supposes that the argument from universality was used commonly and with much public insistence against the sects at a time when the immediate disciples of the Apostles were still everywhere accessible, when all the Sees founded by the Apostles were still

### THE SYMBOL

orthodox, and when the heresies to be opposed were the very same as those already expressly condemned by the Apostles. A name was undoubtedly needed to distinguish the Church from the sects, even if we cannot suppose that the argument from universality was much used against heretics at the time ; but if opposition to heresy had been the occasion of selecting a new name, the Church would have been called the Apostolic Church, not the Catholic Church, and the members Apostolics, not Catholics. For many years after the introduction of the Catholic name the common argument against heretics was Apostolic tradition.

### III.

CATHOLIC AND : Even as late as the fourth  
CHRISTIAN. :  
..... : century St. Athanasius was able  
to use the following argument :

Formerly, when we were all united Christians both in doctrine and name, Marcion became a heretic and was excommunicated, and those who sided with the Bishop that had expelled him retained the name of Christians,

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whilst those that continued with him were called Marcionites. So, too, Valentinus, Basilides, Manichæus, and Simon Magus, gave their names to those who became their disciples. These were named after them—Valentinians, Basilidians, Manichees, and Simonians. Likewise the Cataphrygians take their name from Phrygia, and the Novatians from Novatus. . . . Exactly in the same way, after Alexander of blessed memory had excommunicated Arius, those who kept with Alexander were known as Christians as before, but those that separated with Arius abandoned our Saviour's name, and from that time were denominated Arians. And since Alexander's death, those that are in communion with his successor, Athanasius, and with such other Bishops as he is in communion with, keep the same title; and not only do they call themselves Christians, but everyone does so everywhere as a matter of course."—*Second Oration against the Arians*.<sup>1</sup>

Individual Catholics were therefore still called Christians in contradistinction to heretics. Is it reasonable to suppose that two hundred and fifty years before this time the Church

<sup>1</sup> *Opera Athanasii*, tom. 1, p. 308 (*Ed. Nov., Coloniae*, 1686).



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needed to be called other than Christian in contradistinction to heretical bodies? Or that individual members could have so long retained a name different from that of the Church if both names had reference to the same thing? The second hypothesis must be allowed to go the way of the first.

IV.

A MANY-NATIONED CHURCH. : Hurter, in his *Compendium Theologiae*, bases his definition of Catholicity on the second hypothesis, with the result that his treatment of the subject is vague and unsatisfactory. Billot, a much abler theologian, returns to the traditional definition, the one given by the Catechism of the Council of Trent, and the one discussed in so masterly a way by Lacordaire in his *Conférences*. This definition is based, not on contradistinction to the different sects, but on the inclusion of different peoples. The worldwide mission of the Church is, of course, supposed in all cases; but the actual diffusion which constitutes catholicity must always be

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relative either to sects without or to people within. Which of these divisions was the original occasion of the Church being called Catholic? The third hypothesis is that the Church was so called as being a many-nationed Church in contradistinction to the Church of the Jews which consisted of only one nation.

The Fathers adduce the calling of the Gentiles as prophesied by Isaias in confirmation of their idea of Catholicity, when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together." That is, the Gentile nations, despite their diversities of race and civilization, their opposing interests and natural jealousies, shall abide together in one Church. This is the true idea of Catholicity. Its opposite is the idea that each nation should have a separate independent Church.

No one pretends that the Bishops met in the first century and formally adopted the name Catholic. It must have come into use in some other way. Nor would there be any difficulty at all if it were only a question of an adjective

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denoting an essential quality of the Church. The existence of the quality would sufficiently account for the origin of the word. The words "holy" and "Apostolic" came naturally into use in this way. But the adoption of a name is a very different matter. It is the selection of one among several possible words. How did it happen that the same name was adopted everywhere? There must have been some event or influence of general and impressive importance to lead all to concur in adopting the same name.

V.

PATRIOTISM :  
AND  
RELIGION. :  
.....

