

The Mediaeval world suffered, no doubt, a great many evils, but they were mostly physical and material. With us it is chiefly the soul and the conscience that are harassed.

It has been wisely said that in everything there is an inexhaustible meaning, but we see in it only what we bring means of seeing. This is strikingly true when there is question of the Mediaeval world. We see in it what we bring means of seeing. If our souls have been blotted out by religious questionings, and faith is to us but a delusion and an absurdity, then surely shall we see but little of the true Middle Age.

To catch the full meaning of those truly admirable times, one must look at them through eyes of faith. This is what most historians have failed to do.

Matthew Arnold tells us that there are two forces that divide between them the empire of the world—Hellenism and Hebraism. Hellenism, the spirit of ancient Greece, the desire to see things as they are; Hebraism, the spirit of Judea, the love and pursuit of righteousness. When were these two forces so beautifully balanced as in the Thirteenth Century? "The grace stored up in Jerusalem and the gifts which radiate from Athens," says Cardinal Newman, "are made over and concentrated in Rome." And from Rome they were now spread over Europe.

The Thirteenth Century saw the greatest religious revival and reformation of men and morals since the days when the Master taught in Judea—a revival based on Hellenism and Hebraism; an honest striving to make reason and the will of God prevail.

This revival was effected by those two illustrious orders of Mendicant Friars, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, founded early in the Thirteenth Century by St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi. A sketch of the Thirteenth Century would be incomplete without a word on these two glorious men. Widely as they differed in character and temperament,—Dominic being a man of fiery ardor and rigid orthodoxy, and Francis of tender mystical piety and imaginative enthusiasm,—yet they were closely drawn to each other by a common aim in life. The temper of the one seemed to be the necessary complement to that of the other. Both were actuated by a common purpose to convert the heathen, to extirpate heresy, to reconcile knowledge with faith, and to preach the gospel to the poor.

Montalambert tells a very pretty story of the commencement of their friendship. St. Dominic had a dream in which he saw Christ preparing to strike the guilty world; but Mary interfered, and in order to appease her son, presented to him Dominic and another person unknown to him. The next day, going into one of the churches