

The background of the cover is a photograph of the interior of a large, ornate cathedral dome. The dome's surface is covered in intricate, repeating geometric patterns. Light streams in from several arched windows, creating a dramatic play of light and shadow. A clock face is visible in the distance, partially obscured by the dome's structure. The entire image is overlaid with a halftone dot pattern, which is denser in the lower half and fades towards the top. At the top, the author's name is printed in a bold, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the title is written in a large, white, serif font.

James J. Walsh

***The World's Debt
to the Catholic
Church***

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PREFACE

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For some nineteen hundred years the Church established by Christ when He said, "Go teach all nations," has stood for all that is best in human life. The very fact that it has endured the cataclysmic changes from Roman Empire through Middle Ages and Renaissance down to modern times singles it out as a unique institution in the history of humanity. During all these profoundly trying vicissitudes of the race the Church has fostered the sense of beauty and the sense of duty. These are the sources of happiness for mankind more than any other factors. Architecture, painting, sculpture, music, poetry and the arts and crafts are indebted to the Church for constant inspiration, for the subjects that have touched men most deeply and for the opportunity to display art for the benefit of the mass of the people--the artist's greatest stimulus to achievement. The arts have been re-created over and over again, poetry provided with lofty motives and the drama reborn in the service of the Church.

"Art sees as God sees" would seem to have been the aesthetic criterion of churchmen. Besides, the Church has fostered and encouraged education, feminine as well as masculine, provided a vocation for the woman who felt that she was not called to matrimony and has cultivated all the fruits of the deeper thinking, philosophy, ethics, science. Men who have not studied the history of science as we now have it doubt this last but the revolutionizers of science all

down the centuries, Roger Bacon, Copernicus, Vesalius, Galileo, Morgagni, Mendel, were all faithful sons of the Church, three of them indeed churchmen. The supposed persecution of some of these proves to be largely but another example of the myth making tendency in mankind when religious feelings are involved.

Christ came to give men life and give it more abundantly--not the life of the body but of the spirit. The history of His Church is the story of the spiritual life among men. Of divine origin, its members are human and it would be futile to expect perfection. Among Christ's own chosen Apostles, one betrayed and one denied, so that the Church would not be following in its Founder's footsteps--would not be Apostolic--unless there were a fair proportion of very human elements in it even among the leaders. The Church has stood for all that is best in human life as no mere human institution has ever done. "The witchery of trifles that obscures good things" is still active and will be so long as this stage of humanity lasts. But the Church has by its cultivation of the sense of duty made life significant by distracting human attention from self to our fellows. It is only when its achievements are all gathered together even in the inadequate fashion possible in a brief volume of this kind, that it becomes easy to realize that here is the supernatural in the world.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

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The subject of this book is, in brief, the contribution of the Catholic Church to civilization. Civilization is the process by which men come to be more interested in their minds than in their bodies. In order to go on living we have to be reasonably interested in our bodies. It is very easy to be more interested in them than is necessary or even good for them. There is a constant tendency gripping us to be occupied more with our bodies than with our minds, that is to devote ourselves to the seeking of the satisfaction of the body either present or prospective rather than the satisfaction which comes with the cultivation of the mind. Every man must care properly for his body, because otherwise his mind will not function as it should and he will inevitably be diverted from the intellectual and the spiritual life by the insistent claims of a neglected body.

Every attention to our physical being beyond what is necessary to keep it in good condition just takes away that much time which might be spent in developing the mind and making life mean more. We all want to have life and have it more abundantly. That was what Christ said He came to bring to men. The Christian Church has been the supreme bearer of good tidings in this regard, the evangelist of the higher, better, nobler life.

