

longer will the doctrine of the Church, which weighs the material and temporal in the balance of the spiritual and eternal, be looked upon as paradoxical. "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." "Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all other things will be added unto you." Again will arise the spirit of a true humanity, which will breathe hope into the aching breasts of the down-trodden peoples, the spirit of a divine liberty, equality and fraternity, whose sanction and defence has ever been, as it can only lie, in that divine philosophy which is the expression of the God-word in man, the logic of regenerated reason, the doctrine of the true and only Saviour of the world; which, indeed, like its author, can be scorned, traduced, scourged and crucified, but, like Him, will surely pass through the grave without corruption, and rise again heralding in the dawn of a new day of life, liberty and happiness for mankind.

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### CATHOLIC WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN ART.

*The Offices and Ceremonies of Holy Week.* Card. Wiseman. London, 1839.

*Genius of Christianity.* Chateaubriand. Baltimore, 1856.

*Histoire de l'Eglise.* Par l'Abbé Darras. Paris, 1874-1888, Vol. 30, Appendix.

*Mores Catholici; or, Ages of Faith.* Digby. New York, 1888, Bk. III.

IT is impossible for one who studiously examines the majestic cathedrals of the old world, especially those that are still devoted to the purposes of Catholic worship, to be unimpressed by feelings of wonder and surprise; and if the student know aught of the Catholic ceremonial, and be withal an unprejudiced observer, he will be unable, as a result of his study, to resist the conviction that Mother Church has done both wisely and well in wedding Catholic worship to Christian art.

As he gazes on the gorgeous paintings and noble sculptures that adorn both nave and chancel; as his eye glances admiringly along the clustered columns that rise in stately splendor to the Gothic vault above; as he perceives the massive organ whence reverential music is wont to steal in waves of solemn sound; as he

reflects that the chancel often resounds with the voices of the clergy chanting "in sounds of sweetest melody" the sublime offices of the Roman liturgy, or declaiming in Gregorian song the matchless poetry of Mother Church, he must admit that each and all,—painting, poetry, sculpture, music, architecture, are means wisely made use of by the Catholic Church to draw men's souls with golden bands to Him who is her Spouse, to entrance the sense that thus she may captivate the intellect, making it submissive to the sweet yoke of Christ. And if he understand the motives of the Church in beautifying the chamber of her Bridegroom, he will not fail to realize that the marriage between art and worship is thoroughly in accordance with the wish, even with the *command*, of the Divine Founder of Christianity.

Catholic Worship and Christian Art is no doubt a beautiful theme, and many men of massive minds and facile pens have sought, with eminent success, to do it justice. The literature which it has occasioned is fully in keeping with the vastness of the subject; for it comprises, in historical extent, the nineteen hundred years that have elapsed since the dawn of Christianity, and deals with monuments of genius, with which the earth is widely dotted—monuments fashioned by the hands of faithful Catholic artists of both the present and the past; which are, in a manner, indestructible as the Church herself, and which shall continue to unfold their matchless grace and beauty wherever shine the rays of her benevolence and charity.

The writer does not in the least presume to treat the subject as it merits to be treated; nor will he, for he cannot, enter largely into details. An adequate treatise on the subject would fill many large volumes. This statement, though trite, is true, and evidence of its truth is not wanting. It is scarcely a decade since the learned Jesuit, Father Garucci, published a work bearing a title somewhat similar to that at the head of this article; and though that work consists of six volumes in folio, the descriptions and narratives which it contains come down to the eighth century only,—nearly six hundred years before the birth of Michel Angelo Buonarotti, during whose lifetime Christian art, in all its branches, enjoyed a golden age.

It is the design of the writer to give a mere sketch or outline, and a meagre one at that, of the relation existing between Christian art and the worship of the Catholic Church, both as regards the *liturgy* of the Church and the *sacred edifices* wherein the offices of the liturgy are now or have been performed. In tracing this outline, he has found it necessary, when treating of certain branches of art, to mention one or two works or specimens only—not because there are not more, for their name is indeed legion; but

simply because they are sufficient to suit his purpose. Neither has he, in exercising his choice of specimens, always given the preference to those that are considered the most striking or the most beautiful; for that would involve, in many cases, a wealth of description and a mass of detail altogether incompatible with the length of a REVIEW article. He has, therefore, taken the liberty to select, almost at random, from among so many works that are all beautiful.

From what has already been written, it is hardly necessary to premise that the words "Christian art," as used in this article, convey the idea of the fine arts as wedded to worship, as a vehicle of moral instruction, as employed entirely and only for the furtherance of the ends of religion.

Fully to realize the influence of Catholic worship on the rise, progress, development and perfection of Christian art, it is necessary to understand the object of the Church in employing the beautiful in her religious services, and in the erection and adornment of her sanctuaries.

Her object may be briefly stated as the salvation of mankind. As salvation cannot be accomplished without faith which "cometh by hearing," the necessary means to its attainment is the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. "Going, therefore, *teach* all nations!" "*Preach* the gospel to every creature!" This is her commission. She must go unto the ends of the earth, seek out every rational creature and preach to him, teach him what Christ commands, administer to him the sacraments, which are the mysteries of God, and demand his obedience to Christian law. She is not to hand him a book and say: "Read and be saved." She is to *teach* and to *preach*; for this did she receive the gift of tongues and the divine fire of the Holy Ghost.

