

## THE VATICAN AT CHICAGO.

From the Republic, Boston.

To the Catholic visitor to the World's Fair, that was so auspiciously opened, among the most interesting exhibits will be those which Leo XIII., in his desire to co-operate in the success of the exposition, has sent to it from the Vatican library, and the greater portion of which exhibits bear, directly or indirectly, on the earlier history of this continent. There is probably no larger, richer or more comprehensive collection of historical documents and antiquities of all sorts to be found anywhere than may be seen in the treasure house from which the Sovereign Pontiff selected the articles which constitute the Papal exhibit at Chicago this year; and hence the following brief sketch of the famous Vatican library may not be found lacking in interest at the present time.

The inception of a library connected with the residence of the head of the Church in Rome, doubtless, was undertaken by the very first Pontiff of that city, who knew the future ages would require a reference to the doings of the primitive church, and accordingly took care to preserve in the Papal archives an account of all the important events in the world that were transacted in their days. It is generally accepted as a fact that during the reign of Constantine a collection of books, records, etc., was located in the Lateran, and that this collection was subsequently transferred to the Vatican, and became the nucleus of the great library in whose possession the latter building now rejoices. It is recorded of Pope Zozimas, who occupied St. Peter's chair in the eighth century, that he enriched this Vatican collection with a number of valuable Greek and Latin manuscripts that had come into his possession. The first great addition to the Vatican library, however, took place during the pontificate of Nicholas V., who was Pope from 1447 to 1455, and who not only purchased for the library the bulk of the books and manuscripts which, after the fall of the eastern empire, fugitive Christians brought to Rome, but also sent agents to Constantinople and other points in the East, whence they brought back vast stores of literary wealth, all of which were placed in the Vatican archives. This Pontiff, furthermore, caused the Monasteries of Germany, Britain and other Catholic lands to be levied upon for original copies of the works of ancient ecclesiastical writers, and when it was found impossible to procure the original work, he had authentic copies made and forwarded to Rome. Yet so few were the printed works of the world at this period, Nicholas, after all his energy and searches, left the Vatican library in the possession of but 5,000 volumes.

The next Pope to exhibit himself zealous in behalf of the library was Sixtus IV., Cardinal Bessarion, who wore the tiara toward the close of the fifteenth century, and whose industry in adding to the Vatican collection was loudly praised by the contemporary writers. A number of his immediate successors continued the same good work; and in 1568 the library had gained so many volumes Sixtus V., then the occupant of the Roman See, found it necessary to add another apartment, and employed an architect to cut in two the Cortile di Bramante, also called the Belvidere, by a new range of buildings, in which he placed numbers of new works. Clement VIII., purchased the famous collection of books and antiquities which Falvius Urbinus, a noble Roman, had gathered, and added them to the library, which, during the administration of the same Pontiff, was increased by the valuable number of palimpsests that the Benedictine monastery of Bobbio sent it. At this time there was on the Vatican shelves 11,160 manuscripts, of which

nearly 9,000 were written in Latin, and the rest in Greek.

The first printing press was put in the Vatican library by Pope Paul V., who transferred it to the one erected by Paul IV., and the next notable accession to its wealth was the Palatine collection, captured at Heidelberg by Tilly, and by the great captain presented to Gregory XV. This collection contained nearly 2,600 manuscripts, four fifths of them being Latin and the remainder Greek ones. The Urbino library was added to it by Alexander VIII., early in the seventeenth century, and the founder of this collection is said to have been such an enthusiastic Bibliophile that, at the taking of Volterra, in 1472, he asked for nothing more than a Hebrew Bible which he discovered, saying that would suffice for his share of the spoils. This collection added to the library nearly 3,000 manuscripts, and in 1690 the Alexandrine library, the property up to that period of Queen Christina of Sweden, and consisting of all the literary treasures which her renowned father, Gustavus Adolphus, had carried away from Bremen, Prague and Wurtzburg, after his conquest of those cities, were merged with it, adding over 2,300 volumes to its shelves. Clement XI. presented fifty-five rare Greek manuscripts to the library in the last century, his agents having secured them in Syria and Egypt whither they went in search of them by his order; and Benedict XIV. presented the Vatican with close on 4,000 manuscripts which he obtained by the purchase of the Ottoboni collection. Other collections were added by the subsequent Popes, notably by Pius VII., Leo XII. and Gregory XVI., the last the predecessor of Pius IX., who added to the library ten spacious rooms, known as the Apartment Borgin, for printed books alone. The Heidelberg collection, referred to above, was in great part restored to that city in 1815, on the application of the Prussian King, and, in 1796, Pius VI. was forced to allow the French Government to select 500 volumes from the library, but the greater number of these subsequently found their way back to the shelves. At present it is thought that there are about 22,000 printed volumes in the library, of which 2,500 are fifteenth century editions, many of vellum; 400 Aldines and a number of other rare copies. The manuscripts are about 25,000, in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Ooptic, Syriac and other oriental languages, and of these many are of incalculable value, since duplicates of them cannot be found anywhere.