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We all realize that the formula for life that is worthiest of man as a rational being is "Plain living and high thinking." By plain living we mean taking such simple food, securing such proper exercise and obtaining the amount of sleep necessary to keep the body in health while working so as to make a suitable living, taking such recreation as will prove appropriate diversion and leave all the rest of the time for occupation of the mind with thoughts that lift us above the sordid round of life. Men do not readily follow such a program however. The body has many temptations for indulgences of one kind or another that are being constantly put forward. Cultivating the mind is not of itself an easy nor always a satisfying occupation. The medieval philosopher said that "Knowledge makes a bloody entrance," and while this may not be literally true and some knowledge comes with comparative ease, there is no doubt at all that the intellectual life for the great majority of people requires such self-control and self-discipline, as well as quite definite persistence of character, as cannot be expected of the great majority of men unless their emotions are deeply stirred or their hearts are deeply touched and they have therefore other than selfish motives.

Nature has so constituted the body that it is not only easy but even pleasant and often very alluring to occupy one's self with the satisfaction of its desires. This condition of human life was necessitated by the fact that the individual had to be very definitely committed to self-preservation even under the most trying circumstances and inclined to self-propagation in order to {3} secure the continuance of the race. In the scheme of things as they are

in this little world of ours the conditions of human life are so arranged that it is, as it were, assumed that the mind will through its power of reasoning be quite capable of and deeply intent on taking proper care of itself and its development while the body needs instincts and natural tendencies of many kinds to secure its healthy persistence. Our intellectual curiosity is a very strong impelling motive, and yet it has nothing like the influence over us nor the power to get us to do things which is bound up so forcibly and almost compellingly with the various physical tendencies which we have inherited with our bodies and which constantly manifest themselves.

Unfortunately, while the mind ought to be thoroughly capable of organizing life so as to secure proper development and cultivation and thus enable its possessor to live a life that will be more abundant in the things of the spirit, it too needs allurements to secure its proper cooperation in making life fuller. The great source of these allurements is the sense of beauty which all genuinely intellectual people possess. This sense of beauty gives a satisfaction that is higher and more amply complete than any of the pleasures of the body. All men have some of it. It is not necessarily associated with education and even the child possesses some hints of it. Very well informed people who think themselves educated and who perhaps have received some academic stamp that would seem to indicate the possession of mental development may have very little of it. The savage may have a rather keen sense of it. He {4} may even try to express it in some extravagant fashion, and so we have such expressions as "barbaric splendor", which

indicate a striving after beauty that is carried to excess because it is not according to the canons of good taste. Any man who has a sense of beauty to a marked degree and the power to express it is an artist, and the artist and the poet are the highest products of our civilization such as it is.

[[Note 1](#)]

Civilization, then, is the process by which man's sense of beauty is aroused and trained and satisfied. What the Catholic Church has done for civilization has been the stimulating of the sense of beauty and the affording of opportunities for its expression with the preservation of the results of this, so that they may continue to be a joy to mankind and a further stimulus to the development of the sense of beauty. In thus diverting man from over attention to his body to definite cultivation of his mind and the recognition of the beauties of the world around him and the creation of beautiful things, the Christian Church has accomplished more than any other agency and has indeed been the one institution which all down the centuries has constantly and consistently lifted man up to what is highest and best in him. While its main purpose was to prepare men for happiness in another world than this, it thus afforded the greatest possible help to making the life of every individual happier in this world just in proportion to the faculties that he possessed. Without art man would be little better than the savage. By art we mean the expression of man's thoughts in a beautiful enduring way that will enable him to enjoy himself and {5} permit others to enjoy what would otherwise be but fleeting emotions within himself.

Men who have a strong sense of beauty need no special stimulation but make opportunities for themselves to express their thoughts in some enduring fashion. The cave man, the earliest man that we know anything about, used the flat surfaces of his cave home to paint pictures of animals. This was thousands of years ago, and it would probably be expected that his art would be extremely crude and altogether primitive. Primitive it is, but like the primitives in art generally, vigorous and vivid. It lacks all the modern technique of art that has come as the result of practice, but it is as finely artistic as anything could well be. Modern art critics have not hesitated to say that there is no animal painter alive today who can make such vivid, vigorous pictures of animals as the cave man did. He painted them at rest and in action, both in quiet and vehement action, and above all he painted them with every muscle tense just preparing for action though not as yet moving, thus accomplishing one of the most difficult feats an artist can perform. He painted in oil colors after having drawn his lines with a piece of flint and often filled them with carbon from the by-products of his fires, so that they are eminently enduring and have lasted down to our time; otherwise we would not have believed the possibility of the cave man ever having produced such veritable triumphs of art.