We know the great diversity existing among men, whether as individuals or as nations; we are acquainted with the many obstacles in the ordinary path to knowledge and belief; and yet, all nations must be taught, and the Gospel must be preached to every creature: to the ignorant, who are not moved by the beauties of rhetoric or by elegance of diction, as well as to the learned, who are; to those who are deaf as well as to those who can hear; to the blind as well as to those who can see; to the refined and cultured; to the rich, the poor, the master and the slave. Moreover, it must be preached to these in the most effective manner, that all may realize, as best they can, the facts of the Bible narrative, unroll the past and gaze on it as present. They are to be witnesses in particular of the principal scenes in the life of the Saviour, and to feel in the inmost recesses of the heart the emotions these should

naturally awoken. They are to listen to the joyful song of angels as on Christmas morning they proclaim the Saviour's birth, and be present with the shepherds who adore Him in simple, trusting faith; they must gaze on Simeon in the temple with the Christ-child in his arms, and listen to the farewell canticle of the Old Testament as it gives way to the New; they must bow in adoration with the Wise Men of the East, follow the fleeing Infant into Egypt, wander back again to Nazareth, behold the opened heavens at the Jordan, assist at each act and parable of the "public ministry," sympathize with the sufferings of Christ's passion, feel to some extent the emotions that then thrilled the heart of Jesus, stand with Mary and John and Magdalen "amid the encircling gloom" on Calvary, share with the apostles in the joy of the Resurrection, and stand on Olivet with the men of Galilee to gaze on Jesus as He enters into His glory.

For all this, spoken language is not enough; the Church must use, in addition to it, the language of signs and symbols, the doleful sounds of grief, the harmonious measures of joy. It is for this reason that she adorns the walls of her temples with the Stations of the Cross; for thus we may follow the Saviour, step by step, from Pilate's hall to Calvary, and thence unto the tomb. The half-opened lips of the dead Christ hanging on the Cross, above the altar, speak to us of the enormity of sin; His transpierced heart tells the story of infinite love; His outstretched arms denote that His redemption would extend to all mankind, but His feet are fixed, and men must come to Him. Mary, too, is near—the mother of joys and sorrows—and, as we gaze on her heavenly countenance, she seems to tell us to bear our trials with resignation, to let the light of faith shine through our tears, giving them the beauty of the rainbow, and reminding us of God's promise of a brighter day beyond the clouds. We think of how, in far Judea, an angel came in the long ago and hailed a gentle maiden as the mother of the world's Redeemer. We follow her through joy and sorrow to Egypt, to Nazareth, to Jerusalem, to Calvary; there we become her children; she, our mother. Then, after Jesus has ascended to the "right hand of God the Father Almighty," we behold her with the apostles in the upper room where God the Holy Ghost descends in tongues of fire. And now we remember that she is with her divine Son once more—that good Son who can refuse her nothing, and we know that "she is standing between us and the Deity, intercepting somewhat of His awful splendor, but allowing His love to stream upon us more intelligibly to human comprehension through the medium of a woman's tenderness."—(Hawthorne: "Blithedale Romance.") Thus our thoughts are elevated and purified, and our lives are made more holy. Above the

springing arches and on the chancel walls are ranged, perhaps, the prophets and the evangelists, the patriarchs of the Old Law, the confessors of the New. Isaias tells us that a child shall be born to us; John the Baptist announces that he is here; Matthew tells of the temporal, and John of the eternal generation of the Son of God. In the representation of a Borromeo or of an Assisi, we understand to what heights of sanctity man can rise, whether girded round by riches and wearing the silken garments of a prince, or in the midst of poverty, bare of foot and clothed in the meanest serge.

It is, therefore, in accordance with the divine commission of the Church to make use of the beautiful for the purpose of conveying religious instruction; thus she Christianizes the feelings of the human heart; thus she promotes religion by rendering it attractive; thus she teaches it to many who otherwise would never learn its saving truths nor practise its salutary teachings; thus, in a word, she renders fruitful the indissoluble union, brought about and consecrated by herself, between Catholic Worship and Christian Art.

Everything that is great had its humble beginnings, its various stages of development, and then its full ripe growth. The sturdy oak that scarcely trembles in the storm, was once a tiny acorn; the mighty river was a rill. So it was with Christian as with pagan art; for the frescoes of Buonarotti, as well as the statues of Praxiteles, are the results of ages of development, of centuries of ceaseless evolution. The reason is, that perfection is not the work of an instant, and is rarely, if ever, the work of man.

The first Christian painters and sculptors were dwellers in the Catacombs. No matter how the question as to the original purpose of these excavations may be decided, it is sufficient for the writer's object to recall the fact that, when the furious tide of persecution rolled over the Roman Empire, the Christians fled to these for protection. Beneath the streets and palaces of Imperial Rome were hewn still other streets; and, as the famous *ways* above were lined with the stately tombs of Roman noblemen and heroes, so too, in the *loculi* of the galleries beneath the Christians interred the remains of their martyred brethren. In places where galleries converged were widened spaces, not unlike the forums of the city; in these rude oratories the persecuted people met for prayer, assisted at the solemn offices of the Church and partook of the Most Holy Sacrament. Their religion was proscribed; for, to be a Christian was to be a traitor to the state as well as an enemy of Jupiter; and the punishment was torture and death. Every man suspected his neighbor; the father dragged his son before the tri-

bunal; the daughter gave evidence against her mother. Under such circumstances the utmost precaution was necessary. Hence, while Christians refrained from pagan practices, they studiously concealed the evidences of their being followers of the Nazarene. Their very speech was clothed in ambiguity, and the "discipline of the secret" was in force.

Of necessity, the effects of this restraint are visible in the Christian worship of that period, and even more so in the works of art. As examples of the former, we have the offices of *Tenebræ*, or Darkness, and the Mass of Holy Saturday, which were wont to be celebrated at the midnight hour.

