

## ARTICLE VI.

## THEOLOGY OF THE MODERN GREEK CHURCH.

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THE religion of "the Orthodox Eastern church"—for that is the title by which it chooses to be known—is professed by not far from seventy-five millions of the human family. Nearly sixty millions of these are the subjects of the Czar of Russia; about eleven and a half millions are found in the Turkish Empire; nearly three millions in Austria; not quite one million in Greece; and about three hundred thousand in Montenegro and the Ionian Islands.

As one of the three great parties into which Christendom is divided, the Greek church is justly entitled to a proportionate share of the attention of Christian scholars. It has, indeed, on several accounts, a stronger claim than that which is derived merely from the relative number of its adherents. As the most ancient branch, or rather the original stock, of Christianity in its visible and organized manifestation; as occupying the regions where the apostles chiefly labored, and to which most of their inspired letters were directed; as the scene of all the early general councils of the church, and the depository of their original decrees; as retaining still the very language in which the New Testament writings were composed; and, finally, as having, in all likelihood, no inconsiderable part to perform in the future history of those classic and sacred lands which it occupies; the Greek or Anatolic church fairly challenges a larger share of the attention and study of Christian scholars than it has hitherto obtained.

Though for many centuries united with the Western church in one ecclesiastical communion, yet it had from the beginning its own peculiar spirit and its own distinct law of development. The same germ of divine doctrine, en-

grafted on stocks so different, as the subtile, speculative Greek, and the practical, organizing Roman, bore fruit of the same species, indeed, but of a somewhat different flavor and quality. The divergence began to appear in the very first centuries; but the actual separation did not take place till the latter half of the ninth century, when the patriarch Photius and the Pope of Rome mutually excommunicated and anathematized each other (A.D. 867). The two churches were afterwards nominally united again; but the breach was never healed; and less than two centuries later (A.D. 1054) the separation was solemnly re-affirmed by the patriarch Michael Cerularius. This may be regarded as the final rupture between the Eastern and Western churches. Attempts to re-unite them were renewed from time to time, even down to the period of the overthrow of the Eastern Empire by the Turks in 1453; but these attempts only tended to keep up the irritation, and to exasperate the parties still more, by the frequent discussion of their differences. At the Council of Florence, indeed (A.D. 1438–1442), the Greek deputies, with only one exception, overcome by bribery or by menace, assented to the decrees dictated by the Papal party; but their action was at once indignantly repudiated by their constituents, and very soon abjured by themselves.

Whatever the Greek church may have, therefore, in common with the Romish, whether in doctrines or in usages, we must remember that it occupies a position of declared antagonism to the Papal system as a whole.

Its relation to Protestantism, though less distinctly and formally pronounced, is virtually the same. Some of the Reformers of the sixteenth century cherished the idea of a friendly alliance with the Eastern church, believing that she had preserved more of the primitive purity of doctrine and worship than her younger sister of the West. Melancthon, about the year 1559, sent a copy of the Augsburg Confession to Joasaph II., Patriarch of Constantinople, with a friendly letter; but he never obtained any reply. The theologians

of Tübingen renewed the attempt in 1574, when Jeremiah II. was patriarch. After several interchanges of letters, the intercourse was broken off, upon the patriarch's expressing his wish that their correspondence should contain no further discussion of doctrines, but be confined to friendly civilities. "From that time," to quote the words of Alexander de Stourdza, one of the ablest Greek writers of the present age, "the silence and neutrality of the Eastern church ceased; the doctrine of the Reformation was rejected by her; and the more recent Councils of Jerusalem, in 1648, and of Jassy, in 1678, traced between the church and the Protestant communion *an unalterable line of separation.*" The church of Constantinople had indeed a Protestant patriarch, in the beginning of the seventeenth century — the ill-fated Cyril Lucar; but he was so far from being able to bring over to his views the church which he represented, that he lost his life in the attempt (A.D. 1638). There was much friendly correspondence on the subject of union, between the English hierarchy and the Eastern ecclesiastics in the time of Peter the Great; but his death, in 1725, broke off the negotiations. For the last fifteen years, since the decision of the famous Gorham controversy, a decision equally unsatisfactory to the tractarian and the evangelical parties, because it gave neither the right to expel or censure the other, the former, the tractarian or Puseyite party in the Anglican church, have been endeavoring to effect a union between the two churches; or, in default of this, to secure for themselves satisfactory terms of admission into the Greek church; and there are recent rumors of their special activity in efforts to accomplish this end. But they have not heretofore made any considerable progress, nor met with any such encouragement as to afford a prospect of ultimate success. The Greek church is, in fact, much less disposed to relax the strictness of any of her ecclesiastical rules, for the sake of facilitating accessions to her communion than the Roman Catholic; principally, no doubt, for the reason, that she is less ambitious of universal supremacy. While occu-

