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Translations and Reprints  
FROM THE  
**Original Sources of European History**

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THE CANONS  
OF THE  
FIRST FOUR GENERAL COUNCILS,  
NICAEA, CONSTANTINOPLE, EPHESUS AND  
CHALCEDON.

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# TRANSLATIONS AND REPRINTS

FROM THE

ORIGINAL SOURCES OF EUROPEAN HISTORY.

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VOL. IV. CANONS AND CREEDS OF THE FIRST FOUR GENERAL No. 2  
COUNCILS.

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## INTRODUCTION.

1. The Council of Nicæa was called by the emperor Constantine in the summer of A. D. 325, primarily for the settlement of the Arian controversy, which had greatly distracted the church; but also to deal with the Meletian schism in Egypt, and with the question as to the method of calculating the date for Easter. The titles and subject matter of its twenty Canons indicate, however, that there were many and diverse points brought before the Council for decision. There were some 318 bishops present, 7 of whom were Latins.

2. The Council of Constantinople was summoned by the Emperor Theodosius I, in May, A. D. 381, in order to reaffirm the Nicene faith and to secure it against Arianism and Macedonianism [Semi-Arianism], as well as to stay the progress of Apollinarianism, and to settle the dissensions in the church at Constantinople. There were 150 bishops present, none of whom were from the west.

3. The Council of Ephesus was called by Theodosius II, in June, A. D. 431, for the purpose of settling the Nestorian controversy, and of condemning Pelagianism. There were some 200 bishops present, 2 of whom were Latins.

4. The Council of Chalcedon was convoked by the emperor Marcian in October, A. D. 451; in order to denounce and nullify the action of the so-called Robbers' Synod which had met at Ephesus two years previous. There were some 600 bishops present, only 4 of whom were Latins.

[The following translation of the Canons is based upon the text of Dr. William Bright, and acknowledgment is hereby made of the assistance derived from his excellent notes, as well as from the English translation of Hefele by Clark and Oxenham.]

## I. THE CREED AND CANONS OF THE FIRST GENERAL COUNCIL, HELD AT NICÆA, A. D., 325.

### I. THE NICENE CREED AS FRAMED IN 325, ACCORDING TO THE TEXT CONTAINED IN THE ACTS OF THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON.

We believe in one God, the **FATHER** Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, **JESUS CHRIST**, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance [*ὁμοούσιον*] with the Father; by whom all things were made, both in heaven and on earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; he suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead, And in the **HOLY GHOST**. But those who say: 'There was a time when he was not;' and 'He was not before he was made;' and 'He was made out of nothing,' or 'He is of another substance' or 'essence,' or 'The Son of God is created,' or 'changeable,' or 'alterable'—they are condemned by the holy catholic and apostolic church.

## 2. SUBJECTS OF THE CANONS.

1. Self-mutilation incompatible with clerical office.
2. Converts not to be ordained immediately after baptism.
3. 'Sub-introduced' women not to dwell with clerics.
4. On appointments to bishoprics in the provinces,
5. On excommunication, and on provincial synods.
6. All sees to retain their ancient rights. Bishops to be appointed according to rule.
7. Honorary precedence for the bishop of Aelia [Jerusalem].
8. On the treatment of converts from Novatianism.
9. On inquiry into character of ordinands.
10. Against ordaining those who have lapsed.
11. Laymen who lapsed without excuse to be put under penance.
12. On the case of those who resigned public office, but sought to regain it.
13. Communion to be given to all dying persons, including those under penance.
14. On lapsed catechumens.
15. Against migration of bishops and clergy.
16. Against clerics who leave their proper posts.
17. Against clerics who take usury.
18. Deacons not to encroach on privileges of presbyters.
19. On the treatment of converts from Paulianism.
20. Prayer to be offered standing on Sundays and throughout the Paschal season.

## 3. CANONS OF THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA.

CANON I. Self-mutilation incompatible with clerical office.

If any man has been operated upon by physicians during illness, or has been castrated by barbarians, he may remain among the clergy; but if a man in good health has castrated himself, he must withdraw, even though he is registered among the clergy; and from this time on, no one who has thus acted should be promoted. And clear as it is, that what has been said refers to those who have intentionally acted thus and have dared to castrate themselves, it is equally clear that the rule of discipline admits to the ranks of the clergy those who have been made eunuchs by barbarians or by their masters, provided they are in other respects found worthy.

CANON 2. Converts not to be ordained immediately after baptism.

Inasmuch as many things, either from necessity, or by reason of the pressure of certain persons, have happened contrary to the rule of the church, so that men who have just turned from a heathen life to the faith, and have spent but a short time as catechumens, are brought directly to the spiritual laver, and at baptism are exalted at once to the episcopate or presbyterate, it has seemed best that hereafter this should not take place. For [before being appointed to office] a man should spend considerable time as a catechumen, and should be tested farther after baptism; for the apostolic word is plain, which says: "Not a novice, lest, being puffed up, he fall into condemnation and the snare of the devil." If then, as time goes on, some grave, unspiritual fault be found in the person [thus hastily ordained], and this shall be established by two or three witnesses, he must resign his clerical office. Now any one who acts contrary to this ordinance, thus venturing opposition to the great Synod, will run a risk as to his clerical position.

CANON 3. 'Sub-introduced' women not to dwell with clerics.

The great Synod has universally denied permission to either bishop, or presbyter or deacon, or any one at all in the clergy, to have an intimate female house companion, except it be a mother, or a sister, or an aunt, or such other woman as has escaped all suspicion.

CANON 4. On appointments to bishoprics in the provinces.

It is especially fitting that a bishop be appointed by all the bishops in the province; but if such a thing be difficult, owing either to urgent necessity, or to the distance, then three at least should come together, the absent bishops giving their votes and expressing their concurrence by letter; this done, the consecration should be performed. The ratification of such procedure, however, is in every province to be left to the metropolitan.

CANON 5. On excommunication, and on provincial synods.

