



Jesus said to his disciples. Whom do you say that I am?

Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answering, said to him. Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona. because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. AND I SAY TO THEE. THAT THOU ART PETER, AND UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.

AND I SHALL GIVE TO THEE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven. and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven. S. Matthew xvi. 16-19.

"Was anything concealed from Peter, who was styled the Rock on which the Church was built, who received the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the power of loosing and binding in Heaven and on earth?" —TERTULLIAN Prescrip. xxii.
 "There is one God, and one Church, and one Chair founded by the voice of the Lord upon Peter. That any other Altar be erected, or a new Priesthood established, besides that one Altar, and one Priesthood, is impossible. Whosoever gathers elsewhere, scatters. Whatever is devised by human frenzy, in violation of the Divine Ordinance, is adulterous, impious, sacrilegious." —St. Cyprian Ep. 43 ad plebem.
 "All of them remaining silent, for the doctrine was beyond the reach of man, Peter the Prince of the Apostles and the supreme herald of the Church, not following his own inventions, nor persuaded by human reasoning, but enlightened by the Father, says to him: Thou art Christ, and not this alone, but the Son of the living God. —St. Cyril of Jerus. Cat. xi. l.

Calendar.

FEBRUARY 25—Sunday—Quadragesima I Sunday of Lent sem.

" 26—Monday—St. Margaret of Cortona Penit sem.

" 27—Tuesday—St. Antherus P M Doub from 11th inst.

" 28—Wednesday—St. Gregory II P C Doub from 13th inst.

MARCH 1—Thursday—St. Peter Damian B C Doct from 23rd Feb.

" 2—Friday—Feast of the Lance and Nails of Our Lord Jesus Christ

" 3—Saturday—St. Felix III P C Doub from 25th Feb.

COMPITUM :

The Meeting of the Ways at the Catholic Church. THE ROAD OF CHILDREN.
Continued

In the first place, the very Christian names that children bear, except in the rare instances, where Jewish or Pagan names have been preferred, point, as it were, to the Catholic Church, and bear witness to its perfections, which can thus compel even its adversaries to perpetuate the memory of those who were its principal defenders: Henry, Edward, Charles, Robert, William, Kenneth, Maud, Clare, all these household names which, in later life, we never hear but from our nearest relations and old familiar friends, but which touch the heart of man when they are accosted by them far more than any new and honourable title that fortune can afterwards confer, are taken from the deepest stores of Catholicism, and point at the Church in her period of greatest extension and most exclusive influence. And remark here that this direction is plainly conveyed, requiring no foolish anagrammatizing like that of John Bunyan, who was satisfied with extracting from his name the words nu hony in a B; or that by Penrose, who discovered that the names of Fathers Salvator Mile and Louis Almerat, who were both musicians, contained the letters of the six musical notes; or that of the Lady Eleanor Davies, which drove her mad, from causing the fancy that the spirit of the prophet Daniel was incorporated in her. But children in their simplicity might well suppose themselves clearly called to the Catholic Church, if they heard, which they could hardly avoid doing sooner or later, that their respective names are those of men or women who by her decrees are canonized. We too, they will say, are called so; why then not follow in our faith those whose names were imposed upon us at our baptism? Brantome says, that the father of De Cope, Duc de Brisac, chose to call his son Timoleon, following the Italians in admitting a Pagan name, from having been pleased with reading the life of Timoleon, and feeling a presentiment that his son would resemble him, which he did in some things, though, as his son himself remarked, not in all. He, at least, then was aware that there might be direction in a name. The force of names was not unobserved by the ancients, which even ascribed influences to certain initial letters, of which Southey gives amusing instances, multiplying the supposed proof that D is a dynamic pregnant mystic letter, not without reason called by the Hebrews the door, and endowing the destiny of those whose names begin with it.—Plutarch dwells upon the strange resemblance which he finds between the lives of different men bearing the same name, as in the instance of the two Acteons and the two Scipios; and the Roman senate seems to have recognized the principle in its decree after the defeat of Antony, for-