At the time of the Ascension the Apostles had not received full instruction regarding the catholicity of the Church. Their last question to the Master implies their belief that Israel was to retain a privileged position in the Kingdom of God. They asked whether He would then restore the Kingdom to Israel. His reply showed, indeed, that the Kingdom was to be universal; but as to the position of

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Israel in it, it was not for them to know the times or moments which the Father had put in His own power. This reserve was part of a merciful plan, so to say, by which salvation was offered to the Jews without sudden shock to their keen sense of nationality. The transition from the Jewish to the Christian Church was thus made gradual—the Kingdom came without observation. After the day of Pentecost converts were received in large numbers; but in their case conversion did not involve separation from the Church of the Jews. This was a divine institution, and separation from it was not yet imposed as a duty. The converts as well as the Apostles continued to worship in the Temple and observe the Law of Moses. Christian children were still circumcised. For several years the Apostles preached only to the children of the circumcision. To the Gentiles the Christian Church presented the appearance of a Jewish sect, and the faithful were called Galileans and Nazarenes. Without further direct intervention of God it could never have become anything else. How were the Gentiles to be brough' in? The Apostles did not

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know. We can scarcely imagine them even raising the question whether all nations were to be on a footing of equality in the Church. Patriotism and religion were so closely interwoven in their minds that, in the absence of revelation, they would naturally infer that the Church was to be universal by a universal extension of Jewish nationality, and that the Gentiles would have first to become Jews by being circumcised as a necessary step to their becoming Christians. But whatever the Apostles may have inferred, they came to no decision. They continued to evangelize the Jews until, after twelve years, God gave them new light through Peter, their Leader and Chief.

## VI.

JEW AND GENTILE. : A scene fraught with significance is set before us in the tenth chapter of the Acts. By a heavenly ritual more expressive than words, and incomparably more impressive, St. Peter is taught that the Law of Moses has ceased to bind, and that no man is henceforth to be

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called common or unclean. He is then led to receive a Gentile family into the Church by baptism, and without any rite connecting the converts with the Jewish nation. On returning to Jerusalem he finds the brethren greatly excited over the admission of Cornelius. Why was he not first circumcised? Was this the way to restore the Kingdom to Israel? Then Peter tells them of the revelation he has received, and many rejoice with him that "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh justice is acceptable to Him." The solution of the great problem is now given. To the Apostles at least it is clear that the universality of the Church involves the admission of other nations on equal terms with the Jews.

VII.

But the national sentiment is tenacious. The Christians of Jerusalem soon lapsed into their former state of mind. The case of Cornelius, they told themselves, was an exception, a dispensation granted by God; but the general

: A CRISIS IN  
: THE CHURCH.  
: .....

## THE SYMBOL

rule must be circumcision, after the manner of Moses, for Gentile converts. Then there came to them one day an item of news from Antioch which disturbed them more than the case of Cornelius. They were told that many Gentiles had been received there without circumcision, and that these actually called themselves *Christians*, not Israelites or Galileans, thus emphasizing their independence of Israel. This time they concluded that something had to be done to counteract such anti-national proceedings, and some of them hastened to Antioch, without any commission from the Apostles, as St. James afterwards explained. At Antioch "Paul and Barnabas had no small contest with them." The peace of the Church demanded an immediate and final decision, and it was agreed to refer the question to the Apostles in Jerusalem. Thus, what is called the Council of Jerusalem was convened to define the nature of the Church's catholicity. Was the Church to embrace all nations on a footing of equality, or was she to embrace them through one privileged nation? When all were assembled St. Peter made it clear that the case of Cornelius,

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instead of being an exception, gave a divine ruling for the admission of the Gentiles. St. James added arguments from the Prophets confirming what Peter had related, "how God first visited to take of the Gentiles a people to His name," and suggested the form of decree by which the Church was freed forever from national restrictions in religion. There must have been many a sore heart among the Jewish Christians that day. To see their nation placed on a level with other nations in religion, and excluded from a position of privilege in the Kingdom of God, after having been the chosen people for so many centuries, must have made submission to the Apostolic decree a hard trial to many. Some, in fact, refused to submit and left the Church, while those who remained faithful long retained a degree of antipathy to other nations, and insisted on certain Jewish practices which caused much friction in social intercourse (Gal. 2: 12).



THE SYMBOL

VIII.