pying, therefore, a position of antagonism just as distinctly towards Protestants as towards Romanists, she has had less occasion to manifest her hostility in the former case than in the latter, because she has not been brought into such near relations to the Reformation as she has to the Papacy, nor had the same reason to apprehend the disturbance of her quiet by attempts to make proselytes from among her adherents.

Having thus defined in general the relation of the Oriental church to the other two great divisions of the Christian world, we proceed to speak more particularly of the Theology of the Greek church of the present day. In executing this task, we are obliged to proceed somewhat differently from what we should do in the case of either of the other two portions of Christendom. In giving an account of the theological belief of the Romish church, or of any particular Protestant communion, we could refer to recognized standards of faith, to the writings of learned theologians, the discourses of eminent preachers, and the religious usages of the common people. In the case of the Greek church, there are no universally recognized standards of faith later than the first seven councils. The Eastern church has had no modern council, like the Council of Trent in the Western, whose decrees are universally received; she has no modern articles of faith, like those of the church of England, or the Westminster Confession; she has had no modern theologians, whose writings constitute an accepted exposition of her doctrines, as those of Luther and Melancthon do among German Protestants, those of Calvin and Turretin among the Reformed churches, and those of Bellarmine and Bossuet among the Papists;<sup>1</sup> she has had no great preachers, whose discourses embody the latest phase of her theological belief. Her appeal is still to the three ancient creeds and the seven ancient councils, from whose definitions and decrees it is her boast that she has never departed; and be-

<sup>1</sup> Theophanes Procopowicz deserves, if any one, to be named here as an exception.

tween these and the common popular belief there is hardly anything that can be called an authoritative or official setting forth of her distinctive doctrines. The document which most nearly approaches to this character is the Confession of Petrus Mogilas, the metropolitan of Kiew, published in 1640. This was signed by all the Greek patriarchs in 1643, and was solemnly recognized at the Synod of Jerusalem, in 1672, as the Confession of Faith of the Oriental church. It has the highest authority of any modern exposition of the faith of the Greek church, especially in Russia. It is composed in a somewhat polemical spirit, and was designed especially to confirm the members of the Greek church, in view of the actual or apprehended encroachments of Romanists and Protestants, more especially of the latter. It states the antagonism of the Greek church to the Protestant more strongly than the prevailing feeling of the most enlightened portion of the Greek church of the present day would justify.<sup>1</sup> Next to this is the Catechism of Platon, Metropolitan of Moscow, published a little before 1770, when its author was at the head of the monastery in Troitza. This is less polemical than the preceding, and on those points in which the doctrines and usages of the Greek church are most opposite to those of Protestants, these doctrines and usages are presented in their least offensive form, and defended with much moderation. These two Confessions, together with the writings of Alexander de Stourdza, the learned layman of Odessa, are the sources of which the freest use will be made in the present Article. A residence of more than half a score of years in lands where the Greek religion is the prevailing belief has given the writer somewhat favorable opportunities for becoming acquainted with the faith of the Greek church, as it actually exists in the minds of the people who profess it.

Many of the questions in theology which have been much

<sup>1</sup> The title of this work is 'Ορθόδοξος Ὁμολογία τῆς Πίστεως τῆς Καθολικῆς καὶ Ἀποστολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας, τῆς Ἀνατολικῆς. It has been published in Russian, Latin, and German, as well as in Greek.

discussed among Protestants, and especially such as have been most largely discussed within the past half century, have scarcely been moved at all among the members of the Oriental church. The inspiration of the scriptures; the harmony between human freedom and divine sovereignty; the order and mutual relations of repentance, faith, love, and regeneration — these, and other questions familiar to us, are hardly known among them as topics of discussion. On points of this kind our statements will necessarily be brief and general. On the other hand, the Greek mind has been much occupied with questions which among us are little known, except to scholars. To this class belong the disputes concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit, whether from the Father only, or from the Father and the Son, and also concerning the question of one will or two wills in the person of Christ. The first of these, which was so earnestly disputed in the early controversies between the Eastern and Western churches, remains still the most prominent point of debate between them. We refer to this difference between them and us, in respect to the current subjects of theological controversy, as accounting for what might else seem a strange disproportion in the relative prominence given in the present Article to the several topics that come under our notice.

#### THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

The doctrine of the Greek church in regard to the holy scriptures is stated in her standards in this simple and general form: "The holy scriptures are the true word of God." Questions pertaining to the nature and extent of that divine inspiration under which prophets and apostles spoke and wrote, are hardly known as subjects of discussion in the modern Greek church. She contents herself with the statement, that the Holy Spirit is the author and communicator of scripture, and the prophets and apostles are the media through which that communication is made to men. In regard to the Apocrypha, the Greek church occupies sub-

stantially the same position with the English, as this latter is defined in the sixth of the Thirty-nine Articles. The church reads the Apocryphal books, "for example of life and instruction of manners; but doth not apply them to establish any doctrine." They are always included in the sacred volume, but are not regarded as of canonical authority. In this important respect the doctrine of the Greek church differs from that of the Romish, which, since the time of the Council of Trent, "receives and venerates with equal reverence" the Apocryphal and the Hebrew books.<sup>1</sup> There is not however, it must be confessed, the same agreement among the Greek authorities, ancient and modern, on this subject, which there is in the different Reformed confessions, and in almost all the Romish writers since the Tridentine Council. Even in the earlier centuries there was a difference of opinion. The Council of Laodicea (A.D. 363) names the book of Baruch as a part of the Canon.<sup>2</sup> That of Carthage (A.D. 397) omits Baruch, but includes Tobit and Judith, and according to some copies Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, and 1 and 2 Maccabees.<sup>3</sup> The Apostolical Constitutions include the two books of Maccabees only.<sup>4</sup> And of the ancient catalogues given by individual writers, several include Baruch. There is something of the same diversity in the more modern authorities. The synod of Jerusalem (A.D. 1672) affirmed the canonical authority of the Apocryphal books as a whole, with an explicit censure of those who rejected them; but the decisions of this synod were under a controlling Romish influence, and did not fairly represent the general state of belief in the Greek church at that time. The authorized Russian Catechism receives as canonical only the books extant in Hebrew; and the same is true of the catechisms in general use in the kingdom of Greece. In regard to the Old Testament, the Greek translation of the LXX is practically regarded as of higher authority than the original Hebrew, though its superiority

<sup>1</sup> Session IV., April 8, 1546.

<sup>2</sup> Canon XXXII or XXVII.

<sup>3</sup> Canon LX.

<sup>4</sup> Canon LXXXV.

has not been formally sanctioned by any authoritative decree, nor explicitly affirmed by any of the standard catechisms. Hebrew learning is very little cultivated in the Greek church; and it is not strange that a version so ancient, and having the traditionary reputation of being inspired, should have practically supplanted the original as an ultimate standard of appeal. One of the most learned of the Greek ecclesiastics, who died a few years ago, Constantine Economos, published a voluminous work on the Septuagint, in which he attempts to support the fabulous account given in the letter of Aristæus to Philocrates in regard to the miraculous correspondence, even to a letter, of the translations made separately by the seventy-two learned Jews employed for this purpose by Ptolemy. But this writer, though one of the ablest and most learned of the ecclesiastical writers of modern Greece, was a representative of the ultra conservative or high church school, and notoriously opposed to all progress and reform.

The Greek church does not forbid the use of the scriptures by the common people. As Chrysostom, in the olden time, loved to extol the word of God, and to recommend to all, but especially to those most engaged in secular employments, the constant and devout study of the sacred volume, so the modern Greek writers, with a great approach to unanimity, advocate the universal dissemination and perusal of the oracles of God. The Synod of Jerusalem is believed to be the only Greek council that ever gave a negative answer to the question, whether the scriptures ought to be read by all Christians, without distinction. But the decisions of that synod, for the reason already mentioned, are not entitled to be regarded as a statement of the authorized and prevailing doctrine of the Greek church. Platon, the metropolitan of Moscow, in his *Catechism of Orthodox Doctrine*, enumerates among the errors of the Romish church, the denial of the scriptures to the common people; and he mentions as one of the most important safeguards against doctrinal error the reverential study of the holy scriptures,



