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THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST
IN THE NICENE CREED

and

THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH.

By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Chapter	Page.
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1 - 3
I. The Subject Stated and Explained.....	1
II. The Subject Justified.....	1
III. The Plan of Procedure.....	3
II. DOCTRINAL CONFLICTS LEADING TO THE CALLING OF THE COUNCIL OF NICEA.....	4 -25
I. Ebionitic Heresies.....	5 -11
A. Judaistic Heresy	5 - 7
B. Heresy of Cerinthus	7
C. Pseudo-Clementine Heresy	8
D. Summary of Ebionitic Heresies	9 -11
II. Gnosticism	11 -15
A. Meaning of Gnosis	11
B. The Mystical Elements in Gnosticism	12
C. Dualism-The Power of Evil	13- 14
D. Docetism	14 -15
III. Manichaeism	15 -17
A. Origin of Manichaeism	15
B. Doctrine of "Jesus Patibilis"	16 -17
C. Summary of Manichaeism	17
IV. Monarchian or Anti-trinitarian	18 -20
A. Rationalistic Monarchian	18
B. Patripassian Monarchian	18 -19
C. Sebellius	19 -20
V. The Arian Heresy	20 -25
A. Origin of the Controversy	21
B. The Doctrinal Statement of Arius ..	22
C. The Doctrine of Bishop Alexander ..	23 -25
III. TEXT AND ANALYSIS OF THE NICENE CREED	26 -52
I. Historical Development of the Articles in the Nicene Symbol	26 -32
A. The Introduction of the Creed of Eusebius	26 -28
B. The Comparison between the Nicene Creed and Creed of Eusebius	28 -32

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.
(Continued).

Chapter	Page.
1. Omissions from the Formula of Caesarea	28 - 30
2. Insertions	30 - 31
3. Variations	31 - 32
II. The Adoption of the Nicene Creed ..	32 - 35
A. Symbol of Eusebius	32 - 33
B. Formula of Hosius	33 - 34
C. Text of the Nicene Creed	34 - 35
III. The Enlarged Nicaean or Nicaeno- Constantinopolitan Creed	35 - 40
A. Text of the Nicaeno-Constan- tinopolitan Creed	38 - 40
IV. Analysis of Statement Regarding the Person of Christ in the Nicene- Constantinopolitan or Nicene Creed	40 - 52
A. The Second Article of the Creed	40 - 46
1. (Lord).	40 - 41
2. Begotten of the Father	41 - 43
3. God of God; Light of Light, Very God of Very God	43 - 44
4. Begotten not made; Being one Substance with the Father.	44 - 45
B. The Third Article of the Creed.	46 - 48
1. For us men and for our salvation	46
2. Come Down	47
3. Was made flesh, incarnate..	47
4. Was made man	48
C. The Fourth Article of the Creed.	48 - 49
D. The Fifth Article of the Creed..	49
E. The Sixth Article of the Creed .	50
F. The Seventh Article of the Creed	50 - 51
G. Summary	51 - 52
IV. THE WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH.....	53 - 67
I. Political and Ecclesiastical Events Leading to the Calling of the Assembly	53 - 54
II. Controversial Background of the Confession of Faith	54 - 59
A. The Socinian Heresy	55 - 56
B. Erastianism	56 - 58
B. Unitarianism	58 - 59

TABLE OF CONTENTS.
(Continued).

Chapter	Page.
III. Proceedings of the Westminster Assembly	59 - 64
A. Dr. Twisse's Sermon	59
B. Issuance of the Order for Revision	60
C. Church Parties Represented.....	60 - 61
1. Episcopalian	61
2. Presbyterian	61
3. Independent or Congregational	61 - 62
4. Erastian	62 - 63
D. Summary	63 - 64
IV. The Adoption of "The Westminster Confession of Faith"	64 - 67
A. Directory of Worship	64
B. The Confession of Faith	65 - 67
V. COMPARISON OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST IN THE NICENE AND THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS	68 - 84
I. Section II of the <i>ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ</i>	68 - 72
A. The First Statement	69 - 72
B. The Second Statement	72
II. Section III of the <i>ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ</i>	72 - 77
A. Affirmations of the Nicene Creed	72 - 73
B. Parallel Statement in "The Westminster Confession of Faith"	73 - 77
1. True Nature of Christ	73 - 74
2. "Yet without sin"	74
3. Conceived by Holy Ghost	74 - 75
4. Godhead and manhood	75 - 77
III. Section IV of the <i>ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ</i>	77 - 80
A. Nicene Statement	77 - 78
B. Westminster Statement	78
C. Comparison	78 - 80
1. Points brought out in relief	
2. Omission of Pontius Pilate	
IV. Section V of the <i>ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ</i>	80 - 81
A. The Nicene Statement	80
B. The Westminster Statement	80
C. The Comparison	80 - 81
V. Section VI of the <i>ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ</i>	81 - 83
A. The Nicene Statement	81 - 82
B. The Westminster Statement	82
C. The Comparison	82 - 83

TABDE OF CONTENTS.

(Continued)

Chapter		Page
VI.	Section VII of the <i>ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ</i>	83 - 84
	A. The Nicene Statement	83
	B. The Westminster Statement	83
	C. The Comparison	83 - 84
VI.	CONCLUSION.....	85 - 86
	A. Professor Briggs' Statement	85
	B. Results of Inquiry	85 - 86
	C. The Additions	86
	D. "The Westminster Confession of Faith" a Representative Reformation Creed	86

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

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I. THE SUBJECT STATED AND EXPLAINED

Each age, each church, each believer reads in the records of the historic creeds of Christendom a message for itself, the power of which is realized according to the individual's understanding of it. It is the business of each age to catch the voice which speaks through the symbols of the past and to repeat the message in the language of its own time. The aim of this dissertation is to show the basic relationship existing between two great symbols of the Christian Faith, the Nicene Creed and the Westminster Confession of Faith in respect to the Doctrine of the Person of Christ.

II. THE SUBJECT JUSTIFIED

The affirmations in the Nicene Creed were the reply of the church to the questionings of its age. Then, as in no other period of the Church History, the problem of the person of our Lord became an issue of life and death. The creeds of the Reformation arose at a time when other issues were in the forefront. It is therefore of importance to know whether they departed from or modified in any way the statements in the Nicene Symbol. From the viewpoint of doctrine this inquiry is of value because it helps to determine the question, whether the

doctrines of the Reformation are in complete accord with the historic faith of Christendom. Still further it will show what the emphases of the Reformation were, thereby making clearer what the doctrinal positions of the reformers were. The Westminster Confession of Faith has been chosen as a representative Reformation symbol. The fact that it belongs to the Seventeenth Century is an advantage, because it represents views which had become established as distinctly Protestant.

III. THE PLAN OF PROCEDURE

The method of procedure in the dissertation will be:-first, to show the relation of the Nicene Creed to its historical background. This will involve a general statement of the heresies, which led to the calling of the Council of Nicea. Upon this will follow the critical analysis of the creed as it was formulated at the Council, Neo-Constantinopolitan creed being used as the basis. A similar method of procedure will be followed in regard to the Westminster Confession of Faith; first the historical background will be sketched. On this will follow the critical analysis. The main part of the thesis will then follow, consisting of a comparative study of the doctrine of the Person of Christ in the two symbols. Each significant word and statement in the Nicene Creed will be compared with the statement in the Westminster Confession

in order to discover if the full meaning of the earlier symbol has been carried over into the later. Differences and additions will be noted and discussed.

The final part of the thesis will contain the answer to the questions raised at the beginning. In particular it will determine to what extent the Westminster Confession is in the direct line of succession to the historic creeds of the church, and whether it may be said that those who accept it have in so doing proclaimed their belief in the affirmations made at Nicea.

CHAPTER II.

DOCTRINAL CONFLICTS LEADING TO

THE CALLING OF THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

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The doctrine of the Person of Christ did not come to fruition without internal and external conflict. It was confronted by every known "ism" of the period; until in the year 325 A.D., the church was called to a holy convocation in Nicea by her Christian Emperor Constantine the Great, to settle the main question in dispute.¹ It is therefore necessary to outline the heresies which caused the calling of the council.

In his "History of the Christian Church", Dr. Sheldon characterizes heresies "as false attempts to blend the old of the other systems with the new of Christianity".² This was conspicuously the case at the time of the calling of the council of Nicaea, with two of the principal classes of heresies and may be regarded, to some extent as the case with the third. These three classes of heresies are:- (1) the Judaistic, (2) the Gnostic and Manichaeian, (3) the Monarchian, or

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1- Schaff, "History of the Christian Church"-Vol III-p. 624.
2- Sheldon, H.C. - "History of the Christian Church" (early)
p. 194.

anti-trinitarian. Of these the Jewish and the Gnostic were largely the antipodes of each other in spirit and aim, though there were speculative schools within the bounds of Judaism which harbored Gnostic elements.¹

I. THE EBIONITIC HERESY

A. Judaistic.

The Judaistic Heresies, or in other words Ebionism, arose from the fact that while Judaism was essentially a forerunner of Christianity, it was in a large part unwilling to accept the position of a mere forerunner. It wished to retain its place and prominence after it had performed the work of introduction, and could not enter into the spirit of John the Baptist, when he said of Jesus "He must increase, but I must decrease". Of the Jews who received Christ as the Messiah, many came into full fellowship with their Gentile brethen, and claimed no superiority in virtue of the law. Others, however, continued in the spirit of those who disturbed Paul's congregation by insisting that it was necessary to keep the law of Moses. Towards the middle of the Second Century we find them ranked as a heretical faction, and shortly thereafter, they were called Ebionites.² The probable origin of this name is that suggested by Origen, who derives it from ebion, the Hebrew

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1 - cf. Ibid. p. 194.

2 - Meldonian, V.D. "The Virgin Birth" p. 12.

Thesis in the Library of the Biblical Seminary.

word "poor".¹ The name may have been applied at first to Jewish Christians generally by the Pharisees, who wished to stigmatize them as belonging to the poorer ranks. The term, having thus become associated with those of Jewish extraction, might very naturally be applied to them by Gentile Christians with reference to their Jewish type of Faith.

The main body of those who were classed as Ebionites asserted the obligation of all Christians to keep the law of Moses. They rejected the apostolic office of Paul. They used only the Gospel of Matthew, and that in a mutilated form. In their view Christ was a mere man, conceived in the ordinary way, and distinguished only by his righteous walk and the superior endowment of the Spirit which came upon Him at His baptism. They were also millenarians, and looked for the coming of Christ to inaugurate a visible reign at Jerusalem. It would appear however that the party of Jewish dissent was not altogether homogeneous. Although Irenaus and Hippolytus make no discrimination between different classes of Ebionites.² Origen on the other hand speaks of the "two fold" sect of the Ebionites,³ specifying as a distinction between the two sections, that the one denied, while the other accepted, the supernatural conception of Christ. A century earlier Justin Martyr had intimated that the church had to deal

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1 - cf. Melconian - "Virgin Birth" - p. 12.

2 - cf. Idibd.- P. 196.

3 - cf. Sheldon - "History of the Christian Church (early)"
p. 196.

with two classes of Judaizers, ¹ - the one embracing the law of Moses only upon themselves, the other insisting that it should be kept by all.

B. The Heresy of Cerinthus.

The second faction under the Judaistic Heresies is known as the system of Cerinthus. Cerinthus was educated in Egypt. He was a contemporary of the Apostle John, and began to spread his views in Asia Minor during the life-time of the apostle. He might in some respects be classed with the Gnostics. ² His separation of God from the world, his interposition of intermediate beings, his characterization of the world-maker as an unconscious agent of the Most High, and his distinction between Jesus and the heavenly Christ - the former being the son of Mary and Joseph, while the latter was a superior being who was joined with him in the interval between his baptism and his passion - were quite in the Gnostic vein. At the same time he concurred with the stringent Judaizers in asserting the continued obligation to keep the Mosaic law, and in proclaiming a thousand years' reign of the Messiah on earth with Jerusalem as the center of His Kingdom. ³

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- 1 - cf. Dial Cum Tryph XLVII (quoted from Sheldon, "History of Christian Church", p. 196.)
- 2 - cf. Melconian - "Virgin Birth"- p. 13
3. cf. Irenaeus Cont. Haer 1:26 - Anti-Nicene Fathers Vol 1 - P. 351-352.