**THE CHURCH:**        Thus gradually did the Church  
**CATHOLIC.**        emerge from the conflicts of the  
.....: time as a society held together by a bond of  
religion superior to the divisions of nationhood.  
This was something the world had never seen  
before, and great was the admiration, and  
great the opposition, it excited. A many-na-  
tioned Church was as great a novelty to the  
Gentile as it was to the Jew. Each nation  
had a religion of its own, and a particular re-  
ligion was included in the very notion of  
nationality, in much the same way as each  
nation was supposed to have a particular lan-  
guage. "Which in other generations was not  
known to the sons of men," says St. Paul, re-  
ferring to this very thing, namely, "that the  
Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and of the same  
Body and co-partners of His promise in Christ  
Jesus by the Gospel." This "mystery," as he  
calls it, had been revealed to him as to the  
other Apostles, and he became its prophet.  
He had a formula of comprehension which he  
repeated everywhere, with slight variations, to

## OF THE APOSTLES.

convey the new and wonderful truth that the Church of Christ is above national divisions, that one member of it cannot call another a foreigner with respect to religion, and that all nations when admitted are fellow-heirs and co-partners within the Church. With the great dividing line of nationality he sometimes enumerates the social divisions that naturally go with it, and declares that these too find room in one Church. "Christ is our peace, who hath made both (Jew and Gentile) one." "There is no distinction of the Jew and the Greek." "In one Spirit were we all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond (slave) or free." "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female." "There is neither Gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all." This was not merely the teaching that man should cultivate fellow feeling with man, despite all natural differences; but rather that Christ had done some great and wonderful thing to reconcile all those differences in one

### THE SYMBOL

Body. St. Paul was stating a marvellous fact visible to all, that a many-nationed Institution had, through Christ, come into existence, and this Institution he calls one Body. Hitherto the people of God, however wonderful in other respects, was but a nation among other nations. The Church of the Jews was national; the Church of Christ is—what? A new word was needed to express the contrast, and the word CATHOLIC was soon found. The events and the circumstances of the time made this characteristic of the Church more prominent and more impressive than any other. The continual conflicts with the Jews and the Judaizers; the much-talked of Council of Jerusalem; the novelty of a many-nationed Church; the frequent preaching of it as such by the Apostles and their successors; and the never-ending conflict between duty and inclination in those who admitted and admired the duty of unity, but still felt within themselves the working of the old heathen or Jewish hatred of foreigners—all these things combined to give the word CATHOLIC the prominence of a proper name.

IX.

The early Church was all-com-  
prehensive in respect of national  
divisions and also of the social  
divisions within each nation. Greek and Scy-  
thian, master and servant, high and low, rich  
and poor, male and female, were admitted  
without distinction and worshipped at the  
same altar. This comprehensiveness or catho-  
licity of the Church has reference to the  
natural divisions among men. It involves the  
duty of being liberal in the things that are  
ours, whether national or social, for the sake  
of unity in the things that are Christ's.  
The Church of the Apostles was liberal in  
matters national and social, but conservative  
and exclusive in matters of faith. Those who  
caused divisions in doctrine were marked persons  
and to be avoided. It is the fashion nowadays  
to honor the Catholic Name. Even the  
Evangelicals are following at a distance the  
Anglican example of respect for antiquity.  
A nonconformist catechism published in Eng-  
land has questions and answers regarding the

TRUE COM-  
PREHENSIVE-  
NESS.  
.....

### THE SYMBOL

holy Catholic Church of the Apostles' Creed. This revived respect for the name does not yet include a realizing sense of the stern Scriptural reality which the name connotes. To be liberal in national and social relations is one of the difficult duties which Catholicism imposes. To be liberal in the things of Christ and thus make Christian unity of small account is a privilege to which the natural man thinks he has a right. He seeks to transfer comprehensiveness from the natural sphere, where Scripture places it, to the supernatural sphere, where Scripture forbids it.

## APPENDIX.

[The following forms of Western and Eastern Creeds are cited from *The Apostles' Creed*, by H. B. Swete, D. D.]

### WESTERN CREEDS.

#### CREED OF COD. LAUD. (Bodl. Gr. 35).

Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem; et in Christum Iesum<sup>1</sup> Filium eius unicum dominum nostrum, qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto et Maria uirgine, qui sub Pontio Pilato crucifixus est et sepultus, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, ascendit in caelos<sup>2</sup>, sedet ad dexteram<sup>3</sup> Patris, unde uenturus est iudicare uiuos et mortuos; et in Spiritu Sancto, sancta ecclesia, remissione peccatorum, carnis resurrectione<sup>4</sup>.

