

NUMBERS 5:1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

---

The Israelites are commanded to purify the camp by excluding all lepers, and all diseased and unclean persons, Num 5:1-3. They do so, Num 5:4. Law concerning him who has defrauded another - he shall confess his sin, restore the principal and add besides one fifth of its value, Num 5:5-7. If he have no kinsman to whom the recompense can be made, it shall be given unto the Lord, Num 5:8. All the holy things offered to the Lord shall be the priest's portion, Num 5:9, Num 5:10. The law concerning jealousy, Num 5:11-14. The suspected woman's offering, Num 5:15. She is to be brought before the Lord, Num 5:16. The priest shall take holy water, and put it in dust from the floor of the tabernacle, Num 5:17. Shall put the offering in her hand, and adjure her, Num 5:18-20. The form of the oath, Num 5:21, Num 5:22; which is to be written on a book, blotted out in the bitter waters, and these the suspected person shall be obliged to drink, Num 5:23, Num 5:24. The jealousy-offering shall be waved before the Lord, Num 5:25, Num 5:26. The effect which shall be produced if the suspected person be guilty, Num 5:27. The effect if not guilty, Num 5:28. Recapitulation, with the purpose and design of the law, Num 5:29, Num 5:30.

---

NUMBERS 5:2 "Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every leper, and everyone who has an issue, and whoever is unclean by the dead."

---

Verse 2

Put out of the camp every leper - According to the preceding plan, it is sufficiently evident that each camp had a space behind it, and on one side, whither the infected might be removed, and where probably convenient places were erected for the accommodation of the infected; for we cannot suppose that they were driven out into the naked wilderness. But the expulsion mentioned here was founded,

1. On a purely physical reason, viz., the diseases were contagious, and therefore there was a necessity of putting those afflicted by them apart, that the infection might not be communicated.
  2. There was also a spiritual reason; the camp was the habitation of God, and nothing impure should be permitted to remain where he dwelt.
  3. The camp was an emblem of the Church, where nothing that is defiled should enter, and in which nothing that is unholy should be tolerated. All lepers - all persevering impenitent sinners, should be driven from the sacred pale, nor should any such ever be permitted to enter.
- 

NUMBERS 5:3 Both you shall put male and female outside of the camp; that they not defile their camp, in the midst of which I dwell."

NUMBERS 5:4 The children of Israel did so, and put them outside of the camp; as the LORD spoke to Moses, so did the children of Israel.

---

## Verse 4

And the children of Israel - put them out - This is the earliest account we have of such separations; and probably this ordinance gave the first idea of a hospital, where all those who are afflicted with contagious disorders are put into particular wards, under medical treatment. Though no mention be made of the situation, circumstances, etc., of those expelled persons, we may certainly infer that they were treated with that humanity which their distressed state required. Though sinners must be separated from the Church of God, yet they should be treated with affectionate regard, because they may be reclaimed. It is too often the case when a man backslides from the way of truth, he is abandoned by all; finding his case desperate, he plunges yet deeper into the mire of sin, and the man who, with tender treatment, might have been reclaimed, becomes incurably hardened. One class says, he cannot finally fall, and shall in due time be restored; another class says, he may finally fall and utterly perish. If the unfortunate person be restored, his recovery is taken as a proof of the first doctrine; if he be not, his wretched end is considered a proof of the second. In the first case the person himself may presume on his restoration as a point infallibly determined in the Divine counsel; or in the second, he may consider his case hopeless, and so abandon himself to profligacy and desperation. Thus both parties leave him, and both opinions (misunderstood certainly) render him secure or desperate; and in either case totally inactive in behalf of his own soul. Who is he that properly estimates the worth of one immortal spirit? He who does will at once feel that, in a state of probation, any man may fall through sin, and any sinner may be renewed again unto repentance, through the infinitely meritorious sacrifice, and all powerfully efficacious grace, of Christ. This truth properly felt equally precludes both presumption and despair, and will induce the followers of God to be active in preserving those who have escaped from the corruption that is in the world, and make them diligent to recover those who have turned back to earth and sin.

---

NUMBERS 5:5 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

NUMBERS 5:6 "Speak to the children of Israel: 'When a man or woman commits any sin that men commit, so as to trespass against the LORD, and that soul is guilty;

NUMBERS 5:7 then he shall confess his sin which he has done, and he shall make restitution for his guilt in full, and add to it the fifth part of it, and give it to him in respect of whom he has been guilty.

