

more homily, and the apologetics move from a mere call for the right to live to a more definitive "defense of the faith" along the line of soundly reasoned ideas.

Most of the classical literature expressions are found in the literature of the church. Dialogue was particularly attractive...it allows one to say what the other fellow will say and then answer it! Orations formed a large part of literary production and the letter increased in prominence. Letters tended to be didactic as well as polemic. The letters of Cyprian will illustrate this. The dialectic essay came into force as a means of expressing doctrine, in particular, and a number of these occur in the writings of Tertullian. What were lacking from the classical literature molds were the forms of drama, epic, and pure fiction. Drama would come on in time as would the others. But the early Christians tended to be suspicious of these literary forms due to their usage in the Graeco-Roman world. In most of the forms one may see a basic difference in the literature of the east and the west. Eastern literature tended more and more to the concepts of mysticism while that of the west emphasized practical applications of the theological inquiries. This is not immediately apparent but is a tendency that will grow and eventually will dominate the literary efforts of the various spheres.

Most of the important works in the literary section will be mentioned in connexion with the leaders of the church who produced them but this overall characterization will help one see how the relaxing of temporal pressures allowed the Christian society to develop a literature that was more intended to teach and explain and less intended to build the morale.

III.2.c. Church Struggles

The Struggles of the Church

By this we mean the sort of problems that originate external to the church and then prey on it or at least make inroads in its labors. We enumerate them as follows:

The Older Paganism: The Graeco-Roman societies were enormously polytheistic although serious worshippers were always in a minority and by this time a small minority. The pantheons of Greece and Rome are all one needs to show the accuracy of this judgment. Consequently the older pagan forms were only an occasional challenge in a serious way. Something of this may be seen in the book of Acts when