

reproof. Observe the commandments of God; that when our Lord shall come to his nuptials, (Mt. xxv. 10) thou mayest meet him, together with the saints in the heavenly court; and mayest live life eternal, and live for ever and ever. Ans. Amen."

The whole is concluded with these words: (N.) "Go in peace: and may the Lord be with thee!" Ans. Amen."

BIBLICAL NOTICES AND EXPLANATIONS.

Continued

THE FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS.

This book takes its name from the writer; who was a holy Priest and Doctor of Law.—He is called in the Hebrew Ezra. D. B.

Chapter I.—verse 1. *In the first year of Cyrus, King of the Persians, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremias might be fulfilled; the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, King of the Persians, and he made proclamation throughout all his Kingdom, and in writing also, saying &c.*

In the prophesy of Jeremias, Chap. 25. Verse 12, and Chapter 29.—Verse 10. the end of the seventy years captivity of the Jews in Babylon: and their liberation after the final overthrow of its Monarch, which was effected by the victorious Cyrus are clearly foretold.—But in this prophesy of Isaias ch. 25. v. 1. &c. the very name of Cyrus is given, four hundred years before he was born; the sight of which alone, if shown to that monarch is the sacred and unchangeable books of the Jews, was enough to have made him confess, as he did in his edict to rebuild the Jewish Temple, that the Lord, the God of Israel, the Lord and God of Heaven, who had given him universal dominion on all the Kingdoms of the Earth. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken hold of to subdue nations before his fall. These are the words of Isaias, who even pointed out the way in which he was to make himself Master of Babylon: by turning the River Euphrates out of its bed, and entering that city in spite of its doors and gates so securely shut against him. *Whose right hand, says the Prophet, I have taken hold of to subdue nations before his fall; and to turn the backs of Kings, and to open the doors before him; and the gates shall not be shut, I will go before thee: and will break the gates of brass; and will burst the bars of Iron; that thou mayst know, that I am the Lord who call thee by thy name, the God of Israel. For the sake of thy servant Jacob; and Israel Elect: I have even called thee by thy name; I have made a likeness of thee, and thou hast not known me. Now Cyrus knew him not, for he was a Pagan: But how must that Pagan Prince have been struck on reading in a book so long composed before his time his exploits and success; and even his very name? the giving of which depended on the free will and fancy of his parents?*

Chapter 3. Verse 2. *And Joshue the son of Joshedeck rose up &c. It is still Joshue, or Jesus that rises up &c. to build the Altar of the God of Israel. It is only the Saviour, who, and those whom he chooses for his associates who can set the Altar, that is the religion of God upon its basis.*

Chapter 4 Verse 3. The refusal of Zerobabel, Joshue, and the rest of the chief of the Fathers of Israel, to allow the Samaritans to build with them a Temple to the Lord the God of Israel; shews, that as Saint Paul says, the Faithful can have no part with the unbelievers;—The people of God must dwell alone. Numbers 23. 9. Deut. 32. 28. Hence the common hatred borne towards them; and the joint efforts made by those not allowed to build with them, to stir up, by misrepresentation, calumny and vituperation, the temporal powers against them.

Chapter 8—Verse 23. *And we fasted, and be-*

*sought our God; and it fell out prosperously unto us. Still the Catholic doctrine of fasting and prayer proved from scripture to have been always that of the church of God.*

Chapter 9—Verse 1, 2. This shows how sinful it is to intermarry with those, whom the church forbids us, on account of the danger of perversion and a falling off from the true faith. D. B.

Chapter 10—Verse 6. *He eat no bread: and drank no water: for he mourned for the transgression of them, that were come out of captivity. In how many places of scripture is the penitential discipline of the Catholic that of fasting; and abstinence shewn from scripture to have been always observed by the true believers.*

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAS, OR THE SECOND BOOK OF ESDRAS.

This book takes its name from the writer, who was cup bearer to Artaxerxes, surnamed Longimanus, king of Persia and was sent by him with a commission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. It is also called the second book of Esdras: because it is a continuation of the history begun by Esdras; Esdras, of the state of the people of God after their return from captivity. D. B.

Chap. 1 Verse 4. Still fasting joined with prayer.