---

 Verse 7

Shall confess their sin - Without confession or acknowledgment of sin, there was no hope of mercy held out.

He shall recompense - For without restitution, in every possible case, God will not forgive the iniquity of a man's sin. How can any person in a case of defraud, with his neighbor's property in his possession, expect to receive mercy from the hand of a just and holy God? See this subject considered in the notes on Gen 42:38 (note).

---

NUMBERS 5:8 But if the man has no kinsman to whom restitution may be made for the guilt, the restitution for guilt which is made to the LORD shall be the priest's; besides the ram of the atonement, by which atonement shall be made for him.

Verse 8

If the man have no kinsman - The Jews think that this law respects the stranger and the sojourner only, because every Israelite is in a state of affinity to all the rest; but there might be a stranger in the camp who has no relative in any of the tribes of Israel.

---

NUMBERS 5:9 Every heave offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they present to the priest, shall be his.

NUMBERS 5:10 Every man's holy things shall be his: whatever any man gives the priest, it shall be his."

NUMBERS 5:11 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

NUMBERS 5:12 "Speak to the children of Israel, and tell them: 'If any man's wife goes astray, and is unfaithful to him,

NUMBERS 5:13 and a man lies with her carnally, and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and is kept close, and she is defiled, and there is no witness against her, and she isn't taken in the act;

NUMBERS 5:14 and the spirit of jealousy comes on him, and he is jealous of his wife, and she is defiled: or if the spirit of jealousy comes on him, and he is jealous of his wife, and she isn't defiled:

---

Verse 14

The spirit of jealousy - רוח קנאה ruach kinah, either a supernatural diabolic influence, exciting him to jealousy, or the passion or affection of jealousy, for so the words may be understood.

---

NUMBERS 5:15 then the man shall bring his wife to the priest, and shall bring her offering for her: the tenth part of an ephah of barley meal. He shall pour no oil on it, nor put frankincense on it, for it is a meal offering of jealousy, a meal offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to memory.

NUMBERS 5:16 The priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD;

NUMBERS 5:17 and the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel; and of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water.

---

Verse 17

Holy water - Water out of the laver, called holy because consecrated to sacred uses. This is the most ancient case of the trial by ordeal. See at Num 5:31 (note).

In an earthen vessel - Supposed by the Jews to be such as had never been previously used.

Dust that is in the floor - Probably intended to point out the baseness of the crime of which she was accused.

---

NUMBERS 5:18 The priest shall set the woman before the LORD, and let the hair of the woman's head go loose, and put the meal offering of memorial in her hands, which is the meal offering of jealousy. The priest shall have in his hand the water of bitterness that brings a curse.

---

#### Verse 18

Uncover the woman's head - To take off a woman's veil, and expose her to the sight of men, would be considered a very great degradation in the East. To this St. Paul appears to allude, 1Cor 11:5, 1Cor 11:6, 1Cor 11:10.

---

NUMBERS 5:19 The priest shall cause her to swear, and shall tell the woman, "If no man has lain with you, and if you haven't gone aside to uncleanness, being under your husband, be free from this water of bitterness that brings a curse.

NUMBERS 5:20 But if you have gone astray, being under your husband, and if you are defiled, and some man has lain with you besides your husband:"

NUMBERS 5:21 then the priest shall cause the woman to swear with the oath of cursing, and the priest shall tell the woman, "The LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people, when the LORD allows your thigh to fall away, and your body to swell;

---

#### Verse 21

The Lord make thee a curse and an oath - Let thy name and punishment be remembered and mentioned as an example and terror to all others. Like that mentioned Jer 29:22, Jer 29:23 : "The Lord make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire, because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives." - Ainsworth.

---

NUMBERS 5:22 and this water that brings a curse will go into your bowels, and make your body swell, and your thigh fall away." The woman shall say, "Amen, Amen."

---

#### Verse 22

Thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot - What is meant by these expressions cannot be easily ascertained. ירך לנפל ירך lanpel yarech signifies literally thy thigh to fall. As the thigh, feet, etc., were used among the Hebrews delicately to express the parts which nature conceals, (see Gen 46:26), the expression here is probably to be understood in this sense; and the falling down of the thigh here must mean something similar to the prolapsus uteri, or falling down of the womb, which might be a natural effect of the preternatural distension of the abdomen. In 1Cor 11:29, St. Paul seems to allude to the case of the guilty woman drinking the bitter cursed waters that caused her destruction: He who eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation (κρίμα, condemnation or judgment) to himself; and there is probably a reference to the same thing in Psa 109:18, and in Dan 9:11.