C. Pseudo-Clementine Heresy.

The last faction under the Judaistic heresies is known as ^{THE} Pseudo-Clementine System. About the middle of the 2nd Century there appeared a work embodying a peculiar phase of Jewish speculation. This work, which is known as the Clementine Homilies, ¹ places the Jewish emphasis upon the Unity of God, but falls quite below the best Jewish thought in respect of his spirituality. God, it is represented, dwells on high in bodily form, the image of which is seen in man. He is the centre of the universe and from Him, as such, life-giving power emanates in every direction. No second being or person stands in the place or bears the name of God. At the same time it is conceded that there is a species of duality in Him. He has, so to speak, his feminine side. His wisdom was that with which He himself always rejoiced as with His own spirit. It is united as souls to God, but it is intended by Him as ^{an} ₁ hand fashioning the universe.¹

A dualistic view of the world is strongly emphasized by these systems of thought. God has distinguished says the Homilies, "all principles into pairs and opposites ... the present world is female, as a mother bringing the souls of her children, but the world to come is male, as a father

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1 - cf. Clementine Homilies III 20-27 - Translated by
Barnard.

receiving his children". Also they claim, "To every order of good there is a corresponding evil. Next to Adam, the father of the good stands Eve, the mother of evil. Next to the righteous Abel, the unrighteous Cain; next to the pious Jacob, the profane Esau; over against the true prophets, the false; over against the true apostle, the deceiving apostle; over against the Christ, the anti-Christ. Indeed, in this world evil is foremost; good holds the second place in the several pains." ¹

D. Summary.

Emphasis on the Humanity of Christ.

In summarizing the Ebionitic Thought we notice that Ebionism affirms to the Church that Christ was, essentially man: and whatever other divine attributes may have been given Him, rested on the basis of His full human personality. The divine which was attributed to Christ is His virtue, which raised him above the most distinguished of the human race. Artemon the greatest exponent of Ebionitic thought in the later part of the 3rd Century claims and affirms the fact that Christ is exalted above the prophets and ordinary men by his virtue, as represented in the sole work of Christ's Freedom. We read - "Christ ranks above the prophets, both in consideration of his supernatural

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1 - Clementine Homilies, II. p. 15-20, quoted from Sheldon, Church History p. 199.

birth, and of the superior measure of His virtue: -
 Ἰαρετέμων δέ τις - τὰ μὲν κατὰ τὸν ὄλυν
 θεὸν παραπλησίως ἡμᾶρ εἰδόσασεν, αὐτὸν
 εἰρηκῶς εἶναι τοῦ παντὸς ποιητὴν τὸν δὲ
 κύριον ἰησοῦν χριστὸν ἀρρωπιον εἶπε,
 ψιλὸν ἐκ παρθένου γεγεννημένον
 τῶν δὲ προφητῶν ἀρετῇ κρείττονα
 ταῦτα δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἀποστόλους ἔλεγε
 κεληροχένας, παρεμυεύων τῶν
 θείων γραφῶν τὴν διάνοιαν τοῦ δέ μὲν
 ἐκείνους θεολογῆσαι τὸν χριστόν. 1

Also Paul of Samosata gave the complete to this higher form of Ebionism. Paul did away with the Songs of Praise to Christ. Like Artemon he starts with the Unity of God, and denies the existence of a σοφία or λόγος distinct from the Father ἐν ὑπόστατος. He represents the Logos in God as merely that which intelligence or reason is in the human heart. Paul stresses the human personality of Christ. His Christ is from beneath κάτωθεν. He attaches no value to Christ's super-natural birth. To him Christ continued permanently the subject of divine influence on the sense that His humanity was predestined to, and therefore, also prepared for this abiding union with the divine power. Dorner tells us, "What is peculiar to him, however, is his endeavor to establish the sonship or Diety

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1 - Dorner - "Doctrine of the Person of Christ" Division I Vol II - p. 9.

of Christ on the ground of the divine power which dwelt in Him, after the analogy of the prophets, but in a fuller measure urging that it was the animating principle of his human development, which having attained its goal, constituted Him, for its excellence worthy of the name of the Son of God." ¹

II Gnostic Heresies.

The second great heresy the church had to contend with was Gnosticism.

A. Meaning of Gnosis.

Three causes were especially operative in giving rise to this heresy. The first of these was that spirit of intellectual aristocracy which dominated so largely the Ancient World. Priests, and philosophers alike accepted the theory that the great mass of men were without capacity for higher grades of religious as well as of secular knowledge. The favored few, as a kind of spiritual aristocracy, were set over against the many. They were not willing to rank with the common mass, and form part of a spiritual democracy. Ordinary Christians were regarded by them as merely men of faith who had received the outward facts of Christianity but had not been inducted into its mysteries. From the unlearned multitude they wished to be distinguished as men of knowledge or Gnostics, who had grasped Christiani ty

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1 - Ibid,- p. 9.

in its transcendent significance.¹ Their tendency was to sacrifice the historical and the ethical to the speculative and the intellectual. "The motto of the Gnostic", says Mansel, "might be exactly given in the words of a distinguished philosopher, 'men are saved not by the histories but by the metaphysical'".² The tendency of Gnosticism is always to make the elements of knowledge predominate over that of the moral life; it changes religion into philosophy.³

B. The Mystical Elements in Gnosticism.

A second factor which contributed greatly to Gnosticism was the "spirit of Oriental mysticism". History shows that the oriental mind has always had a peculiar bent toward the allegorical, the mystic, the undefined, and the immense. "By a mind thus disposed, clear outlines and divine simplicity were poorly appreciated. Jewish history, and even the gospel history, appeared too narrow and commonplace. It was thought necessary, therefore, to penetrate beyond the range of revelation, to traverse the secret chambers of the universe, and to view the facts of the Gospel in the light of developments which had taken place within the Godhead, and among higher powers."⁴

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1 - cf. Sheldon - "History of the Early Church" p.202.

2 - Mansel - "Gnostic Heresies" p. 11 (quoted from Sheldon
"History of the Christian Church"
p.202.

3.- cf. Pressense - "Early Years of Christianity" Book I p.12

4.- Sheldon - "History of the Christian Church"(early) p.203

C. Dualism - The Power of Evil.

A third motive-power in the direction of Gnosticism was a lively feeling of dualism, a painful consciousness of the might of the evil which struggles in the world for mastery over the good. This feeling characterized to a peculiar degree the declining classic-world. The State of Society emphasized the force of downward tendencies, and the inherited faith afforded meager promise of a remedy. A sense of the evil in the world rested like a heavy weight upon many heathen minds that were not too indifferent, or too absorbed in earthliness and sin, to reflect upon it. The Gnostic System agreed, in the main upon the following point:- God is the unfathomable abyss exalted above all contact with the creative world. The universe is divided into many stories, as the super being has his dwelling in the attics. From God an unfoldment has proceeded, his attributes or powers going in personal form, the first emanations serving as sources for those more remote, until a chain of celestial beings, in Aeons, appears between the Supreme Father and the material realm.¹ The material in this over is the seat of evil, something essentially opposed to the divine. The fashioner of the material world, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, is a subordinate being standing below even the Aeons, and representing psychical rather than spiritual existence. The Savior is a being from

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1 - cf. Irenaens against Heresies - Anti-Nicene Fathers.
Vol. I p. 326-328.

the Aeonie world, who united himself with Jesus of Nazareth. By this union, however, which was only temporary, he was not brought into contact with matter, or subjected to bodily needs and sufferings. The incarnation was therefore unreal. In this connection it may be remarked that it is a common feature of the Gnostic systems, to deal in images or symbols rather than in concepts. Everything assumes shape or personality.¹ Theology under their handling, becomes not so much a discourse about God, as an imaginary history of God.

D. Docetism.

During the latter part of the third century, the Gnostic view took on a new phase as the docetic heresy. Docetism held the theory that Christ had no real body, his appearance in the actual world being only a magical apparition, his body a phantom, his birth and death visions. The root from which this theory sprang was the idea of matter as being the cause of evil. Ascribing all evil to matter, they thought it necessary to represent Christ as entirely disconnected from the material world.² Basilides (A.D. 125) affirmed only a human suffering in the redeemer, which was not expiatory for two reasons:- first, because as merely human it was finite, and inadequate to atone for the sins of the whole world of mankind; and secondly, because

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1 - cf. Irenaeus - Against Heresies, Anti-Nicene Father
Vol I p. 332.
2 - cf. Schaff - Religious Encyclopaedia Vol I p. 656.

the idea of substitution of penal suffering is inadmissible. The suffering of Christ was merely emblematical, - designed to symbolize the religious truth, than man in order to attain his true and highest life must die to the earthly life.¹ Here we notice that the Gnostic like the Ebionites reject the doctrine of the Atonement.

III. MANICHAISM.

The third heresy is known as Manichaeism. Like Gnosticism, Manichaeism was a mixture of heathenism with Christianity. It differed from average Gnosticism by its smaller appropriation of Christian ideas, its more radical and undisguised naturalism, and its more thorough organization.

A. Origin of Manichaeism.

According to oriental account, Mani, called also Manes or Manichaem, the founder of Manichaean sect, was a learned Persian. He is said to have been converted to Christianity, and even to have served as a presbyter. Mani conceived the idea of forming an eclectic system in which Christianity and Zoroastrionism should be combined. Giving himself out as the promised Paraclete, - that is, a divinely enlightened teacher and performer - Mani began to spread his views about the middle of the third century.²

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1 - cf. Shedd - History of Christian Doctrine Vol II p.206-266

2 - cf. Schaff - Religious Encyclopaedia Vol II p. 1396

He started from the assumption of an absolute dualism. Over against the world of light lies an unoriginated world of darkness, matter, fire which has no power of illumination. At the head of the former stands the good Diety with his angels, who are emanations from himself and channels of his light.¹

B. The Doctrine of "Jesus Patibiles".

Mani claimed that throughout the world on all sides there is more or less of the imprisoned light, or soul. This may be viewed as the suffering son of man, "Jesus Patibiles". He says that the crucifixion is in a sense a continuous event. "The earth", says the Manichean Faustus, "conceives and brings forth the mortal Jesus, who, as hanging from every tree, is the life and salvation of men".² "By your profane fancies", says Augustine, "Christ is not only mingled with heaven and all the stars, but conjoined and compounded with the earth and all its productions."³

Man in the system of Mani, is a section of the mingled realm, his soul is a portion of the world-soul, and his body is a portion of the evil matter. His origin was due to the powers of darkness. Redemption is the release of the luminous essence from the bands of dark

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- 1- cf. McClintock-Cyclopaedia of Biblical & Theological Literature, Vol V - p. 707.
- 2- cf. McClintock- " " " Vol. V p. 707.
- 3- Augustine - Con. Faustum XX 2 (quoted from Sheldon History of Christian Church - p. 223

matter. The redeemer is the Son of the primal man, the Christ, the Sun Spirit fantastically represented as dwelling in the sun by his power, and in the moon by his wisdom.¹ Coming down to earth in bodily form, but with only the phantom of a body, he instructs men how to attain their true destiny. "Death," as the Manichaeans conceived it, "is the liberator of the spiritual part of the believer, which passes on board the great lightships in the heavens, the waxing of the moon being visible evidence of a cargo received."²

C. Summary of Manichaenism.

In brief summary, the Manichaeans believed that Jesus Christ was born an Aeon, or subsistent personification of the Light in the world. He became the historical Jesus, son of a poor widow (Mary) "The Jewish Messiah, whom the Jews crucified", "a devil who was justly punished for interfering in the work of the Aeon Jesus".³ Mani's christology was purely docetic; his Christ appeared to be a man, to live, suffer, and die to symbolize the light suffering in this world, but it was seeming only. Manichaeans urged Faith in God, and in Light Power, wisdom the attributes of God as the way to eternal life.

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- 1 - cf. McClintock - Cyclopaedia of Biblical & Theological Literature - Vol V - p. 707.
- 2 - Acta Archelai - VIII; Alexander of Lycopolis IV - (quoted from Sheldon, Church History p. 225.)
- 3 - The Catholic Encyclopedia Vol 9. p. 594.