The feeling of anthropologists now is that the cave man made these pictures as a sort of religious exercise. A man who could see so clearly and then reproduce {6} his vision for others so exactly, who could invent oil painting because he wanted to reproduce the animals exactly in the colors

that he saw, was evidently in no sense of the word a being lower in the scale than we are ourselves. Indeed, one can scarcely help but have the feeling that if the legend of the seven sleepers were to come true and some of the cave men's children who had been shut in behind a fall of rock in the long ago were to be awakened and sent to school in our time, these children of the artist inventor of oil painting would rather be ahead than behind our children in school work.

This man could manifestly think clearly, and he seems to have thought, that if he could make a very lifelike picture of an animal, he was its superior and should be its master, and that there was a being that somehow beholding this relationship between him and the animal through the evidence of the picture, would give him the victory over it in hunting. The cave man buried his dead, perfectly sure that they were still alive, though their bodies were already beginning to decay, so that it is easy to understand the religious elements that entered into his life and his belief in a world of spirits and a Supreme Spirit who ruled the destinies of things. After all we have never found a tribe of savages, no matter how low in the scale of mentality, who did not have such religious ideas. They represent our intellectual instincts.

All forms of religion since the cave man's time have had this tendency to art expression very definitely present in them. The arts have come into existence {7} very largely in association with religious services. Is it any wonder that the churches became treasure houses of masterpieces of painting? Music and song were born in men's hearts when

their aspirations to serve the Deity in some way properly came home to them. It has been the custom among certain classes of scholars to say that sex was the beginning of art and even to suggest that religion itself was very largely confounded with sex feelings. As more and more investigation and research have been made, however, this has been seen to be a very partial view due to certain extravagant sex interests of the last generation or two and certain reactions against religion which led men easily to accept anything that would in any way discredit its manifestations. The first great poems that have been preserved for us, the Book of the Dead in Egypt, the Upanishads and the Rig-Vedas, Homer's Iliad among the Greeks, have very large religious elements in them. Indeed, it has often been said that Homer was the Bible of the Greeks and had more to do with keeping the old Olympian mythology alive and an influence in men's minds than any other single factor. The great dramatic poems of Aeschylus and Sophocles and Euripides were written in honor of Dionysos, the Greek god of inspiration, and were composed for use in religious celebrations with plots founded on the stories of the gods and their interventions in human affairs.

Indeed, dramatic literature came into existence twice in the world's history, as a development out of religious ceremonials and celebrations. This happened once in Greece in the fifth century before Christ and {8} then in modern Europe in the later Middle Ages, when the mystery and morality plays gradually evolved from the ceremonials in the Church. Rhyme was first used in lyric poetry in hymns written by the Irish not long after their conversion to

Christianity in the fifth or early sixth century. The Oratorio from which developed the opera in Italy was at the beginning an extension and elaboration of the musical services of the Church. The opera came into being with sacred stories for plots.

Deep religious feeling has always exhibited a very definite tendency to express itself in poetry and supremely great poetry has nearly always had an element of profound religious inspiration in it. This is very well illustrated in the Old Testament and also in many places in the New Testament. Job is one of the greatest dramatic poems ever written. It has been said that there are five supremely great poems in the history of literature that have for themes the problem of evil in the world; that is, they are written round that great natural mystery as to why, though man wants so much to be happy, so much of unhappiness comes here below to most men and even to the best of men. These five poems, Job, Aeschylus' Prometheus, Shakespeare's Hamlet, Calderon's *El Magico Prodigioso* and Goethe's Faust, are all of them deeply religious in temper even though they also express something of that skepticism which comes inevitably to the human mind in the face of the evil around us, particularly when it affects ourselves deeply. Of these five the first one written, Job, is usually said to be the greatest. The poetic ideas in {9} it come from eighteen hundred years before Christ, though the literary form as we have it now was probably given to these ideas more than a thousand years later. The Psalms rise to lyric heights in the expression of the emotions of mankind that are unsurpassed. The Canticle of Canticles, as construed by the

mystical poets and the saints who have been particularly favored, has proved a wonderful excursion in symbols of earthly love into what Coventry Patmore in our time so well called "The Unknown Eros."