The paintings of the catacombs consist chiefly of symbols and scenes from Scripture history, so painted as to refer to the state of affliction in which the Church then was. The symbolic paintings are many. The laurel, the olive, and the palm signify respectively victory, peace, and final triumph; the Holy Spirit is represented by the dove, while hope for the heavenly port finds its expression in the anchor; the stag is the symbol of the soul's thirst after the living fountains of paradise, and the peacock of the Christian's belief in immortality; the vine and its branches typify Christ and His disciples; the cross is the emblem of redemption, and the ship an image of the Church. The Saviour Himself is variously represented as the Good Shepherd, the Lamb, and as a fish. The reason of the latter representation is well known; the Christians used each letter of the Greek word *ichthus* as an initial of a name or appellation of Jesus Christ, viz., I-esous, Ch-ristos, Th-eou, U-ios, S-oter (*i.e.*, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour).

Representations of the Blessed Eucharist are many and varied; and the multiplication of the sacramental presence seems to have been a favorite subject. Most often this is represented by dishes containing fishes, and small round loaves with crosses imprinted thereon; yet this is not the only pictorial record of the belief of the first Christians in the eucharistic doctrine. There is a painting of the scene in IV. Kings, iv., 1-8, wherein it is stated that the prophet Eliseus miraculously increased the small store of oil which a certain widow possessed, so that it filled not only her own vessels, but also all that she could borrow from her neighbors; the symbols or emblems on this picture prove that it is eucharistic.

In the Kircher museum at Rome there is a glass jar bearing the representation of a fish on a gourd. As the Christians were desirous of representing the dogmas of the Church in such a manner as to conceal them from the pagans, the "fish on the gourd" was certainly a puzzle to the uninitiated. It simply states the fact of Christ's burial and resurrection; the fish typifies Christ; the gourd refers to Jonas the prophet, who reclined under a gourd

which the Lord had prepared to shield him from the rays of the sun. Both together make us recall the words of our Lord: "As Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights (Matthew xii., 40).

Although there were crosses everywhere in the Catacombs, there is not to be found a painting of the Crucifixion. For this there were many reasons, among which two may be cited: it was very important in the early days of the Church to avoid anything that would be the occasion of pain to converts from Judaism; and, secondly, it was necessary to guard against the mockery of the pagans. The little that these latter knew, or more often *guessed*, concerning Christian doctrines, served as a basis for ridicule, and as an occasion for keeping alive the spirit of persecution. Thus we remember how Christians were called "cowardly worshippers of an ass's head." Again, it is well known that there was a caricature of the crucifix scratched on the wall of Cæsar's house in the pages' department. This consists of a human figure with an ass's head; the arms are outstretched, while at the back of the figure is a cross made of two intersecting lines. One of the pages, Alexemenos, no doubt a Christian, is represented as giving the salute *ad os* to this figure, while under it is rudely traced in Greek the inscription: "Alexemenos adores his God." This caricature dates from the first century, and the mere fact of its existence serves to corroborate what has been written above.

The paintings found in the catacombs have many striking peculiarities. A reference will be made to only one; one which, long misunderstood, has given occasion to scoffers to say that the early painters were as ignorant of Scripture history as they were of painting. This peculiarity has various names, but it may be called *compenetration*. That is to say, there seems to be an interpenetration, if we may so call it, of several scenes of sacred history in the same picture; or, the fulfilment of a prophecy is shown in what should be the original scene; or, an application of an Old Testament scene is made to a doctrine of Christianity. To illustrate the first: we have a representation of the Fall; in this we have the temptation of Eve by the serpent, her temptation of Adam, his accusation of the woman, and the discovery of their shame and nakedness. These events happened at different times, and yet they are all placed in the same picture. The serpent is twisted about the tree; Eve holds out the apple to her husband; Adam stands at a distance, in the act of making an accusation, while both are covered with the aprons of fig leaves.

With regard to the second species of compenetration, which may be said to be the most usual, we have a painting in which Christ,

instead of Moses, is represented as striking the rock in the desert. Now we know that "the rock was Christ" (1 Cor. x., 4), and hence we grasp at once the meaning of the picture: that it is *from* Christ as the fountain head, and *through* Him as our Redeemer, that the saving waters of grace flow through the desert of sin.

As an example of the application of an Old Testament scene to a New Testament doctrine, there is a painting of an early date which conveys to our minds the dogma of Mary's all-powerful intercession. St. Peter and St. Paul are represented as holding up the hands of Mary, who stands between them in the attitude of prayer. We are instantly reminded of Moses on the mountain, his hands held up by Aaron and Hur, while his people battled against their enemies in the valley below. As the name of each personage is written in its proper place under each figure, it is impossible to mistake the identity of the three.

The sculpture of the Catacombs consists mostly of bas-reliefs, and these, like the paintings, are representations of Scriptural scenes, interspersed with symbols. In them, likewise, are to be found many instances of compenetration.

The Church was not destined to live forever in the Catacombs. After three hundred years of bloody persecution the dark waters of the awful deluge at last subsided, carrying with them the shattered remnants of a once proud paganism; the cross that appeared to the army of Constantine was the harbinger of peace. Washing the blood and dust from her bruised members, the Church came forth from her darksome caverns, arrayed herself in bridal glory, and ascended the throne of the Cæsars. The temples of the gods, as well as the basilicas, which had been the halls of justice, were transformed into places of Christian worship; and those whose hands had adorned the walls and ceilings of the Catacombs, now transferred their labors to this more promising field.

But Christian art was not destined to assume in Italy at this time a more distinctive form, nor yet to attain a healthy expansion. Constantine removed the seat of empire to the East, and civil disturbances, coupled with barbarian invasion, checked the development of art in the West, so that within two centuries Constantinople had become its principal seat.

