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978-1-107-62411-5 - An Exposition of the Creed  
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AN EXPOSITION  
OF THE CREED

BY

JOHN PEARSON, D.D.

SOMETIME MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE, AND MARGARET PROFESSOR  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE; AND LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER.

REVISED AND CORRECTED

BY THE REV. TEMPLE CHEVALLIER, B.D.

FORMERLY PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM;  
AND LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF ST CATHARINE'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

*A NEW EDITION, THOROUGHLY REVISED,*

BY THE REV. ROBERT SINKER, B.D.

LIBRARIAN AND FORMERLY CHAPLAIN OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Edited for the Syndics of the University Press.

CAMBRIDGE:  
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.  
1882

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**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107624115](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107624115)

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First published 1859

First paperback edition 2014

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-1-107-62411-5 Paperback

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## PREFACE OF THE EDITOR.

THE edition of Bishop Pearson's *Exposition of the Creed* revised by the late Mr Chevallier for the Cambridge University Press, having been for some time out of print, I felt it right, on being asked to undertake the supervision of a new edition, to collate carefully both the text and notes with one of the folio editions issued during the author's life-time. For this purpose I chose, as Mr Chevallier had done, the third folio edition of 1669, which, although not the last issued before Bishop Pearson's death, was yet, it would appear, the last to receive systematic revision at his hands. In cases, however, where a comparison with the fourth and fifth folio editions (1676, 1683) shewed that there had been a deliberate change of wording on the part of the author, this has been incorporated into the text, with a footnote giving the reading of the third edition. The pages of the third edition are noted in the margin, and to these pages the references in all the indices apply.

As regards the notes, the whole of the references have been verified, except a few, for which books were not available or where there was some original error of citation, which I failed to surmount; and a very large number of corrections has thus been made. It must be noted, however, that besides the verification of references actually given in detail, considerable difficulty often occurred when merely the author's name was given, as for example, *S. Aug.*,

more especially when, as was the case in several instances, the author's name was the wrong one. One cannot wonder that even Pearson's vast learning and vast memory should, amid such an army of citations, occasionally make a slip in a point of detail<sup>1</sup>. I trust, however, that exceedingly few of these survive in the present edition.

Again, from the constant reprinting of the *Exposition*, numerous errors crept in, and, once in, were not easily dislodged. The history of one of these is a curious illustration of this fact. In note 1, p. 501 of the present edition, will be found a reference to *Theodotus, Epit.* 1. So the citation was given in the first and second folio editions (1659, 1662). In the third, however, an undetected misprint crept in, *Theodorus, Epist.* 1, which has survived to the present time; and, improving upon this, both the Oxford and Cambridge editions have the entry for it in the Index, *Theodorus Studita*, entailing a weary waste of labour to solve the reference.

As regards the citations themselves, the obvious course was to adapt them to the best and newest critical texts of the several authors, as was done by Dr Burton in the Oxford edition of 1833. It seemed right to carry out this principle even in cases where, until comparatively lately, we had to depend, mainly or exclusively, on Latin Versions of lost Greek originals. Thus I have replaced the Latin quotations from the Epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas, by the original Greek, except on one occasion when the Latin wording is necessary for the argument.

<sup>1</sup> One of these, the reference to *S. Athan.* in note 4, p. 73 of the present edition, which the best efforts of myself and my friends failed to solve before the sheet containing it was printed off, has since been found

by Canon Churton to be not from St Athanasius at all, but from St Basil (*adv. Eunomium* lib. i. Vol. i. p. 214 D). Also (p. 48, note 2), for Alcimus, read Alcinous, c. 10.

## PREFACE OF THE EDITOR.

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A full index is appended of the editions of authors used ; and the references in the other indices have been verified throughout, and will, I trust, be found fuller and more accurate than before.

In a work, however, with several thousand references, while every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, it is sometimes impossible to avoid mistakes, and a few, I trust very few, may perhaps still linger. A few notes have been added here and there, but only where it seemed absolutely necessary, as to qualify some remark to which fresh sources of information have given a different colouring.

ROBERT SINKER.