The new dispensation has complemented the old in its influence upon poetry and the arts quite as much as it has fulfilled the law and the prophets. Christianity has taken the arts and given them inspiration for marvelous development and has stimulated men to the making of things beautiful that in the words of our ill-fated young English poet were to be "a joy forever." Without the inspiration afforded by Church architecture and the opportunity to build "Houses of the Lord," how little would be known of man's power to conceive and execute beautiful buildings that are of such size that it seems almost impossible that this puny creature man should have made them? These buildings are often so charming in their lines, so delightful in their decoration, that it is no wonder that they have always lifted men's minds up to higher interests, above the trivial things of life and the sordid cares of the body. It has been very well said that you cannot enter a Gothic church without having your eyes and your mind and your heart lifted up. Goethe, who was far from mediocrity minded and who had a distinct penchant for {10} the old pagan mythology, in his *Dichtung und Wahrheit* tells the story of his first entry into the Strassburg Minster:--"I seemed suddenly to see a new revelation; perception of beauty in all its attractiveness was impressed on my soul." Goethe, as pointed out by De Wulf, from whose *Philosophy and Civilization in the Middle Ages* the quotation is borrowed, "had been educated in the traditions of

classicism, 'among the detractors of Gothic architecture,' as he phrases it himself." In spite of that, the great Gothic church was a revelation.

No wonder that they talk of the "dim religious light" of these Gothic churches. What Longfellow calls "the gloom of these long aisles" has in it more of "the light that never was on land or sea" than is to be found anywhere in all the world. They tempt to the mood in which man thinks deep thoughts and feels profoundly, as nowhere else, about the mystery of existence and something at least of the only satisfying solution of it. To be for any length of time in one of these Gothic churches, especially if alone, is to find the awakening of religious emotion that lifts one up to higher things. Longfellow, after spending so many years in translating Dante until surely, if anyone ever had done so, he had come to feel as the great poet himself had felt in the poem now acknowledged as the greatest that ever came from the mind of man, could find nothing more appropriate as a metaphor for the Divine Comedy than a Gothic cathedral. His three beautiful sonnets, very probably the most beautiful sonnets ever written in this country, are {11} simply the poetic summing up of the religious effect of a great Gothic cathedral.

Is it any wonder that these marvelously beautiful structures tempted men to make every portion of them beautiful? As a result of this over-powering temptation the arts and crafts, the making of simple useful things beautiful, developed during the Gothic period as never before. Everything about the cathedral was made beautiful. The hinges on the doors, the locks, the keys, the latches, the

woodwork, all were fashioned into lines of beauty, the books were illuminated until they became precious treasures, the vestments represented the most beautiful textiles and needlework ever made. The stained glass in the windows was such a triumph that it has been the despair of glass makers ever since. And the bells were so beautiful that they have made the standard for all after time. The very utensils of the altar, the cruets for the wine, the dish in which the priests' fingers were washed, the candlesticks and above all the candelabra, were all handsome in their way. The censers or thurifers, the incense boat, the lamp of the sanctuary, none of these were neglected, but like the altar railing and the pulpit and the chairs and benches were all beautifully designed and executed. The churches became veritable museums of things of beauty; and indeed, our modern museums are crowded with objects from the churches whenever these are no longer needed in the service of the church, or when, sad to say, for some lamentable reason, they have been removed from the church to which they belonged. Mr. Yeats, the Irish poet, once said, "There is {12} no culture in the hearts of a people until the very utensils in the kitchen are beautiful as well as useful." However that may be, one thing is perfectly sure, that the people of the Middle Ages, under the inspiration and the protection of the Church, made nothing for their churches that was not beautiful as well as useful.

