

THE CATHOLIC.

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

VOLUME II.

HAMILTON, G. D. DECEMBER 22, 1841.

NUMBER 15.

THE CATHOLIC

Is Printed and Published every Wednesday morning, at
No. 21, JOHN STREET.

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EDITOR.

Original.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

DEMONSTRATED DIVINE.

Dedicated to our modern Freethinkers.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HISTORY OF JOSEPH.—Concluded.

Chapter 49.—Jacob on his deathbed calls together his sons to receive his prophetic benediction. To the three eldest, on account of their crimes he foretells the division of their posterity from the rest of their brethren; that which in the temporal sense, appears verified in the separation of the tribes from Juda after Solomon's death; and, in the spiritual, in that which took place after the Saviour's death, between the believing remnant of Israel and their unbelieving brethren.

When he comes to speak of Juda, his mind is carried in an ecstasy towards the Messiah, who, he foresees, is to be born of Juda's tribe; and, addressing his son in the character of his divine descendant, he bursts forth in the following sublime and mystical strain; "Juda, thee shall thy brethren praise. Thy hands shall be on the necks of thine enemies. The sons of thy father shall bow down to thee. Juda is a lion's whelp. To the prey, my son, thou art gone up. Resting thou hast couched, as a Lion; and, as a Lioness, who shall rouse him. The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda; nor a ruler from his thigh; till he come who is to be sent; and he shall be the expectation of the nations.—Tying his foal to the vineyard, and his Ass, O my son! to the vine. He shall wash his robe in wine and his garment in the blood of the grape. His eyes are more beautiful than wine; and his teeth whiter than milk.

Without dwelling on the other parts of this prophecy, which so clearly point out, descending from Juda, the promised Messiah; the object one day of the praise and adoration of his brethren; the invincible "Lion of Juda;" Apoc. v. 5—ill whose appearance the sovereign power was to remain in that tribe; we shall notice merely the more mystical and less obvious part of this wonderful prediction; "tying his foal to the vineyard; and his Ass, O my son! to the vine."

The Ass is the animal, on which the Saviour rode, at his meekly triumphant entry into Jerusalem; a circumstance foretold by the prophet Zacharias, chapter ix. verse 9. The human nature is that which bore the filial Deity on his humble entry into this world, among mortals. It was, as united with his divine person, the most meekly, patient, drudging and enduring of animals; the worst treated, and, like the Ass, the most despised. "I am become before thee," says he to his heavenly Father, "as a beast of burthen; and still am with thee. Ps. lxxii. 23. He became says the Psalmist, "as a worm and no man; the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people;" Ps. xxi. 7. This was the Ass, which Jacob in an ecstasy beheld the Saviour "tying to the vine;" that is, binding in the Eucharistic sacrifice to the fruit of the vine; or the juice of the grape. It was this stupendous mystery, which made Jacob, on viewing it, exclaim in a transport, "O my son! He shall wash, continues he, his robe in wine; and his garment in the blood of the grape. His robe, or *STOLE*, is his regal

dress; indicating his divine dignity, or divinity. "His garment," or rather *cloak*, as in the Latin, *PALLIUM*, which hides all, is his humanity. In the Eucharistic sacrifice both, inseparably united in His divine person, are "washed in the blood of the grape."

The Foal is the offspring of the ass; a meek, humble, and drudging race; such as the followers of Christ are in this life, like their Saviour doomed to be: or "they are not the children of this world." These "he ties to the Vineyard;" particularly in their adherence to the belief of this mystery; for in addressing them, he says: "I am the vine: ye are the branches." The branches live on the sap of the vine; so do they, on "the blood of the grape," changed into the blood of the Saviour; for except you "eat my flesh, and drink my blood," says Jesus Christ, "you cannot have life in you;"—*JOHN vi.* Jacob knew this Eucharistic mystery to have been prefigured by the Priesthood of Melchisedech; and beheld it with astonishment displayed to him on his deathbed in the light of Revelation.

"His eyes are more beautiful than wine; and his teeth whiter than milk."

The oriental comparisons are always much freer and bolder than ours. Things, resembling each other but in one particular, are often compared; though widely differing; nay, wholly disagreeing; in every other; that which is particularly noticeable in the Canticles of Canticles. Hence, though at first we may think the comparison uncouth of the beauty of eyes to that of wine; on second reflection we find that the sparkling brightness of wine is not inappropriately compared to the piercing lustre of one's eyes, nor the pearly whiteness of one's teeth to the bluish whiteness of milk. It is in the living lustre of the eye, and the pure whiteness of the teeth, that the chief beauty and loveliness of the human countenance is found; and the Saviour, whom Jacob is contemplating in all his natural and supernatural comeliness, is thus also described by the psalmist, his royal progenitor: "Thou art beautiful above the sons of men. Grace is poured abroad in thy lips &c." *Ps. lxxiv. 3.*

Jacob's prophecy concerning his other children, and the fate of their posterity, is also spoken in a spiritual as well as a temporal sense; the fulfilment of which in some is more obvious than in others. The deeds, for instance, of a Sampson, who was one of the judges in Israel, seem particularly alluded to in what he says of Dan, to whose tribe he belonged; though some think his words alluded to Antichrist; and suppose, from their tenor, that the great and final Adversary of the Saviour will be born of the tribe Dan; and that therefore the dying patriarch, foreseeing that trying epoch when it is understood Israel will be converted; he concludes in these words; "I will look for thy salvation, O Lord."

