

He has separated them from the world, and the things of the world, that they may attend solely to the things of the Lord; and how to please the Lord. Of them, the virgin Priesthood of the Redeemer, he speaks thus by the mouth of his Prophet Isaias: *I will give them in my house, and within my walls, a name, better than sons and daughters: an everlasting name, that shall never perish.* Is. lvi, 5. The worldling's name is propagated and preserved on earth for a while, by his carnal progeny: but the Pastor's spiritual progeny; those, whom, like Saint Paul, *he has begotten in Christ*; shall perpetuate his name, and render it illustrious in heaven, for an endless eternity.

XIX.

ON VOWS.

PROTESTANTS deny all the merit, and even the lawfulness, of vowing to God any pious, charitable or good work whatever; and of faithfully observing such vows, when made. This negative was necessarily broached in self-defence, by the fathers and founders of the Protestant reformation. They could not else have hoped to palliate, in the eyes of the public, their open breach of the religious vows they had taken of *voluntary poverty; perpetual chastity, and entire obedience.* For by such vows had Luther, Zuinglius, Carlostadius, Melancton, Ecolumpadius, Bucer, Beza, Knox, and others, all apostate friars and priests, freely and lawfully bound themselves for life, on taking holy orders, and entering their several institutes. Their first endeavor therefore was to excuse before the world their forsworn conduct: and finding their apology take; their next effort was to make it appear that they had only done, as they ought, in breaking thus through all their religious restrictions. Finally, encouraged by the applauses of their loose and irreligious partisans, they had the unblushing effrontery even to make a merit in having exchanged the privations, penitential austerities, and laborious duties of their former holy state of life, for the worldly freedom; the unrestrained indulgence of their sensual appetites; the animal gratification and delights of the flesh!

The Catholic doctrine of vows, notwithstanding, is sanctioned, like all the other articles of her faith, by the most evident scripture. For in it we read how the greatest servants of God were in the habit of vowing, and of scrupulously performing the vows they had made. See Gen. 28. 20.—ibid. 30. 13.—In it we read that God himself commanded his worshippers to vow to him; and rewarded them for vowing and keeping their vows: vows by which persons, as well as things, were set aside and consecrated to his service. Levit. 27. 9. Numb. 6. 9. Samuel was vowed to God from his Mother's womb; and given to serve him in his temple for ever. &c.

Nor was this practice of vowing discontinued in the Christian Church, as appears from Acts. 18. 18. and 21. 23. It were needless to adduce more scripture proofs for that, of which none can doubt, who read the Bible. This practice of vowing, all will allow, was considered by the Jews as a divine ob-

lance. Let the Protestant then shew me in all the scriptures a single text forbidding it to be any more observed. On the contrary, it is sanctioned by the Saviour's declaration that *he came not to abolish, but to fulfil the law.*

To be continued.

BIBLICAL NOTICES AND EXPLANATIONS.

Continued.

NUMBERS.

CHAPTER. 10.—The two silver Trumpets are the emblems of the two modes of announcement of the word of God, under the old and new law. They are to be sounded by the Priests. v. 8. These are the Heralds, appointed to proclaim his will, and revelations to our race. To them, and them alone, the Saviour said: *he who hears you, hears me.* Luke x. 16.

Chapter 11, v. 4. The Egyptians, who followed the Israelites in their flight from Egypt bring by their example, the people to sin. Their longings after their former fare in Egypt; their disrelish of the heavenly showered manna, and their loud murmurings at their present condition, enkindle the wrath of God against them: and dishearten Moses, their law giver and leader, inasmuch that he prays God to ease him of his charge; or even to take away his life, rather than let him be afflicted with such great evils.

We may remark here the force of bad example; and the danger of associating with the wicked: also, how displeasing to God are the longings of his people, in times of penitential fasting and abstinence, to gratify, like the Egyptians, the children of this world, their sensual and unrestrained appetites. We observe too, his condescension in granting the earnest requests of his faithful servants; by his appointment of seventy men of the ancients of Israel, to bear with Moses the burden of the people: his power to do, what to creatures seems altogether impossible; by supplying in the Desert so vast a multitude with the flesh they longed for; till its abundance should surfeit them; till it should come out at their nostrils, and become loathsome to them. It hence also appears that God yields to the wicked the objects of their criminal longings; but that such never fail to prove their bane; and to bring on in the end their merited punishment; as it happened, on this occasion, to the guilty Israelites.