IV. MONARCHIAN OR ANTI-TRINITARIAN

A heresy more immediately concerned with the calling of the Council is known as the Monarchian or Anti-trinitarian. Those who held this view laid stress upon the numerical, personal unity of the Godhead. But we must carefully distinguish among them, two opposite classes. The rationalistic or Dynamic Monarchians, who devised the divinity of Christ, or explained it as a mere power (*δύναμις*), and the patripassian or modalistic Monarchians, who identified the Son with the Father, and admitted at most only a modal trinity, that is a threefold mode of revelation but not a tripersonality.

A. Rationalistic Monarchian.

The first form of this heresy, involved in the abstract Jewish Monotheism, deistically sundered the divine and the human, and rose little above Ebionism. After being defeated in the church this heresy arose later outside it on a grander scale, as a pretended revelation, and with a marvellous success in Mohammedanism.

B. Patripassian Monarchian.

The second form proceeded from the highest conception of the deity of Christ, but in part also from pantheistic notions which approached the ground of Gnostic

docetism.¹ The one view prejudiced the dignity of the Son, the other the dignity of the Father; yet the latter was by far the more profound and Christian, and accordingly met with the greater acceptance.

The Monarchians of the first class saw in Christ a mere man, filled with divine power; but conceived this divine power as operative in him, not from baptism only according to the Ebionite view, but from the beginning; and all spirit. The second group together with their unitarian zeal felt the deeper Christian impulse to hold fast the divinity of Christ; but they sacrificed to it his independent personality, which they merged in the essence of the Father. They taught that the one supreme God by his own free will, and by an act of self-limitation became man, so that the Son is the Father veiled in the flesh. They knew no other God but the one manifested in Christ, and charged their opponents with ditheism.²

C. Sabellius.

A young presbyter in Rome, Sabellius, became an ardent support of Monarchianistic thought of the Patripassian class. His fundamental thought is, that the unity of God, without distinction in itself, unfolds or extends itself (ἡ μὲν αὖς ΠΑΡΕΤΥΘΕ ΕΙΣΑΥΧΕΥΕΤΑΙ^{τρίαις}) in the course of the world's development in three different forms and

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1 - cf. Schaff - History of the Christian Church, Vol 2 p.572.
2 - Ibid.- p. 581.

periods of revelations, (ὁνόματα πρόσωπα) and after the completion of redemption, returns into Unity. The Father reveals himself in the giving of the Law; the Son in the incarnation; the Holy Gost, in inspiration. The revelation of the Son ends with the ascension; the revelation of the Spirit goes on in regeneration and santification. He illustrates the trinitarian relation by comparing the Father to the disc of the Sun, the Son to its enlightening power, the Spirit to its warming influence. His theory prepared the way for the Nicene Church doctrine. He differs from the orthodox standard mainly in denying the trinity of essence and the permanence of the trinity of manifestation; making Father, Son and Holy Ghost only temporary phenomena, which fulfil their mission and return into the abstract moved.¹

V. THE ARIAN HERESY.

We have reached now the immediate reason for the calling of the Council. Arianism, so called from its leader Arius (Ἀέλιος) a presbyter of Alexander, is one of the most powerful and tenacious christological heresies in the history of ancient Christianity. The Arian controversy relates primarily to the diety of Christ, but in its course it touches also the diety of the Holy Ghost, and embraces therefore the whole mystery of the Holy Trinity

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1 - cf. Ibid - p. 583.

and the Incarnation of God which is the very center of the Christian revelation. The roots of the Arian controversy are to be found partly in the contradictory elements of the Christology of the great heresies which have just been reviewed, which reflect the crude condition of the Christian mind in the second and third centuries.¹

A. Origin of the Controversy.

The flint of the controversy was ignited in the conference between Arius and his bishop Alexander, bishop of the City of Alexandria. Arius accused Alexander of Sabellianism; and Arius in turn was accused of teaching that Christ, although creator of the world, was himself a creature of God and therefore not divine in the sense of being God. The contest between these two broke out about the year 318 or 320. Arius and his followers, for their denial of the true deity of Christ were deposed and excommunicated by a council of a hundred Egyptian and Libyan bishops at Alexandria in 321.² In spite of this Arius continued to hold religious assemblies of his numerous adherents, and when driven from Alexandria, proclaimed his doctrine in Palestine and Nicomedia.

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1 - cf. Schaff - Religious Encyclopaedia Vol. I p. 134.

2 - cf. Schaff - History of Christian Church Vol. 3 p. 620.

B. The Doctrinal Statement of Arius.

The doctrines of Arius are set forth by him in his work called the "Banquet" (*Θάγελα*). In this poetical work he elucidates his theological doctrine. First he states:- that "God is the only God besides whom there is no other, is alone unbegotten, without beginning and eternal. He is inexpressible, incomprehensible, and has absolutely no equal. He has created all things out of his full will, and there exists nothing besides him which he has not created. The expression "to beget" is simply a synonym for to "create". God can put forth nothing out of his own essence; nor can he communicate his essence to what is created; for his essence is essentially uncreated".¹ Secondly as to the Son, "He is consequently an unrelated and independent being totally separated from and different from the substance or nature of the Father. He is not one and the same substance together with the Father, nor has he a nature and constitution similar to that of the Father. If he had then there would be two Gods. Since the Son is unrelated to the Godhead, he is not truly God, and accordingly has not by nature the divine attributes. As he is not eternal, neither is his knowledge in any sense perfect; he has no absolute knowledge of God, but only a relative knowledge. In fact he does not know his own.

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1- Harnack - History of Dogma - Vol.4. - p. 15.

substance perfectly and accordingly he cannot claim equal honor with the Father."¹ In another place Arius states, "the son is not a creature and a product like other creatures; he is perfect creature (κτίσμα τέλειον); nevertheless by him everything has been created, and he stands in a special relation to God. All that the Scripture and tradition assert on reference to the incarnation and the humanity of his being holds good. He truly, took a human body (σῶμα ἀψυχον)".² Arius also claims that the spirit is to be placed beside the Son as a second, independent substance or hypostasis (οὐσία ὑπόστασις). He regards the Spirit as a being created by the Son and subordinated to him.³

C. The Doctrine of Bishop Alexander.

Several bishops, especially Eusebius of Nicomedia and Eusebins of Caesarea, who either shared his view or at least considered it innocent, defended him. Alexander issued a number of circular letters to all the bishops against the apostates and Exukontians. "οὐ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων" So he named the Arians, for their assertion that the Son of God was made ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, out of nothing".⁴ In this letter Alexander expressed the Catholic Theology as to the person of Christ. The words which Alexander used

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1 - Ibid. - p. 19.

2 - Ibid. - p. 19.

3 - Ibid. - p. 19.

4 - Schaff - History of the Christian Church Vol. 3, P. 621.

were: *Αἰὲ θεός αἰὲ υἱός, ἀμα πατήρ
 ἀμα υἱός συνυπάρχει ὁ υἱός ἀγεννήτως
 τῷ θεῷ ἀειγενής, ἀγεννητογενής, οὐτ'
 ἐπλοῦρα οὐτ' ἀτοκῶτενὶ προάγει ὁ θεός
 τοῦ υἱοῦ ἀεὶ υἱός ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ υἱός*

always God, always Son at the same time Father, at the same time Son, the Son exists unbegotten with the Father, everlasting, uncreated. Neither in conception nor in any smallest point does God excel the Son, always God, always Son, from God himself Son."¹ Alexander thus maintains the beginningless eternal co-existence of Father and Son; the Father is never to be thought of without the Son who springs from the Father. It is not improbable that Alexander was led thus to give preeminence to the one side of the Logos doctrine of Origen owing to the Influence of the theology of Irenaeus or Melito. The doctrine which Arius opposed to this is above all dominated by the thought that God, the only One, is above eternal; and that besides Him exists only what is created, and that this originates in His will, that accordingly the Son also is not eternal but a creation of God out of the non-existent. From this thesis there necessarily follows the rejection of the predicate *ὁμοούσιος* for the Son.²

In the controversy which ensued, Bishop rose against

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1 - Narnack - Historys of Dogma - Vol IV - p. 12.
 2 - cf. - Ibid. - p. 13.

Bishop and province against province. Through the importance of the subject and the zeal of the parties. The debate soon involved the entire church and transformed the whole Christian East into a theological battle-field. Constantine, the first who mingled in the religious affairs of Christendom and who did this from a political, Monarchical interest for the Unity of the empire and of religion, was inclined to reconcile the parties in diplomatic style by letters and by the personal mission of the aged bishop Hosius of Spain; but without effect. Questions of theological and religious principle are not to be adjusted, like political measures, by compromise, but must be fought through to their last results, and the truth must either conquer or succumb. Finally in pursuance as he thought, of a "divine inspiration", and probably also with the advice of bishops who were in friendship with him, he summoned the first universal council, to represent the whole church of the empire, and to give a final decision upon the relation of Christ to God.¹

1 - cf. Schaff - History of the Christian Church - Vol 3.
p. 621.

CHAPTER III.

TEXT AND ANALYSIS OF THE

NICENE CREED.

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I. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARTICLES
IN THE NICENE SYMBOL.

The Nicene Creed was formulated at the Council of Nicaea 325, as the first authoritative conclusion of the Trinitarian controversy which established the relationship of the Son and the Holy Ghost to the Father. Although the events leading to the triumph of the Alexanderian party, which was the orthodox party, at the council and the formulation of the creed are obscure. Eusebius of Caesarea participant bishop at the council and early church historian informs us (Eus. Eccl Theol. 1:12) ¹ that the Nicene creed was formed on the basis of the baptismal formula of Caesarea. The intention and meaning of the Nicene is also made clear by comparison with the formula brought forward at the Council by Eusebius.

A. The Introduction of the Creed of Eusebius.

Eusebius, in the name of the middle party, laid before the council an ancient confession, which he said had been used by his father's and his father's father in the

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1 - cf. Stanley - Eastern Church - p. 134.

churches of Palestine.¹ He tells us (auth. de Decret. Syn. Nic 32)² that it was what he himself had been taught in his own native city of Caesarea in the plains of Sharon and it is of profound interest as representing the belief of the mother of all churches, the Church of Jerusalem.

It ran as follows:

1 - πιστεύομεν εἰς
ἓνα θεόν πατέρα παν-
τοκράτην - ποιητήν
τῶν τῶν ἀπαισθητῶν
ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀορατῶν

We believe in one God,
The Father Almighty,
Maker of all things,
visible and invisible.

2 - καὶ εἰς ἓνα κύριον
ἱσοῦν χριστόν
τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγον
θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ
φῶς ἐκ φωτός
ζῶν ἐκ ζωῆς
τὸν μονογενῆ
πρωτότοκον πατρὸς
κτίσεως
ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ πατρὸς γε-
γεννημένον
πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων
δι' οὗ καὶ ἐγένετο τὰ
πάντα

And in the Lord Jesus Christ
The Word of God
God from God
Light from Light
Life from Life
The only begotten Son
The first born of every
creature
Begotten of God, the Father
before all ages,
Through whom also all
things were made.

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1 - cf. Neander - History of Christian Church & Religion
Vol 2, p. 416-17.
cf. Ayer - Source Book for Church History - p. 205.
2 - cf. Stanley - Eastern Church - p. 134.

- 3 - Τὸν διὰ τὴν ἡμετέ- Who for our salvation
ραν σωτηρίαν σαρκῶ- took flesh
σέντα καὶ ἐνανθρώ-
πους πῶς τευσάμενον And lived amongst men.
- 4 - Καὶ παθόντα And suffered
- 5 - Καὶ ἀναστάντα And rose again on the
τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ third day
- 6 - καὶ ἀναβάντα And ascended unto
πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα the Father.
- 7 - Καὶ ἔσονται πάλιν And will come again
ἐν δόξῃ in glory
κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ To judge the quick
νεκρῶς and the dead.
- 8 - Πιστεύομεν καὶ We believe also in
εἰς ἓν πνεῦμα ἅγιον one Holy Ghost.¹

B. The Comparison between the Nicene Creed and
the Creed of Eusebius.

1. Omissions from the Formula of Caesarea.

The expressions the Nicene omits, compared with
the baptismal formula of Caesarea are:

(a). Τὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγον (The Word of God) and the

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1 - Ayer - Source Book for Church History p. 305.

phrase *Τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ* (The Son of God)

being substituted; as this phrase "the Word of God" involved the Cosmic principle of Philo which was advocated by Lucius the teacher of Arius, and by Arius himself. The Logos doctrine of Philo was that of Platonism, being a development of Plato's doctrine of ideas.¹ Plato's ideas are "supersensible realities, as forming the eternal pattern of the visible universe, as the unchanging source of all excellence and genuine being in the world, as the sole medium of absolute knowledge, were in themselves fitted to assist those having a firm hold of theistic faith in developing the doctrines of a divine Mediator between God and the world, or the doctrine of the Logos".² Arius, at the Council, advocated that "if Christ be styled God yet is he not true God, but only by the participation of grace, even as all others."³ Further Arius affirmed "The Logos himself is changeable (*πρὸς τὸ*); it is by His own choice that He remains good, so long as He will. When He wishes, even He can change, just as we can".⁴ The phrase *Τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ* (Son of God) being substituted identified Christ with God as His Son.

