

the number seven : which is as remarkably used to designate what regards only the human race. It were too long at present to point out the many instances, in which the mystery of the unity and trinity of God is thus alluded to in the old testament : I cannot however omit mentioning that in all nations, doubtless from an original tradition, the number three has ever been accounted the number *all-efficient and divine*; the wonder working one in sorcery; as appears from the threefold charm described in Virgil's eighth Eclogue; and the reason given for employing it on the occasion: in these words: *NUMERO DEUS IMPARE GUADET. To God belongs the unequal number.*

It were equally needless to cite all the passages in scripture, shewing that, for some mystical reason the number seven is applied by the deity to what, in his merciful dispensation, regards chiefly ourselves: as in the hebdomadal and septennial division of our time: in the seven special modes of applying to our souls the merits of the Redeemer: or the seven sacraments of his church; which are the seven pillars of Wisdom's house.—Prov. ix. &c. I have only further to add, with regard to the decalogue, that the catholic division of the two tables of the law, shews forth the mystery indicated by the above mentioned numbers: for in the first table containing exclusively our duty to God in three commandments, we find the emblem of the eternal one in three: and in the second table, containing exclusively our duty to man, we find the mysterious number seven, the one, by which the deity so constantly regulates his purposes in man's regard: and, in both, these numbers united, which make ten, we have the whole legal code, containing in brief the duties which we owe to God and our fellow creatures. This is one of the numberless harmonies observable in the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

To be continued

BIBLICAL NOTICES AND EXPLANATIONS.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

Chapter vii. Verse 7.—None but the three hundred warriors, who, in their readiness to fight, only lapped the water from their hands, as they passed along; are chosen to be the champions and deliverers of Israel from the yoke of the Madianites; while the others, more sensually intent on quenching their thirst, who had bowed down their knees to drink, are rejected, as unworthy of sharing in the promised victory. By this we are taught a lesson of self denial, and given to understand how much in our spiritual warfare our success depends on the mortification of our animal appetites. The Saviour thus drank of the torrent; therefore did he lift up his head.—Ps. cix. 8.

Verse 13, 14.—Under how many figures does God in his scriptures convey to the human mind the knowledge of his truths and mysteries; instructing us by our senses; and imprinting thus upon our imagination images, which it easily retains; and along with them the simple truths thereby clearly indicated. Thus, the hearth cake rolling down the hill, was interpreted the sword of Gideon. But Gideon, at the same time, like all the illustrious deliverers of God's people, was a prototype of their chief deliverer, the Messiah: who being, as he himself declares, the living bread which came down from heaven; is still more appropriately represented by the hearth cake, than Gideon. In this sense has the rolling hearth cake

upset the camp of Midian; by the universal destruction of idolatry; and the establishment in its stead of his religion and her eucharistic sacrifice, in which he himself is the victim.

Verse 16, &c.—By the division of Gideon's troops into three bands, is indicated the God in whose cause they fought; the eternal one in three. By the earthen pitchers, in which lamps were placed; are designated the mean, weak and frail instruments pitched upon by Almighty God to bring disorder and defeat into the enemy's camp: namely the Apostles, and their followers, the earliest christians; who by being agitated and beaten against one another, in persecution, and finally broken to pieces in martyrdom, displayed to their astonished and confounded enemies amid the dark night of error, the divine light of their confirming spirit, which their frail earthly vessels contained.

The sounding of their trumpets is their preaching and proclaiming of the gospel.

The men dismissed from the three hundred, were the multitude, who after so far following, at last, from their attachment to the enjoyments of this life, abandon the true Gideon, Jesus Christ.

Chapter x. Verse 16.—The moment sinners set about in earnest to prove by their deeds their sincere repentance; God is touched with their miseries; and is ready to forgive them.

Chapter xi. Verse 31.—It is most reasonably supposed that Jephtha's vow was to consecrate to God whatsoever should first meet him, according to the condition of the thing; so as to offer it up as a holocaust, if it were such a thing as might be offered by the law: or to devote it otherwise to God, if it were not such. And therefore it seems probable that the daughter of Jephtha was not slain, by her father; but consecrated by him, tho' with regret, to perpetual virginity.—D. B.

This supposition seems confirmed, from her bewailing with her companions her virginity: for in the old law the bearing of children was much coveted by women, in the hope that some day the Saviour might be born of their posterity.

Chapter xiii. Verse 3.—To the mother of Samson, who was barren, like Sarah, Rebecca and Rachael: (all emblems of the long barren spouse of the Redeemer, the Church of the Gentiles;) a son is promised by an Angel: who at the same time enjoins her to drink no wine, nor strong drink, nor to eat any thing unclean, while she is with child of him; and to let no razor touch his head; for he shall be, says he, a Nazarite of God from his infancy, and from his mother's womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. The same restrictive injunction is repeated in verse 14.

Here then is abstinence ordained by an Angel from heaven; as conducive to holiness and supernatural powers. In the prodigious feats of Samson God shews us that he can turn any instrument, however mean and insignificant, even the jaw bone of an ass, to the salvation or destruction of his creatures, according to their merits or demerits.—Sensual pleasure, proved Samson's bane; as it does to all who become slaves to it. His hair was the sign of his consecration as a Nazarite to God; who, on that account endowed him with such matchless strength for the merited destruction of the Philistines: and, when the legally appointed sign was removed; the supernatural gift attached to it, was withdrawn. That sign however reappearing when his hair had grown again; in the midst of the blasphemous exultations of the Philistines, who praised their God, above the God of their prisoner: at that moment grasping the two main pillars, which supported the whole building, where the infidel and hostile multitude had assembled to make sport of the worshipper of the true God; he prayed that his former strength might be restored; and like the Saviour devoting himself to death for

the good of his people, he shook the pillars; and the house fell upon all the princes, and the rest of the multitude. And he killed many more at his death, than he had killed before in his life.

Chapter xviii.—Verse 1. They had not received, &c. Their portions had been assigned to them: Joshua, 19, 40, but through their own sloth, they had possessed themselves as yet but of a small portion of it.—Judges, 1, 34. D. B.

Chapter xx.—Verse 26. Wherefore all the children of Israel came to the house of God; and sat, and wept before the Lord: and they fasted that day till the evening; and offered to him holocausts and victims of peace offerings.

That sacrifice is grateful to God; and that prayer is sure to prevail, which is accompanied with fasting, weeping and mourning. The details in this chapter, and in the next, shew that the perpetration of heinous crimes is sure sooner or later to meet with condign punishment.

To be continued.

Man's days are as grass: as the flower of the field, so shall he flourish.—Psalm 102, 15.

Tune—Aldivalech.

See, o'er its thorny stalk reclining
Yon wither'd rose, so sickly pining!
Yet late its crimson cheek was seen
In dewy lustre brightly shining.

Thus quickly fades our youthful bloom,
When age, or sickness steals upon us;
And, when we sink into the tomb,
Not long our dearest friends bemoan us.

Fraile beauty hence the sage despises;
Him ne'er her tempting lure entices;
Nor ought, but virtue's deathless charms,
That deck the soul, he fondly prizes.

Unmov'd he smiles at fortune's frown,
And scorns all her short-liv'd favours;
His hope he rests on God alone,
And always him to please endeavours.

Beneath his sacred wing protected,
Still towards heav'n his steps directed,
He journeys on through life secure,
Till comes the happy term expected;

When, ended all his care and toil,
He flies to meet his God's embraces,
Who welcomes him with gracious smile,
And 'mong his saints in glory places.

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