

V.

65. COLUMBUS.

THE crimson sun was sinking down to rest,
 Pavilioned on the cloudy verge of heaven;
 And Ocean on her gently heaving breast
 Caught, and flashed back, the varying tints of even;
 When, on a fragment from the tall cliff riven,
 With folded arms, and doubtful thoughts opprest,
 Columbus sat; till sudden hope was given:
 A ray of gladness shooting from the West.
 O what a glorious vision for mankind
 Then dawned above the twilight of his mind;
 Thoughts shadowy still, but indistinctly grand!
 There stood his Genius,¹ face to face; and signed
 (So legends tell) far seaward with her hand:
 Till a new world sprang up, and bloomed beneath her wand

2. He was a man whom danger could not daunt,
 Nor sophistry perplex, nor pain subdue;
 A stoic, reckless of the world's vain taunt,
 And steeled the path of honor to pursue.
 So, when by all deserted, still he knew
 How best to soothe the heartsick, or confront
 Sedition; schooled with equal eye to view
 The frowns of grief and the base pangs of want.
 But when he saw that promised land arise
 In all its rare and bright varieties,
 Lovelier than fondest fancy ever trod,
 Then softening nature melted in his eyes;
 He knew his fame was full, and blessed his God;
 And fell upon his face, and kissed the virgin sod.
3. Beautiful realm beyond the western main,
 That hymns thee ever with resounding wave,
 Thine is the glorious sun's peculiar reign!
 Fruits, flowers, and gems, in rich mosaic pave

¹ *Gen'ius*, his guardian angel; in heathen mythology, the genius was supposed to be either a good or evil spirit, appointed to watch over the destinies of a man, a tribe, or a nation.

Thy paths: like giant altars o'er the plain
 Thy mountains blaze, loud thundering, 'mid the rave
 Of mighty streams, that shoreward rush amain,
 Like Polyphemus¹ from his Etnean cave.
 Joy, joy for Spain! a seaman's hand confers
 These glorious gifts, and half the world is hers!
 But where is he—that light whose radiance glows
 The load-star of succeeding mariners?
 Behold him! crushed beneath o'ermastering woes—
 Hopeless, heart-broken, chained, abandoned to his foes!

SIR AUBREY DE VERE

SECTION XVI.

I.

66. THE LITERARY ARTIST.

PART FIRST.

EVERY age is characterized by some intellectual ^{signal} trait. It has been already perceived that the prevailing tone of ours is scientific. Progress in industry and the mechanical arts is more highly prized than purely literary ability. True, there is still much written which is ^{noted as} labeled literature. But few, very few indeed, of the many thousand volumes that are yearly flooding the reading world bear the impress that ranks them among the enduring ^{monuments} monuments of intellect; very few ^{merit} deserve the title of classics; the greater number are explosive bubbles on the stream of thought. They are so, not through any lack of talent, but rather through its misapplication.

2. The reason of this is to be found in the spirit of ^{trifling} trifling that possesses the age. Time is wasted and energies are expended in the endeavor to move over a large surface of attainments; and as slight account is made of profoundness of knowledge, the results are not at all in keeping with the motive

¹ *Polyphemus*, son of Neptune, and one of the Cyclopes in Sicily.

power applied. Men are too Pilate-like; they ask what the truth is and wait not for an answer; or, with Tennyson, they postpone it to the other life:

“What hope of answer or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.”

They forget that investigation is a law of our intellects, and that the truth can be found by every earnest searcher before he passes “behind the veil.”

3. There is not enough of the steadiness of purpose, profound thought, and diligent preparation that are necessary to achieve permanent success. Writers aim too low; they no longer seek the sublime and the beautiful; they are content with the pretty and the startling; they have found the labor of art-study too irksome, and have thrown off its invigorating discipline as a cramping yoke; in a word, they have ceased to be literary artists. For in the marshalling of words and in the evolution of ideas, the greatest skill is required for the arrangement best calculated to give the desired result, and must be inborn, as in the man of genius, or acquired, as by the man of talent.

