

CATHOLIC MUSIC.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY BISHOP ELDER OF CINCINNATI
BEFORE THE CECILIAN SOCIETY'S ANNUAL ASSEMBLY.

(*From the Cecilia.*)

“All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord. Praise and exalt Him above all forever.” (Daniel, iii. 57.)

The whole history of God's dealings with man, is a history of God giving man good things that should draw his heart to his Creator and man abusing the good things to satisfy his heart without God.

It was so with our first parents in the garden of Paradise. The fruits given them to enjoy were to fill them with gratitude to their benefactor, and the fruit they were forbidden to eat was to exercise their love, by giving it the merit of obedience.

And so in all ages since, God gives to us good things and beautiful things: and He gives us the appetites to enjoy them that thereby we may take pleasure in doing the duties of life and that these good and beautiful things may fill our hearts with thanks to Him that gives them, and lift up our souls to desire the possession of Him from whom all their beauty and goodness are derived.

But men, on the other hand, in all ages—imitating our first parents—fix their affections on these pleasures themselves as an end, instead of a means to gain the end. In the enjoyment of these gratifications they seek to be satisfied without God. They forget Him in the pleasure of his creatures; and to obtain these pleasures, they violate God's law, outrage His holiness, and turn His creatures and themselves to the service of His hateful enemy.

Indeed, all sin that is in the world may be reduced to this one sort of evil declared by St. Augustine: “*Iniquitas hominis hoc est: uititur fruendis: fruitur utendis.*”—This is the one folly and wickedness of man: he takes the means for his end, and sacrifices his end—the infinite beauty of God—for the sake of enjoying the means—the pleasure given him by creatures.

Now, beloved brethren, we need not wonder if this same contest between God's goodness and man's perversity is to be found in the heavenly gift of song.