

RECENT RESEARCH ON THE ORIGIN OF THE CREED.

THE subject of this paper is 'Recent Research on the Origin of the Creed.' I speak of the 'Creed,' not the 'Creeds,' although I intend to include both the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, because it will be well known, and I may assume, that these are really varieties—marked and characteristic varieties—of the same fundamental creed. If we look not so much at the clothing or details of expression as at the skeleton or inner structure and substance of the two creeds, this fundamental identity will come out.

Of course we ought to compare, not the present 'received texts' of the two creeds, but the oldest and simplest forms of both. We ought to strip off the accretions which have come to them in the course of their history, and which sometimes impart to them a delusive external similarity, while at other times they obscure an original resemblance. The tabular analysis which follows may help to make this clearer.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

(AS A TYPICAL WESTERN CREED).

Words or clauses enclosed in single brackets did not belong to the oldest form of the Creed, but were added in the course of its history. Words or clauses printed in italics are parallel in general sense, but not in expression, to the corresponding portion of the Eastern Creed.

I. I. *I* believe in God,
 Father,
 Almighty,
 [Creator*.]

THE NICENE CREED

(AS A TYPICAL EASTERN CREED).

Words or clauses enclosed in single brackets were present in some, but not in all, forms of the Eastern Creed. Words or clauses in heavy brackets have nothing corresponding to them in the Western Creed. Words or clauses printed in italics agree in general sense, but not in expression, with the corresponding portion of the Western Creed.

I. I. *We* believe in [One] God,
 Father,
 Almighty,
 Creator.

* The present clause does not appear in texts of the Creed until c. 700 A.D., but equivalents are found sporadically much earlier.

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| <p>II. 2. And in <i>Christ Jesus</i>,^a
His only-begotten Son,
<i>Our</i> Lord;</p> <p>3. [<i>Conceived</i>^b] of the
Holy Ghost
<i>Born</i>^b of the Virgin
Mary;</p> <p>4. [<i>Suffered</i>^c] under Pon-
tius Pilate,
Crucified, [dead^d] and
Buried,</p> <p>5. [<i>Descended into Hades</i>^e],
Rose again the third
day;</p> <p>6. Ascended into heaven,
Sitteth at the right
hand of God,
[The Father, Al-
mighty^f];</p> <p>7. <i>Whence</i>^g He shall come</p> | <p>II. 2. And in [One] Lord
<i>Jesus Christ</i>,
His only-begotten Son,
[Eternally begotten,
Very God,
Of one substance with
the Father,
Agent in all creation;]</p> <p>3. <i>For our salvation de-
scended</i>,
<i>And</i>^a <i>incarnate</i>,
<i>And made man</i>;</p> <p>4. [<i>Crucified under Pontius
Pilate</i>^b],
<i>And suffered</i>,
[<i>And was buried</i>^c],</p> <p>5. <i>And rose again the third
day</i>;</p> <p>6. <i>And</i> ascended into
heaven,
[<i>And sitteth at the
right hand of the
Father</i>^d.]</p> <p>*7. <i>And</i> cometh [[again</p> |
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^a '*Christ Jesus*' is the order in the oldest authorities.

^b The oldest form is '*Born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary*.'

^c '*Suffered*' appears first in Priscillian (Spanish, *ob.* 385) and in Nicetas of Remesiana (in Dacia, *c.* 400). The oldest form is '*Crucified and buried*.'

^d First in Nicetas.

^e First in Rufinus of Aquileia, *c.* 400.

^f These additions appear first in Priscillian.

^g Later authorities (Priscillian, Rufinus *al.*) have '*Thence*.'

^a Asyndeton is characteristic of Western creeds, polysyndeton of Eastern.

^b These words are found in some only of the Eastern creeds, but always in this order, whereas the Western order places '*under Pontius Pilate*' before '*crucified*.'

^c Not in the true Nicene Creed nor in the Creed of Caesarea.

^d Also wanting in the Creed of Nicaea. The Creed of Caesarea has '*Ascended to the Father*.'

to judge quick and
dead.

with glory^a]] to judge
quick and dead.

[[Whose Kingdom shall
have no end^b.]

III. 8. And [*I* believe] in the
Holy Ghost;

8. And [*We* believe] in
[One^c] Holy Ghost,
[[Lord, life-giver,
Proceeding from the
Father, [and the
Son^d,]

With the Father and
the Son together
worshipped and
glorified^e,]

Who spake by the
Prophets^f;]

9. The holy [catholic^a]
Church^b;
[The Communion of
Saints^c;]

9. *And* in [One] holy
catholic [and apo-
stolic] Church;

^a First in Nicetas.

^b The African form (current in the time of Cyprian) of this and the following clauses is 'Remission of sins, resurrection of the flesh, and eternal life, through holy Church.'

^c First in Nicetas, then in Caesarius of Arles (*ob.* 542).