A visitor to Rome recently, who had the pleasure of being conducted through the Vatican library and archives, thus wrote of that wonderful collection: "We were taken through the Vatican library by a chamberlain of the Pope, who was able to obtain entrance for us to the rooms and access to the rarely-seen manuscripts. It is a wonderful series of apartments, magnificently frescoed, and containing the gifts of sovereigns. But it is for the number, rarity and importance of its manuscripts that the Vatican is famous. We saw one important manuscript, deciphered by Cardinal Mai, which contains 'De Republica' of Cicero, a discourse of St. Augustine on the Psalms, and fragments of Terence. In the same room we were permitted to examine an autograph letter of poor Anne Boleyn to Henry VIII.: the book of Henry VIII. against Luther; the manuscript autographs by Petrarch and Tasso, with miniatures by Perugino, and so on. The richness is in terminable. I stopped before an extremely rich case of illuminated manuscripts, where I found the vignettes of one now attributed to Raphael, and also of another ascribed to Dante, written on and commented upon by Boccaccio, also the breviary of Mathias Corvinus, the last King of Hungary; the famous Bible of the

fourth century; the sermons of the monk Jacques, with miniatures, and songs and prayers in Japanese characters."

The post of Vatican head librarian is a cardinalship office, and one which has been held by many eminent ecclesiastics. Probably the most renowned of such librarians was Angelo Cardinal Mai, who was born at Schilparlo, in the Italian province of Bergamo, March 7, 1774. This wonderful linguist joined the Jesuits in his 25th year, and for a while he taught in the Neapolitan college of that order. Archbishop Lambrascini, the prelate who consecrated Leo XIII. half a century ago this year, induced him to go to Orvieto, of which See he was the ordinary, and it was there that Mai imbibed that love of archaeological studies in which he was destined to attain such renown. A vacancy occurring later on in the Vatican library, he was appointed to the head of that by the influence of Cardinals Consalvi and Litta; and once he found himself among the inexhaustible and unutilized treasures of the church, his remarkable ingenuity and powers of research asserted themselves and accomplished the wonderful discoveries which he achieved. Cardinal Wiseman has given us a description of Mai's methods, which is very interesting reading. "To drop figures," said the eminent English churchman, "the peculiarity of Mai's wonderful discoveries consisted in the reading of manuscripts twice written; or, as they are more scientifically called, palimpsests. A book, for instance, may have been very properly catalogued as containing the commentaries or sermons of some abbot of the eleventh or twelfth century, works of which there may be several other manuscripts in the library. Edited or not it is improbable that this volume has been, or will be, looked into for a century. But the lens-like eye of a Don Angelo peers into it, and it becomes a treasure trove. The writer of the middle ages has taken down from the shelves a work which he considered of small value—perhaps there were duplicates of it—some letters, for instance, of a heathen emperor to his tutor, and had scrubbed, as he thought, the parchment clean both of its inky and moral denigration, and then had written over it the recent production of some favorite author. It is this under writing which Mai scanned with a sagacious eye, perhaps it was like the lines of a repainted canvas, which, in course of time, came through the mere evanescent tints superadded, a leg or an arm cropping out through the mouth of an impassioned head by the second artist; and he could trace clearly the large forms of uncial letters of the fourth or fifth century, sprawling through two lines of a neatly written brevior. Or the scouring has been more thoroughly done, and then a wash of gallic acid revived the pallid reed strokes of the earlier scribes."