#### CREED OF THE BANGOR ANTIPHONARY.

Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, inuisibilem, omnium creaturarum uisibilium et inuisibilium conditorem. Credo et in Iesum Christum Filium eius unicum dominum nostrum, Deum omnipotentem, conceptum de Spiritu Sancto, natum de Maria uirgine, passum sub Pontio Pilato<sup>1</sup>; qui crucifixus et sepultus descendit<sup>2</sup> ad inferos, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, ascendit in caelos<sup>3</sup> seditque

<sup>1</sup>cod. *xpo ihu.*

<sup>2</sup>cod. *caelis.*

<sup>3</sup>cod. *dextera.*

<sup>4</sup>cod. *resurrectionis.*

## APPENDIX.

ad dexteram Dei Patris omnipotentis, exinde uenturus<sup>4</sup> iudicare uiuos ac mortuos. Credo et in Spiritum Sanctum, Deum omnipotentem, unam habentem substantiam cum Patre et Filio; sanctam esse ecclesiam<sup>5</sup> catholicam, abremissa<sup>6</sup> peccatorum, sanctorum communionem<sup>7</sup>, carnis resurrectionem; credo uitam post mortem et uitam aeternam in gloria Christi. Haec omnia credo in Deum. Amen.

### CREED OF THE C. C. C. MS. 468 (saec. xv.).

Πιστεύω εἰς θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς· καὶ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν, τὸν συλληφθέντα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου, γεννηθέντα ἐκ Μαρίας<sup>8</sup> τῆς<sup>9</sup> παρθένου, παθόντα ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, σταυρωθέντα, θανόντα<sup>10</sup>, καὶ ταφέντα, κατελθόντα εἰς τὰ κατώτατα· τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστάντα ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν, ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, καθιζόμενον ἐν δεξιᾷ θεοῦ πατρὸς παντοδυνάμου· ἐκεῖθεν ἐρχόμενον κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς, πιστεύω εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἁγίαν καθολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ἁγίων κοινωνίαν, ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν, ζωὴν αἰώνιον. ἀμήν.

[The above in a transliteration from the Roman characters.]

### CREED OF NICETAS.

(saec. v.)

Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, et in Filium eius Iesum Christum, natum ex Spiritu Sancto et ex Maria uirgine, sub Pontio Pilato passum crucifixum et mortuum. Tertia die resurrexit uiuus a mortuis, ascendit in caelos, sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris, inde uenturus iudicare uiuos et mortuos. Et in Spiritum Sanctum, sanotam ecclesiam catholicam, communionem sanctorum, in remissionem pec-

<sup>1</sup> cod. *pylato*.    <sup>2</sup> cod. *discendit*.    <sup>3</sup> cod. *caelis*.    <sup>4</sup> cod. *uenturum*.

<sup>5</sup> cod. *aeccliam*.    <sup>6</sup> cod. *abremisa*.    <sup>7</sup> cod. *commononem*.

<sup>8</sup> cod. *Μαρίας* vid.    <sup>9</sup> cod. *την* vid.    <sup>10</sup> cod. *θανετα* vid.

## APPENDIX.

catorum, huius carnis resurrectionem, et in vitam aeternam.

### CREED OF AQUILEIA (Rufin. *in symb.*).

(saec. iv.)

Credo in Deo Patre omnipotente, inuisibili et impassibili ; et in Christo Iesu, unico Filio eius domino nostro, qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria uirgine crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato et sepultus descendit in inferna, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, ascendit in caelos, sedet ad dexteram Patris ; inde uenturus est iudicare uiuos et mortuos. et in Spiritu Sancto ; sanctam ecclesiam, remissionem peccatorum, huius carnis resurrectionem.

### CREED OF THE PRYMER (cent. xiv.).

(Maskell, *Monumenta ritualia*, ii. 177.)

I bileue in god, fadir almy3ti, makere of heuene and of erthe : and in iesu crist the sone of him, oure lord, 6001 aloone : which is conceyued of the hooli gost : born of marie maiden : suffride passioun undir pounce pilat : crucified, deed, and biried : he wente doun to hellis : the thridde day he roos a3en fro deede : he stei3 to heuenes : he sittith on the ri3t syde of god the fadir almy3ti : thenus he is to come for to deme the quyke and deede. I bileue in the hooli goost : feith of hooli chirche : commuunynge of seyntis : for3yuenesse of synnes : a3enrisyng of fleish, and euerlastyng lyf. so be it.