As regards those who, whether in the rank of the clergy or among the laity, have been excommunicated by the bishops in this or that province, the sentence must hold good in accordance with the rule which

prescribes that those who have been cast out by some bishops should not be admitted by others. However, let inquiry be made, whether such have not been unchurched through pettiness, or contentiousness, or some unkindness of that sort on the part of the bishop. In order, therefore, that the matter may receive due examination, it has seemed good that there should be two synods every year in each province, that, by the gathering of all the bishops of a province into one assembly, such questions may be examined into, and thus that those who have undeniably offended against their bishop may appear to all to be with good reason excommunicate, until it may seem fitting to the common body of bishops to cast a milder vote in their behalf. And let the synods be held, one before Lent [Tessaracosta], that, all pettiness of soul being banished, the gift [of the eucharist] may be offered with a pure heart unto God; and the second some time late in the autumn.

CANON 6. All sees to retain their ancient rights. Bishops to be appointed according to rule.

Let the ancient customs prevail which obtain in Egypt and Libya and Pentapolis, and which give the bishop of Alexandria jurisdiction over all these provinces, since there is a similar custom in the case of the bishop of Rome. And likewise also at Antioch, and in the other provinces, their prerogatives are to be preserved to the churches. Now it is perfectly plain that if any one has become a bishop without the consent of the metropolitan, the great Synod has decreed that such a one ought not to remain a bishop. If, however, two or three, through their own contentiousness, antagonize the common vote of all the bishops, the same being reasonable and in accordance with church rule, the vote of the majority must prevail.

CANON 7. Honorary precedence for the bishop of Aelia (Jerusalem).

Since custom and ancient tradition have brought it about that the bishop in Aelia [Jerusalem] is specially honored, he may retain the position of honor, the proper dignity of the metropolis [Cæsarea] being, however, duly conserved.

CANON 8. On the treatment of converts from Novatianism.

With respect to those who at one time style themselves "the Pure" [i. e. Novatians], but afterward seek admission to the catholic and



apostolic church, the holy and great Synod has seen fit to decree that they may remain in the clerical office, provided that they receive imposition of hands. But, first of all, they must make confession in writing that they will agree to the decrees of the catholic and apostolic church, and follow them: that is, by having fellowship with those who have married a second time, and also with those who have lapsed in persecution, if the church has appointed for such a season of penance and a definite time when they can return to fellowship. They will thus give evidence that they will follow all the decrees of the catholic church. Wherever, then, either in villages or cities, those who have received ordination shall be found to be entirely confined to their sect, the men thus found in the clerical office shall retain the same status as before. But if certain [Novatian] clerics seek admission to the catholic church when it already has a bishop or presbyter of its own appointment, it is plain that the bishop of the church shall retain the dignity of "bishop," while he who is styled "bishop" by the so-called "Pure," shall have the rank of presbyter: this, at least, unless the bishop be pleased to grant him a share in the honorary title of "bishop;" if he is not so minded, he should certainly find a place for him as rural bishop or presbyter, that he may seem to retain fully his clerical status. This provision, then, is made to prevent the anomaly of two ruling bishops in one city.

CANON 9. On inquiry into character of ordinands.

If any have been admitted as presbyters without due investigation, or if any, upon examination, have confessed to sins committed by them, and yet have received ordination by men who were moved by their confession, the rule does not accept them; for only a character above reproach will the catholic church defend.

CANON 10. Against ordaining those who have lapsed.

If any from the number of the lapsed have been chosen to office either in ignorance, or with the ordainer's full knowledge, this cannot prejudice the church's rule; for when their disqualification is discovered, they must be deposed.

CANON 11. Laymen who lapsed without excuse to be put under penance.

Regarding those who have fallen away, yet not under compulsion, nor for fear of confiscation of property or personal risk or the like (in

other words, under conditions such as characterized the tyranny of Licinius), the Synod has decided to extend clemency to them, even though they are unworthy of kindly consideration. All those, therefore, who truly repent, if they were formerly among the "faithful," shall spend three years of penitence as "hearers," for seven years they shall be "kneelers," and for two they shall join with the people in the prayers, without, however, participating in the "oblation" [the eucharist].

CANON 12. On the case of those who resigned public office, but sought to regain it.

Those soldiers who were called by grace, and showed real zeal at the start, and threw away their belts, but who afterward returned like dogs to their own vomit, so that some even offered money, and secured reenlistment by bribes; these men must be "kneelers" ten years, even after having spent three years as "hearers." In the case of all such, there should be a thorough examination of their purpose, and of the nature of their repentance; for those who, by their reverence and tears and patience and good works, show their conversion in deed and not merely in appearance, may reasonably join in the prayers at the expiration of the time which it was appointed that they should spend as "hearers"; indeed the bishop may show even greater leniency toward them, if he deems it wise. But those who carry their penance all too lightly, and consider the mere form of entering the church a sufficient sign of their repentance, must by all means complete the full period.

CANON 13. Communion to be given to all dying persons, including those under penance.

With regard to those penitents who are departing this life, the old and regular law is still to be observed: viz. that if any one is departing, he should not be deprived of the last and most necessary provision for the journey. But if, after one's life has been despaired of, and he has partaken of the communion, he is again restored to the number of the living, he shall be in the class of those who join in the prayer only.

And, in general, if any one whatsoever is departing, and begs to partake of the eucharist, the bishop, after due examination of his fitness, shall present to him the "oblation."

## CANON 14. On lapsed catechumens.

Respecting lapsed catechumens, the holy and great Synod has decided that for three years they shall be simply "hearers," and that thereafter they may pray with the catechumens.

## CANON 15. Against migration of bishops and clergy.

Owing to the great disturbance and the many factions that have resulted from a custom, which, though contrary to rule, has been found prevalent in certain quarters, it has seemed best to entirely suppress it, and to ordain that neither bishop, nor presbyter, nor deacon obtain any transfer from city to city; and if, after the decision of the holy and great Synod, any cleric makes any such attempt, or devotes himself to such an enterprise, the arrangement shall be completely nullified, and he shall be restored to the church in which he was ordained bishop or presbyter.