Sculpture is one of the major developments of the arts and crafts which came to occupy a very prominent place in connection with the Gothic churches. The portals supplied an opportunity for sculptured figures that were eminently

decorative and yet beautifully expressive of great religious truths as illustrated in the lives of the saints and the Lord Himself. There used to be the feeling that these figures followed the lines of the architecture so closely, acquiring a certain obvious stiffness and cramped air in the process, that they were not to be considered as artistic sculpture in any proper sense of the word. We have changed our minds on the subject in recent years, and now the sculptors of the Middle Ages are looked upon as having done supremely beautiful work and achieved, as almost never was done before, that supreme triumph of art, the purpose of fitting their ideas appropriately into their surroundings. François Millet, our greatest modern painter, once declared that the best definition of beauty that we have is "suitability to the conditions around." For a gnarled oak may be beautiful and a stiff and formal figure under certain circumstances is eminently decorative. No matter what the theory, sculpture has always been beautiful down the ages under the inspiration and in the service of the Church.

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Painting has been even more beautiful under the same stimulus and incentive. How the history of painting would dwindle to nothingness without the religious paintings which make so large a part of its material! The churches were the museums; and as the people were required to go to church all the Sundays of the year, and between the holy days of obligation and their own devotion attended at least fifty days more, painting and sculpture and the arts and crafts had an audience of the whole people, such as our museums cannot command to anything like the same degree, and that aroused the sense of beauty and the artistic talents of all,

even of those without formal opportunities for education. Church music sublimely beautiful and the great Latin hymns, poetry such as only Dante and Shakespeare might have written and no one has ever excelled, completed the round of the arts in the highest intellectual sense of that word and stirred deeply every possible taste for beauty and intellectual faculty that people might possess.

These great Christian Churches constituted a liberal education in themselves for all those brought in intimate contact with them; but, besides, they became centres of the intellectual as well as of the moral and spiritual life of the people. The earliest Christian schools were founded in connection with the churches and the first teachers were the priests and their clerical assistants. After a time the monastic schools came into existence, but the centre of interest in them, too, was the church of the monastery, and the religious orders prided themselves on the beauty of their churches, {14} though also on the charm of the sites which they selected for their monasteries. Often these were bare enough and quite unpicturesque until the labor of the religious turned them into places of beauty and appropriate settings for the beautiful church, the chapter house, and other monastic buildings. When the first universities came into existence they were scarcely more than advanced cathedral schools with the chancellor of the cathedral as the rector of the university and with the cathedral property as the home at least of the administrative officials, and the cathedral chapter houses and even sometimes the cathedral itself or the open space in front of it as the place for the holding of university exercises. Most of the

cathedrals had a group of canons whose ecclesiastical duties took but three or four hours a day and who were quite willing to devote the rest of their time to the education of all who had the talent and the desire for intellectual development.

The greatest triumph of Christianity, however, was in leading and inspiring a certain number of men and women to make their lives a thing of beauty, a great poem, a work of highest art in the sublimest sense of that word. In that striking passage of the tenth chapter of St. Mark Christ meets the young man who ran up and knelt before Him and asked Him, "What shall I do that I may receive life everlasting?" Christ said to him, "Thou knowest the commandments." And the young man replied, "Master, all these things I have observed from my youth." Jesus looking on him, loved him and said to him: "One thing is wanting unto thee: {15} go sell whatever thou hast, give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come follow me."

In Matthew's Gospel the phrase is, "If thou wouldst be perfect, sell all thou hast and give to the poor and come and follow Me." Literally many many thousands of men and women have taken this injunction, and under the aegis of the Church have striven to be perfect even as Christ suggested to the young man that he should. Unfortunately, the young man himself to whom that injunction was given found it too hard a saying and "went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." Many others down the centuries since, who have had great possessions either of money or of talents or of power, have found this saying too hard and

have turned away even though the Lord had looked on them and loved them and suggested to their hearts that they should make what was highest and best out of their lives. They have made "the great refusal."

