

The Foundation of Training

Randall Davies

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SIX CENTURIES OF PAINTING ***

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SIX CENTURIES OF PAINTING



VITTORE PISANO
(CALLED PISANELLO)
ST ANTHONY AND ST GEORGE
National Gallery, London

SIX CENTURIES OF

PAINTING

BY

RANDALL DAVIES



LONDON : T. C. & E. C. JACK

67 LONG ACRE, W.C., and EDINBURGH

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In the possession of John J. Cowan, Esq.

INTRODUCTORY

So far as it concerns pictures painted upon panel or canvas in tempera or oils, the history of painting begins with Cimabue, who worked in Florence during the latter half of the thirteenth century. That the art was practised in much earlier times may readily be admitted, and the life-like portraits in the vestibule at the National Gallery taken from Greek tombs of the second or third century are sufficient proofs of it; but for the origin of painting as we are now generally accustomed to understand the term we need go no further back than to Cimabue and his contemporaries, from whose time the art has uninterruptedly developed throughout Europe until the present day.

Oddly enough it is to the Christian Church, whose early fathers put their heaviest ban upon all forms of art, that this development is almost wholly due. The reaction against paganism began to die out when the Christian religion was more firmly established, and representations of Christ and the Saints executed in mosaic became more and more to be regarded as a necessary, or at any rate a regular embellishment of the numerous churches which were built. For these mosaics panel paintings began in time to be substituted; but it was long before any of the human feeling of art was to be found in them. The influence of S. Francis of Assisi was needed to prepare the way, and it was only towards the close of the thirteenth century that the breath of life began to be infused into these conventional representations, and painting became a living art.

As it had begun in Italy, under the auspices of the Church, so it chiefly developed in that country; at first in Florence and Siena, later in Rome, whither its greatest masters were summoned by the Pope, and in Venice, where, farther from the ecclesiastical influence, it flourished more exuberantly, and so became more capable of being transplanted to other countries. In Germany, however, and the Low Countries it had appeared early enough to be considered almost as an independent growth, though not till considerably later were the northern schools capable of sustaining the reputation given them by the Van Eycks and Roger Van der Weyden.

But for the effects of the Renaissance in Italy in the fifteenth century it is questionable whether painting would ever have spread as it did in the sixteenth and seventeenth to Spain and France. But by the close of the fifteenth century such enormous progress had been made by the Italian painters towards the realisation of human action and emotion in pictures, that from being merely an accessory of religious establishments, painting had become as much

a part of the recognised means of intellectual enjoyment of everyday life as music, sculpture, or even the refinements of food and clothing.

Portraiture, in particular, had gradually advanced to a foremost place in painting. Originally it was used exclusively for memorials of the dead—as we have seen in the case of the paintings from the Greek tombs—and on coins and medals. But gradually the practice arose, as painters became more skilful in representing the appearance of the model, of introducing the features and figures of actual personages into religious pictures, in the character of "donors," and as these increased in importance, the sacred personages were gradually relegated to the background, and ultimately dispensed with altogether. At the beginning of the sixteenth century we find Hans Holbein (as an example) recommended by Erasmus to Sir Thomas More as a portrait painter who wished to try his fortunes in England; and during the rest of his life painting practically nothing but portraits.

By the end of the sixteenth century, if not earlier, painting had become almost as much a business as an art, not only in Italy but in most other countries in Europe, and was established in each country more or less independently. So that making every allowance for the various foreign influences that affected each different country, it is convenient to trace the development of painting in each country separately, and we arrange our chapters accordingly under the titles of Tuscan and Venetian (the two main divisions of Italian painting), Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, German, French, and British Schools. In each country, as might be expected—and especially in Italy—there are subdivisions; but, broadly speaking, the lover of pictures will be quite well enough equipped for the enjoyment of them if he is able to recognise their country, and roughly their period, without troubling about the

particular district or personal influence of their origin.

For while it is undoubtedly true that the more one knows about the history of painting in general the greater will be the appreciation of the various excellences which tend to perfection, it is absolutely ridiculous to suppose that only the learned in such matters are capable of deriving enjoyment from a beautiful picture, or of expressing an opinion upon it. In the first place, the picture is intended for the public, and the public have therefore the best right to say whether it pleases them or not—and why. And it may be noted as a positive fact that whenever the public, in any country, have a free choice in matters of art, that choice generally turns out to be right, and is ultimately endorsed by the best critics. Most of the vulgar art to be found in advertisements and the illustrated papers is put there by ignorant and vulgar providers, who imagine that the whole public are as ignorant and vulgar as themselves; whereas whenever a better standard of taste is given an opportunity, it never fails to find a welcome. Until Sir Henry Wood inaugurated the present régime, the Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden were popularly supposed to represent the national taste in music. Until the Temple Classics and Every Man's Library were published it was commonly supposed that the people at large cared for nothing but Bow Bells, the Penny Novelette, or such unclassical if alluring provender. In the domain of painting, the Royal Academy has such a firm and ancient hold on the popular imagination of the English that its influence is difficult to dispel; but there are many signs that its baneful ascendency is at length on the decline; and it is well known that the National Gallery is attracting more and more visitors and Burlington House less and less as the years go on.

In the following attempt at a general survey of the history of painting—imperfect or ill-proportioned as it may appear

to this or that specialist or lover of any particular school—I have thought it best to assume a fair amount of ignorance of the subject on the part of the reader, though without, I hope, taking any advantage of it, even if it exists; and I have therefore drawn freely upon several old histories and handbooks for both facts and opinions concerning the old masters and their works. In some cases, I think, a dead lion is decidedly better than a live dog.

R. D.

Chelsea, 1914.

TUSCAN SCHOOLS

I

GIOVANNI CIMABUE

By the will of God, in the year 1240, we are told by Vasari, Giovanni Cimabue, of the noble family of that name, was born in the city of Florence, to give the first light to the art of painting. Vasari's "Lives of the Painters" was first published in Florence in 1550, and with all its defects and all its inaccuracies, which have afforded so much food for contention among modern critics, it is still the principal source of our knowledge of the earlier history of painting as it was revived in Italy in the thirteenth century.

Making proper allowance for Vasari's desire to glorify his own city, and to make a dignified commencement to his

work by attributing to Cimabue more than was possibly his due, we need not be deterred by the very latest dicta of the learned from accepting the outlines of his life of Cimabue as an embodiment of the tradition of the time in which he lived—two centuries and a quarter after Cimabue—and, until contradicted by positive evidence, as worthy of general credence. In the popular mind Cimabue still remains "The Father of modern painting," and though his renown may have attracted more pictures and more legends to his name than properly belong to him, it is certain that Dante, his contemporary, wrote of him thus:—

> Credette Cimabue nella pintura
> Tener lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido
> Si che la fama di colui s'oscura.

This is at least as important as anything written by a contemporary of William Shakespeare; and even if we are required to believe that some of his most important works are by another hand, his influence on the history of art is beyond question. Let us then follow Vasari a little further, and we shall find, at any rate, what is typical of the development of genius.

"This youth," Vasari continues, "being considered by his father and others to give proof of an acute judgment and a clear understanding, was sent to Santa Maria Novella to study letters under a relation who was then master in grammar to the novices of that convent. But Cimabue, instead of devoting himself to letters, consumed the whole day in drawing men, horses, houses, and other various fancies on his books and different papers—an occupation to which he felt himself impelled by nature."

This is exactly what is recorded of Reynolds, it may be noted, and very much the same as in the case of Gainsborough, Benjamin West—and many a modern painter.

"This natural inclination was favoured by fortune, for the governors of the city had invited certain Greek (probably Byzantine) painters to Florence, for the purpose of restoring the art of painting, which had not merely degenerated but was altogether lost. These artists, among other works, began to paint the chapel of the Gondi in Santa Maria Novella, and Cimabue, often escaping from the school, and having already made a commencement of the art he was so fond of, would stand watching these masters at their work. His father, and the artists themselves, therefore concluded that he must be well endowed for painting, and thought that much might be expected from him if he devoted himself to it. Giovanni was accordingly, much to his delight, placed with these masters, whom he soon greatly surpassed both in design and colouring. For they, caring little for the progress of art, executed their works not in the excellent manner of the ancient Greeks, but in the rude modern style of their own day. Wherefore, though Cimabue imitated them, he very much improved the art, relieving it greatly from their uncouth manner and doing honour to his country by the name that he acquired and by the works which he performed. Of this we have evidence in Florence from the pictures which he painted there—as for example the front of the altar of Saint Cecilia and a picture of the Virgin, in Santa Croce, which was and still is (*i.e.* in 1550) attached to one of the pilasters on the right of the choir."

Unfortunately the very first example cited pulls us up short alongside the official catalogue of the Uffizi Gallery (where the picture was placed in 1841), in which it is catalogued (No. 20) as "Unknown ... Vasari erroneously attributes it to Cimabue."

Tiresome as it may seem to be thus distracted, at the very outset, by the question of authenticity, it is nevertheless desirable to start with a clear understanding that in

surveying in a general way the history and development of painting, it will be quite hopeless to wait for the final word on the supposed authorship of every picture mentioned. In this instance, as it happens, there is no reason to question the modern catalogue, though that is by no means the same thing as denying that Cimabue painted the picture which existed in the church of S. Cecilia in Vasari's time. Is it more likely, it may be asked, that Vasari, who is accused of unduly glorifying Cimabue, would attribute to him a work not worthy of his fame, or that during the three centuries since Vasari wrote a substitution was effected? The other picture, the *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, which found its way into our National Gallery in 1857, is still officially catalogued as the work of Cimabue, and it is to be hoped that this precious relic, together with the Madonnas in the Louvre, the Florence Academy, and in the lower church at Assisi, may be long spared to us by the authority of the critics as "genuine productions" of the beloved master.

On the general question, however, let me reassure the reader by stating that so far as possible I have avoided the mention of any pictures, in the following pages, about which there is any grave doubt, save in a few cases where tradition is so firmly established that it seems heartless to disturb it until final judgment is entered—of which the following examples of Cimabue's reputed work may be taken as types. The latest criticism seeks to deprive him of every single existing picture he is believed to have painted; those mentioned by Vasari which have perished may be considered equally unauthentic, but, as before mentioned, his account of them gives us as well as anything else the story of the beginnings of the art.

Having afterwards undertaken, Vasari continues, to paint a large picture in the Abbey of the Santa Trinità in Florence for the monks of Vallombrosa, he made great

efforts to justify the high opinion already formed of him and showed greater powers of invention, especially in the attitude of the Virgin, whom he depicted with the child in her arms and numerous angels around her, on a gold ground. This is the picture now in the Accademia in Florence. The frescoes next described are no longer in existence:—

"Cimabue next painted in fresco at the hospital of the Porcellana at the corner of the Via Nuova which leads into the Borgo Ogni Santi. On the front of this building, which has the principal door in the centre, he painted the Virgin receiving the Annunciation from the angel, on one side, and Christ with Cleophas and Luke on the other, all the figures the size of life. In this work he departed more decidedly from the dry and formal manner of his instructors, giving more life and movement to the draperies, vestments and other accessories, and rendering all more flexible and natural than was common to the manner of those Greeks whose work were full of hard lines and sharp angles as well in mosaic as in painting. And this rude unskilful manner the Greeks had acquired not so much from study or settled purpose as from having servilely followed certain fixed rules and habits transmitted through a long series of years by one painter to another, while none ever thought of the amelioration of his design, the embellishment of his colouring, or the improvement of his invention."