and the adoption of them as the guide of all our thoughts and actions.<sup>1</sup> And the learned Koraēs, in his annotations to the modern Greek translation of that work (first published in the Russian language), says: "There are a few, even among us, who are so ignorant as to think that the reading of the holy scriptures in private ought not to be allowed. But, thanks be to God, such was never the doctrine of the Oriental church." Of this exceptional class are those who, in the early history of Protestant missions to Greece, violently opposed the translation of the New Testament into the modern Greek dialect for the use of the uneducated. But while there were some among the Greek priesthood, who thus opposed the efforts of foreign missionaries to enlighten the common people, there were others, and some who ranked among the ablest and most popular ecclesiastics, such as Neophytus Bambas and Theoclytus Pharmakides, who either directly co-operated with the missionaries in the work of translation, or boldly defended them against the assaults of the former class. And it is but a few months since a new translation of the Bible into the vernacular language of Russia has begun to be circulated among the population of that vast empire, with the concurrent encouragement of the highest civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

#### OF THEOLOGY PROPER, OR THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING GOD.

The Greek church has always held fast to the exact form of the Nicene Creed, as enlarged by the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381), in regard to the procession of the Holy Spirit. The language of that creed is: "We believe in the Holy Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father." In the Western church, this expression was changed, about two hundred years later (at the Synod of Toledo, A.D. 589), by the addition, "and from the Son" (*filioque*); and this alteration, though disapproved at first by the See of Rome, was finally adopted as the doctrine of the Western church. Against this innovation in the form of the ancient symbol,

<sup>1</sup> Part II. chap. xxviii. p. 121.

the Greek church has always protested, with an earnestness which does not seem, to those unacquainted with the history of the controversy, to be justified by the intrinsic importance of the difference. But in the minds alike of those who condemn and of those who justify the addition of these words to the creed, the doctrine which they teach is intimately connected with just views of the mutual relations of the three persons of the Godhead. The Greeks, in condemning this addition of "filioque," appeal to the words of our Lord in John xv. 26, with which the language of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed precisely agrees; and they maintain that to derive the procession of the Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father, is to place the Spirit in a relation of seeming dependence on, and inferiority to, the Son, which has no warrant in scripture, and tends also to displace the Father from that primordial position which the scriptures assign to him, as the "fons divinitatis," to use the language of the schoolmen of a later age. The Greek church has here the unquestionable advantage of adhering literally to the inspired text, from which the church of Rome, and after her all the Protestant Confessions of Faith, have departed. In the controversy between the Eastern and Western churches which resulted in their separation, this subject of the interpolation of this addition into the creed was always prominent; and in all the discussions that have since taken place between them, it has occupied the chief place. At the Council of Florence, this was the first and principal topic of discussion between the two parties. Indeed it occupied the whole of the first twenty-four sessions of this council, and the greater part of the twenty-fifth and last. After the Greek deputies were brought to accede to the Romish doctrine on that point, the remaining differences were soon settled. In like manner, in the reply of the patriarchs of the East to the overtures of reconciliation made to the members of the Greek church by Pius IX., soon after his accession to the pontificate, this subject takes precedence of all others. The patriarchs fill up ten pages of

their encyclical letter with fifteen distinct arguments against the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son.

In regard to the decrees of God, the Greek theologians, both ancient and modern, lean strongly toward the Arminian, rather than the Calvinistic view. It has been said that many of the Russian clergy are ardent admirers of Calvin; but all the leading theologians, and indeed the ecclesiastical acts that are read in their churches, denounce Calvinism as a dangerous heresy.

#### OF THE DOCTRINE OF MAN.

Holding the common doctrine of all Christians, that man was originally created in the image of God, the Greek church understands that image of God to consist mainly in the spiritual endowments of reason, freedom of choice, and immortality, but partly also in the dominion with which man is invested over this lower world,—a faint image of the universal dominion of the Supreme Ruler.

By the transgression of our first parents, sin was not only introduced into the world by one example of disobedience, but it became common, and the whole race of Adam was corrupted at the fountain of its being. This corruption instead of being mitigated by transmission, and diminished in intensity by extension and subdivision, became, on the contrary, more virulent with the lapse of time and the increase of the human race. For the rays of that original divine light, which could not be wholly darkened in our first parents, grew continually fainter and dimmer in their posterity, the further these were removed from their primitive source. The form in which this doctrine of inherited corruption is stated by the Greek theologians, Platon and Stourdza, though not very explicit, leans rather towards the theory of Traducianism than of Creationism. The reverse of this is true of the ancient teachers of the Oriental church.