^a Characteristic of most, but not all, forms of Eastern creed, and wanting in the original Creed of Nicaea.

^b Absent from the Creeds of Caesarea and Nicaea, and probably inserted against Marcellus of Ancyra.

^c Found in many Eastern creeds, though not in either form of the Nicene Creed.

^d First, as is well known, in the Fourth Council of Toledo in 589 A. D., but may conceivably go back as far as 447 (Kattenbusch, *Apost. Symb.* i 158).

^e These clauses on the Holy Ghost appear first in the shorter Creed of Epiphanius (374 A. D.), then in the Constantinopolitan Creed of 381 A. D. The remaining clauses, 9, 10, 11, 12, did not form part of the original Nicene Creed, and were at least not quoted by Eusebius from the Creed of Caesarea: see below.

^f Stress on the prophetic inspiration is an early and widespread feature in Eastern creeds.

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| 10. Remission of sins ; | 10. [[We confess] one Baptism for the] Remission of sins ; |
| 11. Resurrection of the flesh ; | 11. [We look for] the Resurrection of the [dead ^a]; |
| [12. Eternal life ^a .] | 12. Life in the [next] aeon ^b . |

This, then, is our first observation. The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds resemble each other so closely that they must be related in origin.

We shall ask presently, What is the exact nature of this relation? But before doing this, we go on to make a second observation—not of course as anything new, but as one of the postulates of this paper. The history of the Apostles' Creed is now sufficiently ascertained. In its oldest form it stands at the head of a long series of creeds current in the West. This oldest form is known to be identical with the primitive baptismal creed of the Church of Rome. The Roman Creed is really the parent of all the other provincial creeds. The present text of the Apostles' Creed is not Roman, but provincial^c. And a little perhaps remains to be done in the way of determining by what precise process this provincial creed came to assume its dominant position. We may say in general terms that it took its shape very nearly in Southern Gaul, towards the end of the fifth century, and that perhaps it owes its predominance to the

^a Found in the African creed, but not in the Old Roman, Priscillian, or Rufinus.

^a Early Eastern creeds vary between 'resurrection of the flesh' and 'of the dead.'

^b The Creed of Jerusalem has 'Eternal life,' as in the Western creed (where, however, the clause is not original), for *ζωὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος*, in which the Nicene agrees with the creed in the Apostolic Constitutions.

^c I gather that Mr. Burn would question this (*Introduction to the Creeds*, pp. 221, 234 ff.); and his arguments will deserve further consideration. The statement in the text was based upon the observation that the additions to the Creed seem to appear one by one, and gradually to collect in Southern Gaul. But much will depend on the genuineness, or at least on the localization, of writings ascribed to Faustus of Riez (on which see Bergmann in the *Bonwetsch-Seeberg Studien*, Bd. i, Hft. 4, 1898), and to Caesarius of Arles (in regard to whom I have followed the conclusions of Kattenbusch, i 164-170).

relations between the Carolingian dynasty and the Church of Rome in the eighth century. But this belongs to a later stage in the history with which we are not concerned. The main fact is that the Apostles' Creed is really the local Roman Creed throwing out branches throughout the West.

All this is a very old story. It is only not quite so old a story that what we know as the Nicene Creed in both its forms, as well the true creed of the Council of Nicaea as the creed which afterwards came to usurp the name, really represents two local Eastern creeds. It is one of the many debts which the world owes to Dr. Hort, to have shown that the later form is based upon the creed of the Church of Jerusalem. He showed this so conclusively as to cause surprise that the relation had not been observed before. And he assumed, as I believe rightly, though we shall see that this is to some extent disputed, that the original Nicene Creed was in like manner based upon the local creed of the Church of Caesarea.

We thus have in close and organic relation to the Nicene Creed two local creeds of the fourth century, both belonging to Palestine. And by the side of these it is easy to place a number of other creeds, the existence of which is attested during the fourth and fifth centuries, representing most parts of the Christian East. And these creeds have all such a degree of general resemblance to one another that they may be said to constitute a distinct class of Eastern creeds directly confronting the creeds of the West. It is convenient to be able to take the familiar Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as leading representatives of the two classes. So that when we come back to our original question we find it placed upon a broader basis. We are no longer content to ask, What is the relation of the Nicene Creed to the Apostles'? Or, if we do ask this, we ask it as a step to the further question, What is the relation of the Eastern creeds to the Western?

This is the real problem which at the present moment exercises the greatest fascination. It is in reference to this that recent works invite summing up and estimating, and in reference to this that opinions are for the time, though I do not think that they will long continue, widest asunder.

It may be well to try to group opinions, though the different

members of the groups would not be quite upon the same footing. On the one side we should have Caspari, Zahn, Loofs, and a younger writer, Kunze; on the other side, Kattenbusch and Harnack who, it is needless to add, is a host in himself.