After describing Cimabue's activities at Pisa and Assisi with equal circumstance, Vasari passes to the famous *Rucellai Madonna*, now supposed to be by the hand of Duccio of Siena. However doubtful the story may appear in the light of modern criticism, historical or artistic, it certainly forms part of the history of painting—for its spirit if not for its accuracy—and as such it can never be too often quoted:—

"He afterwards painted the picture of the Virgin for the Church of Santa Maria Novella, where it is suspended on high between the chapel of the Rucellai family and that of the Bardi. This picture is of larger size than any figure that had been painted down to those times, and the angels surrounding it make it evident that although Cimabue still retained the Greek manner, he was nevertheless gradually approaching the mode of outline and general method of modern times. Thus it happened that this work was an object of so much admiration to the people of that day—they having never seen anything better—that it was carried in solemn procession, with the sound of trumpets and other festal demonstration, from the house of Cimabue to the Church, he himself being highly rewarded and honoured for it. It is further reported, and may be read in certain records of old painters, that while Cimabue was painting this picture in a garden near the gate of S. Pietro, King Charles the Elder of Anjou passed through Florence, and the authorities of the city, among other marks of respect, conducted him to see the picture of Cimabue. When this work was thus shown to the King, it had not before been seen by anyone; wherefore all the men and women of Florence hastened in great crowds to admire it, making all possible demonstration of delight."

Now whether or not Vasari was right in crediting Cimabue with these honours in Florence instead of Duccio in Siena, makes little difference in the story of the origin and early development of the art of painting. One may doubt the accuracy of the mosaic account of the Creation, the authorship of the Fourth Gospel or the Shakespearean poems, or the list of names of the Normans who are recorded to have fought with William the Conqueror. But what if one may? The Creation, the poems and plays of Shakespeare and the battle of Hastings are all of them historic facts, and neither science, nor literature, nor history is a penny the worse for the loose though perfectly

understandable conditions under which these facts have been handed down to us. When we come down to times nearer to our own the accuracy of data is more easily ascertainable, though the confusion arising out of them often obscures their real significance; but in looking for origins we are content to ignore the details, provided we can find enough general information on which to form an idea of them. To these first chapters of Vasari, then, we need not hesitate to resort for the main sources of the earlier history of painting. Even so far as we have gone we have learnt several important facts as to the nature of the foundations on which the glorious structure was to be raised.

First of all, it is apparent that the practice of painting, though strictly forbidden by the earliest Fathers of the Church, was used by the faithful in the Eastern churches for purposes of decoration, and was introduced into Italy—we may safely say Tuscany—for the same purpose.

Second, that being transplanted into this new soil, it put forth such wonderful blossoms that it came to be cultivated with much more regard; and from being merely a necessary or conventional ornament of certain portions of the church, was soon accounted its greatest glory.

Third, that it was accorded popular acclamation.

Fourth, that its most attractive feature in the eyes of beholders was its life-like representation of the human form and other natural objects.

Prosaic as these considerations may appear, they are nevertheless the fundamental principles that underlie the whole of the subsequent development of painting; and unless every picture in the world were destroyed, and the art of painting wholly lost for at least a thousand years, there could not be another picture produced which would

not refer back through continuous tradition to one or every one of them. First, the basis of religion. Second, the development peculiar to the soil. Third, the imitation of nature. Fourth, the approbation of the public—there we have the four cardinal points in the chart of painting.

It would be easy enough to contend that painting had nothing whatever to do with religion—if only by reference to the godless efforts of some of the modernists; but such a contention could only be based on the imperfect recognition of what religion actually means. In Italy in the thirteenth century, as in Spain in the seventeenth, it meant the Church of Rome. In Germany of the sixteenth, as in England in the eighteenth, it meant something totally different. To put it a little differently, all painting that is worth so calling has been done to the glory of God; and after making due allowance for human frailties of every variety, it is hard to say that among all the hundreds of great and good painters there has ever been one who was not a good man.

As for the influence of environment, or nationality, this is so universally recognised that the term "school" more often means locality than tuition. We talk generally of the French, English, or Dutch schools, and more particularly of the Paduan, Venetian, or Florentine. It is only when we hesitate to call our national treasure a Botticelli or a Bellini that we add the words "school of" to the name of the master who is fondly supposed to have inspired its author. The difference between a wood block of the early eighteenth century executed in England and Japan respectively may be cited as an extreme instance of the effect of locality on idea, when the method is identical.

With reference to the imitation of nature, at the mere mention of which modernists become so furious, it is worth recalling that the earliest story about painting relates

to Zeuxis, who is said to have painted a bunch of grapes with such skill that the birds ignored the fruit and pecked at the picture. In later times we hear of Rembrandt being the butt of his pupils, who, knowing his love of money, used to paint coins on the floor; and there are plenty of stories of people painting flies and other objects so naturally as to deceive the unwary spectator. Vasari is continually praising his compatriots for painting "like the life."

Lastly, the approbation, or if possible the acclamation, of the public has seldom if ever been unconsidered by the artist. Where it has, it has only been the greatest genius that has been able to exist without it. A man who has anything to say must have somebody to say it to; and though a painter may seem to be wasting the best part of his life in trying to make the people understand what he has to say in his language instead of talking to them in their own common tongue, it is rarely that he fails in the end, even if, alas for him, the understanding comes too late to be of any benefit to himself.

Cimabue's last work is said to be a figure, which was left unfinished, of S. John, in mosaic, for the Duomo at Pisa. This was in 1302, which is supposed to be the date of his death, though Vasari puts it two years earlier, at the time he was engaged with the architect Arnolfo Lapi in superintending the building of the Duomo in Florence, where he is buried.

II

GIOTTO DI BONDONE

While according all due honour, and probably more, to

Cimabue as the originator of modern painting, it is to his pupil, Giotto, that we are accustomed to look for the first developments of its possibilities. Had Cimabue's successors been as conservative as his instructors, we might still be not very much better off than if he had never lived. For much as there is to admire in Cimabue's painting, it is only the first flush of the dawn which it heralded, and though containing the germ of the future development of the art, is yet without any of the glory which in the fulness of time was to result from it.

To Giotto, Vasari considers, "is due the gratitude which the masters in painting owe to Nature, seeing that he alone succeeded in resuscitating art and restoring her to a path that may be called the true one; and that the art of design, of which his contemporaries had little if any knowledge, was by his means effectually recalled to life." This seems to detract in some degree from his eulogies of Cimabue; but it is to the last sentence that our attention should be directed, which implies that in profiting by the master's example he succeeded in extending the possibilities of the new art beyond its first limits. Cimabue, we may believe, drew his Virgins and Saints from living models, whereas his predecessors had merely repeated formulas laid down for them by long tradition. Giotto went further, and extended his scope to the world at large. For the plain gold background he substituted the landscape, thus breaking down, as it were, a great wall, and seeing beyond it. Nor was this innovation merely a technical one—it was the man's nature that effected it and made his art a living thing.

Giotto, who was born in 1276, was the son of a simple husbandman, who lived at Vespignano, about fourteen miles from Florence. Cimabue chanced upon the boy when he was only about ten years old, tending his father's sheep, and was astonished to find that he was occupied in making a drawing of one of them upon a smooth piece of rock with

a sharp stone. He was so pleased with this that he asked to be allowed to take him back to Florence, and the boy proved so apt a pupil that before very long he was regularly employed in painting.

His influence was not confined to Florence, or even to Tuscany, but the whole of Italy was indebted to him for a new impulse in art, and he is said to have followed Pope Clement V. to Avignon and executed many pictures there. Giotto was not only a painter, but his name is also famous in the history of architecture: the wonderful Campanile adjoining the Duomo in Florence was designed by him, and the foundations laid and the building erected under his instructions. On sculpture too he exercised a considerable influence, as may be seen in the panels and statues which adorn the lower part of the tower, suggested if not actually designed by Giotto, and carved by Andrea Pisano.

Chief of the earlier works of Giotto are his frescoes in the under church at Assisi, and in these may be seen the remarkable fertility of invention with which he endowed his successors. Instead of the conventional Madonna and Child, and groups of saints and angels, we have here whole legends represented in a series of pictures of almost dramatic character. In the four triangular compartments of the groined vaulting are the three vows of the Franciscan Order, namely, Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, and in the fourth the glorification of the saint. In the first, the Vow of Poverty, it is significant to find that he has taken his subject from Dante. Poverty appears as a woman whom Christ gives in marriage to S. Francis: she stands among thorns; in the foreground are two youths mocking her, and on either side a group of angels as witnesses of the holy union. On the left is a youth, attended by an angel, giving his cloak to a poor man; on the right are the rich and great, who are invited by an angel to approach, but turn scornfully away. The other designs appear to be Giotto's

own invention. Chastity, as a young woman, sits in a fortress surrounded by walls, and angels pay her devotion. On one side are laymen and churchmen led forward by S. Francis, and on the other Penance, habited as a hermit, driving away earthly love and impurity. S. Francis in glory is more conventional, as might be expected from the nature of the subject.

In the ancient Basilica of S. Peter in Rome Giotto made the celebrated mosaic of the *Navicella*, which is now in the vestibule of S. Peter's. It represents a ship, in which are the disciples, on a stormy sea. According to the early Christian symbolisation the ship denoted the Church. In the foreground on the right the Saviour, walking on the waves, rescues Peter. Opposite sits a fisherman in tranquil expectation, typifying the confident hope of the simple believer. This mosaic has frequently been moved, and has undergone so much restoration that only the composition can be attributed to Giotto.

Of the paintings of scriptural history attributed to Giotto very few remain, and the greater part of those have in recent times been pronounced to be the work of his followers. Foremost, however, among the undoubted examples are paintings in the Chapel of the Madonna dell'Arena at Padua, which was erected in 1303. In thirty-eight pictures, extending in three rows along the wall, is contained the life of the Virgin. The ground of the vaulting is blue studded with gold stars, among which appear the heads of Christ and the prophets, while above the arch of the choir is the Saviour in a glory of angels. Combined with these sacred scenes and personages are introduced fitting allusions to the moral state of man, the lower part of the side walls containing, in medallions painted in monochrome, allegorical figures of the virtues and vices—the former feminine and ideal, the latter masculine and individual—while the entrance wall is covered with the

wonderful *Last Judgment*.

Here, as in his allegorical pieces, Giotto appears as a great innovator, a number of situations suggested by the Scriptures being now either represented for the first time or seen in a totally new form. Well-known subjects are enriched with numerous subordinate figures, making the picture more truthful and more intelligible; as in the Flight into Egypt, where the Holy Family is accompanied by a servant, and three other figures are introduced to complete the composition. In the Raising of Lazarus, too, the disciples behind the Saviour on the one side and the astonished multitude on the other form two choruses, an arrangement which is followed, but with considerable modification, in Ouwater's unique picture of the same subject now in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum at Berlin. This approach to dramatic reality sometimes assumes a character which, as Kugler puts it, oversteps the strict limits of the higher ecclesiastical style. It is worth noting, however, that the early Netherlandish school—as we shall see in a later chapter—developed this characteristic to a far greater extent, continuing the tradition handed down, quite independently of Giotto, through illuminated manuscripts, and with less of that expression of the highest religious or moral feeling which is so evident in Giotto.

The few existing altar-pieces of Giotto are less important than his frescoes, inasmuch as they do not admit of the exhibition of his higher and most original gifts. Two signed examples are a *Coronation of the Virgin* in Santa Croce at Florence, and a *Madonna*, with saints and angels on the side panels, originally in S. Maria degli Angeli at Bologna, and now in the Brera at Milan. The latter, however, is not now recognised as his. The earliest authentic example is the so-called Stefaneschi altar-piece, painted in 1298 for the same patron who commissioned the *Navicella*. Giotto's highest merit consists especially in the

number of new subjects which he introduced, in the life-like and spiritual expression with which he heightened all familiar occurrences and scenes, and in the choice of the moment of representation. In all these no earlier Christian painter can be compared with him. Another and scarcely less important quality he possessed is in the power of conveying truth of character. The faces introduced into some of his compositions bear an inward guarantee of their lively resemblance to some living model, and this characteristic seems to have been eagerly seized upon by his immediate followers for emulation, as is noticeable in two of the principal works—in the Bargello at Florence, and in the church of the Incoronata at Naples—formerly attributed to him but now relegated to his pupils. The portrait of Dante in a fresco on the wall of the Bargello shows a deep and penetrating mind, and in the *Sacraments* at Naples we find heads copied from life with obvious fidelity and such a natural conception of particular scenes as brings them to the mind of the spectator with extraordinary distinctness.

