

tion and consolation, to the repenting sinner, and a powerful check against future relapses into sin.

Whatever other check persons of a different persuasion may have, the Catholic has in common with them. He is enjoined, like them, to confess his sins to God, and to repent and humbly acknowledge his unworthiness before him. Yet, though the awful presence of the deity should deter us from committing sin; we are apt daily to commit before him what we would often be ashamed either to do or confess in the more sensible presence of a fellow creature. Here then is an additional curb, which the Catholic Church has on the sinner; for a Catholic believes that, besides confessing his guilt, and repenting for it in the presence of God, he must, if he can, (for impossibilities are required of none) reveal it also to a fellow creature; and abide by his sentence, in order to obtain forgiveness: so that rather than subject himself to the humiliation, or else endure the stings of a guilty conscience, he will often deny himself the gratification of his criminal passion.

Besides, confession affords a safe and easy means to all of settling their accounts with their fellow-creatures here below, and of making restitution to those, whom they have any ways injured, or defrauded of their property: as none can expect forgiveness for such a sin, without making what reparation they can of the injury done. But it were often compromising one's own honour, and even one's safety, to make such restitution one's self. And whom could we entrust with a secret of such a delicate nature, but one, who is so tied down by all laws human and divine to an eternal secrecy; and whose character and office, besides puts him above all suspicion of having been himself the defrauder? Such is the light, in which Catholics consider their Clergy, among whom instances of similar restitutions frequently occur; and if they rarely happen among persons of a different religious persuasion, it is not because they are less addicted to dishonest practices and unfair dealings; but because they have not the like safe and easy means of fulfilling their duty in this respect.

BIBLICAL NOTICES AND EXPLANATIONS.

GENESIS.

It was to the atoning medium of the precious blood to be one day shed, by the male child 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. And 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 shed by the long prefigured male. Only the male was circumcised, because only the male was to shed the redeeming blood. But the male and female must be baptised, because male and female, alike, require purification from original sin.

Chapter 18.—Of the three heavenly guests of Abraham, who appeared to him in human form, one is particularly distinguishable, as the Lord himself, who renews to him all his former promises, especially the one, that in him *all the nations of the earth should be blessed*. He reveals to Abraham the purpose of his journey to Sodom and Gomorrah; not but that he sees, and can punish human guilt,

without descending from on high; but to shew us how near a visiter he is, and how just and deliberate a punisher of our crimes or misdeeds. He shews us also, in his answers to Abraham's queries, how he spares in this world the numberless wicked, on account of the few just who are found among them.

Chapter 19.—We see in the reception and entertainment of the heavenly visitants by Abraham and Lot, how sacred the rights of hospitality were held by the ancients. It was probably from the traditional accounts of these, and such like visits of Angels to the Holy Patriarchs of old, that the Heathens formed their mythological stories of their Gods,—a Jupiter, a Mercury, and the like, appearing disguised, and mixing among mortals.

To prevent the rights of hospitality from being violated, and the perpetration of an unnatural and more heinous crime, Lot even consents to expose his own daughters, but they are preserved from outrage by his guests the Angels, who strike with blindness the whole brutal multitude, so that they could not find the door of his house, which they were besieging. The Angels then desire him to gather together his family, his sons, or sons-in-law, and daughters, with all that are his; and to get out of a city, which the Lord is on the point of destroying for the crimes of its inhabitants. His sons-in-law not profiting of the warning; and he himself lingering when the moment of destruction was at hand, the heavenly messengers *take his hand, and the hand of his wife, and the hands of his two daughters, and brought him forth, and set him without the city; bidding him save his life, and not look back, nor stay in the country about, but save himself in the mountain, lest he be consumed*. Yet, at his earnest supplication, a nearer place of refuge is allowed him. The small town of Segor is spared for his sake, into which he is pressed to hasten his entry, the Angels not being permitted to execute their dread commission, till he was in safety,—*Then the Lord rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven, and destroyed these cities, and all the country about, all the inhabitants of the cities, and all things that spring from the earth, verse 24.*—By these words, the Lord rained down—from the Lord out of heaven, are designated two distinct persons, each equally Lord:—Like what we observe in Psalm 109, *the Lord said to my Lord, &c.* The Lord, then, who conversed with Abraham, seems to have been the Filial Deity, under the form of that nature, which his love for mankind made him afterwards assume.