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- 1- cf, Sheldon - History of the Christian Doctrine - Vol I p. 64.
- 2- Ibid.- p. 164-65
- 3- Mackintosh - Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ - p. 177.
- 4- Ibid.- p. 177.

(b). The phrases *πρωτότοκον πάντων κτίσεων*
 (the first born of every creature) *πρό πάντων τῶν αἰώνων*
ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς δεγεγεννημένον
 (begotten of the Father before all ages) the
 phrase *γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς* being substituted.

This substitution gives a real birth from God the Father to the Sonship of Christ. It excludes all interpretations advocated by the Arians in giving a merely figurative thought to the Sonship of Jesus Christ, such as the creation of the world, of Israel as a nation, or of men in general. This substituted implies the unique relation of Jesus Christ to God the Father as the only Son, the only Begotten.¹ The phrase before all worlds was left out of the Nicene Creed for the purpose to avoid all temporal relations which may be related to Christ by the Arians.

These omissions are of the greatest significance, as they prove that the triumphant Alexandrian party would allow no compromise and was bent on avoiding all misunderstanding.²

2. Insertions.

The Nicene Fathers were determined to make a definition of the relation of the Son to the Father, which would express the Faith of the Church, and which the Arians could not evade, and accordingly, they inserted the phrase *ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί* This then became the term about which the subsequent conflicts centered. The term *ὁμοούσιος* is not a Biblical term, but a philosophical term meaning of the same substance. The word comes

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1 - cf. Briggs - Theological Symbols p. 89
 2 - cf. Ch. II - Arian Controversy - p. 23.

from the root *οὐσία* strictly means being, actual being, real existence. It's Latin equivalent in usage was *substantia*.¹ This term was proposed by Hosius in opposition to the term *ὁμοούσιος* meaning of like substance, by the middle party. "But it soon became evident that this term *ὁμοούσιος* by its indefiniteness opened a door to various interpretations."² This insertion satisfied the Nicene Fathers in maintaining the unity of God, the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost over against the reaction of Arianism. The creed also inserts the six Anathemas at the close of the formula for the intention to exclude all heretics who opposed to the statement agreed by the Church Fathers. It was upon those who denied or impaired the proper deity of the Son.

3. Variations.

The other variations of the Nicene creed from the Caesarean formula are not of a theological character, and are in accord with the phraseology of the baptismal formulas of Jerusalem and Antiochian churches. The differences are:- *πάντων* for *ἀπάντων* the readjustment of phrases in *ἵς οὐ καὶ ἐγένετο τὰ πάντα* to *ἵς οὐ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο* with the following addition *τὰ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γῆ*
 The Nicene added *ἵς καὶ τοὺς ἀνεβλεπόμενα* and further added

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1 - cf. Briggs - Theological Symbols - p. 91
 2 - Ibid.,- p. 93.

κατεθέοντα ἐναρρωτηθέντα for ἐν ἀν-
 θρώποις πορευθέντων, εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς
 for πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα ἐρχόμενον for ἡ-
 ἔοντα πάντων
 and the prefix of ἄγλον τὸ πνεῦμα

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4. Summary.

If we consider the positiveness with which the Nicene creed excludes all of Arianism, and its promulgation as the law of the church, we get some conception of the strength and energy of the Alexandrian party at the council. In this brief study of the two symbols we notice the main points with reference to the composition of the Nicene creed are: that it rests upon the formula of Caesarea. It differs from it (1) by omissions and small changes; (2) by the introduction of the christological clauses of the Alexandrian church; (3) by a revision based upon the baptismal formula of the Church of Jerusalem; and (4) it was promulgated as a statement of belief.²

II. THE ADOPTION OF THE NICENE CREED.

A. Symbol of Eusebius.

When the creed of Eusebius was read at the council the Emperor Constantine approved, and the Arian party was willing to accept it just as it was read. But this did not satisfy the Alexandrian party because there

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1 - cf. Schaff - Religious Encyclopaedia Vol II p. 1648.
 2 - cf. Ibid.- p. 1648

were in it too many loopholes for misinterpretation and free translation that could be given by all heretics. The Alexandrian party resolved not to leave it an open question whether the second person in the Trinity was or was not God, and of the same essence with the Father. Again, therefore, the discussion was renewed, and the Emperor seeing that the Eusebian formula would not pass, resolved for the sake of peace to obtain as nearly a unanimous decision as possible.¹

B. The Formula of Hosius.

In the midst of debate Hosius, bishop of Cordova, rose and announced that the Alexandrian party had a formula to offer. This creed was read and at once the Emperor accepted it.² The creed of Hosius was the well-known Nicene symbol in its earliest form. The symbol contained eight articles like the creed of Eusebius but differed in the following clauses:-

1. After the words "begotten of the Father" was added the phrase *ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς* that is "of the essence of the Father".

2. After the words "God from God", "Light from Light" was added *ἀληθινὸν θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθοῦ* "True God from True God".

3. After the words "begotten not made" was added the famous clause *ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί*

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1 - cf. Schaff - History of Christian Church Vol III p. 628.
2 - cf. Ibid.- p. 629

"of the same essence with the Father".¹

C. The Text of The Creed of Nicea.

The text as passed with virtual unanimity is as follows:-

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἕνα Θεὸν Πατέρα,
Πατοκράτορα, Πατρῶν ὁρατῶν τε καὶ ἀορατῶν.
καὶ εἰς ἕνα κύριον καὶ ἰσοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν υἱὸν
τοῦ Θεοῦ, γεννηθέντα, ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς
μονογενῆ, τοῦτέστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ
Πατρὸς, Θεὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ, φῶς ἐκ φωτός,
Θεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀληθοῦς,
γεννηθέντα, οὐ ποιηθέντα, ἁμοούσιον
τῷ Πατρί, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο, τὰ τε
ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γῆ. τὸν δι' ἡμῶν
τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν
σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα καὶ σαρκωθέντα
ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ, πῆσαντα παθόντα, καὶ ἀναστάντα
τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναλθόντα εἰς οὐρανοὺς
καὶ ἐρχόμενον κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς.
καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα.

τοὺς δὲ δεχόμενος ἦν τοτε οὐτε οὐκ
ἦν, καὶ πρὶν γεννηθῆναι οὐκ ἦν οὐσίας
φάσκοντας εἶναι ἡγετιώτερον ἢ τρεπτύον
ἢ ἀλλοιωτὸν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀναθεμα-
τί ζεῖν καθολικῆ ἐκκλησίας

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1 - Maclear - Introduction to the Creeds - p. 29.
cf. Mackintosh - Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ
p. 182.

The main desire of those who framed this creed was obviously, as has been remarked, to exclude Arianism. At all cost it must be affirmed that the Son is not a creature and that He is of one essence with the Father. Accordingly the Divine Sonship of Christ is set forth as no accident of time, but an eternal, and as it were, organic relation within the God head.¹ The distinction between Father and Son and their unity are equally stated and balanced over-against each other by the two phrases "from the essence" (distinction) and "of one essence" (unity). Finally, by adding "was made man" to "was made flesh", the Arian tenet that Christ had a real body, but no human soul, was definitely barred out.

In this shape it was ultimately signed. Hosius signed first, "so I believe, as above written" then the two priests of Rome for their absent bishop, "so we have subscribed for our bishop, who is the Bishop of Rome. So he believes as is above written". Then followed the rest. However Eusebius took a day to consider and consulted the Emperor, but eventually he signed both the creed and the Anathema.²

III. THE ENLARGED NICAEAN OR NICAENO- CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED.

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- 1 - cf. Mackintosh - Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ p. 182.
- 2 - cf. Schaff - History of Christian Church Vol II p. 629
cf. Stanley - Eastern Church - p. 135.

The Nicene creed of 325 did not promote the peace and unity of the Church. As Duchene says:- "It only resulted in a short suspension of hostilities, followed by a war, abominable and fratricidal, which divided the whole of Christendom from Arabia as far as Spain, and was only quited after sixty years of scandal that bequeathed to succeeding generations the germ of schisms from which the church still suffers."¹

Synods and provincial councils were summoned by the different parties in which these condemned and excommunicated each other. Political and national questions became involved with those that were religious and doctrinal; and Christianity became so distracted that it could not have survived, if it had not been for the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, which guided it safely through a multitude of disasters.² During this strife and confusion a number of different parties arose, taking several different positions with the questions at issue. The most important of these were the following:-

1. The Eunomians who held to the "anomoion of Christ; that is, that he was "not like to the Father in essence, "but simply a creature. These may be regarded as extreme Arians.

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1 - Duchene - Histoire Ancienne de l'Eglise II p. 157.
(quoted from Briggs - Theological Symbols p. 85
2 - cf. Briggs - Theological Symbols - p. 85.

2. The Arians proper, who asserted that the Son was "like the Father" with the implication that it was only a moral likeness.¹

Here at this point we notice that the cause of the controversy in the period after the Nicean adoption was like that of the Trinitarian controversy of the Nicaen Period. Both involved the acceptance of the True Deity of the Son. However in the latter period, the Deity of the Spirit had to be guarded and substantiated. The Council of Constantinople was convoked by the Emperor Theodosius in May, 381, to determine the questions in dispute. It was composed of one hundred and fifty bishops, all Eastern.² It seemed best to the council not to make a new creed or additional dogmatic statements, but simply reaffirm the Nicean creed of 325 and to reject the heresies mentioned as inconsistent to it. Accordingly this was their action. Hence at this point we are able to say that the Nicene Creed secured its rebirth and its triumph in the council of 381, which is known as the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed. The Constantinopolitan, being a combination of the Apostles' creed and the Nicene, has taken the place of both in usage of the Eastern Church for baptism as well as for the Eucharist.³ Today this final form of the Nicene Creed is

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1- cf. Ibid p. 86.

2-cf. Du Bose - The Ecumenical Councils - p. 162-163

3-cf. Stanley - History of the Eastern Church p. 58-60.

being used by the Protestant Episcopal Church in America.¹
and by the Anglican Church in Canada and English, and by
all the Catholic Churches in the World; and by the present
Greek Orthodox Church in the East and the West.

A. Text of the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed.

1- Πιστεύω εἰς ἕνα Θεόν
Πατέρα Παροκράτορα
Ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς
ὁρατῶν τε πάντων καὶ
ἀορατῶν

I believe in one God, the
Father Almighty,
Maker of Heaven and earth,
and all things visible and
invisible.

2- καὶ εἰς ἕνα Κύριον
Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τοῦ υἱοῦ
τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ
τὸν ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς γεν-
νηθέντα προπάντων
τῶν αἰώνων -
ὡς ἐκ φωτός, Θεὸν
ἀληθινόν, ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀλη-
θινοῦ γεννηθέντα, οὐ
ποιηθέντα ὁμοούσιον
τῷ Πατρὶ, δι' οὗ τὰ
πάντα ἐγένετο.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ
The Son of God, begotten of
the Father before all worlds
the only begotten (that is
of the substance of the
Father) (God of God,) Light
of Light, Very God of Very
God; Begotten not made;
being of one substance with
the Father, by whom all
things were made.

.....

1- cf. Stanley - History of the Eastern Church p. 58-60
cf. Book of Common Prayer - p. 25-26

3- Τὸν ἰσὺ ἡμᾶς τοῦς
ἀνθρώπων καὶ διὰ τὴν
ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν
κατεβόοντα ἐκ τῶν
οὐρανῶν, καὶ σαρκωθέντα
ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου
καὶ μαρίας τῆς παρθενῆς
καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα

Who for us men and for our
salvation came down from
heaven, and was incarnate by
the Holy Ghost and the
Virgin Mary, and was made man.