bidding any one of the family thenceforth to bear the name of Marcus. Varro counts about thirty phenoms which, as Scævola relates, were not taken by boys before assuming the manly gown, nor by girls before marriage; and which were all significative, as Status from stability, Faustus from favour, Lucius from being born at the dawn, Marcus from being born in March, Tiberius from being born on the banks of the Tiber. The Romans sometimes gave names which would, perhaps, suit some in later times better than their Christian appellation, as Sullius, Porcius, and Bubulcus, taken from the animals on whom their chief solicitude was bestowed, as Plutarch observes in his Life of Publicola. Plato, in the Cratylus, maintains that it is for the sage alone to impose names; and Pythagoras ascribes the choice of names to a sovereign wisdom. In fact, neither Aristotle nor the Stoics supposed that they were the result of chance.—Plato shows that the names of the heroes are all significative, as Hector and Astyanax, which were invented by poets to express their qualities or deeds. In general, the ancients laid great stress on their children having remarkable names, as is observed by Julius Cæsar Scaliger. The Greeks, as Plutarch says, gave names taken from great actions, as Soter, Callinicus; or from singularities of face, as Physcon, Grypus; or from virtues, as Euergetus and Philadelphus.—The ancient Hebrews had in great veneration the science of names, the knowledge of which, they said, was given by God to the patriarchs, and has been continued by tradition; whom Origen seems to follow, saying, that there is a secret and wondrous power in some sacred names; which opinion will not so much surprise those who have remarked that Cyrus is spoken of by name in the prophecies of Isaiah two centuries before his birth. The first Hebrew names were significative. Adam was made of red earth; Abel, nothing, as having no lineage; Seth, resurrection; Mathusael, god of death, all his generation being destined to the deluge; Lameth, striking, as killing Cam; Israel, son of God; Ismael, "the man having heard;" Ruben, son of the vision; Simeon, hearing; Levi, addition; Juda, praise; Phares, division; Daniel, judgement; Elias, God the Lord, to signify his zeal against idolatry. So also among the Greeks, Stephen signifies a crown; Anne, gracious; Magdalen, magnificent. Similarly, many names that became eminently Christian had been originally significative in the Pagan sense. Clovis or Lewis, signified man of excellent valour; Pharamond, true man; Charles, sweet and peaceful; Dagobert, renowned in arms; Chilperich, who has power to aid; Henry, valiant and honourable; Childbert, heroic.

In the Christian society, however, the use of names became far otherwise significative, as being given to children with an especial reference either to the saint who had borne them, and under whose patronage they were thereby placed, or to the festival on which they were born: and it is curious to remark, in spite of the continual systematic resistance on the part of some who give Jewish or Pagan names according to the extent of their infidelity, for what else is heresy?—that even in separated countries, there are no names, ushering men into life, more familiar or popular than those which most directly relate to the saints or festivals of the Holy Catholic and Roman Church. Some names, it is true, continued to be given as significative of internal qualities: as Godehebe, the meaning of

which is dear to God, or as commemorative of some singular event, as Bonaventura, which was given to the child John of Fidenza, on occasion of his being cured by the prayers of St. Francis, who used this exclamation on hearing of it. or as being the names of sponsors, in baptism, which was usual on the conversion of Jews, as in the instance cited by De la Roque, of Louis de Harcourt, Vicomte de Chastelleraut, lieutenant-general of King Charles VI., in Normandy, giving his name to a Jew in baptism, while some families sought to perpetuate relationship with remarkable men by taking their names, as that of Essex was often borne, in later times, in the Digby family, and that of Guy, in the house of Laval, from the seigneurie of which it was made inseparable by a privilege of Pope Pacha II., to perpetuate the memory of Christendom in the holy war under Godefrey de Bouillon.—But these examples only confirm the justice of the observation in general, respecting the facilities afforded to children even in the names they bore to trace their way back to the right road, if by birth they had been thrown at a distance from the Church, since by universal consent names possess this power to recall the memory of deeds and men.

Though for every name there is not such a book as that by Marchantius, entitled Triumphus S. Joannis Baptistæ, dedicated to the monastery of St. John the Baptist, at Florius, with an address ad eos qui Joannem nomen gerunt, in which every thing collected that has reference to the Precursor, for the instruction of all who bear his name, and for all who belong to churches, or monasteries, or colleges placed under his invocation; or that which he composed on the name of Jane, in which Trithemius, Abbot of Spanheim, De laubus sanctissimæ matris Annæ, inviting all the faithful to invoke her holy patronage, observing the third feria in her honour, as Saturday in that of the Blessed Virgin; and though some endeavour to substitute modern for ancient associations, as when Dryden through animosity against Hunt and Shadwell, and as if to exhibit a counterpart to the thought of Stapleton, in his book on the Three Thomases, surmised that "dulness and clumsiness were fated to the name of Tom," still it will ever be impossible to prevent Christian names from being intimately associated with Catholicism by birth, might as well bear the ancient phenoms taken from colour, as Barra and Rutella, or have no name at all, like the Chinese daughters, as those of sweet holy women, for any bond which they learn to experience from hearing Lucy or Elizabeth; but the sign is no less held out to them though they may neglect to read it, and wherever all history is not absolutely excluded, sooner or later the idea must suggest itself that they bear a name recalling some great and supereminent perfection, which requires to be explained.