## CANON 16. Against clerics who leave their proper posts.

All those who recklessly withdraw from their church, neither having the fear of God before their eyes, nor taking pains to know the church's rules, whether they be presbyters, or deacons, or registered in any clerical office whatsoever, must by no means be received into another church, but the utmost pressure should be brought to bear upon them to induce them to return to their own diocese; or if they are bent upon staying, fellowship should be denied to them. And if any bishop has the temerity to underhandedly steal a cleric belonging to another bishop, and to ordain him in his own church, without the consent of the bishop from whom the registered cleric withdrew, the ordination shall be void.

## CANON 17. Against clerics who take usury.

Inasmuch as many registered among the clergy, in covetous pursuit of sordid gain, have forgotten the divine Scripture which says: "He put not his money out at interest" [Ps. 14: 5 LXX.,] and when they make loans, demand 1 per cent. a month; the holy and great Synod has deemed it just to decree that if, after the publication of this ordinance, any one is found taking interest by explicit contract, or seeking to accomplish the same result in another way, or exacting half as much again when the debt falls due, or, in fine, resorting to any other contrivance whatsoever for the sake of base gain, he shall be deposed from the clerical office, and his name erased from the canon.

CANON 18. Deacons not to encroach on privileges of presbyters.

It has come to the knowledge of the holy and great Synod, that in certain regions and cities the deacons give the eucharist to the presbyters, although neither rule nor custom allows those, who have no authority to make the "oblation," to give the body of Christ to those who have such authority. And this also has come to light, that, in addition, some of the deacons partake of the eucharist before the bishops. All these abuses, then, must cease. And let the deacons remain in their proper sphere, remembering that they are merely the assistants of the bishop, and of lower rank than the presbyters. As is consistent then with good order, let them receive the eucharist after the presbyters, at the hands of either the bishop or the presbyter. But let no deacon sit in the midst of the presbyters, for such a thing is contrary both to rule and good order. But if any one refuses to obey, even after hearing these ordinances, let him be removed from the diaconate.

CANON 19. On the treatment of converts from Paulianism.

With regard to those who have Paulianized [i. e. followed the heresy of Paul of Samosata], but who later have fled for refuge to the catholic church, the ordinance prescribes that they shall be rebaptized without exception; and if some, in time past, were registered among the clergy, they shall be ordained (after rebaptism) by the bishop of the catholic church, provided they approve themselves to be blameless and above reproach; if, however, the examination finds them unfit for the office, they should be deposed. This rule is to be observed, in like manner, with regard to deaconesses, and, in short, with all those registered among the clergy. We called special attention to the deaconesses, who have apparent clerical rank, since they have no real ordination, and are therefore to be reckoned as altogether of the laity.

CANON 20. Prayer to be offered standing on Sundays and throughout the Paschal season.

Inasmuch as there are certain persons who kneel in prayer upon the Lord's Day and in the season from Easter to Pentecost, the holy Synod, desirous to obtain uniformity in the observance of all forms of worship in every diocese, has seen fit to decree that they offer their prayers to God standing.

## II. CREED AND CANONS OF THE SECOND GENERAL COUNCIL, HELD AT CONSTANTINOPLE, A. D., 381.

I. THE CREED AS REVISED BY THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE,  
ACCORDING TO THE TEXT CONTAINED IN THE ACTS  
OF THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON.

We believe in one God, the FATHER Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord JESUS CHRIST, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds [*aeons*,] Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; he was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; from thence he shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And in the HOLY GHOST, the Lord and Giver of life, who precedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets. In one holy catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## 2. SUBJECTS OF THE CANONS.

1. The Nicene faith must be maintained, and all heresies anathematized.
2. All bishops to observe their existing limits of jurisdiction.
3. The bishop of Constantinople to have priority next after the bishop of Rome.
4. Against Maximus, the pretender to the see of Constantinople.
5. [A. D. 382?] On reception of Antiochenes professing the true faith.
6. [A. D. 382?] On accusations against bishops.
- [7. Spurious. On the mode of receiving converts from heresy.]

## 3. CANONS OF THE FIRST COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

CANON 1. The Nicene faith must be maintained, and all heresies anathematized.

The confession of faith of the three hundred and eighteen fathers assembled at Nicæa in Bithynia shall not be set aside, but shall remain authoritative, and every heresy shall be anathematized, especially the Eunomian or Anomæan, the Arian or Eudoxian, the Semi-Arian or Pneumatomachian, the Sabellian, the Marcellian, the Photinian and the Apollinarian.

CANON 2. All bishops to observe their existing limits of jurisdiction.

The bishops of one diocese shall not visit the churches of another and make confusion among them; but, in accordance with the canons, the bishop of Alexandria shall govern Egypt only, those of the East, the East only, while at the same time regarding the privileges of the church at Antioch, as granted in the canons of Nicæa. And the bishops of Asia shall have jurisdiction over Asia only, those of Pontus, over Pontus only, and those of Thrace, over Thrace only. Unless summoned, bishops shall not go outside their dioceses for the purpose of ordination, or other ecclesiastical functions. But, while the existing canon regarding the dioceses is observed, it is clear that in each province the provincial Synod is to rule, according to the decisions of Nicæa. And the churches of God among the barbaric nations shall be governed according to the custom which prevailed in the times of the fathers.

CANON 3. The bishop of Constantinople to have priority next after the bishop of Rome.

Next to the bishop of Rome, the bishop of Constantinople shall have highest rank, because Constantinople is New Rome.

CANON 4. Against Maximus, the pretender to the see of Constantinople.

As to Maximus the Cynic and the disorder in Constantinople occasioned by him, [be it known that] Maximus never really became bishop, and is not one now, neither are those who have been ordained by him, whatever their rank in the clergy, really ordained, since all things performed upon him [i. e. his ordination as bishop] and by him are pronounced invalid.

CANON 5. [A. D. 382?] On reception of Antiochenes professing the true faith.

Concerning the "tome of the western [Christians]", we also have recognized all Antiochians as orthodox who acknowledge the oneness of the Godhead of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

CANON 6. [A. D. 382?] On accusations against bishops.