4- Σταυρωθέντα τε ὑπὲρ
ἡμῶν ἐπὶ σταυροῦ
πιλάτου καὶ παθόντα
καὶ ταφέντα.

And was crucified also for
us under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered and was buried.

5- καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ
τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ κατὰ
τὰς γραφὰς

And the third day he rose
again according to the Scrip-
tures.

6- καὶ ἀνεβόοντα εἰς
τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, καὶ κα-
θεζόμενον ἐκ δε-
ξιῶν τοῦ πατρὸς

And ascended into heaven
and sitteth on the right
hand of the Father.

7- καὶ πάλιν ἐρχόμενον
μετὰ δόξης κρῖνας
ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς,
οὗ τῆς βασιλείας οὐκ
ἔσται τέλος

And He shall come again with
glory, to judge both the quick
and the dead; whose kingdom
shall have no end.

8- καὶ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα
τὸ ἅγιον τὸ κύριον, τὸ
ζωοποιόν, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ
πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον,
τὸ σὺν πατρὶ ἰσὺ καὶ ἰσῶ
σὺν προσκυρούμενον,
καὶ συνδόξαζόμενον,
τὸ ἀπαγγέλλον διὰ τῶν
προφητῶν

And I believe in the Holy
Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of
Life who proceeds from the
Father who with the Father
and the Son together is wor-
shipped and glorified, who speake
by the Prophets.

- 9- εἰς Μίαν Ἁγίαν Κα- In one Holy Catholic and
θολικὴν καὶ Ἀποστο- apostolic Church.
λικὴν Ἐκκλησίαν
- 10- Ὁμολογῶ εἰς Βάπτισμα I acknowledge one baptism
εἰς ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν for the remission of sins.
- 11- Προσδοκῶ ἀνάστασιν I look for the Resurrection
νεκρῶν of the dead
- 12- καὶ ζωὴν τοῦ μέ- And the Life of the world
λλον αἰῶνος. Ἀμήν to come. Amen.

IV. ANALYSIS OF STATEMENT REGARDING THE PERSON OF CHRIST

IN THE NICAENO-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN OR NICENE CREED.

At this point, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the Doctrine of the Person of Christ which the Nicene Creed proclaims, and to consider critically the additions made to exclude the prominent heresies of the period.

A. The Second Article of the Creed.

Κύριος (Lord)

First it is to be observed that Jesus Christ is called Lord Jesus Christ. The word Lord (Κύριος) is very interesting, it comes from a Greek word κύριος. It designates a person who has control over another person.

or thing either by right of divinity, or by right of ownership; or because of position, as of a husband in relation to his wife (household); or because of office, as in the case of a guardian or trustee.¹ In the early days of Christianity three elements enter into the meaning of *κύριος* namely ownership, right of service, right of obedience; and all three Christ fulfills as in Mark 13:35 Lord of the Sabbath, Mark 13:32, Christ's called Son of the Highest; and in Rom. 8:32, Christ is the Incarnate Son. Even more important is the connection of the word with the divine name; as is well known, the Hebrews never uttered the sacred name of God יהוה יהוה , but in reading substituted for the word "adonai", meaning "my Lord". This fact is represented in the American Version of the Bible by printing the word LORD in capitals. There seems to be no question that this special use of *κύριος* as an equivalent of the divine name has great significance in the doctrine of the person of Christ. To affirm that Jesus was *κύριος* was virtually equivalent to declaring his divinity. The placing of the word in the Nicene formula is therefore to be regarded as an assumption to Him of deity.

B. Begotten of the Father.

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1- cf. Burton - New Testament Word Studies - p. 33

This phrase, as we have noticed early in this chapter, was derived from the creed of Caesarea. The Greek word *μονογενής* (only begotten) distinguished the unique Sonship of our Lord. It denotes His eternal generation from the Father, His pre-existence from all eternity in a nature different from that which he assumed in His Incarnation.¹ The phrase also denotes a real birth from God the Father, and so excludes the merely figurative sense of Sonship in the docetic and ebionitic views. This, with the phrase "only begotten Son" implies the unique relation of Jesus Christ to God the Father as the only Son, the only Begotten.¹ The phrase "before all word", which represents that the only begotten son was begotten prior to all things was left out of the Nicene creed of 325, probably to avoid temporal relations for the eternal relationships, and the clause "that is of the substance of the Father", substituted for it. However the Constantinopolitan adapted the phrase "Begotten of the Father before all worlds", and claims that it does not exclude the temporal origin of the Son as prior to all other beings and things. But it implies of the substance of the Father; for the birth was a real birth of the Son of God from His Father God, it implies "begotten from the substance of the Father", as truly in the case of the Son of God as in that of all other reasons.² In the stress of

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1- cf. Maclear - Introduction to the Creeds p. 82-83
2- cf. Briggs - Theological Symbols p. 89.

controversy the Nicene Fathers were determined to make explicit what was implied and to leave no loophole of escape for the Arians.

C. God of God; Light of Light; Very God of Very God.

1. Θεὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ This is an addition to the original Nicene Creed. The preposition ἐκ denotes that out of which he originates. The expression thus denotes not only that our Lord is God, but that He originates from God.

2. φῶς ἐκ φωτός The Gnostics spoke of Light as an emanation from Deity.¹ Hence John 1:4 states that He was not simply φῶς but τὸ φῶς ἐν αὐτῷ Ἰωάννην τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων. The conception

is that the Son of God, as the Light of the World, came forth from the Father as the original source of light; light being conceived, not in the physical sense, but in the religious meaning of the Divine Glory.

3. Ἀληθεύον Θεὸν ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀληθείου. Ἀληθείας denotes truth-speaking, and God is Ἀληθείος inasmuch as He is true and cannot lie (John 3:33) Ἀληθείος denotes true, real, in opposition to what is fictitious and unreal.² Hence our Lord says of himself ἐγὼ εἶμι ἐκ ἀμπετεδος ἐκ ἀληθείης (John 15:1)

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1- cf. Maclear - Introduction to the Creed p. 83.
2- cf. Briggs - Theological Symbols p. 90.

This phrase Very God of Very God is a strong expression in defense of Christ's Divinity against the Ebionitic viewpoint. The Nicene Fathers by adding the phrase of John 17:3, ἀληθινὸς ὁ υἱὸς used the of God the Father, both for the Father and for the Son, ruled out the Arians, who could not subscribe to this. "While they might say "God of God, meaning that the real and true God created the God as His Son, they could hardly say that the Son was the true veritable God" born of the "true veritable God".¹

D. Begotten not Made; Being of one substance with the Father.

1. "Begotten not made" - This was another phrase designed to rule out the Arians more distinctly. This phrase emphasizes what was before in "begotten of the Father". The Arians held that the Son was made or created. The creed of Eusebius held the Biblical term πρῶτότοκος πάντων κτίσεων (Col. 1:15), (First born of every creature) which in some respects is better; but this phrase "First born of every creature" evaded by the Arians, and so a phrase was substituted that could not be evaded,² which is Begotten, not made.

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1 - Briggs - Theological Symbols - p. 90.
 2 - cf. Ibid., - p. 90.

2. "Being of one substance with the Father"
 ὁμοούσιος τῷ Πατρὶ ὁμοούσιος from ὁμός
 meaning one and the same, and οὐσία meaning sub-
 stance or rather essence, denotes that the Son is
 one and the same essence with the Father.¹ The
 Arians at the Council of Nicea at first wished to
 decide that the Son is ἐκ τῶν τοῦ Πατρὸς ὁμοίων
 τε καὶ ἀπαράλληλος κατὰ πάντα τῷ
 Πατρὶ καὶ ἀΐτιτος καὶ ἀελ.

This did not satisfy the Catholic party for a "being exalted to any conceivable height, and placed above the highest archangel, is parted from the Divine Essence by a fathomless chasm".² The Arians by putting between God and the creature, a subordinate God, separated rather than united the Infinite and the finite. They made a perfect revelation or manifestation of God impossible. The Nicene Fathers met this by proclaiming the real and proper God-head of the Son that according to His higher pre-existent nature He was very and Eternal God, and consubstantial with the Father, so that, that which we believe of the Glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, without any difference or inequality.³

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1- cf. Maclear - An Introduction to the Creeds - p. 84.
 2- Athan - De Decret Syn. Nic 20 (quoted from Maclear p. 84).
 3- cf. Dorner - Doctrine of the Person of Christ Div I Vol II - p. 236.

B. The Third Article of the Creed.

The third article of the creed reads as follows:-

"Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost by the Virgin Mary and was made man". Hitherto the creed has dwelt upon the original glory and the divine nature of the Eternal Son. It now proceeds to deal with the adorable mystery of Christ's voluntary humiliation, which he underwent (for us men and for our salvation) and to treat of what he has done and suffered, what he continues to do still and will do hereafter for the race of mankind.

1. "For us men and for our salvation".

The phrase *διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν* first occurs in the creed of Eusebius¹ recited at the council of Nicea; but the full phrase *δι' ἡμᾶς τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν* is first found in the creed of Epiphanius, A.D. 373.² This full phrase immediately refutes the docetic or gnostic thought of the impossibility of a God to take a form of man or the *σῶμα* and still to remain sinless, and yet further they could not understand the Love of God for man, so that he should die for his sin and render salvation.

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1- See Chapter III.

2- Maclear - An Introduction to the Creed - p. 93.

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1- See Chapter III.

2- Maclear - An Introduction to the Creed - p. 93.

2. "Come Down"

κατεβόρτα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν this is

"came down from heaven" as the creed of Constantinople has it. This was inserted by the Nicene Fathers, in order to emphasize the fact that the incarnation was a voluntary act of the Son of God himself, in accordance with the usage of Philippians II and Gospel of John and over against the subordinationism of the Arians.¹

3. (Σαρκωθέντα, was made flesh, incarnate.

This phrase was taken from the Creed of Eusebius.² It is based on John 1:14. Flesh here means, not the flesh of the body, but man as flesh in antithesis to God.³ To this statement of the Creed of Eusebius was added by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. Thus it reveals that He, who is very God, condescended to be "conceived of the Holy Ghost" designed to take unto him of her substance the simplest original element of man's nature before it came to have any personal human subsistence.⁴ This statement refutes the Ebionitic thought, which denies the virgin birth of Jesus Christ and only accepts his humanity.

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1-cf. Briggs - Theological Symbols - p. 96.

2-See Chapter III.

3-cf. Ibid.- p. 96.

4-cf. Mclear - Introduction to the Creed - p. 100.

4. Ἐνανθρωπήσαστα (was made man)

This verb Ἐνανθρωπήσαστα means to become man and the word Ἐνανθρωπήσις (incarnation) is derived from the verb. This denotes that our Lord became man (ἄνθρωπος) The Phrase is a Nicene substitute for the Ἐν ἄνθρωποις ποιεῖσθαι σαμηνεον of the Eusebius Creed,¹ which was not sufficiently definite to emphasize the humanity itself.² The Nicene Creed in this statement reveals the perfect union of the God-head with human nature. It affirms that our Lord "was incarnate" and that he "was made man".

C. The Fourth Article of the Creed.

The Fourth Article reads:- "and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried..

Having confessed that for us men and for our salvation the Eternal Son of God came down from heaven and was made man, the creed passes on to the fact that he further humbled himself to a life of suffering and death of pain for humanity. He was crucified for us, and this suffering the creed indicates it under Pontius Pilate. This Roman Governor is mentioned so as to fix the chronology of the event. This article declares that Christ suffered

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1-See Chapter III

2-cf. Briggs - Theological Symbols - p. 96.

and was crucified and was buried, for us. In saying this we are brought face to face with the mystery of the Atonement which Christ wrought out by the offering of Himself once for all upon the Alter of the cross.¹ Also the phrase *καὶ ταφέντα* (and was buried) confutes the opinions of the Docetai, who taught that Christ death was not real but only apparent.²

D. The Fifth Article of the Creed.

The fifth article of the Nicene Creed proceeds to deal with Christ's Resurrection. It reads:- "and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures". This article confutes the Ebionitic viewpoint which rejects the resurrection and only accepts him as the un-risen Jesus. On this article of our Lord's Resurrection the whole structure of the Christian Church and the entire faith of the Christians may be said to depend. "Christ's resurrection is a proof of His divinity and the fulfillment of his own prediction".³ "Creation is the victory of omnipotence over nothingness; the Resurrection is the victory of the same power over death, which is the thing most like to nothingness that is known to us."⁴

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1-cf. Maclear - Introduction to the Creed - p. 128.