4. Glance over one of the Shakesperian masterpieces. In that apparent abandonment to the inspiration of the moment, by which from his magic pen drop some of the loveliest flowers of poetry and the sweetest words in language, which reveal new worlds of thought and sentiment—in that total absorption in the spirit of his play to the seeming neglect of the diction he employs, so that what is apparently a random expression turns out to be most essential; in that entire subserviency of all the parts to the end proposed; in all these traits of that grand whole producing the desired effect upon the reader, playing upon the multitudinous chords of his heart, and calling forth at will notes of pleasure and pain, we have unmistakable evidence of the perfect artist, who possesses the secret of hiding his artistic efforts.

5. And so, on a like examination of one of Pope's poems, in the rounded finish of every expression, in the exquisiteness with which a figure is set, and the apparent solicitude lest any word should be misplaced, we find palpable evidence of effort to have everything tend in the best manner possible to produce a de-

sired effect; the work wears on its face traces of art. So is it with the labored finish of Sallust; with the exquisite expression of Fénelon; with the Attic grace of Xenophon; with the sublime eloquence of Bossuet (bōs' sō ā'). All point to study, thought, labor, art. For the literary man is it true, as for the mechanic, that he must earn his bread in the sweat of his brow.

6. And genius is no exception to the rule. Carlyle defines it “a capacity for work.” Michael Angelo calls it “eternal patience.” Augustus Schlegel (shlā' gēl) says that though it is “in a certain sense infallible, and has nothing to learn, still art is to be learned, and must be acquired by practice.” Therefore, genius is not indolence, nor eccentricity, nor a license to dispense with all labor. True, it is a gift from heaven, and, like all heavenly gifts, generally placed in a frail vessel thrown among us apparently at random, but invariably for a purpose and in obedience to a law.

7. We have already defined the characteristic of genius to be a power of simplifying, of taking that view of a subject in its rounded completeness that makes it more easily understood, of possessing one idea, in the light of which all others are resolvable. Hence a universal genius is never spoken of except by exaggeration. Genius in one department of knowledge excludes genius in another. Thus we have the mathematical genius, the military genius, the philosophic genius; but we never mention a genius in all or any two of these branches together. “But,” it may be urged, “the possession of only one idea implies intellectual weakness; the man with many ideas has the superior intelligence.” The reverse is true. Contemplate the Supreme Intelligence for a moment. It sees every thing; It possesses all knowledge in the light of an idea, which is Its own essence. Every thing is contained in that idea, that divine essence; and the more perfect created intelligences are, the more they resemble their Creator, the less is the number of their ideas, and the more they see in the light of these ideas.

8. Superior intelligence belongs not to a caviller, a disputatious person, a hair-splitter; these classes give indications of narrow-mindedness and weakness of understanding. We make use of argument to supply our deficiency of comprehension. We are discussing some property or relation of a triangle; we

are puzzled over it; we can proceed no further. A mathematical genius comes along; he draws a line or two, and resolves the figure into its simplest elements; in a few words he throws a flood of light upon the subject-matter, so that we are surprised at our own lack of comprehension, and we exclaim: "How simple! Why did we not see it before?" Again, we are perplexed over a proposition in some old author; we see not its bearings; we throw it aside as a dry and barren idea, and we wonder how any man in his sound senses can sit down and seriously write such language. A genius takes up that idea; he makes it the nucleus of an essay or treatise, in which he traces its relations through all departments of thought; in his hands it becomes the central point whence emanates an illumination that reveals the secret of a thousand things hitherto incomprehensible. What was barrenness before, becomes the germ of a whole world of thought.

9. It is ever thus with genius. We all of us bask in its sunshine. Its slightest conjectures become established truths for us. Its proved ideas we take as our first principles. Its views we make the standard of our own. It discovers and invents, and we apply. We add the weight of its assertions to support the deficiencies of our own weak arguments. "The master says so," is often enough our saving clause and our most convincing proof. Reason is infallible under given circumstances; but the instinct of faith is always strong within us. It is the secret of our progress; for were we obliged to refer all truth back to first principles, taking nothing for granted but the self-evident, the march of ideas would be slow; we would always be beginning, always making the same discoveries, and much that is now the glory of intelligence would still be buried in the unknown.

II.

67. THE LITERARY ARTIST.

PART SECOND.