Of Giotto's numerous followers in the fourteenth century it is impossible in the present work to give any particular account, but of his influence at large on the practice as on the treatment and conception of painting at this stage of its development, one or two examples may be cited as typical of the progress he urged, such as the frescoes in the Campo Santo at Pisa. This wonderful cloister, which measures four hundred feet in length and over a hundred in width—traditionally the dimensions of Noah's ark—was founded by the Archbishop Ubaldo, before 1200, on his return from Palestine bringing fifty-three ships laden with earth from the Holy Land. On this soil it was erected, and surrounded by high walls in 1278. The whole of these walls were afterwards adorned with paintings, in two tiers.

So far as concerns the history of painting, the question of

the authorship of these frescoes—which are by several distinct hands—is altogether subordinate to that of the subjects depicted and the manner in which they are treated, and we shall learn more from a general survey of them than by following out the fortunes of particular painters. The earliest are those on the east side, near the chapel, but more important are those on the north, of about the middle of the fourteenth century, which show a decided advance, both in feeling and execution, beyond Giotto. The first is *The Triumph of Death*, in which the supernatural is tempered with representations of what is mortal to an extent that already shows that painting was not to be confined to religious uses alone. All the pleasures and sorrows of life are here represented, on the earth; it is only in the sky that we see the demons and angels. On one side is a festive company of ladies and cavaliers, with hawks and dogs, seated under orange trees, with rich carpets at their feet, all splendidly dressed. A troubadour and a singing girl amuse them with songs, *amorini* flutter around them and wave their torches. On the other side is another group, also a hunting party, on splendidly caparisoned horses, and accompanied by a train of attendants. On the mountains in the background are several hermits, who in contrast to the votaries of pleasure have attained in a life of contemplation and abstinence the highest term of human existence. Many of the figures are traditionally supposed to be portraits.

The centre foreground is devoted to the less fortunate on earth, the beggars and cripples, and also corpses of the mighty; and with these we may turn to the allegorical treatment of the subject. To the first group descends the angel of death, swinging a scythe, and to her the unfortunate are stretching out their arms in supplication for an end to their sorrows. The second group, it will be seen, are tracing a path which leads to three open coffins in which lie the bodies of three princes in different stages of

decay, while a monk on crutches—intended for S. Macarius—is pointing to them. The air is filled with angels and demons, some of whom receive the souls of the dead.

A second picture is *The Last Judgment*, and a third *Hell*, the resemblance between which and the great altar-piece in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella at Florence, painted by Andrea Orcagna in 1357, was formerly considered proof of the same authorship. They are now attributed to an unknown disciple of Pietro Lorenzetti, who was painting in Siena between 1306 and 1348, and is assumed to have been a pupil of Duccio.

The fourth picture, apparently by another hand—possibly that of Lorenzetti himself—is *The Life of the Hermits* in the wilderness of Thebais, composed of a number of single groups in which the calm life of contemplation is represented in the most varied manner. In front flows the Nile, and a number of hermits are seen on its banks still subjected to earthly occupations; they catch fish, hew wood, carry burdens to the city, etc. Higher up, in the mountains, they are more estranged from the world, but the Tempter follows them in various disguises, sometimes frightful, sometimes seducing. As a whole this composition is constructed in the ancient manner—as in Byzantine art—several series rising one above the other, each of equal size, and without any pretension to perspective: the single groups, at the same time, are executed with much grace and feeling.

Next to this are six pictures of the history of S. Ranieri, and as many of the lives of S. Efeso and S. Potito. The latter are known to have been painted in 1392 by Spinello of Arezzo, or Spinello Aretino as he is called, of whose work we have some fragments in the National Gallery—alas too few! Two of these fragments are from his large fresco *The Fall of the Rebellious Angels*, painted for the

church of S. Maria degli Angeli at Arezzo, which after being whitewashed over were rescued on the conversion of the church to secular uses. Vasari relates that when Spinello had finished this work the devil appeared to him in the night as horrible and deformed as in the picture, and asked him where he had seen him in so frightful a form, and why he had treated him so ignominiously. Spinello awoke from his dream with horror, fell into a state of abstraction, and soon afterwards died.

On the third part of the south wall is represented the history of Job, in a series of paintings which were formerly attributed to Giotto himself, though it is now recognised that they cannot be of an earlier date than about 1370.

The *Temptation of Job* is by Taddeo Gaddi, and the others, painted in 1372, are probably by Francesco da Volterra—not to be confused with the sixteenth century painter Daniele da Volterra.

The paintings on the west wall are of inferior workmanship, while those on the north were the crowning achievement of Benozzo Gozzoli a century later.

III

THE EARLIER QUATTROCENTISTS

Coming to the second period in the development of the new art—roughly, that is to say, from 1400 to 1450—Vasari observes that even where there is no great facility displayed, yet the works evince great care and thought; the manner is more free and graceful, the colouring more varied and pleasing; more figures are employed in the compositions, and the drawing is more correct inasmuch as it is closer to nature. It was Masaccio, he says, who during

this period superseded the manner of Giotto in regard to the painting of flesh, draperies, buildings, etc., and also restored the practice of foreshortening and brought to light that modern manner which has been followed by all artists. More natural attitudes, and more effectual expression of feeling in the gestures and movements of the body resulted, as art seeking to approach the truth of nature by more correct drawing and to exhibit so close a resemblance to the face of the living person that each figure might at once be recognised. *Thus these masters constantly endeavoured to reproduce what they beheld in nature and no more; their works became consequently more carefully considered and better understood.* This gave them courage to lay down rules for perspective and to carry the foreshortenings precisely to the point which gives an exact imitation of the relief apparent in nature and the real form. Minute attention to the effects of light and shade and to various technical difficulties ensued, and efforts were made towards a better order of composition. Landscapes also were attempted; tracts of country, trees, shrubs, flowers, clouds, the air, and other natural objects were depicted with some resemblance to the realities represented; insomuch that the art might be said not only to have become ennobled, but to have attained to that flower of youth from which the fruit afterwards to follow might reasonably be looked for.

Foremost among the painters of this period was Fra Angelico, or to give him his proper title, Frate Giovanni da Fiesole, who was born in 1387 not far from Florence, and died in 1455. When he was twenty years old he joined the order of the preaching friars, and all his painting is devoted to religious subjects. He was a man of the utmost simplicity, and most holy in every act of his life. He disregarded all worldly advantages. Kindly to all, and temperate in all his habits, he used to say that he who practised the art of painting had need of quiet, and should

live without cares and anxious thoughts; adding that he who would do the work of Christ should perpetually remain with Christ. He was most humble and modest, and in his painting he gave evidence of piety and devotion as well as of ability, and the saints that he painted have more of the air of sanctity than have those of any other master.

It was the custom of Fra Angelico to abstain from retouching or improving any painting once finished. He altered nothing, but left all as it was done the first time, believing, as he said, that such was the will of God. It is also affirmed that he would never take his brushes in hand until he had first offered a prayer, and he is said never to have painted a crucifix without tears streaming from his eyes, and in the countenance and attitude of his figures it is easy to perceive proof of his sincerity, his goodness, and the depth of his devotion to the religion of Christ.

This is well seen in the picture of the *Coronation of the Virgin*, which is now in the Louvre (No. 1290). "Superior to all his other works," Vasari says of this masterpiece, "and one in which he surpassed himself, is a picture in the Church of San Domenico at Fiesole; in this work he proves the high quality of his powers as well as the profound intelligence he possessed of the art he practised. The subject is the Coronation of the Virgin by Jesus Christ; the principal figures are surrounded by a choir of angels, among whom are a vast number of saints and holy personages, male and female. These figures are so numerous, so well executed in attitudes, so various, and with expressions of the head so richly diversified, that one feels infinite pleasure and delight in regarding them. Nay, one is convinced that those blessed spirits can look no otherwise in heaven itself, or, to speak under correction, could not if they had forms appear otherwise; for all the saints male and female assembled here have not only life and expression most delicately and truly rendered, but the

colouring also of the whole work would seem to have been given by the hand of a saint or of an angel like themselves. It is not without sufficient reason therefore that this excellent ecclesiastic is always called Frate Giovanni Angelico. The stories from the life of Our Lady and of San Domenico which adorn the predella, moreover, are in the same divine manner; and I for myself can affirm with truth that I never see this work but it appears something new, nor can I ever satisfy myself with the sight of it or have enough of beholding it."

No less beautiful are the five compartments of the predella to the altar-piece still in San Domenico at Fiesole —which were purchased for the National Gallery in 1860 at the then alarming price of £3500—with no less than two hundred and sixty little figures of saintly personages, "so beautiful," as Vasari says, "that they appear to be truly beings of Paradise."

FRA FILIPPO LIPPI, born in Florence about 1406, and dying there in 1469, was the exact antithesis of Fra Angelico, both in his private life and in the method of his painting. He was just as earthly in both respects as Fra Angelico was heavenly. As a child he was put with the Carmelites, and as he showed an inclination for drawing rather than for study, he was allowed every facility for studying the newly painted chapel of the Branacci, and followed the manner of Masaccio so closely that it was said that the spirit of that master had entered into his body. It is only fair to Masaccio to add that this means his artistic spirit, for Filippo's moral character was by no means exemplary. The story of one of his best-known works, *The Nativity*, which is now in the Louvre (No. 1343), is thus related by Vasari:—"Having received a commission from the nuns of Santa Margherita, at Prato, to paint a picture for the high altar of their church, he chanced one day to see the daughter of Francesco Buti, a citizen of Florence, who

had been sent to the convent as a novice. Filippo, after a glance at Lucrezia—for that was her name—was so taken with her beauty that he prevailed upon the nuns to allow him to paint her as the Virgin. This resulted in his falling so violently in love with her that he induced her to run away with him. Resisting every effort of her father and of the nuns to make her leave Filippo, she remained with him, and bore him a son who lived to be almost as famous a painter as his father. He was called Filippino Lippi."

The picture of S. John and six saints in the National Gallery (No. 677) also recalls the story of his wildness, inasmuch as it came from the Palazzo Medici, where Filippo worked for the great Cosimo di Medici. It was well known that Filippo paid no attention to his work when he was engaged in the pursuit of his pleasures, and so Cosimo shut him up in the palace so that he might not waste his time in running about while working for him. But Filippo after a couple of days' confinement made a rope out of his bed clothes, and let himself down from the window, and for several days gave himself up to his own amusements. When Cosimo found that he had disappeared, he had search made for him, and at last Filippo returned; after which Cosimo was afraid to shut him up again in view of the risk he had run in descending from the window.

Vasari considers that Filippo excelled in his smaller pictures—"In these he surpassed himself, imparting to them a grace and beauty than which nothing finer could be imagined. Examples of this may be seen in the predellas of all the works painted by him. He was indeed an



PLATE I.—FILIPPO LI
THE ANNUNCIATIO
National Gallery, Lond

artist of such power that in his own time he was surpassed by none; therefore it is that he has not only been always praised by Michelangelo, but in many particulars has been imitated by him."

As a contributor to the progress of the art of painting he is credited by Vasari with two innovations, which may be seen in his paintings in the church of San Domenico at Prato, namely (1) the figures being larger than life, and thereby forming an example to later artists for giving true grandeur to large figures; and (2) certain figures clothed in vestments but little used at that time, whereby the minds of other artists were awakened and began to depart from that sameness which should rather be called obsolete monotony than antique simplicity.

It is noticeable that despite his bad character—which is said to have been the cause of his death by poison—all his work was in religious subjects. He was painting the chapel in the Church of Our Lady at Spoleto when, in 1469, he

died.