2-cf. Chapter II - Docetism.

3-Maclear - Introduction to the Creeds - p. 155

4-Godet - Defense of the Christian Faith p. 43.

(quoted from Maclear Introduction to the Creed p. 156).

E. The Sixth Article of the Creed.

The sixth article assures the continuity of Life after death through Faith in Jesus Christ. The continuity of Christ is the assurance of ours. The article reads:- "and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father". This is the complete joining of the God-head, which refutes the Monarchian Belief, which emphasizes the "oneness" of God Almighty; but rejects the Trinitarian belief.¹

F. The Seventh Article of the Creed.

The seventh and final article concerning the Person of Christ is that which has reference to His Second Coming. It reads:- "and he shall come again with Glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end". Hitherto the creed has been teaching us respecting the Life of Our Lord on earth, his life in the Spirit world, and his ascension to heaven as completing his Resurrection. But there is yet a final revelation for which we wait, and we proceed to confess that from the right hand of God, "He shall come to judge the quick and the dead". He shall come again *παλις ἐρχόμενος* of this his second advent our Lord often spoke when he was upon the earth, as in Matthew 16:27 "Son of man shall come in the glory of

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1- of Chapter II Monarchian.

his Father with his angels", also in Mathew 24, we have the signs of the second advent. In Christ's second advent he is to judge the quick and the dead $\kappa\epsilon\tau\alpha\ \xi\acute{\omega}\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \kappa\epsilon\tau\alpha\ \theta\acute{\nu}\tau\alpha\varsigma$. The second coming, then, will not, like the first involve a change in the conditions of our Lord's personal Life. The first was "in great humility". This second will be the revelation of his present "glorious majesty" to execute judgement alike on the quick and the dead.¹ Concerning the nature of this judgement is revealed in 2 Tim. 4:1, "I charge thee in the sight of God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, and by his appearance and his kingdom".

G. Summary.

It will be seen then that the Nicene Creed in its Constantinopolitan form embraces the Trinitarian formula and the twelve articles of the Christian Faith found in the Nicene Creed. The articles on the divinity of Christ are made richer and fuller so as to rule out the Arians and the Anti-Nicean heresies, which threatened to destroy Christianity. This ruling out was accomplished by the following clauses intended for the particular heresy:-

1. Belief in three distinct equal personality-
The Father, The Son, the Holy Ghost - yet all One.
This was against the Monarchian which insisted of One personality, the Father, and subordinated the Son and Holy Ghost.

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1- cf. Maclear - Introduction to the Creed - p. 180-184.

2. Belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds. This was against the Ebionitic heresy which accepted Christ humanity but rejected his divinity.

3. Belief that Jesus Christ was begotten and not made, being of one substance with the Father. This was against the Arians who insisted that Christ was not of one substance with the Father.

4. Belief that Jesus Christ came down from heaven, incarnate, and was made man. This was against the Docetic view, which accepted Christ's Divinity but rejected his humanity, saying that it is impossible for a God to come down on this sinful earth.

And today all Christian churches hold to this creed as the Ecumenical Creed of the church. The great Protestant Churches, no less than the Greek and Roman, reject all those heresies condemned once for all in the accepted form of the Nicene Creed.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH" ¹¹ ✓

CHAPTER IV.
THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH.

I. POLITICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL EVENTS
LEADING TO THE CALLING OF THE
ASSEMBLY.

The Westminster Confession of Faith owed its origin to the political and religious conditions of the commonwealth in England. In both England and Scotland state churches had been established, which under the despotic rule of James I and Charles I, had sought by force to secure uniformity of belief and worship. The result had been the Puritan revolt which ended in the Civil War, with the triumph of Puritanism and the establishment of the commonwealth. The Episcopal form of government was set aside. This left both countries without a national church. This was a state of things which, according to the ideas then prevalent, was not to be allowed. Consequently, on the 12th of June 1643, an ordinance was passed by Parliament calling an assembly of divines to meet at Westminster, on the first day of July following, for the

purpose of re-organizing the church; or, in the language of the title of ordinance itself, "to be consulted with by the Parliament, for the settlement of the government and liturgy of the Church of England, and for vindicating and clearing of the doctrines of the said church from false aspersions and interpretations".¹ The Scottish Kirk was invited to send commissions to aid and advise in the deliberations of this assembly, and about the same time the two nations entered into a solemn League and Covenant,² binding themselves to preserve the Reformation religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, discipline, and government according to the Word of God, and the example of the best Reformed Churches, and to endeavor to bring the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church of church government, directory for worship, and catechising. Such in brief outline were the historical events leading to the Westminster Assembly.

II. CONTROVERSIAL BACKGROUND OF THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

While the calling of the Westminster Assembly was due primarily to the civil and religious struggles of the time, it is necessary to bear in mind that those res-

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1- Westminster Addresses - p. 49.

2- cf. Larson - History of British Empire - p. 386.

possible for drawing up the creedal statements were influenced also by the thought of the time. It is therefore necessary before proceeding to an account of the work of the assembly to summarize briefly the heretical tendencies of the time. These are never referred to in "The Confession of Faith", but they were responsible for certain statements in the Confession.

Framed by men thoroughly conversant with the history of the church from the earliest times till the period in which they lived, the Confession contains the calm and settled judgment of these profound divines on all previous heresies and subjects of controversy which had in any age or country agitated the church. This it does without expressly naming even one of these heresies, or entering into controversy. Each error is condemned, not by a direct statement and refutation of it, but by a clear, definite and strong statement of the converse truth. Everything of an irritating nature is suppressed, and the pure and simple alone displayed.

A. The Socinian Heresy.

The principal heresy of the time affecting the doctrine of the Person of Christ was the Socinian. Socinianism was first advocated by Laelius Socinus of Italy, a learned young exile, eager for knowledge, who doubted

the divinity and atonement of Christ.¹ The leader of this movement had proclaimed that if religious doctrines are to be believed, they must be amenable to the strict rules of logic; and accordingly he had denied the doctrine of the Trinity, of the pre-existence of Christ, and of His two natures. Socinus claims that "Jesus is a mere man, but He was sent into the World by a benignant God, and only through Him can salvation be secured. Yet to this mere man wonderful things have happened; He is distinguished from all other men by His birth of a virgin, by His sinlessness, and by a special baptism of the Holy Spirit, endowing Him with miraculous power; not only so, but as a reward for the perfect obedience of his earthly life. He has been raised to heaven and constituted God's viceroy over the whole universe."²

B. Erastianism.

The name "Erastianism" is often used in a somewhat loose sense as denoting an undue subservience of the church to the State. This was not, however, the principal question on which the system of Erastus turned, but rather a subsidiary of one and a deduction from it. Although his work and lectureship were both connected with medicine, the chief interest of Erastus had always been in theology.

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- 1- Blackburn - History of Christian Church - p. 454.
- 2- Briggs - Theological Symbols - p. 245.

Erastus, who was himself a follower of Zwingli, threw himself heart and soul into conflict against the Lutherans.¹ He defended of all the doctrines of Zwingli in the different conferences. The great work by which Erastus is known is his "Seventy-Five Theses". The central question about these was "that of excommunication". He argued that by the "Law of Moses no one was excluded from the offering of the paschal sacrifice, but every male was commanded to observe it under pain of death".² He also points to the fact that "John the Baptist administered baptism to all, good and bad indiscriminately. He laid stress also on Christ himself having admitted Judas to the participation of the Holy Communion, at its institution".³ Erastus substantiated his theory of open communion and administration of the Sacraments to all who desire them on the teaching of John and of Christ. Another argument is drawn from the nature of the Sacraments themselves; Erastus looked upon the preaching of the Word as equal in sacredness with the sacraments. "I ask", he said, "are the sacraments superior in authority and dignity to the Word? Why then do we go about to exclude nobody from the Word, while from the sacraments, especially the Lord's Supper, we would exclude some, and that contray to, or without the express command

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- 1- cf. Catholic Encyclopedia Vol V. - p. 514.
- 2- Ibid.- p. 515
- 3- Ibid.- p. 515.

of God."¹ (thesis XXXVIII)

C. Unitarianism.

The Unitarian Doctrine is belief in the Unity of God. It may be said in a comprehensive sense it includes, with a part of Christianity, Jews, Mohammedan, Deist, and all who worship God as one. Within the ranks of Christendom the name Unitarian is given to those who reject the dogma of the Trinity in its varying phases of a three-fold or tripersonal Deity, whether three in substance or only in name and forms, and who maintain the essential unity of God as Creator and Father, and the created nature and subordinate rank of Jesus Christ.² The Unitarian Doctrine may be traced to the Early Church, as may be observed in Chapter two of this dissertation. During the Reformation Period Socinus was the outstanding advocate of the Unitarian Doctrine,³ and became known as the Reformation Father of the movement. The Unitarians taught that "Jesus was a supreme teacher of Christianity, finding in his word and character the essence of the Gospel".⁴ They state that to us "there is but one God, the Father"; "This is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent".⁵ It may be said that Unitarianism

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1- Ibid.- p. 515

2- cf. McClintock - Cyclopaedia of Biblical & Theological Literature Vol X - p. 647.

3- cf. Ibid p. 642

4- Ibid.p. 641

5- Ibid.p. 641.

does not fully recognize the equality of the three Persons in the Godhead. They deny the true divinity of Jesus Christ; and the inherent total moral depravity of human nature.¹

III. PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

The ordinance of Parliament calling the assembly of divines to meet at Westminster on the first of July, 1643, was issued, as has been stated, on the 12th of June, in the same year.

A. Dr. Twisse's Sermon.

On Saturday, the first of July, the members of the two Houses of Parliament named in the ordinance, and many of the divines therein mentioned, and a vast congregation, met in the Abbey Church, Westminster. Dr. Twisse, the appointed prolocutor of the assembly, preached an elaborate sermon from the text, John 14:18.² "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you". After the sermon all the members present adjourned to Henry VII's chapel; the roll of members being called, it appeared that there were sixty-nine clerical members present on the first day of the assembly. But as there had been no specific instructions given, nor any subject prepared for their immediate discussion, the assembly adjourned till the following Thursday.³

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1- cf. Ibid - p. 646.

2- cf. Westminster Addresses - p. 60.

3- Hetherington - History of the Westminster Assembly, p. 99.

B. Issuance of the Order for Revision.

Having made the necessary arrangements, the following Thursday, Parliament sent to the assembly an order to revise the thirty-nine articles,¹ for the purpose of simplifying, clearing, and vindicating the doctrines therein contained. The discharge of this task was begun in the Committee and reported from time to time in the assembly. The assembly continued to discuss the thirty-nine articles, and expended ten weeks in debating upon the first fifteen. But upon the arrival of the Scottish Commissioners, or rather, soon after the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, which has been mentioned in the preceeding portion, a new direction was given to the whole course of discussion.²

C. Church Parties Represented.

When Parliament issued the ordinance for calling together an assembly of divines for consultation and advice, there was actually no legalized form of Church Government in England. Even Charles himself had consented to the bill removing the prelates from the House of Lords. The chief object of the Parliament was to determine what form of church government was to be established by law, in the room of that which had been abolished. And as their desire was to secure a form which should both be generally

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1- cf. Ibid - p. 103-104
2- cf. Ibid - p. 105.

acceptable, and should also bear a close resemblance to the form most prevalent in other reformed churches; they attempted to act impartially, and, in their ordinances, they selected some of each denomination appointing bishops, untitled Episcopalians, Puritans, and Independents.¹

1. Episcopalians.

Several Episcopalians were present in the first meeting of the Assembly. But when the Solemn League and Covenant was proposed and taken all the decided Episcopalians left, with the exception of Dr. Featly. "He remained a member of the Assembly for some time; till being detected corresponding with Archbishop Ussher, and revealing the proceedings of the Assembly, he was cut off and sent to prison".²

2. Presbyterians.

The Presbyterian element was the dominating representation. Its influence was exerted and felt almost solely in the great assembly. It may be said that the aim and tendency of the Westminster Assembly was to establish the Presbyterian form of Church government in England.³

3. The Independent or Congregational.

The Independents or Congregationalists formed another party, few in point of numbers, but individual men

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1- cf. Ibid - p. 116

2- Neal, Vol II p. 234-235. (quoted from Hetherington, History of Westminster Assembly p. 116).

