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The Credal Statements of St. Patrick

AS CONTAINED IN
THE FOURTH CHAPTER OF HIS *CONFESSION*

A STUDY OF THEIR SOURCES

BY

JOHN ERNEST LEONARD OULTON, D.D.

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AND

CANON OF ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

DUBLIN

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P R E F A C E.

IN his *Life of St. Patrick*, J. B. Bury writes (p. 227) with reference to the genuineness of the *Confession*: "There is nothing in the shape of anachronism in the document, nothing inconsistent with its composition about the middle of the fifth century." The negative terms in which the statement is made are perhaps an indication of the difficulty that has been experienced by scholars who have tried to establish a positive relation between the Saint and the traditional date of his *floruit*. One passage, however, in the *Confession* seems to offer some hope of establishing such a relation. The fourth chapter stands out from the rest of the document by reason of its theological and credal phraseology. It is clearly not St. Patrick's composition in the sense that the rest of the *Confession* is. What are the sources of these phrases? When and where were they current in Latin Christianity? I have endeavoured to answer these questions in the following pages, which I offer as a small contribution to Patrician study. I ask my readers to remember that the evidence by which I seek to establish my conclusion is cumulative in character.

My grateful thanks are due to the Rev. G. O. Simms for the assistance he has given me in the correction of the proofs.

J. E. L. OULTON.

TRINITY COLLEGE,
DUBLIN,
February, 1940.

THE CREDAL STATEMENTS OF ST. PATRICK.

I.

As long ago as 1894 Kattenbusch¹ showed that the creed-like passage in Chapter 4 of the *Confession* of St. Patrick was in some way connected with a passage of the Commentary on the Apocalypse by Victorinus of Pettau. Although a little-known writer, and not an important figure² in the early Church, Victorinus was well thought of in certain circles in his day, and at any rate it is relevant to the present discussion to set down some of the few facts that may be gleaned concerning him. He was bishop of Pettau (Poetovio), a town situated on the river Drave, which up to the time of Constantine the Great was included within the boundaries of Upper Pannonia. Trajan gave it the status of a colony, both in name and in actual fact, for colonists were settled in it from Italy, who possibly may have brought with them the Christian faith. At all events, at the beginning of the fourth century there was a Christian community there, ruled over by a bishop named Victorinus, who, if the facts of his life have fallen into oblivion, is at any rate remembered in his death: for he was martyred in the Diocletian persecution, c. 304 A.D. Writing more than five hundred years afterwards Ado, Archbishop of Vienne, speaks of *sancti Victorini, Petavionensis episcopi, qui persecutione Diocletiani martyrio coronatus est*,³ and mentions his "day" in the martyrology as November 2nd.

Inscriptions appear to indicate that at Pettau both Greek and Latin were spoken; and in their bishop the community

¹ *Das apostolische Symbol* ii, p. 212 f.

² Although Jerome, in a moment of self-disparagement, speaks of Victorinus and others, by way of comparison, as "pillars of the Church," *Apol. adv. lib. Rufini*, i. 2.

³ *P.L.* cxxiii. 389.

there had one who was acquainted with both languages. But not equally so. Jerome, who speaks more becomingly of Victorinus than he does of many persons of much greater eminence, has nevertheless to remark more than once that the good bishop's Latin was not all that it should be. "He did not know Latin as well as he did Greek, and so the style of his works was inferior to their thought";⁴ "he could say with the Apostle: *although unskilled in word, yet not in knowledge*";⁵ "Victorinus, crowned though he was with a glorious martyrdom, was unable to express his thoughts";⁶ "though lacking in learning, yet there was no lack of the wish for learning."⁷

In spite of his linguistic deficiencies Victorinus was a voluminous writer in Latin, and composed among "many other" works commentaries on Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Matthew and the Apocalypse.⁸ Of these, with the exception of the last-named work, only fragments or bare references survive. A work of his "Against all heresies"⁹ has also perished, but there is extant a short treatise *De Fabrica Mundi*,¹⁰ of which, curiously enough, there is no mention in antiquity.

But it is the Commentary on the Apocalypse which concerns us here. That it continued to circulate after the death of Victorinus would seem to be an inference from the request of an otherwise unknown person named Anatolius to Jerome that he would undertake a revision of the work.¹¹ For there was more in it than faulty style that needed correction. Victorinus, like many another in the early Church, was a millenarian; or—as Jerome puts it—he understood in the literal sense what *Revelation* has to say about the reign of one thousand years. Further, the text of the

⁴ *De Vir. Ill.*, c. 74.

⁵ *Prolog. Comment. in Esaiam.*

⁶ *Ep.* lviii. 10.

⁷ *Ep.* lxx. 5.

⁸ Jerome, *De Vir. Ill.*, c. 74; Cassiodorus, *Inst. Div. Litt.* 7.

⁹ Optatus Afer, *Lib. contra Parm. Donat.* (C.S.E.L. xxvi. 11); Jerome, *ib.*

¹⁰ Routh, *Rel. Sacr.* iii. 455 ff.; P.L. v. 301 ff.; C.S.E.L. xlix. 3 ff.

¹¹ See p. 36.

treatise had soon become corrupted, and called for critical handling. And—though Jerome does not mention this explicitly—Victorinus was what has been described as a binitarian; that is to say, his doctrine of the Holy Spirit was confused and undeveloped, and in effect he identifies Him with the pre-existent Christ. Jerome, therefore, though not without some misgivings, complied with the request of Anatolius, and issued a recension of the Commentary, in the Prologue of which he groups under three headings the three kinds of alteration he had felt himself compelled to make: correction, addition, omission. In fact, his emendations went even further than he admits.

The task of separating the original Victorinus from the Hieronymian recension was accomplished by J. Haussleiter, who has been able to place side by side the two versions for comparison. The portion of the Commentary with which we are concerned contains an exposition of Rev. xi. 1: "And there was shewn me a reed like unto a rod, and the angel stood, saying: Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and them that worship therein." *Et ostensa est mihi arundo similis virgae et stabat angelus dicens: Surge et metire templum dei et altare et eos qui adorant in illo.*

We print here, according to the text of Haussleiter,¹² the comment of Victorinus on this passage together with Jerome's recension of it; and, after these, the text of chapter 4 of St. Patrick's *Confession*, a translation of the Jerome passage, and a translation of chapters 2-5 of the *Confession*. In each case, the correspondences between Patrick and Victorinus-Jerome are underlined. Quotations from Scripture are italicized.

¹² *C.S.E.L.* xlix, p. 94 ff. This edition of the works of Victorinus appeared in 1916.

Victorinus.

Accepisse autem illum *arundinem similem uirgae*, ut *metiret templum dei et aram et adorantes in ea*,¹³ potestatem dicit, quam dimissus postea exhibuit ecclesiis. nam et euangelium postea conscripsit. cum essent enim Valentinus et Cerinthus et Ebion et cetera scola <satanae> sparsa per orbem, conuenerunt ad illum de finitimis ciuitatibus episcopi et compulerunt eum, ut ipse testimonium conscriberet in dominum. “mensura” autem fidei est mandatum domini nostri; patrem omnipotentem, ut didicimus, et huius filium dominum nostrum Iesum Christum ante originem saeculi spiritaliter apud patrem genitum, factum hominem et morte deuicta in caelis cum corpore a patre receptum, sanctum dominum et pignus immortalitatis, hunc per prophetas praedicatum, hunc per legem conscriptum, hunc per manum dei¹⁴ et per uerbum patris omnipotentis et conditorem orbis totius mundi. haec est *arundo* et mensura fidei, ut nemo *adoret ad aram sanctam*, nisi qui haec confitetur: *dominum et Christum eius*.¹⁵

Jerome.

Accepisse autem *arundinem similem uirgae*, ut *metiret templum dei et aram et adorantes in ea*,¹⁶ potestatem dicit, quam dimissus postea exhibuit ecclesiis. nam et euangelium postea scripsit. cum esset enim Valentinus et Cerinthus et Ebion et ceteri scholae satanae diffusi per orbem, conuenerunt ad illum de finitimis prouinciis omnes episcopi et compulerunt, ut ipse testimonium conscriberet. “mensura” autem filii dei mandatum domini nostri, patrem confiteri omnipotentem; dicimus et huius filium Christum ante originem saeculi spiritalem apud patrem genitum, hominem factum et morte

¹³ Rev. xi. 1.¹⁵ Acts iv. 26 (Ps. ii. 2).¹⁴ Cp. Isai. lxvi. 2; Acts vii. 50.¹⁶ Rev. xi. 1.

deuicta in caelis cum corpore a patre receptum effudisse spiritum sanctum,¹⁷ donum et pignus immortalitatis, hunc per prophetas praedicatum, hunc per legem conscriptum, hunc esse manum dei et uerbum patris¹⁸ et conditorem orbis. haec est *arundo* et mensura fidei, et nemo *adorat aram* sanctam, nisi qui hanc fidem confitetur.

