

THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

Vol. XXIV.

APRIL—MAY, 1913

No. 4

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

BY PROFESSOR STALKER, D. D.,

Aberdeen, Scotland.

I believe in God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead;

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

For the title borne by this document there was early invented a brilliant justification. The twelve apostles, it was believed, after the ascension of their Lord but before any of them had gone forth to evangelize the world, met at Jerusalem and, by a common impulse or inspiration, uttered in succession the twelve articles of which, it was assumed, the Apostles' Creed was composed. Certain of those by whom this report was transmitted from generation to generation went so far as to assign to each apostle the exact words which had issued from his

church, its agencies for the conduct of missions, and the countries abroad for which it is responsible, the missionary force, funds and administration, methods and achievements. Part second deals with the plan and work of the church missionary committees.

The book contains much matter and many suggestions of great value.

T. C. JOHNSON.

COMING TO THE COMMUNION: *A Manual of Instruction for Preparatory Classes and Private Study.* 79 pages, duodecimo. Price, 10 cents Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1912.

The special design of the book is for the use of pastors who may wish to place in the hands of inquirers such information as it contains, or who may desire a handbook for the instruction of classes preparatory to the communion.

The book presents six brief studies, relating to Christian faith and profession, to the Church and the sacraments, and to Christian life and service. Quotations from the Scriptures, the Standards of the Church and their Revised Hymnal have been presented with each study, to be used as illustrative matter or, preferably, memorized. Brief prayers, gathered from various sources have been given with the several studies.

The work strikes us as well adapted to its expressed purpose—sane, helpful, Christian and Presbyterian.

THOS. C. JOHNSON.

THE INTERMEDIATE CATECHISM: Price, 5 cents. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1912.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in session at Louisville, Ky., 1912, took action in regard to this catechism as follows:

1. The Assembly approves the Intermediate Catechism prepared by its committee and directs the Board of Publication to print it for distribution.

“2. The Assembly continues the Committee with the request that it receive suggestions and make such revisions as, in its judgment, seems advisable, and report to the Assembly at Atlanta in 1913.

We have read this catechism with considerable care; and have arisen with the conviction that the children we know would, after having committed to heart the Children's Catechism, lose by being put into this Intermediate Catechism, instead of into the Westminster Shorter Catechism. The definitions of the Shorter Catechism at once inform and fortify as these do not. Even where a new and valuable question has been introduced, the answer is imperfectly given. For example, in answer to question 29, “What is our

duty concerning the kingdom of God?" The answer is: "Our duty concerning the kingdom of God is to obey the commandment given by our Lord: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations," etc. It will take a good deal of reading into this text to make it cover every duty which we owe to the kingdom of God.

It may be in part the work of a professional pedagogue, but it does not seem a whit better adapted to getting truth easily and effectively lodged in the mind than the Shorter Catechism.

The question 49, "Who are the trustees of the Church?" is answered in a way that will give the average child very little light: "The trustees of a church are its temporal officers." I dare say that many grown-ups will wish an exposition of this answer; and that others will dispute its accuracy.

The answer to the question: "What is our duty to our country?" "Our duty to our country is to love and pray for it, to obey its laws," etc. John Calvin would have slipped in a proviso here, something like this; save in so far as its laws may conflict with the laws of God.

This may displace the Shorter Catechism to some extent, even if not intended. That is to be deplored. THOS. C. JOHNSON.

THE PRESBYTERIAN HANDBOOK: 1913. 91 pages, 16mo. Price, 5 cents. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work.

It contains facts concerning the history, the statistics and the work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. It also marks out the International Sunday School lessons, severally, for the year, and the daily Bible readings; and suggests a list of prayer meeting topics for the year.

Among the decisions in polity, by the last Assembly and noted in this booklet, which gave us pleasure was the following: "Any Presbytery that ordains to the ministry men who deny the teachings of God's word as interpreted by our Standards is guilty of perjury."

If the Assembly will follow up these strong words by the prosecution of such presbyteries as do this, the Church at large will have occasion to thank God for witnesses, of conviction and courage, to His truth.

The compilation has been edited by the Rev. Wm. H. Roberts, D. D., Stated Clerk of the General Assembly.

THOS. C. JOHNSON.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES: *By John Vant Stephens, D.D.* Small 12mo., pp., 115. Price, 75 cents. Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia, Pa.

The purpose of the author is to give a brief outline, by statement and by diagram, of the origins, divisions and unions of the Presbyterian churches in Scotland, Ireland, Canada and America; so that the continuity and relationships of each of these bodies can be easily