

columns. The work was carried a stage further by another scholar, Arias Montano, in the reign of Philip II. Thus we see that in Spain Classical erudition tended to go hand in hand with Biblical criticism. This, of course, occurred also in Northern Europe, but in Spain it was free from heterodox religious tendencies. Scholastic philosophy, which elsewhere failed to stand its ground against the new ideas of the age in Spain took on a new lease of life. The background made possible the work of men like Suarez and Vitoria. While the latter was laying the foundations of international law, the exploits of the "Conquistadores" in the New World was followed by the compilation of the *Laws of the Indies*. In the age of Machiavelli a great codex of laws like this of a high moral tone was indeed something unusual. Not only was the culture of the Spanish Renaissance remarkably free from neo-paganism, but it was destined to play a great part in ousting neo-paganism from Italian ecclesiastical circles. The Emperor Charles V pressed repeatedly for the summoning of the Council of Trent. And at this Council Spanish theologians played the brilliant part. Finally, and this epitomizes all that has just been said about general tendencies, the age produced St Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, and one of the spear-points of the Catholic reaction against Renaissance neo-paganism. The Jesuits are justly famed for the high standard of Classical studies they have always maintained in their schools and colleges. But their Christian approach to the Classics can be traced back to the Spanish Renaissance.

What general conclusion may we draw from the foregoing? Being more deeply religious than the contemporary Italian, the Spaniard was more earnest about life. He did not make life subservient to culture, but in an age of great achievement subordinated culture to the major purposes of life. The Renaissance Spaniard is generally at the same time both a man of letters and a man of action. The poet Garcilaso de la Vega lost his life in the Italian Wars, Ercilla, author of the epic poem "La Araucana" describing the struggles between Spaniards and Chilean Indians actually took part in the battles in the New World he portrays, Cervantes, the author of *Don Quixote* lost a hand at the battle of Lepanto. The list could be continued, but enough has been said to show that in Spain there was no tendency to separate art from life. And so the enthusiasm for the Classical authors of Ancient Rome, when it spread to Spain, was grafted on to the life the Spaniard already knew and lived, a life that had its roots in the Christian tradition of the Middle Ages.

May I suggest that, as members of Malta branch of the Virgil Society, we follow the example of the scholars and artists of the Spanish Renaissance. Murillo, it is said, before painting a picture of a religious subject always devoutly received Holy Communion. What a world of difference there is between this and what we knew, for instance, about the private life of Raphael! The aim of the Virgil Society is not, I take it, to encourage a slavish devotion to, but rather an intelligent appreciation of the great Latin authors of Classical Antiquity. We live in the Christian era, they did not. Let us therefore approach their works with the discerning eye, take from them what they have to give us, and discard what we do not need. As there are lovers of the Classics, so we have with us today enthusiasts for the Middle Ages. They aim at rescuing the thought of this period from the neglect into which it was thrown precisely by the Renaissance. But they do not — if they are intelligent men — accept the Middle Ages en bloc. They accept what is living in its tradition and discard what is dead or surpassed. Our attitude towards the Classics should be the same.

Ne Immemores simus.

In funere Joannis Antonii Vassallo

Dum lacrymans sedeo ad tumulum, Vassalle, cui intus
Exigui cineres, labile corpus inest;
dumque tuum ploro casum, irreparabile fatum,
Tamque cito mortem te rapuisse queror;
ecce meas vox de caelo edita fertur ad aures,
vox quam dulciloquio ingeniosa sonis!
"Flere tuum, Joseph, defunctum desine amicum:
corpus habet tellus, spiritus astra colit.
Namque per alta volat melior pars regna perennis,
et superos inter dulcius ille canit.
Non omnis moritur sapiens: stat fama superstes,
et laude usque recens vividiore micat."
Dixerat. Interea ipse tuo, Vassalle, sepulcro
Grandibus haec lacrymans carmina caedo notis
Quem ex animo semper tu fidus amicus amasti,
virtuti haec offert florida sertae tuae.

JOSEPH ZAMMIT
(BRIGHELLA)