Up to the administration of the present Pope, these inexhaustible treasures of the Vatican library were available only to the favored few who formed, as it were, portions of the Vatican household, Leo XIII., however, renowned literateur as he is himself, and patron of all the arts and sciences, soon after his coronation, decided to throw open the Vatican archives to historical students, and invited such personages from whatever religion they professed, to avail themselves of the stores of information in the archives. And Protestants, no less than Catholics, have availed themselves of the Papal invitation, which ought to be considered an ample refutation of those old calumnies which charge the Catholic church with fearing the truth and with concealing the real facts of history.

In choosing from these archives an exhibit to be sent to the World's Fair, the Holy Father naturally selected

articles relating to the earlier history of this continent; the Papal map of division; copies of letters written by Columbus, and charts said to have been employed by him on his famous voyage of discovery. These exhibits, are, of course, reproductions, or phototypes, of the original documents, which it could not be expected the Holy See would allow to quit the archives; and the Pope shows his good will toward this country by sending hither duplicate sets of the exhibits, one for the Columbian Exposition, and the other for the national library at Washington. The Catholic who visits Chicago this year should not fail to see the Papal exhibits of ancient American manuscripts that are to be viewed there.

## The Symbol I. H. S.

Non-Catholics and even some of our Catholic friends visiting the College, are at a loss to explain the monograms, I. H. S., which blazes with golden rays in the pediment of our facade writes William P. Gavan in "The Highlander." Like many other signs and characters these letters have a meaning quite different from what people commonly attribute to them. It is an interesting story to learn the reason why they are used by the Church and in particular by the Society of Jesus.

In the early ages of the Church the Christians had to be very careful of the way in which they talked in public; for if they uttered a word to the effect that they were Christians, they were often seized and tortured to death. Similarly, they had frequent recourse to signs and symbols to preserve their holy things from profanation. A pagan, for example, meeting the image of a fish in the Caccombs or elsewhere carved in stone or wood, would never suspect a religious meaning. Yet it was the emblem of our Lord Himself. The letters of the Greek word meaning a fish, Ichthys, are the initials of our Lord's title, "Iesus Christus I Heou Uios Soter," in English "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour."

So it was natural that the holiest of names, the Name at which every knee in heaven, on earth and under the earth should bend, should at the same time appear frequently and yet be preserved from profanation by the most mysterious of symbols.

Now IHSOUS is the Holy Name in Greek capital letters, the H being simply the long E of the English, I. H. S., was simply the abbreviated form used by the early Christians. In former times it was also occasionally abbreviated, I. H. C., with a line over the top signifying that it was an abbreviated form. These letters are the I, the long E or Eta, and the S or Sigma of the Greek. The Greek S of the early times was written in a variety of ways, often like the S or C of our time. The emblem traveled from Greece to Rome, and was afterwards ignorantly written in Roman letters, I. H. S. The line of abbreviation over the H was soon forgotten, unless the cross sometimes set over the H is to be considered as replacing it.

The two interpretations, I Have and Jesus Hominum Salvator are pious indeed but warranted by history. The symbol is Greek, and is simply the three first letters of the name of Jesus in that language. It is for this reason that the Jesuits, or members of the Society of Jesus, chose it for their emblem.

In conclusion we may tell a little story referring to the use of this emblem by the Jesuits. A Franciscan monk once playfully interpreted the letters for a Jesuit as "Iesuate Habent Satis" (The Jesuits have enough). "Yea," the Jesuit answered, laughing, "provided you then read the letters backwards, Si Habent Iesum (if they have Jesus)."

In old times it seemed to be thought that a medicine must be nauseating to be effective. Now, all this is changed. Ayer's Sarsaparilla, one of the most powerful alteratives, is agreeable to most palates, the flavor being by no means medicinal.