

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, MAY 28, 1852.

THE IDEAS OF A CATHOLIC AS TO WHAT SHOULD BE DONE.

VOL. II.

Translated from the French of Abbé Martinet, for the True Wilness.

(Continued from our last.)

9 .- SUPREMACY OF CATHOLICISM IN THE FINE ARTS.

The supremacy of Catholicism in the fine arts is a fact so universally admitted, that any attempt to prove it would seem ridiculous. On this head, it is very easy for us to square accounts with heresy, and her daughter-false philosophy.

All that we have best in eloquence, in poesy, in painting, in sculpture, in architecture, in music, wherever found, is owing to Catholicism. All the losses that we deplore, all the abortions of genius in those arts, are the cliect of religious opposition. The latter, in becoming antagonistic to the Catholic idea, could but show itself the enemy of form; even so has it broken down all before it with the fury of hatred. Doubt, by it substituted for faith, has extinguished the lamp of genius, which is only lit from the fire of belief.

Is it so very difficult to understand that the beauty and the grandeur, alone capable of exciting lasting enthusiasm, are a reminiscence of a superior world, a presentiment of heaven, and are here below but ideal ? Withdraw the consoling ties which religion establishes between the present time and that which is to come ; dispel, together with the light of faith, the smiling perspectives of Christian hope, and man becomes gloomy, sad, silent on this disenchanted earth, where his eye perceives no other term to sixty years of vain illusions, but an everlasting tomb.

There is no doubt but the thirst for material enjoyments, excited still more by the shortness of life, will develop an industrial activity, that may well be called marvellous. You will see man fly over the surface of the earth, behind a fiery chariot-but never more shall he ascend on the wings of genius to the regions of the great realities. He may construct vast factories, wherein thousands of the poor shall sacrifice, to the fortune of the rich, the only good which remains to them-health of soul and body ; he may open sumptuous bazaars, where luxury shall barter with cupidity, at the price of the sweat and blood of the poor; but no more shall he build, or even restore the immense basilica wherein rich and poor conceive a thirst for the eternal treasures, and learn to share, in more equal measure, the good things of the earth.

You will everywhere hear the hissing of steam, the monotonous sound of machinery, and trades; but you hear no more those sacred songs which raise the soul to a better world, and withdraw it from the cares and sorrows of its exile.

If, in the midst of a community thus devoted to the worship of matter, and the demon of gold, there papal chair. chance to arise a poetic genius of great power, he will but realise what he has under his eyes, and you

where the ecclesiastical hierarchy is still kept up, letters have had their classic age; Lutheranism retains some sparks of imagination which Calviuism would fain extinguish, and so on, down to the Quaker, who would reduce social life to mere coarseness of manner and the exercise of trades.

"Shakspeate was, in all probability, a Catholic; Milton has evidently imitated certain portions of the poems of Saint Avite and of Masenius; Klopstock has borrowed most of the Roman doctrines. In our own times, in Germany, the higher imagination has only manifested itself when the spirit of Protestantism was enfeebled and untrue to itself. Goethe and Schil-ler regained their genius in treating of Catholic subiccis.

Rome, the radiant centre of Christian faith, must needs be, as she ever has been, the capital of the fine arts, the terrestrial paradise of artists. It is to Rome that the painters, the architects, and the sculptors of dissenting communions, now come to seek that inspiration which universal toleration permits them to gather.

It is very remarkable that amid so many popes of different characters and different fastes who have occupied the Holy See, there is not one on record who did not manifest his predilection for the fine arts, or who did not find in the pontifical treasury, drained and exhausted though it might be, the means of encouraging their progress, and purchasing their best productions.

Julius JI, who seemed to breathe only war and made all around him tremble, was yet the patron of the Michael Angelos and the Raphaels. Sixtus, Quintius, so severe, so averse to idle prodigality, ordered the most prodigious works of the Fontanas and other artists of his time, and rewarded their labors with unheard-of liberality.

But it is not merely over the productions of the christian genius that the popes have extended their protecting sceptre ; we are also indebted to them for the discovery and the preservation of the monuments of ancient art. The same thought which has saved from destruction the writings of paganism, has drawn from their tombs its deities, its demi-gods.

beauty to shrink from surrounding herself with the beauty that cinanates from the mind of man. And then, is it not a happy inspiration to have ranged around the tomb of the Galilean fisherman, the innumerable family of the gods whom his word overthrew !