#### OF REDEMPTION.

The Greek church teaches that the Son of God, who was

truly and perfectly God, begotten of the Father from all eternity, became truly and perfectly man, in order to effect the salvation of sinners. By this union, the God-man was qualified to become the mediator between God and man. The doctrine of two natures and two wills in this one Christ, as defined long ago by the Councils of Ephesus, Chalcedon, and Constantinople, is still the declared doctrine of the Greek church, though these subjects have almost entirely ceased, for many centuries, to occupy the attention of the Greek theologians. As to the work of Christ, his death is represented as a true sacrifice for sin, by which satisfaction was made to divine justice. The sufferings and death of Christ were regarded by the Father as if the sinner himself had suffered them, and the punishment<sup>1</sup> of the innocent Saviour was, according to the inscrutable decree of God, reckoned to us instead of the punishment which we deserved. By faith in this divine Mediator, we are justified and saved. Good works, though they do not contribute anything towards the sinner's justification, are indispensable as evidences of his conversion and proofs of the genuineness of his faith.

#### OF THE CHURCH.

On this topic, we find the statements of the Greek theologians more explicit and full. Their doctrine is compendiously stated in the words of the ancient creed, — the church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. They find these attributes of the true church nowhere but in their own communion; hence no other churches are regarded as entitled to the name. In speaking of the unity of the church, Platon says: "From this unity of the church all those have separated who either do not receive the divine word at all, or mix with it their own absurd opinions. Hence, such communities are not churches, but rather assemblies of errorists, who are governed, not by the Spirit of God, but by the spirit of enmity and hatred. We see in these days, to

<sup>1</sup> πῶς is the word which Platon uses.

the great scandal of the Christian religion, three principal heresies, those of the Papists, the Lutherans, and the Calvinists. The Papal communion is full of deadly superstitions, and is blindly subject, in defiance of the divine word, to the decisions of the pope. The Papists pervert the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit, in opposition to plain testimonies of holy scripture; they deprive the laity of the cup of the divine eucharist, and do not allow them to read the holy scriptures. They believe in a purgatorial fire, the offspring of their own fancy; and, arrogating to themselves a sovereignty unknown to the Gospel, they persecute with fire and sword all those who will not agree with them. The Lutherans and the Calvinists separated from the Papists a few centuries ago; but in their desire to cast off the papal superstitions, they have rejected also the apostolical traditions. They both hold the erroneous doctrine of the Western church in regard to the procession of the Holy Spirit. The Lutherans attribute to the body of Christ a universal presence, which is the attribute of the divine Being only; and the Calvinists subject human actions to a certain and inevitable fore-ordination. The correctness of our Russo-Grecian church is founded on indubitable proofs; for from the times of the apostles to the present it has preserved, entire and uncorrupt, not only the faith preached by them, but also the traditions of the ancient church. Greece was taught the Christian religion by the apostle Paul; and it has kept the truth taught by him through all subsequent ages, and has rooted out, by means of general and local councils, all the delusive heresies, which have tried to gain a foothold in it. God was pleased afterwards to enlighten Russia also with the same pure and faultless doctrine. Neither in Greece nor in Russia has this doctrine ever undergone any change, as we see that papal doctrine did in the time of Luther; and, although among some of our co-religionists superstitions and malpractices have found place, yet the church does not sanction such corruptions; but she pities, reproveth, and corrects those.

who fall into them. Besides, particular erroneous views and practices of some who are ignorant of the truth, cannot bring any just reproach upon the whole church. Hence we conclude, that our Orthodox church is not only the true church, but the only one, and the same from the foundation of the world."¹ In explaining the term "holy," as applied to the church, the same author says: "Although there are sinners in the church, yet only those who confess their sins before God with true repentance, and receive his gracious pardon, are really members of it; the impenitent and hard-hearted are not members of the church."² There seems to be no clear conception here of the distinction between the visible church and the invisible.