Paolo Uccello, as he was called, was born at Florence in 1397, and died there in 1475. His real name was Paolo di Dono, but he was so fond of painting animals and birds—especially the latter—that he officially signed himself as Paolo Uccello. He devoted so much of his time, however, to the study of perspective, that both his life and his work suffered thereby. His wife used to relate that he would stand the whole night through beside his writing table, and when she entreated him to come to bed, would only say, "Oh, what a delightful thing is this perspective!" Donatello, the sculptor, is said to have told him that in his ceaseless study of perspective he was leaving the substance for the shadow; but Donatello was not a painter.

Before his time the painters had not studied the question of perspective scientifically. Giotto had made no attempt at it, and Masaccio only came nearer to realising it by chance. Brunelleschi, the architect, laid down its first principles, but it was Uccello who first put these principles into practice in painting, and thereby paved the way for his successors to walk firmly upon.

How he struggled with the difficulties of this vitally important subject may be seen in the large battle-piece at the National Gallery, and however crude and absurd this fine composition may seem at first sight to those who are only accustomed to looking at modern pictures, it must be remembered that Uccello is here struggling, as it were, with a savage monster which to succeeding painters has, through his efforts, been a submissive slave.

This picture is one of four panels executed for the Bartolini family. One of the others is in the Louvre, and a third in the Uffizi. Another—or indeed almost the only other—work of Uccello which is now to be seen is the colossal painting in monochrome (*terra-verde*) on the wall

of the cathedral at Florence. Strangely enough, this equestrian portrait commemorates an Englishman, Sir John Hawkwood, whose name is Italianized in the inscription into Giovanni Acuto. He was born at Sible Hedingham in Essex, the son of a tanner, and adventuring under Edward III. into France, found his way to Florence, where he served the State so well that they interred him, on his death in 1393, at the public expense, and subsequently commissioned Uccello to execute his monument.

With all his devotion to science, the artist has committed the strange mistake of making the horse stand on two legs on the same side, the other two being lifted.

To Masaccio, born in or about 1400, and dying in 1443, we owe a great step in art towards realism. It was he, says Vasari, who first attained the clear perception that *painting is only the close imitation, by drawing and colouring simply, of all the forms presented by nature showing them as they are produced by her, and that whoever shall most perfectly effect this may be said to have most nearly approached the summit of excellence*. The conviction of this truth, he adds, was the cause of Masaccio's attaining so much knowledge by means of perpetual study that he may be accounted among the first by whom art was in a measure delivered from rudeness and hardness; it was he who led the way to the realisation of beautiful attitudes and movements which were never exhibited by any painter before his day, while he also imparted a life and force to his figures, with a certain roundness and relief which render them truly characteristic and natural. Possessing great correctness of judgment, Masaccio perceived that all figures not sufficiently foreshortened to appear standing firmly on the plane whereon they are placed, but reared up on the points of their feet, must needs be deprived of all grace and excellence in the most important essentials. It is true that Uccello, in his studies of perspective, had helped

to lessen this difficulty, but Masaccio managed his foreshortenings with much greater skill (though doubtless with less science) and succeeded better than any artist before him. Moreover, he imparted extreme softness and harmony to his paintings, and was careful to have the carnations of the heads and other nude parts in accordance with the colours of the draperies, which he represented with few and simple folds as they are seen in real life.

Masaccio's principal remaining works are his frescoes in the famous Branacci Chapel at the Carmine convent in Florence. The work of decorating the chapel was begun by Masolino, but finished by Masaccio and Filippo Lippi. Vasari states it as a fact that all the most celebrated sculptors and painters had become excellent and illustrious by studying Masaccio's work in this chapel, and there is good reason to believe that Michelangelo and Raphael profited by their studies there, without mentioning all the names enumerated by Vasari. Seeing how important the influence of Masaccio was destined to become, I have ventured to italicise Vasari's opinions on the causes which operated in creating the Florentine style and in raising the art of painting to heights undreamt of by its earliest pioneers.

IV

THE LATER QUATTROCENTISTS

Three names stand out conspicuously from the ranks of Florentine painters in the latter half of the fifteenth century. But progress being one of the essential characteristics of the art at this period, as in all others, it is not surprising that the order of their fame coincides (inversely) pretty nearly with that of their date. First, Antonio Pollaiuolo;

second, Sandro Botticelli; and lastly, Leonardo da Vinci.

It is important to note that Pollaiuolo was first apprenticed to a goldsmith, and attained such proficiency in that craft that he was employed by Lorenzo Ghiberti in the carving of the gates of the Baptistry, and subsequently set up a workshop for himself. In competition with Finiguerra he "executed various stories," says Vasari, "wherein he fully equalled his competitor in careful execution, while he surpassed him in beauty of design. The guild of merchants, being convinced



PLATE II.—SANDRO BOTTICELLI (?)
THE VIRGIN AND CHILD
National Gallery, London

of his ability, resolved to employ him to execute certain stories in silver for the altar of San Giovanni, and he performed them so excellently that they were

acknowledged to be the best of all those previously executed by various masters.... In other churches also in Florence and Rome, and other parts of Italy, his miraculous enamels are to be seen."

Now whether or not Antonio, like others, continued to exercise this craft, the account given by Vasari, as follows, of his learning to paint is extremely significant as showing how painting was regarded in relation to the kindred arts so widely practised in Florence:—"Eventually, considering that this craft did not secure a long life to the work of its masters, Antonio, desiring for his labours a more enduring memory, resolved to devote himself to it no longer; and his brother Piero being a painter, he joined himself to him for the purpose of learning the modes of proceeding in painting. He then found this to be an art so different from that of the goldsmith that he wished he had never addressed himself to it. But being impelled by shame rather than any advantage to be obtained, he acquired a knowledge of the processes used in painting in the course of a few months, and became an excellent master."

As early as 1460 he had painted the three large canvases of *Hercules* for Lorenzo de'Medici, now no longer existing, but probably reflected in the two small panels of the same subject in the Uffizi. These alone are enough to mark him as one of the greatest artists of his time. The magnificent *David*, at Berlin, soon followed, and the little *Daphne and Apollo* in our National Gallery. These were all accomplished unaided, but a little later he worked in concert with his brother Piero, to whom we are told to attribute parts of the painting of the large *S. Sebastian* in the National Gallery, painted in 1475 for Antonio Pucci, from whose descendant it was purchased. "For the chapel of the Pucci in the church of San Sebastian," says Vasari, "Antonio painted the altar-piece—a remarkable and wonderfully executed work with numerous horses, many

nude figures, and singularly beautiful foreshortenings. Also the portrait of S. Sebastian taken from life, that is to say, from Gino di Ludovico Capponi. This picture has been more extolled than any by Antonio. He has evidently copied nature to the utmost of his power, as we see more especially in one of the archers, who, bending towards the ground, and resting his bow against his breast, is employing all his force to prepare it for action; the veins are swelling, the muscles strained, and the man holds his breath as he applies all his strength to the effort. All the other figures in the diversity of their attitudes clearly prove the artist's ability and the labour he has bestowed on the work."

It is in his superb rendering of the figure, especially in the nude, that Antonio Pollaiuolo marks a decisive step in the progress of painting, and is entitled to be regarded as "the first modern artist to master expression of the human form, its spirit, and its action." But for him we should miss much of the strength and vigour that distinguishes the real from the false Botticelli.

"In the same time with the illustrious Lorenzo de Medici, the elder," Vasari writes, "which was truly an age of gold for men of talent, there flourished a certain Alessandro, called after our custom Sandro, and further named di Botticello, for a reason which we shall presently see. His father, Mariano Filipepi, a Florentine citizen, brought him up with care; but although the boy readily acquired whatever he had a mind to learn,

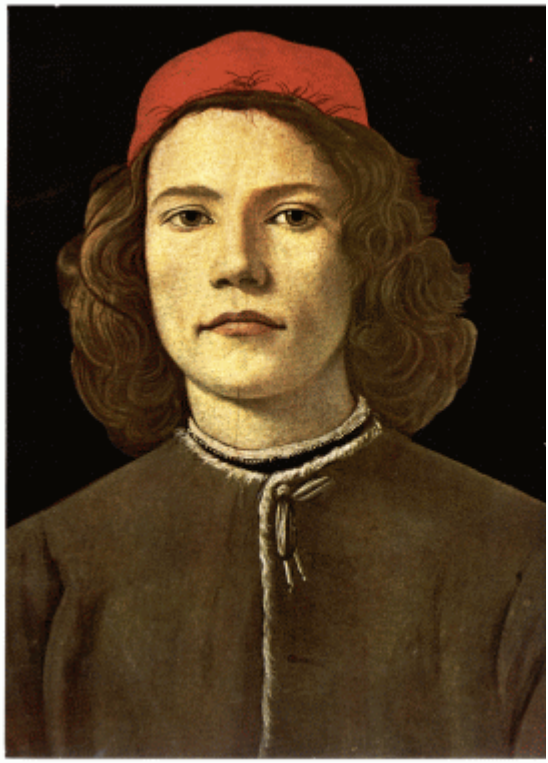


PLATE III.—SANDRO BOTTICELLI
PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN
National Gallery, London

yet he was always discontented, nor would he take any pleasure in reading, writing, or accounts; so that his father turned him over in despair to a friend of his called Botticello, who was a goldsmith.

"There was at that time a close connection and almost constant intercourse between the goldsmiths and the painters, wherefore Sandro, who had remarkable talent and was strongly disposed to the arts of design, became enamoured of painting and resolved to devote himself

entirely to that vocation. He acknowledged his purpose forthwith to his father, who accordingly took him to Fra Filippo. Devoting himself entirely to the vocation he had chosen, Sandro so closely followed the directions and imitated the manner of his master, that Filippo conceived a great love for him, and instructed him so effectually that Sandro rapidly attained a degree in art that none could have predicted for him."

The influence of the Giottesque tradition which was thus handed on to the youthful Botticelli by Filippo Lippi is traceable in the beautiful little *Adoration of the Magi*—the oblong, not the *tondo*—in the National Gallery (No. 592). This was formerly attributed to Filippino Lippi, but is now universally recognised as one of Sandro's very earliest productions, when still under the immediate influence of Filippo, and prior to the *Fortitude*, painted before 1470, which is now in the Uffizi, and is the first picture mentioned by Vasari, thus—"While still a youth he painted the figure of Fortitude among those pictures of the virtues which Antonio and Pietro Pollaiuolo were executing in the Mercatanzia or Tribunal of Commerce in Florence. In Santo Spirito (Vasari continues, naming a picture which is probably *The Virgin Enthroned*, now at Berlin (No. 106)), he painted a picture for the Bardi family; this work he executed with great diligence, and finished it very successfully, depicting the olive and palm trees with extraordinary care."

The influence of Pollaiuolo is more evident in his two next productions, the two small panels of *Holofernes* and the *Portrait of a Man with a Medal*, in the Uffizi, and again in the *S. Sebastian* now at Berlin, which was painted in 1473.

About 1476 the second *Adoration of the Magi* in the National Gallery was painted, and a year or two later the

famous and more splendid picture of the same subject which is in the Uffizi. With this he established his reputation, showing himself unmistakably as an artist of profound feeling and noble character besides being a skilful painter. It was commissioned for the church of Santa Maria Novella. "In the face of the oldest of the kings," says Vasari, "there is the most lively expression of tenderness as he kisses the foot of the Saviour, and of satisfaction at the attainment of the purpose for which he had undertaken his long journey. This figure is the portrait of Cosimo de'Medici, the most faithful and animated likeness of all now known of him. The second of the kings is the portrait of Giuliano de' Medici, father of Pope Clement VII., and he is presenting his gift with an expression of the most devout sincerity. The third, who is likewise kneeling, seems to be offering thanksgiving as well as adoration; this is the likeness of Giovanni, the son of Cosimo.