3- cf. Larson - History of British Empire.

of considerable talent and learning. In doctrine they professed to agree both with the Church of England in its articles and with the other reformed churches; but they held the entire power of government to belong to each separate congregation; and they practically admitted no church censure but admonition.¹

4. The Erastian.

The last party represented at the assembly were the Erastians; so called from Erastus, a physician at Heidelberg who wrote on the subject of Church government in 1568. His and his followers' theory was:- that the pastoral office is only persuasive, like that of a professor over his students, without any direct power. That the baptism and the Lord's Supper, and all other Gospel ordinances, were free and open to all. The punishment of all offences, whether of a civil or a religious nature, belonged, accordingly to his theory, exclusively to the civil magistrate. Erastianism also deny the mediatorial sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ over his church.² This belief was recognized as a great danger and the assembly finally devoted a whole section of chapter twenty-three of the confession of Faith to combat it. Since it directly involved the glory

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1- cf. Hetherington - History of the Westminster Assembly
p. 118.
2- cf. Ibid.- p. 121.

of the mediator, as sole head of his body the church.

D. Summary.

Into these parties, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Independent and Erastian, was the Westminster Assembly of Divines divided, even when first it met; and it was inevitable that a contest would be waged among them for the ascendancy. The strength of these parties was more evenly balanced at first than might have been expected. The proceedings of the Assembly brought two features into prominence. The first was the reverence of the Divines for the Scripture. Not only did they give "the first place, the place of honor in the Confession of Faith, but a cardinal rule of the assembly was, what any man undertakes to prove as necessary, he shall make good out of the Scriptures".¹ The second feature was the sense of humble dependence on God, as seen in the prominence given to prayer. Not only were the daily sessions opened and closed with prayer, and often interposed with prayer for specific objects, but once a month all business was regularly suspended, that a day of fasting and prayer might be observed in the two houses of Parliament. It seems almost incredible to us that men should have remained continuously in devotional worship from nine in the morning to four in the afternoon

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1- Westminster Addresses - p. 82.

and that a single prayer sometimes was two hours long. Yet it is interesting to note that the doctrinal statements of "The Westminster Confession of Faith" were arrived at in this atmosphere of prayer and consecration.

IV THE ADOPTION OF "THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH".

A. Directory of Worship.

The first piece of work finished at the Westminster Assembly was a Directory of Worship. This was completed in 1644 and was submitted to Parliament for its consideration. We do well to remember that all the work of the Westminster Assembly was only tentative and was submitted to Parliament as "humble advice". Parliament took each piece of work submitted to it by the Assembly and went over it with care before adopting it. The directory of worship was approved by Parliament in 1644, and supplanted the Book of Common Prayer which had been in use in the Church of England for nearly a hundred years. The form of Government was completed by its Assembly in 1644, but it was not adopted by Parliament until 1648. It was a Presbyterian form of government, and the moment it was adopted by Parliament the Episcopal form was ushered out of the Church of England and the Presbyterian form was ushered in.¹

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1- cf. Lingle - Presbyterianism - p. 95-96.

B. The Confession of Faith.

The Confession of Faith was completed by the Assembly on December 3, 1646 and sent to Parliament for its consideration. After going over it, Parliament sent it back with the request that the Assembly give proof texts for all the doctrines. One rule of the Assembly was that what any man undertakes to prove as necessary he shall make good out of the Scripture. In the making of the confession, members of the Assembly had made large use of the Scriptures, but had not thought it necessary to append all these Scripture texts to the Confession. However, Parliament demanded the proof texts and the Assembly gave them.¹ Incidentally, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland, by way of encouraging the English Parliament, adopted the Westminster Confession on August 27, 1647. The Act of approving the Confession of Faith reads as follows:- Assembly at Edinburgh, August 27, 1647: Session 23 "A Confession of Faith for the Kirks of God in the three kingdoms, being the chiefest part of that uniformity in religion, which by the Solemn League and Covenant we are bound to endeavor; and there being accordingly a Confession of Faith agreed by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, with the assistance of commissioners from Kirk of Scotland; which confession was sent from our commissioners at London to the commissioners met at Edinburgh

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1- Briggs - Theological Symbols - p. 217.

on January first, and hath been in this Assembly twice publicly read over, examined, and considered, copies thereof being also printed, that it might be particularly perused by all the members of this Assembly unto whom frequently intimation was publicly made, to put it in their doubts and objections, if they had any; and the said confession being, upon due examination thereof, found by the Assembly to be most agreeable to the Word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Kirk and, lastly it being so necessary, and so much longed for, that the said confession be, with all possible diligence and expedition, approved and established in both kingdoms. The Assembly, doth therefore agree unto, and approve the said confession, as to the truth of the matter judging it to be most orthodox and grounded upon the Word of God."¹

The English Parliament finally adopted the Westminster Confession on March 22, 1648, and it took the place of the Thirty-nine Articles in the Church of England.² The shorter catechism was completed by the Assembly and submitted to Parliament on November 5, 1647, and was approved on September 15, 1648, after some slight revisions had been made. At this time the Larger Catechism was also approved.³

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- 1- Shaw - Confession of Faith - p V.
- 2- cf. Lingle - Presbyterianism - p. 97.
- 3- cf. Hetherington - History of Westminster Assembly.
p. 258,

When Parliament adopted the Presbyterian Standards mentioned, the Church of England ceased to be Episcopal and became Presbyterian, and remained so from 1648-1660.[†]

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1- cf. Lingle - Presbyterianism - p. 97.

CHAPTER V.

COMPARISON OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST
IN THE NICENE AND THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS

CHAPTER V.

COMPARISON OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST

IN THE NICENE AND THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS.

It now remains to compare the statement of the doctrine of the Person of Christ in the Nicene Creed and the Westminster Confession of Faith with a view to discover whether the later symbol has departed in any way from the affirmations of Nicea. This will be done by taking the statements in the order in which they occur in the Nicene Symbol.

I. SECTION II OF THE *ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΝΙΖΕΤΙΝΣ*
(Nicene Creed)

The second section of the Nicene Symbol reads:

<i>(Πιστεύω) καὶ εἰς ἓνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν χριστὸν τὸν ἕκον τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν μονο- γενῆ τὸν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα προπαντῶν τῶν αἰώνων - ὡς ἐκ φωτός, θεὸν ἀλη- θινόν ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ γεννηθέντα, οὐ πο- θηθέντα ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο</i>	(I believe) and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the begotten of the Father, begotten before all worlds. Light of Light very God of Very God Begotten not made being of one substance
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with the Father, by whom all things were made.

In "The Confession of Faith" the statements regarding the Person of Christ are not presented in a compact formula as they are in the Nicene, but they are summarized in the different sections of the Confession.

A. The First Statement.

The first statement, found in Chapter eight, section one, reads thus:- "It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man; the prophet, priest, the heir of all things, the judge of the world."¹

In comparing this section with that of the Nicene Symbol, it may be noticed that the divines of Westminster were not trying once again to settle the question of Our Lord's Divinity and humanity; this they accepted as it was settled once and for all times at the great Council of Nicea in 325. However one thing which they were deeply concerned at this period was that of our Lord's mediatorial office, since this was the bulwark of the Reformation theology. For this reason "The Westminster Confession of Faith" emphasizes the work of our Lord.

The only affirmation regarding Christ's person

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1- "The Westminster Confession of Faith" - Chapter 8:1
p. 43-44

is that he is the "only begotten Son" which is the exact equivalent of the Nicene statement. It is also to be noted that the Westminster Confession brings the work of Christ within the scope of the divine purpose that He was ordained to be the mediator between God and man, and that as such he fulfills the offices of prophet, priest and king. The section also states that Christ is to be head and Savior of his Church on earth and the judge of the world.¹ This addition is in no sense a contradiction of the Nicene formula. It arises from the altered emphasis in theological statement. Nicea was chiefly interested in establishing the doctrine of the deity of Christ. The Westminster divines were concerned more particularly with setting forth the eternal purpose of God. "The Westminster Confession of Faith" reflects the theology of the day, which followed in general the statement of John Calvin. In the view of Calvin the divine purpose is manifested in all things. Humanity was part of the plan of God, who was working for human redemption even before man was created. God had an eternal purpose in his Son Jesus Christ. As Dr. Shaw expresses it, "It pleased God from all eternity, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the mediator between God and man From eternity he was chosen and appointed to execute the office of mediator between God and man;

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1- Westminster Confession of Faith - p. 44.

hence he is said to be "set up from everlasting" and 'fore-ordained before the foundation of the world.'" ¹

This difference in viewpoint also explains why "The Confession of Faith" does not follow the Nicene Formula in repeating the affirmation that Jesus is the "only begotten

Son of God" Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν τὸν ἕνόν τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἐκ τῶν πατρῶν — γεννηθέντα πρῶτον τῶν ἐκ τῶν αἰώνων. . . . γεννηθέντα οὐ ποτε-θέντα.

This repetition made clear to the theological world of the fourth century that Jesus Christ is begotten of the Father (God) begotten before all worlds, begotten not made. This fact as has been pointed out, was an accepted doctrine in the Post-reformation period, and it was not necessary to do more than state that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. Repetition was not required. This same line of

explanation makes clear why the succeeding clauses ^{φῶς} ἐκ φωτός, Θεὸν ἀληθινόν, ἐκ Θεοῦ ἀληθοῦς γεννηθέντα, οὐ ποτεθέντα ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρὶ, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα.

are also omitted. The language in the Nicene Symbol belongs to the Alexandrian Thought of the fourth century rather than the seventeenth. Moreover the conflict between Homocousios and Homoiouios was settled for all time and the Westminster divines had no interest in reviving it. Nevertheless it is clear that the views were in all essentials the same. This

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1- Shaw - Confession of Faith - p. 95.96.

is proved distinctly by a second statement regarding our Lord.

B. The Second Statement.

The second statement regarding this doctrine occurs in "The Westminster Confession of Faith" in section two of Chapter eight. "The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God of one substance, and equal with the Father".¹ Here it should be noticed that the word "very" is the exact equivalent of *ἄλλο οὐκ ὄν* and of the French "vrai", and it is evident that the statement is in exact accord with that of the Nicene Creed.

II. SECTION III OF THE ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ

The statement of the true deity of our Lord is followed in section three of the Nicene Creed by an affirmation regarding his incarnation.

Τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους	Who for us men
καὶ διὰ τῆν ἡμετέραν	and for our salvation
σωτηρίαν κατεβόρτα ἐκ	came down from
τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ σαρκωθεὶς	heaven, and was incarnate
ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ	by the Holy Ghost and
μαρίας τῆς παρθένου καὶ	Virgin Mary and was
ἕνανθρωπήσαντα	made man.

A. Affirmation of Nicene Creed.

This section affirms that:-

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1- The Westminster Confession of Faith" Chapter 8:2 p.45

1. Jesus Christ came down from heaven to earth.
κατεβόρτα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν
2. He became flesh. σὰρξ
3. He became incarnate for the sake of man and for mans' salvation, διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν
4. The incarnation of Jesus (σαρκωθέντα) was by the Holy Ghost, (πνεύματος ἁγίου)
5. The human vehicle for the Incarnation was the Virgin Mary.
6. Jesus Christ was made true man (ἐνανθρωπήσας - σαρκά) true man even as we.

B. Parallel Statement in "The Westminster Confession of Faith".

1. In "The Westminster Confession of Faith" Chapter eight, section two, reads thus:- "The Son of God did, when the fullness of time was come take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin: being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man".¹ In this statement it

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1- The Westminster Confession of Faith" - p. 45.46

will be seen that the Westminster divines have elaborated the Nicene formula. They have in point of fact followed here the Creed of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) This will be evident from a comparison of the clause "the Son of God did, when the fullness of time was come take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities".¹ This is a kind of paraphrase of the words in the creed of Chalcedon which are:- "καὶ ἀνθρώπου ἀληθῶς τὸν αὐτὸν ἐκ ψυχῆς λογικῆς καὶ σώματος ὁμοούσιον"² (and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body, consubstantial) which says that this mankind body of the Son of God had all the essential properties of man and it also had the common infirmities of man's nature. Here it seems clear that the Westminster Divines had also in mind Hebrews 4:15 "with the feelings of our infirmities".