And the woman shall say, Amen, amen - This is the first place where this word occurs in the common form of a concluding wish in prayer. The root אמן aman signifies to be steady, true, permanent. And in prayer it signifies let it be so - make it steady - let it be ratified. Some have supposed that it is composed of the initial letters of מלך נאמן Adonai Melech Neeman, My Lord the faithful King, but this derivation is both far-fetched and unnecessary.

---

NUMBERS 5:23 "The priest shall write these curses in a book, and he shall blot them out into the water of bitterness.

---

Verse 23

The priest shall write these curses - and he shall blot them out - It appears that the curses which were written down with a kind of ink prepared for the purpose, as some of the rabbins think, without any calx of iron or other material that could make a permanent dye, were washed off the parchment into the water which the woman was obliged to drink, so that she drank the very words of the execration. The ink used in the East is almost all of this kind - a wet sponge will completely efface the finest of their writings. The rabbins say that the trial by the waters of jealousy was omitted after the Babylonish captivity, because adulteries were so frequent amongst them, that they were afraid of having the name of the Lord profaned by being so frequently appealed to! This is a most humiliating confession. "Though," says pious Bishop Wilson, "this judgment is not executed now on adulteresses, yet they have reason from this to conclude that a more terrible vengeance will await them hereafter without a bitter repentance; these being only a shadow of heavenly things, i. e., of what the Gospel requires of its professors, viz., a strict purity, or a severe repentance." The pious bishop would not preclude the necessity of pardon through the blood of the cross, for without this the severest repentance would be of no avail.

---

NUMBERS 5:24 He shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that causes the curse; and the water that causes the curse shall enter into her and become bitter.

---

Verse 24

The bitter water that causeth the curse - Though the rabbins think that the priest put some bitter substance in the water, yet as nothing of the kind is intimated by Moses, we may consider the word as used here metaphorically for affliction, death, etc. These waters were afflicting and deadly to her who drank them, being guilty. In this sense afflictions are said to be bitter, Isa 38:17; so also is death, 1Sam 15:32 : Ecc 7:26.

---

NUMBERS 5:25 The priest shall take the meal offering of jealousy out of the woman's hand, and shall wave the meal offering before the LORD, and bring it to the altar.

NUMBERS 5:26 The priest shall take a handful of the meal offering, as its memorial, and burn it on the altar, and afterward shall make the woman drink the water.

NUMBERS 5:27 When he has made her drink the water, then it shall happen, if she is defiled, and has committed a trespass against her husband, that the water that causes the curse will enter into her and become bitter, and her body will swell, and her thigh will fall away: and the woman will be a curse among her people.

NUMBERS 5:28 If the woman isn't defiled, but is clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed.

NUMBERS 5:29 "This is the law of jealousy, when a wife, being under her husband, goes astray, and is defiled;

#### Verse 29

This is the law of jealousies - And this is the most singular law in the whole Pentateuch: a law that seems to have been copied by almost all the nations of the earth, whether civilized or barbarian, as we find that similar modes of trial for suspected offenses were used when complete evidence was wanting to convict; and where it was expected that the object of their worship would interfere for the sake of justice, in order that the guilty should be brought to punishment, and the innocent be cleared. For general information on this head see at the end of this chapter. (See Num 5:31 (note)).

NUMBERS 5:30 or when the spirit of jealousy comes on a man, and he is jealous of his wife; then he shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute on her all this law.

NUMBERS 5:31 The man shall be free from iniquity, and that woman shall bear her iniquity."

#### Verse 31

This woman shall bear her iniquity - That is, her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot; see Num 5:22 (note). But if not guilty after such a trial, she had great honor, and, according to the rabbins, became strong, healthy, and fruitful; for if she was before barren, she now began to bear children; if before she had only daughters, she now began to have sons; if before she had hard travail, she now had easy; in a word, she was blessed in her body, her soul, and her substance: so shall it be done unto the holy and faithful woman, for such the Lord delighteth to honor; see 1Tim 2:15.