Inasmuch as many, to disturb and subvert the order of the church, maliciously and falsely invent charges against the orthodox bishops of the church, for no reason but to injure the reputation of the priests and introduce trouble among the peaceable people, the holy Synod assembled at Constantinople decrees that in future no accuser shall be admitted without examination; that neither all shall be permitted nor all forbidden to make charges against the rulers of the church. But, in case of a private charge against the bishop, as of fraud or any other injustice, no examination shall be made as to the person or the religion of the accuser; for the conscience of the bishop should be clear, and he who alleges injustice, whatever his religion, should receive his just dues. But if the complaint against the bishop is of an ecclesiastical nature, then the persons of the accusers must be considered, in order first, that heretics may not be allowed to bring charges concerning ecclesiastical matters against the orthodox bishops. By heretics are meant both those formerly shut out from the church, and those afterward anathematized by us. In addition to these, also those who indeed profess to hold the sound faith, but who have separated themselves and hold meetings in opposi-

tion to our canonical bishops. Again, members of the church who have been for any cause condemned and excommunicated, or have been deprived of communion, whether clergy or laity, shall not be allowed to accuse a bishop until they have first cleared themselves of the charge against them. In like manner, those under accusation may not accuse a bishop, or any of the clergy, until they have shown themselves innocent of the charges against them. If, however, persons other than heretics, excommunicated, condemned or accused, bring a charge on ecclesiastical matters against the bishop, the holy Synod orders that such shall first bring their complaints before the assembled bishops of the province, and before them prove their charges. Then if the bishops of the province are not in position to punish the bishop for the offences charged, the accusers shall carry it over to a greater synod of the bishops of the diocese, called for the purpose, and they shall not make the complaint before they have in writing promised to undergo the same punishment [as would the bishop if guilty], in case they are proved on examination to have falsely accused him. If, ignoring these clear directions, anyone should presume to assail the ear of the emperor, or the secular courts, or an ecumenical council and so show disrespect to the bishops of his diocese, his charge shall most certainly not be received; because he has shown contempt for the canons and violated the order of the church.

CANON 7. [Spurious. On the mode of receiving converts from heresy.]

Those who come over to orthodoxy and from heretics to the number of the saved, we receive in the following prescribed manner. Arians, Macedonians, Sabbatians, Novatians [who call themselves Katharoi and Aristeroi], Quartodecimans or Tetradites, and Apollinarians, we receive after they have presented written petitions and have anathematized every heresy not agreeing with the holy catholic and apostolic church of God. First, they are sealed or anointed with the holy oil on the forehead, the eyes, nostrils, mouth and ears; and as we seal them we say, "The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit." But Eunomians, who only baptize with one immersion, Montanists, here called Phrygians, Sabellians, who teach the identity of the Father and the Son and make some other grievous errors, and all other heretics [since there are many here, especially from Galatia]—all wishing to come from these to orthodoxy, we receive as we do pagans. The first day we make them



Christians, the second catechumens, the third day we exorcise them after three times breathing on the forehead and on the ears. And so we give them instruction and make them attend church for a long period and listen to the Scriptures, and then we baptize them.

### III. THE CANONS OF THE THIRD GENERAL COUNCIL, HELD AT EPHEBUS, A. D. 431.

#### I. SUBJECTS OF THE CANONS.

1. Against metropolitans joining the rival council, or the Pelagian party.
2. Against bishops adhering to, or going over to the rival council.
3. In favor of orthodox clerics deposed by Nestorian party, or belonging to dioceses of Nestorianizing bishops.
4. Against clerics adopting Nestorianism or Pelegianism.
5. Against clerics deposed for misconduct and uncanonically restored by Nestorius.
6. Against all who resist decrees of the council.
7. No new creed to be composed or presented to converts.
8. Church of Cyprus, and all churches to retain existing rights.

#### 2. CANONS OF THE COUNCIL OF EPHEBUS.

CANON I. Against metropolitans joining the rival council, or the Pelagian party.

Inasmuch as those who were for any cause absent from the holy synod should not be ignorant of the affairs there transacted concerning them, be it known to your holiness and love that if a metropolitan of the province has turned from this holy ecumenical Synod and joined the ranks of the apostate, or shall afterward join them; or has accepted the beliefs of Coelestius [i. e. the Pelagians] or shall accept them, he has no longer any jurisdiction over the bishops of the province, and is already excluded from all church fellowship by the Synod, and without power; but it is also the duty of the bishops of the province and the neighboring orthodox metropolitans to remove him entirely from the rank of the episcopate.

CANON 2. Against bishops adhering to, or going over to the rival council.

If any of the provincial bishops did not attend the holy Synod, but went over to the apostates, or attempted to go over; or if they subscribed to the deposition of Nestorius and then afterward went over to the ranks of the apostate; these shall be entirely deposed from the priesthood and stripped of their office.

CANON 3. In favor of orthodox clerics deposed by Nestorian party, or belonging to dioceses of Nestorianizing bishops.

If any of the clergy, in city or country, have, owing to their orthodox faith, been rejected from the priesthood by Nestorius and his party, they shall resume their office; and, in general, the clergy who agree with the orthodox and ecumenical Synod are enjoined not to submit in any respect to apostate or apostatizing bishops.

CANON 4. Against clerics adopting Nestorianism or Pelagianism.

If any of the clergy shall apostatize and presume publicly or privately to adhere to Nestorius or Coelestius, they shall be deposed from their rank by the holy Synod.

CANON 5. Against clerics deposed for misconduct and uncanonically restored by Nestorius.

Those who for improper actions have been condemned by the holy Synod or by their own bishops, and whom Nestorius and his party in their usual lax fashion have afterwards attempted to restore to fellowship or rank, or shall attempt to restore, shall remain unbenefited thereby and unrestored to rank.

CANON 6. Against all who resist decrees of the Council.

Now in general, if any presume in any way to resist any of the enactments of the holy Synod at Ephesus, the holy Synod decrees that they shall be utterly deprived of their office, if they be bishops or other clerics; and if laymen, they shall be excommunicated.

