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THE LABORS OF ST. THOMAS.

IT is indeed with feelings of the most singular deference that I approach that mighty theme, the "Labors of St. Thomas." Of these it is impossible to form any just estimate, for they are so far stretching in their vastness and so complete in their comprehension that the human mind in contemplating them but wanders from admiration into wonder, and is lost in the depths to which they lead. He lived in a time when a quiet intellect such as he possessed was necessary to successfully meet the unsound and highly dangerous doctrines which were being introduced into Europe at that time.

It was during the life of St. Thomas that the great undertaking for the deliverance of the Holy Land was on foot, and although the consequences of this great project were generally advantageous, it nevertheless caused the entrance into Europe of many pernicious principles that, at that time, found sincere advocates in the East. He considered it his duty to aim at the overthrow of these: "The highly colored and exciting elements of thought introduced from the East through the medium of the Crusades; the philosophical mysticism of Egypt; the shadowy dreams of India; the importation into Europe, particularly into France, Italy and England of the neoplatonism, gnosticism, pantheism, naturalism of the Arabian commentators on Aristotle; the rise in

large and thriving cities of important universities filled with the youth of every land and with professors of almost every type." A new danger had, on this account, found its way into society. Its seeds had been disseminated throughout the length and breadth of the Continent and threatened in many cases most serious dangers to Catholic tenets and worship. In every age, throughout the entire history of mankind, we see two contending forces arranged, one against the other, upholding by profound argumentation the principles which each desires to see triumphant. Faith is, was, and ever shall be menaced by reason. So it was amongst the Arabians, so it was amongst the Jews, so it was in the schools of Paris during the thirteenth century, and so it is as every one knows, this day among ourselves. During the thirteenth century, this antagonism between these two forces was at its highest, as previous to that period there was no perceptible rivalry, and the people, ever anxious for novelty, entered into the controversy with the desire of finding pleasure in them, and of throwing their whole minds and hearts into the seething waters of religious contention. Then it was that a man of superior intellectual power was needed to safely pilot the Catholic Church out of the dangers that menaced it. Was he to be found? An humble Dominican, schooled in all the rigors of that severe