Chapter 2—Verse 19, 20. Those who oppose the rebuilding of Jerusalem, represent the enemies of the church: who are strangers, and have no part or portion, nor justice, nor remembrance in the spiritual Jerusalem.

Chapter 3. The building up of the gates and walls of Jerusalem, begun by the high priest and his brethren; and carried on by the rest; represents the labours of the apostles and their lawful successors in the propagation of the faith, and establishment of the Church of Christ; begun by the Chief priest, Saint Peter, in the face of their surrounding enemies.

Chapter 4—Verse 18. *Every one of the builders, in the spiritual must be girded with the sharp sword of wisdom or knowledge and truth.*

Verse 20. They will cooperate, and support each other in the work; and in repelling the adversary.

Chapter 5—Verses 1, 2, 3, 4. How many, like the Jews, barter their portion in the city of God; sell even their sons and daughters, and give up even their own liberty, for pelf, and worldly considerations!

Verse 10. *Remember me, O my God, for good according to all that I have done for this people!* There is then, in spite of Luther's, Calvin's and the Presdyterian doctrine against good works; (the doctrine evidently of the devil,) some merit in good works as the catholic church teaches.

Chapter 7—Verse 64. *These sought their writing in the record, and found it not: and they were cast out of the priesthood.* So is every one cast out of the christian priesthood, (of which the Jewish was but a figure,) who cannot produce the record of their ordination.

Verse 65. *Athersathu*, that is, Nehemias, as appears from ch. 8. verse 9, either that he vasso called at the court of the King of Persia, where he was cup-bearer; or that, as some think, this name signifies governor; and he was at that time governor of Judea. D. B.

Chap. 8—Verse 16. *And they made themselves tabernacles, every man on the top of his house, &c.* Their houses were, as they are in the East to this day, flat-roofed.

Verse 18. *And in the eighth day a solemn assembly, prelusive of the christian sabbath.*

Chapter 9.—verse. 1. *The Children of Israel came together with fasting and with Sackcloth, and Earth upon them, &c. Why are Catholics ridiculed by Protestants for using a penitential discipline so sanctioned in Scripture, the pretended Rule of Doctrine and discipline in every upstart reforming Sect.*

THE BOOK OF TOBIAS.

This Book takes its name from the Holy Man Tobias, whose wonderful Virtues are herein recorded. It contains most excellent Documents of great piety, extraordinary patience, and perfect resignation to the will of God. His humble prayer was heard; and the Angel Raphael was sent to relieve him. He is thankful and praises the Lord, calling on the children of Israel to do the same. Having lived to the age of one hundred and two years, he exhorts his Son and Grandsons to piety: foretells the destruction of Niniveh and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. He dies happy.—D. B.

This Book, though acknowledged by the Catholic Church, as canonical Scripture; is disowned as such, by protestants; Indeed, how could they, who pretend to build their faith on nothing but Scripture, admit it as such, and yet deny what it so clearly displays; the intervention in Man's behalf of the Blessed Angels;—As there is nothing particularly figurative, or difficult to be understood in it, we pass it over without any further remark as well as those of Judith and Esther; which, though inspired, and written for our instruction and Edification, are chiefly historical, and easily understood by every one.

To be continued.

ON REASON.

Extract from a M. S. poem.

Not all those luminaries bright, that roll  
Wide scatter'd round our globe from pole to pole;  
The flaming sun by day; the moon by night,  
Fresh trimming at his ray her borrowed light;  
With stars innumerable twinkling o'er the sky,  
Might e'er, with her compar'd, in beauty vie.  
Theirs all is transient, and to space confin'd;  
Hers boundless flowing from th' eternal mind.  
And, were the whole of this material world  
Back reeling, whence it sprung to nothing hurl'd;  
With undiminish'd lustre still would shine  
Her radiance, streaming from its source divine:  
Would millions then, no further change that know,  
Than change of bliss; still feel her vital glow.  
As fresh delighting objects they pursue,  
And joyful prospects, op'ning on their view.  
Ev'n here, so from her centre far remov'd  
On man is reason's influence pow'rful prov'd:  
Though all her noon-tide blaze in twilight dies  
He through his prison's chinks but dim decries.  
'Tis she calls forth; unfolds, and nurses kind  
The infant buds of knowledge in his mind;  
Till genius, art and science flourish gay,  
And bear their fruits, full ripen'd in her ray.

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