WRITERS on genius have much to say about originality. It consists not so much in saying something that nobody ever said before, as in moulding an idea into shape, and

giving it a hue that stamps it as characteristic. The great genius is not over particular about the materials he uses. He picks up those nearest to hand; he stamps them with the impress of his genius; and, so fashioned, they ever pass as his, and his alone. The conception of no one of Shakespeare's plays is his. It lived in history and tradition long before he made it the heirloom of humanity.

2. The appearance of an idea in two or more authors proves nothing beyond mere coincidence. Two minds may arrive at the same result by entirely different methods of thought. Truth is one, as the Author of truth is one; and only small fragments of it are realized by the most powerful minds. The rill, feebly following the ravine's course, the torrent dashing down the mountain's side, and the expansive river majestically winding along the plain, bearing on its bosom a nation's treasures—each and all, however distant be their sources, originally came from the same ocean to which they return, and in comparison with which the greatest of them is insignificant. So all truth, all beauty, all excellence, have their creative source in God, the divine Fountain-head, in whom they will again find a resting-place and a home. What wonder, then, that as the same shower replenishes many springs, the same truth should sink into more intellects than one, and flow therefrom tinged by their individual peculiarities (pe kûl yâr' i tiş).

3. The source from which the literary artist draws materials to work upon is as varied and universal as nature. The intellectual, the moral, and the physical worlds are alike open to his observation and study. Life, savage and civilized; the past and the present; the empirical¹ and the ideal; beauty and deformity; virtue and vice; nobility and baseness; pleasure and pain, all present themselves to him; from all he must cull, and from the clashing of opposites, and the harmony of compatibles, and the influencing agencies in the physical and spiritual orders, weave an artistic whole that is so connected in parts, and so much the expression of an inspiring principle, that it becomes a thing of undying life for all time. His aim—the aim of all literature—is to solve life's problem. No easy one it is, con-

¹ Em pir'i cal, depending solely without due regard to science and upon experience or observation, theory.

sidering man's numerous and complex relations with his fellow-man, himself, and his Creator; the thousand passions that alternately roll over his soul and lash it into so many moods; the contradictory influences under which he moves, and the rigid logic with which every event works out its result, either here or hereafter.

4. The production of a literary artist is the image of himself, inasmuch as it possesses a soul and a body. In nature, it is not the body that shapes the soul: it is rather the soul that gives form and activity to the body. We lay stress on the same distinction in a work of art. When Cousin¹ tells us that "method is the genius of a system," he makes method usurp the place of principle. The principle is the soul of the system, and therefore its genius. It determines both system and method. It has been seen that there is no artistic masterpiece without expression; there is no expression without unity; and there is no unity without a common bond, in which all the parts unite, and therefore without an animating principle to keep them together. In the construction of a work, then, the first thing the literary artist must do is to determine the principle that gives it unity, and therefore life. He must observe, study, meditate. His subject-matter, when well digested, will determine his method of treatment. And if he has no subject, no aim, no idea to develop, no proposition to prove, if all is random and confusion, he would better wait. It is a loss of time to undertake that which pride rather than ability dictates. There is a work for every man; each has his function in life. Let not him destined for hand-work assume to do the labor that belongs to him selected for brain-work. Let each hold to that for which he has natural aptitude; for in that alone lies the secret of his success.

5. Thought, sentiment, enthusiasm unite in giving soul to a work. A great source of labor is the mechanism of construction of the body. Language is the material upon which the literary artist works. He must aim at the accurate wording of his propositions. He must therefore seek to be complete master of his language. He must know the force and bearing of

¹ Cousin (koo zăn').

every word. He must study the great masters. We can not judge of a musical instrument by the grating notes which a beginner draws therefrom; it is only when the consummate master elicits sweet and rapturous variations that we appreciate its power. The tyro in literary art should learn from those who have made it the vehicle of profound *idéal* and happy expressions, the power there is in it, its richness of idiom, the flexibility with which it bends to the humor of the author—now plain and simple, now full-flowing and pathetic, again vigorous and energetic, in all cases variety of style yielding to variety of thought. But nothing can take the place of constant practice. It is only that beating and hammering on language—that turning it into a thousand moulds—that correcting and refining of its diction—that can make it bend to every grade of thought, and express every shade of meaning.