The decree of the holy Synod pronounced after reading first the creed of the three hundred and eighteen holy and blessed fathers at Nicæa and then the impious and false creed written by Theodore of Mopssuestia, which latter was exposed in the holy Synod at Ephesus by Charisios presbyter of Philadelphia.

CANON 7. No new creed to be composed or presented to converts.

These things having been read the holy Synod decreed that it was not permitted to any one to recite, or to compose, or to proffer any other creed than that appointed by the holy fathers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the city of Nicæa.

Moreover, those who shall dare to compose, or to bring forward, or to proffer another creed to such as are willing to turn to a knowledge of the truth, whether from among the Greeks, or the Jews, or any heresy whatsoever, these shall be deposed, if they are bishops or clerics; the bishops from their bishoprics, the clerics from the clericate; if laymen, they shall be anathematized. In like manner, if any individuals, whether bishops, clerics or laymen, shall be detected thinking or teaching those things contained in the creed exposed by Charisios, the presbyter, concerning the only begotten Son of God, or those wicked and perverted doctrines of Nestorius, they shall be subject to the decree of this holy and ecumenical Synod. It is accordingly clear that the bishop is to be dismissed from the episcopate, and degraded. And the cleric likewise is to be cut off from the clericate. But if the person be a layman, let him be anathematized in accordance with what has been said.

Vote of this holy Synod given upon the appeal made to it by the bishops of Cyprus.

CANON 8. Church of Cyprus, and all churches to retain existing rights.

A matter not covered by the ecclesiastical laws and the canons of the holy apostles, and affecting the liberty of all, has been brought before us by our fellow bishop, Rheginus, beloved of God, together with Zeno and Evagrius, beloved of God, bishops of the province of Cyprus. Wherefore, as ordinary ailments need strong medicines, and serious troubles result in real harm, and the worst diseases are fatal, if their course is not at once stayed, so the bishop of the city of Antioch, having performed ordinations in Cyprus, the devout men composing the holy Synod accordingly declare in response to petitions and personal requests, that the representatives of the holy churches of Cyprus have the indisputable and inviolable right, in accordance with the canons of the holy fathers and ancient custom, to themselves ordain their own most pious bishops. Moreover, the same rights shall be preserved to other dioceses and to all other provinces everywhere, so that no one of our bishops, beloved of God, may invade another province, which has not

previously and even from the beginning been under his care or that of his predecessors. But if any one shall occupy or take a diocese by his own power, it shall be surrendered; in order that the statutes of the fathers may not be broken, lest the arrogance of worldly power creep into the sacred functions, lest we in our ignorance utterly destroy the liberty, which our Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of all men, purchased for us by his own blood. It is therefore agreeable to this holy and ecumenical Synod that the rights of each province, possessed from the beginning, shall be preserved pure and inviolate, so that each metropolitan, having obtained his functions in a proper manner may exercise his office in security. Now if any one shall bring forward a decision contrary to these ordinances, it is clear to this holy and ecumenical Synod that the same is without force.

#### IV. DEFINITION OF FAITH AND CANONS OF THE FOURTH GENERAL COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON, A. D. 451.

##### I. DEFINITION OF THE FAITH BY THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON.

The holy and great and ecumenical Synod, which by the grace of God and the decree of our most pious and Christian Emperors, Marcian and Valentinian, is convened in the metropolis Chalcedon of the province of Bythinia, in the chapel of the holy and pure martyr Euphemia, has defined as follows:

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, when confirming the faith in his disciples, declared: 'Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you,' so that no one might be in disagreement with his neighbor concerning the doctrines of religion, but that the preaching of the truth might be made known to all alike. Inasmuch, however, as the evil one ceases not by his tares to choke out the seeds of religion, and is ever devising something new in opposition to the truth, God has therefore, in his care for the human race, stirred up zeal in this pious and orthodox Emperor to call together unto himself the heads of the priesthood, so that the grace of Christ, the Lord of us all, being operative, every plague of falsehood may be removed from the sheep of Christ and they may be nourished with tender plants of truth. This we have accord-

ingly done, since we have expelled by our common judgment the doctrines of error, have renewed the right faith of the fathers, have proclaimed the creed of the 318 to all, and have subscribed to that statement of religion adopted by those fathers who afterward gathered in the great city of Constantinople, a hundred and fifty strong; this faith we ourselves ratify. While guarding the order and form of faith everywhere current and ourselves receiving the regulations of the earlier holy Ephesian Synod, of which Coelestine of Rome and Cyril of Alexandria, sainted to memory, were the guides, we declare that the confession of the 318 holy and blessed fathers who gathered under the Emperor Constantine, of sainted memory, is a light to the right and unblemished faith; and affirm that that is also valid which was decreed by the 150 holy fathers in Constantinople in repudiation of those engendering heresy, and for the confirmation of our own catholic and apostolic faith. [Here follow the Creeds of Nicæa and Constantinople.] This wise and wholesome symbol of divine grace should indeed suffice for a complete knowledge and confirmation of religion, since it teaches the finalities concerning the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and offers the incarnation of the Lord to those who receive it in faith. As, however, those who attempt to do away with the preaching of the truth have devised vain expressions through their own heresies, daring indeed to destroy the mystery of the dispensation [incarnation] of our Lord, and rejecting the designation "God-bearer" as applied to the Virgin; moreover, introducing an inter-mixture and fusion [of natures], imagining without reason that there is only one nature of the flesh and the God-head, and rashly maintaining that the divine nature of the Only-begotten through the mixture became passible. Wherefore, desiring to exclude every machination against the truth, the present holy, great and ecumenical Synod, teaching afresh the stability of the proclamation, decrees in the first place that the faith of the 318 holy fathers shall remain inviolate, and also that the doctrine concerning the essence of the Holy Spirit, afterwards promulgated by the 150 holy fathers gathered in the royal city in opposition to the Pneumatomachi, shall have equal validity. This they made known to all, not as though supplying any deficiency in preceeding deliverances, but in order to make known in writing their deep conviction concerning the Holy Spirit in opposition to such as seek to set aside his glory. On account of those, however, who attempted to destroy the mystery of the dispensation [incarnation], and shamelessly spoke of him who was born of the holy Mary as a mere man, the Synod

