

ordinary method of the Divine government not to create new faculties, but in a kingly way to take possession of faculties already existing, and impress them by the power of love into the service of the King.

Thus Saul of Tarsus was taken captive, and his skill transferred to the service of the Conqueror. The chief priests kept that man in constant employment. His task was to destroy the Church. His great and peculiar talents were laid out in the service of the enemy, before he became a vessel to bear the name of Christ. But, as in the case of the ancient Hebrew artists, the decree had gone forth on the mount, while they were in the flagrant act of idol-making in the valley, that their skill should be forthwith consecrated to the service of God; so, at the very time that the young man Saul kept the clothes of the ruffians who murdered Stephen, the purpose of the Lord was sure, and the decree was already on the wing that should arrest the man, and employ his varied learning in establishing the kingdom of Christ. It is a common method of Divine providence to take from the adversary his ablest hands, and make them willing workers on the side of righteousness. The skill that made an idol winsome, so as to lure human souls into idolatry, will be employed to decorate the temple of the living God. The native energy and scholastic acquirements, which in Saul the persecutor compassed the death of a few believing men and women in Jerusalem, in Paul the apostle carried the gospel over Europe, and undermined the foundations of idolatry.

A movable temple in miniature was constructed for the use of the nomadic tribes. Considering the circumstances and condition of the people, there was a great measure of completeness and splendour in the provision made for Divine worship amongst them. Each portion of the structure and each appointed ceremony had a typical significance. On a similar plan, and with larger dimensions, the temple was afterwards reared and furnished at Jerusalem. Both in the earlier tent, and in the later temple, art in the highest forms then available was lavishly employed. The ritual was sumptuous to the outward eye, as well as spiritually significant to the faith of the thoughtful.

But the partisans of the Romish ritual take nothing by this. The sensuous and gorgeous devotional culture of the Papacy, so far from being an imitation of the Hebrew worship, is in violent opposition to it on the vital cardinal point. By Hebrew law and practice the method of modern Rome would have been condemned and destroyed as idolatry. In the Theocracy there was only one temple; there was no duplicate of the gorgeous culture established there. When a portion of the tribes settled on the east of Jordan were suspected of an intention to establish another altar, the nation rose in arms, and were prepared to blot the stigma out, if necessary, in the blood of their brethren, (Josh. xxii). In later times a distinguished proselyte of Ethiopia, when he desired to worship, found it necessary to travel all the way to Jerusalem. He could find no altar and no priesthood nearer home.

The fine-art worship of Rome is set up every-

where. It is repeated like echoes among the hills, or ripples on the sea. The costly, decorated, sensuous worship of the Hebrews was one. Sternly were the people forbidden under pain of death to set up any second. There is a world of meaning in this. We know that the divinely-appointed symbolic ritual of Israel was a type of true heavenly things. The Coming Event cast this shadow before it. One light only throws one shadow. Where there are many shadows, we know there must be many lights. The light in heaven which spreads day on earth is one: the many lights are of man's kindling, and tenants of the darkness. Besides, when the sun reaches the zenith, even the one shadow ceases. Such is the condition of the Church since the Light of the world has come in full. The shadows have disappeared, and "looking unto Jesus" through the transparent glass of the Word is now the common and equal privilege of all believers.

Art, both in its useful and ornamental departments, revives and flourishes in our day. How can it be baptized by the Spirit and employed in the service of Christ? Not by bringing it bodily into Christian worship. Art thus employed will, like a drunken mother, overlay in the night her living child. Let "the simplicity that is in Christ" preside in the worship of God, and let Art as a servant go out to the field and gather tribute for the king.

How vast is the mechanical power, how exquisite the skill and taste of the civilized nations in modern times! Let the Great Exhibition testify. Can this power be yoked to the chariot of the Gospel, in order to hasten its progress through the world? Can this beauty be employed in making the truth more attractive, so that it may win the nations to the Saviour? They may; they shall; but the blessed consummation cannot be attained by any rude material process. Gold and silver, wood and iron, are not plastic in the Holy Spirit's hands. In the human soul sits the disease that perverts art; to the human soul must the cure be applied which shall make all art loyal again to the King Eternal. Alas, our art, with the wealth which it brings, seems to gravitate, like that of the Hebrews, to idolatry! We do not make a calf and dance round it. Covetousness is a more refined and equally real idolatry. Other worships, less reputable, but even more imperious, draw devotees in thousands to their shrines. If the skilful, wealthy, powerful persons were converted to Christ, the skill and wealth and power would become tribute in His treasury.

The Art of Britain lacks the blessing, because her artisans, the pith and marrow of the nation, are in a great measure ignorant of the gospel and estranged from its ordinances. It is vain to expect that those who do not fear God will regard man. The chief effort of the Church should be directed toward the chief constituent of the population. What the artisans are, this country will eventually be. If this mighty mass run to corruption, nothing will save the commonwealth.

There has been great danger; but the worst is past. We are in a much healthier condition to-day than we were ten years ago. There is