To this period is to be ascribed the Byzantine style of painting, of which the most interesting remains are works in mosaic and illuminations of the Bible and of other sacred manuscripts. It must be remembered that during the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries the iconoclasts fought with all the fury of mistaken zeal against the development of Christian art; and were it not for the deathless energy with which the Catholic Church strove against those sacrilegious image-breakers, we would not have now the



meagre remnants of the Byzantine school. To prove that there is no exaggeration on this point, a quotation from Chateaubriand will not be out of place :

“The clergy had collected at the College of Orthodoxy at Constantinople the finest library in the world and all the masterpieces of antiquity. Here, in particular, was to be seen the Venus of Praxiteles, which proves, at least, that the founders of the Catholic worship were neither barbarians without taste, bigoted monks, nor the votaries of absurd superstition.

“This college was demolished by the iconoclast emperors. The professors were burned alive ; and it was at the risk of meeting with a similar fate that some Christians saved the dragon’s skin, one hundred and twenty feet long, on which the works of Homer were written in letters of gold. The pictures belonging to the churches were consigned to the flames, and stupid and furious bigots, nearly resembling the Puritans of Cromwell’s time, hacked to pieces with their sabres the admirable mosaic works in the Church of the Virgin Mary at Constantinople, and in the Palace of Blaquernæ. To such a height was the persecution carried that it involved the painters themselves ; they were forbidden under pain of death to prosecute their profession. Lazarus, a monk, had the courage to become a martyr to his art. In vain did Theophilus cause his hands to be burnt to prevent him from holding the pencil. The illustrious friar, concealed in the vault of St. John the Baptist, painted with his mutilated fingers the great saint whose protection he sought ; worthy, undoubtedly, of becoming the patron of painters, and of being acknowledged by that sublime family which the breath of the spirit exalts above the rest of mankind.”—*(Genius of Christianity.)*

For a time it seemed as if the choir of Muses had left the earth forever. Yet all was not dark in Italy ; a ray of light occasionally penetrated the gloom, as when Theodoric, Desiderius and Luitprand erected substantial churches, and Charlemagne built at Florence the Church of the Apostles, which to-day still stands, the pride of the age in which it was erected.

It was not, however, until about the thirteenth century that the clouds began to roll away ; the dawn of a brighter era was at hand. The models of ancient Greece and Rome had not entirely disappeared. Nicolo Pisano made them live again in purest marble, and Giotto di Bondone, casting to the winds the traditions that had bound him to the stiff Byzantine school, stood forth in his originality the true regenerator of Christian art. Brighter and brighter grew that morning light, until in Angelo and Raphael arose twin luminaries who filled the world with admiration of their genius, whose names shall ever be synonyms of all that is perfect

in art, and whose works shall exist as long as that Church whose faithful children they were, and on which they still shed unfading glory.

From Rome the light soon spread afar, though its brightness was somewhat obscured by the smoke of burning abbeys and cathedrals which marked the progress of the "Reformation." This is written in sorrow, not in anger; although there be some who decry the Catholic Church as the enemy of art, and either ignorantly or maliciously ascribe to the "Reformation" whatever of progress has been made in the field of civilization since Christianity made its appearance on the earth. The sacrilegious vandals of the sixteenth century spared nothing. As Motley says in his "Rise and Fall of the Dutch Republic": "They destroyed for destruction's sake." One example alone will bear out this assertion. At Antwerp a mob attacked the great cathedral, overthrew the seventy altars, carried off the vestments and sacred vessels, demolished the great organ, the most perfect in the world, destroyed the statues, and hacked to pieces the splendid paintings which were the pride of Flemish art. On this subject our own Prescott says:

"The amount of injury inflicted during this period, it is impossible to estimate. Four hundred churches were sacked by the insurgents in Flanders alone. The damage to the cathedral of Antwerp, including its precious contents, was said to amount to not less than 400,000 ducats. The loss occasioned by the plunder of gold and silver plate might be computed; the structures so cruelly defaced might be repaired by the skill of the architect; but who can estimate the irreparable loss occasioned by the destruction of manuscripts, statuary and paintings?"

This from a non-Catholic historian! Should any one then be so presumptuous as to proclaim to an astonished world that Catholicity has been inimical to art, let him be reminded of two things: that the appearance of Protestantism was the signal for the destruction of all art, and that Luther blessed (!) this earth with his presence when the world was ablaze with light, during its second Augustan age—the glorious pontificate of LEO X!

Having written thus much concerning the development of painting and its twin sister under the influence of the Church, it is now in order to consider poetry and music in relation to the worship of the Catholic Church.

If we carefully examine the liturgy of the Roman Church, we shall find, without doubt, that the poetic idea runs through it all. In fact, the liturgy itself is an epic poem, whose subject is the Atonement. Every detail of the divine tragedy, from the first promise of a Redeemer to the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pen-

tecost, is presented to us with marvellous sublimity, with an elevation of language and a grandeur of action that are absolutely without parallel. The chief aim of the Church, as has already been noticed, is to substitute the past for the present, so as to make her children witnesses of the facts which she commemorates, and even to feel that they are actual participants in the actions which she represents. And, indeed, with reason; for, in the divine economy nothing can be merely historical; hence, when Mother Church commemorates, she represents, and when she narrates, she consecrates.—(Canon Oakley.)

Bearing this in mind, let us first examine the ecclesiastical year, which commences with the first Sunday of Advent. Here we have four successive Sundays set apart for the purpose of representing the four thousand years of expectation which preceded the coming of the Son of Man. During this period the Church calls on us to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ as though His birth were really yet to take place.

On the first Sunday she sings with the Psalmist (Ps. xxiv.): "To Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul, in Thee, O God, I put my trust; let me not be ashamed, neither let my enemies laugh at me, for none of them that wait on Thee shall be confounded." Thus, with the chosen people, we live surrounded by malignant enemies, yet we trust ever implicitly in the omnipotence and providence of Jehovah, Who will one day surely send "the desired of the eternal hills."