Speaking very roughly, we may say that the former group believes that from the first, or as far back as we can go, there were two distinct types of Eastern and Western creeds branching off from a common root, that the two types are equally ancient, and that they are related to each other through this common root, which itself is, so to speak, underground out of our sight.

The second group believes that the Western creed was developed first, and had a century and a half or more of independent existence before it was carried eastwards and became the direct parent of the Eastern creeds. On the one theory the two typical creeds might be regarded as sisters; on the other, as respectively mother and daughter.

It would be superfluous to speak of the vast work of Caspari, whom Harnack describes as 'a second Ussher,' meaning that he has played in recent investigation of the Creed a part equal to that which we are proud to think that our countryman Ussher played at an earlier period. Caspari's publications cover nearly a quarter of a century (from 1866 to 1890—he died in 1892), and the labours on which they are based of course go back further still.

Caspari's great object was evidently the accumulation of a mass of carefully sifted material bearing upon the history of the Creed. He seems to have been averse to generalization. The conclusion of all his labours—or (shall we rather say?) the working hypothesis which guided him through them—is expressed in a single modest paragraph, barely exceeding five lines in length, which occurs in the midst of detailed researches:

'After what we have been saying, we may, and indeed must assume, that the Creed came to Rome on the boundary-line between the Apostolic and the sub-Apostolic age substantially in the form which it has in the Old Roman Creed, and probably from Asia Minor, from the Johannean circle, which may well have been its birthplace' (*Quellen zur Geschichte des Taufsymbols*, &c. iii. 161).

Zahn, whose concise and valuable, if popular, treatise has

recently been laid before the English public by Mr.—and I presume Mrs.—A. E. Burn^a, in the main points agrees with Caspari, but has defined the process in a way that has met with some opposition and criticism. We may give the theory in his own words, which have the advantage of sketching out the main lines of creed-development in a short compass.

‘The Creed has its roots in Christ’s command to baptize. Against the authenticity of that command no historical reasons worthy of consideration have been brought forward. It was necessary that the newly converted should confess their faith, both before and at the time of their baptism. On this condition they were baptized; and out of the baptismal formula grew a baptismal confession, which had already assumed a more or less stereotyped form in early Apostolic times. At a somewhat later period, somewhere between 70–120 A.D., the original formula, which reminds us of the Jewish origin of Christianity, was reconstructed. Thus, it appeared better suited to the needs of the baptized, who mostly came out of heathendom. This altered formula was very soon widely known. We find it at Ephesus in 130 [i. e. at the baptism of Justin]; at Rome in 145 [i. e. implied in the history of Marcion], and again between 180–210, at Carthage, Lyons, and Smyrna [i. e. in the writings of Irenaeus, Tertullian, and in the confession of faith ascribed by Hippolytus to the presbyters who debated with Noetus]. It also forms the groundwork of all the later baptismal confessions of the Eastern Churches. Between the years 200–220 the first article was slightly altered in Rome. . . . This altered form was adopted by the Churches of Italy, of Africa, and probably also of the south of France. For many generations the Roman Church, and a few Churches closely united to Rome, held strictly to this form, which had been published in Rome early in the third century. In all the other Churches the Creed was thenceforward developed with considerable freedom. In the East, where the Roman recension of 200–220 could not find an entrance, its course was other than in the West; in Carthage other than in Aquileia. The inner and outer factors which determined these provincial developments, and the exchanges between the different Churches, are for the most part unknown to history. The

^a *The Articles of the Apostles’ Creed*, London, 1899, and *Expositor*, 1898.

Gallican Church of the third and fourth centuries especially lies for us in utter darkness with regard to this as to many other points. And yet it seems that it was in that very South Gallican Church, during the fifth century, that the revision of the Creed, which was to spread all over the West and supersede all the other forms, took its final impulse' (*The Apostles' Creed*, pp. 97-100).

The characteristic feature in this reconstruction of the history is the supposed Roman recension of the years 200-220 which, as I have said, has not been allowed to pass unchallenged. And there are other particulars which I think would be better stated rather differently. Where Zahn differs from Loofs, I prefer the form which the theory takes in the hands of Loofs.

This writer, who has expressed his views in a notice of Kattenbusch in the *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* for 1895, speaks with the caution of one who sees a scientific problem in course of active prosecution around him, but is not able himself to contribute to it at the moment quite on the scale and with the thoroughness which he would desire. But in spite of this reserve, he seems to me to lay his finger on the really critical point in a way to which I shall return before I have done.

Kunze, who is now *Privatdocent* at Leipzig, made his *début* with a work of some merit, entitled *Marcus Eremita, a New Witness for the Baptismal Confession of the Early Church* (Leipzig, 1895). He writes rather with the dogmatism of youth, and in particular attacks Kattenbusch in a way that is both exaggerated and unbecoming. He was sharply rebuked by Harnack in the *Theol. Literaturzeitung*, and has been gently and generously treated by Kattenbusch. The contribution which the 'new witness' makes to the history of the Creed is something, but not as much as it would be if we could be sure that the Creed of Marcus was really the local creed of Ancyra. On the general question Kunze clearly takes rank on the same side as Loofs and Caspari.