"The beauty which Sandro has imparted to these heads cannot be adequately described; all the figures are in different attitudes, some seen full face, others in profile, some almost entirely turned away, others bent down; and to all the artist has given an appropriate expression, whether old or young, showing numerous peculiarities, which prove the mastery he possessed over his art. He has even distinguished the followers of each king, so that one can see which belong to one and which to another. It is indeed a most wonderful work; the composition, the colouring, and the design are so beautiful that every artist to-day is amazed at it, and at the time it acquired so great a fame for Sandro that Pope Sixtus IV. appointed him superintendent of the painting of the chapel he had built in Rome."

The visit to Rome was in 1481, and meantime Botticelli had produced the wayward *Primavera*, and the more stern

and harsh *S. Augustine* in the church of Ognissanti. Of his frescoes in the Pope's chapel nearly all have survived, including *Moses slaying the Egyptian*, *The Temptation*, and *The Destruction of Korah's Company*, besides such of the heads of the Popes as were not painted by Domenico Ghirlandaio and his other assistants in the work.

Returning to Florence in 1482, he was for twenty years without a rival in the city—after the departure of Leonardo to Milan—and he appears to have been subjected to no new influences, but steadily to have developed the immense forces within him. Before 1492 may be dated the two examples in the National Gallery, the *Portrait of a Youth* and the fascinating *Mars and Venus*, which was probably intended as a decoration for some large piece of furniture. The beautiful and extraordinarily life-like frescoes in the Louvre (the only recognised works of the master in that Gallery) from the Villa Lemmi, representing Giovanna Tornabuoni with Venus and the Graces, and Lorenzo Tornabuoni with the Liberal Arts, are assigned to 1486. Of this period are also the more familiar *Birth of Venus*; *The Tondo of the Pomegranate* and the *Annunciation* in the Uffizi, and the San Marco altar-piece, the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Florence Academy.

To the influence of Savonarola, however great or little that may have been, is attributed the seriousness of his latest work. Professor Muther characterises Botticelli as "the Jeremiah of the Renaissance," but whether or not this is a rhetorical overstatement, the "tendency to impassioned and feverish action, so evident in the famous *Calumny of Apelles*, reflects, no doubt, the agitation of his spiritual stress."[1]

This is the latest of Sandro's works which are in public galleries, and there is every probability that the last years of his life were not very productive. "This master is said to

have had an extraordinary love for those whom he knew to be zealous students in art," Vasari tells us, "and is affirmed to have gained considerable sums of money, but being a bad manager and very careless, all came to nothing. Finally, having become old, unfit for work, and helpless, he was obliged to go on crutches, being unable to stand upright, and so died, after long illness and decrepitude, in his seventy-eighth year. He was buried at Florence, in the church of Ognissanti in the year 1510."

The large and beautiful *Assumption of the Virgin*, with the circles of saints and angels, in the National Gallery, which has only of late years been taken out of the catalogue of Botticelli's works, is now said to have been executed by his early pupil Francesco Botticini (*c.* 1446-1497) in 1470 or thereabouts. "In the church of San Pietro," Vasari writes of Botticelli, "he executed a picture for Matteo Palmieri, with a very large number of figures. The subject is the Assumption of our Lady, and the zones or circles of heaven are



PLATE IV.—SANDRO BOTTICELLI
THE NATIVITY
National Gallery, London

there painted in their order. The patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, doctors, virgins, and the hierarchies; all of which was executed by Sandro according to the design furnished to him by Matteo, who was a very learned and able man. The whole work was conducted and finished with the most wonderful skill and care; at the foot were the portraits of Matteo and his wife kneeling. But although this picture is exceedingly beautiful, and ought to have put envy to shame, yet there

were certain malevolent and censorious persons who, not being able to fix any other blame upon it, declared that Matteo and Sandro had fallen into grievous heresy." It is apparent that the picture has suffered intentional injury, and it is known that in consequence of this supposed heresy the altar which it adorned was interdicted and the picture covered up.

In view of all the circumstances it is certain that it was designed by Botticelli, and very possibly executed under his immediate supervision and with some assistance from him. If we do not see the real Botticelli in it, we see his influence and his power far more clearly than in the numerous *tondi* of Madonna and Child that have been assigned to him in less critical ages than our own. For the real Botticelli was something very real indeed, and though it was easy enough to imitate his mannerisms, neither the style nor the spirit of his work were ever within reach of his closest followers.

V

LEONARDO DA VINCI

Twelve years younger than Botticelli was Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1520), whose career as a painter commenced in the workshop of Andrea Verrocchio, goldsmith, painter, and sculptor. That so extraordinary a genius should have fixed upon painting for his means of expression rather than any of his other natural gifts is the most telling evidence of the pre-eminence earned for that art by the efforts of those whose works we have been considering. For once we may go all the way with Vasari, and accept his estimate of him as even moderate in comparison with those of modern writers. "The richest gifts," he writes, "are sometimes

showered, as by celestial influence, on human creatures, and we see beauty, grace, and talent so united in a single person that whatever the man thus favoured may turn to, his every action is so divine as to leave all other men far behind him, and to prove that he has been specially endowed by the hand of God himself, and has not obtained his pre-eminence by human teaching. This was seen and acknowledged by all men in the case of Leonardo da Vinci, in whom, to say nothing of the beauty of his person, which was such that it could never be sufficiently extolled, there was a grace beyond expression which was manifested without thought or effort in every act and deed, and who besides had so rare a gift of talent and ability that to whatever subject he turned, however difficult, he presently made himself absolute master of it. Extraordinary strength was in him joined with remarkable facility, a mind of regal boldness and magnanimous daring. His gifts were such that his fame extended far and wide, and he was held in the highest estimation not in his own time only, but also and even to a greater extent after his death; and this will continue to be in all succeeding ages. Truly wonderful indeed and divinely gifted was Leonardo."

To his activities in directions other than painting, I need not allude except to say that they account in a great measure for the scarcity of the pictures he has left us, and to emphasise the significance of his having painted at all. To a man of such supreme genius the circumstances in which he found himself, rather than any particular technical facility, determined the course of his career, and in another age and another country he might have been a Pheidias or a Newton, a Shakespeare or a Beethoven.

But if the pictures he has left us are few in number—according to the present estimate not more than a dozen—they are altogether greater than anything else in the realm of painting, and with their marvellous beauty and subtlety

have probably had a wider influence, both on painters and on lovers of painting, than those of any other master. They seem to be endowed with a spirit of something beyond painting itself, and in the presence of *The Last Supper* or the *Mona Lisa* the babble of conflicting opinions on questions of style, technique, and what not is silenced.

Similarly, in writing of Leonardo's pictures, every one of which is a masterpiece, it seems superfluous to say even a word about what the whole world already knows so well. All that can be usefully added is a little of the tradition, where it is sufficiently authenticated, relating to the circumstances under which they came into existence, and such of the circumstances of his life as concern their production.

When still quite a youth Leonardo was apprenticed to Andrea Verrocchio, and the story goes that it was the marvellous painting of the angel, by the pupil, in the master's *Baptism* in the Academy at Florence, that induced Verrocchio to abandon painting and devote himself entirely to sculpture. This angel has been attributed to the hand of Leonardo from the earliest times, but can hardly be taken, at any rate in its present condition, as a decided proof of the genius that was to be displayed in manhood. More certain are the *S. Jerome* in the Vatican, and the *Adoration of the Kings* in the Uffizi, though neither is carried beyond the earlier stages of "under-painting." A few finished portraits are now assigned with tolerable certainty to his earlier years; but for his famous masterpieces we must jump to the year 1482, when he left Florence and went to Milan, where for the next sixteen years he was intermittently engaged in the execution of the great equestrian statue, which was destroyed by the French mercenaries before it was actually completed.

It appears that he was recommended by Lorenzo

de'Medici to Lodovico il Moro, Duke of Milan, probably for the very purpose of executing this statue. However that may be, it is now certain that in 1483 he was commissioned by the Franciscan monks to paint a picture of the Virgin and Child for their church of the Conception, and that between 1491 and 1494 Leonardo and his assistant, Ambrogio di Predis, petitioned the Duke for an arbitration as to price. This was the famous *Virgin of the Rocks*, now in the Louvre, and the similar, and though not precisely identical, composition in our National Gallery is generally supposed to be a replica, painted by Ambrogio under the supervision of, and possibly with some assistance from, Leonardo himself.

Between 1495 and 1498 Leonardo was engaged on the painting of *The Last Supper*. In the Forster Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum is a notebook which contains his first memoranda for the wonderful design of this masterpiece. At Windsor are studies for the heads of S. Matthew, S. Philip, and



PLATE V.—LEONARDO DA VINCI
THE VIRGIN OF THE ROCKS
National Gallery, London

Judas, and for the right arm of S. Peter. That of the head of the Christ in the Brera at Milan has been so much "restored" that it can hardly be regarded as Leonardo's work. Vasari's account of the delays in the completion of the painting is better known, and probably less trustworthy, than one or two notices of about the same date, quoted by

Mr H. P. Horne, in translating and commenting on Vasari. In June 1497, when the work had been in progress over two years, Duke Lodovico wrote to his secretary "to urge Leonardo, the Florentine, to finish the work of the Refectory which he has begun, ... and that articles subscribed by his hand shall be executed which shall oblige him to finish the work within the time that shall be agreed upon." Matteo Bandello, in the prologue to one of his *Novelle*, describes how he saw him actually at work —"Leonardo, as I have more than once seen and observed him, used often to go early in the morning and mount the scaffolding (for *The Last Supper* is somewhat raised above the ground), and from morning till dusk never lay the brush out of his hand, but, oblivious of both eating and drinking, paint without ceasing. After that, he would remain two, three, or four days without touching it: yet he always stayed there, sometimes for one or two hours, and only contemplated, considered, and criticised, as he examined with himself the figures he had made."

Vasari's story of the Prior's head serving for that of Judas is related with less colour, but probably more truth, in the Discourses of G. B. Giraldi, who says that when Leonardo had finished the painting with the exception of the head of Judas, the friars complained to the Duke that he had left it in this state for more than a year. Leonardo replied that for more than a year he had gone every morning and evening into the Borghetto, where all the worst sort of people lived, yet he could never find a head sufficiently evil to serve for the likeness of Judas: but he added, "If perchance I shall not find one, I will put there the head of this Father Prior who is now so troublesome to me, which will become him mightily."

In 1500 Leonardo was back again in Florence, and his next important work was the designing, though probably not the actual painting, of the beautiful picture in the

Louvre, *The Virgin and Child with S. Anne*, the commission for which had been given to Filippino Lippi, but resigned by him on Leonardo's return. In 1501 Isabella d'Este wrote to know whether Leonardo was still in Florence, and what he was doing, as she wished him to paint a picture for her in the palace at Mantua, and in the reply of the Vicar-General of the Carmelites we have a valuable account of the artist and his work. "As far as I can gather," he writes, "the life of Leonardo is extremely variable and undetermined. Since his arrival here he has only made a sketch in a cartoon. It represents a Christ as a little child of about a year old, reaching forward out of his mother's arms towards a lamb. The mother, half rising from the lap of S. Anne, catches at the child as though to take it away from the lamb, the animal of sacrifice signifying the Passion. S. Anne, also rising a little from her seat, seems to wish to restrain her daughter from separating the child from the lamb; which perhaps is intended to signify the Church, that would not wish that the Passion of Christ should be hindered. These figures are as large as life, but they are all contained in a small cartoon, since all of them sit or are bent; the figure of the Virgin is somewhat in front of the other, turned towards the left. This sketch is not yet finished. He has not executed any other work, except that his two assistants paint portraits and he, at times, lends a hand to one or another of them. He gives profound study to geometry, and grows most impatient of painting."

The history of this cartoon—as indeed of the Louvre picture—is somewhat obscure, but it is certain that the beautiful cartoon of the same subject in the possession of the Royal Academy is not the one above described.