On the principal subject of this chapter. I shall here introduce a short account of the trial by ordeal, as practiced in different parts of the world, and which is supposed to have taken its origin from the waters of jealousy.

The trial by what was afterwards called Ordeal is certainly of very remote antiquity, and was evidently of Divine appointment. In this place we have an institution relative to a mode of trial precisely of that kind which among our ancestors was called ordeal; and from this all similar trials in Asia, Africa, and Europe, have very probably derived their origin.

Ordeal, Latin, ordalium, is, according to Verstegan, from the Saxon, ordal and ordel, and is derived by some from great, and Dael, judgment, signifying the greatest, most solemn, and decisive mode of judgment - Hickes. Others derive it from the Francic or Teutonic Urdela, which signifies simply to judge. But Lye, in his Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, derives the term from an Anglo-Saxon word, which is often in Anglo-Saxon, a privative particle, and, distinction or difference; and hence applied to that

kind of judgment in which there was no respect of persons, but every one had absolute justice done him, as the decision of the business was supposed to belong to God alone. It always signified an appeal to the immediate interposition of God, and was therefore called *Judicium Dei*, God's Judgment; and we may naturally suppose was never resorted to but in very important cases, where persons accused of great crimes protested their innocence, and there was no sufficient evidence by which they could be cleared from the accusation, or proved to be guilty of the crime laid to their charge. Such were the cases of jealousy referred to in this chapter.

The rabbins who have commented on this text give us the following information: When any man, prompted by the spirit of jealousy, suspected his wife to have committed adultery, he brought her first before the judges, and accused her of the crime; but as she asserted her innocency, and refused to acknowledge herself guilty, and as he had no witnesses to produce, he required that she should be sentenced to drink the waters of bitterness which the law had appointed; that God, by this means, might discover what she wished to conceal. After the judges had heard the accusation and the denial, the man and his wife were both sent to Jerusalem, to appear before the Sanhedrin, who were the sole judges in such matters. The rabbins say that the judges of the Sanhedrin, at first endeavored with threatenings to confound the woman, and cause her to confess her crime; when she still persisted in her innocence, she was led to the eastern gate of the court of Israel, where she was stripped of the clothes she wore, and dressed in black before a number of persons of her own sex. The priest then told her that if she knew herself to be innocent she had no evil to apprehend; but if she were guilty, she might expect to suffer all that the law threatened: to which she answered, Amen, amen.

The priest then wrote the words of the law upon a piece of vellum, with ink that had no vitriol in it, that it might be the more easily blotted out. The words written on the vellum were, according to the rabbins, the following: - "If a strange man have not come near thee, and thou art not polluted by forsaking the bed of thy husband, these bitter waters which I have cursed will not hurt thee: but if thou have gone astray from thy husband, and have polluted thyself by coming near to another man, may thou be accursed of the Lord, and become an example for all his people; may thy thigh rot, and thy belly swell till it burst! may these cursed waters enter into thy belly, and, being swelled therewith, may thy thigh putrefy!"

After this the priest took a new pitcher, filled it with water out of the brazen bason that was near the altar of burnt-offering, cast some dust into it taken from the pavement of the temple, mingled something bitter, as wormwood, with it, and having read the curses above mentioned to the woman, and received her answer of Amen, he scraped off the curses from the vellum into the pitcher of water. During this time another priest tore her clothes as low as her bosom, made her head bare, untied the tresses of her hair, fastened her torn clothes with a girdle below her breasts, and presented her with the tenth part of an ephah, or about three pints of barley-meal, which was in a frying pan, without oil or incense.

The other priest, who had prepared the waters of jealousy, then gave them to be drank by the accused person, and as soon as she had swallowed them, he put the pan with the meal in it into her hand. This was waved before the Lord, and a part of it thrown into the fire of the altar. If the woman was innocent, she returned with her husband; and the waters, instead of incommoding her, made her more healthy and fruitful than ever: if on the contrary she were guilty, she was seen immediately to grow pale, her eyes started out of her head, and, lest the temple should be defiled with her death, she was carried out, and died instantly with all the ignominious circumstances related in the curses, which the rabbins say had the same effect on him with whom she had been criminal, though he were absent and at a distance. They add, however, that if the husband himself had been guilty with

another woman, then the waters had no bad effect even on his criminal wife; as in that case the transgression on the one part was, in a certain sense, balanced by the transgression on the other.