TRINITY COLLEGE,  
*January 5, 1882.*

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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**I**T seems to be well ascertained that the latest edition of the Exposition of the Creed, to which Bishop Pearson made any additions or alterations, is the third, in folio, 1669. That edition has consequently been here taken as the principal model for the text. I have availed myself, however, of the valuable labours of Dr Burton, in his revision of the text, stating in a note the reading of the third edition, when any deviation from it is made.

The pages of the third edition are printed in the margin; and all the references in the indexes are made to those pages.

To the theological student one of the most valuable parts of the Exposition of the Creed is the rich mine of patristical and general learning contained in the notes. If the passages to which reference is thus made were collected, with the context in which they occur, they would form a complete *Catena* of the best authorities upon doctrinal points. Even the briefest allusions derived from reading so extensive, and a memory so tenacious as Bishop Pearson's, deserve to be treasured as suggestive of patient investigation and deep thought, and directing the inquirer to the original sources whence information may be obtained. This consideration will, I trust, be a sufficient excuse for a minuteness of reference in the notes, which, under other circumstances, might be regarded as superfluous.

As regards the quotations from the Fathers and other sources, it may be stated that all have been faithfully verified throughout, and the errors of former editions of this work have been carefully corrected.

In those quotations which differ verbally from the original passages, I have followed Dr Burton's example in adopting the reading of the best editions to which I have had access: and I have noted the very few instances in which the general sense of a passage, and not the exact words, are given. I have, also, supplied several additional Notes, and have given a list of the several works which have been consulted.

It is to be regretted that Dr Burton has not given a list of the editions, to the volumes and pages of which he has



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION. ix

referred. In some instances, and especially in the quotations from St Augustine, I have, however, reprinted those references, together with the references to the editions which I have consulted. Some references have also been taken from Mr Dobson's edition.

I am indebted to the Rev. Henry John Rose, late Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, for a careful collation of the passages from the Rabbinic writings and from the Chaldee paraphrases. All the quotations from the Chaldee and from Jarchi have been compared with Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica* of Basle, 1618, and with Breithaupt's edition; some passages have been compared with a MS. in the Library of St John's College, Cambridge: and some also with Bomberg's *Biblia Rabbinica*.

All the Syriac passages, and some of those from the Chaldee paraphrases, have been compared with Walton's *Polyglot*.

Some additional notes on these subjects are marked with the initials H. J. R.

My thanks are due also to the Rev. Churchill Babington, Fellow of St John's-College, Cambridge, for collating many passages in authors not contained in libraries which I could consult.

TEMPLE CHEVALLIER.

ESH PARSONAGE, DURHAM,  
*July 6, 1849.*

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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**I**N this edition a few errors in the first edition have been corrected, and some additional references have been introduced. There are also inserted a few short but valuable notes, distinguished by the name, M. J. Routh. These notes were written by the late learned President of Magdalen College, Oxford, in a copy of the 11th edition of Pearson on the Creed, now in the Routh Library, the munificent donation of Dr Routh to the University of Durham.

DURHAM, *June, 1859.*

TO THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL AND WELL-BELOVED

THE PARISHIONERS OF ST CLEMENT'S,  
 EAST-CHEAP.

*Mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied.*

IF I should be at any time unmindful of your commands, you might well esteem me unworthy of your continued favours; and there is some reason to suspect I have incurred the interpretation of forgetfulness, having been so backward in the performance of my promises. Some years have passed since I preached unto you upon such texts of Scripture as were on purpose selected in relation to the CREED, and was moved by you to make those meditations public. But you were pleased then to grant what my inclinations rather led me to, that they might be turned into an Exposition of the Creed itself; which, partly by the difficulty of the work undertaken, partly by the intervention of some other employments, hath taken me up thus long, for which I desire your pardon. And yet an happy excuse may be pleaded for my delay, meeting with a very great felicity, that as faith triumpheth in good works, so my Exposition of the Creed should be contemporary with the reedifying of your Church. For though I can have little temptation to believe that my book should last so long as that fabric; yet I am exceedingly pleased that they should begin together; that the publishing of the one should so agree with the opening of the other. This, I hope, may persuade you to forget my slackness, considering ye were not ready to your own expectation; your experience tells you the excuse of church-work will be accepted in building, I beseech you let it not be denied in printing.