The change of Lot's wife into a statue of salt, is not more inconceivable, than what we daily witness, the change of one substance into another: of our meat and drink, for instance, into our flesh and blood, though this last happens in a natural, the other in a supernatural way, yet, either change is equally easy for him to effect, who is the author of both.

The conduct of Lot's daughters towards their father, when alone with him on the mountain, to which their terror at the awful catastrophe had made them fly for further security, is accounted for by their conviction, after the fate of their mother, and the general desolation which they then witnessed all around them, that there was no man, but their father left upon the earth, v. 31. This, however, like many other passages in Holy Scripture, is evi-

dently not calculated for general inspection. The babe at the breast, would be choaked with the substantial food of the strong.

Chapter 22d.—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 utmost test; on his being desired to sacrifice the child of 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 when slain, alive to him again. He therefore sets out, with his son, to the place appointed for the sacrifice required, and, when come within sight of it, *he took the wood for the holocaust, and laid it upon Isaac, his son, and he himself carried in his hands fire and a sword*. Here is the emblem of Jesus Christ carrying the cross, the wood of his sacrifice, on which he was to be slain. Abraham then *built an altar, laid the wood upon it, and when he had bound Isaac, his son, he laid him on the altar, on the pile of wood: And he put forth his hand, and took the sword to sacrifice his son,* when he was arrested by the call of an Angel, forbidding him to lay his hand upon the boy; adding, on the part of God: *now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not spared thine only begotten son for my sake*. Abraham then *lifting up his eyes, saw behind him, a ram entangled among the briars by the horns, which he took and offered for a holocaust, instead of his son.*—The Filial Deity, the Child of Promise, could not be slain. But God had fitted a body to him. Heb. 10, 5. He had assumed the human nature, which was mortal. He was, as man, *the ram*,—the father of the flock,—*entangled by the horns*; that is, by his doctrines, in which however, his strength consists, among the snares of his enemies. He was thus the victim ready found to be sacrificed. *And Abraham called the name of that place, the Lord seeth, whence, to this day, it is said: In the mountain the Lord will see.* That mountain was Mount Calvary, on which the prefigured Isaac, was finally sacrificed; the worthiest object that the Lord seeth on all our earth; at the sight of which the Almighty Father relents, and spares for his sake, and at his entreaties, our guilty race. *Father, said he, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Luke 23, 34. *The Angel then called to Abraham a second time from heaven, saying, by my own self have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thine only begotten son for my sake; I will bless thee, and multiply thy seed, as the stars of heaven, and as the sand on the sea-shore. Thy seed shall possess the gates of their enemies: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast heard my voice.*

Chapter 23, verse 7.—Abraham rose up, and bowed down to the people of the land. This great Saint, and favourite of God, was evidently no Quaker in his manners, nor were the children of Heth such in their speech, who styled him, *my Lord*.

Chapter 24th, Verse 2, 3.—The lawfulness of an oath, which Quakers also deny, is here proved by the solemn oath which Abraham made his servant take.

Verse 22.—The golden ornaments with which Abraham's servant decks forth Isaac's bride, represent the spiritual ornaments, the proofs and symbols of her dignity, transmitted in all the prophecies, types and figures, by the Jewish Church,—the servant to the Saviour's Church represented by the long barren Rebecca.

Chapter 25, Verse 21. *And Isaac besought the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and he heard him, and made Rebecca conceive. But the children struggled in her womb, and she said: if it were to be so with me, what need was there to conceive? And she went to consult the Lord. And he answering said: two nations are in thy womb: and two peoples shall be divided out of thy womb: and the elder shall serve the younger.*