On two of these Sundays her prayers begin with the words: "O Lord, we beseech Thee, exert Thy power and come!" On the second Sunday the Collect reads thus: "O Lord, excite our hearts to prepare the ways of Thy only Son, that by His coming we may merit to serve Thee with purified minds!"

Thus we see that there is a constant ray of hope to light our footsteps to the cradle of the Lord: and it grows ever brighter as the days roll by. As we draw nearer to the great day of the Lord, the sounds of gladness increase. On the third Sunday we are thus exhorted in the words of St. Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord always! again I say, Rejoice! . . . Be nothing solicitous, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your petitions be made known to God."

During the ember days of the last week, and also on the last Sunday, she heaves a hopeful sigh, and, with Isaias, prays the heavens to rain the *JUST ONE*, and the earth to bud forth the Saviour, while her Gospel tells us of John the Precursor, the "voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord!"

Brighter still that ray of hope! more harmonious the sounds of

gladness! On the very night before the Nativity, she speaks with unshaken confidence; "To-day you shall know that the Lord will come and save us, and *to-morrow* you shall see His glory." And again: "To-morrow shall be blotted out the iniquity of the earth, and the Saviour of the world shall reign over us."

This is truly magnificent, the highest form of poetical expression. And how sublimely the period of expectation terminates! The midnight hour of Christmas Eve has come. The churches are illuminated and the altars are ablaze with lights; the air is filled with the fragrance of frankincense and flowers; the kneeling worshippers are waiting in reverence and silence. At length, clothed in golden vestments, the ministers appear; they advance slowly to the foot of the altar; all hearts unconsciously swell with spiritual joy. Now they ascend the platform of the altar; clouds of incense roll to the vault above; the organ peals forth its swelling notes of harmony, and above all are heard the solemn words of Christ Himself, once spoken by the mouth of the royal prophet: "The Lord said to me: Thou art my Son, *this day* have I begotten Thee!" While present at such a scene and filled with its spirit, we cannot but feel that the great day of the Lord has come at last—the day of salvation has dawned, indeed; the sentiments of the humble shepherds become our own; our ears are tingling with song of the heavenly spirits; and with Mary and Joseph we adore in spirit our new-born King.

The poetic principle, as already mentioned, pervades the entire liturgy. Each succeeding Sunday unfolds some new mystery of the God-Man's life on earth, until on Ascension Day we stand in spirit on the summit of Mount Olivet, and thence behold Him taken from us into heaven. However, it is particularly during Holy Week that the poetry of Mother Church reaches the highest point of excellence.

On Palm Sunday we actually participate in a procession commemorating the triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem; bearing palm branches in our hands, we sing joyous hosannas to the Son of David, the King who cometh in the name of the Lord.

On Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings are chanted the Lamentations of Jeremias, during the office called *TENEBRÆ*, or Darkness. The versicles and responses are so arranged as to seem spoken by the Saviour during His passion, so that His words of reproach and sorrow may excite in us feelings of repentance for our many sins.

On Thursday evening we witness the beautiful ceremony of the Washing of the Feet. We hear Peter saying to the Saviour: "Lord, why dost Thou wash my feet? Thou shalt never wash

my feet." And then comes soft and low the answer of our loving Lord: "If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me."

On Good Friday the sombre drapings and the vestments of deepest mourning, the desolate altar and the open tabernacle, the plaints of mourning and the cries of woe, give evidence of the great grief of the widowed Bride of Christ. The history of His sufferings is recited in Gregorian chant; and, when the last words on the Cross have been uttered, we prostrate ourselves in sorrow and meditate on the death of the Son of God. We are in spirit at the foot of the Cross on Calvary, amid the darkness and the gloom, weeping with Mary and John and Magdalen, striking our breasts like the many that were there, and confessing with the centurion that this man is truly the Son of God.

But darkness does not last always; our woe must become less intense. Did He not give a promise, saying that on the third day He would rise again? In the very midst of our grief, Mother Church allows us to catch a glimpse of the dawn of Easter Day; for, on Holy Saturday, the tidings of the Resurrection are communicated, the ALLELUIA is entoned, and we are told that Mary Magdalen and the other Mary have gone to see the sepulchre.

And now, on Easter morning, the hymns of joy and the songs of praise! The VICTIMÆ PASCHALI LAUDES is entoned and sung in rhythmic melody. Magdalen comes running to us, and we anxiously bespeak her thus:

"Tell unto us, O Mary,  
What thou hast seen in the way."

She answers, joyfully:

"I have seen the sepulchre of the living Christ,  
And the glory of His rising,  
The angel ministers, the napkin and the cloths,  
Christ, my hope, is risen again,  
He shall go before you into Galilee."

And then we sing with rapture:

"We know that Christ has truly risen from the dead,  
Thou, triumphant King, have mercy on us!  
Amen. Alleluia."

It is hoped by the writer that the few examples he has given will serve to illustrate, at least in some degree, the poetry of Catholic worship. To grasp in its entirety the poetical idea which is contained in the liturgy would necessitate an examination of the entire ceremonial, a thing entirely beyond the compass of an article.

The music proper of the Church is called Gregorian, or "plain chant." When it was introduced into the Church is not definitely known. It was probably based on the Greek system. Eusebius, who flourished towards the close of the third century, says that in his time there were different places assigned in the churches to the old and the young psalm-singers. St. Augustine is authority for the statement that the great St. Ambrose of Milan was the first to introduce alternate chanting into the West. The Emperor Charlemagne delighted in this music so much that he often ascended the platform with the choristers, and made the walls of his cathedral at Aix resound with the accents of his beautiful voice. Pope Gregory the Great reformed the music of the Church, and gave to the octave scale the names which the notes still bear, A, B, C, etc. In the first half of the eleventh century the art of writing music on lines and in spaces was invented by Guido of Arrezzo, a Benedictine monk, and thus the notation of the different tones was finally and systematically regulated.

