

## THE NICENE AND POST-NICENE FATHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH - 2nd series

After the success of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, Christian writings become much more prolific than previously. There was not longer the threat of persecution. Moreover the church was large and widespread and enjoyed the favor of the Empire. Immediately there came a great burst of interest in the beginnings of the Church and its history through the three centuries that had passed since the time of Christ. The first volume of this series is devoted to the writings of Eusebius, the first great Church historian. If it were not for Eusebius many details of early Christian history would be lost to us.

Eusebius' writings need to be checked and corrected at times by the writings of other early historians. Volume II deals with two of these ~~XXXXXXXX~~ while Volume III deals with still another.

The years after Nicaea were not years of quietness and calmness. Almost immediately a new heresy sprang up - the heresy of Arianism, a heresy which gave great honor to Christ but denied His full deity. For a time Roman Emperors espoused the cause of Arianism and used all the force of the Empire to ~~bring~~ <sup>bring</sup> the Christian Church in line with this unscriptural view. During this period a great leader rose in Egypt - Athanasius. For a time it seemed as if Athanasius was standing against the world. He was universally derided as a bitter, cantankerous, making much of small matters. However, this was not true. Athanasius was very tolerant on minor points but he stood like a rock on everything that was vital, for belief in the absolute dependability of the Word of God, and <sup>in</sup> the full deity of Christ and the necessity of belief in Him for salvation. Five times Athanasius was exiled by the Roman Emperor. Every time, however, he was able to return and be re-established in his leadership in Egypt. Athanasius was such a fine Christian leader, such an able speaker, such a clear writer, such a devoted Christian, that he overcame all obstacles and in the end was recognized as having been more than any other human being, responsibly for bringing the Christian