*Patrick, Confession, chapter 4.*¹⁹

Quia non est alius deus nec unquam fuit nec ante nec erit post haec praeter deum patrem ingentum, sine principio, a quo est omne principium, omnia tenentem ut dicimus, et eius filium Iesum Christum, qui cum patre scilicet fuisse semper testamur ante originem saeculi spiritualiter apud patrem inenarrabiliter genitum ante omne principium. et *per ipsum* facta sunt *uisibilia et inuisibilia*,²⁰ hominem factum, deuicta morte in caelis a patre receptum. et *dedit illi omnem potestatem super omne nomen caelestium et terrestrium et infernorum et omnis lingua confiteatur ei quia dominus et deus est Iesus Christus*²¹ quem credimus. et expectamus aduentum ipsius mox futurum *iudex uiuorum atque mortuorum*,²² *qui reddet unicuique secundum facta sua.*²³ et effudit in nobis abunde spiritum sanctum,²⁴ donum et pignus immortalitatis, qui facit credentes et oboedientes ut sint *fili dei patris et coheredes Christi*,²⁵ quem confitemur et adoramus unum deum in Trinitate sacri nominis.

¹⁷ Cp. Titus iii. 5, 6.

¹⁸ Cp. Isai. lxvi. 2; John i. 1.

¹⁹ The text is that of N. J. D. White in *Libri Sancti Patricii (Texts for Students, no. 4, S.P.C.K., 1918)*, except that I follow the Paris MS. of the *Confession* in reading *a patre receptum*, instead of *ad patrem receptum*. I have italicized *iudex uiuorum atque mortuorum* as coming from Acts x. 42. In the translation of chaps. 2-5 I largely follow Dr. White.

²⁰ Col. i. 16.

²¹ Phil. ii. 9-11.

²² Acts x. 42.

²³ Rom. ii. 6.

²⁴ Titus iii. 5, 6.

²⁵ Rom. viii. 16, 17.

Translation of Jerome's recension of Victorinus.

But²⁶ that he received a reed like unto a rod, that he might measure the temple of God and the altar and them that worship therein,²⁷ indicates the power which, when he had been released [from Patmos],²⁸ he afterwards displayed to the churches. For afterwards he wrote the Gospel also. In fact, when Valentinus and Cerinthus and Ebion and others of the school of Satan had been spread abroad throughout the world, all the bishops from the neighbouring provinces came to him and constrained him to write down his testimony himself. But²⁶ the "measuring rod" of the Son of God is the command of our Lord to confess the Father Almighty; we say too that his Son, Christ, was spiritually begotten in his relation to the Father (apud patrem) before the world came into being; that he was made man; and when he had overcome death, and had been received with his body by the Father into the heavens, he poured forth the Holy Spirit,²⁹ the gift and pledge of immortality; that he who was foretold by the prophets, he who was written about in the Law, is the hand of God and the Word of the Father and the maker of the world. This is *the reed*³⁰ and measuring rod of faith, and no one worships at the holy altar, but only he who confesses this faith.

Translation of Patrick's Confession, chapters 2-5.

Chapter 1 describes how Patrick as a lad of about sixteen was taken captive to Ireland.

2. And there the Lord *opened the understanding*³¹ of my unbelief that, even though late, I might call my faults to remembrance, and that I might *turn with all my heart*³² to the Lord my God, who *regarded my low estate*,³³ and pitied the youth of my ignorance, and kept me before I knew him, and before I had discernment or could distinguish between

²⁶ "Autem": indicating that the commentator is proceeding to a new point in his exegesis. ²⁷ Rev. xi. 1. ²⁸ That this is the reference of "dimissus" is clear from the close of the preceding chapter of Victorinus. ²⁹ Titus iii. 5, 6. ³⁰ Rev. xi. 1. ³¹ Luke xxiv. 45.

³² Joel ii. 12. ³³ Luke i. 48.

good and evil, and protected me and comforted me as a father does his son.

3. Wherefore then I cannot keep silence—nor would it be fitting—concerning such great benefits and such great grace as the Lord has vouchsafed to bestow on me in the land of my captivity; because this is what we can render unto him, namely, that after we have been chastened, and have come to the knowledge of God, 'we shall exalt and *confess his wondrous works*³⁴ before every nation which is under the whole heaven.'³⁵

4. Because there is no other God, nor was there ever any in times past, nor shall there be hereafter, except God the Father unbegotten, without beginning, from whom all things take their beginning, holding all things, as we say, and his Son Jesus Christ, whom we affirm verily to have always existed with the Father, ineffably begotten after a spiritual manner in his relation to the Father before the world came into being, before the beginning of anything. *And through him were made things visible and invisible.*³⁶ He was made man; and when he had overcome death he was received by the Father into the heavens. *And he gave him all power above every name of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth; and let every tongue confess to him that Jesus Christ is Lord and God*³⁷ in whom we believe. And we look for his coming soon to be; *he the judge of the quick and the dead,*³⁸ *who will render to every man according to his deeds.*³⁹ And he poured forth on us abundantly the Holy Spirit,⁴⁰ the gift and pledge of immortality, who makes those who believe and obey to become *children of God* the Father and *joint heirs with Christ*,⁴¹ whom we confess and adore as one God in the Trinity of sacred name.

5. For he himself has said through the prophet, *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*⁴² And again he saith, *It is honourable to reveal and confess the works of God.*⁴³

³⁴ Ps. lxxxix. 5.

³⁵ Acts ii. 5.

³⁶ Col. i. 16.

³⁷ Phil. ii. 9–11.

³⁸ Acts x. 42.

³⁹ Rom. ii. 6.

⁴⁰ Titus iii. 5, 6.

⁴¹ Rom. viii. 16, 17.

⁴² Ps. l. 15.

⁴³ Tob. xii. 7.

Chapter 4, with its creed-like passage, must be read in its context, both preceding and following, with which it is connected not only in sentiment, but even verbally. Chap. 2 speaks of the mercy and goodness of God as manifested in Patrick's conversion; chap. 3 of the thanks that are thereby due from him to God ("Wherefore then I cannot keep silence"); chap. 4 (beginning "because (quia) there is no other God . . .") expresses that thanks by an acknowledgment of the glory of God as He is revealed in Himself and in His acts of redemption for men; chap. 5 sums up briefly that acknowledgment by means of two quotations from the Bible ("For he himself said . . ."). Further, chaps. 3, 4, 5 are connected verbally by the occurrence in each of them of the same word "confess" (*confiteri*), which expresses the leading thought of the whole passage. (c. 3), "This is what we can render unto him . . . to confess (*confiteri*) his wondrous works" (Ps. lxxxix. 5); (c. 4), "let every tongue confess (*confiteatur*) to him that Jesus Christ is Lord and God" (Phil. ii. 11); (c. 5), "It is honourable to reveal and confess (*confiteri*) the works of God" (Tob. xii. 7). In all these three passages of Scripture the Greek verb translated *confiteri* is the equivalent of ἐξομολογεῖσθαι, which primarily means "to confess openly," but comes to have a secondary sense (which in the LXX has almost entirely supplanted the primary) of "to proclaim with thanksgiving" with reference to God.⁴⁴ In Matt. xi. 25 (Luke x. 21) A.V. and R.V. translate this verb "thank"; and in Rom. xv. 9 R.V. translates it "give praise." This is the sense in which Patrick employs it in this passage; and thus at the outset of his *Confession* he makes it clear why he has chosen this word as a description of the treatise as a whole. "This title," says Bury,⁴⁵ "might easily convey a false idea. The writer has occasion to confess certain sins, he has occasion also to make a brief confession of the articles of his faith, but it is in neither of these senses that he calls the work as a whole his Confession. Neither his sins nor his theological creed are his main theme, but

⁴⁴ See Lightfoot on Phil. ii. 11.

⁴⁵ *Life of St. Patrick*, p. 197 f.

the wonderful ways of God in dealing with his own life. 'I must not hide the gift of God'; this is what he 'confesses'; this is the refrain which pervades the *Confession* and emphatically marks its purpose . . . The express motive of the *Confession* is to declare the wonderful dealings of God with himself as a sort of repayment—*retributio*—or thanksgiving." "He goes on to explain by passages from his life," continues Bury,⁴⁶ "how it was that, though he missed the early training which is to be desired in a religious apostle, he had nevertheless presumed to take in hand the work of converting heathen lands. His narrative is designed to show that it was entirely God's doing, who singled him out, untrained and unskilled though he was; that there were no worldly inducements to support the divine command, which he obeyed simply without any ulterior motive, and in opposition to the wish of his kinsfolk." "The term confessio (Greek, *ἔξομολόγησις*)" says N. J. D. White,⁴⁷ "was used by Patrick in the sense in which he found it in the Latin translation of the Greek Psalter familiar to him. It means an open and thankful acknowledgment of the goodness of God: it has no specially penitential connotation."⁴⁸

A second thought, related to that of thankful acknowledgment, is revealed in a closer study of chapters 2–5. As he looked back on his past life, and especially upon its earlier portion, Patrick was conscious of what theologians call the preventing grace of God. God had been beforehand in every step that Patrick took towards God. Though as a lad of sixteen he knew not the Lord, yet the Lord had kept him before he knew Him, opened his understanding, and before he could distinguish between good and evil, had protected and comforted him as a father does a son. Patrick found, as Paul had found before him, that man cannot anticipate God in anything; at every point he is a debtor. "Who hath

⁴⁶ *Life of St. Patrick*, p. 199.

