

# THE CATHOLIC.

QUOD SEMPER, QUOD UBIQUE, QUOD AB 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.

### THE MIDNIGHT CONTEMPLATION.

Now mounted aloft on her bright beaming car,  
Lo, Cynthia speeds her career :  
Around their fair empress, diffus'd wide and far,  
The starry host twinkling appear.

O'er heav'n's bright azure the fleecy cloud's sail,  
And vary their forms in the breeze :  
The hoarse rushing river now gleams in the vale :  
The silver beam floats o'er the trees.

While nature in silence her mighty machine  
Is wheeling majestic along :  
In thought let us soar to a goodlier scene,  
And mix with th' angelical throng.

Where beaming in beauty the blessed appear,  
As they move in the Deity's blaze :  
Their music celestial enraptur'd we'll hear,  
And join them in hymning his praise.

In ravishing symphony often they sing,  
How Nature's omnipotent Lord  
Bade all that existeth from nothing to spring—  
From nothing it sprung at his word.

How o'er the dark chaos his spirit then mov'd,  
And call'd forth the light's cheering ray :  
From darkness emerging the light he approv'd  
And gave it to form the first day.

The waters he parted—some causing to rise  
Aloft on the wings of the wind ;  
Then, whither he orders, the rest instant hies,  
The dry land disengaging behind.

The gathering of waters he called the Sea—  
The dry Land the Earth he design'd— [tree,  
The Earth now he decks with each green herb and  
Bearing Flow'rs, Fruit, and Seed of its kind.

These luminous Orbs, then, he pours o'er the sky,  
Bids each in its orbit be whirl'd,  
That man, by their course, may the Seasons descry  
From his lowly, terrestrial world.

The Sun, then, he launches forth, flaming so bright,  
And bids him preside o'er the Day ;  
The Moon he commands next to lead on the Night  
With her fainter and changeable ray.

Be Earth, Air, and Water replenish'd, he said,  
With creatures that swim, creep, or fly ! [sped,  
Then Fishes o'er Ocean—o'er Earth Beasts are  
And Birds wing their flight to the Sky.

Still where is the creature, for whom is design'd  
The wonderful fabric he rears ?  
'Tis Man, whom his God all the while has in mind,  
And at length the lov'd Creature appears.

"Man now to our image [he says] let us make ;"  
So spake the mysterious Three—  
Of all the fair creatures, just made for his sake,  
He sole lord and master shall be.

His finger almighty then fashions the clay,  
And builds up the beautiful frame ;  
Then he breathes in the spirit immortal—straight—  
It caught the celestial flame. [way

Thus blooming and upright the fav'rite of heav'n  
From the hand of his Maker arose.  
Sole test of his gratitude, Free Will was giv'n,  
Ne'er meant to have wrought him such woes.

The gift he abus'd ; and a rebel full soon  
To his God, like the Tempter, became :  
Then Heav'n he lost, the conditional boon,  
Doom'd henceforth to mis'ry extreme.

Here suddenly pause the celestial choir—  
They feel for their brother, lost Man. [lyre,  
Each pensive reclines o'er his light-streaming  
When God's word thus gracious began :

Not evil shall over my goodness prevail,  
Or render my purposes vain ;  
The deep wound inflicted by Sin I will heal,  
And man his lost bliss shall regain.

But who for his sin the atonement shall make,  
For made an atonement must be ?  
Who can, but myself ? then his nature I'll take,  
And stoop to Death's fatal decree.

Thus man, of my justice the victim assign'd,  
The adequate victim shall be ; [join'd,  
Then my anger shall cease—"Truth and Mercy be  
"And Justice with Peace shall agree."

He ceas'd : the angelical host with amaze  
Are struck at the tidings they hear,  
To think that their God could himself so debase  
As trail human nature to bear.

To think of such honour on man thus conferr'd,  
As brother of God to become ; [prefer'd,  
Nay, God ;—and thus heav'n, o'er all creatures  
To claim as his own native home !

But, hark ! now their voices harmonious they  
In strain so melodious they sing : [raise,  
To him be all honor, and glory ; and praise,  
Such good who from evil can bring !

And thou, the last child, not the least of his love,  
O, Man, let it ever be thine,  
His name to extol, who has rais'd thee above  
Thy nature, and made thee divine !

What sound interrupting my pleasure wou'd spill ?  
How quickly has vanish'd the scene !  
The vigilant cock with his clarion shrill,  
Recalls me to earth back again.

