

DECEMBER 20.

*O Clavis David!*

"O Key of David, and sceptre of the house of Israel, who openest, and no man shutteth: come, and take out of prison, him, who is in fetters, and who sitteth in darkness, and in the shade of death!"

O Son of David! inheritor of his throne and his power; in your triumphant progress, you pass over a land that was heretofore ruled by your great Ancestor, but which is now enslaved by the Gentiles. In every part of your journey you behold many places which bear witness to the justice and mercy of Jehovah, your Father, towards his people, under that ancient covenant which is now near its end. The virginal cloud which covers you, will be speedily removed, and you will make new journies throughout this same land. You will pass over it, *doing good, and healing all weaknesses and diseases*, and nevertheless *not having therein a place to lay your head*. This day, at least, the maternal bosom offers you an asylum of sweet repose, in which you receive testimonies of the most tender and respectful love. But you must leave, O Lord, this happy retreat. O Eternal Light! you must shine in the midst of darkness, for the *captive* whom you have come to deliver, is languishing in his prison. He sits in the shadow of death, and will assuredly perish there, unless you come with your all-powerful *Key* to unlock his prison doors.

This *captive*, O Jesus! is man, the slave of his errors and vices: come and break the yoke which overpowers and degrades him. This *captive*, is our heart: come and break its sinful attachments, Divine Liberator, that being filled with the Spirit from on high, we may glory in the liberty of the children of God.

DECEMBER 21.

*O Oriens!*

"O Orient, Brightness of Eternal Light, and Sun of Righteousness: come and enlighten those who sit in darkness, and in the shade of death."

Eternal praises be to you, O Jesus, Divine Sun of Justice. You have come to deliver us from eternal night. But, how singularly you exercise our faith before you shine upon us in all your splendour. How you love to conceal your rays until the moment appointed by your heavenly

Father! You traverse Judea, and approach Jerusalem; one half the journey of Mary and Joseph is accomplished. On the way you meet a multitude of men who are going in every direction, each one unto his own city. Of all these, not one suspects that you are so near him, O Divine Orient! Mary, your Mother, is looked on by them as an ordinary woman. They never bestow a thought upon her, much less upon her Son, who is not yet brought forth into visible light. And yet that Son is yourself, *O Sun of Justice!* Increase our faith, increase our love, O Deliverer of the human race!

O Jesus! you travel through the world which you created, and you do not force the homage of your creatures. We desire to accompany you for the remainder of your journey. We will kiss the earth that is marked by the blessed footsteps of Her who bear you in her womb. We will not abandon you until we arrive with you at the happy Bethlehem, at this House of Bread, where, at length, our eyes will behold you, O eternal Brightness, *Our Lord, and Our God!*

DECEMBER 22.

*O Rex Gentium!*

"O King of the Gentiles, and their Desired One, and the Corner Stone that joinest the two walls: come and save man whom thou hast formed out of the slime of the earth."

O King of Nations, you are continually approaching this Bethlehem where you are to be born. Your journey is near its end, and your august Mother, consoled and strengthened by her precious burthen, unceasingly converses with you on the way. She expects with joy the happy moment when her eyes will behold you. How can She who looks upon herself as the last of creatures, serve you in a manner worthy of your Sovereign greatness? How will she have courage to lift you in her arms, to press you to her heart, to suckle you from her mortal bosom? You will strengthen her, *O Desired of all nations!* for you wish the blessed moment should arrive which will give to the earth its Saviour, and to mankind, the Corner Stone which will unite them in one family. The distant gentile, as well as the sheep of the house of Israel, the Old and the New Covenant will be united in Thee!