⁴⁷ *History of the Church of Ireland* (ed. W. A. Phillips), i, 105.

⁴⁸ Cp. also its use in the title of the *Confessions* of St. Augustine, and Gibb and Montgomery's note in their edition (p. 1).

first given to God, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him are all things. To him be glory for ever. Amen."⁴⁹ In chap. 4 Patrick expresses in theological language what he had stated more simply in chaps. 2 and 3 concerning his personal life, namely, that God is the fount and source of all being, the giver of all good gifts. God the Father is "unbegotten," "without beginning," "the source of everything that has a beginning." The Son is before all creation, before all time. He is the agent of creation. To Him is given all power in heaven and earth and below the earth. As Judge He will dispense just rewards. He has poured upon us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Our immortality is a gift from Him. Thus, if chaps. 2 and 3 of the *Confession* correspond in thought to Rom. xi. 35, chap. 4 corresponds to Rom. xi. 36.

Patrick's object, then, in chap. 4 is not to set out a formal creed or even to mention what in his opinion are the more important Articles of the Faith; but rather to state that in his personal experience he had found God to be such as the Christian faith affirms. We have no reason to think that the orthodoxy of Patrick was called in question; but we do know that his motives and career were challenged.

When this creed-like passage is seen in its true light, it is irrelevant to ask, why it does not contain statements about the Virgin Birth, Crucifixion under Pontius Pilate, the Church, Forgiveness of sins, Resurrection of the flesh, and so forth.⁵⁰ Patrick is not challenged about the content of his creed. It is he who throws down the challenge, by making such affirmations about God as are pertinent to his purpose.

That the passage as it stands in the *Confession* is not a formal Creed is evident from the fact that it contains at least two bad grammatical blunders: (1) . . . Iesum Christum, *qui cum Patre scilicet fuisse testamur* . . . inenarrabiliter *genitum*; (2) *et expectamus aduentum ipsius* mox futurum

⁴⁹ Rom. xi. 35, 36.

⁵⁰ It will be noted, however (see p. 14) that the general plan of this credal passage is, in fact, shaped by the passage in Victorinus-Jerome.

index uiuorum atque mortuorum. Further, at the close, the "whom" in the phrase "whom we confess and adore as one God in Trinity of sacred name," ought grammatically to refer to Christ or the Holy Spirit, mentioned in the preceding context, whereas in sense it is to be referred to the "God" ("there is no other God") which occurs a long way back at the very beginning of the whole passage. These blemishes are due to Patrick's faulty Latin; in comparison with which the Latin of Victorinus is vastly superior. If chapter 4 as a whole is expressed in a better style than is the rest of the *Confession*, it is because, as I hope to show, Patrick here adopts or echoes phrases which he has found to hand. Indeed, the general style of this chapter is by itself a sufficient indication that it is not Patrick's own composition in the sense that the rest of the *Confession* is.

Dr. J. R. Ardill,⁵¹ assuming (wrongly, as I think) that we have here a statement of Patrick's creed, argues in explanation of its unique form that Patrick lived at so early a date that "he knew no Creeds," and formed his personal creed from Bible teaching. It is said, for example, that what is called the old Roman Creed did not come into existence until the latter part of the second century. This is a highly debatable statement, and in opposition to the views of Harnack, Kattenbusch, and Burn, who trace this Creed back as far as 100-120 A.D. On the other hand, the theory of Dr. Badcock, lately put forward, goes so far in the other direction that it can supply no support to Dr. Ardill's views. According to it, the Baptismal Creed of Rome, as distinct from the Rule of Faith (which was a fuller thing), remained quite undeveloped until the time of Damasus, c. 371 A.D., so that Patrick would be free to roam about the early Church in his scanty credal attire for almost four centuries. And in any case he speaks in the *Confession* definitely of a *Rule of Faith* (*mensura fidei*, chap. 14). But, in this connection, a reference to the Old Roman Creed is irrelevant. Whatever views we may hold about its content in early days, it had a

⁵¹ *St. Patrick, A.D. 180*, pp. 29-44. It is to be noted that there is no reference in this book to Victorinus.

very limited geographical influence. Patrick is in the "Gallican" tradition, and it is admitted on all sides that the "Gallican" Creed as professed in the early centuries of the Church was fuller than the Roman Creed. Again, Patrick's so-called Creed is by no means a résumé of Bible language. It contains 146 words; and of these 45 only are italicized in Dr. White's text as coming from Scripture. I have italicized 4 more, as coming from Acts x. 42. Further, of these 49 the quotation from Phil. ii. 9-11⁵² accounts for 24; so that in the rest of the "Creed" 25 only out of 121 words are marked as coming from Biblical phraseology. And, once again, it is very difficult to reconcile the view that Patrick lived in so naïve a theological atmosphere that "he knew no creeds" with his anything but naïve or unsophisticated language concerning the generation and pre-existence of the Son, recalling and in fact reproducing phrases used in the fourth century on this subject.⁵³ And yet again, that a writer of A.D. 180 should use the term Trinity in the Christian sense calls for comment;⁵⁴ but that such a person should speak of the Trinity of *sacred name* surpasses belief.

I now propose to examine the passage of Victorinus and Jerome's recension of it, and to compare the passage of Patrick with both of them (see pp. 4-7). Victorinus is recounting a story concerning the origin of the Fourth Gospel which has several parallels in the literature of the early Church.⁵⁵ Heresies were abroad in the world. The pernicious doctrines of Valentinus, Cerinthus and the Ebionites could not be allowed to spread unchecked. Accordingly, his brother bishops came to John and put pressure on him to write down his testimony concerning the Lord. To John the strong angel in the Apocalypse⁵⁶ (whom

⁵² See pp. 5, 15.

⁵³ See pp. 21, 22.

⁵⁴ Theophilus of Antioch (180 A.D.) used *τριάς* of God; shortly afterwards *Trinitas* is found in Tertullian. Though the treatise of Novatian (c. 250) goes by the title "De Trinitate," the word *Trinitas* never occurs in the treatise itself.

⁵⁵ Some of these may be read in the Commentary on *John*, vol. i, pp. lvi ff., by J. H. Bernard, who, however, does not refer to Victorinus's account of the matter.

⁵⁶ xi. 1.

Victorinus identifies with our Lord)⁵⁷ had given a measuring rod; and this is the *mensura fidei*, *κανών regula*, rule of faith, by which John subsequently to his release from Patmos defined in his Gospel the truth concerning Christ. It is to be noted that it is not claimed for this *mensura fidei* that it is a formal or complete statement of the Church's belief. It is a testimony *concerning the Lord*. Inasmuch, however, as the command in the Apocalypse came to John from an angel (identified with the Son of God), and an angel is a *nuntius patris omnipotentis*,⁵⁸ the statement concerning the Lord must include a statement concerning the Father, and this is briefly referred to in the opening words of the testimony: "the measure of faith is the command of our Lord to confess the Father Almighty, as we have learned"—the words "as we have learned" (*ut didicimus*) looking back to a previous comment,⁵⁹ that it is the function of this great Angel to proclaim the words of Almighty God to men.

The heresies of Valentinus, Cerinthus and the Ebionites all touched the Person of the Son; and—as we have noted—it is with this matter alone that the passage in Victorinus is concerned. Two points in it are especially relevant to the heresies in question. The statement that Christ "was begotten before the world came into being" is in conflict, e.g., with the teaching of the Ebionites, who said that Christ did not exist before He was born of Mary;⁶⁰ and the affirmation of a bodily ascension (in *caelis cum corpore a patre receptum*) is in opposition to the general Gnostic tenet that matter is essentially evil. It is not clear whether Victorinus professes to give the actual testimony of John concerning the Lord, or—as seems more probable⁶¹—merely to make his own statement on the matter. But this does not affect the object of our present discussion.

In his recension of this passage,⁶² Jerome in addition to

⁵⁷ *In Rev.* x. 1 (Haussleiter, p. 88). ⁵⁸ Haussleiter, p. 88. ⁵⁹ *Id.*, p. 90.

⁶⁰ See the passage quoted in Bernard i, p. lviii. It is worthy of note that Patrick omits "cum corpore."

⁶¹ The credal passage is prefaced by "autem," indicating that Victorinus is developing a new point. See p. 6. ⁶² See p. 4.

minor verbal alterations made an important doctrinal change: he removed the binitarianism of Victorinus, and substituted a trinitarian doctrine. This he did in three ways: (1) V says that John was prevailed upon to write his testimony concerning the Lord; J omits "in dominum." (2) V speaks of the Son as "sanctum dominum et pignus immortalitatis"; J says that the Son poured forth "spiritum sanctum, donum et pignus immortalitatis," thus introducing into the passage a clear and definite reference to the Holy Spirit. (3) V speaks of the rule and measure of faith as belief in "the Lord (i.e., God) and His Christ": *dominum et Christum eius* (Acts iv. 26). J omits *dominum et Christum eius*, and speaks generally of "this faith." Jerome's introduction of Trinitarianism into the passage makes it, but only superficially, more like a formal creed.