The chief difference between the Gregorian and modern music is thus fully stated by Cardinal Wiseman :

"According to his (Gregory's) and the present systems of music, any of these notes (A, B, C, etc.) may be the key-note ; but then we now introduce as many flats and sharps as are necessary to make the tones and semitones fall at the same intervals in every major and minor key respectively. Hence, a melody written for one key can be sung upon another, without any change thence resulting except as to pitch. In the Gregorian chant, likewise, any note may be the key-note, but no sharps or flats are allowed excepting B flat in the key of F. Thus, in every key, the position of the semitone varies ; and a piece of music, composed on one key or tone, is completely altered, and becomes insufferable if transposed into another."—(Lect. II.)

This system of music is essentially melodic ; the music is to be sung in the same melody by all the voices. It is purely diatonic. According to Rousseau, "it is superior to all modern music in that pathos which a majestic strain can give to the human voice." It stands majestically alone ; and every modern effort to compose in imitation of it has signally failed.

Great corruptions crept early into church music, and it was very much degraded when Gregory XI. brought with him from Avignon his choir of French, Spaniards, and Flemings. These used harmonised music, in which no words could be distinguished. They had an idea that the Italians could not sing, and many are the jokes and sharp retorts of the latter at the expense of the foreigners. Bains, quoted by Cardinal Wiseman, relates two :

Pope Nicholas V. asked Cardinal Capranica, one day, what he

thought of his choir. His Eminence answered that they seemed to him like "a sackfull of young swine, for he heard a dreadful noise, but could distinguish nothing articulate." Cirillo Franchi describes them in 1549 as singing "with certain howls, bellowings, and guttural sounds, so that they more resemble cats in January than flowers in May."

These abuses soon reached their height, and then Palestrina appeared. He put an end to the discordant jarring, brought harmony back again to earth, and gave us that grand church music which can neither be surpassed, imitated, nor equalled. How plaintive, and yet how angelically sweet, is the music of the Lamentations! how prayerful and solemn that of the Preface and the *Pater Noster*! Then the chanting of the Passion on Good Friday; the loud and brusque recitative of the historian; the deep, pathetic and solemn bass of Jesus, and the high tumultuous treble of the Jewish rabble! What mournful cadence in the *Dies Iræ* and the *Stabat Mater*! What exultation in the Paschal hymn of the deacon, as on Holy Saturday he blesses the paschal candle!

When sung by many voices, Gregorian music is truly sublime and ravishing; its melodic nature seems to have been formed in Heaven. The four living creatures—the number of perfect harmony—sing "Holy, holy, holy, to the Lord God of armies!" The one hundred and forty-four thousand virgins who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, sing a song which none others know; while "thousands of thousands" sing in a voice like the roaring of the sea, that magnificent canticle, "To the Lamb that was slain."

The multitudinous singing of this grand church music is exquisitely touching, and entrancing in the extreme. The writer will never forget the thrill he felt when, in Montreal, at the Corpus Christi processions, amid the booming of cannon, the melodious chiming of numberless bells, and the deafening peals of the Gros Bourdon, he heard the glorious *Te Deum* swell to Heaven from the throats of sixty thousand men. Nothing on earth, he thought, could equal it. Yet, when the procession crowded into the grand cathedral of Notre Dame, where nearly twenty thousand people can be packed, the *Tantum Ergo* was entoned; thousands caught it up; it surged towards the altar of the Blessed Sacrament; then it swelled around the walls and echoed from the galleries above—such waves of gorgeous harmony! No wonder that the people felt the thrill! On every side, strong men and tender women were wiping away, as they sang, the tears they were unable to repress; and yet they were happy, for they felt that gladness of spirit which fills the human soul overflowing at the eyes.

The Christian art of each age bespeaks the condition and spirit of the Church at that period. Thus, as we have seen, the paintings and the sculpture of the catacombs reveal the state of affliction which was then the lot of the Church. Christian architecture forms no exception to the rule.

The first churches were the oratories shaped by the Christians among the tombs of their martyred brethren in the catacombs. Coming to the surface under Constantine, they seized on the basilicas and the temples of the gods, and converted them to Christian uses. Subsequent architecture copied Grecian models with but little change, except in the Byzantine and Romanesque styles.

The Christian idea, however, is ever prolific. Therefore when, after ages of darkness, architecture with all the arts arose again in Italy, Michel Angelo built in mid-air "that vast and wondrous dome to which Diana's marvel were a cell," and that gorgeous temple was completed whose like is not in all the earth, which even the infidel Gibbon calls "the most glorious structure that has ever been applied to the use of religion."

" But thou, of temples old or altars new,  
 Standest alone with nothing like to thee.  
 . . . . . Majesty,  
 Power, glory, strength and beauty all are aisled  
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled."—CHILDE HAROLD.

As early as the twelfth century the Church had at last secured full freedom to realize the divine idea in architecture. She had acquired religious liberty under the first Christian emperor; political liberty was guaranteed to her by the well-won victory of Hildebrand and his successors, and now she was in full possession of artistic liberty, gradually achieved from the time of Charlemagne to the reign of Louis the Fat. Now, if ever, is the time to show that she is progressive! If she now remain sterile, she may well merit everlasting reproach! Let us see whether she can produce anything to eclipse the glories of Grecian architecture, and let the "lazy monks" lead the way!

