

unless that question was answered in the affirmative, no initiation could take place. There is no question that fasting is in certain circumstances a Christian duty; but while neither the letter nor the spirit of the Divine institution requires any such stringent regulation as the above, the regulations in regard to the Babylonian Mysteries make it evident whence this requirement has really come.

Although the god whom Isis or Ceres brought forth, and who was offered to her under the symbol of the wafer or thin round cake, as "the bread of life," was in reality the fierce, scorching Sun, or terrible Moloch, yet in that offering all his terror was veiled, and everything repulsive was cast into the shade. In the appointed symbol he is offered up to the benignant Mother, who appointed judgment with mercy, and to whom all spiritual blessings are maternely referred; and blessed by that mother, he is given back to be feasted upon, as the staff of life, as the nourishment of her worshippers' souls. Thus the Mother was held up as the favourite divinity. And thus, also, and for an entirely similar reason, does the Madonna of Rome entirely eclipse her son as the "Mother of grace and mercy."

In regard to the Pagan character of the "unbloody sacrifice" of the mass, we have seen not little already. But there is something yet to be considered, in which the working of the mystery of iniquity will still further appear. There are letters on the wafer that are worth reading. These letters are I. H. S. What mean these mystical letters? To a Christian these letters are represented as signifying, "*Jesus Hominum Salvator*," "Jesus the Saviour of men." But let a Roman worshipper of Isis (for in the age of the emperors there were innumerable worshippers of Isis in Rome) cast his eyes upon them, and how will he read them? He will read them, of course, according to his own well-known system of idolatry: "*Isis, Horus, Seb*," that is, "The Mother, the Child, and the Father of the gods,"—in other words, "The Egyptian Trinity." Can the reader imagine that this double sense is accidental? Surely not. The very same spirit that converted the festival of the Pagan Oannes into the feast of the Christian Joannes, retaining at the same time all its ancient Paganism, has skilfully planned the initials I. H. S. to pay the *semblance* of a tribute to Christianity, while Paganism in reality has all the *substance* of the homage bestowed upon it.

When the women of Arabia began to adopt this wafer and offer the "unbloody sacrifice," all genuine Christians saw at once the real character of their sacrifice. They were treated as heretics, and branded with the name of Collyridians, from the Greek name for the cake which they employed. But Rome saw that the heresy might be turned to account; and therefore, though condemned by the sound portion of the Church, the practice of offering and eating this "unbloody sacrifice" was patronised by the Papacy; and now, throughout the whole bounds of the Romish communion, it has superseded the simple but most precious sacrament of the Supper instituted by our Lord Himself.