There has always been the open opportunity for men and women to lead this perfect life in Catholic Christianity, and the religious men and women, using religious in the sense of those who had re-obligated themselves to the highest aims for religious motives and services, have counted up in the many millions. Not all of them have been worthy representatives of the striving after the perfect life. They were human, and to err is human. The vast majority of them, however, have followed this injunction of Christ and not only found happiness for themselves but have also helped others to happiness through it. Many many thousands have deserved to have their names inscribed high on {16} the scroll of humanity's greatest men and women and have had their lives written in many generations because of the appeal and the inspiration that their mode of living made for others even in the long subsequent time. Among them are St. Francis of Assisi, "the little poor man of God," as he loved to call himself, "the greatest Christian since Christ's time" as he has been called, of St. Teresa, perhaps the greatest of intellectual women, of whom more lives has been written than of any other except the Mother of the Lord, of St. Vincent de Paul, founder in modern charity, of St. Francis de Sales, "the gentleman saint," of St. Catherine of Sienna, the most influential woman of her time, and almost it might be said of all time, of St. Ignatius of Loyola, knight for Christ, of St. Benedict,

whose life and rule probably brought more happiness to a greater number of individuals than that of any other mere man who has ever lived, of St. Scholastica his sister, who did as much for the women of many centuries as her brother did for the men, of St. Antony of Padua, beloved of mystical souls, of St. John of the Cross, the divine lover, of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, queen and mother, the apotheosis of charity, of St. Brigid of Ireland, whose name is in benediction, the "Mary of the Gaels," whom they honor so highly a millennium and a half after her death, of St. Hilda of Whitby, patroness of our first great English poet Caedmon, of St. Margaret of Scotland, wife and mother whose molding of the character of her son, St. David, meant so much for Scotland, of St. Louis of France, greatest of monarchs who ever ruled a people, one of {17} the most beautiful of characters and yet with a family resemblance in every way to his cousin-german St. Ferdinand of Castile,--and so through a list that would make a volume in itself.

In a word, what the Catholic Church has done for men and women is to afford them an opportunity to express in their lives and in their sense of duty to themselves and to others, the sense of beauty they possessed in the arts and even in the crafts. Blessed is the man who has found his work is the supreme natural beatitude. This the Church has constantly and consistently fostered, making men blessed in the midst of a trying world as no other institution has ever done it. No wonder that it has been said that if there had been no Christian Church it would have been necessary to invent one for the sake of the benefits it brings to man in a worldly way. Man wants happiness more than anything else.

The Church points how he can secure it by living a life worthy of his better nature.

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CHAPTER II

Architecture

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The greatest contribution that the Church has made to civilization, that is to the human cult of the beautiful, is in architecture. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," is thought a modern culture formula but Church edifices all over the world, whenever the Catholic Church has been free to express herself, have been an exemplification of this and have lifted people up by the beauty that they expressed. This was all the greater because the people felt that these beautiful edifices belonged to them; indeed, at the time of their erection, they knew that their fellow citizens, often their relatives, sometimes those who were very close to them, had labored in the production of all this beauty. They themselves had by their contributions of money, or, oftener still, of labor or of materials, made possible the erection of these wonderful structures. No wonder then that they had a definite sense of ownership which made them appreciate the splendor of the churches and helped to arouse in them a taste for what was fitting and to develop a sense of beauty which is almost the highest faculty that man has. Besides, the Church by providing manifold opportunities for the exercise in handiwork of any and every kind for all those who had the talent or the power to produce the beautiful, was lifting people above the sordid round of every day life. {19} There is probably nothing which reacts more for the

happiness of mankind and for the development of the best that is in man than an opportunity of this kind.