There is no instance in the Scriptures of this kind of ordeal having ever been resorted to; and probably it never was during the purer times of the Hebrew republic. God had rendered himself so terrible by his judgments, that no person would dare to appeal to this mode of trial who was conscious of her guilt; and in case of simple adultery, where the matter was either detected or confessed, the parties were ordered by the law to be put to death.

But other ancient nations have also had their trials by ordeal.

We learn from Ferdusi, a Persian poet, whose authority we have no reason to suspect, that the fire ordeal was in use at a very early period among the ancient Persians. In the famous epic poem called the Shah Nameh of this author, who is not improperly styled the Homer of Persia, under the title Dastan Seeavesh ve Soodabeh, The account of Seeavesh and Soodabeh, he gives a very remarkable and circumstantial account of a trial of this kind.

It is very probable that the fire ordeal originated among the ancient Persians, for by them fire was not only held sacred, but considered as a god, or rather as the visible emblem of the supreme Deity; and indeed this kind of trial continues in extensive use among the Hindoos to the present day. In the code of Gentoo laws it is several times referred to under the title of Purrah Reh, but in the Shah Nameh, the word Soogend is used, which signifies literally an oath, as the persons were obliged to declare their innocence by an oath, and then put their veracity to test by passing through the kohi atesh, or fire pile; see the Shah Nameh in the title Dastan Seeavesh ve Soodabeh, and Halhed's code of Gentoo laws; Preliminary Discourse, p. lviii., and chap. v., sec. iii., pp. 117, etc.

A circumstantial account of the different kinds of ordeal practiced among the Hindoos, communicated by Warren Hastings, Esq., who received it from Ali Ibrahim Khan, chief magistrate at Benares, may be found in the Asiatic Researches, vol. i., p. 389.

This trial was conducted among this people nine different ways: first, by the balance; secondly, by fire; thirdly, by water; fourthly, by poison; fifthly, by the cosha, or water in which an idol has been washed; sixthly, by rice; seventhly, by boiling oil; eighthly, by red hot iron; ninthly, by images.

There is, perhaps, no mode of judiciary decision that has been in more common use in ancient times, than that of ordeal, in some form or other. We find that it was also used by the ancient Greeks 500 years before the Christian era; for in the Antigone of Sophocles, a person suspected by Creon of a misdemeanor, declares himself ready "to handle hot iron, and to walk over fire," in proof of his innocence, which the scholiast tells us was then a very usual purgation. *Ἡμεν δ' ἔτοιμοι καὶ μύδρους αἰρεῖν χεροῖν, καὶ πῦρ διερπεῖν, καὶ θεοῦς ὀρκωμοτεῖν.*

Ver. 270.

The scholiast on this line informs us that the custom in binding themselves by the most solemn oath, was this: they took red hot iron in their hands, and throwing it into the sea, swore that the oath should be inviolate till that iron made its appearance again. Virgil informs us that the priests of Apollo at Soracte were accustomed to walk over burning coals unhurt. - *Et medium, freti pietate, per ignem*

*Cultores multa premimus vestigia pruna.*

Aen. xi. 787.



Grotius gives many instances of water ordeal in Bithynia, Sardinia, and other places. Different species of fire and water ordeal are said to have prevailed among the Indians on the coast of Malabar; the negroes of Loango, Mozambique, etc., etc., and the Calmuc Tartars.

The first formal mention I find of this trial in Europe is in the laws of King Ina, composed about a. d. 700. See L. 77. entitled, Decision by hot iron and water. I find it also mentioned in the council of Mentz, a. d. 847; but Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, wrote against it sixty years before this time. It is afterwards mentioned in the council of Trevers, a. d. 895. It did not exist in Normandy till after the Conquest, and was probably first introduced into England in the time of Ina, in whose laws and those of Athelstan and Ethelred, it was afterwards inserted. The ordeal by fire was for noblemen and women, and such as were free born: the water ordeal was for husbandmen, and the meaner classes of the people, and was of two sorts; by cold water and by hot. See the proceedings in these trials declared particularly in the law of King Ina; Wilkins, *Leges Anglo-Saxonae*, p. 27.

