

THE
MERCERSBURG REVIEW.

JANUARY, 1869.

ART. I.—THE CHURCH AND THE SCHOOL.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE relation of Christianity to science has been made the subject of earnest and learned discussion in every age since the former became a living power in the world. We propose to discuss the subject on its more practical side, with reference especially to the circumstances under which Christianity is working out its problem in this country. In order to do so, it seems proper to glance briefly at the history of the church in its relation to the school.

In its first entrance into the world, Christianity soon found itself arrayed against all heathen systems of philosophy and learning, as well as against all heathen systems of idolatry. Heathen learning, in its last results, was one with heathen religion. Both were destitute of the true light which had come into the world, in the incarnation of the Son of God. Common education must ever receive its reigning spirit from the character of the higher order of culture that prevails. Hence while the first fathers and theologians fought the battle against heathen science and philosophy, the Church undertook immediately to provide for the education of her own children. The form in which this was done at first was catechization. The young in

Whilst the Catechism is true and possesses binding authority for faith and teaching, it is not held to be in all its particulars the final perfection of theology. The Church feels itself to be free as well as bound—free to think, as well as bound to believe—free to think historically, as well as bound to submit in child-like simplicity to the faith of the Church as held in all ages of the world.

ARTICLE VI.—ORIGIN AND STRUCTURE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

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THE title it bears does not mean that the symbol, as we now have it, was the work originally of the Apostles themselves. It has been indeed a very widely prevalent opinion in the Church, resting in long tradition, that it originated in this way. Rufinus, a church father of the fourth century, speaks of it as a common belief in that age, handed down from earlier times, that the Apostles, before separating to their different fields of labor, met together in Jerusalem, and under the guidance of the Holy Ghost framed and adopted this compend, to be received by the infant churches everywhere as a common bond of faith. The term *symbol* was supposed to favor, as it probably at first suggested, this imagination, by indicating in its Greek etymology a joint composition made up of different parts contributed from different quarters; in conformity with which view then it was sometimes held also, that each Apostle had contributed separately a distinct article or clause to the work which was thus brought to pass. But this whole opinion is easily shown to be false. No such Apostolic rule is spoken of in the New Testament. None of the church fathers before Rufinus, Greek or Latin, make any mention of the tradition which he refers; and in all their controversies and discus-

sions, we meet with no appeal whatever to any such single fixed form of words, as of established authority from the time of the Apostles. On the contrary, the way in which they express themselves in regard to the subject, shows clearly that no fixed form of this sort was in existence. They refer frequently to a Christian rule or canon of faith, and occasionally give us the sum of its contents; but this always with such free variation, as plainly implies that the rule was regarded as standing in the substance of what it taught, rather than in any particular form of expression. Nay, the testimony of Rufinus himself is conclusive in regard to this point. He affirms expressly, that the form was not the same precisely in all the churches; additions were made to it in some cases, in opposition to particular new phases of heresy. What the title of the symbol means then is, not that it was composed by the Apostles, but that it contains, in a form universally approved by the Church, the sum and substance of what the Apostles taught, the fundamental rule and normative scheme of the Christian faith, as this had been established by them and handed down from the beginning.

The conception of such a normative scheme does not require continued sameness of words for its representation, but only sameness of substance and fact. Even the tradition mentioned by Rufinus, which in the fourth century referred the authorship of the creed to the Apostles, must be taken to have understood this more of its substantive matter than of the precise form of words in which it was uttered. For Rufinus does not pretend to restrict this honor to any one form of the general creed then in use; but takes it for granted rather, that all the churches enjoyed in this respect the same advantage, as being alike in possession of the faith received from the Apostles. No difficulty was felt among the churches in recognizing the identity of their faith, through all the variations that were allowed in the form of its expression. It was known, that the general symbol admitted an utterance more or less free, as circumstances might require; that particular clauses had been brought into it with the progress of time, which did not belong

to it in the beginning ; and that it was not the same precisely at all points, in any two leading provinces of the Church. And yet it was felt none the less surely for all this, that the Church had but one creed, and that this was of truly Apostolical origin and force. Its unity stood in its substance. Its stability was not in the outward letter, so much as in the inward spirit. It was written and preserved, as Jerome tells us, not on parchment, but on the fleshy tables of the heart.