Let us now compare (a) in general, and (b) in detail Patrick's credal statements with the passage of Victorinus and its revision by Jerome.

(a) *General Contents.*

V and J.	P.
God the Father	God the Father His uncreated Being.
Jesus Christ	Jesus Christ
Eternal generation of Son ⁶³	Eternal generation of Son
Incarnation	Agent of Creation Incarnation
Resurrection (<i>morte</i> <i>devicta</i>)	Resurrection (<i>devicta</i> <i>morte</i>)
Ascension	Ascension Phil. ii. 9-11 Coming as Judge
(J only.)	
Holy Spirit	Holy Spirit Sonship of believers Trinity

⁶³ I use this phrase for the sake of convenience: but actually neither V nor P employs the terminology which Origen (or rather Rufinus's translation of Origen) impressed upon the mind of the Church, *aeterna ac sempiterna generatio*.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid the conclusion that the general contents of P are based on those of V as revised by J. (1) All the articles in J reappear in P. (2) P omits, with V and J, Virgin Birth, Crucifixion, Church, Forgiveness of sins, Resurrection of the flesh, etc. (3) The additions made by P to V-J are easily explicable; (a) I have already indicated why in this context P might suitably emphasize the *uncreated Being of God*; (b) the quotation Phil. ii. 9-11 contains the key-word *confiteatur*, which makes it particularly relevant; (c) if, *ex hypothesi*, Patrick had been reading a Commentary on the Apocalypse, reference to the Second Coming is natural, and even the expectation of an imminent Coming (*nox futurum*—a word found, so far as I know, in no credal statement of this Article of faith) is explained (see Rev. i. 1; xxii. 20); (d) emphasis upon the *Trinity* is a marked feature of Gallican creeds and writers.⁶⁴

(b) *Verbal Similarities.*

These should be studied by a comparison of the texts printed on pp. 4-7, where the identical words are underlined. They fall into three groups: (i) *filium Iesum Christum, ante originem saeculi spiritaliter apud patrem genitum*; (ii) *hominem factum, deuicta morte in caelis a patre receptum*; (iii) *effudit spiritum sanctum, donum et pignus immortalitatis*. They prove, in my view, a literary dependence of Patrick upon Victorinus-Jerome. Neither (i) nor (ii) nor (iii) occurs in any known creed, even separately: but they all appear in both P and V-J. Moreover, while the great majority of the phrases used by P in *Confession*, chap. iv, may be paralleled in other writings of the fourth and fifth centuries⁶⁵ (see pp. 17-27), I have failed to find there either (i) or (iii) or the combination contained in (ii). Further, when (a) and (b) are taken together—the similarity

⁶⁴ See *Journal of Theological Studies*, xxxix, 239. See also p. 31.

⁶⁵ A few of the parallels come from the third century.

of the general contents and the verbal similarities—the cumulative effect of the evidence is very strong.

It seems clear, too, that Patrick knew Victorinus, not in its original form, but in the recension of Jerome.⁶⁶ P, like J, is Trinitarian; V is Binitarian. And it is incredible that P and J should, each of them independently, alter *sanctum dominum et pignus immortalitatis* in V to *spiritum sanctum, donum et pignus immortalitatis*. True, *effudit in nobis abunde spiritum sanctum* in P comes ultimately from Titus iii. 5, 6; but the addition *donum et pignus immortalitatis* points unmistakably to Jerome.

Moreover, in *Confession*, chap. 14, Patrick again recalls V-J in his use of the phrase *mensura fidei Trinitatis*. In Rom. xii. 3 *mensura fidei* means “an amount of faith measured out.” But in Patrick, as in V-J, it means “a rule” or “measuring rod” of faith, with reference to “the reed like unto a rod” (Rev. xi. 1) for the measuring of the Temple. And this is a further indication that he read the passage in Jerome’s recension. He could not have found in the original version of Victorinus a measuring rod or rule of faith *in the Trinity*.

Dr. Ardill does not refer to Victorinus in his book, *St. Patrick, A.D. 180*. In a subsequent pamphlet, *The Date of St. Patrick (Second Issue Revised, 1932)*, he endeavours to account for the similarity between Victorinus and Patrick by postulating a common source.⁶⁷ (No reference is made in this pamphlet to the Hieronymian recension of V.) There is not the slightest evidence, but rather the contrary, that such a common source ever existed. If it did, we must postulate that V altered it in a binitarian direction, and that J in turn revised V in such a way that his recension

⁶⁶ Haussleiter perceived this (p. 97) “haec recensio symboli Patricio nota erat, cum confessionem suam scriberet.”

⁶⁷ He suggests (pp. 8, 9) Origen or Hippolytus as the author of this hypothetical source. But we may ask: (1) Was Patrick able to read these writers in the original Greek? and (2) How did a Patrick of 180 A.D. become acquainted with the works of Origen (born c. 185) or of Hippolytus, who wrote in the first quarter of the third century?

tallied with the wording of P. But it is clear that the words *effudisse spiritum sanctum, donum et pignus immortalitatis* were not in a common source, retained by J, altered by V. It is J who has done the altering. For the sentence in V, though not elegant, is tolerably good. But the introduction by J of this reference to the Holy Spirit makes his sentence extremely awkward, the words in question being followed immediately by a reference to the Second Person of the Trinity: *hunc per prophetas praedicatum, hunc per legem conscriptum, hunc esse manum dei et uerbum patris et conditorem orbis.*

I, therefore, conclude, that Patrick had before him the Hieronymian version of Victorinus.⁶⁸

II.

I now proceed to cite from the writings of the early Church examples of other words and phrases employed by St. Patrick in chapter 4 of his *Confession*. On the first mention of a writer, his dates or approximate dates are given.

non est alius deus . . . praeter.

Cp. Irenaeus⁶⁹ (c. 140–c. 202; Latin translation made in Africa towards the end of the fourth century, according to A. Souter, or, according to H. Koch, before 250) *Haer.* i. 15: “super quem alius deus non est.”

Cp. *Id.* ii. 41. 1: “alterum tamen deum, praeter eum qui est, non requiramus.”

Hilary of Poitiers (c. 310–361), *De Trinitate* v. 37 (*P.L.* x. 155): “Et per id, quod ipse deus est et in eo deus est, non est deus praeter eum.”

Id. v. 38 (*P.L.* x. 155 f.). Hilary applies *Isai.* xlv. 14, 15,

⁶⁸ In one small detail P appears to side with V against J: *spiritaliter* (VP) *spiritalem* (J). But the *apparatus criticus* in Haussleiter gives variants here both in V and J; and in our ignorance of the exact text that lay before P, no argument of a solid character can be based upon a detail of this kind.

⁶⁹ The references to Irenaeus are from the edition of W. W. Harvey.

quoniam in te est deus, et non est praeter te deus, etc., to Father and Son: "Nam in eo quod ait, in te deus est, naturae dei patris in deo filio docuit ueritatem, cum in eo deus intelligeretur esse qui deus est. In eo uero quod subiecit, et praeter te non est deus, ostendit praeter eum deum non esse, quia in se deo deus inesset."

Arnobius Junior (c. 450) (*P.L.* liii. 241): "quod ipse sit deus, et non sit alius praeter ipsum." [In the Index to Migne, Arnobius Junior is said to have been at Lérins.]

(*deum patrem*) *ingenitum.*

Irenaeus *Haer.* iv. 63. 2: ὁ καὶ μόνος ἀγέννητος καὶ πρῶτος πάντων . . . τέλειος γὰρ ὁ ἀγέννητος. οὗτος δὲ ἐστὶ θεός. But the Latin is *infectus*, not *ingenitus*.

Origen (c. 185–c. 255) *In Joh.* ii. 10: καὶ ἀγέννητον μηδὲν ἕτερον τοῦ πατρὸς εἶναι πιστεύοντες.

Arnobius Senior (c. 303) *Adv. Nat.* i. 31 (*P.L.* v. 755; *C.S.E.L.* iv. 21): "infinite, ingenitus, immortalis, perpetuus, solus."

Id. *Adv. Nat.* ii. 35 (*P.L.* v. 864; *C.S.E.L.* iv. 76): "si omnes concedimus unum esse rerum patrem, immortalem atque ingenitum solum."

Phoebadius of Agen. (c. 355) *Liber contra Arianos*, 16, 21 (*P.L.* xx. 24, 29): "deus ingenitus."

Creed of Ulfilas (c. 311–c. 381), as given in Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, § 198:

"Credo unum esse deum patrem, solum ingenitum et invisibilem."

Origen (trans. Rufinus, c. 345–410) *De Principiis* i. 2. 6; "quod necesse est inprimis suscipi ab his, qui nihil ingenitum, id est innatum, praeter solum deum patrem fatentur."

Jerome (c. 348–420) *Ep. ad Avit.* 2 (*P.L.* xxii. 1061): "nihil absque solo deo patre infectum esse confirmans."

Ascribed to Paulinus of Nola (c. 353–431), *C.S.E.L.* xxx. 356, appendix, carmen III, 227 :

“tu pater ingenitus, genitus tibi filius, ex te
non genitus sanctus spiritus egreditur.”