Kattenbusch, Professor at Giessen, who is also known for an elaborate work on the *Doctrine of the Eastern Church* (1892), part of a largely planned comparative treatment of the Confessions of Christendom, has taken up more than any one else the systematic labours of Caspari, but not exactly in the same

way. Caspari's was mainly research in libraries. Kattenbusch operates rather with already printed texts, hunting up the traces of creeds out of obscure corners, carefully comparing them, checking the critical process of reconstruction, and putting them into relation to each other. Kattenbusch is exceedingly painstaking and conscientious, though hardly a writer of first-rate power. It is no small labour to follow his investigations, which are often very minute, often (and quite rightly, considering the state of the materials) left with a large margin of uncertainty, and not very much helped by bold, clear grouping. He has, if I am not mistaken, the special claim upon our sympathy of one who discovers slowly and painfully in the course of his research that the working hypothesis with which he started (not explicitly, but at the back of his mind) is wrong and untenable. I suspect that this has had something to do with the delayed appearance of his second volume, which still wants its concluding half. This book of Kattenbusch's is an example of the difficulty of conducting research and exposition at the same time. Materials are so abundant that they need to be put into print before they can be properly weighed; and, while this is being done, the leading idea which determines their grouping has to be assumed before it has been adequately tested.

Harnack's work on the history of the Creed, with a writer of less exuberant energy and fertility, might well have formed the special study of a lifetime. With him it is hardly more than a *πάρεργον*, but a *πάρεργον* in which he evidently takes great interest. He has recently given expression to his views in a number of places. First, in the popular pamphlet (published in 1892) which caused considerable stir in Germany; then in a reply to Dr. Cremer, which followed in the same year; then in an elaborate note in the English translation, and in the third edition, of the *History of Dogma* (i 157 ff), and more recently and fully in the article on the Apostles' Creed in the new edition of Hauck-Herzog, *Real-encyklopädie* (cited below as *PRE*³), which is just one of those brilliant and masterly summaries to which we are accustomed from him^a.

^a Mention may also be made of the very convenient collection of material added by him as an appendix to the new (third) edition of Hahn's *Bibliothek der Symbole* (cited below as Hahn²) pp. 364-390.

Harnack and Kattenbusch agree in maintaining that the old Roman Creed, the shortest and simplest form of the Apostles' Creed, is not a variety of a previously existing creed, but itself the oldest piece of creed-production, the starting-point of the whole development. Harnack puts its date 140-150, Kattenbusch still earlier \pm 100.

Both Kattenbusch and Harnack refuse to distinguish an Eastern and Western type of creed before the end of the third century. They both believe that the Eastern Creeds, as they have come down to us, are directly dependent upon the Western. They believe that the old Roman Creed was carried across to Antioch at the time of, or soon after, the settlement of the disputes there in reference to Paul of Samosata by Aurelian, *c.* 272 A.D.

This is no doubt the most important part of the problem as it lies before us at the present time, to determine which of the two views is right, that of those who hold, or of those who deny, that there was a distinct Oriental type of baptismal creed more or less widely diffused throughout the Churches at a date anterior to 272, and indeed coeval with the Roman Creed.

At the present moment Kattenbusch and Harnack may be regarded as to this extent in possession of the field, that they have stated their case the more fully. Their opponents have made us aware of their opinions, and have hinted at some of the grounds on which they rest, but they have not as yet joined issue along the line.

In spite of this disadvantage I will venture to record my vote, such as it is, for the followers of Caspari; and that on the double ground of what seem to me flaws in the arguments of the opposing side, and of positive indications in their favour.

In attempting to test this question I will deal mainly with Harnack; and this may be a suitable opportunity to offer some more general remarks upon the methods of that illustrious scholar. I have spoken of his summary of the subject as brilliant and masterly. Those are epithets which his work seems to me constantly to deserve. It is impossible not to envy the extraordinary physical vitality, the intellectual keenness and vigour which enter into his work. No one on this side the water for a moment grudges him the pre-eminent position which he enjoys, most fitly marked by the offer understood to have been made

to him by the University of Cambridge of an honorary degree. At the same time, I seem to note in his work certain recurring and even characteristic defects by the side of its more conspicuous excellences. I rarely find a point that can be taken omitted. The combined breadth of view and penetrative argument is most striking; but I often find myself differing as to the proportionate value of arguments. It seems to me that these are often strict where they need to be relaxed, and lax where they ought to be strict. In particular I am inclined to question the use that is made of the absence of evidence, which is too often treated as though it were the same thing as negative evidence, whereas really the two things are very different.

