

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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Dedicated to our modern Freethinkers.

CHAPTER IX.

JACOB'S DEPARTURE FROM HOME IN QUEST OF A WIFE. HIS VISION AND THE PROMISE RENEWED TO HIM OF A REDEEMER. HIS CONSECRATION OF THE STONE ON WHICH HE HAD RESTED HIS HEAD.—GEN. ch. xxviii. HIS VOW.—*ib.*

In more senses than one is Jacob the Saviour's prototype: 1st. As leaving his home to choose his bride in a foreign land. Even so did Jesus Christ quit his own people and country to choose his church from among the Gentiles; of which Rachael, whom he had won with so much labour, like Sarah and Rebecca, was a figure. 2nd. As from him immediately descended the twelve Patriarchs, the carnal parents of the twelve tribes of the Jews, the chosen people of God; so from Jesus Christ immediately descended the twelve spiritual Patriarchs, of his finally chosen spiritual progeny; that is to say, the twelve Apostles, the fathers and founders of the Christian church; for the whole Jewish history, as we shall have all along occasion to observe, is but a continual type: a representative shadow; a prophetic, promissary figure of man's redemption, and the Christian dispensation.

The stone, on which Jacob rested his head; that is on which he reposed his reasoning faculties; is the emblem of Jesus Christ; "the chief corner stone;" Is. xxvi. 16. EPHES. ii. 20. The other stones, for they are here mentioned also in the plural number, are his twelve Apostles; of whom the chief is styled CEPHAS, PETROS, or "the rock;" represented conjointly by "the twelve stones," taken by Joshua from the waters of the Jordan; JOSU. iv. Whoever rests his head on these; that is, reposes his reason on the unerring testimony of Christ and his lawful pastors; and presumes not to subject the revealed mysteries of God to his own conjectural reasonings and blind conceptions; to him, who rests on such sure authority; the path to Heaven is thrown open; and a direct communication takes place between man and his Maker; and the celestial inhabitants; indicated by the vision of the mystical ladder; which exhibits to us the intercourse existing between the blessed in Heaven and the just on earth: or what we profess in the creed to believe, "the communion of Saints."

VERSE xii.—"And the Lord leaning upon the ladder, said to him, I am the Lord God of Abraham, thy father; and the God of Isaac; the land wherein thou sleepest, I will give to thee, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth. Thou shalt spread abroad to the East and to the West; and to the North and to the South; and in thee and thy seed all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed." &c

This promise of the Lord was fulfilled in the first place by the possession which the children of Jacob obtained, and held for so many centuries of the land of Canaan; and that of the Redeemer, in whom "all the tribes of the earth were to be blessed," being verified; his descendants were forthwith for rejecting him, deprived of their possessions, and scattered as outcasts all over the world.

"The Lord," said Jacob, awakening from his dream, "Is indeed in this place, and I knew it not. And trembling he said, how terrible is this place! This is no other but the house of God, and the gate of Heaven.—And rising in the morning, he took the stone, which he had laid under his head, and set it up for a title, pouring oil upon the top of it; and he called the name of the city Bethel, or the house of God, which before was called Luza." The chief stone, on which he rested his head, he set up for a title; and sanctified it with unction. For Jesus Christ, on whose word we wholly rely, was the anointed of God, set up for a title to his followers, who from him are called *Christian*: and it remains in his church, "the house of God," or spiritual *Bethel*, as a fixture to the end of the world; for lo! said he himself, "I am with you, even to the end of the world." MATT. xxviii. 20.

This is the earliest instance mentioned, though, we must suppose, not the first in practice, of unction used in the consecration of persons or things. This rite of anointing whatever is consecrated to God; and so constantly prescribed in the old law by God himself; and practiced in the new; is not, as we have shown above, without its instructive and edifying meaning.—For, as oil is a searching substance, which diffuses itself over and deeply penetrates those bodies, on which it is poured; rendering them soft and pliant, provided they are not cold or frozen; for with such it will not amalgamate; so the grace of God, which it represents, diffusing itself over the human heart, when warmed with the sacred spiritual fire of charity, renders it soft and pliant to the divine will; and fit for receiving every virtuous impression.

VERSE 20.—Jacob's vow, approved of by God, and afterwards rewarded, shews that the Catholic practice of vowing is neither unacceptable to God, nor unscriptural.

EXTRACTS FROM THE LIFE OF LUTHER.

BY J. M. V. AUDEN.

[Continued.]

LUTHER IS MADE DOCTOR—1508-1516.

