

spiritual government of the faithful on earth. This symbolical purpose is ancient, as may be proven from the liturgy, from the writings of St. Thomas, and even from the words of writers outside the pale of the true church.

Schlegel, speaking of this symbolical element in the churches of Christianity, says: "The significance and the expression was the principal object of these old artists, and we cannot doubt that they had often the clear intention to express and to represent in the visible church the church itself, that is to say, its idea in its various conceptions either as militant or as triumphant." This supernatural expression is, in fact, that by which all Christian religious art is characterized. The principle has been laid down that it is not the subject matter by which an art becomes a Christian religious art, but through the intention conveyed in the treatment of the subject, which intention must be supernatural. *En passant* we may remark that this distinction is not well observed by some modern writers. Thus by some the works of Tasso, Dante and Milton, are classified with the hymns of the church. The former productions belong not to religious art proper but to hedonic art. The two following laws must necessarily be complied with in any Christian religious work of art. The first, or negative law is: A religious work of art must contain nothing that excludes or weakens the influence of the Holy Ghost. The second, or positive law, is: Every religious work of art must be so ordained that it corresponds and operates in accordance with the influence of the Holy Ghost. So that a Christian church in which the supernatural finds no expression does not, from an æsthetical standpoint, come up to its ideal standard, notwithstanding the fact that, in other respects, it may present elements of high beauty.

We are now to determine which type of Christian architecture has expressed most perfectly the symbolical idea in accordance with which the church is to be a representation of the invisible temple of God. Christian architecture, like Christian life itself, has passed in its development through several distinct phases.

From the different orders of classical architecture arose the various modern

types. These latter may be thus classified: The Basilica or Romanesque, which was in vogue from the dawn of Christianity until about the end of the twelfth century. Contemporary with the Romanesque was the Byzantine in the East. From 1150 to 1290 was the transition style between the Basilica and Gothic. The early Gothic flourished between 1250 and 1350, then the later Gothic from 1350 to 1500. The Renaissance style appeared in Italy about the year 1420; later it passed over in France, Germany, Spain and England. It flourished until the year 1600, when it gradually died away, or rather was transformed into the so-called Rococo style.

The Basilica was an imitation of Roman architecture. In fact, the early Christians borrowed the forms of their churches from the Basilica, or public hall, which served at once for a market place and a court of justice. In the Romanesque order were found the Corinthian column and the Roman arch, both of which had been considerably improved upon, since their first appearance. The supernatural element was present, it is true, both in the Romanesque and Byzantine styles, but it did not in them make its presence keenly felt. The Romanesque church is highly ornamented, being especially noted for the mosaics of its apse, its painted walls, inlaid pavements and the richness of its colours. The finest examples now remaining of the Basilica style are St. Paul's and Sta. Maria Maggiore, at Rome. And at Ravenna, St. Apollinaire. The dome or cupola may be said to be the chief feature of the Byzantine style. The dome of the church of St. Sophia, Constantinople, became the typical Christian structure of the kind.

We now come to the Gothic, or "barbarous" architecture, the latter epithet being applied to it by some self-styled heralds of enlightenment and progress. The Gothic churches for many a year, with stately composure, heard the sneers hurled at them by numberless scoffers, such as Voltaire, who had the unblushing audacity to assert that one hundred and fifty years before his time there was not in all Europe a single monument of architecture worthy of attention, and later we behold the same Gothic churches hearkening with the