The denial of the existence of specifically Eastern Creeds before 272 A.D. turns largely upon the absence of evidence. But in such a case the first question we have to ask ourselves is, To what does this absence of evidence amount? Where there is no literature there can be no literary evidence. But how much literature is there for the whole of Asia Minor, including Cappadocia and Cilicia, for Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine, say from the time of Melito of Sardis to that of Eusebius? Or, indeed how much literature is there between these dates for the whole of the Christian East with the one exception of Alexandria or Hellenized Egypt? I believe that even the scanty evidence there is supplies a fair presumption for the existence of local creeds. But if it did not, what would be the worth of the negative inference?

Those who hold that there were creeds in the East before the beginning of the fourth century usually start with the assumption that there are definite recoverable creeds of the Church of Caesarea implied in the discussions at Nicaea in the year 325, and of the Church of Jerusalem implied in the catechetical lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem in the year 348. Dr. Hort e.g. starts from these two creeds, the text of which he prints in his *Two Dissertations*. Harnack lets pass the Creed of Jerusalem, but he denies the proof of a local creed at Caesarea. He says that the creed given by Eusebius was not the local creed, but a creed specially drawn up by him with a view to the Council.

In the pastoral letter addressed to his diocese, Eusebius gives the opening of the statement which he laid before the Council thus:—

'According as we received from the bishops who were before us both when we were catechized and when we received baptism (καὶ ἐν τῇ κατηγήσει καὶ ὅτε τὸ λουτρὸν ἐλαμβάνομεν), and according to what we have learned from the holy scriptures, and as we have believed and been in the habit of teaching in our own presbyterate as well as in our episcopate, so we still believe, and lay the statement of our belief before you' (Socr. *H. E.* i 8). Then follows the well-known creed.

Harnack allows (as it is impossible not to allow) that this creed represents the teaching current in the Church at Caesarea, but he denies that it was in use *totidem verbis* as a creed. Yet if Eusebius had wanted to describe the baptismal creed of his Church, it is difficult to see what closer language he could have used than *καθὼς παρελάβομεν . . . καὶ ἐν τῇ κατηγήσει καὶ ὅτε τὸ λουτρὸν ἐλαμβάνομεν* (the imperf. probably points to the *preparation for baptism*). Would not these words exactly suit such a course of catechetical lectures as those delivered by St. Cyril at Jerusalem twenty-three years later? Yet those lectures were directly based upon a creed.

We must needs bring to bear the analogy of this neighbouring Church. If a creed was in regular use at Jerusalem, is it likely to have been otherwise at Caesarea? And is not the creed ascribed to that Church just what we should have expected to find there, if the Churches of the East were in the habit of using their own local varieties of the same original creed?

*Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum.*

Harnack has another argument. The Jerusalem Creed certainly had the Appendix to its third paragraph, which is such a striking link of connexion between the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds (the clauses of the Church, forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the flesh, or of the body, [eternal life]). Eusebius does not reproduce this. He breaks off abruptly at 'We believe also in one Holy Spirit.' It has been commonly assumed (amongst others by Dr. Hort) that he did this simply because he confined himself to that portion of the Creed which was relevant to his purpose. The true Creed of Nicaea ends at the same place. Harnack maintains that the supposition that Eusebius left out anything is 'highly precarious.' To me it seems most natural that he should

do so. And, indeed, when we read Eusebius' letter, and observe how he at once takes up in his comment the three Trinitarian articles, we see that to quote the Appendix in full would have only interrupted his argument*.

Fortunately we are not left to subjective impressions one way or the other. We have another analogous case which shows exactly how the disputants of the day felt themselves stand towards the clauses of the Appendix. The First Antiochene Formula of 341 A.D. ends, 'We also believe in the Holy Ghost. And if we are to go on (*εἰ δὲ δεῖ προσθεῖναι*), we believe besides in the resurrection of the flesh, and in eternal life' (Socrates, *H. E.* ii 10: Hahn³ § 153). Clearly there was a sense that these further clauses were detachable from the main body of the Creed, and might be quoted, or not, as suited the purpose of the speaker.

It seems to me therefore that both Harnack's objections are of the nature of refinements—needless and uncalled-for refinements—which under an appearance of exact science only serve to divert a plain and natural inference.

But if we once admit that the creed laid by Eusebius before the Council was the local creed of his Church, then I cannot but think that the theory of Kattenbusch and Harnack breaks down altogether. Bishop Lightfoot in his famous article in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* puts the birth of Eusebius about 260 A.D., so that he would be something like twelve years old when Aurelian intervened in the affairs of Antioch. In other words, he was in all probability already baptized, and had already been catechized in the Caesarean Creed, at a time when, on the Kattenbusch-Harnack hypothesis, the parent of that creed had not yet reached Antioch—much less Caesarea or Jerusalem. With that one fact the whole edifice collapses.