## EASTERN CREEDS.

### CREED OF MARCELLUS (Epiph. *haer.* LXXII. 3).

Πιστεύω εἰς θεὸν παντοκράτορα, καὶ εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν, τὸν γεννηθέντα ἐκ Πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς Παρθένου, τὸν ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου σταυρω-



## APPENDIX.

θέντα καὶ ταφέντα Καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστάντα ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, Ἄναβάντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ καθήμενον ἐν ἐξιᾷ τοῦ Πατρὸς, Ὁθεν ἔρχεται κρίνειν ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς· Καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, Ἄγιαν ἐκκλησίαν, Ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, Σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν, Ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

### THE NICENE FAITH.

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓνα θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, πάντων ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀορατῶν ποιητὴν· καὶ εἰς ἓνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, γεννηθέντα, ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μονογενῆ, τουτέστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς, θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ, φῶς ἐκ φωτός, θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο· τὰ τε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γῆ· τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα καὶ σαρκωθέντα, ἐνανθρωπήσαντα, παθόντα, καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, ἀνελθόντα εἰς οὐρανοὺς, καὶ ἐρχόμενον κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς· καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα.

### EARLY CREED OF JERUSALEM.

(Collected from Cyril.)

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓνα θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, ὁρατῶν τε πάντων καὶ ἀορατῶν· καὶ εἰς ἓνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ, τὸν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα θεὸν ἀληθινόν, πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο· σαρκωθέντα καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα, σταυρωθέντα καὶ ταφέντα, ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, καὶ ἀνελθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, καὶ καθίσαντα ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ ἐρχόμενον ἐν δόξῃ κρίναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς· οὐ τῆς βουσιλείας οὐκ ἔσται τέλος· καὶ εἰς ἓν ἅγιον πνεῦμα, τὸν παράκλητον, τὸ λαλήσαν ἐν τοῖς προφήταις· καὶ εἰς ἓν βάπτισμα μετάνοιᾶς εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, καὶ εἰς μίαν ἁγίαν καθολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ εἰς σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν, καὶ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

## APPENDIX.

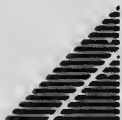
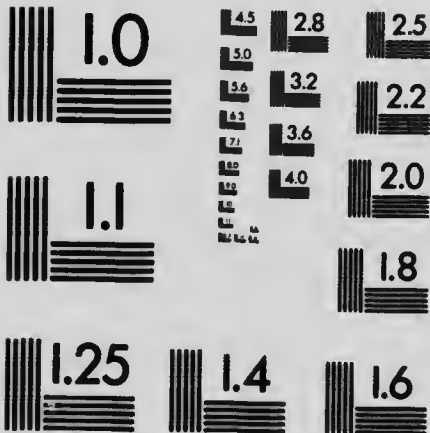
### CREED OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἕνα θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, ὁρατῶν τε πάντων καὶ ἀοράτων· καὶ εἰς ἕνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ, τὸν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων, φῶς ἐκ φωτός, θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα, οὐ ποιηθέντα, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο· τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ σαρκωθέντα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα, σταυρωθέντα τε ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, καὶ παθόντα καὶ ταφέντα καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, καὶ ἀνεληθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ καθεζόμενον ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ πάλιν ἐρχόμενον μετὰ δόξης κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς· οὗ τῆς βασιλείας οὐκ ἔσται τέλος. καὶ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τὸ κύριον τὸ ζωοποιόν, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, τὸ σὺν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον, τὸ λαλῆσαν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν· εἰς μίαν ἁγίαν καθολικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν. ὁμολογοῦμεν ἕν βάπτισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν· προσδοκῶμεν ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν, καὶ ζωὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος. ἀμήν.



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ABBREVIATIONS : Ap. = Apostle ; Bp. = Bishop ; C. = Council ;  
Cr. = Creed ; c. = chapter ; S. = Symbol ; s. = section ;  
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