The Greeks are strenuous advocates of three orders in the ministry. Some of the more strict and zealous among them were much disturbed, or at least professed to be so, soon after the first Protestant missionaries were sent to Greece, lest their hierarchy should be supplanted by Presbyterianism, or some other form of church government founded on the purity of the ministry. Some of the Greek priests were accused of conspiring with these foreigners to bring about this result. The learned Economos wrote a treatise in defense of the three orders. He was answered by Pharmakides and Bambas, whom he had accused of being partners in this plot. They both indignantly denied the charge; but the former, in a subsequent work, published in 1852, did not hesitate to affirm that the constitution of the primitive church was *democratic* in its character.

The vow of celibacy is not required of deacons or presbyters, but only of the bishops. These, therefore, are always selected from the monastic order. The parochial clergy are required to be married before their ordination; but they may not marry a second time after ordination. This rule, which was adopted at the council called Quinsextum, held in Constantinople A.D. 692, has remained in force to the present day. In defending the usage of the Greek church

¹ *Orthodox Doctrine*, Part II. § 28.

² *Ibid.*

on this point, de Stourdza says: "The Orthodox church regards the bishops as holocausts, smoking upon her high places, and having for their vocation to diffuse afar the vivifying light and the sweet odor of their perpetual sacrifice. In prescribing the celibacy of bishops, our church has thought she ought to honor and realize the doctrine of the Saviour, who teaches us that there are some men who are capable of devoting themselves to perpetual chastity. And at the same time, in restricting this institution to the episcopate, the Orthodox church reconciles the laws of revelation with those of nature, and does not impose on human weakness burdens which it is not able to bear."

The monastic life has only a very limited development in the modern Greek church, as compared with its extent in the Papal. In the kingdom of Greece most of the monasteries were abolished soon after the revolution. In the vicinity of Mount Athos the monks are still counted by thousands. But the countries where the Greek church predominates are not, like most Roman Catholic countries, burdened with swarms of lazy monks, of numerous varieties of garb and order. The Greek monks nearly all follow the rule of Basil.

In respect to ecclesiastical government, the Greek church lacks that unity which makes the Papal church so formidable. It has no single universally acknowledged head, the fountain of priestly authority, the ultimate arbiter of spiritual discipline, the centre of ecclesiastical unity. The different geographical divisions of the church are governed in a different manner. The churches of Russia, Greece, and Austria, are national establishments, the two former being governed by a synod, and the latter by the Archbishop of Carlowitz, with the title of patriarch. Most of the remaining portions of the Oriental church are under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the four patriarchs of Constantinople, of Alexandria, of Antioch, and of Jerusalem. Of these, the patriarch of Constantinople enjoys the pre-eminence, and is virtually the primate of all who profess the oriental faith in

the Turkish Empire, in the Danubian Principalities, in the Ionian Islands, and in Venice. The Island of Cyprus, though belonging to the Turkish Empire, has an independent ecclesiastical government, under the rule of its bishops, four in number; and the churches of Montenegro and Mount Sinai also enjoy ecclesiastical independence, though each consists only of a single bishopric. Of the three national churches, that of Greece is least dependent on the secular power. In fact, since the kingdom of Greece has been established, it has never had a sovereign who belonged to the prevailing faith of the people. The lately deposed Otho was a Catholic, and his queen a Protestant. The present king, George the First, is a Protestant, belonging to the Lutheran church. Many of the Greeks are opposed altogether to the union of church and state. Economos, whose name has already been mentioned, wrote a very able argument against this mixture of things sacred and secular.

#### OF THE SACRAMENTS.

The Greek church, like the Papal, makes the number of sacraments, or mysteries as she calls them, to be seven. She is however more careful than the papal to assign a pre-eminence to baptism and the Lord's supper. She gives the name of confession to that which the Romish church calls penance; and her anointing is not like the extreme unction of the Western church. It is used, not as a preparative for death, but rather as a means, through the prayer of faith, of the recovery from sickness and forgiveness of sins. It is defined in the larger Orthodox Catechism of the Russian church, as "a mystery in which, while the body is anointed with oil, God's grace is invoked on the sick, to heal him of his spiritual and bodily infirmities." Or, as it is in the Catechism of Platon, "the mystery in which the priest anoints the sick with oil, and prays to God to heal him and forgive his sins."

