

A spire

by [Susan McLean](#) in the [July 3, 2019](#) issue

And when we watched the havoc as the blaze
plundered the ark of ages, did we mourn
the stained glass, paintings, statues that would burn,
or grudge the millions we would have to raise
to bring it back, which could have fed the poor?
The corpse of Notre Dame may waste for years,
languishing while the mobs and financiers
dispute if its maimed beauty should endure.

The spire that once stretched, yearning, toward the skies
collapsed in pieces, sapped by rot and char.
But will a host of artisans arise
that, like their forebears, are content to be
tools of a splendor some won't live to see?
We can be better than we mostly are.