Faustus of Riez (c. 410–c. 480) *De Spiritu Sancto* i. 9 (*C.S.E.L.* xxi. 115): “patrem confiteamur ingenitum.”⁷⁰

Hilary P. appears to have preferred to use *innascibilis* of the Father: ep. *De Trinitate* iv. 9 (*P.L.* x. 102): “Igitur id quod deo patri proprium est, proprium ei ac secretum relinquamus: confitentes in eo aeternae uirtutis innascibilem potestatem.”

(*pater*) *sine principio.*

Arnobius Junior (*P.L.* liii. 257); “unus est omnium deus sine principio.”

Meginhard (c. 845) in Hahn, *op. cit.*, § 245: “pater est ergo principium deitatis et sine ullo omnino principio . . . a quo filius ineffabiliter natus.”

(See also Hilary P., quoted below.)

(*deus pater*) *a quo est omne principium.*

Canon xxvi of Declaration against Photinus (A.D. 351), ap. Hilary P. *De Synodis*, 59, 60 (*P.L.* x. 521): “Si quis innascibilem et sine initio dicat filium . . . anathema sit. Caput enim, quod est principium omnium, filius; caput autem, quod est principium Christi, Deus: ita enim ad unum initiabilem, omnium initium, per filium uniuersa deferimus.”

(Comment of Hilary.)

“Caput enim omnium filius est, sed caput filii deus est. Et ad unum deum omnia hoc gradu atque hac confessione referuntur: cum ab eo sumant uniuersa principium, cui ipse (*sc.* deus pater) principium sit.”

Cp. Augustine c. *Maximum* ii. 17. 4 (*P.L.* xlii. 784):

⁷⁰ See also quotation from Arian sermon on p. 20.

“pater principium non de principio; filius principium de principio.”

Cp. *Id. De Trinitate* iv. 18. 29 (*P.L.* xlii. 908): “totius diuinitatis, vel, si melius dicitur, deitatis principium pater est.”

Cp. Prosper Aquitanus (*d.* 463) in *Ps.* cix. 3 (*P.L.* li. 319).

omnia tenentem.

Pseudo-Tertullian *Carm. adv. Marcionem* v. 202 (*P.L.* ii. 1089) [acc. to Leclercq, *Dict. Arch. Chrétienne et de Lit.* iii. 42, this poem dates from the third century]:

(Of the Son.)

“Omnitenentis enim solus quia verba ministrat
Quem capit in terris, et per quem cuncta creavit.”

Pseudo-Augustine *Quaestiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti* no. 1 (*C.S.E.L.* i. 13) [author probably a Jew named Isaac of the time of Damasus (366–384)]: “omnipotens, omnitenens, uere in omnibus diues, quia nihil est quod non eius est.”

Sermonis Arianorum fragmentum (*P.L.* xiii. 604): “Solus igitur in sua singularitate talis est, et aliter non est talis sine initio deus, et omnitenens et solus auctor omnium . . . Et ideo pater unus deus, qui neque potestatem, neque ut esset ab alio accepit, sed est quod erat sine initio ingenitus, omnitenens deus.”

Augustine, *Confessiones* vii. 15: “tu es omnitenens manu veritate.”

Ib. xi. 13: “te deum omnipotentem et omnificentem et omnitenentem caeli et terrae artificem.”

Id. De Genesi ad Litteram viii. 26 (*C.S.E.L.* xxviii. 265; *P.L.* xxxiv. 391): “deus omnipotens et omnitenens, incommutabili aeternitate, ueritate, uoluntate semper idem, non per tempus nec per locum motus mouet per tempus creaturam spiritalem.”

Cp. Sedulius (c. 450) *Carmen Paschale* ii. 63 (P.L. xix. 599):

(of Son)

“Salve, sancta parens, enixa puerpera Regem,
Qui caelum terramque tenet per saecula.”

Cp. Irenaeus *Haer.* ii. 47, 2: “omnipotens . . . et omnia capiens.”

Cp. *Ib.* ii. 1. 1: “solus continens omnia.”

Cp. Novatian (c. 250) *De Trinitate* ii (P.L. iii. 889): “ipse continens cuncta . . . hunc enim legimus cuncta continere.”

inenarrabiliter (genitum).

Cp. Irenaeus *Haer.* iv. 55. 2: “inenarrabile habet genus.”

Hilary P. *De Trinitate* iii. 3 (P.L. x. 77): “sed incomprehensibiliter, inenarrabiliter, ante omne tempus et saecula, unigenitum ex his quae ingenita in se erant procreavit.”

Id. Lib. de Syn. 79 (P.L. x. 532): “Iam si hoc nesciebant (sc. homöousion), cur nesciri uolebant generationem filii? Numquid si inenarrabilis est, ideo et ignorabilis est?”

Id. Damnatio Arianae haereseos, put out by orthodox after synod of Ariminum (A.D. 359), found in fragment ascribed to Hilary P. (P.L. x. 698; Mansi iii. 300): “Si quis filium dei non uere inenarrabiliter de deo patre natum, sed adoptium filium dixerit, anathema sit.”

Eusebius of Vercellae (died c. 371) *Ep.* ii. 5 (P.L. xii. 950): “Nouit hoc omnipotens deus: nouit et eius unigenitus inenarrabiliter de ipso natus Filius.”

ante originem saeculi . . . genitum.

Cp. Origen (c. 185-255) *in Joh.* ii. 4 (Brooke, p. 62):
δύναται μέντοι γε τὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς ὄνομα λαμβάνεσθαι καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ἀρχῆς.

(*Filium*) *genitum ante omne principium.*

Creed of Cappadocia, according to Auxentius of Milan (see p. 35) *ap.* Hilary P., *Liber contra Auxentium* 14

(P.L. x. 617: Hahn, § 134): “. . . Iesum Christum, ante omnia saecula et ante omne principium natum ex patre . . .”

Council (Arian) held at Nicaea in Thrace in 359 (Mansi iii. 309): . . . καὶ εἰς τὸν μονογενῆ υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸν πρὸ πάντων αἰώνων καὶ πρὸ πάσης ἀρχῆς γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ δι’ οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο τὰ τε ὄρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα.

This is repeated in Acacian Creed of a Council of Constantinople held in 360.

Creed of Council of Toledo, A.D. 447 (Mansi iii. 1003⁷¹; Hefele iii. 175), in which the Son is described as “deum natum a patre ante omne omnino principium.”

Confession of bishops at Council of Ariminum (A.D. 359), *ap.* Jerome, *Dial. adv. Luciferianos* 17 (P.L. xxiii. 170), ascribed by Kattenbusch⁷² and others to Phoebadius of Agen: “unigenitum dei filium, qui ante omnia saecula et ante omne principium natus est ex deo.”

Phoebadius of Agen (presided at Council of Valence, A.D. 374)⁷³ *Liber contra Arianos* 16 (P.L. xx. 25): “dei enim uerbum, hoc est, dei filius, ante omne principium cum eo qui ex eo, et in eo cui nullum potest esse principium . . . Qui ergo probauerit sine uerbo, sine sapientia, sine ratione, sine uirtute, sine spiritu aliquando patrem fuisse, is probauit cum patre et in patre filium ante omne principium non fuisse.”

Cp. Origen *in Joh.* ii. 1: πρὸ γὰρ παντὸς χρόνου καὶ αἰῶνος ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

Cp. Priscillian (Bishop of Abila, A.D. 380; executed, 385), *Tract.* vi. 94 (C.S.E.L. xviii. 71): “Christus origo omnium totus in sese nec quod est aliunde praesumens sine principio, sine fine, etc.”

Cp. *Ib.* vii. 113 (C.S.E.L. xviii. 82): “si Christum omnium scimus esse principium.”

⁷¹ The creed given here *sub ann.* 400 really belongs to the Council of Toledo of year 447 (see Mansi iii. 1001, foot-note 4).

⁷² *Das apostolische Symbol* i. 173.

⁷³ Mansi iii. 491.

per ipsum (sc. *Filium*) *facta sunt uisibilia et inuisibilia.*

A statement of belief in the Son as the Agent of Creation, based on Col. i. 16, is a common feature of Greek creeds (Hahn, *op. cit.*, §§ 126, 127, 129, etc., etc.). It appears, too, in the Creed of Cappadocia as given in Latin by Auxentius,⁷⁴ Bishop of Milan 355–374, the text of which is given on p. 35; and in the Latin version of the semi-Arian Creed of Philippopolis,⁷⁵ A.D. 343, in the form “*per quem facta sunt omnia, et quae in coelis et quae in terra, uisibilia et inuisibilia*”; also in the “*fides Romanorum*” (c. 360 A.D.), attributed by Kattenbusch and others to Phoebadius of Agen,⁷⁶ where the text runs “*credimus Iesum Christum dominum nostrum, dei filium, per quem omnia facta sunt quae in caelis, quae in terra, uisibilia et inuisibilia.*” The Article is also to be found in the Latin version of the Creed drawn up at Sirmium (A.D. 351) by the Easterns in opposition to Photinus: “. . . *per quem facta sunt omnia in caelis et in terra, uisibilia et inuisibilia.*”⁷⁷

deuicta morte.