has accepted as valid the synodal letters of the blessed Cyril, pastor of the church of Alexandria, to Nestorius and to the orientals in refutation of the blasphemies of Nestorius, and as expressive of the deep conviction of those seeking with holy zeal to preserve the redemptive symbol; and it has added to them the letter of the president of the great and ancient church of Rome, the blessed and holy archbishop Leo, written to the sainted archbishop Flavian for the overthrow of the errors of Eutyches, as agreeing with the doctrine of the great Peter, and as a firm pillar against all heretics, for the proper confirmation of the orthodox dogmas. The Synod opposes those who attempt to sever the sacred mystery of the dispensation [incarnation] into a duality of sons; and it excludes from the sacred fellowship those who dare to speak of the Godhead of the Only-begotten as passible, and withstands those who imagine, in regard to Christ's two natures, a commixture or fusion, and expels those who foolishly affirm that the 'form of a servant' which Christ assumed from us was of a heavenly or any other [non-human] essence; and it anathematizes those who fable that there were two natures of the Lord before the union, but make out that there was only one after the union. Following therefore the holy fathers, we all unanimously instruct men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead, the same perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man; the same of a reasonable soul and a body, coessential with the Father according to the Godhead, the same also coessential with us according to the manhood, 'in all points like unto us, apart from sin;' before the ages begotten of the Father according to the Godhead, and in the last days, for us and for our salvation, the same [was born] of Mary the Virgin, the Mother of God, according to the manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten: acknowledged as in two natures, without amalgamation, without change, without division, without severance. The difference of the nature has not only not been destroyed by reason of the union, but rather the peculiarity of each nature has been preserved, combining indeed into one person and one hypostasis; not as though divided or separated into two persons, but as one and the same Son and Only-begotten God-Logos, the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as the prophets announced him and he himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us. These things therefore having been defined by us with all possible exactness and care, the holy ecumenical Synod has decreed, that none shall advance, or write, or compose, or think, or teach others another creed; and those

daring to compose, or bring forward, or teach, or give another symbol to such as desire to turn from Hellenism, or Judaism, or any heresy whatsoever to a knowledge of the truth, they, if they be bishops or clerics, shall be deposed, the bishops from their bishoprics, the clerics from the clericate; but if they be monks or laymen, they shall be excommunicated. Upon the reading of the decree all the bishops were delighted and exclaimed: 'This is the faith of the fathers! The metropolitans must now subscribe while the imperial commissioners are here; definitions so good can allow of no delay; this is the faith of the apostles, we all agree to it, we all think thus!' The august and glorious commissioners said: 'These things having been defined by the holy fathers, and being agreeable to all, shall now go to his divine majesty, the Emperor.

## 2. SUBJECTS OF THE CANONS.

1. Preceding canons ratified.
2. Against simoniacal ordinations.
3. Clerics not to undertake secular business.
4. Against disorderly conduct in monks.
5. Bishops and clerics not to migrate.
6. None to be ordained without a title.
7. Clerics and monks to hold no secular office.
8. Clergy of monasteries, etc., to be subject to their bishops.
9. On the prosecution of causes by clerics or bishops.
10. Against pluralities.
11. Letters of peace to be furnished to needy travellers.
12. No new 'metropolis' to be erected by civil authority.
13. Foreign clerics to produce letters commendatory.
14. On the marriage of readers and singers.
15. On deaconesses.
16. No monk or dedicated virgin to marry.
17. On questions as to diocesan limits.
18. Against conspiracies of clerics or monks.
19. Provincial synods to meet regularly.
20. On accusations of bishops or clerics.
22. A bishop's property not to be taken away at his death.
23. Clerics and monks not to make a disorderly stay in Constantinople.

24. Monasteries not be secularised.
25. Consecrations of bishops not to be delayed.
26. All bishops to have stewards of church property.
27. Against seizure of women under pretext of marriage.
28. On the dignity and powers of the see of Constantinople.
- [29. Bishops not to be degraded to the order of presbyters.]
- [30. On the case of the Egyptian bishops.]

### 3. CANONS OF THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON.

#### CANON 1. Preceding canons ratified.

We have judged it proper that the canons, promulgated by the holy fathers in each Synod until the present, remain in force.

#### CANON 2. Against simoniacal ordinations.

If any bishop shall hold an ordination for money, and shall put on sale that grace which is not to be sold; if then, he ordain for money a bishop, or chorepiscopus [rural bishop], or presbyter, or deacon, or any man who is numbered among the clergy, or if he shall appoint for money a steward, or advocate [defensor], or sacristan [?], or in short any one enrolled upon the canon, on account of his own love of sordid gain:—the bishop who is convicted of attempting such a thing will imperil his own clerical position; and the person ordained shall derive no advantage from the ordination or appointment thus venially obtained, but must be removed from the dignity, or office which he has acquired for money. And further, if any man is plainly seen to be a third party to bargains so shameful and nefarious, he also must be deposed from his own rank, if he is a cleric, and if a layman, or monk, he must be anathematized.

#### CANON 3. Clerics not to undertake secular business.

It has come to the holy Synod that certain men who are registered among the clergy become, through their own love of base gain, farmers of other men's estates, and contract for managing worldly affairs, thus



becoming remiss in the service of God; that they also insinuate themselves into the houses of worldly persons, and in covetousness accept the management of their property: therefore the holy and great Synod has decreed that in future no bishop, or cleric, or monk shall either farm estates, or administer property, or intrude himself into secular administrations, except when he is legally compelled to assume the guardianship of minors, or is entrusted by the bishop with the care of ecclesiastical business, or of orphans, or of widows not otherwise provided for, and in general of persons who most need help from the church, on account of the fear of the Lord. Now if any one in future attempts to transgress these decrees, he shall incur the ecclesiastical penalties.

CANON 4. Against disorderly conduct in monks.