Several popes published edicts against this species of trial. Henry III. abolished trials by ordeal in the third year of his reign, 1219. See the act in Rymer, vol. i., p. 228; and see Dugdale's *Origines Juridicales*, fol. 87; Spelman's *Glossary*, Wilkins, Hicke, Lombard, Somner, and Du Cange, art. *Ferrum*.

The ordeal or trial by battle or combat is supposed to have come to us from the Lombards, who, leaving Scandinavia, overran Europe: it is thought that this mode of trial was instituted by Frotha III., king of Denmark, about the time of the birth of Christ; for he ordained that every controversy should be determined by the sword. It continued in Holsatia till the time of Christian III., king of Denmark, who began his reign in 1535. From these northern nations the practice of duels was introduced into Great Britain. I need scarcely add, that this detestable form of trial was the foundation of the no less detestable crime of dueling, which so much disgraces our age and nation, a practice that is defended only by ignorance, false honor, and injustice: it is a relic of barbarous superstition, and was absolutely unknown to those brave and generous nations, the Greeks and Romans, whom it is so much the fashion to admire; and who, in this particular, so well merit our admiration!

The general practice of dueling is supposed to have taken its rise in 1527, at the breaking up of a treaty between the Emperor Charles V. and Francis I. The former having sent a herald with an insulting message to Francis, the king of France sent back the herald with a cartel of defiance, in which he gave the emperor the lie, and challenged him to single combat: Charles accepted it; but after several messages concerning the arrangement of all the circumstances relative to the combat, the thoughts of it were entirely laid aside. The example of two personages so illustrious drew such general attention, and carried with it so much authority, that it had considerable influence in introducing an important change in manners all over Europe. It was so much the custom in the middle ages of Christianity to respect the cross, even to superstition, that it would have been indeed wonderful if the same ignorant bigotry had not converted it into an ordeal: accordingly we find it used for this purpose in so many different ways as almost to preclude description. Another trial of this kind was the *Corsned*, or the consecrated bread and cheese: this was the ordeal to which the clergy commonly appealed when they were accused of any crime. A few concluding observations from Dr. Henry may not be unacceptable to the reader: - "If we suppose that few or none escaped conviction who exposed themselves to these fiery trials, we shall be very much mistaken. For the histories of those times contain innumerable examples of persons plunging their naked arms into boiling water, handling red hot balls of iron, and walking upon burning ploughshares, without receiving the least injury. Many learned men have been much puzzled to account for this, and disposed to think that Providence graciously interposed in a miraculous manner for the preservation of injured innocence. "But if we examine every circumstance of these fiery ordeals with due

attention, we shall see sufficient reason to suspect that the whole was a gross imposition on the credulity of mankind. The accused person was committed wholly to the priest who was to perform the ceremony three days before the trial, in which he had time enough to bargain with him for his deliverance, and give him instructions how to act his part. On the day of trial no person was permitted to enter the church but the priest and the accused till after the iron was heated, when twelve friends of the accuser, and twelve of the accused, and no more, were admitted and ranged along the wall on each side of the church, at a respectful distance. After the iron was taken out of the fire several prayers were said: the accused drank a cup of holy water, and sprinkled his hand with it, which might take a considerable time if the priest were indulgent. The space of nine feet was measured by the accused himself, with his own feet, and he would probably give but scanty measure. He was obliged only to touch one of the marks with the toe of his right foot, and allowed to stretch the other foot as far towards the other mark as he could, so that the conveyance was almost instantaneous. His hand was not immediately examined, but wrapped in a cloth prepared for that purpose three days. May we not then, from all these precautions, suspect that these priests were in possession of some secret that secured the hand from the impression of such a momentary touch of hot iron, or removed all appearances of these impressions in three days; and that they made use of this secret when they saw reason? Such readers as are curious in matters of this kind may find two different directions for making ointments that will have this effect, in the work here quoted. What greatly strengthens these suspicions is, that we meet with no example of any champion of the Church who suffered the least injury from the touch of hot iron in this ordeal: but where any one was so fool-hardy as to appeal to it, or to that of hot water, with a view to deprive the Church of any of her possessions, he never failed to burn his fingers, and lose his cause." I have made the scanty extract above from a very extensive history of the trial by ordeal, which I wrote several years ago, but never published. All the forms of adjuration for the various ordeals of hot water, cold water, red hot iron, bread and cheese, etc., may be seen in the *Codex Legum Antiquarum*, Lindenbrogii, fol. Franc. 1613, p. 1299, etc.