Lastly, there is the famous—or, may we say, now more famous than ever—portrait of *Mona Lisa*. "Whoever wishes to know how far art can imitate nature," Vasari

writes, "may do so in this head, wherein every detail that could be depicted by the brush has been faithfully reproduced. The eyes have the lustrous brightness and watery sheen that is seen in life, and around them are all those rosy and pearly tints which, like the eyelashes too, can only be rendered by means of the deepest subtlety; the eyebrows also are painted with the closest exactitude, where fuller and where more thinly set, in a manner that could not be more natural. The nose, with its beautiful and delicately roseate nostrils, seems to be alive. The mouth, wonderful in its outline, shows the lips perfectly uniting the rose tints of their colour with that of the face, and the carnation of the cheek appears rather to be flesh and blood than only painted. Looking at the pit of the throat one can hardly believe that one cannot see the beating of the pulse, and in truth it may be said that the whole work is painted in a manner well calculated to make the boldest master tremble.

"Mona Lisa was exceedingly beautiful, and while Leonardo was painting her portrait he kept someone constantly near her to sing or play, to jest or otherwise amuse her, so that she might continue cheerful, and keep away the melancholy that painters are apt to give to their portraits. In this picture there is a smile so pleasing that the sight of it is a thing that appears more divine than human, and it has ever been considered a marvel that it is not actually alive."

It is worth observing that while these rapturous expressions of wonder at the life-like qualities of the portrait may seem somewhat tame and childish in comparison with the appreciation accorded to Leonardo's work in these times—notably that of Walter Pater in this case—they are in reality at the root of all criticism. If Vasari, as I have already pointed out, pitches upon this quality of life-likeness and direct imitation of nature for his

particular admiration, it is only because the first and foremost object of the earlier painters was in fact to represent the life; and though in the rarefied atmosphere of modern talk about art these naïve criticisms may seem out of date, it is significant that between Vasari and ourselves there is little, if any, difference of opinion as to which masters were the great ones, and which were not. "Truly divine" is a phrase in which he sums up the impressions created in his mind by the less material qualities of some of the greatest, but before even the greatest could create such an impression they must have learnt the rudiments of the art in the school of nature.

VI

MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI

In the opening years of the sixteenth century the art of painting had attained such a pitch of excellence that unless carried onward by a supreme genius it could hardly hope to escape from the common lot of all things in nature, and begin to decline. After Botticelli and Leonardo, the works of Andrea del Sarto, "the perfect painter" as he has been called, fall rather flat; and no less a prodigy than Michelangelo was capable of excelling his marvellous predecessors, or than Raphael of rivalling them.

Vasari prefaces his life to Andrea del Sarto (1486-1531) with something more definite than his usual rhetorical flourishes. "At length we have come," he says, "after having written the lives of many artists distinguished for colour, for design, or for invention, to that of the truly excellent Andrea del Sarto, in whom art and nature combined to show all that may be done in painting when design, colouring, and invention unite in one and the same

person. Had he possessed a somewhat bolder and more elevated mind, had he been distinguished for higher qualifications as he was for genius and depth of judgment in the art he practised, he would beyond all doubt have been without an equal. But there was in his nature a certain timidity of mind, a sort of diffidence and want of strength, which prevented those evidences of ardour and animation which are proper to the highest characters from ever appearing in him which, could they have been added to his natural advantages, would have made him truly a divine painter, so that his works are wanting in that grandeur, richness, and force which are so conspicuous in those of many other masters.

"His figures are well drawn, and entirely free from errors, and perfect in all their proportions, and for the most part are simple and chaste. His airs of heads are natural and graceful in women and children, while both in youth and old men they are full of life and animation. His draperies are marvellously beautiful. His nudes are admirably executed, simple in drawing, exquisite in colouring—nay, they are truly divine."

And yet? Well, let us turn to Michelangelo.

"While the best and most industrious artists," says Vasari, "were labouring by the light of Giotto and his followers to give the world examples of such power as the benignity of their stars and the varied character of their fantasies enabled them to command, and while desirous of imitating the perfection of Nature by the excellence of Art, they were struggling to attain that high comprehension which many call intelligence, and were universally toiling, but for the most part in vain, the Ruler of Heaven was pleased to turn the eyes of his clemency towards earth, and perceiving the fruitlessness of so many labours, the ardent studies pursued without any result, and the presumptuous self-

sufficiency of men which is farther from truth than is darkness from light, he resolved, by way of delivering us from such great errors, to send to the world a spirit endowed with universality of power in each art, and in every profession, one capable of showing by himself alone what is the perfection of art in the sketch, the outline, the shadows, or the lights; one who could give relief to painting and with an upright judgment could operate as perfectly in sculpture; nay, who was so highly accomplished in architecture also, that he was able to render our habitations secure and commodious, healthy and cheerful, well-proportioned, and enriched with the varied ornaments of art."

A more prosaic passage follows presently, occasioned by the innuendoes of Condivi as to Vasari's intimacy with Michelangelo and his knowledge of the facts of his life at first hand. Vasari meets this accusation by quoting the following document relating to the apprenticeship of Michelangelo to Domenico Ghirlandaio when fourteen years old. "1488. I acknowledge and record this first day of April that I, Lodovico di Buonarroti, have engaged Michelangelo my son to Domenico and David di Tommaso di Currado for the three years next to come, under the following conditions: That the said Michelangelo shall remain with the above named all the said time, to the end that they may teach him to paint and to exercise their vocation, and that the above named shall have full command over him paying him in the course of these three years twenty-four florins as wages...."

Besides this teaching in his earliest youth, it is considered probable that in 1494, when he visited Bologna, he came under influences which resulted in the execution at about that time of the unfinished *Entombment* and the *Holy Family*, which are two of our greatest treasures in the National Gallery. As he took to sculpture, however, before

he was out of Ghirlandaio's hands, there are few traces of any activity in painting until 1506, when he was engaged on the designs for the great battle-piece for the Council Hall at Florence. The one easel picture of which Vasari makes any mention, the *tondo* in the Uffizi, is the only one besides those already noted which is known to exist. "The Florentine citizen, Angelo Doni," Vasari says, "desired to have some work from his hand as he was his friend; wherefore Michelangelo began a circular painting of Our Lady for him. She is kneeling, and presents the Divine Child to Joseph. Here the artist has finely expressed the delight with which the Mother regards the beauty of her Son, as is clearly manifest in the turn of her head and fixedness of her gaze; equally evident is her wish that this contentment shall be shared by that pious old man who receives the babe with infinite tenderness and reverence. Nor was this enough for Michelangelo, since the better to display his art he has grouped several undraped figures in the background, some upright, some half recumbent, and others seated. The whole work is executed with so much care and finish that of all his pictures, which indeed are but few, this is considered the best."

After relating the story of the artist's quarrel with his friend over the price of this masterpiece (for which he at first only asked sixty ducats), Vasari goes on to describe the now lost cartoons for the great fresco in the Council Hall at Florence, in substance as follows:—

"When Leonardo was painting in the great hall of the Council, Piero Soderini, who was then Gonfaloniere, moved by the extraordinary ability which he perceived in Michelangelo [he calls him in a letter a young man who stands above all his calling in Italy; nay, in all the world], caused him to be entrusted with a portion of the work, and our artist began a very large cartoon representing the Battle of Pisa. It represented a vast number of nude figures

bathing in the Arno, as men do on hot days, when suddenly the enemy is heard to be attacking the camp. The soldiers spring forth in haste to arm themselves. One is an elderly man, who to shelter himself from the heat has wreathed a garland of ivy round his head, and, seated on the ground, is labouring to draw on his hose, hindered by his limbs being wet. Hearing the sound of the drums and the cries of the soldiers he struggles violently to get on one of his stockings; the action of the muscles and distortion of the mouth evince the zeal of his efforts. Drummers and others hasten to the camp with their clothes in their arms, all in the most singular attitudes; some standing, others kneeling or stooping; some falling, others springing high into the air and exhibiting the most difficult foreshortenings.... The artists were amazed as they realised that the master had in this cartoon laid open to them the very highest resources of art; nay, there are some who still declare that they have never seen anything to equal it, either from his hand or any other, and they do not believe that genius will ever more attain to such perfection. Nor is this an exaggeration, for all who have designed from it and copied it—as it was the habit for both natives and strangers to do—have become excellent in art, amongst whom were Raphael, Andrea del Sarto, Franciabigio, Pontormo, and Piero del Vaga."

In 1508 Michelangelo began to prepare the cartoons for the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Space forbids me to attempt any description of these, but the story of their completion as related by Vasari can hardly be omitted. "When half of them were nearly finished," he says, "Pope Julius, who had gone more than once to see the work—mounting the ladders with the artist's help—insisted on having them opened to public view without waiting till the last touches were given, and the chapel was no sooner open than all Rome hastened thither, the Pope being first, even before the dust caused by removing the scaffold had subsided. Then it was that Raphael, who was very prompt

in imitation, changed his manner, and to give proof of his ability immediately executed the frescoes with the Prophets and Sibyls in the church of the Pace. Bramante (the architect) also laboured to convince the Pope that he would do well to entrust the second half to Raphael.... But Julius, who justly valued the ability of Michelangelo, commanded that he should continue the work, judging from what he saw of the first half that he would be able to improve the second. Michelangelo accordingly finished the whole in twenty months, without help. It is true that he often complained that he was prevented from giving it the finish he would have liked owing to the Pope's impatience, and his constant inquiries as to when it would be finished, and on one occasion he answered, "It will be finished when I shall have done all that I believe necessary to satisfy art." "And we command," replied Julius, "that you satisfy our wish to have it done quickly," adding finally that if it were not at once completed he would have Michelangelo thrown headlong from the scaffolding. Hearing this, the artist, without taking time to add what was wanting, took down the remainder of the scaffolding, to the great satisfaction of the whole city, on All Saints' Day, when the Pope went into his chapel to sing Mass."

Michelangelo had much wished to retouch some portions of the work *a secco*, as had been done by the older masters who had painted the walls; and to add a little ultramarine to some of the draperies, and gild other parts, so as to give a richer and more striking effect. The Pope, too, would now have liked these additions to be made, but as Michelangelo thought it would take too long to re-erect the scaffolding, the pictures remained as they were. The Pope would sometimes say to him, "Let the chapel be enriched with gold and bright colours; it looks poor." To which Michelangelo would reply, "Holy Father, the men of those days did not adorn themselves with gold; those who are painted here less than any; for they were none too rich.

Besides, they were holy men, and must have despised riches and ornaments."

VII

RAFFAELLO DI SANTI

The character and the influence of Raphael are well expressed in the following sentences with which Vasari concludes his biography:—"O happy and blessed spirit! every one speaks with interest of thee; celebrates thy deeds; admires thee in thy works! Well might Painting die when this noble artist ceased to live; for when his eyes were closed she remained in darkness. For us who survive him it remains to imitate the excellent method which he has left for our guidance; and as his great qualities deserve, and our duty bids us, to cherish his memory in our hearts, and keep it alive in our discourse by speaking of him with the high respect which is his due. For through him we have the art in all its extent carried to a perfection which could hardly have been looked for; and in this universality let no human being ever hope to surpass him. And, beside this benefit which he conferred on Art as her true friend, he neglected not to show us how every man should conduct himself in all the relations of life. Among his rare gifts there is one which especially excites my wonder; I mean, that Heaven should have granted him to infuse a spirit among those who lived around him so contrary to that which is prevalent among professional men. The painters —I do not allude to the humble-minded only, but to those of an ambitious turn, and many of this sort there are—the painters who worked in company with Raphael lived in perfect harmony, as if all bad feelings were extinguished in his presence, and every base, unworthy thought had passed

from their minds. This was because the artists were at once subdued by his obliging manners and by his surpassing merit, but more than all by the spell of his natural character, which was so full of affectionate kindness, that not only men, but even the very brutes, respected him. He always had a great number of artists employed for him, helping them and teaching them with the kindness of a father to his children, rather than as a master directing his scholars. For which reason it was observed he never went to court without being accompanied from his very door by perhaps fifty painters who took pleasure in thus attending him to do him honour. In short, he lived more as a sovereign than as a painter. And thus, O Art of Painting! thou too, then, could account thyself most happy, since an artist was thine, who, by his skill and by his moral excellence exalted thee to the highest heaven!"

