**SOLOMON’S**

**CANTICLE OF CANTICLES**

*This Book is called the* Canticle of Canticles*, that is to say, the most excellent of all canticles: because it is full of high mysteries, relating to the happy union of Christ and his spouse: which is here begun by love; and is to be eternal in heaven. The spouse of Christ is the church: more especially as to the happiest part of it,* viz., *perfect souls, every one of which is his beloved, but, above all others, the immaculate and blessed virgin mother.*

**CHAPTER** **1**

*The spouse aspires to an union with Christ, their mutual love for one another.*

**1** Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth: for thy breasts are better than wine,

**2** Smelling sweet of the best ointments. Thy name is as oil poured out: therefore young maidens have loved thee.

**3** Draw me: we will run after thee to the odour of thy ointments. The king hath brought me into his storerooms: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, remembering thy breasts more than wine: the rightous love thee.

**4** I am black but beautiful, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Cedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

**5** Do not consider me that I am brown, because the sun hath altered my colour: the sons of my mother have fought against me, they have made me the keeper in the vineyards: my vineyard I have not kept.

**6** Shew me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou liest in the midday, lest I begin to wander after the flocks of thy companions.

**7** If thou know not thyself, O fairest among women, go forth, and follow after the steps of the flocks, and feed thy kids beside the tents of the shepherds.

**8** To my company of horsemen, in Pharao’s chariots, have I likened thee, O my love.

**9** Thy cheeks are beautiful as the turtledove’s, thy neck as jewels.

**10** We will make thee chains of gold, inlaid with silver.

**11** While the king was at his repose, my spikenard sent forth the odour thereof.

**12** A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, he shall abide between my breasts.

**13** A cluster of cypress my love is to me, in the vineyards of Engaddi.

**14** Behold thou art fair, O my love, behold thou art fair, thy eyes are as those of doves.

**15** Behold thou art fair, my beloved, and comely. Our bed is flourishing.

**16** The beams of our houses are of cedar, our rafters of cypress trees.