Even if there had been a slight probability on Harnack's side instead of against him, I submit that he should have reflected what a slender thread his theory was hanging by, and how entirely it would fall to the ground if this one postulate were otherwise in fact than he assumed. The precariousness of the situation was with him and not with his opponents.

* It is a similar case to the argument for the omission of the doxology in Matt. vi 13 from the fact that *ἐὰν γὰρ ἀφήτε* is meant to link on directly to *ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν*, and the doxology breaks this connexion.

The argument just used is a short cut which, looking at it as dispassionately as I can, does not seem to me less decisive because it is short. But I believe that we should arrive at the same result if we go the whole round of the East and examine the evidence relating to the several Churches one by one.

Harnack and Kattenbusch, I submit again, forget the difficulty of proving a negative, and as they pass from one item of evidence to another are not as much troubled as they should be by the residual possibilities which they are leaving behind them.

One positive argument there is against the existence of a definite type of creed in the East, viz. that derived from the two short confessions of Gregory Thaumaturgus and Aphraates (Hahn⁸ §§ 185, 16). These are so divergent from the common type as to suggest the inference that their authors were not acquainted with it. The inference may hold good in the case of Aphraates. But in a Syriac writer, beyond the Tigris and outside the limits of the Roman world, this would no more surprise us than that he should not show signs of acquaintance with the Catholic Epistles. The case of Gregory Thaumaturgus has perhaps rather more significance. The extent of this we shall try to estimate later.

If we take a survey of the Eastern Churches during the Ante-Nicene period we naturally find the most abundant material in Egypt. Kattenbusch has discussed this at length, both in his first and in his second volume. We do not, however, as it seems to me, reach daylight until we come to the small print appendix at the end of the treatment in vol. ii, and then rather in spite of the author.

Kattenbusch begins by admitting the substantial genuineness of the baptismal interrogations in the so-called 'Egyptian Church Order' (preserved in the Coptic version of the Apostolic Constitutions), a shorter and older form of which is found in the Canons ascribed to Hippolytus. Kattenbusch agrees with Achelis and most other scholars in accepting these as really traceable to Hippolytus of Rome, and he thus accounts for the resemblance which the interrogations present to the clauses of the Roman Creed. These interrogations were in use in Egypt in the third century, and they are the only factor that Kattenbusch finds it necessary to assume to explain the phenomena, with the addition of some knowledge of the Roman Creed itself, which

he attributes to Origen in the latter part of his life. He questions the existence of an Egyptian Creed, properly so called.

But in the appendix to his second discussion of the subject in vol. ii, he prints a form of creed, brought to his notice by Preuschen, which is said to have been used by Macarius the Great, a hermit of the Scetic desert, whose life extended over ninety years of the fourth century, in an interview with a Hierakite heretic, which seems to be historical.

Now this creed has striking points of contact on the one hand with the letter of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, to his namesake of Constantinople in 323 A. D., and on the other hand, with the confession of Arius about 321 A. D. (both Ante-Nicene). And it is further to be observed that some of the more marked expressions, (τὸν) ἐπὶ συντελείᾳ τῶν αἰώνων εἰς ἀθέτησιν τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐπιδημήσαντα ἐν σαρκί, are not only common to Macarius and Alexander, but occur, as Kattenbusch candidly points out, with considerable frequency in the writings of St. Athanasius.

I have little doubt that these coincidences really point to an Egyptian Creed (see also Kattenbusch, ii 251, 253). When once we assume this, the lengthened investigations of the language of Dionysius of Alexandria, Origen, and Clement will take a different colour. Kattenbusch repeatedly admits that their language would be consistent with the use of a creed, and only says that it does not require it. It would actually require it if we could be sure that some of Rufinus' translations accurately represented their original. In any case, I should have been prepared to say that it at least *favoured* the use of a creed. And when we bring in these clear indications from the end of the period, that use appears to be raised to a high degree of probability.

When we pass on to Syria and Palestine, the material is ample for the fourth century, scanty for the third. The facts here (with the exception of what has been said above about the Creed of Caesarea) would, for the most part, be explicable upon the hypothesis of Kattenbusch and Harnack, who believe that Antioch was the centre for the dissemination of the Roman Creed throughout the East, and who assign an important part in this dissemination to Lucian and his school.

Kattenbusch, however, shows himself conscious that an objection may be drawn to his view from the Syriac *Didascalia*, which

forms the base of *Apost. Constitt.* vi 30 (printed side by side, ii 206). Funk, who has examined the date of this work most fully, assigns it to the first half of the third century. Harnack would place the original *Didascalia* in the first half, but the copy used by the Syriac translator in the second half of the century; Kattenbusch would put it *after* Paul of Samosata. On his theory (and Harnack's) it cannot be earlier; for it implies a creed like the Roman. The allies must feel that the dates are again becoming rather uncomfortably crowded. And in the background there is the Creed of Caesarea.