St. Jerome writing to Læta on the education of her daughter, desires that the first words she learns to pronounce should be the names of the Apostles, or of the Patriarchs and Prophets; and, indeed, many holy writers recognize that power in the identity of names which was felt by the ancients, as when the Romans, on making peace with the Sabines, agreed, in order to form but one nation, to take each other's names in future. It would be long to specify the names which point significantly to the Church, as commemorative either of persons or doctrines, for among the latter may be classed such as recall angels, as that borne by him to whom St. Gregory sent an epistle, who had many associates in it, Angelo Patriciacus, Doge of Venice, and the

Patriarch of Jerusalem, and Angelo de Victoria, the holy monk of Ferrara, and others; and such as are formed of the name of Mary, conjointly with the title of some mystery, as that of Dulces, or some other taken from the festival of the Blessed Virgin, nearest to which the child's birth took place, according to the Spanish custom, to the prevalence of which so much contributed the institution of the sodalities by St. Philip Benitus, which were extended through all Europe and a great part of Asia. The successor of John II. on the throne of Portugal, surnamed the Great from the glory of his reign, was called Emmanuel, from having been born on the festival of Corpus Christi, at the moment when the procession passed before the palace.—Some names pointed at the saint whose memory was especially dear to certain provinces, when they were commonly borne by the people of all ranks, as Berenger and Raimon in Provence, Maurice and Rene in Anjou, Eudo and Benigne in Burgundy, Thibaud and Eustache in Champagne, Baldwin in Flanders, Hugues and Enguerand in Picardy, and Gilbert in the Bourbonnois, Alam, Yoes, Rolland in Brittany, William, Richard, Robert, and Raoul in Normandy, William, Raimond, Bertrand, and Roger in Gascony, John Baptist in Genoa, and Patrick in Ireland. Sometimes the country itself was designated by the name of its first apostle, as parts of the Indies; and if we credit an ancient author, that of the Savoyards, who in gratitude to Sabaudius, Bishop of Arles, who in 553 converted the Allobroges from idolatry to the Christian faith, assumed ever afterwards the name of their spiritual father. Holy writers have not disdained to remark the tracks which we are now following. 'It is common,' says St. Thomas of Villanova, 'for all writers who seek to extol any one to begin by citing some great testimony in praise of his name, though whence this custom has arisen I know not. One can understand why a person should be commended for his own acts, or for his parents and family, or for his country, though this seems more strange, but to praise a name seems absurd, since it is given for slight cause, and belongs to good and evil alike. Nevertheless, this common opinion of men seems to originate in the idea that there lies hidden a certain mystery in a name, and that it is not imposed on men without a certain divine providence, and that it contains a certain prognostic and presage. God thus secretly ordaining, that it should serve as a certain tacit vocation to man, which we often see verified; as in Genesis, where it is said, recte vocatum est nomen ejus Jacob—and now also it often happens, that those parents who, renouncing Christian piety, give Pagan names to their children, find them afterwards become very like those whose names they bear, that is, impious and profane: nor can we suppose that those ancient Fathers would have been so careful in imposing names on their children, unless that the choice of a name had really some connexion with the future man.' That the influence of names was not unfelt by those who bore them, might be shown from express testimonies, of which one instance must suffice, taken from a name borne by twenty-four sovereign pontiffs, of whom some were martyrs.

In Clairvaux, says Cæsar of Heisterbach, was a certain young monk named John, who was a great lover of St. John the Baptist, having been born on the day of his nativity, and called after him in consequence. Whenever anything was

* In Vit. Bertozii.
 † Hom v cont Cæsum.
 ‡ De la Roque, Traite de l'Origine des Noms.
 • De la Roque.
 • De la Cerda, De excellentia Cælestium Spirituum, c. 2.
 † Du Port, Hist de l'Eglise d'Arles, 143.
 ‡ S. Thom Vill Sermon De Joan Bapt iii.