

# THE CATHOLIC.

QUOD SEMPER, QUOD UNIQUE, QUOD AD OMNIBUS CREDITUM EST.—WHAT ALWAYS, AND EVERY WHERE, AND BY ALL IS BELIEVED.

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## THE CATHOLIC

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EDITOR.

Original.

### TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse; and a flower shall rise up out of his root: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.—ISAIAH xi, 1, 2.

Sweet flow'r, the fairest ever blown  
In Sharon's lovely vale;  
Whose balmy fragrance wide diffus'd,  
Perfumes the wafting gale!  
By sacred Sion's sainted bards,  
In strain prophetic sung,  
At length from Jesse's royal root,  
All pure and spotless sprung.

The heav'ns, to nurse thy growing stem,  
Distill'd their brightest dew;  
And hov'ring o'er thine hallow'd top,  
Th' ethereal spirit flew.  
Not Eden, in her blooming haunts,  
With all her flow'rs so fair,  
Could boast a flow'r so choice as thine,  
For worth and beauty rare.

'Twas she, the stem from Jesse's root,  
God's virgin mother sprung;  
And he the flow'r, her son divine,  
By all the Prophet's sung.  
On him, in Jordan's stream baptiz'd,  
Descend'd the mystic dove;  
And loud his son belov'd the sire,  
Proclaims him from above.

Original.

## THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

DEMONSTRATED DIVINE;

AS EXHIBITING IN ITSELF THE ENTIRE FULFILMENT

of the

JEWISH TYPES AND PROPHECIES.

Dedicated to our modern Freethinkers.

CHAPTER. V.

ABRAHAM CALLED.—SARAH'S CHASTITY PROTECTED.—THE SERPENT AND MELCHISEDEC.—GENESIS ch. xii.—ch. xiv. 18.

In order to preserve the human race from being wholly swept away to destruction by the growing deluge of vice and infidelity; and that he might shew forth, in the fulfilment of his promises, the excess of his mercy and love

to those who should correspond with his grace by their dutiful endeavours, in all things to please him, the Deity calls forth Abraham from his kindred and country; deigns himself to become his guide and protector, and foretells the countless millions that would spring from him, and that in his seed "all the nations of the earth would be blessed." Thus, like the just Noah, was Abraham chosen to be the father of a rescued progeny; worshippers of the one true God, and the faithful depositaries of his law and revealed truths; till he, descended of his family, the promised Saviour should appear; who is to regenerate and unite in the bonds of spiritual kindred all the nations of the earth with his posterity.

Yet, though in this life God is the guide of the just, as he was of Abraham; he invariably leads them, like strangers in this world, through trials and difficulties; that by their patience and perfect reliance on his fatherly care, they may prove themselves worthy of his promised favours. This Abraham always did, without murmuring, diffidence or despondence, and therefore did God protect and prosper him in all his wanderings in the midst of strangers; and preserved, when exposed to risk, the chastity of his spouse, the beloved and beautiful Sarah; the destined mother of the promised progeny.

In this appears the watchful care which the Saviour has over his church among the Gentiles; for, according to Saint Paul, GAL. iv. 24; the long barren Sarah was the prototype of the Saviour's church. It was of this spiritual Sarah, the Saviour's spouse, that the same Apostle speaks as follows: "Christ, says he, has so loved his church, as to deliver himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, cleansing her by the laver of water in the word of life; that he might present her to himself a glorious church; not having spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing; but that she might be holy and without blemish;" EPHES. v. 26. It is to her that the beloved in the Canticle of Canticles, exclaims, "thou art all fair, O my love, and there is no spot in thee;" CANT. iv. 7. Of her unity and perfection; her surpassing beauty, like Sarah's, her bright, universal visibility, and her all-subduing power, the beloved speaks in the same place in the following mystical terms; "My dove is one; my perfect one is one: She is the only one of her mother;" (the Jewish synagogue) "the chosen of her who bore her. The daughters" (the churches, her own genuine offspring in every place) "saw her, and declared her most blessed. The queens and concubines," (the ruling powers of the earth; and even the false and fornicating sectaries,) "and they praised her. Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising; fair as the moon; bright as the sun; terrible as an army in battle array!" *ib.* ch. vi. 8, &c. "Under the apple tree I raised thee up; there thy mother was corrupted; there she was deflowered, who bore thee;" *ib.* ch. viii. 5.—That is, under the tree of the cross, the tree, not of knowledge unduly sought, but of faith in God's word; there the Jewish synagogue, the mother of the Christian church, having filled up the measure of her iniquity by putting the Saviour to death; was deflowered & cast off; and her daughter was raised up, the Christian church among the Gentiles, as the Saviour had foretold; "when I am exalted from the earth," said he, "I will draw all things to myself; JOHN xii. 32; that is, all the nations hitherto separated from him by infidelity. To this same mystery the Saviour alluded in his speech with Nicodemus; pointing out to him the figurative meaning of the brazen serpent raised up at God's command by Moses in the wilderness; NUMB. xxi. "As Moses," said he, "lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting;" JOHN iii. 14. 15.

