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### CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

The Romanesque was the first distinctively Christian style. Before the time of Constantine, whatever churches the Christians had seem to have been Roman private houses converted into churches. Constantine started a new era by building a number of churches on a large scale, and on a plan which was borrowed more or less from the civil basilica. The characteristic of this style (says the *Bombay Examiner*) lay in a long nave with two aisles but no transepts, the intervening walls being supported on Greek or Roman columns. At the sanctuary end was a semi-circular apse round which the clergy sat, the altar being placed in front between them and the people. At the other end were three door in a narthex or vestibule, and in front of the doors outside an open square surrounded by a colonnade. At first the whole style was classical in execution (Greek or Roman columns and entablatures), but later on the Roman round arch was introduced between the columns in place of the flat entablature. This basilica style became the type for all future Christian churches in the West. As the old Roman civilisation declined and its place was taken by the incipient civilisation of the Northern barbarians, churches began to be built in various parts of Italy and northwards, in a style which may be defined as a rude attempt to reproduce what they had seen in Rome. The execution was at first extremely rude, and the imitations in decoration far removed from the original models. But by degrees the art of design developed till a distinctive style arose, which on account of its source of inspiration has come to be called Romanesque.

The open courtyard was discarded, but the other chief features remained—piers or columns, round arches, round-topped windows; the round apse covered with a half dome; the three round-topped doors in the narthex. To this main structure was added a tower, sometimes round, more generally square, placed on one side of the church, and often standing quite apart. The nave was covered by an open timber roof, and the aisles with lean-to roofs at a lower level. Many churches of this early type still stand intact in Istria, Lombardy, and the northern parts of Italy generally, and some of them also survive in Rome itself, though obscured by subsequent alterations and additions. Later on the open timber roof gave way to the barrel or tunnel vault, which is quite general in the Romanesque churches of France and Germany; and the cruciform plan involved the addition of transepts.

The style advanced gradually in refinement of design and complexity of parts—two towers at one end, sometimes two more at the other end, and even a fifth in the middle at the crossing of the transepts. The style reached its highest climax especially in Germany and Normandy, where the best specimens date from the twelfth to the thirteenth century. Finally the invention of the pointed arch and the development of groined vaultings soon led to the erection of a new style called the Gothic, which receded more and more from the old one till it became essentially different in its whole spirit as well as every detail. The general plan of nave and aisles alone remained.

#### Wellington

Miss Agnes M. Segrief, who lately returned from an enjoyable holiday in the northern province (writes our travelling correspondent) earned many flattering tributes from the press of the different towns where she appeared. Referring to her solos at the Liedertafel concert, the *Hawera Star* remarked: 'Miss Segrief, the contralto singer, scored a distinct success. She has a voice of good quality, and is a genuine artist in her use of it. Miss Segrief's enunciation is excellent, and she has the musical temperament, singing all her work with fine artistic expression.' Miss Segrief also had the honor of singing at the reception tendered to the Premier in Rotorua, and on two occasions she contributed solos at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Auckland. Her very many friends in Wellington wish her a full measure of success in her musical career.

#### Parnell

(From an occasional correspondent.)

On the anniversary of the death of Bishop Lenihan a Requiem Mass was celebrated by Rev. Father Patterson. There was a good attendance of parishioners, and some received Holy Communion for the repose of the Bishop, who had been resident priest at Parnell many years ago.

The attention of our readers is called to an advertisement of a book and stationery business for sale in one of the principal centres. Being well stocked with Catholic goods and having a good Catholic connection, it offers a rare chance for a Catholic married couple....

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