O, Death, whose approach now we hope more than  
At me thy dart hasten to sting ; [dread,  
To heav'n that my soul, from her banishment freed,  
Her flight unencumber'd may wing !

Original.

### THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

DEMONSTRATED DIVINE.

Dedicated to our modern Freethinkers.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION. ISAAC'S SACRIFICE ; GEN. xvii. ABRAHAM'S INTERVIEW WITH THE CHILDREN OF HETH ; GEN. ch. xvii.—ch. xxii.—ch. xxiii.—vii. AN OATH LAWFUL ; ch. xxiv. 2, 3.

The Lord appearing again to Abraham, renews his promise to him ; and establishes with him and his posterity his covenant of circumcision. This was "the covenant of blood." He himself and every male and male

child of his household, and their descendants were to be circumcised.

It was to "the atoning medium" of the precious blood to be one day shed by the male child, born of his posterity, Jesus Christ, that this ceremony alluded ; and, when that blood was finally shed, the figure ceased, or rather was changed in baptism to "the purifying medium" of water. Hence, with the last drop of Christ's blood, shed upon the cross for our ransom, was water seen to issue from his wounded side ; deriving all its purifying virtue from the blood finally shed by the long predicted and pre-figured male child. And, as this ceremony of circumcision showed the Jews to be the carnal progeny of Abraham, so baptism shows the Christians to be the spiritual progeny of Jesus Christ. Only the male was circumcised, because only the male was to shed the redeeming blood ; which alone sufficed to make all—both male and female, God's chosen people ; but in the Saviour's household, or church, the male and female alike must be baptized ; because male and female alike require purification from sin.

And here is realized a remarkable figure in the mysterious manner in which Christ has given birth to his spouse the church ; as noticed by the holy fathers and spiritual writers ; for as Eve, the carnal mother of mankind, was taken and formed from the side of Adam laid in a deep sleep in Paradise, with the natural power of bearing and bringing forth children to him ; so the church, the spiritual mother of all the faithful, was taken from the side of Jesus Christ, laid in the deep sleep of death upon the cross ; with the supernatural power imparted to her of bringing forth spiritual children to him in the regenerating sacrament of baptism ; for in it we are born again to God ; since, as the Saviour said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." JOHN iii. 5. It is to this mystery that allusion is made in the Canticle of Canticles, where the bridegroom addresses thus his finally chosen bride, the daughter of the synagogue ; "under the apple tree I raised thee up ; there thy mother was corrupted ; there she was deflowered," who bore thee ; CANT. viii. 5. It was, as we observed before, under the tree of the cross that Jesus Christ raised up his church, and repudiated the synagogue which had rejected him. "When I am exalted, said he, I will draw all things to myself ;" JOHN xii. 32. It was from the sense of this deep mystery that Saint John attaches so much consequence to his having seen the water mixed with blood flowing from the Saviour's side, when pierced with the spear. "He who saw it," says he, "bath given testimony ; and his testimony is true ; and he knoweth that he saith true, that you also may believe ;" JOHN xix. 35.

After Isaac's birth, and the final dismissal of the handmaid and her son ; Abraham's reliance on God's word is put to the severest test ; on his being desired to sacrifice the child of all his hope as a holocaust to the Lord. Abraham readily obeys the command of God ; well knowing, that, he who created all things out of nothing ; could restore his son, though slain, alive to him again.—He therefore sets out with his beloved child to the place appointed for the sacrifice required ; and, when come within sight of it, "he took the wood of the holocaust, and laid it upon Isaac his son ; and he himself carried in his hands fire and a sword ;" GEN. xxii. 6.

Here is most clearly typified the Saviour bearing his cross ; loaded by the hand of his father with the wood, on which he was going to be sacrificed ; still the only child of the promise ; the one "in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed." Yet, like a meek lamb uncomplaining, he yields himself up, at the will of his Father, a ready victim to be slain. Well might he too, the guiltless Saviour, have addressed his heavenly Father on the pre-figured occasion, as Isaac did his earthly parent Abraham ; *Father*, said he "behold the fire and wood ; but where is the victim of the holocaust ? vs. 7. He beheld as Isaac did the fire, or the wrath of the Most High enkindled. He also bore upon his shoulders the wood, on which the victim of that wrath, was now about to be consumed. But could he, the father's own beloved son, "in