

the Holy Books tell us of one Jubal, descendant of Cain, who was father of those who play on the harp and organ "*Et fratris ejus Jubal: ipse fuit pater cantantium cithara et organo.*" Nations have at all times used fine arts to praise and glorify their divinities. The rude trophies and monstrous idols of uncivilized nations, as well as the unsurpassed temple of Solomon, built according to the plans of the Divine Architect himself; the loud and guttural shouts and fantastic dances of the barbarian, as well as the harmonious and full-swelling strains of the Christian, are all proofs that man, in presence of his God, can do nothing more indicative of his adoration and love than to glorify and praise him by means of his monuments and songs.

Lastly, if we proceed to examine the influence that fine arts have exercised in Christianity, we find that it is only since its introduction into the world that fine arts have reached their full development, and obtained due consideration. Chateaubriand, treating this subject, says: "Fondly embracing the Christian religion, fine arts took her as their mother "as soon as she appeared in the world; "their terrestrial charms they gave to "her, and she, in turn, imparted to them "her god-like beauty; music embodied "her hymns, painting represented her "sorrowful triumphs, sculpture took pleasure in musing with her over her children's graves, and architecture erected "temples, sublime and mysterious as "her thoughts." The Church, among the many restorations which she has effected, has restored and elevated art and our sense of beauty. Humanity was depraved; it was her mission to regenerate mankind. By her doctrine, she purified and rectified man's intellect, by her laws she enlivened and strengthened his will, but by her artistic charms she inflamed and ennobled his affections. The Christian, by the study of the Divine Scriptures and of Catholic

dogmas, consecrates his mind to his Creator, by his continual efforts to act in accordance with the law of the Gospel he consecrates his will, but it is by the expression of his heavenly ideals that he consecrates his heart and affections. It would also seem, as a writer said in a recent issue of THE OWL, treating of the advantages of the congregational singing of plain chant, that God, as he has inspired and dictated to the Church her doctrine, so has inspired her with a peculiar manner of composing her works of art. Philosophers tell us that scholasticism is truly the philosophy of Christianity. In the same manner may we say that gothic style in architecture and Gregorian chant in music, belong to the Church of Christ. These are her own artistic modes; no other can use them because no other has her ideas and aspirations. In Christianity the object of fine art is two-fold, to praise and to edify: praise to the Creator and Master of all things, edification for the faithful by the vivid and material expression of the truths of religion. No one will refuse to admit that on entering those incomparable monuments of architecture, which Christianity has raised to the glory of God, on hearing the solemn rendering of our Catholic hymns, on beholding those *chefs d'oeuvre* of Rubens, Michael Angelo and so of many other famous painters and sculptors, which represent the sublime mysteries of religion, we are unusually struck, nay sometimes confounded, and, instinctively, we meditate and pray.

Let us not, then, despise that which the Church in her wisdom has ever held as a potent agent in her work of evangelization and civilization. We should, on the contrary, develop our taste and acquire experience in judging and appreciating works of art. And if God has granted us some aptitude and inclination to cultivate any of the fine arts, let us be thankful for such a gift and use it for His glory.

F. N. B. '90.