The northern nations, after sweeping over Europe like so many destructive tidal waves, had finally settled into political calm. Barbarism was fast giving way to civilization. The religion of Christ took possession of the north and demanded fitting temples for the worship of the Almighty. These people had no models, and, of course, they had no architects. But the monasteries had always been schools of art. The monks alone of all the world in the eleventh and twelfth centuries were the masters of Romanesque architecture. They went among the peoples of northern Europe,



bringing with them the arts and civilization. Untrammelled by traditions among peoples who had none, they began to modify the Italian type of architecture, and after scarcely thirty years of successive transformations they succeeded in creating that style so magnificent, so extremely beautiful, commonly, but erroneously, called the "Gothic." Of this style Henri Martin has said that "it is the most solemn form with which religious thought has ever been invested since the origin of worship."

The abbot Suger, the great prime minister of Louis the Fat, personally directed the construction of the church of St. Denis, which has been called by many competent critics "the first of the Gothic monuments." Desiring monolithic columns for his edifice, he was on the point of writing to the Pope for some which he had seen in the baths of Diocletian, but just then he discovered a new quarry, and immediately set about working it. Massive timbers were also needed. In vain did people tell the abbot that all the forests in the vicinity of Paris had been stripped of the largest trees; he and his workmen traversed the whole country, searching bravely everywhere, until at last they came to the forest of Yveline, where the abbot picked out several beautiful trees, and had them felled and carried away.

Beautiful churches on the same model sprang up as by magic; and everywhere under the direction of the monks. Scarcely had Gothic art sprouted forth than it was transplanted by the Cistercian monks, who hastened to carry it to the ends of the earth; so that there is scarcely a country of Europe whose first Gothic churches have not been erected by the sons of Norbert, or Odilon, or Bernard, or Bruno.

Lay architects were unknown until the year 1210, sixty years after the dedication of St. Denis. Guilds of workmen did not appear until ten years afterwards, in the latter part of the reign of Philip Augustus. For a long time, however, the direction of the work remained with the monks, and when this was taken from them, Gothic art began to decline. "It is remarkable," says Raymond of Bordeaux, "that religious architecture has always declined in the proportion in which laymen have been employed in it." "Without doubt," says Albert Lenoir, "the first lay architects called on to replace them (the monks) were but little different with regard to faith and science, but from generation to generation these indispensable qualities could only decrease in the secular life, and the fall of sacred art was the consequence."

The great difference between Gothic and Grecian architecture is thus stated by Cardinal Wiseman:

"The architectures of Greece and Rome, like their religion, kept their main lines horizontal or parallel with the earth, and

carefully avoided breaking this direction, seeking rather its prolongation than any striking elevation. The Christian architecture threw up all its lines, so as to bear the eye towards heaven; its tall, tapering and clustered pillars, while they even added apparent to real height, served as guides and conductors of the sense to the fretted roof, and prevented the recurrence of lines which could keep its direction along the surface of the earth. Nothing could more strongly mark the contrast between the two religious systems. The minute details of its workmanship, the fretting and carving of its many ornaments, the subdivision of masses into smaller portions, are all in admirable accord with the mental discipline of the time, which subtilized and divided every matter of its enquiry, and reduced the greatest questions into a cluster of ever ramifying distinctions. The "dim religious light" that passed through the storied window, and gave a mysterious awe to the cavern-like recesses of the building, excellently became an age passionately fond of mystic lore, and the dimmest twilights of theological learning. Nothing could be more characteristic, nothing more expressive of the religious spirit which ruled those ages, than the architecture which in them arose."

The purity of the Gothic does not exclude the peculiar genius of a nation; in other words, under the general inspiration a people does not lose its characteristics. The splendid genius of the French people has given us Notre Dame, the church of the monarchy; the cathedral of Rheims, the royal sanctuary; St. Denis, the mausoleum of the kingly dead; St. Severin, of Paris; Auxerre, Chartres, Amiens, Beauvais and a hundred other splendid piles. The patient perseverance of English thought is embodied in the wonderful cathedral of Salisbury, the choir of Ely, the nave of Durham, and in the magnificent national abbey of Westminster. In Belgium we find the church of St. Gudule, in Brussels, and that of Dunes, built by four hundred monks in forty-eight years. In Spain are the beautiful cathedrals of Toledo, Burgos and Seville. The soil of Germany is dotted with Gothic monuments; Cologne stands complete after six hundred years, and forty cities gaze on the spire of Strasburg, that marvel on the Rhine; while Treves, Freiburg and Marburg are the admiration of the world. In Ireland "of the saints," the cathedrals have been stolen and the abbeys are in ruins. Athenry and Kilconnell, Mellifont and Dunbrodie, Holy Cross and Cashel uplift "their stately heads in ruined beauty over the land they once adorned," and their cloisters and their chapels are filled with the graves of the silent dead.

It is strange, yet it is true, that during three hundred years—from the Renaissance until some time during the last century—the prodigious manifestation of religious sentiment and ideas every-

where resplendent in the monuments of the Middle Ages, was really uncomprehended and apparently unknown. These were despised and ignored as relics of barbarism, whence the name "Gothic," a synonym of "barbaric." Voltaire, that prince of scoffers, did not hesitate to assert that, one hundred and fifty years before his time, there was not in all Europe a single monument of architecture worthy of attention.

But the clouds of ignorance, error and prejudice have long since rolled away; the name of reproach has become a glorious title, and men of genius have unfolded before us the incomparable beauties of Gothic art.

The Gothic cathedral has been admirably styled *la pensée chrétienne bâtie*—Christian thought architecturally expressed. And indeed, if we examine it in the light of its mystic meaning, we shall find that in it is recorded the complete history of religion, and the full teaching of its mysteries, a veritable *summa theologica* and historical epitome written in marble by the Christian generations of the Ages of Faith. Eternity and time, the spirit creation and the kingdoms of nature, both are there, two worlds in miniature.

