

looker can have aught before him save a disquieting conglomerate of fragmentary material, which is first to gain its meaning and elucidation from its employment for some vulgar need.—None but a great nation, confiding with tranquil stateliness in its unshakable might, could ripen such a principle within itself, and bring it into application for the happiness of all the world: for it assuredly presupposes a solid ordering of every nearer, every relation that serves life's necessary ends; and it was the duty of the political powers to found that order in this lofty, world-redeeming sense,—that is to say: *Germany's Princes should have been as German, as were its own great masters.* If this foundation fell away, then the German must come to the ground for very reason of his merit: and that's what he has done to-day, where German he has stayed.

But, let us have no care! People knew of a means of rescue. The "Now-time" had arrived. Let us see how things go with the School, in it!—

XII.

About the School, especially in Catholic Germany, the Church and State to-day are striving: manifestly because each has its own end in view. The Church upbraids the State with aiming at nothing in the School but a materialistic, a utilitarian education of the people, and claims it as her duty to see that man's highest spiritual interests, which undeniably are his religious interests, shall not suffer harm from this training for sheer utilitarian ends. Plainly the Church here appears in the most advantageous of lights. Only, the State replies with the proof, or at least the apprehension, that the Church is merely endeavouring through the School to found for herself a political power, an imperium in imperio; that religion is simply her means, whereas her end is Hierarchy, which would give rise to great confusion in the State and finally would burden it with an uneducated populace, unfitted for

the ends of life, unable to help itself, and cast upon the State for a shelter and a sustenance at last impossible.

Indeed it might be hard, wellnigh impossible, to say which is the greater evil menacing a Folk: the ill foreboded by the Church, or that foretokened by the State!

Certain it is, that dating from the reaction, so often mentioned by us, of the German governments against the German spirit, the new tendency of the State itself has strongly influenced the School: an ever greater aversion to 'objectless' æsthetic culture supervened; classical studies were more and more exclusively reserved for philologists by profession; of Philosophy one took possession for objects of the State—and easily enough, for whoso declined to trim his philosophy to suit these ends, simply got appointed to no post* and was hurled into the opposition, where he might see for himself how well he fared between philosophy and the police. In this the State was everywhere backed by the Church, both Protestant and Catholic. The Polytechnic schools arose, those high-schools of industrial Mechanics: to prepare the sons of the Folk for admission to these schools, became more and more the State-subserving object of the better class of lower Folk-schools; the Universities, on the other hand, where not intended to directly qualify for service of the State, became more and more a luxury for the rich, who "didn't need" to learn anything save what they had a fancy for. Classical education proper, i.e. the foundation of all humanising culture upon a knowledge of the Greek and Roman tongues and literature, is already openly decried—by persons, too, who as artists make a claim to culture—and dubbed both useless and easy of replacement: it is looked on as a waste of time, disturbing, and good for nothing but being forgotten. Altogether of this opinion is the Catholic Church of nowadays, though upon different grounds from our artists'. Herein she rather shares the secret reasons of the un-German newer State: all phenomena upon the field of intellectual life which have fallen

* Arthur Schopenhauer.—Tr.

out of favour with them both, they deem the result of those humanistic classical studies. This change originated in their terror of the French Revolution, their amazement at the fire of German revival in the War of Liberation. Down to that time the Jesuit Fathers had rendered the greatest services to classical education, and thus to the cause of spiritual reawakening in Catholic countries, fast decaying beneath the most unspiritual political oppression. Then the Church (as influenced by the Jesuits, at least) and State were really and intrinsically antagonists. How we are to construe their antagonism of to-day, is more difficult to comprehend : after the mournful turning taken by the Church's spiritual life under dread of political revolution, it would rather seem as if the State had stepped into the position toward the Church which the Jesuits ere-while occupied so honourably towards the State. Yet how the State could venture, with a good conscience and any prospect of success, to take into its hands again the intellectual elevation of the Folk-life, after, in common with the Church, it had left, or even led the public intellectual life of the nation itself to a desolation such as our present inquiries have forced upon our knowledge,—that certainly is easier said than thought. With justice might the Church, like ourselves, be amazed at seeing the State now want to drag on Art as substitute for the spiritual fount of life once issuing from Religion : on the other hand, though the State had no valid answer to the scoffs it thus invited, it would surely be no less justified in hesitating to ascribe any such quickening efficacy to the Church, in her present so very mundane form, for only too visibly there likewise clings to her the stain of that theatrical element which we have shewn to be the characteristic mark of all our social and artistic life that faces toward publicity.

Since the School has necessarily brought us into immediate contact with the *Church* and *State*, we hold it our duty to at once give plainer expression to the idea we cherish of the supremely salutary effect of a genuine

German Art-revival even upon these weightiest of all the world's affairs; a course to which we are chiefly prompted by the hope of bringing about at least a glimmer of agreement where it hitherto has seemed to be the farthest off.

It has become an easy thing to-day, to taunt the Church: on the political tribune, in diplomatic intercourse, and by newspaper-authors in the service of them both, she commonly, and according as the particular interest dictates, is treated with not much more respect than an establishment of the *crédit mobilier*. If, then, we undertake to prove to the representatives of ecclesiastical interests that this want of reverence has an actual correlation with the dishonour put on public art in modern days, it is quite obvious that the barest self-regard would oblige us to adopt a more becoming tone. Again, as we do not feel that our thesis calls us in the slightest to touch upon the intrinsic substance of the Church, her religious Dogma, but simply on the outer shape wherein she steps before the burgher's public life and strikes his senses,—and even though that outer shape, whereby she fain would point the layman's phantasy to the depths of her unutterable content, must ineluctably submit itself to the laws of the æsthetically beautiful: yet we are so remote from the almost universal spirit of irreverence, that we ourselves should account it unhandsome to wish to make these laws apply to her exactly, or without reserve. Merely we would rouse the representatives of Churchly interests to meditate on this; and for that purpose we, too, will have recourse to parable, in a certain sense, to wit an illustration from historically patent facts.