We may easily see in this way, how the symbol, as we now have it, may be said to refer itself back, through all its early changes and variations, to the very age of the Apostles, and to carry in itself as derived immediately from them what was the one unvarying faith of the Church in following ages. It lies in the nature of the case, that the Christian profession must have involved some common rule of faith from the beginning; and we know from the New Testament, that this stood in the acknowledgment of the mystery of the Incarnation, the coming of Christ in the flesh. Christianity roots itself, both as doctrine and life, in that fact. Peter's memorable confession (Matt. xvi. 16. John vi. 68, 69), becomes thus the germ or principle of all right confessional belief: carrying in itself, we may say, the universal truth and power of the Gospel. The form of baptism, as prescribed by our Saviour Himself, is only an enlarged utterance of the same faith. The Holy Trinity is revealed only in and through Christ; to confess Him, is to confess at the same time the Father and the Holy Ghost; and this threefold confession gives us at once the outline and scheme of the entire creed. How far it may have become usual, before the death of the Apostles, to take into the scheme formally, the secondary clauses of the confession as it now stands, cannot be clearly determined. But no one familiar with the early history of Christianity can well fail to see, that this must have been done at least to some considerable extent; and there is good reason to believe, that early in the second century, if not before, nearly all the particulars now embraced in it were found more or less in current use.

Still, as already said, this current use remained irregular

and free. There was one creed, but various forms of giving it utterance. These variations were not felt to trench at all upon the unity of the general tradition or rule; and this is frequently appealed to accordingly, by the early writers, as being of acknowledged and easily intelligible authority. Irenæus speaks of such an "immovable rule of faith," and describes it as proclaiming the same particulars that are found in the later creeds; and he makes it to be, at the same time, of Apostolical and universal authority; a tradition handed down from the Apostles and their disciples, which was kept sacredly by the Church diffused throughout the whole world. "The dialects in which it is uttered," he says, "are different; but the tradition is in force the same. The churches founded in Germany have no other faith and doctrine; nor those in Spain; nor those among the Celts; nor those in the East; nor those in Egypt; nor those in Lybia; nor those of more central situation; but as the sun, God's workmanship, is over the whole globe one and the same, so also the evangelical truth shines everywhere and illuminates all who are willing to come to its light." Tertullian appeals frequently in the same free way, to the Christian rule of faith, and recapitulates several times its general contents, always in harmony with the sum of it as given by Irenæus, for the purpose of confuting and confounding the heretics of his own time. His recapitulations are indeed always different, sometimes more and sometimes less full, showing that the creed was life more than mere word; but they assume throughout, nevertheless, the clear identity belonging to it as a single apostolical tradition. "*Regula fidei*," he tells us, "*uno omnino est, sola immobilis et irreformabilis.*" The amount of it is always: One God, the Almighty Maker of the world; His Son, Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, constituted Messiah, crucified under Pontius Pilate, raised the third day, exalted to heaven, and set at the right hand of God, from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead; the Holy Ghost sent forth vicariously, according to His promise, to sanctify those that believe in his name; the resurrection of the flesh, the damnation of the wicked, and the recep-

