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

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

(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.

All that we have best in eloquence, in poesy, in painting, in sculpture, in architecture, in music, wherever found, is owing to Catholicism.

It is so very difficult to understand that the beauty and the grandeur, alone capable of exciting lasting enthusiasm, are a reminiscence of a superior world.

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 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.

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

"Sur un monde infernal, Chanter l'hymane de gloire 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 man, abandoned by God, and the infernal joys of Satan.

"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 residence of the true.

The Reformation, penetrated with the spirit of its founder—a ruthless and envious monk—declared itself the enemy of the arts. By retrenching imagination from the faculties of man, it cut off the wings of genius and confined it to the earth.

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.

This was also the remark made by a Protestant minister: "It is even now a fortunate thing for Protestant nations," says M. Muller, "that Protestantism did not penetrate everywhere at that period; for where then should we find any traces of the grand culture of religious art?"

where the ecclesiastical hierarchy is still kept up, letters have had their classic age; Lutheranism retains some sparks of imagination which Calvinism 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.

Shakspeare 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.

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 very remarkable that amid so many popes of different characters and different tastes 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.

Julius II, who seemed to breathe only war and made all around him tremble, was yet the patron of the Michael Angelos and the Raphaels.

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.

True christianity is too conscious of her divine beauty to shrink from surrounding herself with the beauty that emanates from the mind of man.

The Apollo of antiquity still reigns in the Belvedere; and if the modern Apollo, by heresy precipitated from heaven, is reduced, like the son of Latone, to vegetate in the bazaars of the exhibition, where true talent despised and neglected, beholds praise and gold showered on mediocrity and bad taste.

Europe has not forgotten the extraordinary honors bestowed by Pius VII. on the most illustrious statuary of our age. Honored during his life with the 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.

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 years of his pontificate erect a new transept to the greatest of painters, found a new museum, and complete those immense collections of ancient and modern works of art.

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.

On the 15th September, 1833, the remains of Raphael were exhumed from a cell of the Pantheon and inclosed in a fair sarcophagus of marble, provided by his Holiness.

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.

strength, and he sank beneath it. Twenty years after the death of the artist, Fornaro de Reggio, in a little book of his, assigned 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.

We are indebted to the talented 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."

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 succinct 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. Archbishop in his discourse on the Auxiliary Church Building Association, in the Cathedral a few days ago.

WILFRED.

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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.

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.

Table with 2 columns: Location and Amount. Includes rows for Great Britain, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Oceania, with sub-totals for each region.

During the same year, 1850, the receipts were as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Location and Amount. Lists receipts from France, British possessions, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Holland, Prussia, Switzerland, Malta and Greece, Germany, North America, and South America.

Total, \$587,000

The above statement shows that many countries are at once contributors and recipients: thus they form together an admirable alms-giving community; so that all nations have it in their power to participate in the special graces with which the association is endowed.

\* NOTE.—For convenience in calculation, five francs have been taken as the equivalent of one dollar federal currency.