Having touched upon this most remarkable figure of the Saviour's crucifixion, a few more explanatory observations are required to show the exactness of its fulfilment. And first, it is necessary to know that the name of the serpent in Hebrew is *Ev* or *Hev*, which signifies *Life*. And, indeed, from this root is derived

the Latin word *Evum*, a duration of life; and the words *Co-eval*, living at the same time; *primaval*, living before. The serpent therefore is the sign of life; and, in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, is understood to denote life in all its varieties, according to its various positions. On this account has the serpent always been the emblem of the medical art, the sign of the physician, who is the preserver of life, in so much that our physicians in the army and navy wear, as their distinctive badge, the snake round their buttons. Esculapius, an Egyptian physician, was distinguished by this sign; and worshipped by the Greeks and other nations ignorant of the original meaning of this emblem, as the God; and his daughter Hygeia, who prepared his drugs, as the Goddess of medicine. She is therefore exhibited in mythological representations as holding a cup in her hand, out of which a serpent is seen drinking; to signify, if you drink my drug, you will have life; or a serpent issuing out of her cup; to indicate having drained my cup, you have life. Now Jesus Christ says, "I am the way, the truth and the life; JOHN xiv. 6. As God, he is the life; the ever self-existing being; "I am who am," said God to Moses; EXOD. iii. 14. From him (who is of himself,) all things that are, derive their existence. He is therefore the author, preserver, and restorer of life. Could any figure then so appropriately represent him dead upon the cross, as the intimate brazen serpent did upon the tree! The life itself dead in his assumed humanity, to preserve from death his sinful, but repenting people; to preserve them from death eternal, caused by the stings of the fiery serpents, by life eternal, as man dead upon the tree of the cross, to whom, (their redemption being thus accomplished,) they are bidden to look up for salvation; "by whose wounds we are healed;" ISAIAH liii.

The devil, who was allowed for God's purpose to assume the serpent's form, when he tempted our first mother Eve in Paradise; was the false serpent; as he promised life to man against God's threat; but gave him death; whereas Jesus Christ is the true serpent, who, by suffering death, gave man life. The strength of the fiend's temptation seems to have consisted in this, that Eve knowing the serpent to be only a brute reptile unendowed with speech and reason; must therefore have wondered how it could speak to her as a rational being; and, though she should have turned with horror from the tempter on hearing him give the lie to God, (like all who question of God's truths revealed what'er they cannot comprehend;) she stopped to ponder how such a change had taken place in the reptile, so addressing her; and, following up, against the word of God, her own guiltily doubting conjectures, she naturally enough imagined that it had become rational by eating, as it may have done before her, of the forbidden fruit. Hence, reasoning on this false conception, she must have concluded that, as the serpent by eating of that fruit, of an irrational creature had become rational; she and her husband, who were rational beings, would, as the tempter affirmed, "not die, but become as gods knowing good and evil;" GEN. iii. 4, 5. In this we are shewn from the beginning the danger of reasoning against the word of God, when duly revealed, however much it may surpass our understanding; which the Apostle tells us, "must be brought into captivity, in obedience to Christ; 2d Cor. x. 5.

The hieroglyphical sign of the Saviour's path upon the cross; the brazen serpent hung upon the tree; was the first crucifix; a wonder working image; since all who looked upon it were cured of the bites of the fiery serpents; NUMB. xxi. 9; a figure most abhorred by the false serpent and his brood, as the instrument of his discomfiture; the weapon, with which the God-man avenged the wrongs done to mankind upon the mischief maker's head; the Saviour's ever glorious trophy, and sign of triumph, which shall be borne before him by the angels, when he descends at the last day to judge the world. It is the mystical letter *Thau* or *T*, signifying in the Hebrew the sign; namely, of the Son of man; the sign that saves from destruction those, on whose foreheads it is marked; EZECH. ix. 6; as it is in the church of Christ on the foreheads of all who are baptized as