Frederick, the elector of Saxony, was a patron of literature and the arts; he was a skilful musician and a scholar, who knew the classic poets of antiquity by heart. To him Wittenberg owes her university, which in the 16th century emitted so bright a light; he had founded it in the year 1582. Staupitz whose name will frequently recur in the history of Reformation, was then vicar general of the Augustinians, professor of sacred eloquence and dean of the faculty of theology. The prince consulted him on the choice of professors for the new institution, and Staupitz recommended Luther as one of the young priests on whom Germany grounded her most brilliant hopes. Luther accordingly received his nomination to the chair of philosophy at Wittenberg. So pressing was the invitation of the prince that he had not time to take leave of his friends—"Scarcely" writes he to one of them, "could I take up my trunk and embrace those whom I love," and yet his trunk was not very large; it only contained a coarse woollen habit, two bibles, one Greek, the other Latin, a few ascetic works, and some linen. On leaving Erfurth, tears moistened the eyes of the young religious; perhaps he had a presentiment of the future, and foresaw that he should be exposed to turmoil and chagrin; but he dared not disobey. He set out, and on arriving, took up his residence at the convent of the Augustinians.

On the recommendation of Staupitz, the senate of Wittenberg named him city preacher; and the bishop approved of the choice. This was a new mission for Luther, the responsibility of which terrified him: he feared lest he should sink under it, and made known to his friends the terror that beset him. Staupitz encouraged him, Luther pressed his views and was almost angry, "You wish then my death doctor! I shall not sustain

that charge three months." "Well,"—replied the divinity professor. "to live or to die for the Lord, would be a good sacrifice." Luther submitted.

He accordingly ascended the pulpit and preached by turns in the convent, in the castle-church, and in the collegiate chapel. He had no reason to distrust his powers, for his success was great. His voice was clear, loud and harmonious, and his gestures at once natural and dignified. He told Staupitz that when he preached, he would imitate his predecessors; and he kept his word. For the first time, the Christian orator appealed not to the masters of scholastic theology, and drew his arguments, and illustrations exclusively from the inspired writings. In this affected contempt for the forms of the school, it was easy to perceive the first germs of revolt against authority.

His most ardent wishes were now about to be gratified. He received the office and the degree of bachelor of divinity; and, without abandoning the pulpit, he was enabled, thenceforward, to Lecture on the sacred text. Luther promoted this science of interpretation which protestantism has since so much abused. In the hands of his successors it has spoiled and sullied every thing; substituted investigation for faith, heartlessly analyzed inspiration, sacrificed the spirit to the letter, and treated the gospel as a book of human origin. A protestant writer has described this vaunted science as a pestilential blast, which affects to draw life from death itself.

The daily practice of speaking prepared Luther for these great contests which he was, one day, to sustain against the papacy. His auditory was numerous and consisted, in a great proportion, of young scholars, who were familiar with the writings of Hutten, and had taken part in the literary disputes which agitated Germany since the year 1500. The University of Wittenberg increased daily in reputation; it owed its celebrity to the lectures of the Augustinian monk. Erfurth grew jealous, and repented of having lost Luther; and indeed, not without reason, for there had not been before heard from the professor's chair so luminous an exegesis as that of the lecturer on the Old and New Testament. He explained the text of the Vulgate,—that very Vulgate which he then esteemed a beautiful production, but which he subsequently decried. He became enamoured of his philological labour; to it he devoted his days and nights, and scarcely allowed himself time either to eat or sleep. Doctors sometimes attended his lectures and retired quite amazed at his erudition. Old Mellerstadt, known by the soubriquet Lux Mundt, (the light of the age) heard him with admiration; and cried out on coming from his lecture:—This monk has a sharp mind and a fine fancy, he will confound the scholastics and make work for all the doctors.

Staupitz watched over Luther, and spared not counsel, advice or applause; for he foresaw the future fame that awaited him. To reward him for his labours, and probably to dignify him in the mission he had marked out for him to the capital of the Christian world, he offered him the degree of "Doctor." This title would cost something considerable and Luther possessed nothing, as his lectures were gratuitous. He had not even always for himself a professor's gown. The elector had taken on himself the charge of his wardrobe, and when his habit began to wear out Luther received a fine piece of cloth, which he gave to the tailor whom the prince even paid for making it. To make this transalpine journey would require some money, Staupitz took on him to defray the expenses. Luther then directed the dean's attention to his wan cheeks and attenuated frame. "What do you mean to do," asked he, "with a poor friar who has only a few days to live; you have here in the convent some fat and florid monks, who would much better answer your purpose." Staupitz laughed and significantly shrugged his shoulders.

On the 18th of October, 1512, Luther received the degree of licentiate, and on the following day that of doctor of divinity. Andreas Bodenstein (Karlstadt) examined him and pronounced him to the degree of master in the sacred science of the scriptures. It was the same Karlstadt whose genius he then extolled, to whom