tion of the righteous into eternal life and the blessedness of heaven. This rule, he says, instituted by Christ, allows no questions, other than such as spring from heresy and go to make heretics; it is older than all heresies; their novelty, as exposed by it, serves to establish its antiquity; to know nothing beyond it, is to know all that is necessary. Origen, in like manner gives a summary statement of the heads of Christian doctrine, "as plainly received by apostolical tradition," which corresponds in substance with the same rule. From Cyprian again we learn, that the whole creed, nearly as we have it now was made use of in Africa, in his time, as a rule of faith derived from the Apostles, in connection with the service of baptism. These private testimonies show the presence everywhere in the early Church of an evangelical tradition, agreeing in its general contents with the creed as it now stands, and accepted as of strictly apostolic origin and weight. They show also, that this tradition, though always of the same general type, was not regarded as a slavish form of words, but as a free doctrine rather which might be uttered in various ways. Cyprian gives us a glimpse into the general African formula, as it was everywhere of force in the first part of the third century. Other sections of the Church had similar standing forms; some more full perhaps than others; those of the East different from those of the West; but all handed down from the earliest time, and palpably expressing one and the same faith, as they belonged also to one and the same baptism. In the fourth century, these public formularies come more distinctly into view; and now it was that a sort of central dignity and preëminence, among the symbols of the Western Church, began to be claimed and allowed in favor of the form which had long been in use at Rome. Gradually this authority became more and more widely established; other local and provincial forms fell quietly into neglect; until finally the Roman symbol, in the fifth and sixth centuries, worked its way into universal use; and has thus come down to us, with the veneration of the whole Christian world, as the standard version or edition of the ancient rule of faith, the best and truest

representation of the fundamental realities of the Christian religion, the proper "Apostles' Creed."

Thus it is that this form of sound words lies at the foundation of Christianity in all centuries and through all times. No confessionism can be truly Christian, which does not start from this confession as its original root and source. Here, as on a common basis, all Churches rest, whether Oriental or Western, Roman Catholic or Protestant. The object of the Reformation was to remove the rubbish which threatened to smother the life of the ancient faith, not by any means to set aside this faith itself. Both divisions of the Protestant Church, accordingly, the Lutheran and the Reformed, joined in acknowledging the ancient œcumenical symbols, and especially the root of all symbols as found in the Apostles' Creed. In the Lutheran Church, the three primary Creeds (Apostolical, Nicene and Athanasian) are made to precede the Augsburg Confession, in the Form of Concord; to show, says Walch, "that Lutherans embrace not a new doctrine, but such as is old and apostolical, and profess thus the truly catholic faith." The Reformed Church here was of one mind with the Lutheran. Thus in Calvin's Catechism the first section treats of *Faith*; which is said to have the sum of its contents in the "formula of confession held in common by all Christians, commonly called the Apostles' Creed, and always received from the beginning among the pious, as being either derived from the mouth of the Apostles or faithfully collected from their writings." So in the Heidelberg Catechism the "articles of our catholic, undoubted Christian faith," as comprised in the same symbol, are made to underlie the whole doctrine of salvation. The Gallican, Belgic, and Helvetic Confessions, as well as the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, distinctly acknowledge the three Creeds, Apostolic, Nicene and Athanasian, as of universal obligation for the faith of Christians.

With the outward history of the Apostles' Creed corresponds in full its inward constitution. It agrees throughout with the actual objective movement of the Christian salvation, and represents the form it must necessarily have, as apprehend-

ed by faith, for the Christian consciousness. It is not the product of reflection, employed with the doctrinal statements of the Bible; it is drawn rather from the direct contemplation of Christ, the living principle of the Gospel, and is the first utterance of what the faith of the Church saw in Him from the beginning, as being the brightness of the Father's glory and the revelation of all grace and truth for the world. Apprehended in this manner, Christ and Christianity were no doctrine simply, no theory for the understanding, but a grand act or drama of the most real kind, by which God was seen entering the world through the mystery of the Incarnation, and carrying out the work of man's redemption in an objective, historical way, reaching through all time. Thus objective and real, the Christian salvation necessarily determined its own form; and this then determined necessarily also the form of its believing apprehension in the mind of the Church. The fundamental consciousness of the Church here must be in harmony with its object, the fundamental movement of Christianity itself; otherwise it would be no faith at all, but fancy only or opinion. The early creeds then which were in truth as we have seen but one creed (authentically fixed for general use at last in what we now call the Apostles' Creed), as the expression of this consciousness, could have only one general order and shape, answerable to what was thus apprehended as real in the Christian mystery itself. The organization of the Creed, in this view, is not a matter of indifference; as though it were the result of accident or mere subjective schematization; it is ruled by the actual movement of its object, the historical manifestation of the Holy Trinity in Christ, and the historical consequences of his Incarnation in his own Person and in the Church, on to the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting. The form of the symbol thus is just as necessary as its matter. Christianity fundamentally is this array of facts, and this order of facts, and no other. In the creed we have not only the primordial constituents of the Christian faith, but the only construction of them also which can be regarded as true. Those who dream of other possible better summaries