Chapter xii.—In this chapter we see how God resents the contempt shewn to those whom he has appointed to be our guides and directors; that is, his lawful pastors: to whom the Saviour said: *he who despises you, despises me.*—Luke x. 16. Such as despise and vilify them, are struck, like Mary, with the leprosy of sin, and cast forth from the society of the clean. We see also, by the efficacy of Moses' prayer, how powerful the intercession of the just is in behalf of the sinner.

Chapter xiii.—Verse 33. The spies, who by their misrepresentations of the land of promise, discouraged the Israelites from attempting its conquest; were a figure of those worldlings; who decrying, or misrepresenting true devotion, discourage christians from striving in earnest to conquer all their spiritual enemies; and thus secure their entry into the promised land of endless felicity: the kingdom of heaven; which, as our Saviour assures us, *suffers violence; and only the violent shall carry it away.*—D. B.

Chapter xiv.—Verse 30. None but the courageous, like Joshua and Caleb, shall ever enter the promised land of bliss. From this it appears how small a portion of mankind will be saved.

Verse 34.—According to the number of the forty days, in which you viewed the land; a year shall be counted for a day; and forty years you shall re-

ceive your iniquities; and shall know my revenge. The term of forty is that of punishment, as at the deluge; Gen. vii. 19. It is therefore that of penance, as in the fasts of Moses, Elias, the Ninevites, our Saviour, &c. and of his Church in her fast of Lent: to appease the wrath of God, enkindled against us by our sins.

Verse 44.—The Israelites, fighting against the command of Moses, and without the Ark, are foiled; so, in the spiritual warfare, those, depending on themselves, who fight not under the direction of their spiritual leaders, are sure to be overcome.

Chapter xv.—Verse 4. We still observe the figurative bloody sacrifice followed by the figurative unbloody sacrifice of flour, or bread and wine; the sacrifice of the Saviour; who is a priest forever according to the order of Melchisadech.

Verse 35.—The temporal punishment awarded to the Sabbath breaker, shews the spiritual punishment to be awarded on all, who neglect to keep holy the Lord's day.

Chapter xvi.—Verse 2.—The crime of these men, which was punished in so remarkable a manner; was that of schism; and rebellion against the authority established by God in the Church; and their pretending to the priesthood, without being lawfully called and sent. The same is the case of all modern sectaries.—D. B.

Verse 40.—Their crime, as the greatest possible, which went to the subverting of religion and the confounding of God's institutes; met with the most awful and appalling of punishments; and a memorial of it was affixed to the altar, admonishing the people that no stranger, or any one that is not of the seed of Aaron, should come near to offer incense to the Lord; lest he suffer, as Core did, and all his congregation. And are not the functions of Christ's priesthood as holy as those of the priesthood of Aaron? Or is the ministry of the Christian Church left free to be usurped by every one who pleases? No: the crime of all, who dare usurp it, without being called by God, as Aaron was, is greater far than that of Core; and its punishment not temporal, but eternal.

Chapter 17, verse 8. The Rod of Aaron, which thus miraculously budded and brought forth fruit, is considered a figure of the blessed virgin conceiving and bringing forth her divine son, without any prejudice to her virginity. D. B.

She was of the sacerdotal race, and a descendant of Aaron; as is evident from her being a near kinswoman to Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias. She was also of the family of David; as appears from the genealogy given of her guardian spouse in the gospel. For by the law of Moses, in order to keep the tribes distinct and that it might be known of what tribe the Saviour should be born; the Jews were forbidden to marry, save in their own tribe. She was therefore that descendant of Jesse, whom the prophet Isaias foresaw eight hundred years before her birth; and described, as follows: *a rod shall come forth from the root of Jesse; and a flower shall rise up out of his root: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him &c.* Is. 11, 1. This was the rod that budded, and brought forth the Saviour.

Chapter 18.—If any stranger shall approach, he shall be slain. With what jealousy does God in the old law watch over the figurative functions of his priesthood; forbidding all, but Aaron and his sons, to touch the things that appertain to the service of the altar, under pain of death!

And where in the new law do we find him permitted, as in the reformed schemes of christianity, every one who pleases to take up the sacred ministry; and meddle with the highest functions of Messiah's long expected and more holy priesthood?

To be continued.