Baptism is defined by Platon as "the mystery in which,



when the body is washed in water, the soul is washed in the blood of Christ." Its effects are explained as consisting in regeneration, the remission of all sin, and the entering into covenant with God, whereby we obtain a title to everlasting life. The form of baptism in the Greek church is always a triple immersion. The priest, pronouncing the baptismal formula, plunges the child into the water simultaneously with the pronouncement of each of the names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Greek church does not allow the validity of baptism by aspersion or affusion; nor will she receive proselytes from those communions which practise these modes, unless they submit to the triple immersion. The Russian church was, however, prevailed on by the influence of the patriarch Nikon, about the middle of the seventeenth century, to make an exception to this rule in favor of the Roman Catholic church. The members of that church, who may wish to unite with the Greek church in Russia, may be received without any other ceremony than the chrism or confirmation. This exception does not include Protestants, nor has the example been followed in any other division of the Greek church. In administering baptism, the priest does not say, "I baptize thee"; but, "the servant of the Lord (here follows the name) is baptized," etc. The Greeks defend this form on two grounds; first, as being more modest on the part of the administrator, who is made too prominent, they say, by the use of the first person; and, secondly, as intimating the voluntariness of the baptized person, since the verb may be taken either as the passive or the middle form.

The Greek church gives the rite of chrism or confirmation, immediately after baptism. Indeed the two offices are combined into one. The administration of this rite is not, as in the Romish and Anglican churches, the prerogative of the bishop, but, as in the Lutheran church, it is performed by presbyters.

In the case of adults, auricular confession is regarded as a qualification for communion. But in pronouncing the

absolution connected with this, the priest does not say, "I absolve thee," but "may the Lord absolve thee."

The Lord's supper is thus defined by Platon: "The holy eucharist is a mystery, in which the believer receives, under the form of bread, the very body of Christ, and under the form of wine, the very blood of Christ, for remission of sins, and everlasting life." The word "transubstantiation" was never used by the Greek church till after the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, in 1453. It is said to occur for the first time in the confession of faith presented by the patriarch Gennadius to the sultan Mohammed II, shortly after the capture of the city. The Greek church differs from the Roman Catholic in regard to the precise moment of the service when the miracle of transubstantiation is wrought. While the Romish church assigns the miracle to the moment when the priest pronounces the words "this is my body," the Oriental church assigns it to a subsequent part of the service, when the priest prays, in the words of Chrysostom's rubric: "Make this bread the precious body of thy Christ, and that which is in this cup the precious blood of thy Christ, *changing* them by thy Holy Spirit." They thus involve themselves in inconsistency; for the priest repeats the Lord's words, "this is my body," and the people respond, "Amen; we believe it," before the change of substance is effected. The communion is always administered in both kinds, and to all infants after baptism, as well as to adults. In regard to this last point, Stourdza has the following significant note: "The Orthodox church administers the sacrament to infants at the breast, desiring to sanctify them from the cradle: The Western church does not give the communion till a more advanced age. There is more of faith in the former of these usages; more of reason in the latter."

#### OF WORSHIP.

The worship of the Greek church differs in this important particular from that of the Romish, that the services are not

conducted in an unknown tongue. For the ecclesiastical Greek, though differing from the written, and still more from the spoken, language of the present day, cannot be regarded as a foreign or unknown tongue to the worshipper. Another difference which the spectator at once notices is, that there is far less in the Greek church than in the Latin of that ecclesiastical mummery and pantomime, in which the priest alone plays his part, without any apparent consciousness of the presence of the people. So far as the worship of images is concerned, the only important difference (if indeed this is important) between the two churches is, that the Greek disallows the use of *graven images*, and limits herself to pictures painted on board or canvas. She professes also to disallow the use of pictorial representations of the Deity, excepting those of the Son, who, as having actually assumed the nature of man, may be lawfully represented in a human form. But in practice this distinction is little regarded, and pictures of the Father, as a venerable old man with a flowing beard, and of the Holy Spirit, as a dove, are very common, both in churches and in private dwellings. The Greek church also professes, in her better formularies, to guard the members of her communion against the abuse, or superstitious use, of images. Thus Platon, in his orthodox instruction, says: "The respect which may be lawfully paid to pictures degenerates into the heinous sin of idolatry when reverence is directed to the picture in itself; when one picture is considered holier than another; when an ornamented picture is more honored than a plain one, or an old one more than a new, or when persons decline to pray where there is no picture." But, in fact, the church's caveat is little regarded, and all these prohibited forms of abuse are common. The images used in the Greek church are not likely to attract the idolatrous reverence of those who look upon painting as almost a divine art. They are far inferior, in this respect, to those used in the Roman Catholic church.

The invocation of saints is as universal in the Greek

church as in the Latin. The mother of Christ, the ever-virgin, the all-holy, is invoked quite as often and as fervently as her divine Son.