2- "Yet without sin". This phrase also is derived from the creed of Chalcedon which reads:- "κατὰ πάντα ὁμοίον ἡμῖν χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας"³ Both statements however rest on the words of the Scripture as they are found in Hebrews 4:15. "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin".

3- "Being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost,

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1- Ibid - p. 45.

2- Schaff - Creeds of Christendom Vol II - p. 62.

3- Ibid - p. 62.

in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance". This statement of the Westminster formula is in accord with the clause of the Nicene which states:- *καὶ σαρκωθέντα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα* (and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary and was made man.) Both symbols state that the Son of God was conceived or incarnate of the Holy Ghost in the Virgin Mary. It is to be noted however that the Westminster divines add words "of her substance". Thereby they emphasized the humanity of Christ by affirming that his body was truly human.

4- "So that the two whole, perfect, and distinct natures the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man". Here again the Westminster symbol follows the more elaborate statement in the Symbol of Chalcedon. "*τὸ αὐτὸν ἐν θεότητι καὶ ἐν ἀνθρωπότητι*" 1

(the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood). *τῆ πατρὶ κατὰ τὴν θεότητα καὶ ὁμοούσιον τὸν αὐτὸν ἡμεῖν κατὰ τὴν ἀνθρωπότητα* 2 (with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the manhood).

.....

1- Ibid.- p. 62.
2- Ibid.- p. 62.

« ἓνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν Χριστὸν, ὕλον, κύριον
 μονογενῆ, ἐκ δύο φύσεων, ἀσυγχύ, τῶς
 ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαρέτως, ἀχωρίτως συν-
 ριζόμενον οὐδαμῶς τῆς τῶν φύσεων
 διαφορᾶς, ἀνηρημένης διὰ τῆν ἕνωσιν
 σωθῶμενης ἑκαστῆς πᾶλλον τῆς ἰδιότητος
 ἑκατέρας φύσεως καὶ εἰς ἓν πρόσωπον καὶ
 μίαν ὑπόστασιν συνεχούσης, οὐκ εἰς δύο
 πρόσωπα μερικοῦς ἢ διαρρέμενον ἀλλ' ἓνα
 καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ὕλον καὶ μονογενῆ, θεοῦ λόγον
 κύριον ἡσοῦν Χριστὸν ¹

(One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only Begotten, to be
 acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly,

While the Westminster symbol is shorter than
 this statement, it omits nothing essential. In the words
 of Prof Schaff "one of the briefest and clearest Protestant
 definitions of the person of Christ in the sense of the
 Chalcedonian formula is the one in the Westminster Confes-
 sion of Faith."²

The two main phrases which are found both in the
 Chalcedon and the Westminster Symbols are:- (a) ἀσυγχύτως
 (inconfuse) without confusion. This safeguards the symbols
 from the Eutychianism, "which mixes and confounds the human
 and the divine natures in Christ (σύγχυσις) and teaches
 an absorption of the former into the latter".³ (b) ἀτρέπτως
 (immutabiliter) without conversion. This was against the
 Monophysites heresy which taught only one composite nature
 of Christ making his humanity a mere accident of the immu-
 table divine substance and saying that God has been cruci-

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1- Ibid.- p. 62.
 2- Schaff - History of the Christian Church Vol3, p. 748.
 3- Schaff - Creeds of Christendom - Vol 2, p. 65.

fied (without a qualifying) according to the human nature or flesh. They also questioned whether Christ's body before the resurrection was "corruptible or incorruptible".¹

It may be interesting to add that in its form of statement "The Westminster Confession of Faith" is in general accord with the statements of other Reformation symbols. For example "The Augsburg Confession says in reference to the Person of Christ that the "Son of God, did take mans nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human inseparably conjoined in one person, one Christ, true God, true man".² It is clear that both these Reformation symbols follow the statements of the Chalcedon Symbol, which is based on the Nicene Creed; and that in the essential and fundamental truths the Westminster and the Nicene Symbols agree.-- Where "the Westminster Confession " makes additions, its statements are based upon those of the Nicene and are in essential accord with them.

III. SECTION IV - OF THE ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗΣ

A. The Nicene Statement.

The next section of the Nicene Creed in reference to the Person of Christ is section four which reads thus:-

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1- cf. Ibid.- p. 65.

2- The Augsburg Confession - Article III - p. 8.

- σταυρωθέντα τε ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐπὶ
πυλῶν Πιλάτου καὶ ταφέντα καὶ ταφέντα

(and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried.)

B. The Westminster Statement.

The corresponding statement in "The Westminster Confession of Faith" reads thus:- "This office", mediatorial, "the Lord Jesus Christ did most willingly undertake: which, that he might discharge, he was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfill it: endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul, and most painful suffering in his body; was crucified, and died; was buried, and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption".¹

C. Comparison.

Here again we notice a great amplification in "The Westminster Confession of Faith", of the Nicene statement in respect to the human suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Nicene simply states the fact of his suffering and indicates the historical circumstances by reference to Pontius Pilate. It also affirms He was buried; but here it stops. The Westminster Confession of Faith amplifies this simple statement. The reason is to be found in the doctrinal position of the Reformers and of their immediate successors. Their idea of the atonement emphasized the mediatorial work of Christ, accomplished by his suffering and death. The authors of the Westminster Symbol are not in opposition to the doctrines of Nicea, but the necessity

.....
1- The Westminster Confession of Faith Ch. 8;4 p . 47

of stating more fully the nature of the redeeming work of Christ.

In this statement the following points are brought into relief.

- 1- The Voluntary and willing humiliation of Christ. "The Lord Jesus Christ did most willing undertake".
- 2- The taking of our human frame to obedience to the law. "that he might discharge he was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfill it."
- 3- The sufferings endured by Him in carrying out his atoning work. "endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul and most painful sufferings in his body".
- 4- The fact of his crucifixion and burial "was crucified and died: was buried and remained under the power of death".
- 5- His Victory over death. "yet saw no corruption".

The omission of the reference to Pontius Pilate in "The Westminster Confession" of Faith" cannot be said to have any special significance. It occurs in no other reformation symbols such as the Augsburg Confession.¹ There was, however, no dispute regarding the fact that Pilate was the ruler under whom Christ was crucified.

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1- The Augsburg Confession, Article III.

Here again it is clear that, while the Westminster Symbol makes certain additions, its statements are based upon those of the Nicene and are in essential accord with them.

IV. SECTION V - OF THE ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΤΡΙΤΗΣ

A. The Nicene Statement.

The statement in section five in the Nicene Creed respecting the Person of Christ is:- *καὶ ἀναστάρτα ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς* (and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures.)

B. The Westminster Statement.

In "The Westminster Confession of Faith" section four reads:- "on the third day he rose from the dead, with the same body in which he suffered".¹

C. The Comparison.

Both statements affirm that Christ (1) rose, *ἀναστάρτα* ; (2) on the third day, *ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ*. The Westminster Symbol adds however, that Christ rose "from the dead" "with the same body in which he suffered". This statement is also mentioned in the "Larger Catechism" in answer to question 52. "Christ was exalted in his resurrection, in that, not having seen corruption in death "of which it was not possible for him to be held) and having the

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1- The Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 8:4 p. 48

very same body in which he suffered with the essential properties thereof (but without mortality and other common infirmities belonging to this life) really united to his soul, he rose again from the dead the third day, by his own power".¹ There can be no doubt that the reason for this emphasis on the identical body lay in the fact that already influences were beginning to make themselves felt which would call in question the bodily resurrection of Christ and substitute for it some form of a Spiritual appearance. As the Socinians state that after the resurrection "Jesus appears in heaven as the exalted being of men"², and in this elevation he became the "divine dispenser of all spiritual blessings"³. Such a view the Westminster divines would regard as heresy; and in accordance with their practice they inserted a clause to guard against it. The omission of the words *κατὰ τὰς Πλαφάς* cannot be held to have any doctrinal significance, since it has been made clear that they accepted unquestioningly the statements of Scripture.

V. SECTION VI - OF THE ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ
ΠΛΕΤΕΡΩΣ

A. The Nicene Statement.

In section six of the Nicene Creed affirms that after Christ rose he ascended.

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- 1- The Larger Catechism - p. 30.
- 2- Sheldon - System of Christian Doctrine - p. 386.
- 3- Ibid., - p. 386.

- ἀνεληθόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ
καθεξόμενον ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ Πατρὸς

(ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of
the Father.)

B. The Westminster Statement.

In respect to this same point "The Westminster
Confession" states "with which also he ascended into heaven,
and there sitteth at the right hand of the Father, making
intercession".¹

C. The Comparison.

"The Westminster Confession of Faith" repeats
the Nicene phrases:-

(1) Ascended into heaven - ἀνεληθόντα
εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς

(2) Sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
καθεξόμενον ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ Πατρὸς

Again however it amplifies the statement by linking
it to the preceding clause which affirms the identity of the
resurrection and ascension body of our Lord with his physical
body. Also to the phrase "sitteth at the right hand of the
Father" is added the explanatory clause "making intercession".
This amplification is for the purpose of revealing the
mediatorial work of Christ which is the center of the Refor-

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1- The Westminster Confession of Faith - p. 48.

mation doctrine. Again however, it becomes clear that the "Confession" is based upon the Nicene Creed and is in accord with it.

IV SECTION VII - OF THE ΣΥΜΒΟΛΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΤΡΙΤΗΣ

A. The Nicene Statement.

The final statement of the Nicene Creed in respect to the Person of Christ reads:- *καὶ πάλιν ἔρχομαι μετὰ δόξης κλεῖνας οὐρανὸν καὶ γῆν καὶ κρινοῦσά τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτῆς ἣν ἔσται τέλος* (and he shall come again with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.)

B. The Westminster Statement.

In respect to this same point "The Westminster Confession of Faith" in section four states:- "and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world".¹

C. The Comparison.

In respect to our Lords final coming it is to be noted that the Westminster Symbol statement is much shorter than that of the Nicene Creed. Generally the affirmations are the same. The Nicene states that our Lord is coming again with glory. The Westminster says "he shall return". The Nicene says that the purpose of the Lord's coming is to judge the quick and the dead. The Westminster says "to judge men and angels". The authority for the insertion of

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1- The Westminster Confession of Faith - p. 48.

angels in the Westminster Symbol is Jude 6 (and the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day". Furthermore the Westminster Symbol does not mention the Nicene clause "whose kingdom shall have no end". However it may be stated that both symbols state that Christ

- (1) Shall come *ἐρχόμενον*
- (2) To judge *κρίνα*

Here again it may be stated that while the Westminster makes certain alterations, its statements are based upon those of the Nicene and are in essential accord with them.

CHAPTER VI.

C O N C L U S I O N

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION.

Professor Charles Augustus Briggs in his book, "Theological Symbols" makes the following statement. "The Faith of the Reformation was built upon the Faith of the Ancient and Mediaeval Church in its consensus".¹ This inquiry has shown the truth of Briggs' statement in regard to the doctrine of the Person of Christ as it is found in "The Westminster Confession of Faith". The purpose of the thesis was to examine minutely both in the Nicene Creed and the Westminster Symbol and then, by comparison, of the two to discover in what respect, if any, the later creedal statement has departed from the earlier.

The results of our inquiry go to prove conclusively that the Westminster divines had before them and used the Nicene Creed as well as that of Chalcedon. In many cases they use words and phrases borrowed immediately from these earlier symbols. In no instance do they challenge or contra-

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1- Briggs - Theological Symbols - p. 253.

dict them. When there are omissions, they are due to the fact that the altered circumstances of the Seventeenth Century no longer required them.

It is, however, clear that the Westminster divines did not regard themselves as bound to use the earlier Symbols without alterations. They found their authority not in creeds of the church but in the Scriptures. Hence they feel themselves free to add to earlier statements if it is desirable to do so.

The additions made are of two kinds.

- (1) Those inserted for the purpose of stating more clearly the distinctive doctrines of the Reformation.
- (2) Those inserted to guard against the false views of their own time.

Finally it may be said that "The Westminster Confession of Faith" as a representative Reformation creed is based upon the historical symbols of Christendom and is a development from them to meet the need of the Church in England and Scotland in the Seventeenth Century.

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