

Is It a Creed.

I read, in this week's MESSENGER, a document headed "An Open Letter," and signed by Bros. Carroll Kendrick, Chas. Vincent, and H. H. Hendrick.

After reading it over several times the question occurred to my mind—Is it a creed. It is called "An Open Letter," but things are sometimes misnamed.

I would not have anyone think that I entertain the idea for a moment that the authors intended it as such, or that they would, under any circumstances, promulgate, knowingly, a human creed; but we all know that man is fallible, and may make mistakes before he is really aware of it.

The only question I now consider is the document referred to a creed? In order to decide that matter intelligently, we first ask what is a creed in the etymological and the theological sense of the word.

Webster defines the word creed to mean 1st. "A definite summary of what is believed." 2nd. "A brief exposition of important points."

The "Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge" tells us that the word is from *credo* in the "Apostles Creed," and signifies "I believe." The word in the Greek church, used to signify a "summary of belief," was *sumbolon*, hence creeds are often called "symbols of faith" or belief.

Let us look at this "open letter" and see if we find anything in it that answers any of these definitions.

1st. We notice that this document emanates from the "Church of Christ," hence it is not the declaration of the individuals whose names are signed below it, but it is the declaration of the church.

2nd. We notice that there seems to be a definite summary of faith in it. It states that "We plead for the word of God as the only basis of Christian union, communion and cooperation."

Again we have the following language, "We plead for faith, in a hearty surrender and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ."

And again, "To all who with us regard the meek, the lowly, the humble, the down-trodden, the unfortunate and the poor as the special favorites of the Lord."

Now I ask what are these but declarations of belief or faith put forth as the faith of the church that sends out to the world.

3rd. We notice here the "exposition of important points," thus completing the definition of a creed given by Webster, with the important addition that they are promulgated in the name of the church.

This document is addressed to those whom the church desires to attend its meetings, and, of course, participate in the worship.

The first important point is that "all who are willing to abandon all things of human origin in matters of religion," * * * "are invited to attend our meetings."

The second point which I notice is that "all who desire to have Christian worship restored in all its primitive, simplicity and sincerity, avoiding all display, all modern appliances and innovations" * * * are invited to attend.

Now these items are published as the important points in the faith of the church sending them out.

4th. We notice that acceptance of these points, with many others not mentioned here, are made conditions of attendance, as worshipers. After going over the various points mentioned and several others, we find the following language: "To all such we extend a cordial invitation to attend our meetings."

Here we see the invitation to attend and participate in the worship is extended to only such as subscribe in their minds to the above declaration of principles. No others are invited. Those who can heartily accept the nine points presented in the document are requested to come and bring their

friends, thus drawing the line distinctly between those who endorse the document and those who do not.

Now it does seem to me that this is the nearest a creed of anything I have seen among the Disciples.

There are several things in the "open letter" that I don't believe, hence I am not included in the invitation. In other words I am politely excluded from a participation in their worship.

TIMOTHY.

Select Reading.

—A brother recently remarked: "It's a pity we have no more back seats." Methinks this is not the only church that should have "more back seats."

People will flock to the rear of the church; some in spite of every thing. Let's get pulpits on wheels. Then we can move back.

—Abernethy used to tell his pupils that all human disease sprang from two causes: *stiffing* and *fretting*.

—Queen Victoria's journeys between England and Scotland cost Her Majesty nearly £8,000 a year. Two special trains are always run, the second conveying the horses, carriages and servants.

—Will the man who gave the prescription of "money makes the mare go," please give another stating what will make the average newspaper office bore go? No dynamite, for that's just a trifle too noisy.

—An Illinois railroad conductor says that no conductor earning less than \$200 a month can live a Christian life.

—Germany sent England £3,999,999 worth of potatoes last year.

—The base drum player makes more noise than anybody else, but he doesn't lead the band. There is a moral to this.—*Steubenville Herald*.

—He was a stranger; but he entered with an air of confidence, and handed us what he called "a joke." We examined it, and told him that it contained neither sense nor point, and that it was a pure piece of idiocy. "Well," he replied, reaching for his manuscript, "I have read your paragraphs for some time, and I thought you preferred them that way."—*Ex.*

—Let a man once look at the printing in a railroad office, and he will be immediately convinced that he ought to go somewhere. If he stays a little longer and looks at the straight, black line on a railroad map, he will also be convinced that there is but one way to go.—*New Orleans Picayune*.