Raphael was the son of Giovanni Sanzio, or di Santi, of Urbino. He received his first education as an artist from his father, whom, however, he lost in his eleventh year. As early as 1495 probably, he entered the school of Pietro Perugino, at Perugia, where he remained till about his twentieth year.

The "Umbrian School," in which Raphael received his first education, and in which he is accordingly placed, is distinguished from the Florentine, of which it may be said to have been an offshoot, by several well-defined characteristics. Chief of these are, first, the more sentimental expression of religious feeling, and second, the greater attention paid to distance as compared with the principal figures; both of which are explainable on the ground of local circumstances. They reflect the difference between the bustling intellectual activity of Florence and the dreamy existence but broader horizon of the dwellers in the upper valley of the Tiber. In the beautiful *Nativity* of Piero della Francesca (No. 908 in the National Gallery) we

see something akin to the Florentine pictures, and yet something more besides. Piero shared with Paolo Uccello the eager desire to discover the secrets of perspective; but in addition he seems to have been influenced by the study of nature herself, in the open air, as Uccello never was. His pupil, Luca Signorelli (1441-1523), was more formal and less naturalistic, as may be seen by a comparison between the *Circumcision* (No. 1128 in the National Gallery) and Piero's *Baptism of Christ* on the opposite wall. Pietro Perugino (1446-1523)—his real name was Vannucci—was influenced both by Signorelli and by Verrocchio. In the studio of the latter he had probably worked with Leonardo and Lorenzo di Credi, so that in estimating the influences which went to form the art of Raphael we need not insist too strongly on the distinction between "Umbrian" and "Florentine."

Raphael's first independent works (about 1500) are entirely in Perugino's style. They bear the general stamp of the Umbrian School, but in its highest beauty. His youthful efforts are essentially youthful, and seem to contain the earnest of a high development. Two are in the Berlin Museum. In the one (No. 141) called the *Madonna Solly*, the Madonna reads in a book; the Child on her lap holds a goldfinch. The other (No. 145), with heads of S. Francis and S. Jerome, is better. Similar to it, but much more finished and developed, is a small round picture, the *Madonna Casa Connestabile*, now at St. Petersburg.

A more important picture of this time is the *Coronation of the Virgin*, painted for the church of S. Francesco at Perugia in 1503, but now in the Vatican. In the upper part, Christ and the Madonna are throned on clouds and surrounded by angels with musical instruments; underneath, the disciples stand around the empty tomb. In this lower part of the picture there is a very evident attempt to give the figures more life, motion, and enthusiastic

expression than was before attempted in the school.

After this, Raphael appears to have quitted the school of Perugino, and to have commenced an independent career: he executed at this time some pictures in the neighbouring town of Città di Castello. With all the features of the Umbrian School, they already show the freer impulse of his own mind,—a decided effort to individualize. The most excellent of these, and the most interesting example of this first period of Raphael's development, is the *Marriage of the Virgin* (Lo Sposalizio), inscribed with his name and the date 1504, now in the Brera at Milan. With much of the stiffness and constraint of the old school, the figures are noble and dignified; the countenances, of the sweetest style of beauty, are expressive of a tender, enthusiastic melancholy, which lends a peculiar charm to this subject.

In 1504 Raphael painted the two little pictures in the Louvre, *S. George* and *S. Michael* (Nos. 1501-2) for the Duke of Urbino. *The Knight Dreaming*, a small picture, now in the National Gallery (No. 213), is supposed to have been painted a year earlier.

In the autumn of 1504 Raphael went to Florence. Tuscan art had now attained its highest perfection, and the most celebrated artists were there contending for the palm. From this period begins his emancipation



PLATE VI.—PIETRO PERUGINO
CENTRAL PORTION OF ALTAR-PIECE

National Gallery, London

from the confined manner of Perugino's school; the youth ripens into manhood and acquires the free mastery of form.

To this time belong the celebrated *Madonna del Granduca*, now in the Pitti Gallery, and another formerly belonging to the Duke of Terra Nuova, and now at Berlin (No. 247a). In the next year we find him employed on several large works in Perugia; these show for the first time the influence of Florentine art in the purity, fullness, and intelligent treatment of form; at the same time many of the motives of the Peruginesque school are still apparent. The famous *Cowper Madonna*, recently sold to an American for £140,000, also belongs to the year 1505, when the blending of the two influences resulted in a picture which has been extolled by the sanest of critics as "the loveliest of Raphael's Virgins." An altar-piece, executed for the church of the Serviti at Perugia, inscribed with the date 1506, is the famous *Madonna dei Ansidei*, purchased for the National Gallery from the Duke of Marlborough. Besides the dreamy religious feeling of the School of Perugia, we perceive here the aim at a greater freedom, founded on deeper study.

Raphael was soon back in Florence, where he remained until 1508. The early paintings of this period betray, as might be expected, many reminiscences of the Peruginesque school, both in conception and execution; the later ones follow in all essential respects the general style of the Florentines.

One of the earliest is the *Virgin in the Meadow*, in the Belvedere Gallery at Vienna. Two others show a close affinity with this composition; one is the *Madonna del Cardellino*, in the Tribune of the Uffizi, in which S. John presents a goldfinch to the infant Christ. The other is the

so-called *Belle Jardinière*, inscribed 1507, in the Louvre.

It is interesting to observe Raphael's progress in the smaller pictures which he painted in Florence—half-figures of the Madonna and Child. Here again the earliest are characterised by the tenderest feeling, while a freer and more cheerful enjoyment of life is apparent in the later ones. The *Madonna della Casa Tempi*, at Munich, is the first of this series. In the picture from the Colonna Palace at Rome, now in the Berlin Museum (No. 248), the same childlike sportiveness, the same maternal tenderness, are developed with more harmonious refinement. A larger picture, belonging to the middle time of his Florentine period, is in the Munich Gallery—the *Madonna Canignani*, which presents a peculiar study of artificial grouping, in a pyramidal shape. Among the best pictures of the latter part of this Florentine period are the *S. Catherine*, now in the National Gallery, formerly in the Aldobrandini Gallery at Rome, and two large altar-pieces. One of these is the *Madonna del Baldacchino*, in the Pitti Gallery. The other, *The Entombment*, painted for the church of S. Francesco at Perugia, is now in the Borghese Gallery at Rome. This is the first of Raphael's compositions in which an historical subject is dramatically developed; but in this respect the task exceeded his powers. The composition lacks repose and unity of effect; the movements are exaggerated and mannered; but the figure of the Saviour is extremely beautiful, and may be placed among the greatest of the master's creations.

About the middle of the year 1508, when only in his twenty-fifth year, Raphael was invited by Pope



PLATE VII.—RAPHAEL
THE ANSIDEI MADONNA
National Gallery, London



PLATE VIII.—RAPHAEL
LA BELLE JARDINIÈRE
Louvre, Paris

Julius II. to decorate the state apartments in the Vatican. With these works commences the third period of his development, and in these he reached his highest perfection. The subjects, more important than any in which he had hitherto been occupied, gave full scope to his powers; and the proximity of Michelangelo, who at this

time began the painting of the Sistine Chapel, excited his emulation.

At this period, just before the Reformation, the Papal power had reached its proudest elevation. To glorify this power—to represent Rome as the centre of spiritual culture—were the objects of the paintings in the Vatican. They cover the ceilings and walls of three chambers and a large saloon, which now bear the name of the "Stanze of Raphael."

The execution of these paintings principally occupied Raphael to the time of his death, and were only completed by his scholars.

In 1513 and 1514 Raphael also executed designs for the ten tapestries intended to adorn the Sistine Chapel, representing events from the lives of the apostles. Seven of these magnificent cartoons are now in the South Kensington Museum.

Beside these important commissions executed for the Papal court, during twelve years, many claims were made on him by private persons. Two frescoes executed for Roman churches may be mentioned. One, in S. Maria della Pace, represents four Sibyls surrounded by angels, which it is interesting to compare with the Sibyls of Michelangelo. In each we find the peculiar excellence of the two great masters; Michelangelo's figures are grand, sublime, profound, while the fresco of the Pace exhibits Raphael's serene and ingenious grace. In a second fresco, the prophet Isaiah and two angels, in the church of S. Agostino at Rome, the comparison is less favourable to Raphael, the effort to rival the powerful style of Michelangelo being rather too obvious.

Like all other artists, Raphael is at his best when, undisturbed by outside influences, he follows the free

original impulse of his own mind. His peculiar element was grace and beauty of form, in so far as these are the expression of high moral purity.

The following works of his third period are especially deserving of mention.

The *Aldobrandini Madonna*, now in the National Gallery —in which the Madonna is sitting on a bench, and bends down to the little S. John, her left arm round him. The *Madonna of the Duke of Alba*, in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg. *La Vierge au voile*, in the Louvre; the Madonna is seated in a kneeling position, lifting the veil from the sleeping Child in order to show him to the little S. John. The *Madonna della Seggiola*, in the Pitti at Florence (painted about 1516), a circular picture. The *Madonna della Tenda* at Munich; a composition similar to the last, except that the Child is represented in more lively action, and looking upwards.

A series of similar, but in some instances more copious compositions, belong to a still later period; they are in a great measure the work of his scholars, painted after his drawings, and only partly worked upon by Raphael himself. Indeed many pictures of this class should perhaps be considered altogether as the productions of his school, at a time when that school was under his direct superintendence, and when it was enabled to imitate his finer characteristics in a remarkable degree.

In this class are the *Madonna dell'Impannata*, in the Pitti, which takes its name from the oiled-paper window in the background. The large picture of a *Holy Family* in the Louvre, painted in 1518, for Francis I., is peculiarly excellent. The whole has a character of cheerfulness and joy: an easy and delicate play of graceful lines, which unite in an intelligible and harmonious whole. Giulio Romano assisted in the execution.

With regard to the large altar-pieces of his later period in which several Saints are assembled round the Madonna, it is to be observed that Raphael has contrived to place them in reciprocal relation to each other, and to establish a connection between them; while the earlier masters either ranged them next to one another in simple symmetrical repose, or disposed them with a view to picturesque effect.

Of these the *Madonna di Foligno*, in the Vatican, is the earliest. In the upper part of the picture is the Madonna with the Child, enthroned on the clouds in a glory, surrounded by angels. Underneath, on one side, kneels the donor, behind him stands S. Jerome. On the other side is S. Francis, kneeling, while he points with one hand out of the picture to the people, for whom he entreats the protection of the Mother of Grace; behind him is S. John the Baptist, who points to the Madonna, while he looks at the spectator as if inviting him to worship her.

The second, the *Madonna del Pesce* has much more repose and grandeur as whole, and unites the sublime and abstract character of sacred beings with the individuality of nature in the happiest manner. It is now in Madrid, but was originally painted for S. Domenico at Naples, about 1513. It represents the Madonna and Child on a throne; on one side is S. Jerome; on the other the guardian angel with the young Tobias who carries a fish (whence the name of the picture). The artist has imparted a wonderfully poetic character to the subject. S. Jerome, kneeling on the steps of the throne, has been reading from a book to the Virgin and Child, and appears to have been interrupted by the entrance of Tobias and the Angel. The infant Christ turns towards them, but at the same time lays his hand on the open book, as if to mark the place. The Virgin turns towards the Angel, who introduces Tobias; while the latter dropping on his knees, looks up meekly to the Divine Infant. S. Jerome looks over the book to the new-comers, as if ready to

proceed with his occupation after the interruption.

