

The Catholic.

Quod semper; quod ubique; quod ab omnibus.

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AMICABLE DISCUSSION.

Continued.

LETTER VII.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION.

There is quite as little solidity and analogy in the example of the paschal lamb, become so celebrated by the manner in which Zuinglius affirms that it was revealed to him in a dream, after he had wasted full five years in vainly opposing the real presence. He could not say for certain, whether the spirit which had acquainted him with this example was black or white. Black in my opinion and most decidedly so: for the absurdity of his revelation could proceed from nothing else than a spirit of darkness. I expect you will soon be of my opinion on this point. You will see that the example adduced by the nocturnal phantom neither requires nor forms any figure: and that, should we even make a concession of this, no inference could thence be drawn against the natural and simple sense of the words, *this is my body*.

1^o The example is drawn from a chapter of Exodus, where, after having regulated the manner in which the paschal lamb was to be chosen and immolated, and in which the houses were to be sprinkled with its blood, the Lord adds: "And thus you shall eat it: you shall gird your reins, and you shall have shoes on your feet, holding staves in your hands, and you shall eat in haste: for it is the Phase (that is the Passage) of the Lord. And I will pass through the land of Egypt that night and will kill every first born." There is nothing said here to make the lamb the sign of the passover: every thing points to the time when the Lord was to pass. Be ready to go out of Egypt, and equipped for your journey: make haste to eat the paschal lamb, and lose no time, for the Lord is going to pass. Such is the sense that these words naturally present: for it is the Phase (that is the passage) of the Lord. What immediately follows confirms this: "and I will pass through the land of Egypt that night," adds the Lord. It was then the moment of his approaching and immediate passage that was indicated by the word, for it is the passage of the Lord, which also is given to the Israelites as a motive and a reason for the command given to them that they must keep themselves in readiness to depart and eat in haste. And in fact, the passage of the Lord was to be their signal for departure. Moreover, when Moses speaks of the lamb, he calls it neither passage nor sign of the passage, but the victim of the passage. It is to ce-

lebrate this event that the lamb is to be immolated: it is to perpetuate the remembrance of this famous epoch of their deliverance, that they are commanded to sacrifice the paschal lamb every year, and to reply to their children when they should ask them the meaning of this sacrifice: "It is the victim of the passage of the Lord, when he passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, striking the Egyptians and saving our houses." After this explanation given us by the sacred text in the same chapter, on what ground would the ministers oblige us to receive a different explanation, and compel us to believe upon their interpretation, that the lamb is the sign of the passage, when the Holy Spirit assures us that it is the victim of the passage? The words objected to us do not refer to the lamb, but to the preparations commanded for their journey and to the quick dispatch of their repast. They were all to be equipped for their journey, and eat in haste: and why? because the Lord is going to pass. In all this there is no occasion for sign or figure: every thing is taken literally and is wonderfully clear. There can be conceived no subject for Zuinglius's extravagant triumph in this discovery: it would appear that his black spirit turned his brain, and cast him into a perpetual delirium and absurdity.

2^o And should we even be so indulgent to Zuinglius and his phantom, and also his numerous followers, as to grant that the text in question refers to the lamb, and that we must in consequence explain these words, *it is the passage of the Lord, by, it is the sign of the passage of the Lord, what could they thence infer? Let them keep in mind the general principle, that the name of the thing signified, may be given to the sign, when we see in the minds of others that they regard it as a sign, and are only at a loss to understand what it signifies: but that it is never lawful to do so, when there is no reason to suppose this disposition in those to whom we speak. This is the principle; now for the application. God commands them to take a lamb without blemish, a male, and one year old, to keep it four days, to immolate it at the end of the fourth day, to sprinkle with its blood the outsides of the doors, to eat it roasted, to consume it entirely without reserving any thing for the next day, to eat it with bitter herbs, in the dress of travellers, with their reins girt, their shoes on their feet, and staves in their hands. What is the meaning of this display of strange ceremonies, this detail of extraordinary circumstances? What mean all these preparations? and why is this lamb commanded to be eaten in so mysterious a manner? There was no Israelite but must have put similar questions, and*

must have found the reply in these words: it is the passage of the Lord. If these words were by them applied to the lamb, they must then have understood without difficulty that the lamb was the sign of this passage, because so great a number of strange and most unusual ceremonies had prepared them to regard it as a mysterious and significative object. But the bread had not been regarded as a sign, as an emblematical and mysterious object: no anterior circumstance, no actual explication, no word of our Saviour tended to make the bread which he held in his hand, be considered; as the matter of which he was going to make a sign. The apostles had clearly understood their master to speak of a particular bread upon some solemn occasion, and no doubt had taken care not to lose the remembrance of it: but this bread which he had promised them, had not been announced either as a sign, or as a figure: it was to be flesh, and flesh that would be meat indeed, flesh that must be eaten to obtain eternal life; in fine, that very flesh which would be also delivered up for the life of the world. It is not likely that with such ideas, and such instructions imprinted on their minds, the apostles, upon hearing these positive words solemnly articulated, *this is my body*, should have imagined that they signified, *this is the sign of my body*. In truth, it is offering too great an insult to the world and to oneself to advance such chimeras as these, and to give them admittance into one's mind and it is being too blind or too obstinate, not to see and not to acknowledge the essential difference that exists between the examples that they would vainly compare together, and not to be feelingly convinced that what renders the figure admissible in that of Exodus, renders it in that of the Gospel inadmissible and unreasonably.

Let us pass from the examples to the arguments that our adversaries draw from scripture for the support of their opinion. The most specious, the only one in fact that deserves to be seriously examined, is that which seems to be favoured by the words, that immediately follow the words of institution. We learn from St. Luke that our Saviour, after having said: *Take and eat, this is my body* added; Do this for a commemoration of me. They will have these last words to be an explanation of those that precede; and because, according to our adversaries, the remembrance can only be of things absent, we cannot suppose Jesus Christ to be present in the Eucharist, because, if he were really there, he would not have ordained it as a memorial and in remembrance of his person. You, Sir, as well as myself, must have heard this argument a thousand times: it is in all the books of your re-