It was a beauteous time for the Roman Church, when Michael Angelo adorned the walls of the Sistine Chapel with the sublimest of all works of painting; but what is the import of a time in which these works, upon occasions of great ceremony, are swathed with theatrical draperies and tinsel gewgaws?—It was a beauteous time, when a Pope was determined by Palestrina's lofty music to retain for God's service the adornment of the art of Tone, against whose rank corruption he had meant to take

strong measures by banishing it forever from the Church; what now shall we say of a time in which the latest favourite operatic aria and ballet-tune sound out for the *credo* and *agnus*?—It was a fairer time, when the Spanish *auto* brought the sublimest mysteries of Christian Dogma upon the stage, and set them in dramatic parables before the Folk, than when the capital of the Church's temporal protector sent forth to all the world an opera in which murderers and incendiaries (as in the "Huguenots"), in the most sacred garment of the Church, attune their hideous priestly jargon to the strains of their by all means effect-full trios. Nor has it an import less deserving of reflection by the representatives of Catholic interests, when the recently canonised dogma of the Immaculate Conception called forth full many a frivolous quip in the French and the Italian press, whereas the greatest German poet closed his grandest poem with the beatific invocation of the *Mater gloriosa*, as the loftiest ideal of spotless purity. Might they not be of opinion, that the last Act of Schiller's "Maria Stuart" affords an other, and a more commendable explanation of the purport of the Catholic Church, than Mons. L. Veuillot can ever reach to-day in Paris through his bickerings and his sorry wit?

In his "Wanderjahre" Goethe draws the imaginary picture of an educational establishment according to his own ideas: the father, committing his son to its care, is conducted round the building wisely furnished for instruction in Religion; after the Life of the Saviour down to the Last Supper has been also shewn him, in beautiful paintings on the wall, he asks the overseer in amazement whether the Passion and Death of the Redeemer are kept a secret from the pupils. The Elder answers: "Of this we make no secret; but we draw a veil over those sufferings, even because we reverence them so highly. We hold it a damnable effrontery to expose that instrument of torture, and the Holy One who hangs thereon, to the light of that same sun which hid its face when a flagitious world forced such a sight upon it; to take these

deepest mysteries, in which the godlike depths of Holiness lie hid, and play with them, dandle them, trick them out, and rest not till the most sublime seems vulgar and insipid. I invite you to return when a year has elapsed, to attend our General Festival, and see for yourself how far your son has progressed; then shall you, as well, be inducted to the sanctuary of Sorrow." *—

This lesson well might teach us how the School must finally be governed in its dealings with Religion, if the same tendency which has brought the Church to the degradation suggested in the instances adduced above is to remain the only one in force for her further evolution, and thus if her "*non possumus*" is no longer to express a will, but a sheer incapability.—The words cited from Goethe, however, are not attributable to the Protestant, but to the *German*. And indeed it might not seem amiss, to counsel the representatives of ecclesiastical interests to ponder earnestly what we understand, and with full authority, by this "German": its æsthetic principle, as previously defined, might be imagined in no unhelpful harmony with the highest religious principle of the Church. Perchance the leaders of the Roman Church of old committed the same mistake, in their judgment and treatment of the German spirit, as we have shewn attaching to the German Princes in more recent history: what was quickening for their rescue, may easily have been misprised and rejected by them both, as ruinous alike to every party. But, if the latest incidents in history make it seem more doubtful every-day whether the spirit of the Romanic nations is destined to prove a lasting buttress to the Roman Church, one might recommend the deeper-thinking advocates of Catholic interests to take more keenly and affectionately in view the hopes and endeavours, as sincere as beautiful, which the never-to-be-forgotten King Maximilian II. of Bavaria addressed to a re-uniting of the severed Christian

* With exception of a few minor changes, I have taken the above translation from Carlyle's English version of "*Wilhelm Meister*," Vol. III., chapter xi.—TR.

creeds in Germany,—to take this project more affectionately into their consideration than the policy, said to be more than tolerated by them, of a final partition of Germany into a Catholic and a Protestant half, to be effected by a main-divisor leaving nothing politically over, save Austria and Prussia.

In any case may the immediate object of these hints have been so far attained, that the representatives of Churchly interests, even should they not deem good to second with friendly earnestness our efforts toward ennobling the spirit of public art in Germany, at least will not allow them to be cried down with hostile jests—as, alas! has become so common in the public organs that serve their party.* With this pious wish, and surely no extravagant one, we believe we must for this time turn away from School and Church; not, however, as though we feared our further plan would ever lead us to a region where we should find ourselves compelled to leave out of count, not to say wantonly sacrifice, the highest and weightiest interests of these most saving powers for culture of the human mind and heart.

XIII.

To want to bring the *State* directly into play for Art, as has already occurred to many a well-meaning mind, reposes on an error which takes the faults in organisation of the modern State for its truest and intrinsic essence. The State is the representative of absolute expedience †; it

* For the Ultramontane newspapers of Munich were as hostile to Wagner and his friends, as was the Jewish press; he stood between the two opposing fires.—TR.

† “Zweckmässigkeit”; this word—derived from “Zweck,” an “end, aim, or object”—is not fully covered by “expedience,” but implies the principle upon which a thing is done for some purely temporal or mechanical end, something akin to “utilitarianism”; the latter term, however, being likewise employed by our author—either actually or in the more strictly German form of “Nützlichkeit”—I have found it necessary to observe a distinction between the two.—TR.