

Sing, sing, music was given
 To brighten the gay and kindle the loving;
 Souls here—like planets in heaven—
 By harmony's laws alone are kept moving.

Yes, it is a false idea with our modern fathers and mothers to think that because they provide their children abundantly with what is necessary for life, their duty is accomplished. Something more is required; they must also cultivate in them pure and noble affections, they must develop their heart. Let us not imagine that time given to music, if we take this art in particular, is time lost. If its only effect were to dispel the many sorrows and the melancholy of life and recall to mind the joys of youth, it would certainly be advantageous to devote now and then, a few moments to music:

When through life unblest we rove,
 Losing all that made life dear,
 Should some notes we used to love
 In days of boyhood meet our ear:
 Oh! how welcome breathes the strain,
 Waking thoughts that long have slept,
 Kindling former smiles again
 In faded eyes that long have wept.

If we take a yet higher view of the fine arts we again find that they have no small importance and that their cultivation is of the greatest utility. Not only do they benefit us materially, but also spiritually. Art excites passion, and passion is a most powerful stimulant of the will. Of course, we do not here speak of passions which tend towards evil-doing and excite the sensual appetites in man. True art does not excite those passions, for it is founded on the true and the good. Art, we say, is a stimulant of the noble passions of our heart: otherwise it is not art. We are sometimes surprised to see one undertake a work that requires most arduous and unceasing labour, a work the accomplishment of which, we are inclined to attribute to heroism. Such a man, we say, strives to attain his end with passion; it is passion that sustains and goads him on. If passions are such potent factors in human actions, so are the fine arts which develop them. Witness the truth of this on the battlefield. The soldier, wounded and exhausted, begins to give way under the increasing hardships of the day; his drooping spirits begin to shrink from the battle. But suddenly a loud and martial note is struck. It is perhaps his own national hymn. Immediately his courage is roused;

fatigue, pain, despair, all disappear: he now fights desperately, regardless of his own life. History gives us innumerable instances of the influence of art on the human will. We all know that the first time the celebrated song "*La Marseillaise*" was heard during the French revolution, ten thousand men flocked around the revolutionary flag. When the apostle of the Irish arrived on the shores of that isle of song, he began his mission by singing to the natives the glories of the Master he was announcing. The old druid of the nation listening for a while to the religious strains, finally rose and exclaimed: Countrymen, let us hereafter serve no one but Patrick's God.

In fine, we claim for the fine arts a powerful spiritual influence, because it always conveys an idea: and this idea it conveys with all its surroundings. Not only is the mind affected, but likewise the heart, the will, the inmost depths of the soul. We stand in presence of a master's picture representing a warrior dying for his country. Falling under the fatal stroke, the soldier pale but yet full of ardour and courage, makes a last effort to defend the flag he convulsively presses to his breast. At this sight we naturally say to ourselves: "How beautiful and noble it is to die for one's country! Would that I were in his place and did the same!" No need is there of reasoning, to arrive at this conclusion: we see the painted or the sculptured representation and immediately we understand, feel and will all at once.

But what now, if we enter the domain of morality and religion? In religion the fine arts are a whole world in themselves. Their influence upon the natural life of man is very feeble compared to their influence in his supernatural life. Reason fails very often to reach the truths of religion, but the heart by the strength of faith and carried on the wings of beauty's charms, rises and soars in regions incalculably higher. So natural seems the union between art and religion that from time immemorial men have used the former, well-nigh solely to give expression to their adoration and love of the Deity. We read that in bygone ages men used to sing the praises of their gods and goddesses and dance before statues ornamented with flowers and crowns. This was art indeed, though in its rudest and most undeveloped state. In the beginning of the world,