Those who truly and unfeignedly follow the monastic life should be deemed worthy of fitting honor. But inasmuch as certain men assume the monastic state as a pretext and disturb the churches and the affairs of state, wandering about the cities heedlessly, and, not content with that, even undertaking to found monasteries of their own, it is hereby decreed that no one shall anywhere build or found a monastery, or oratory, against the will of the bishop of the city; also, that the monks in each city and rural district be in subjection to the bishops, and cling to a quiet life and attend to fasting and prayer only, continuing in the places where they renounced [the world]. Nor may they annoyingly intrude into the affairs of the church, or of this life, or have anything to do with them, leaving their own monasteries [in order to do so], unless they be permitted by the bishop of the city for some necessary reason; and they may not receive into their monasteries a slave who wishes to lead a monastic life contrary to the will of his own master. And they who transgress this ordinance, we have decreed to be excommunicated, that the name of God be not blasphemed. The bishop of the city, then, ought to make requisite provision for the monasteries.

CANON 5. Bishops and clerics not to migrate.

With regard to bishops or clerics who remove from city to city, it has seemed best that the canons enacted by the holy fathers, which apply to their case, shall retain their original force.

## CANON 6. None to be ordained without a title.

No one shall be ordained at large, either to the presbyterate, or diaconate, or to any place in the ecclesiastical order whatsoever: on the contrary the person ordained must be particularly designated to some church in city, or village, or to some oratory [martyr's chapel], or monastery. Such ordination at large, then, the holy Synod has decreed to be null and nowhere operative, to the disgrace of the ordainer.

## CANON 7. Clerics and monks to hold no secular office.

We have decreed that those who have been once registered among the clergy, or who have become monks, must enter upon neither public service nor any other secular calling; or if they have the temerity to do so, and do not penitently return to that life which they formerly chose for God's sake, they are to be anathematized.

## CANON 8. Clergy of monasteries, etc., to be subject to their bishops.

In accordance with the tradition of the holy fathers, the clerics in almshouses, monasteries, and martyries must remain under the jurisdiction of the bishop of the city where they live, and must not in self-will grow restive under the authority of their own bishop. And those who dare to violate this statute in any way whatsoever, and do not subject themselves to their own bishop, must, if they are clerics, incur canonical penalties, or if monks or laymen, be excommunicated.

## CANON 9. On the prosecution of causes by clerics or bishops.

If a cleric has a matter against another cleric, he must not leave his own bishop and run away to secular tribunals; but he must first lay the charge before his own bishop, or, with the bishop's own consent, before those whom both parties are willing to make arbiters of the matter in dispute. Now if any man does otherwise in such a case, he shall incur canonical penalties. And if any cleric has a matter against his own, or another bishop, the case must be tried in the provincial synod; but if a bishop or cleric has a dispute with the metropolitan of the same province, he must go to the exarch of the dioecesis [the superior metropolitan], or to the see of the imperial city, Constantinople, and have the case there adjudicated.

## CANON 10. Against pluralities.

A cleric is not permitted to be registered in two cities at once, viz: in the church in which he was originally ordained, and in that to which, through love of empty glory, he has fled, presumably because it is larger; and those who have done this thing, must be restored to their own church in which they were ordained at the first, and must there minister. If, however, a man has really been transferred from one church to another, he must have nothing more to do with the affairs of the former church, or with the martyries, or almshouses, or hospices under its jurisdiction. The holy Synod has therefore decreed, that those who are so bold as to do anything thus forbidden, after the publication of the ordinance of this great and ecumenical Synod, must be deposed from their rank.

## CANON 11. Letters of peace to be furnished to needy travellers.

We have decreed that all poor persons, and such as need assistance, shall after an examination travel with ecclesiastical letters of peace simply, and not with letters of commendation; because it is seemly that commendatory letters should be granted only to persons held in high esteem.

## CANON 12. No new 'metropolis' to be erected by civil authority.

It has come to our notice that some, in defiance of ecclesiastical enactments, have made applications to the government and, with the authority of pragmatic letters, have divided one province into two, in this way constituting two metropolitans in the same province. The holy Synod has therefore decreed, that in future no bishop be so bold as to do this, for any one who attempts it must be degraded from the position which he holds; and all the cities, which, by imperial edicts have been honored with the name of "metropolis," may enjoy the honorary title only, as also their ruling bishops. The peculiar right of the real metropolis must of course be conserved.

## CANON 13. Foreign clerics to produce letters commendatory.

Foreign clerics and leaders must not, by any means, be allowed to officiate anywhere in another city without the authorization of commendatory letters from their own bishop.

## CANON 14. On the marriage of readers and singers.

Inasmuch as in certain provinces readers and singers are permitted to marry, the holy Synod has decreed that at least no one shall be allowed to take a heterodox wife. And those who have already begotten children of such a marriage, must bring their offspring into the communion of the catholic church, if they had previously caused them to be baptized among the heretics; if, however, their children have not been thus baptized, they may not henceforth have them baptized among the heretics, nor unite them in marriage to a heretic, or a Jew, or a pagan, unless indeed the person joined to the orthodox spouse promises to turn to the orthodox faith, Now if any one transgresses this ordinance of the holy Synod, he shall incur canonical discipline.

## CANON. 15. On deaconesses.

A woman may not be ordained a deaconess before forty years of age, and then only after thorough scrutiny. If, then, after receiving ordination, and remaining at her duty for some time, she entangle herself in marriage, thus doing despite unto the grace of God, she must be anathematized, and her husband along with her.

## CANON 16. No monk or dedicated virgin to marry.

A virgin who has consecrated herself to the Lord God, and likewise also monks, are not permitted to enter into the marriage relation: and if any be found so doing, they must be excommunicated. Yet we have decreed that the bishop of the place has authority to use clemency in their case.

## CANON 17. On questions as to diocesan limits.

The rural or country parishes in each church should remain undisturbed under the authority of the bishop who holds them, especially if he has ruled them in peaceable possession for the space of thirty years. But if, within the thirty years, a dispute about them has arisen, he who says he is wronged is permitted to bring the matter before the provincial synod. But if a man is wronged by his own metropolitan, the case must be tried before the exarch of the diocese, or the see of Constantinople, as we have before directed. And if any city has been rebuilt by imperial authority, or shall be in the future, the arrangement of the church dioceses must follow the political and public models.

