

spoke figuratively; he must therefore have always spoken figuratively. But on this subject it is evident, from a thousand circumstances already pointed out in the course of our numbers, that he proposed to our belief no figure; but a stupendous reality; the victim itself so long prefigured: the true paschal lamb; on which the faithful fed: the real heavenly manna, for better than that eaten by the Jews in the wilderness; the unbloody sacrifice of the new law, offered up, according to the prophet Malachi, 1, 11. *in every place among the Gentiles: by him, who is a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech; who offered up bread and wine.*

When our Saviour said: *I am the vine, &c.* it was impossible for any one present to take his words in any other sense, than a figurative one. But when he said: *this is my body, which is given for you: this is my blood of the New Testament,* (not of the old: not of the paschal lamb, and other figurative victims; but of the real lamb of God; the final propitiatory victim, so many ways prefigured: the fulfilment in fine of all the figures; far exceeding them altogether;) the very blood then about to be shed for the remission of sins. Who, not deeply prejudiced could see in all this nothing but a mean figure proposed? Nor is it, Sir, a trifling consideration that he, who came only to seek and to save the sheep which were lost: and who, as God, looking from eternity to eternity, foresaw the many millions of his creatures, who in all ages would take his words in their literal meaning; (for those Christians, who take them in the figurative sense, are but a modern handful;) should not have expressed himself in the very opposite terms, in which he did, and which protestants use in declaring their faith concerning this sacrament. Then at once would all doubts upon the subject have been removed. and the disciples, who left him, would have had no cause whatever, to murmur at his doctrine, which, as propounded, had so shocked and offended them.

The body of Christ is whole, immortal and impassible, wherever it is: and cannot, as your author expresses it, be *divided, mangled, or consumed.* This was the carnal idea of the capernaite disciples; which the Saviour corrects by telling them that *the flesh profiteth nothing*: He did not thereby mean his own flesh, the eating of which he had just said, would give us life everlasting: but such a dead flesh, as they imagined it would be, like that of their slaughtered victims. The words, said he, *that I speak to you, are spirit and life.* That is, what I have promised to give you, has spirit and life in it: or rather is spirit and life. For he had said: *I am the living bread, which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever and the bread, which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world.* And to obviate all objections to this, his stupendous doctrine, he reminds them that it is written in the prophets, *they shall all be taught of God,* (not then of man; whose glow-worm reason cannot light us into the mysterious depths of God's infinite wisdom and omnipotence.) And he asked them what their

ideas would then be, did they see him, who proposed such a mystery to their belief, ascending up to heaven; where, as God, he had been from all eternity before. Why such a reminiscence, or why such a question put to those who believed not in his words; if he had been inculcating nothing more difficult to be conceived than that he would give them a bit of bread, as a figure of his body; and a sip of wine, as a figure of his blood? Why did he suffer them to leave him under such a wrong impression? Why ask his apostles, if they also would leave him, rather than believe him capable of giving them his flesh indeed to eat: and his blood indeed to drink.

If after these considerations you are still satisfied with the clearness and correctness of your demonstration; I must say that in your logic appears to me more of wilfulness than wisdom. And the very text you cite as unavoidably and irresistibly proving your figurative eating and drinking; is the very text that (on attending well to the Saviour's declarations on the subject) unavoidably and irresistibly upsets your whole conjecture for believing in Christ is surely believing that he never would say what he did not mean; nor promise what he could not give. *Believing in Christ* in the instance here alluded to, is surely to receive his doctrine: not to contradict and oppose it, as his apostatizing disciples did: but with Saint Peter and the rest of his apostles to take his words exactly as he had spoken them; not doubting but he—the omnipotent could verify his so clearly and emphatically repeated promise.

It would seem from your concluding remark that you dispense altogether with your corruptible elements of bread and wine: and that you hold your sacrament to consist wholly in the mere mental act of believing. This indeed, among all our religious novelties, is still something new: and what has this particular advantage in it, that it spares both cost and trouble to all those adopting it. For, if bare belief is all your sacrament; each can take it by himself; and where and when and as often as he chooses. Without bit or sip, or outward form, he can at all times and in every place furnish forth his mental feast; and feast; and feed upon the spiritual elements of belief in his ever ready inward communion. This indeed is reforming down the Saviour's institute with a vengeance.

I must now be free to observe that you take a little too much vantage ground in this polemical skirmish; considering the length of your communication, and the number, but especially the irrelevancy, of your objections to be answered. If to confound the Catholic, were the purpose, and not to confute it, a better method of doing so could not be adopted, than that of cramming its pages with broken and desultory quirks and queries, a thousand times refuted, and as often proposed: and all this to the exclusion of more important matter and regular discussion. We should thus have straight to toss our cargo overboard, to make way for what we deem not quite such precious merchandize. We refuse you not, however, a corner in our skiff,

(since you grant us one in yours) to any thing but useless and encumbering lumber.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient and humble servant,
EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC.

ORIGINAL.

CEREMONIES USED BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN BAPTISM.

FIRST, we must observe that as we have contracted the guilt of original sin by the distrust, or disbelief, and the consequent transgression of our natural first parents: so we must, ere freed from that guilt, make amends for their disbelief, by the open profession of our faith; and, if not able to do so by ourselves; by the mouths at least of our spiritual parents, who answer for us; our God-fathers and God-mothers: for having so contracted original sin without our knowledge, God in his mercy allows us to be thus freed from it without our knowledge. It is to the church too, that we are to apply for this inestimable benefit of regeneration to God in baptism. On this account does the priest begin by asking: *what doest thou ask of the church of God?* For the sacraments of Christ's church are forced upon none. All who receive them must duly apply for them. The answer is *faith.* *What does faith bring thee to,* continues the priest? *Answer. Life everlasting; for he who does not believe, says Christ, shall be condemned.* The priest then explains what that faith must be, which brings to us life everlasting. It must be, according to Saint James, a *lively faith, working by charity*: he therefore adds: *If then thou desirest to enter into life, keep the commandments. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, & with all thy mind: & thy neighbor as thyself.* Then, as the Saviour did, when imparting the holy ghost to his apostles, he breathes into the face of the Neophyte three times, saying, *go out of him (or her) thou unclean spirit: and give place to the holy ghost, the paraclete.*

When God created man, he breathed into his face the breath of life.—Gen. ii. 7.—This the creator did himself at first. But man, having by sin come under the dominion of death, and of satan; he can be regenerated, and thus delivered from the devil's thrall only by the one, who can make the sufficient atonement for his sin to divine justice. But man himself, the offender, could not make this atonement. Then God himself the son becomes that guiltless man, who in that nature which had offended atones superabundantly for man's offence. It is he then to breathe again into the face of his regenerated creature the breath of life; and to free him from the dominion of death and of satan; that which he does by his deputy and representative, the priest. For to his priest he said: *all power is given to me in heaven and on earth: go ye therefore, &c.* And: *as the father has sent me, so I send you.* Therefore what his lawful pastor does, he himself does.

Then to shew that all this is effected, by the death of Christ upon the cross, in which sign we