Tertullian (c. 160–c. 220) *Adv. Praxeam* 23 (*P.L.* ii. 186): “*pater filium . . . per resurrectionem glorificavit, morte deuicta.*”

Ib. 25: “*post resurrectionem et deuictae gloriae mortis.*”

Victorinus of Pettau, *Comm. in Apoc.*, chap. 2 (*C.S.E.L.* xlix. 18, 19): “*post mortem deuictam, cum ascendisset in caelis.*”

Hilary P. *De Trinitate* xi. 34 (*P.L.* x. 422) quotes 1 Cor. xv. 26 as “*Nouissime deuicta est ab eo mors*” (“*Itala*” reading; *Vulg. destruetur*). Hilary comments: “*Deuictio mortis nihil aliud quam resurrectio ex mortuis est.*”

⁷⁴ Hilary P., *Lib. contra Auxentium* 14 (*P.L.* x. 617); Hahn, § 134.

⁷⁵ *Not Sardica*, as it appears in the inscription in Hilary P., *De Synodis* 34 (*P.L.* x. 507). See Hahn, § 158.

⁷⁶ A. E. Burn, *Introduction to the Creeds*, p. 216; F. J. Badcock, *The History of the Creeds*, 2nd ed., p. 96.

⁷⁷ Hilary P., *De Synodis* 38 (*P.L.* x. 509). See p. 35.

Pseudo-Hilary *Epistola seu Libellus* (P.L. x. 739): "Triumphans igitur homo cum deo, iam deuicta morte, non mortalis iam ad superos euadebit."

Priscillian *Tract.* i. 3 (C.S.E.L. xviii. 5): "crucifixus deuicta morte uitae heres effectus est ac tertia die resurgens, etc."

Cp. *Id. Tract.* iv. 79 (C.S.E.L. xviii. 60): "immortalis ipse neque morte uincendus" (= Hilary P. *De Trinitate* i. 13).

Cp. Irenaeus *Haer.* v. 13. 3: "tunc enim uere erit uicta mors quando ea quae continetur ab eo caro exierit de dominio eius."

in caelis a patre receptum.

Cp. Tertullian *De virg. vel.* 1: "receptum in caelis."

Cp. *Id. Adv. Prax.* 2: "in caelo resumptum."

Cp. Irenaeus *Haer.* iii. 11. 6 (Mark xvi. 19): "receptus est in caelos."

Cp. *Ib.* ii. 49. 2: "receptus est in caelum."

In caelis a patre receptum is found only in V-J, P.

Quotation from Phil. ii. 9-11.

An echo of Eph. i. 21 may be found in "*omnem potestatem super omne nomen*," as Dr. F. R. M. Hitchcock suggests (*Hermathena*, liv., 97). He also points out (*Ib.*, p. 96) that both Patrick and Lat. Iren. (i. 2) quote Phil. ii. 11 as "*omnis lingua confiteatur ei*," for which there is no other textual authority. But it is to be noted that the "ei" in Patrick is read only by A (the Book of Armagh); the other MSS. of the *Confession* omit it.

iudex uiuorum atque mortuorum, qui reddet unicuique secundum facta sua.

These are quotations from Acts x. 42 and Romans ii. 6. But it is to be noted that Rom. ii. 6 appears in certain creeds of the fourth century after the clause which affirms belief in the Lord's coming as Judge. The Creed drawn up by the Easterns at Philippopolis in 343 (see p. 23) has "... uenturus

in fine mundi iudicare uiuos et mortuos et reddere unicuique secundum opera (*v.l.* facta) sua.”⁷⁸ The Creed of Sirmium (see p. 35) of 357 has “. . . uenturus est in consummatione saeculi iudicare uiuos et mortuos, et reddere unicuique secundum opera sua.” Finally, the “Symbolum Germinii episcopi Sirmiensis”⁷⁹ (A.D. 366) contains the clause in the form “profitemur et quod in fine mundi de caelis descensus sit iudicare uiuos et mortuos et reddere unicuique secundum opera eius.” These three Creeds are all to be found in the works of Hilary of Poitiers.

*effudit . . . spiritum sanctum, donum et pignus
immortalitatis.*

I have failed to find this phrase elsewhere than in Patrick and in Jerome’s recension of Victorinus.

Cp. Acts ii. 38 (Vulg.): “accipietis donum sancti spiritus.”

Cp. Romans vi. 23 (O.L.), as given by Pacian (died *c.* 390), *Sermo de Baptismo* (P.L. xiii. 1094): “stipendia ergo peccati mors: donum (vulg. gratia) dei uita aeterna per Iesum Christum dominum nostrum.”

Cp. Irenaeus *Haer.* iv. 55. 6 “(spiritus sanctus) in nouissimis temporibus noue effusus est in nos.”

Cp. *Ib.* v. 8. 1: “pignus hoc habitans in nobis iam spirituales efficit et absorbitur mortale ab immortalitate.”

Cp. *Ib.* v. 13. 3, where “immortalitas” is connected with the “pignus” (2 Cor. v. 5) of the Spirit.

Cp. Hilary P. *De Trinitate* i. 36 (P.L. x. 48): “neque iam per sensus humani sententiam spiritum dei inter creaturas quisquam auderet referre, quem ad immortalitatis pignus, et ad diuinae incorruptaeque naturae consortium sumeremus.”

Cp. Arnobius Jun. (P.L. liii. 315): “spiritus dei, unde pignus accepimus.”

⁷⁸ This Creed appears in slightly varying forms in P.L. x. 507; C.S.E.L. lxx. 69; and P.L. lvi. 855.

⁷⁹ *Ap.* Hilary P., *Collectanea Antiariana Parisina* (Fragmenta Historica), series A, III (C.S.E.L. lxx. 48).

Cp. Augustine *c. Iulianum* ii. 137 (*P.L.* xliv. 1199): “sanitatis futurae atque perpetuae nunc pignus spiritum dedit.”⁸⁰

*spiritum sanctum . . . qui facit credentes et oboedientes
ut sint filii dei.*

Cp. Irenaeus *Haer.* iii. 6. 2: “filius Iesus Christus dominus noster, qui filios dei facit credentes in nomen suum.” But here it is the Son; *not* the Holy Spirit, as in Patrick.

Cp. *Hymnus de Christo*, ascribed to Hilary P. (*C.S.E.L.* lxxv. 222):

Praecipit totum per orbem baptizari credulos
nomen patris inuocantes, confitentes filium.
Mystica fide reuelat tinctos sancto spiritu,
fonte tinctos, innouatos, filios factos dei.

Cp. Creed of Philippopolis, A.D. 343 (see pp. 23, 24): “credimus in spiritum sanctum, hoc est in paraclatum, quem promittens apostolis post adsumptionem suam in caelum misit docere illos et instruere de omnibus, per quem sanctificantur animae in ipsum fideliter credentes.”

Cp. Creed of Sirmium, A.D. 357 (see pp. 35, 36): “et in spiritum sanctum, id est, paraclatum, quem promittens apostolis, postea quam caelum adscendit, misit docere eos, et commonere omnia, per quem sanctificantur credentium in eum sinceriter animae.”

adoramus unum deum in Trinitate sacris nominis.

Cp. *Sermo* cxxxiii, included among works falsely ascribed to Augustine in *P.L.* xxxix. 2175, entitled *De fide catholica*, and also to be found in Codex Canonum et Constitutorum Eccl. Rom., cap. 40, entitled *Libellus Augustini de fide*

⁸⁰ But Augustine preferred the expression “arrha spiritus”; as we learn from *Sermo* clvi (*P.L.* xxxviii. 858): “Nec pignus, sed arrha dicenda est. pignus enim quando ponitur, cum fuerit res ipsa reddita pignus aufertur. Arrha autem de ipsa re datur, quae danda promittitur; ut res quando redditur, impleatur quod datum est, non mutetur.”

catholica contra omnes haereses (*P.L.* lvi. 585). It appears also, in a slightly different form, in the *regula fidei* attached to the Canons of the Council of Toledo, A.D. 400 (Mansi iii. 1003), but, as Mansi observes, wrongly, as it belongs to the later Council of Toledo, held in 447 (cp. note on “ante omne principium”). The relevant passage is as follows:—“Credimus in unum deum, patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum, uisibilium et inuisibilium factorem, per quem creata sunt omnia in coelo et in terra: hunc unum deum, et hanc unam esse diuini nominis (‘substantiae’ in Toledo) Trinitatem.”

Cp. Gaudentius, Bishop of Brixia (died after 405), *Sermo* xiv (*P.L.* xx. 946): “Trinitatis adorandae una eademque diuinitas semper ubique est.”

Cp. Athanasian Creed: “fides autem catholica haec est, ut unum deum in Trinitate et Trinitatem in Unitate ueneremur.”

The phrase in *Confession*, chap. 4, occurs in the Hymn *Audite omnes* in St. Patrick’s praise:

Ymnos cum Apocalypsi Psalmosque cantat Dei,
 quosque ad aedificandum Dei tractat populum;
 quam legem in Trinitate sacri credit nominis,
 tribusque personis unam docetque substantiam.