of the "first principles" of Christianity, either in the way of different matter or in the way of different form, only show that they have not entered properly into the sense of the Creed, and that faith for them is not the same thing it was held to be in the early Church. As there is but one Christianity (one historical movement of the Mystery of Godliness) objectively, so there can be but one true way of apprehending it by faith; and that way we have presented to us in the Apostles' Creed.

It lies in the very conception of the symbol as now given, that it moves throughout in the sphere of faith. So much is signified at once by its name. It has to do from beginning to end with things, which are real and true only in the supernatural order of life that has been introduced into the world by Jesus Christ. All its articles are mysteries; not to be certified or measured by the natural understanding of men; not to be settled in the first place by empirical observation or logical proof; but authenticating themselves rather to the Christian consciousness in an *a priori* way, as necessary deductions from the primary fact of Christianity, the actual coming of Christ in the flesh. The assumption is, in this view, that they may be believed, nay *must* be believed if Christ is true, even where there is no power to understand or explain fully what they mean. To believe in Christ necessarily involves the belief of all that His advent is represented as drawing after it in the Creed; the consciousness of the Church, exercised with the problem of what it felt itself to possess in His Person, found itself shut-up from the beginning, we may say, to each successive point, as the necessary expression of what was comprehended in its faith, over against all surrounding infidelity and heresy. And so still; we cannot break off the onward flow of this confession at any one point, so as to hold a portion of it only without regard to what comes after. All its parts are organically bound together. They represent the movement of one and the same fact. We must believe all or nothing.

We have a right to say thus, that the Apostles' Creed is the deepest, and for that reason the most comprehensive also of all Christian symbols or confessions of faith. It lies at the foun-

dation of all evangelical unity, and forms in this way the last basis and bond of common comprehension in the general conception of the Church. No religious community refusing to stand on this basis, no religious teacher pretending to construct Christianity on any other foundation, can have any right to claim footing in the Gospel, or fellowship with the Apostles.

Works on the subject: *King* (Lord), History of the Apostles' Creed, with Critical Observations, 5 edit. London, 1738, (translated into Latin by *Olearius*); *J. D. Vossius*, De Tribus Symbolis Dissert. Amstel. 1701, fol.; *H. Witsius*, Dissertation on what is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, translated from the Latin by *D. Fraser*; *Pearson* (Bishop), On the Creed; *Möhler*, Einheit der Kirche, oder Princip des Katholicismus im Geiste der Kirchenväter der ersten 3 Jahrhunderte, Tüb., 1825; *Rudelbach*, die Bedeutung des Apostolischen Symbolums, 1844; *J. Stockmeier*, über Entstehung des Apostolischen Symbolums, 1846; *Meyers*, De Symbol. Apostol. Trevisis, 1849; *W. W. Harvey*, History and Theology of the Three Creeds, 2 vols., 1855.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

LANGE'S COMMENTARY.

It is known to the readers of this REVIEW that this commentary of the Old and New Testaments is appearing in English, under the supervision of Dr. Schaff. The volumes thus far issued have attained a popularity beyond that of any other commentary that has ever been published in this country.

We have received the last two volumes thus far issued, which have been already favorably noticed by the religious press generally. The first is a commentary on the book of Genesis, by Dr. Lange himself, translated, with valuable additions, by Prof. Taylor Lewis, LL.D., and A. Gosman, D.D.; the second volume contains commentaries on the epistles to the Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews, by C. A. Auberlen, and C. J. Riggenbach, I. J. Van Oosterzee, D.D., and Carl Bernhard Moll, translated by John Lillie, D.D., E. A. Washbur, D.D., E. Harswood, D.D., Horatio B. Hackett, D.D., and A. C. Kendrick, D.D.