In Joseph, he spies again the comeliness of the Saviour; and the desire of "the daughter," that is, of the several branches, or offspring of his Church, "running to and fro upon the wall to behold him;" but never leaving the safe and sacred precincts of his holy city, to look for him elsewhere.

"They, who hold darts, provoked him, and quarrelled with him, and envied him." All this was verified in the treatment which he himself experienced here on earth, from "those who had darts, that is, the power of hurting; from those in authority, the priests and rulers of the people; and it is still verified in the treatment which he meets with in the opposition to his word, and in the persecution of his Church by his enemies.

"But his bow," says Jacob, "rested upon the strong," that is, on the Deity; "and the bands of his hands and arms were loosed by the mighty one of Israel." That is, the prefigured Joseph is freed like his prototype, from his bondage or prison, "the grave;" and comes forth in all his strength, "a pastor" to feed and tend his people; first the Egyptians or Gentiles; finally, his kindred Jews, his brethren; but in a foreign land, to which they must come, where they will find him, the "stone of Israel; the stone which the builders (the legal or levitical priesthood) rejected;" but "which now is be-

come the head of the corner; Ps. cxvii. 22;" *MATT. 21, 12,*—on which is firmly founded his Church among the nations.

"The God of thy father," continues Jacob, "shall be thy helper; and the Almighty shall bless thee with the blessing of heaven above; with the blessings of the deep that lieh beneath; with the blessings of the breasts and of the womb.—The blessings of thy fathers are strengthened with the blessings of his father; until THE DESIRE OF THE EVERLASTING HILLS SHALL COME. May they be upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the Nazarite among his brethren."—Joseph is thus declared the comliest, best beloved and most best of all his brethren; the representative of him, on whom all grace and benediction descends and dwells; the "growing son;" rising in greatness, majesty and glory; the most exalted, because the most debased, *PHIL. ii. 9.*—The Nazarite; the holy and consecrated one among his brethren, among mankind, whose nature he assumed.

In Benjamin, as is commonly understood, Jacob spies Saint Paul, the most illustrious descendant of the tribe of Benjamin. He beholds him "as a ravenous wolf in the morning eating his prey;" in the morning of the day of truth; in the infancy of the Christian Church; consenting to the death of her first martyr, Saint Stephen; and soon after scattering and devouring the sheep of Christ; but "in the evening dividing the spoil;" in the end dealing out the treasures of the Saviour's merits to the faithful, the rich spoils acquired by "the lion of Juda" in his final triumph over all his enemies.

Chapter i. verse 16. Joseph's brethren, after burying their father, go down and dwell with Joseph in Egypt.

The Jews, after burying the synagogues, their common parent in the spiritual sense; go down, and reside with Jesus in his Church among the Gentiles. That before doing this they must, like Joseph's brethren, be commissioned by their dying parent, "beseech him to forget their wickedness; and the sin and malice they had practised against him. They must worship him prostrate on the ground, and acknowledge themselves his servants." Then Jesus, "hearing this," will "weep over them," like Joseph: and will say to them, as did his illustrious prototype:—"Fear not: can we resist the will of God? You thought evil against me; but God has turned it into good, that he might exalt me, as at present you see; and might save many people. Fear not, I will feed you and your children," yes, he will feed them with the plenty of his house: and give them to eat of the real manna, "the living bread that came down from heaven."—*JOHN vi.*

ON THE MICROSCOPE.

As the Microscope discovers almost every drop of water, every blade of grass, every leaf, flower and grain swarming with inhabitants; all of which enjoy not only life but happiness; a thinking mind can scarce forbear considering that part of the scale of beings which descends from himself to the lowest of all sensitive creatures; and may consequently be brought under his examination. Amongst these, some are raised so little above dead matter, that it is difficult to determine whether they live or no. Others, but one step higher, have no other sense besides feeling and taste. Some again have the additional one of hearing; others of smell and others of sight.

It is wonderful to observe by what a gradual progression the world of life advances through a prodigious variety of species, before a creature is formed that is complete in all its senses; and even amongst these there is such a different degree of perfection in the senses which one animal enjoys beyond what appears in another, that though the sense in different animals be distinguished by the same common denomination; it seems almost of a different nature. If after this we look into the several inward perfections of cunning sagacity; or what we generally call instinct, we find them rising in the same manner imperceptibly, one above another, and