III.

Certain matters call for special reference. The phrase “omnia tenentem, ut dicimus” is puzzling, as it might suggest that omnia tenentem or omnitenentem was a credal^{s1} attribute of God. The references I have given on p. 20 make it clear that in the 3rd–5th centuries it was not unusual to speak of God as “omnitenens”; but no *Creed* has been found with this epithet. Further, Augustine, *Confess.* xi. 13, and the quotation from the *Quaestiones* on p. 20, show that “omnitenens” was not regarded—at any rate by these

^{s1} *dicimus* is used in the declarations of the Councils of Toledo in 447 and 633 almost in the sense of “we affirm.”

writers—as the equivalent of “omnipotens”⁸²; although “omnitenens” would not be an unfair equivalent of *παντοκράτωρ*, the word that stands regularly in Eastern Creeds, and which is used in Greek versions of the Roman Creed from Marcellus downwards as the rendering of “omnipotens.”⁸³ If Patrick wrote “omnipotentem,⁸⁴ ut dicimus,” all would be clear; for we might then suppose that he was confused by the sentence as he found it in V-J: “mensura autem filii dei mandatum domini nostri, patrem confiteri omnipotentem; dicimus et huius filium Christum, etc.,” and construed “dicimus” with the first clause, instead of with the second (as Haussleiter takes it). But why should a scribe alter so familiar a word as “omnipotentem” to “omnia tenentem”? In any case, if “dicimus” in P comes from this source, it is a further indication that he read the passage in Jerome’s recension; for V has “didicimus.”

Patrick writes of the Son “genitum ante omne principium et per ipsum facta sunt uisibilia et inuisibilia.” The italicized words are found, though separated, in the Creed of Cappadocia as given by Auxentius⁸⁵ in Hilary of Poitiers (see p. 35). That Auxentius (Bishop of Milan, 355–374) was an Arian need cause us no difficulty, even if we were to suppose that Patrick took the words directly from this Creed. For there is no reason to doubt the statement of Auxentius that the Creed he gives was the pre-Nicene Creed he had learned in childhood in Cappadocia.⁸⁶ In its original intention it was perfectly orthodox,⁸⁷ though it did not

⁸² As N. J. D. White supposed.

⁸³ H. B. Swete, *The Apostles’ Creed*, p. 22.

⁸⁴ In *Confessio* 60 P. writes *deo patre omnipotente*.

⁸⁵ The Rev. G. F. Hamilton pointed this out in *St. Patrick and his Age* (1932).

⁸⁶ “ex infantia, quem admodum doctus sum, sicut accepi de sanctis scripturis credidi.”

⁸⁷ Similarly, Duchesne argues (*Christian Worship: its Origin and Evolution*, p. 94) that if the Gallican Liturgy was introduced by Auxentius into Milan, the question of Arianism does not arise, since the liturgy was prior in the countries of its origin to the rise of Arianism.

contain any phrase which definitely ruled out the Arian position, which was subsequently developed. And, as a matter of fact, *ante omne principium* is used of the Son by Phoebadius of Agen in his Book against the Arians, and in the anti-Arian Creed of Toledo (447). It is to be found, too, in a confession of faith put forth at the Council of Ariminum (359), which certain scholars believe to be the work of Phoebadius; and to this person is also ascribed a creed which goes by the title "Fides Romanorum," containing the clause, ". . . dei filium, per quem omnia facta sunt, quae in coelis, quae in terra, uisibilia et inuisibilia."⁸⁸ Phoebadius was an influential ecclesiastic, and presided over the council of Gallican bishops which met at Valence in 374. His adoption of these two phrases may have caused them to circulate in Gaul as credal statements. But it is to be noted that the Creed as given by Auxentius is the only Latin symbol in which *both* of them are to be found.

It is clear from the foregoing that much of the language of *Confessio* 4 is to be found in writings and documents of the fourth and fifth centuries. A few of the references I owe to the articles of Dr. F. R. M. Hitchcock in *Hermathena*,⁸⁹ in which he has adduced parallels between the language of Patrick and that of the Latin translation of Irenaeus. But he has not, in my view, proved a direct literary connection between the two. Moreover, the *provenance* and date of this translation is uncertain.⁹⁰ Indeed, I should maintain that a stronger case could be made out for such a connection between Patrick and Hilary of Poitiers, whose name appears frequently in these pages. It will be noted that the following phrases and words in Patrick appear also in Hilary (whose writings, it will be remembered, contain certain of the creeds and documents referred to above): *sine principio* (of Father); *inenarrabiliter* and *ante omne principium* (of generation of Son); *per ipsum facta sunt uisibilia et inuisibilia*; and the addition *qui reddet unicuique secundum facta sua* to the

⁸⁸ See p. 23.

⁸⁹ xiv. 168 ff.; xlv. 202 ff.; liv. 93 ff.

⁹⁰ See *Novum Testamentum S. Irenaei* (ed. W. Sanday and C. H. Turner), pp. xxxvi-exi; B. Steidle, *Patrologia*, p. 35.

clause expressing belief in the Second Coming; and that there are also to be found in Hilary phrases similar to *non est alius deus . . . praeter* and *a quo est omne principium*, and other less close parallels. But I do not claim to have in any sense proved that Patrick had read Hilary. What does emerge (as I should hold) is that Patrick was acquainted with theological phrases current in Gaul in the fourth and fifth centuries and to be met with in Gaul's most eminent theologian; and that accordingly, apart from the borrowing from Jerome's recension of Victorinus, the language of Patrick's credal statements is consistent, and indeed consonant, with the traditional date of his *floruit*.

That Patrick stands in the "Gallican" tradition (if indeed any further indication of this is needed) is consistent with two other facts which are revealed by a consideration of his credal statements. (1) Modern investigation into the history of the Apostles' Creed has traced its development along a geographical line beginning or at any rate emerging in Eastern Europe (*e.g.*, in the writings of Niceta of Remesiana, and of Jerome, who was born in Pannonia), thence passing westwards through Northern Italy into Gaul and Spain, from which it was carried eventually to Ireland.⁵¹ So, too, this independent enquiry, undertaken for a particular object, has brought the Apostle of Ireland in touch with Gaul, Spain, Milan, and finally, in the persons of Victorinus and Jerome, Pannonia. The origin of this spiritual commerce between these countries and areas may be beyond our powers of discovery now; but the fact of its existence is undoubted. And I cannot regard it as a mere coincidence that I have been quite unconsciously led along the same geographical route as one travels along when investigating the history of the formal creed. (2) It is natural, too, to find in Patrick a definite reference, even in an informal credal statement, to the Trinity. And if the Breastplate also is to be ascribed to him, his emphasis upon this doctrine is manifest and beyond question. For such emphasis is a marked feature of

⁵¹ See, *e.g.*, H. B. Swete, *The Holy Catholic Church*, pp. 159 f.; *History of the Church of Ireland* (ed. W. A. Phillips), i. 44 ff.

“Gallican” creeds and writings of the fifth century and later, and finds its way into the Irish Creed as found in the Antiphonary of Bangor, which alone of all known creeds styles each of the three Persons “deus omnipotens.”⁹² The reason for this was largely historical. The barbarian invaders of Gaul in the fifth century were Arian in belief; and, consequently, the native Christians there were filled with a detestation of Arianism not simply as a heresy, but as the heresy of a hated and hateful conqueror. We need not wonder, therefore, that the Athanasian Creed (if Gaul is indeed its place of origin) is not the mildest of documents, or that modern attempts to soften or explain away its language have been unsuccessful. As regards the actual phrase used by Patrick, “confitemur et adoramus unum deum in Trinitate sacri nominis,” I have been unable to discover an exact parallel to it in the writings of the early Church.⁹³ It may have its source in a liturgical expression, as has been suggested. Certainly, in *Confessio*, chap. 60, “Christus . . . qui regnat cum deo patre omnipotente et cum spiritu sancto ante saecula et nunc et per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen,” has a liturgical ring about it, the concluding words recalling a form of the *Gloria Patri*.

Much has been made of Patrick’s absence of reference to the Nicene Creed, and in particular to the watchword of orthodoxy, *homöousion*; and this has been adduced as a reason for putting him earlier than the fourth century. To this line of argument several answers may be made. (1) The normally perilous *argumentum ex silentio* is particularly so when it is recognized that (2) the passage of the *Confession* in question is not intended as a creed, but as an expression of praise and thanks to God. (3) Patrick is writing, not in defence of his orthodoxy (for that was not in question), but in defence of his call by God to work in Ireland. (4) (a) We must not read back into the fourth and fifth centuries that self-consciousness in regard to the Nicene Creed which arose later as a result of its universal acceptance as an expression

⁹² *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. xxxix, p. 242.