For Cappadocia we have a state of things which, on a smaller scale, is rather like that in regard to Egypt. The only extant Ante-Nicene literature is Firmilian's letter to Cyprian (*Ep.* lxxx in the Cyprianic collection). Now just as there is one conspicuous passage in the writings of Clement (*Strom.* vii 15 § 90; Kattenbusch, ii 118) which, though it does not exactly prove, yet seems distinctly to favour the regular use of a creed, so also in this letter of Firmilian's there is one paragraph which seems to point to a like conclusion. Firmilian is arguing on the question as to the necessity for repeating baptism given by heretics; and in § 11 he quotes what is to him the horrible case of a woman who had been impelled by a demon to baptize. It only made the matter worse that the baptism was administered with all the regular forms: *cui nec symbolum trinitatis nec interrogatio legitima et ecclesiastica defuit* (cf. *usitata et legitima verba interrogationis* in the preceding §).

I do not press *symbolum trinitatis**, because it might be difficult to say for what it stood in Firmilian's Greek, or that it necessarily implied more than baptism in the Threefold Name. But when we remember how constantly elsewhere (including Egypt and, we may say, Palestine) the formulae of interrogation required answers modelled upon the local creed, it is fair to presume that this would be the case in Cappadocia, and the words *legitima et ecclesiastica* seem to me to suggest at once something fuller than a bare confession of the Trinity, and something more in touch with the usage of the rest of the Christian world.

But however this may be, I must needs think that we have the

* *σύμβολον*, in the sense of 'creed,' is said to be not found earlier than Cyril of Alexandria.

same sort of verification here that there is in the case of the Egyptian Creed. The Third Formula of Antioch in 341 is expressly ascribed to Theophronius, Bishop of Tyana, one of the cities of Cappadocia. Now Kattenbusch himself has noticed the sort of triangular relation which subsists between the confession of Theophronius, a confession of another Cappadocian, the Sophist Asterius, and the Second Formula of Antioch. There are striking points of contact between each of these confessions. Indeed, so far does this go, that in a small print appendix of his second volume, Kattenbusch admits the possibility that the Second Formula of Antioch may have been actually inspired by Asterius (ii 264 f.). But I think we may venture to draw for him the conclusion which he refuses to draw for himself—that Asterius, Theophronius, and both the Second and Third Antiochene Creeds are all based on a form of creed current in Cappadocia, just as we drew a similar inference as to the relation of Arius, Alexander, and Macarius the Great to a form of creed current in Egypt. Students of Dr. Hort's *Two Dissertations* may be interested to know that a characteristic feature of the Cappadocian Creed was its use of the phrase *μονογενῆς θεός*.

If we could take over Kunze's conclusion that the Creed of Marcus the Hermit is really the local creed of Ancyra, we should then have a local creed established for Galatia. But although Zahn wholly, and Harnack partially, are inclined to assent to this proposition, both Loofs and Kattenbüscher demur, and, as at present advised, I should find myself on the side of the doubters. In any case, the Creed of Marcus cannot be localized with so much certainty as to become a determining factor in the argument.

Kunze may perhaps have something to say about the original Creed of Byzantium, but it is not likely that that will have any more vital bearing upon the main issue.

In regard to the province of Asia one little creed stands out—the confession of faith put forward by the presbyters against Noetus (Routh, *Script. Eccl. Opusc.* i 50). But this, and the great question of Irenaeus, I may reserve for a little longer.

Looking back over the course by which we have travelled, I cannot but think that, considering the scantiness of the material accessible to us, the indications are really by no means slight that

there were local creeds existing before the time of Aurelian in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria, and in Eastern Asia Minor.

If Harnack does not admit this, he yet makes some important concessions towards those who maintain it. These concessions deserve to be stated as examples of his resourcefulness and strenuous way of facing a complex problem. They will also show how he regards a considerable part at least of the phenomena on which the opposing case may be supposed to rest.

'The result of our investigation,' he says, 'is not purely negative; rather we can allow that the advocates of a primitive Oriental type of creed, up to a certain point, are in the right. There did, in fact, exist as far back as the beginning of the second century in the East (that is, in Asia Minor, or in Asia Minor and Syria), amongst other things, a Christological *μάθημα*, organically related [*blutverwandti*] to the second article of the Roman Creed, which in its peculiar parts and formulae lasted on until it passed into the Oriental Creeds of the fourth century. There existed also formulae in regard to the "One God, Creator of heaven and earth," and His incarnate Son, which also lasted on [*durchgeschlagen*] and influenced the whole course of creed-development, including many modifications of the Roman Creed in the West (the uniform theological tenor [*Haltung*] of the Oriental Creeds in the second article has its root in the primitive *σαρκωθέντα*). There existed, lastly, a formula which referred to the holy, prophetic Spirit, and the facts which that Spirit had proclaimed in regard to Christ. Besides these larger sections, such details as the *descensus* and *catholica* also point to the East' (Hauck-Herzog, *PRE*³ i 752).