The temple itself, constructed of many stones, some bearing and some borne, some both borne and bearing, some borne yet not bearing, some great and some small, some visible and some hidden, some near the corner-stone and the foundation and some far from both, some high and some low, but all united, all joined in closest union, all forming a compact whole, all resting on the foundation and the corner-stone—what is it but the mystic body of Jesus Christ formed from the members of the human family, joined to His sacred humanity by the sacrament of baptism, "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and the Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone?" In Him "all the building being formed together groweth up into an holy temple of the Lord, in Whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the Spirit." (Eph. II., 20, 21, 22.)

Within the sacred walls, human differences are forgotten; rank and age and wealth bend low the knee in unison with poverty and youth and lowliness; the stranger within the gates and the citizen of the realm together offer homage to Him who is equally their King. "For by Him we have access both in one spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints and domestics of God." (*Ibid.* 18, 19.)

We are reconciled "to God in one body by the cross" (*Ibid.* 16), and the Gothic temple, in its divine geometry, represents the altar of the victim Who offered Himself to save the human race; the

nave, extending its two arms, is the Man-God on the cross, while the choir, inclined as compared with the nave, is His head bent down in agony.

In the midst of nature cursed in his fall, man drags out the weary length of his existence, drawing nigher and still more nigh to Him who made him, until, his day of pilgrimage over, he sinks to rest at last in the bosom of his God. Thus, too, in the Christian temple, we tread the "long-drawn aisle," now amid deepening gloom, again with painted rays across our pathway, until we reach the very extremity of the sacred edifice; and there we sink in prayer and adoration in the presence of Jesus Christ. For there, in the depths of the tabernacle, under the luminous cloud of the Eucharist, resides the God who fills the temple with the majesty of His presence; to that point converge all the lines as from it they have diverged: creation, emanating from its principle, returns to it again; man, fallen from grace, returns to God "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Nature here dons the garb of art, and in it pays homage to "the Creator of heaven and earth." The vault above us unrolls in majesty like heaven's own blue arch, while the building itself stretches away in its vastness like the horizon of nature. Clustered columns, like the gnarled and knotted giants of the forest, lifting high their foliated heads, mingle with the tracery of the arches, and are crowned with sculptured flowers. Living creatures come forth in stone and bronze to people this forest of man's creation. The pavement is the sea, and from its bosom, like islands from the ocean, arise the many chapels, while in its waters mimic monsters of the deep disport themselves in glee.

As the sky bends down to meet the earth, so, too, heaven seems here to meet this "vale of tears." The happy spirits that people the blessed land hover over us with outstretched wings, or stand in seeming meditation in the Gothic niches and under the sculptured canopies. The saints of both Testaments shine in glory on the sun-lit windows, just as in the firmament of God's love they shine "as stars to all eternity." (Dan. xii., 3.) Mary, our mother, blessed by all generations, looks down on us with love, with an aspect calm and beautiful, with a virgin-mother's smile. And, at the extremity of the apsis, brightly crowned with gold mosaic, stands a colossal figure of Christ the Saviour and Supreme Judge, "a smile of mercy playing about the half-opened lips, the eyes soft, yet firm, and fixed as eternity."

No wonder is it, then, that Catholic worship and Christian art have ever exercised a powerful influence on the worshiper. Sometimes the heart stands still in awe; more often it overflows with love; nearly always it cannot give expression to its feelings. The

brilliant Lamartine, in language chaste, choice and eloquent, thus apostrophises the splendid churches which Christianity has given to us, where God is worshiped "in spirit and in truth," and true art has found its lasting habitation :

"Hail, sacred tabernacle, where thou, O Lord, dost descend at the voice of a mortal! Hail, mysterious altar, where faith comes to receive its immortal food! When the last hour of the day has groaned in thy solemn towers, when its last beam fades and dies away in the dome, when the widow, holding her child by the hand, has wept on the pavement and retraced her steps like a silent ghost, when the sigh of the distant organ seems lulled to rest with the day, to awaken again with the morning, when the nave is deserted and the Levite attentive to the lamps of the holy place with a slow step hardly crosses it again, then is the hour when I come to glide under thy obscure vault, and to seek, while nature sleeps, Him who aye watches! Ye columns who veil the sacred asylums where my eyes dare not penetrate, at the feet of your immovable trunks I come to sigh. Cast over me your deep shades; render the darkness more obscure, and the silence more profound! Forests of porphyry and marble, the air which the soul breathes under your arches is full of mystery and peace! Let love and anxious care seek shade and solitude under the green shelter of groves to soothe their secret wounds! O darkness of the sanctuary, the eye of religion prefers thee to the wood which the breeze disturbs. Nothing changes thy foliage; thy still shade is the image of motionless eternity! Eternal pillars, where are the hands that formed ye? Quarries, answer, where are they? Dust! The sport of the winds! Our hands, which carved the stone, turn to dust before it, and man is not jealous! He dies, but his holy thought animates the cold stone and rises to heaven with it. Forums, palaces, crumble to ashes; time casts them away with scorn; the foot of the traveller who tramples upon them lays bare their ruins; but when the block of stone leaves the side of the quarry and is carved for Thy temple, O Lord, it is Thine; Thy shadow imprints upon our work the sublime seal of Thine own immortality! . . . . I love the obscurity of Thy temple; it is an island of peace in the ocean of the world, a beacon of immortality! Inhabited alone by Thee and by death, one hears from afar the flood of time which roars upon this border of eternity. It seems as if our voice, which only is lost in the air, concentrated in these walls by this narrow space, resounds better to our soul, and that the holy echo of Thy sonorous vault bears along with it the sigh which seeks Thee in its ascent to heaven, more fervent before it can evaporate!"—(Quoted by Digby, *Mores Catholici*.)