⁹³ Apart from its occurrence in the Hymn *Audite omnes*: see p. 27.

of orthodoxy; nor (b) must we imagine that the Nicene Fathers had at their disposal, for the promulgation of the Nicene Faith, those means of publicity which are available in the modern world. In fact, (a) the Creed of the Council of Nicaea did not find general acceptance until after a long and protracted struggle; and many perfectly orthodox Christians distrusted the term *homöousion* because it was not found in Scripture and because it had been used by heretics, previously to Nicaea, in a different sense; and (b) Hilary of Poitiers (who was a theologian in a sense that Patrick never was) tells us that “though long ago regenerate and for some time a bishop, I never heard of the Nicene faith until I was going into exile”⁹⁴ (*i.e.*, in A.D. 356). (5) When individuals wished to testify to their belief, it was customary to recite the creed of their *baptism*, as being the expression of their traditional, personal faith. Thus, at the Council of Nicaea, Eusebius of Caesarea produced and read a creed which, he averred, he had received as a catechumen; Marcellus of Ancyra, when his orthodoxy was questioned, wrote to Pope Julius in A.D. 343, depositing with him “my faith in writing . . . which I learned and was taught out of the Holy Scriptures”⁹⁵ (then follows the Apostles’ Creed in an ancient form); and the similar case of Auxentius has been mentioned above.⁹⁶ On the other hand, the Nicene symbol was a *conciliar* Creed (“we believe,” not “I believe”); and, therefore, could not express a man’s personal testimony to the faith—the teaching he had assimilated from childhood—in the sense in which a Baptismal Creed could do it. (6) It will be remembered, too, that in the Latin Churches the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan formula was nowhere recited in the Liturgy until the year 589, when the Church of Spain began to use it publicly, and that this custom spread but slowly through the Gallican Church. The practice of singing this Creed in the Liturgy was not adopted by the Church of Rome until 1014.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ *De Synodis* 91. ⁹⁵ Epiphanius, *Adv. Haer.* lxxii (P.G., xlii. 385).

⁹⁶ P. 28.

⁹⁷ Proctor and Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 389.

It remains to consider if there is any evidence available as to the date at which Jerome issued his recension of the Commentary of Victorinus. In the list of Jerome's writings as it appears in a recent volume entitled *Patrologia*, by Basilius Steidle,⁹⁸ no attempt has been made to assign even an approximate date to this work. Yet there are indications, I believe, which point significantly to a definite period of Jerome's life as the time of its composition. His exegetical works were composed mainly between the years 386 and 415; but it is unlikely that so comparatively an unimportant work as the one in question would have been undertaken at an early stage in this period, especially as he was then also occupied with the preparation of the Vulgate. It is much more probable that Anatolius⁹⁹ should have pressed him to revise Victorinus at a time when Jerome's powers as a Biblical student and exegete were already recognized. Further, in his *Prologue*¹⁰⁰ to the recension, Jerome speaks of the hesitation with which he approached the task, since to pass judgement on the work of another man was dangerous, and laid the critic open to the "barkings of traducers" (*obtreclatorum latratibus*). It is Jerome singled with the fires of literary controversy who speaks thus. May there not be a reference here to the bitter dispute in which he was involved from c. 393 onwards over Origen and the translations of his works, reaching its climax at the end of the fourth century? But I think that we may determine the matter more exactly. The *Prologue* indicates that when he wrote it Jerome was not in the best of health: "si uita nobis comes fuerit et dominus sanitatem dederit." Now we know from his 114th letter, written to Theophilus in A.D. 406,¹⁰¹ that he had in that year a severe illness: "grauissimo languori correptus, et mortis limen ingrediens, domini misericordia et tuis precibus reseruatus sum." Is this the same illness as that referred to in the *Prologue*? The

⁹⁸ Freiburg (1937).

⁹⁹ See p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ *C.S.E.L.* xlix. 14. A translation is given on p. 36.

¹⁰¹ *P.L.*, xxii. 933 ff.; Smith and Wace, *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, iii. 45.

probability that it is becomes greater when we note that there is a verbal connection between the two documents, the *Prologue* and the letter. In the *Prologue*, Jerome assures Anatolius that in carrying out this recension of Victorinus he will expend his "mental sweat": "tibi nostrum in hoc uolumine potissimum sudabit ingenium." The same vivid, almost racy, phrase occurs in the 114th letter. Jerome has written a book at the request of Theophilus, and he says to him: "suscipe igitur librum tuum, immo meum et ut uerius loquar nostrum . . . tibi enim sudauit ingenium." I, therefore, place the recension of Victorinus *circa* 406 A.D.

It may be well, finally, to summarize the conclusions to which I have been led.

(1) In chapter 4 of his *Confession*, Patrick's aim is, not to set out a formal Creed, but to express his thankful acknowledgment of God's mercies as revealed in Jesus Christ and experienced in Patrick's personal life.

(2) Patrick was acquainted with the Commentary on the Apocalypse by Victorinus, not in its original form, but in the recension of Jerome, made c. 406 A.D.

(3) Patrick is dependent upon chapter xi of that Commentary, as revised by Jerome, for (a) the general structure of his creed-like statement, both in what it contains and in what it lacks; and (b) for certain phrases. Also, the expression "mensura fidei" in chapter 14 of the *Confession* is used in the sense that it bears in chapter xi of the Commentary of Victorinus-Jerome.

(4) This passage in the Commentary is in no sense a formal creed, but confessedly a statement of belief in the Second Person of the Trinity. Jerome, however, gave it a Trinitarian character, which it lacked in the original version.

(5) Apart from the phrases directly borrowed from V-J, the theological expressions used in *Confession* 4 can, almost all of them, be paralleled in Gallican writers and documents of the fourth and fifth centuries.

(6) It is possible that Patrick was acquainted, in some form or another, with a Creed originally brought to the West from Cappadocia by Auxentius, Bishop of Milan (355-374).

APPENDIX A.

CREED OF AUXENTIUS.

(*ap. Hilary P., Lib. contra Auxentium, § 14, P.L., x. 617; Hahn, § 134.*)

Credo in unum solum uerum deum patrem omnipotentem, inuisibilem, impassibilem, immortalem, et in filium eius unigenitum, dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, ante omnia saecula et ante omne principium natum ex patre, deum uerum filium ex uero deo patre, secundum quod scriptum est in euangelio: "haec est autem uita aeterna, ut cognoscant te solum uerum deum, et quem misisti Iesum Christum." Per ipsum enim omnia facta sunt, uisibilia et inuisibilia: qui descendit de caelis uoluntate patris propter nostram salutem, natus de spiritu sancto et Maria uirgine secundum carnem, sicut scriptum est, et crucifixum sub Pontio Pilato, sepultum, tertia die resurrexisse, ascendisse in caelis, sedere ad dexteram patris, uenturum iudicare uiuos et mortuos. Et in spiritum sanctum paraclatum, quem misit dominus et deus noster saluator Iesus Christus discipulis, spiritum ueritatis.

APPENDIX B.

Copy of the Creed composed at Sirmium (A.D. 357) by the Easterns against Photinus.

(*ap. Hilary P., De Synodis 38: P.L., x. 509; Mansi iii. 259.*)

Credimus in unum deum patrem omnipotentem, creatorem et conditorem, ex quo omnis paternitas in coelo et in terris nominatur. et in unicum eius filium dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, qui ante omnia saecula ex patre natus est, deum de deo, lumen de lumine, per quem facta sunt omnia in coelis et in terra, uisibilia et inuisibilia: qui est uerbum, et sapientia, et uirtus, et uita, et lumen uerum: qui in nouissimis diebus propter nos incorporatus est, et natus de sancta uirgine, et crucifixus, et mortuus est, et sepultus: qui et surrexit ex mortuis tertia die, et adscendit in caelum, et sedet in dextera patris, et uenturus est in consummatione saeculi iudicare uiuos et mortuos, et reddere unicuique

secundum opera sua: cuius regnum sine fine perseuerans, permanet in perpetua saecula. erit enim sedens in dextera patris, non solum in hoc saeculo, uerum etiam in futuro. Et in spiritum sanctum, id est, paraclitum, quem promittens apostolis, postea quam caelum adscendit, misit docere eos, et commonere omnia, per quem sanctificantur credentium in eum sinceriter animae.

APPENDIX C.

Prologue of Jerome to his recension of the Commentary of Victorinus on the Apocalypse.

Divers happenings fall to the lot of those who voyage on the perilous deep. If a violent hurricane of wind arises, terror ensues; if a gentler breeze ripples the surface of the tranquil waters, the sailors fear a hidden danger. So it is also, in my opinion, as concerning the book you have sent me, which appears to be a commentary of Victorinus on the Apocalypse. To criticize the works of a man of eminence is dangerous, and lays the critic open to the barkings of traducers. It is clear that in former days Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, and Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, held the same views about the reign of one thousand years as did Victorinus. And since you wrote beseeching me, I was unwilling to postpone the matter; and, rather than spurn your entreaties, I at once began to study the writings of ancient authors; and anything that I found in them concerning the reign of one thousand years I have inserted in the works of Victorinus, removing from these anything of his that savoured of a literal interpretation.

From the beginning of the book to the place where a cross is marked, I have corrected corruptions due to the errors of scribes. Note that from that point on to the end of the volume additions have been made. Now it is for you to criticize and to confirm whatever you may approve. If life remains to me, and if the Lord grant me health, on this volume will my mental toil be chiefly expended for thy sake, dearest Anatolius.

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