and if the modern Apollo, by heresy precipitated from despised and neglected, beholds praise and gold

most flattering distinctions, clothed with the character of Papal ambassador, Canova, after his death, might look down from that celestial abode where his profound piety had so well deserved a place, and behold the sacred college honor with its presence the man, abondoned by God, and the infernal joys of most magnificent obsequies ever made for an artist. Satan careering over an unbelieving world. He is Leo XII. would also throw a flower on the tomb of Canova ; and it is not without emotion that a strangerartist, wandering through the Capitoline Panthcon.+ Graces are crowning the bust of their favorite, these words : " Leo XII. to the memory of Canova." Gregory XVI. has also given a fair place to the fine arts during his pontificate. Not only did he rebuild in a magnificent style the basilic of the Doctor of nations, but we have seen him in the earlier "The Reformation, penetrated with the spirit of its founder-a rutbless and envious monk-declared itself years of his pontificate erect a new transoleum to the greatest of painters, ‡ found a new museum, and complete those immense collections of ancient and mogenius and confined it to the earth. Had it had, at the dern works of art, gathered together at such vast expence by his predecessors, in the halls of the Capitol and the galleries of the Vatican; admirable monuments which, grouping all that is great in art around all that is most august in religion, proclaim the indissoluble

strength, and he sank hencath it. Twenty years after the death of the artist, Fornare de Reggio, in a little book of his, as-signed other causes for that premature event; and Vasari, who attempted not to conceal his feelings towards Michael Angelo, repeated with malignant pleasure the details furnished by the critic. Since then, the helief is current in the artist world that Raphael died the victim of a passion which he sought not to hile. M. Passavant thought it a bounden daty to exculpate the painter from a posthumous charge, which rested solely on the authority of such a biographer as Vasari. . . . Long before his death, Raphael had manifested a desire to be buried in St. Mary's of the Rotunda (the Pantheon of Agrippa) in a small vanit made in his own time and by his own directions close by an altar whereon was to be placed a statue of the Shall value made in his own one and by his own carectons close by an altar whereon was to be placed a statue of the Virgin, which he bad engaged Lorenzetto to execute. All flis life Raphael had cherished a truly filial love for Mary..... These affairs being all arranged he confessed, and received the sacraments of the church with the most fervent sentiments of faith and piety."-M. Audin, Vic. de Leon X.

We are indebted to the falented and well-known correspondent of the N. Y. Freeman's Journal, for the following interesting statistics of the "Association for the propagation of the Faith." The amount of money contributed may seem small; but it is by their expenditure that Catholic missions must be judged. "Look," would we say to those who sneer at the smallness of the means, (humanly speaking,) "look at the results accomplished, and confess that the hand of God is here ;" for it is God alone who give th the increase. Neque qui plantat est aliquid, neque qui rigat; sed qui incrementum dat, Deus-1 Cor. iii. 7.

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH. Mr. Editor,-It occurred to me that it would, just at present, be very opportune to set before your readers a sussinct account of the origin, progress, and present condition of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, that eminently glorious and useful Catholic association, whose beginning and labors were so touchingly alluded to by our Most Rev. Archbishup in his discourse on the Auxiliary Church Building Association, in the Cathedral a few days ago. I must confess that, to me, the account of its True christianity is too conscious of her divine bumble and insignificant beginning was as new as it was full of interest. I was deeply impressed, as I know your readers will be with me, with admiration for the infinite power and wisdom of Almighty God, that knows, as it were, with so little visible expenditure of material and force to bring about, both in the nature and in the works of man, such immense and The Apollo of antiquity still reigns in the Belvedere; astonishing results; so that while in the former we see the spreading oak springing up from the small heaven, is reduced, like the son of Latone, to vegetate acorn, we also, in the instance before us, rejoice at in the bazaars of the exhibition, where true talent the growth and prosperity of a Catholic work, of which the seed was " the least indeed of all seed ;" showered on mediocrity and bad taste, if the august but which, receiving the sustenance of His Divine exile have anywhere a throne, it is again near the blessing, grew on with the wonderful vitality imparted by His Church; so that it now, in one way or other, Europe has not forgotten the extraordinary honors either by receiving or distributing, it overspreads bestowed by Pius VII. on the most illustrious sta-nearly the whole Catholic world, and the souls of To tuary of our age. Honored during his life with the converted heathens, like the birds of heaven, "may come and dwell upon the branches thereof." I accordingly requested Mons. de Courcy, who takes a great pride in being always au fait in all matters connected with the Catholic faith, and who, in the well-stored Catholic portion of his Library, is so fortunate as to possess what has now become very rare, a complete series of the annals of the oeuvre de la Propagation de la foi, to write an article on the subject, which I offered to translate for the benefit reads on the pedestal of a white marble where the of your readers. The contemplation of such extensive results, proceeding from so feeble an outset, should serve to inspire us with confidence that, if we choose to use proper exertion, Divine Providence will, in like manner, bless and cause to fructify the newly projected undertaking of our Most Rev. Archbishop; so that, before a long while, all the Catholics of the city, no matter how isolated their position, may have a holy temple in which there will fo be room for them to pray to God, and enjoy the happiness of assisting at the adorable sacrifice of the body and blood of His Divine Son. WILFRED. The origin of the association which forms the subject of these lines is intimately connected with the history of the Catholic Church in the United States. It was for the purpose of assisting us to build our churches, and to pay the passage of missionaries sent to us from France, that it was founded only about thirty years ago. In 1815, Monseigneur, Dubourg, Bishop of New Orleans, on his return from Rome, where he had been consecrated, made a short stay in Lyons; and, in his solicitude for the penury and wants