That blessed Saint, by whose name your Parish is known, was a fellow-labourer with St Paul, and a successor of St Peter; he had the honour to be numbered in the Scripture with them *whose names are written in the book of life*; and when he had sealed the Gospel with his blood, he was one of the first whose memory was perpetuated by the building a Church to bear his name. Thus was St Clement's Church famous in Rome, when Rome was famous for the *faith spoken*

## THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

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*of throughout the whole world.* He wrote an Epistle to the Corinthians infested with a schism, in imitation of St Paul, which obtained so great authority in the primitive times, that it was frequently read in their public congregations; and yet had for many hundred years been lost, till it was at last set forth out of the library of the late King.

Now as, by the providence of God, the memory of that primitive Saint hath been restored in our age, so my design aimeth at nothing else but that the primitive Faith may be revived. And therefore in this edition of the Creed I shall speak to you but what St Jude hath already spoken to the whole Church, *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.* If it were so needful for him then to write, and for them to whom he wrote to contend for the first faith, it will appear as needful for me now to follow his writing, and for you to imitate their earnestness, because the reason which he renders, as the cause of that necessity, is now more prevalent than it was at that time, or ever since. *For, saith he, there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.* The principles of Christianity are now as freely questioned as the most doubtful and controverted points; the grounds of faith are as safely denied, as the most unnecessary superstructions; that religion hath the greatest advantage which appeareth in the newest dress, as if we looked for another *faith to be delivered to the saints*: whereas in Christianity there can be no concerning truth which is not ancient; and whatsoever is truly new, is certainly false. Look then for purity in the fountain, and strive to embrace the first faith, to which you cannot have a more probable guide than the Creed, received in all ages of the Church; and to this I refer you, as it leads you to the Scriptures, from whence it was at first deduced, that while *those which are unskilful, and unstable, wrest the words of God himself unto their own damnation*, ye may receive so much instruction as may set you beyond the imputation of unskilfulness, and so much of confirmation as may place you out of the danger of instability; which as it hath been the constant endeavour, so shall it ever be the prayer of him, who after so many encouragements of his labours amongst you, doth still desire to be known as

Your most faithful Servant in the Lord,

JOHN PEARSON.

## TO THE READER.

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I HAVE in this book undertaken an Exposition of the Creed, and think it necessary in this Preface to give a brief account of the work, lest any should either expect to find that here which was never intended, or conceive that which they meet with such as they expected not.

The Creed, without controversy, is a brief comprehension of the objects of our Christian faith, and is generally taken to contain all things necessary to be believed. Now whether all things necessary be contained there, concerneth not an Expositor to dispute, who is obliged to take notice of what is in it, but not to inquire into what is not: whether all truths comprehended in the same be of equal and absolute necessity, we are no way forced to declare; it being sufficient, as to the design of an Exposition, to interpret the words, and so deliver the sense, to demonstrate the truth of the sense delivered, and to manifest the proper necessity of each truth, how far, and in what degree, and to what purposes, it is necessary.

This therefore is the method which I proposed to myself, and have prosecuted in every Article. First, to settle the words of each Article according to their antiquity, and generality of reception in the Creed. Secondly, to explicate and unfold the terms, and to endeavour a right notion and conception of them as they are to be understood in the same. Thirdly, to shew what are those truths which are naturally contained in those terms so explicated, and to make it appear that they are truths indeed, by such arguments and reasons as are respectively proper to evidence the verity of them. Fourthly, to declare what is the necessity of believing those truths, what efficacy and influence they have in the soul, and upon the life of a believer. Lastly, by a recollection of all, briefly to deliver the sum of every particular

truth, so that every one, when he pronounceth the Creed, may know what he ought to intend, and what he is understood to profess, when he so pronounceth it.

In the prosecution of the whole, according to this method, I have considered, that a work of so general a concernment must be exposed to two kinds of readers, which though they may agree in judgement, yet must differ much in their capacities. Some there are who understand the original languages of the holy Scripture, the discourses and tractates of the ancient Fathers, the determinations of the Councils, and history of the Church of God, the constant profession of settled truths, the rise and increase of schisms and heresies. Others there are unacquainted with such conceptions, and incapable of such instructions; who understand the Scriptures as they are translated; who are capable of the knowledge of the truths themselves, and of the proofs drawn from thence; who can apprehend the nature of the Christian faith, with the power and efficacy of the same, when it is delivered unto them out of the Word of God, and in the language which they know. When I make this difference, and distinction of readers, I do not intend thereby, that because one of these is learned, the other is ignorant; for he which hath no skill of the learned languages, may notwithstanding be very knowing in the principles of Christian religion, and the reason and efficacy of them.