The veneration of relics is also as much a part of the Greek worship as of the Romish.

Prayers for the dead who have departed in faith are defended on the ground of the unity of the church. Believers on earth and spirits of the just made perfect in heaven make up one communion of saints.

The abundant reading of the scriptures is a marked feature in the services of the Greek church. This has undoubtedly contributed to keep her from sinking to the level of ignorance and superstition which is seen in countries entirely under the sway of the pope. It has also operated effectually to prevent the Greek language from becoming obsolete, and has prepared the way for that purification and improvement of the language, which has been going on with such remarkable rapidity since Greece became an independent kingdom.

In respect to fasting, the rules of the Greek church are less minute than those of the Roman Catholic. Fasting is a duty of the Christian. It involves the three elements of the *time*, the *quantity*, and the *quality* of food. As to the second, the church, in view of the diversities of age, constitution, and circumstances, does not lay down any rule. But as to the times of fasting and the quality of food she gives direction to her faithful children. She prescribes entire abstinence as a preparation for receiving the eucharist, and four principal feasts in the year. These she regards as means of improvement, and not as meritorious works. As to the quality of food, her general principle is to prescribe the less substantial and less savory kinds of food, as a security against excess.

#### THE FUTURE LIFE.

We come now to consider the doctrine of the Oriental church in regard to the world to come. The Greek church

has never received the Romish doctrine of purgatory. And yet, with what seems to Protestants a strange inconsistency, she has always sanctioned prayers for the dead. She reconciles the seeming inconsistency in this way. The penalty of sin is twofold, consisting partly in eternal reprobation, and partly in temporal chastisements. Remission of the first is obtained by penitence and faith, through the merits of Christ. But the liability to the temporal consequences of sin, such as human justice, shame, affliction, sickness, and death is not removed by repentance. Now many die in a state of penitence indeed, but before they have undergone the temporal penalty of their transgressions. To supply this deficiency, the church imposes on them pious exercises, voluntary privations, which are called canonical penalties. It is for those who die before they have undergone these providential or canonical penalties, that the maternal solicitude of the church has appointed prayers and commemorations. There is nothing here of expiation in purgatory, nothing of *merits* or *demerits* after death; but only a maternal aspiration of prayer on the part of the church in behalf of the dead, with a view to their obtaining the free remission of the temporal penalties which they have incurred, while as yet their *eternal destiny* is not irrevocably fixed by the sovereign Judge. Nothing short of certain signs of final impenitence imposes silence on the distressful cry of her maternal heart.

In regard to the resurrection of the dead, and the eternal awards that follow it, there is nothing peculiar in the doctrine of the Eastern church.

The above statement of the belief of the modern Greek church will put the reader in a position to judge of the correctness of the assertion made by a Scotch apologist, that "the principles of the Protestant Reformation and Eastern Orthodoxy (separated from practical abuse, and fairly exhibited) are *identical*."<sup>1</sup> In another part of his book, the same author qualifies somewhat this identity:

<sup>1</sup> An Apology for the Greek Church. By Edward Masson. p. 41.

“The standards of the Greek church, strictly speaking, contain, in fact, but two points of difference between the Greek and the Protestant faith. The Greeks admit pictures into places of worship, and maintain the Nicene Creed in its original form, without the undeniable Western interpolation.”<sup>1</sup> The object of this apologist is to show, “that the complete regeneration of the Greek church is perfectly compatible with the integrity of her standards.”<sup>2</sup> As an inference from this view, he maintains, “that a system of missionary operations, founded on the principle of non-interference, may be rendered entirely efficient; and that every other system will end in disappointment.”<sup>3</sup> This is not the place to argue this question; but while the writer heartily approves the principle which restricts the series of Articles in this Periodical on the theological views of different divisions of the Christian church to the statement of facts, principles, and arguments, to the exclusion of heated polemical discussions, yet he is unwilling to close this view of the doctrines of the Greek church without recording his profound conviction, the result of more than ten years’ observation and experience of missionary operations among the Greeks, that the only missionary policy which has produced, or which promises to produce, any thorough reform of faith and worship in the Greek church, is that which, while conciliatory and Christian in its spirit, is distinctly and avowedly aggressive in its principle: “Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be *rooted up*.”

<sup>1</sup> An Apology for the Greek Church. By Edward Masson, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.