moderate sums which she transmitted to Monseigneur Dubourg. But in 1822, a Vicar General of New Orleans arrived in Lyons, and reanimated the fervor of the friends of the diocese he came from. Up to that time they had not succeeded in sending to one mission alone all the assistance its wants required : nevertheless, they determined to aid all the missions in the world, and it was by giving to their work this Catholic principle and purpose that they drew down upon it the benediction of heaven. On the 3d May, 1822, the feast of the finding of the Holy Cross, twelve persons met together in Lyons. The meeting was opened by an invocation of the Holy Ghost; a priest read a short statement of the sufferings and wants of religion in North America, and proposed the establishment of an immense association which should provide with the pecuniary resources they were in need of the missionaries of the whole world. The proposition was unanimously adopted by the meeting, and before adjourning it elected a President and a Committee to organise the association. Shortly afterwards there was merged in it another very unpretending one, which had, in 1820, been formed among the silk operatives, for the purpose of assisting the Christians in China. Their combined action met with results which they never could have ventured to expect from isolated efforts. The receipts of the first month amounted to \$104, and at the close of the first year to \$3,000

NO. 42.

What is the amount at the present day of the resources distributed by the association for the Propagation of the Faith? The famine in Europe in 1847. the political revolutions which in 1848 disturbed the old world, had, by diminishing the means of the public generally, a corresponding effect on the receipts of the society; nevertheless, during 1850, it distributed to the different missions nearly \$600,000, apportioned as follows* :---

Among the Bishops of Great Britain,	\$28,000
" " Missions in Switzerland,	9,000
" ". Missions in the North of Ger-	-,
many and Sweden, &c.,	29,000
" " Missions of Turkey Greece.	20,000
inissions of Turkey, Greece,	04.000
Wallachia,	34,000
	\$100,000
Among 45 Bishops in Asia Minor, Syria,	
and Jerusalem,	\$35,000
" 2 Bishops in Mesopotamia and	• • • •
Persia,	11,000
" 10 Bishops in British India,	58,000
(10 Bishops in Toponin Sign and	00,000
To Distions in Tonquili, Stam and	00 000
Cochinchina,	38,0 00
" 17 Bishops in China, Corea, and	
Mantchuria,	63,000
,	
Total for Asia,	\$205,000
Among 4 Bishops in Algiers, Tripoli,	•
Tunis and Egypt,	\$25,000
" 5 Bishops in Abyssinia, at Cape	
of Good Hope & Madagascar,	17,000
Ta 1 Rishon in Cuince	10,000
To 1 Bishop in Guinea,	10,000
Total for Africa,	\$52,090
Among 14 Bishops in British America, Ca-	40.050.000
Among 14 bishops in British America, Ca-	
nada, Nova Scotia, New-	07 000
Foundland, & Hudson's Bay,	37,000
or Dishops in the Onlieu States,	93,000
" 7 Bishops in Jamaica, Trinidad,	
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shall hear him-

"Sur un monde infernal, Chanter l'hymne de glorie au sombre dieu du mal."

Byron, with a genius which would have eclipsed most Christian poets, had he had the happiness of being one himself, has only celebrated the miseries of the poet of anti-Catholic society, as Strauss is its theologian.

"C'est pour la verite que Dieu fit le genie."

But religious truth exists only in the lap of faith and it is there alone that genius should seek the excellent in all kinds, the excellent being no more than the resplendence of the true. Let us hear a man who has a right to be heard on this subject :-

the enemy of the arts. By retrenching imagination from the faculties of man, it cut off the wings of outset, complete success, it would have established, at least for a time, another species of barbarism*, treating as superstition the pomp of altars, and as idolatry, the master-works of sculpture, of architecture, and of painting; it tended to destroy all high eloquence, and grand poetry, to deteriorate taste by the repudia- alliance of the beautiful and the true. tion of models, to introduce something dry, cold, captions, into human intellect; to substitute a mincing and material society for one easy and intellectual; to put machinery and the motion of a wheel in the place of hands and mental operation. These truths are confirmed by the observation of facts.

"In the various branches of the reformed religion, the communion is more or less perfect, according as it is more or less distant from Catholicity. In England,

The death of Canova was, like his life, that of a Christian full of faith. He consecrated his vast wealth to the completion of the church of the Holy Trinity, the foundations of which he had himself laid at Passagno, his native place. A traveller who visited this noble monument some years after the death of who visited this noble monument some years after the death of Canova, tells us that it had even then cost four millions.

+ The Protomoteca, or gallery of the busts of the great masters

The above statement shows that many countries

This was also the remark made by a Protestant minister: "It is even now a fortunate thing for Protestant nations," says M. Muller, "that Protestantisin did not penetrate everywhere at that period; for where then should we find any traces of the grand enture of religious art? If the primitive Christians had exercised such farry on the temples and religious objects of the pagan nations, there would not remain in Italy, in Greece, or in Egypt, any vestige of the religious monuments of antiquity." De beaux arts et de la langue des signes, p. 53.