6. Above all, the literary artist should guard truth as a sacred trust, and never sacrifice any jot thereof to a smooth turn or a rhetorical figure. There is no beauty without truth. Real art grows sickly, rank, defective, in the unwholesome atmosphere of falsehood. Let the artist be so possessed with his subject-matter that he will see in it "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and he will find fit expression for his views.

BROTHER AZARIAS.

Brother Azarias of the Christian Schools, was born at Utica, N. Y., June 29, 1817, and entered the Brotherhood June 29, 1862. He is the author of "An Essay Contributing to the Philosophy of Literature."

III.

68. ACTIVITY OF FAITH.

THE Catholic Church is a puzzle to the world. Men reproach her for her ambition in desiring the first place and brooking no rival. Not content with laboring for her own children, she is constantly trying to convert others to her faith, and disturbing the world in her search after proselytes;¹ thrusting her theology and her disputes under people's noses; distracting men from their business; disturbing the peace and

¹ Pros'elytes, converts.

quiet of families; compromising¹ Christian nations with the heathen by the efforts of her missionaries.

2. Contrast the Catholic Church's perpetual turmoil² with the placid quiet of the Oriental Churches.³ Compare her fierce ambition with the modest bearing of the Church of England. And turning from the Church to individuals, the world complains that we Catholics are always at work, intriguing⁴—as they say—disturbing. Look at these Jesuits—you find them everywhere; we are constantly offended by the sight of Catholic priests, Catholic books, Catholic crucifixes, Catholic nuns.

3. Every one received into the Church seems to be suddenly changed and deteriorated,⁵ filled with an unquiet spirit, a longing, a thirst to bring in others. Such a man, as a Protestant, was a quiet, gentlemanly fellow, not bothering his own head or his friend's about religion; doing the genteel thing, going to church on Sunday; but he got bitten by those Ritualists,⁶ and he's gone over to Rome, and gone regularly mad. He's constantly talking about religion; he goes to Mass at strange hours in the morning; he can't get on without his priest; men say that he has lost interest in many things, and hint that he is thinking of joining one of the orders, and going to get murdered in the Chinese missions, or to kill himself slaving in the slums and hospitals of some great city.

4. On the other hand, we children of the Church, also, are struck with the amazing energy of our mother. We know her to be the oldest institution in the world, yet we see in her no sign of old age. Old age means and brings with it a cessation of growth, a wasting away, a decline of strength, an apathy⁷ and neglect of the purposes of life, a second childhood. But the Church is acknowledged even by her enemies to be as fresh and vigorous as she was two thousand years ago. She still

¹ Cöm' pro mis' ing, putting in danger by some act that can not be recalled.

² Tur' moil, disturbance; confusion.

³ Ori ěnt' al Churches, the Greek and Russian Churches which deny the supremacy of the Holy See, and which are also in grave error on

other points of faith.

⁴ In trigu' ing, forming secret plans.

⁵ De tē'ri o rā'ted, made worse.

⁶ Rit' u al ists, a sect in the Church of England which imitates the ceremonies of the Catholic Church.

⁷ Ap'a thy, want of interest.

grows, and the aged mustard-tree puts forth leaf and branch, flower and fruit in every land. She questions every comer, examines every doctrine, prescribes for every moral disease, denounces and punishes every crime, with as keen an interest and as vital an energy as in the days when the Apostolic Council sat in Jerusalem, when John the Evangelist denounced Cerinthus, when Paul excommunicated the incestuous Corinthian, when Peter preached in Antioch and in Rome.

5. The secret of all this is *faith*, and it is to this that I invite your attention to-day. Friends admire, while enemies decry the activity of the Catholic Church and of her children, but friends and enemies alike admit it. We are accused of many things, but no one dreams of accusing the Church of apathy, of indifference. Nay, our very activity is the foundation for those charges of ambition, of intrigue, of restless zeal, of troublesome intermeddling, which are made against us; and yet, if we reflect upon the nature of divine faith, we shall find that this very activity is one of its essential attributes, one of the signs whereby it may be known to exist amongst men. For, my brethren, faith, as we have seen, is the image of God, the reflection in the intelligence of man of that truth which is God Himself.