So much of the substance of the Creed is included in these admissions, that the negative which they are intended to qualify loses most of its sting. I would ask, however, whether it is not after all the simpler and more probable hypothesis that the Creed existed as a whole, undergoing slight modifications in the different localities, but with the definite type everywhere in the background, than to suppose that these floating and fluid *μαθήματα* retained their shape and cohesion down to the fourth century.

But on the other hand I should be prepared myself to make a concession which might perhaps go some little way to meet Harnack's objections. I believe that the existence of a formu-

lated creed goes back as far in the East as in the West, but I believe that there was a perceptible difference in its use during the period before the Arian controversy. This difference, however, I should be inclined to refer to psychological causes. The two leading representatives of Greek and Latin theology at this period are Tertullian and Origen. Does not the mere mention of those two names suggest at once all the explanation we need? I do not mean only that it explains the difference of type between the Eastern and the Western Creeds—though it does explain that most abundantly—but I mean also that it explains the greater craving on the one side than on the other for a fixed definite objective authority, and the greater frequency of the appeal to that authority. It was not so natural to the speculative Eastern mind to bind itself by rule as it was to the legal unspeculative West. Tertullian and Origen are only very pointed examples of the general tendency of the Western and Eastern mind. I doubt if it is necessary to go beyond this kind of consideration to account for the comparative eccentricity of the Creed of Gregory Thaumaturgus. I seek the solution rather in the man than in the conditions.

If we may consider that the position has now been made good that the Eastern branch of the Creed as well as the Western already existed in the third century, the only remaining question will be, how much further back we can trace it, and what was its ultimate relation to the Western branch and to the original Creed. Here comes in a valuable observation made by Dr. Loofs. The writings of Irenaeus contain a number of creed-like passages, or passages which have every appearance of being based upon a creed*. These passages were collected by Harnack in vol. i of his (and von Gebhardt's) edition of the Apostolic Fathers. Now Dr. Loofs has remarked, what is indeed evident as soon as our attention is called to it, that Irenaeus already has many of the most characteristic expressions of the Eastern Creeds. He inserts *ἐνα* in both the two first articles *ἐνα Θεόν, ἐνα Χριστόν Ἰησοῦν*. He clearly had a clause corresponding to *ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς*. He had *παθόντα*, and *σταυρωθέντα* with *ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου*

* Harnack's denial (in his latest work, *PRE*³ i 752) that they really are so based seems to me to be a paradox. But it is fair to say that I have not before me his article in the *Zeitschrift f. Theol. u. Kirche*, iv 149 ff.

after instead of before it. He seems also to have had *ἐν δόξῃ* of the Second Coming. Along with these peculiarities, every one of which is distinctively Eastern, Irenaeus has one only which is characteristic of the oldest form of the Western Creed—in three well-attested places *Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν* for *Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν*. It is quite possible that this really belongs to the primitive Creed.

But in regard to the others, is it not natural and obvious to infer that the separation of the Eastern and the Western types had already taken place, and that Irenaeus himself had carried with him the creed of his home in Smyrna? This inference is confirmed by the brief confession of the Presbyters in Hippolytus *c. Noetum* 1. That too has *ἕνα θεόν*; it has *παθόντα* and *ἀποθανόντα*—both originally Eastern. There is perhaps more room to doubt about Justin, though he too has two or three of the Eastern peculiarities.

But if Irenaeus took an Eastern Creed from his home, that would carry back the type to the middle of the second century. Much further than this I doubt if we should go. For this main reason: Zahn is of opinion that *ἕνα* (before *θεόν*) was part of the primitive Creed, and that this was dropped out and *πατέρα* inserted in his hypothetical Roman recension of 200–220 A.D. But would it not be better to invert this? The three first peculiarities of the Eastern Creeds, *ἕνα θεόν*, with *ἕνα Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν*, and *ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς*, are obviously controversial and aimed against the Gnostics, with their multitude of aeons, their Demiurge, and their separation of *Ἰησοῦς* and *Χριστός**. But, that being so, it is surely natural to put the non-controversial form first. The primitive Creed arose, it is fair to believe, before the controversies of the second century became acute. And the primitive Creed corresponded more nearly to the Roman type than to the Oriental. The Eastern mind played upon it; and, as a result of that play, what began with a close resemblance to the Apostles' Creed ended with a close resemblance to the Nicene.

W. SANDAY.

* Zahn (*op. cit.* p. 61) adopts the alternative explanation that the changes were made under the stress of the Monarchian controversy. It is perhaps somewhat in his favour that Tertullian, as well as Irenaeus, has *unicum* or *unum deum*. But may not he too have been influenced by the Eastern Creed, through his intimate relations with Asia Minor?