Little Em, looking out in the rain and the mud, saw the old cow standing and chewing her cud; "O mamma!" she cried, "I want some gum, Just see old Brindle, she has got some!"—*Companion*.

—Elizabeth of Austria is said to be one of the most cultivated sovereigns in the world. She draws beautifully, is a good musician, and speaks fluently all the languages of modern Europe. She is fond of literature, and among her attendants has readers in various languages, to whom she enjoys listening. She is not very popular among the ladies of the court circle, since she has no taste for small chatter and fashionable amusements. She employs her time with her drawing, embroidery, reading, and last but not least, in playing with her little daughter, Valerie, of whom she is passionately fond.

—A child went to the cure of the parish to recite his catechism. Out of respect to the priest, he stood in his presence. "Be seated, my child," said the cure. But the child made no other movement than to indicate that he could not sit while his teacher remained standing. "Be seated then," replied the cure. "I am at home, and I can do as I please. But let us continue our lesson. Where was God before the creation?" "Monsieur le cure, God was in himself." "Bien," but what was he doing in himself? "Mon-

sieur le cure, he was at home, and he could do as he pleased."

—An enterprising American shipped some wheel-barrows to Rio de Janeiro; and the natives filled them with stones and such and carried them on their heads. They said it was a capital contrivance; and wondered how they managed to get along so many years without it.

—We learn that Edison is inventing a lemonade without either sugar or lemons, for the conveniences of circuses and Sunday school picnics. That man never drank either, or he would know that those two ingredients are never in them.

—A man in Connecticut is reported as having set two hens, with twelve eggs each, one of which he calls Hancock and the other Garfield. He is waiting to see which hen will hatch out the most chickens. He intends to vote for Hancock or Garfield according to this rule. That is one way to exercise the elective franchise.

A JACKASS THAT WOULDN'T SCARE. —Says the San Antonio Herald: "A vagrant ass stood beside the track of the Sunset Railway at the depot, a few mornings ago. An engine moved slowly up; it stopped within a few feet of the ass; the engineer blew one of those terrible screams, prolonged and ear-piercing—such a blast as makes a sleeping Milerte dream of the day of judgement. Did the ass scare? Not worth a cent. Did he shake the sloth from his limbs, erect his tail and speed away like the asses of Bassorah, faster than the Bedouin coursers run back to the chapparral? No, he didn't. He turned one ear toward the engine, just as a deaf man uses his tin trumpet, and caught every particle of the sound. And when the steam-blown whistle ceased its notes and all the echoes died away, the animal straightened out his neck, opened his mouth, and in a voice that deafened all the railroad men and caused the freight clerk to drop his pen, roared: 'I can't! I can't! I can't be beat! be beat! be beat! I can't be-be-be-be-beat!'"

EDUCATIONAL.—The majority, both of the faculty and regents of the University of Kansas, are said to be orthodox Christian men. The general sentiment and influence is altogether favorable to genuine Christianity. The following State universities are under the presidency of members of Congregational churches. The Universities of Michigan, Dr. J. B. Angell; of Wisconsin, Dr. John Bascom; of Iowa, Dr. D. W. Pickard; of Nebraska, Dr. E. B. Fairfield. Bascom and Fairfield were ordained to the ministry. —Hon. E. B. Morgan who had given \$100,000 to endow Wells College for women, Aurora, N. Y., at its recent commencement entirely freed it from a debt of \$30,000. —At Wellesley College commencement, H. F. Durant Esq., announced that there are now thirteen \$5,000 scholarships belonging to the college, nine having been donated during the last year. —James B. Colgate has added \$5,000 to his previous gifts to Madison University and Colgate Academy, at Hamilton, N. Y. This makes his gifts amount to over \$200,000, and the endowment of the college, a half million. —Besides what we have recorded above of Mr. Morgan's gifts to Wells College, we should have mentioned that, in the name of his wife he presented an entire building, to be called Morgan Hall. —The funds of Brown University for assisting young men amount to nearly \$142,000. —At the Wesleyan University commencement, Middletown, Ct., a gentleman who has given \$150,000 added \$5,000, which makes the endowment there a half a million. —We are specially glad to note that C. P. Huntington has made a gift of \$15,000 to Hampton Institute, Va., for a saw and planing-mill. —*Ex.*

—An English paper mill in 1498 received a present of 10s 8d from King Henry VII.

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