6. And consequently faith must not only be one, as we have seen, because God is essentially one, but it must also be active, because God is pure, essential, and eternal action. God is pure action, says St. Thomas, the prince of Catholic theologians. This is a high and mysterious saying. Let us consider. The life of God is one eternal, essential, pure, active intelligence. All that lives, moves, and acts (for life is motion and action) so far participates of the essential life of God. Man is said to live with a most perfect life, because intellectual, and so nearer to God in resemblance. Man again is capable of receiving a far higher degree of intellectual resemblance to the divine life of God by faith, which brings him into closest union of intelligence with his Maker; and so we conclude that if God be pure action, *actus purus*, if approach to God by resemblance of life be action, if the nearer we approach to God the more do we share in the life which is essential action, that virtue which brings us to the highest resemblance with God, the Father of

light and intelligence, must also be an element of the highest activity of man, and that virtue is Faith. BURKE.

THOMAS NICHOLAS BURKE, a priest of the Dominican Order, was born in Galway, Ireland, in the year 1830. He was ordained in 1856. In October, 1871, he came to the United States as visitor-general of his order, and remained until February, 1873, preaching and lecturing almost daily in the principal cities. He is an orator of most magnetic eloquence. His lectures and sermons were collected and published in 1872.

SECTION XVII.

I.

69. INVISIBLE AND SPIRITUAL ENEMIES.

IT was manifestly the sense and conviction of those who composed the prayers of the ancient Church that we are living in a perfect atmosphere of invisible and spiritual enemies, who disturb nature, thwart¹ the providential direction of things, play foul on our imaginations, trouble our peace, and try to pervert our reasons. They meddle with every thing that is of use to man, and endeavor to mar its purposes. They infest every place in which they can tempt and seduce him, from his own dwelling to the house of God itself.

2. Earth, and air, and water are equally their element; ² the first is shaken and convulsed, the second is darkened by thunder-clouds and tortured into whirlwinds, the third is lashed into foaming billows by their permitted but most malicious agency. The doctrine on this head is clearly apostolical; ³ and that it was apprehended by the early Church in a far more lively manner than by our duller faith, the writings of the fathers clearly prove.

3. Now the Church in all her prayers considers herself appointed to be the antagonist and vanquisher of this hostile crew; and while she shows her deep and earnest conviction of the difficulties of the contest, she betrays no uneasiness about its results. She hath power to rule and to quell these spirits of

¹ Thwart, to defeat; to frustrate. its existence.

² Element, the state or sphere ³ Apostolical, derived from natural to anything or suitable to the Apostles of Christ.

darkness. Moreover, she is not alone in the conflict. Every part of her offices displays her assurance that a bright circle of heavenly spirits is arrayed around her for the protection of herself and her children—spirits who can wrestle upon equal terms with these unsubstantial foes, and whose swords are tempered for their subtle natures.

4. There mingle, too, in all her religious actions legions of blessed saints, who have loved and honored her upon earth, and who now worship and pray, invisible, with her children. These strong impressions of the incessant conflict going on between the enemies and the friends of God are clearly and feelingly expressed by the Church in innumerable places. The whole rite of consecration of a church keeps before our eyes the efforts which will be made by our invisible tempters to spoil God's work.

5. The cross is planted at the door, the walls are purified and blessed, prayers are repeatedly poured out to shield the holy place and its worshipers against the fraud and violence of wicked spirits. The blessing of bells, of crosses, and of reliquaries has reference to the same idea. No substance is employed in any solemn rite¹ (except the Eucharistic elements, which are deemed holy from their very destination) without a previous exorcism or adjuration of the enemy, that he quit all hold upon them and presume not to misuse them.

6. The water, the salt, and the oil, consecrated for sacramental unction, are all so prepared, and the blessing upon them and upon other similar objects is, that wherever they are presented, sprinkled, or used, evil spirits may be put to flight, and their malice and wiles be confounded. The solemn application of this feeling in the rite of baptism has been well enforced by Dr. Pusey in his "Tract on Baptism," where he regrets the loss in the Anglican ritual of that portion of the service so calculated to produce strong impressions on the faithful.

7. There is surely a mysterious sublimity in the idea, the effect of which is most striking and almost overpowering in these and other Church offices. The priest or bishop who attentively and devoutly performs them feels himself necessarily as one acting, with power and authority, against a fearful enemy; in

¹ Rite, the manner of performing Church ceremonies and functions.