## CANON 18. Against conspiracies of clerics or monks.

The crime of conspiracy, or faction has been totally prohibited, even by the civil laws: much more seemly is it, then, that the church of God should forbid it. If then, any clerics or monks shall be found conspiring, or forming factions, or concocting plots against bishops, or fellow clerics, they must lose their office.

## CANON 19. Provincial synods to meet regularly.

It has come to our ears that in the provinces the synods of bishops provided for by the statute are not held, and, as a result, many ecclesiastical matters which need correcting escape attention: the holy Synod has therefore decreed, that in accordance with the canons of the holy fathers the bishops in each province shall assemble twice a year, wherever the bishop of the metropolis thinks best, and that they shall correct each abuse that arises: also, that those bishops who do not attend, though they are residing in their own cities at the time and are in good health and are not engaged in any unavoidable and necessary occupation, shall receive a brotherly rebuke.

As we have before decreed, clerics belonging to any church must not be allowed to connect themselves with a church in another city, but must be content with the one in which they were originally deemed worthy to minister, though this rule does not apply to those who, having lost their own country, have been compelled to migrate to another church. If then any bishop, after hearing this ordinance, shall receive a cleric belonging to another bishop, we have decided that both receiver and received shall be excommunicated until such time as the deserting cleric shall return to his own church.

## CANON 20. On accusations of bishops or clerics.

Clerics or laymen who bring charges against bishops or clerics must not be allowed to make a formal accusation indiscriminately and without examination, but must first have their own characters tested.

CANON 22. A bishop's property not to be taken away at his death.

Clerics must not be allowed, after the death of their bishop, to plunder his effects, an act forbidden by the ancient canons also. Those, then, who do this, risk their positions.

CANON 23. Clerics and monks not to make a disorderly stay in Constantinople.

It has come to the ears of the holy Synod that certain clerics and monks, though entrusted with no business by their bishop, and sometimes after having been excommunicated by him, betake themselves to the imperial city [Constantinople] and remain long there, making disturbances and troubling the order of the church, and even upsetting some households. The holy Synod has therefore decreed that notice be given to such persons by the advocate of the most holy church of Constantinople to depart from the imperial city, and if they impudently continue such conduct, that they be ejected by the advocate, even against their will, and betake themselves to the places where they belong.

CANON 24. Monasteries not to be secularised.

Monasteries once consecrated with the consent of the bishop must remain monasteries forever, and their property must be preserved for them; nor may they ever be converted into secular dwellings; those, then, who give their consent to such secularization will incur the penalties prescribed by the canons.

CANON 25. Consecrations of bishops not to be delayed.

Inasmuch as some of the metropolitans, as we have heard reported on all sides, are neglectful of the flocks entrusted to them, and defer the ordination of bishops, the holy Synod has been pleased to decree that the ordination of bishops take place within three months after a vacancy, unless some unavoidable necessity prevails to lengthen the interval. Now if a metropolitan does not do as here directed, he will incur ecclesiastical punishment. The income, however, of the church thus widowed by the death of the bishop, must be safely kept by the steward of the church.

CANON 26. All bishops to have stewards of church property.

Inasmuch as in certain churches, as we have heard widely reported, the bishops administer the church property without the aid of stewards, it has been resolved that every church which has a bishop, should also have a steward of its own clerical stall, who shall manage the church's funds in accordance with the judgment of his bishop, in order that the financial management of the church may not be unattested, and, as a result, the church property squandered, and reproach be cast upon the priesthood. If, then, the bishop will not do this, he must be punished according to the sacred canons.

CANON 27. Against seizure of women under pretext of marriage.

Those who ravish women even under the pretence of marriage, or who are accomplices in the whole plan of the ravishers, or in the act itself, the holy Synod has decreed shall fall from their office, if clerics, and be anathematized, if laymen.

CANON 28. On the dignity and powers of the see of Constantinople.

Following in all respects the decrees of the holy fathers, and recognizing the canon just read, which was framed by the 150 most religious bishops, who assembled in the queen city, Constantinople, New Rome, in the reign of the emperor Theodosius, of pious memory, we also so decree and vote as they did respecting the privileges of the most holy church of this same Constantinople, New Rome. For the fathers accorded the privileges to the see of the Elder Rome with good reason, since she was then the imperial city; and the 150 most religious bishops, acting upon the same principle, awarded the same privileges to the most holy see of the new Rome, rightly judging that a city which is honored with the sovereignty and senate, and which enjoys equal privileges with the elder queen city, Rome, should receive dignity like hers in matters ecclesiastical as well, holding the place next to her: And so that the metropolitans only of the dioceses of Pontus, Asia and Thrace, together with those bishops in their dioceses who are settled over barbarians, shall be ordained by the aforesaid most holy see of the most holy church at Constantinople, each metropolitan of the aforesaid dioceses, in company with the bishops of his province, ordaining of course

the bishops of that province, as the sacred canons prescribe. But, as we have said before, the metropolitans of the aforesaid dioceses are to be ordained by the archbishop of Constantinople, after harmonious elections have been held, in accordance with the usage, and the result reported to him.

CANON [29. Bishops not to be degraded to the order of presbyters.]

To change a bishop to the rank of a presbyter is sacrilege. If any just cause removes bishops from episcopal functions, they ought not to hold the position even of presbyter. But if they are removed from their high office without having some charge proved against them, they shall be restored to their episcopal rank.

CANON [30. On the case of the Egyptian bishops.]

Inasmuch as the most pious bishops of Egypt have up to the present time postponed subscribing to the letters of the most holy archbishop Leo, not in a spirit of opposition to the catholic faith, but upon the plea that they have a custom in the Egyptian diocese to do nothing of this kind contrary to the will and direction of the archbishop, and since they ask that indulgence be granted to them until the ordination of the future bishop of the great city of the Alexandrians; it has seemed to us reasonable and humane, that such indulgence be granted to them, while they remain [still in full possession of their episcopal status] within the imperial city, until the archbishop of the great city of the Alexandrians shall be ordained.



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