

attitude toward art as an aesthetic object. In the church itself Luther's attitude was that the presence or absence of images, pictures, etc. was comparatively unimportant and he vigorously protested against their removal in any disorderly or hasty fashion. Calvin, on the other hand, while also opposing disorderly individual motions against images in churches, felt that the church authorities should make sure that nothing remained in the churches which could divide the attention of the worshipper and hinder him from whole-hearted attention to the Word of God.

I read the quotation from Van Loon with much interest. I had long known that his writing is mostly extremely superficial and that he takes little interest in questions of fact, preferring to give his imagination free play. However, I had never realised that they went quite the length which he did in these two pages. They abound in illogical statements and absurdities. Nine-tenths of what he says is purely based upon his imagination and has no evidence whatever as to its truth or falsity. What could be more illogical than the contrast between the two statements about Luther's relation to the arts? First, he condemns him as a German peasant who had no capacity to understand the beauty of art (as if the question of whether one's parents were farmers or noble men would matter much one way or the other in determining the question of his ability to appreciate art!). On the second page he recognizes Luther as an ardent champion of all the arts that appeal to the ears. After condemning him as gross and incapable of appreciating art, he recognizes that all this is entirely false if one thinks of music rather than of painting and sculpture! I wonder how many great musicians one would find today who are experts on painting or how many great artists have a real appreciation for music. Surely a person who can appreciate either one of these is truly artistic. Yet the capacity of most human beings as far as time and energy are concerned is sufficiently small to keep them from being particularly skilled in more than one field. When we think of the thousands of people in the United States who show no evidence of appreciation for anything particularly good either in the visual arts or in the musical field it becomes quickly evident how absurd it is to heap such calumny on Luther because he did not include in his great works on the religious problems of the day a few pages of enthusiastic admiration of the statues and paintings that he may have seen! There is so much that is absurd in the two pages -- and so much