The beautiful buildings which were erected for Church purposes thus became themselves an important source of education in so far as one extremely significant part of that is the training of taste and the development of the sense of beauty. Christianity did not stop with the Church beautiful. Besides churches, monasteries, convents and schools, guildhalls and hospitals were made beautiful architecturally and were studiously fitted with appropriate decorations, interiorly and exteriorly, and thus of themselves were a very valuable educational feature. Contact with these beautiful structures and with the painting, the sculpture and the fine arts and crafts products so patiently and genially made for them, was of itself an education, a liberal education, that counted for much in the genuine cultivation of the human intellect in its taste for beautiful things. This is the sort of education that cannot be tested by examinations nor measured by rules of thumb, but it is very real and extremely significant. We are gradually working back in this generation to a recognition of what was accomplished in this matter, and we too are making our school buildings beautiful and decorating them as finely as possible, because we appreciate how much this means for education. When we do so, we go back for our models to the time when the Church was the beneficent patron of education and wished to educate not only the mind but also the heart and the soul in the sense of developing a love for beauty and a desire for the bringing out of what was best in man. All this is quite intangible and incommensurable according to

material standards; but then, most of the things in the world that are really worth while are quite intangible.

Just as soon as the Church was free through the edict of Constantine to come out of the catacombs into the open, her beautiful churches began to appear. Indeed, even in the catacombs, as archaeological investigations during the past generation have made very clear, there was a definitely successful attempt to employ all the charms of beauty consistent with the situation as an appropriate setting for divine worship. Some of the decorative effects on walls and ceiling and the sacred vessels and various utensils employed in the services were made beautiful as well as useful. From very early days the textiles employed as altar cloths and the garments worn during the sacred ceremonials were distinguished for their beauty and finish. Very early in Church history the Mass books and other volumes employed in the services of the Church were the subjects of devoted artistry and the Scriptures themselves were written out with a loving devotion that made these books much more than mere useful articles, as is very well illustrated by the fact that the Book of Kells comes from one of the early centuries of the Middle Ages and must have represented the culmination of a tradition in this matter which had been in existence from early Christian history.

Under Constantine the Christians adopted and adapted the plan of the basilica which had been in use {21} in Rome for centuries for their place of worship. The name "House of the King" suited them exactly because of their belief in Emmanuel, God With Us, and they proceeded to modify the basilica, as it had been used for public halls and courts of

justice, for the purpose of public worship. The old construction of the basilica with an apse was particularly adaptable to the services of the Church. Two rows of columns dividing the main hall into a nave and ambulatories allowed for some circulation of the people even during services or in the midst of preaching. A transept was added after a time in order to give more room and also because the cruciform shape of the church then became symbolic of the Cross, the basis of Christianity. These early basilicas, of which examples may still be seen in Rome, as for instance San Lorenzo, built originally during the first half of the fourth century, and St. Paul without the walls, erected in the second half of the same century, furnish the best possible idea of how beautiful these churches might be. They were very simple and yet were marvelously effective in their construction and gave abundant opportunity for decorative effects of many kinds.

With the introduction of the arch the beginning of the Romanesque style is seen, and the use of what was known as the arch of triumph, which represented the opening of the nave into the transept, was particularly striking, and the space above this arch was used for decorative purposes. The next development was the erection of the dome at the crossing, and this was first exemplified in the great city which was built at {22} Byzantium by Constantine to be his capital city and which came to be called after his name, Constantinople. Santa Sophia, the first of these great buildings, is a veritable triumph of architecture. It has been suggested that there are three supremely beautiful buildings that are the product of the religious spirit: Santa

Sophia in Constantinople, the Cathedral of Chartres and St. Peter's in Rome. All of these represent developments of the devotion of the Christian people as displayed in architecture.

The dome of Santa Sophia was so marvelously set upon its pillars that it was said that it seemed as though it must be suspended from Heaven by chains. Santa Sophia still remains as it was thirteen centuries ago, as an index of what the Christian spirit could accomplish. It is still the admiration of mankind; and though it has now been so long the mosque of Omar and has deeply influenced the building of many mosques, there has been the fond hope in the Christian heart of the world that sometime or other this wonderful old Church with its marvelous beauty of construction would be returned to its pristine use as a Christian temple to the Most High.

