

was a natural cult. Their religion was the worship of humanity. Thus China is not, and never was, noted for its architecture. The teacher of the Chinese, Confucius, though an advocate of justice, humanity, honour and sincerity, was rather a philosopher of the school of rationalism and naturalism. If it is true that religion is the source of art, we must expect that where the doctrine of Revelation was intact there would be found the noblest art. Nor do historical facts disappoint our expectations. Jewish art was in truth the highest art of pagan times. The superiority of the prophets over the pagan poets was as great as the superiority of a heartfelt sublimity over a false artificial sublimity. Among the former it was the offspring of the heart, among the latter, of fancy. Schlegel, speaking of the book of Job, says that it is one of the most admirable books written by man. In architecture it is admitted by all that no pagan temple could compare in beauty of design and of execution with that of Solomon. In it we recognize for the first time the underlying supernatural element which should characterize all religious art.

Connoisseurs on the subject have enunciated the principle that the religious arts in our Christian era exhibit a greater excellence than the profane arts, and that, when religious art flourishes, all art flourishes, when it wanes, all art wanes. Let us examine the truth of this principle when applied to architecture. How do Grecian and Roman architecture compare with Christian?

The distinction between heathen and Christian thought could scarcely be more distinctly stated in words than they are exhibited to the eye in the difference between a Greek temple and a Gothic cathedral. The pagan temples were altogether earthly, their columns and arches were comparatively low; they pointed not heavenwards, but were flat and broad, embracing, as it were, mother earth. Cardinal Wiseman is the author of the following admirable comparison between Grecian and Gothic architecture. "The architecture of Greece and Rome, like their religion, kept their main lines horizontal or parallel with the earth, and carefully avoided breaking this direction, seek-

ing rather its prolongation than any striking elongation. 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 senses to the fretted roofs, 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." In pagan temples the supernatural elements found no place. This need be no subject of surprise, since for the pagan, life in this world was the greatest happiness which man could enjoy. Existence after death in the imagination of their poets seems at best to have been a dreary one. The shade of Achilles thus speaks to Ulysses:

"Talk not of ruling in this dolorous gloom;
Nor think vain words can ease my doom.
Rather I choose laboriously to bear
A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,
A slave to some poor hind that toils for bread,
Than reign the sceptred monarch of the dead."

On the contrary, in Christian architecture the lofty towers, arches, and upward tendency of the whole structure majestically proclaim the heavenward aspirations of the Christian heart.

The religious architecture of Christianity is founded on the spirit of Christianity itself. Its churches, the material houses of God, symbolize the spiritual temple of God. The material house is further symbolical inasmuch as it represents to a great extent the practices, duties and