According to this distinction I have contrived my Exposition, so that the body of it containeth fully what can be delivered and made intelligible in the English tongue, without inserting the least sentence or phrase of any learned language; by which he which is not acquainted with it might be disturbed in his reading, or interrupted in his understanding. Not that I have selected only such notions as are common, easy, and familiar of themselves, but have endeavoured to deliver the most material conceptions in the most plain and perspicuous manner; as desirous to comprise the whole strength of the work, as far as it is possible, in the body of it. The other part I have placed in the margin, (but so as oftentimes it taketh up more room, and yet is never mingled or confounded with the rest,) in which is contained whatsoever is necessary for the illustration of any part of the Creed, as to them which have any knowledge of the Latin,

Greek, and Oriental languages, of the writings of the ancient Fathers, the doctrines of the Jews, and the history of the Church; those great advantages toward a right perception of the Christian Religion.

Now being the Creed comprehendeth the principles of our religion, it must contain those truths which belong unto it as it is a religion, and those which concern it as it is ours. As it is a religion, it delivereth such principles as are to be acknowledged in natural theology, such as no man which worshippeth a God can deny; and therefore in the proof of these, I have made use of such arguments and reasons as are most proper to oppose the Atheists, who deny there is a God to be worshipped, a religion to be professed. As it is our religion, it is Christian and Catholic. As Christian, it containeth such truths as were delivered by Christ and his Apostles, and those especially concerning Christ himself, which I have prosecuted constantly with an eye to the Jews, who obstinately deny them, expecting still another Messiah to come; wherefore I shew out of the Law and the Prophets which they acknowledge, what was foretold in every particular concerning the Messiah, and prove all those to be completed by that Christ in whom we believe. As our religion is Catholic, it holdeth fast that *faith which was once delivered to the saints*, and since preserved in the Church; and therefore I expound such verities, in opposition to the heretics arising in all ages, especially against the Photinians, who of all the rest have most perverted the articles of our Creed, and found out followers in these latter ages, who have erected a new body of divinity in opposition to the Catholic theology. Against these I proceed upon such principles as they themselves allow, that is, upon the Word of God delivered in the Old and New Testament, alleged according to the true sense, and applied by right reason; not urging the authority of the Church which they reject, but only giving in the margin the sense of the primitive Fathers, for the satisfaction of such as have any respect left for antiquity, and are persuaded that Christ had a true Church on the earth before these times.

In that part, which, after the demonstration of each truth, teacheth the necessity of believing it, and the peculiar efficacy which it hath upon the life of a Christian, I have not thought

## TO THE READER.

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fit to expatiate or enlarge myself, but only to mention such effects as flow naturally and immediately from the doctrine; especially such as are delivered in the Scriptures; which I have endeavoured to set forth with all possible plainness and perspicuity. And indeed in the whole work, as I have laid the foundation upon the written Word of God, so I have with much diligence collected such places of Scripture as are pertinent to each doctrine, and with great faithfulness delivered them as they lie in the writings of those holy penmen; not referring the reader to places named in the margin (which too often I find in many books multiplied to little purpose), but producing and interweaving the sentences of Scripture into the body of my Exposition, so that the reader may understand the strength of all my reason, without any farther inquiry or consultation. For if those words which I have produced, prove not what I have intended, I desire not any to think there is more in the places named to maintain it.

At the conclusion of every distinct and several notion, I have re-collected briefly and plainly the sum of what hath been delivered in the explication of it, and put it, as it were, into the mouth of every Christian, thereby to express more fully his faith, and to declare his profession. So that if the reader please to put those collections together, he may at once see and perceive what he is in the whole obliged to believe, and what he is by the Church of God understood to profess, when he maketh this public, ancient, and orthodox Confession of Faith.

I have nothing more to add; but only to pray, that the Lord would give you and me a good understanding in all things.

## THE CREED.

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*I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Which was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into Hell, the third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost: The Holy Catholic Church: The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of Sins: The Resurrection of the Body: And the Life everlasting.*