When Ravenna became the capital of the Exarchate, the Eastern Empire headquarters in Italy, a series of Byzantine churches under Romanesque influence were erected there. Such churches as San Appollinare Nuovo or San Appollinare in Classe or San Vitale, all of them in Ravenna, have been a source of pleasure for visitors and a subject for study on the part of architects and artists ever since. They were beautifully {23} decorated with mosaics, and while unimposing from the exterior are wonderful examples of effective devotional church architecture. The tomb of Galla Placidia at Ravenna, which is, as so many of them were, a chapel tomb, is one of the most beautiful things of its kind in the world. It shows how beautifully these Christians of the earlier Middle Ages could build under the influence of

religious feeling. When in the modern time the French wanted to honor Pasteur, the man who saved more lives probably than any other who has ever lived, they built his tomb beneath the main door of the Pasteur Institute in Paris in imitation of the tomb of Galla Placidia. They went back nearly twelve hundred years at the end of the nineteenth century, which was so proud of its accomplishment, to find a model for a monument that would in some way serve to honor worthily a great modern man of science. No one who sees that tomb of Pasteur's will be disappointed, for the beauty of the design is such that everyone comes away with a feeling that the architect displayed excellent judgment in his choice of a model.

The culmination of this Byzantine style is to be found in St. Mark's in Venice. That is so beautiful and has attracted so much attention that very little need be said about it here. It is quite literally one of the most interesting churches in the world. What needs to be recalled particularly however, is that it was built not long after the year 1000. Those years are sometimes said to be the Dark Ages, when men had reached their lowest ebb in the power to think and in their interest of the things of the intellect. Yet here is a great {24} church, one of the most beautiful of all time, the structure of which at least comes from this period and shows very clearly that the men of this generation had taste and a sense of beauty and an artistic discrimination and a power of accomplishment in structural work and a talent for solving architectural and engineering difficulties, all of which indicate developed intelligence of the highest order. Such a church would never have been built except that there were

people in that time capable of appreciating it, able to achieve the work on it, ready to make sacrifices of time and money and energy in order to build it. It is a monument to their culture no matter what may be thought of them from other standpoints.

So far from this Byzantine style being outworn or suited only for people of much more primitive tastes in architecture than our generation, it is well to note that two of the great churches of recent years, Westminster Cathedral in London and St. Louis Cathedral in St. Louis, Mo., were designed by architects after the Byzantine. Their impressiveness makes it very clear that here is a great mode of construction that can be used to the very best advantage in modern times with wonderful effectiveness. In England it probably seemed better to the architect of Westminster not to try to rival the great Gothic churches which had been built in the flourishing Gothic period, and many were inclined to think that he made too great a sacrifice for this purpose. Even a short visit is likely to disabuse one of that opinion and to show {25} very clearly that the Byzantine style can still be wonderfully impressive. What these devout Christians of an older time worked out as worthy of their basilicas, their houses of the King, are not mere passing fancies but enduring modes of what is highest in human expression in structural work.

Then came the great development of the true Romanesque which gave us the beautiful cathedrals of Aix and Spire and Mainz. There are some who affect to consider this style as representing a transition between the Byzantine and modern Gothic and as scarcely worth

recording as a definite achievement in architecture. It was, however, ever so much more than that. Anyone who has been near the Cathedral at Mainz, not merely for a passing visit, but in intimate association with the old church, will realize how wonderfully impressive it can be when familiarity has bred, not contempt, but ever increased admiration. The fact that the most fashionable church in Boston, Trinity Church, was built at the end of the nineteenth century in this style shows how thoroughly modern architects have appreciated its structural value. Originally the cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York was to have been built in the Romanesque, and there is no doubt at all that the round arches and the dome of the style would have been very impressive on Morningside Heights, even though it is possible that the reconstructed design which will give us a great Gothic fane at the highest point of the city may prove even more charmingly beautiful. It will {26} require all the resources of a great architect, however, to accomplish this, for the Romanesque is not an unworthy rival of the Gothic even at its best.

After the Romanesque came the development of Gothic and the erection all over the north and west of Europe of the great Gothic cathedrals and abbey churches. There are many, whose years of study and whose tried experience and cultivated taste give them a right to an opinion in the matter, who declare that these are the most beautiful church buildings in the world. Undoubtedly some of them are. It would be very hard to make a choice among them. No two of them are alike. Indeed they are almost infinitely diversified and yet the souls of the builders have gone into