But the most important is the famous *Madonna di San Sisto*, at Dresden. Here the Madonna appears as the queen of the heavenly host, in a brilliant glory of countless angel-heads, standing on the clouds, with the eternal Son in her arms; S. Sixtus and S. Barbara kneel at the sides. Both of them seem to connect the picture with the real spectators. This is a rare example of a picture of Raphael's later time, executed entirely by his own hand.

Two large altar pictures still claim our attention; they also belong to Raphael's later period. One is the *Christ Bearing the Cross*, in Madrid, known by the name of *Lo Spasimo di Sicilia*, from the convent of Santa Maria dello Spasimo at Palermo, for which it was painted. Here, as in the tapestries, we again find a finely conceived development of the event, and an excellent composition. The other is the *Transfiguration*, now in the Vatican, formerly in S. Pietro at Montorio.



PLATE IX.—RAPHAEL
PORTRAIT OF BALDASSARE CASTIGLIO
Louvre, Paris

This was the last work of the master (left unfinished at his death); the one which was suspended over his coffin, a trophy of his fame, for public homage.

"I cannot believe myself in Rome," wrote Count Castiglione, on the death of the master, "now that my poor Raphael is no longer here." Men regarded his works with religious veneration as if God had revealed himself through Raphael as in former days through the prophets. His remains were publicly laid out on a splendid catafalque, while his last work, the *Transfiguration*, was

suspended over his head. He was buried in the Pantheon, under an altar adorned by a statue of the Holy Virgin, a consecration offering from Raphael himself. Doubts having been raised as to the precise spot, a search was made in the Pantheon in 1833, and Raphael's bones were found; the situation agreeing exactly with Vasari's description of the place of interment. On the 18th of October, in the same year, the relics were reinterred in the same spot with great solemnities.

The schools of Lombardy and the Emilia, which derive their characteristics from Florentine rather than from Venetian influences, may here be briefly mentioned before turning to the consideration of the Venetian School. In 1482, it will be remembered, Leonardo went to Milan, where he remained till the end of the century; and the extent of his influence may be judged from many of the productions of Bernadino Luini (1475-1532) and Giovanni Antonio Bazzi, known as Sodoma (1477-1549). Of Ambrogio di Predis we have already heard in connection with the painting of our version of Leonardo's *Virgin of the Rocks*. Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio (1467-1516) was a pupil of Vincenzo Foppa, but he soon abandoned the manner of the old Lombard School, and came under the influence of the great Florentine, of whom he became a most enthusiastic disciple.

More independent—indeed, he is officially characterised as "an isolated phenomenon in Italian Art"—was Antonio Allegri, commonly called Correggio, from the place of his birth. In 1518 he settled at Parma, where he remained till 1530, so that he is usually catalogued as of the School of Parma, which for an isolated phenomenon serves as well as any other. Of late years his popularity has been somewhat diminished by the increasing demands of private collectors for works which are purchasable, and most of Correggio's are in public galleries. At Dresden are some of the most

famous, notably the *Nativity*, called "La Notte," from its wonderful scheme of illumination, and two or three large altar-pieces. The *Venus Mercury and Cupid* in our National Gallery, though sadly injured, is still one of his masterpieces. It was purchased by Charles I. with the famous collection of the Duke of Mantua. Our *Ecce Homo* is entitled to rank with it, as is also the little *Madonna of the Basket*.



PLATE X.—CORREGGIO
MERCURY, CUPID, AND VENUS
National Gallery, London

VENETIAN SCHOOLS

I

THE VIVARINI AND BELLINI

In Venice the Byzantine style appears to have offered a more stubborn resistance to the innovators than in Tuscany, or, in fact, in any other part of Italy. Few, if any, of the allegorical subjects with which Giotto and his scholars decorated whole buildings are to be found here, and the altar pictures retain longer than anywhere else the gilt canopied compartments and divisions, and the tranquil positions of single figures. It was not until a century after the death of Cimabue and Duccio that the real development of the Venetian School was manifested, so that when things did begin to move the conditions were not the same, and the results accordingly were something substantially different.

The influence of the Byzantine style still hangs heavily over the work of Nicolo Semitecolo, who was working in Venice in the middle of the fourteenth century, as may be seen in the great altar-piece ascribed to him in the Academy—the Coronation of the Virgin with fourteen scenes from the life of Christ. In this work there is little of the general advancement visible in other parts of Italy. It corresponds most nearly with the work of Duccio of Siena, though without attaining his excellence; while the gold hatchings and olive brown tones are still Byzantine.

An altar-piece, by Michele Giambono, also in the Academy, painted during the first half of the fifteenth century, shows a more decided advance, and even anticipates some of the later excellences of the Venetian

School. The drapery is in the long and easy lines which we see in the Tuscan pictures of the period, and what is especially significant, in view of the subsequent development of Venetian painting, the colouring is rich, deep, and transparent, and the flesh tints unusually soft and warm. This is signed by Giambono, and is one of his most important works, as well as the most complete, as it exists in its original state as an *ancona* or altar-piece divided into compartments by canopies of joiners' work. It is unusual in form, inasmuch as the central panel, though slightly larger than the pair on either side, contains but a single figure. This figure was generally supposed to be the Saviour, but it has recently been pointed out that it is S. James the Great, the others being SS. John the Evangelist, Philip Benizi, Michael, and Louis of Toulouse. Some of Giambono's finest work was in mosaic, and the walls and roof of the Cappella de'Mascoli in S. Mark's may be regarded as the highest achievement in mosaic of the early Venetian School. While this species of decoration had given place to fresco painting elsewhere, it was here, in 1430, brought to a pitch of perfection by Giambono which entitles this work to a prominent place in the history of painting.

But the two chief pioneers of the early fifteenth century were Giovanni, or Johannes Alamanus, and Antonio da Murano. The former appears from his surname to have been of German origin, the latter belonged to the family of Vivarini, and they used to work together on the same pictures. Two excellent examples of this combination are in the Academy at Venice. The one, dated 1440, is a Coronation of the Virgin, with many figures, including several boys, and numerous saints seated. In the heads of the saints we may trace the hand of Alamanus, in the Germanic type of countenance which recalls the style of Stephen of Cologne. A repetition of this, if it is not actually the original, is in S. Pantalone at Venice. The other picture, dated 1446, of enormous dimensions,

represents the Virgin enthroned, beneath a canopy sustained by angels, with the four Fathers of the Church at her side. The colouring is fully as flowing and splendid as that of Giambono.

We do not recognise here, as Kugler rightly observes, the influence of the school of Giotto, but rather the types of the Germanic style gradually assuming a new character, possibly owing to the social condition of Venice itself. There was something perhaps in the nature of a rich commercial aristocracy of the middle ages calculated to encourage that species of art which offered the greatest splendour and elegance to the eye; and this also, if possible, in a portable form; thus preferring the domestic altar or the dedication picture to wall decorations in churches. The contemporary Flemish paintings, under similar conditions, exhibit analogous results. With regard to colour, the depth and transparency observable in the works of the old Venetian School had long been a distinguishing feature in the Byzantine paintings on wood, and may therefore be traceable to this source without assuming an influence on the part of Padua, or from the north through Giovanni Alamanus.

The two side panels of an altar-piece, representing severally SS. Peter and Jerome, and SS. Francis and Mark, now in the National Gallery (Nos. 768 and 1284), are ascribed to Antonio Vivarini alone, though the centre panel, the Virgin and Child, now in the Poldi Pezzoli collection at Milan is said to be the joint work of Alamanus and Antonio. However that may be, there is no longer any dispute about the fascinating Adoration of the Kings in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum at Berlin, formerly supposed to be the work of Gentile da Fabriano, but now catalogued as that of Antonio.

In 1450 the name of Alamanus disappears altogether, and

that of Bartolommeo Vivarini, Antonio's younger brother, replaces it in an inscription upon the great altar-piece commissioned by Pope Nicholas V. in commemoration of Cardinal Albergati, now in the Pinacoteca of Bologna. The change is noticeable as introducing the Paduan influence of Squarcione, under whom Bartolommeo had studied, instead of the northern influence of Alamanus, into Antonio's workshop, and while this work of 1450, as might be supposed, bears a general resemblance to that of 1446, the change of partnership is at least perceptible, and had a determining influence on the development of the Venetian style.

A slightly earlier work of Bartolommeo alone is a Madonna and Child belonging to Sir Hugh Lane, signed and dated 1448. An altar-piece in the Venice Academy is dated 1464, a Madonna and Four Saints, in the Frari, 1482, and S. Barbara, in the Academy, 1490. Bartolommeo is supposed to have died in 1499.

Alvise, or Luigi, Vivarini was the son of Antonio, and though he worked under him and his uncle Bartolommeo, as well as under Giovanni Bellini, the Paduan influence is apparent in his work. He was born in 1447, and his first dated work is an altar-piece at Montefiorentino, in 1475. In the Academy at Venice is a Madonna dated 1480, and at Naples a Madonna with SS. Francis and Bernard, 1485. Another Madonna at Vienna is dated 1489, and the large altar-piece in the Basilica at the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin is assigned to about the same time. This is the first of his works in which the influence of Bellini rather than that of his family is traceable, while of the "Redentore" Madonna at Venice, of about five years later, Mr Bernhard Bernson says that, "As a composition no work of the kind by Giovanni Bellini even rivals it." In 1498 he had advanced so far as to be spoken of as anticipating Giorgione and Titian, in the effect of light and

in the roundness and softness of the figures of the *Resurrection*, at Bragora. His last work, the altar-piece at the Frari, was completed after his death in 1504 by his pupil Basaiti. Bartolommeo Montagna, Jacopo da Valenza and Lorenzo Lotto were the chief of his other pupils.

In connection with the Vivarini must be mentioned Carlo Crivelli, who studied with Bartolommeo under Antonio and Squarcione. But there was something fierce and uncongenial about Crivelli which takes him out of the main body of Venetian painters, and seems to have given him more pride in being made a knight than in his pictorial achievements, remarkable as they were. In his ornamentation of every detail with gold and jewels he recalls the style of Antonio Vivarini, but while the master used it as accessory merely, Crivelli positively revelled in it. An inventory of the precious stones, ornaments, fruits and flowers, and other detached items in the great "Demidoff Altar-Piece" in the National Gallery would fill several pages. Of the eight examples in this gallery the earliest is probably the *Dead Christ*, presumably painted in 1472. The Demidoff altar-piece is dated 1476. The *Annunciation* (No. 739), which may be considered his masterpiece, was ten years later. In 1490 Crivelli was knighted by Prince Ferdinand of Capua, and from that date onward he was careful to add to his signature the title *Miles*—as appears in our *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, with SS. Jerome and Sebastian—called the Madonna della Rondine:——

Carolus Crivellus Venetus Miles Pinxit. This was painted for the Odoni Chapel in S. Francesco at Matelica, the coat of arms of the family being painted on the step.

Our *Annunciation* was executed for the convent of the Santissima Annunziata at Ascoli, and is dated 1486. Three coats of arms on the front of the step at the bottom of the

picture are those of the Bishop of Ascoli, Pope Innocent VII., the reigning Pontiff, and the City of Ascoli. Between these are the words *Libertas Ecclesiastica*, in allusion to the charter of self-government given in 1482 by the Pope to the citizens of Ascoli. The patron saint of the city, S. Emidius, is represented as a youth kneeling beside the Archangel, holding in his hands a model of it. The Virgin is seen through the open door of a house, and in an open loggia above are peacocks and other birds. Amid all the rich detail, the significance of the group of figures at the top of a flight of steps must not be missed, amongst which a child and a poet are the only two who are represented as noticing the mystic event.

Another painter of the earlier half of the fourteenth century may be mentioned here, though as he was more famous as a medallist his influence on the main course of painting is not observable. Vittore Pisano, called Pisanello, was born in Verona before 1400, and died in 1455. Of the few pictures attributed to him we are fortunate in having two such beautiful examples as the *SS. Anthony and George* and *The Vision of S. Eustace* in the National Gallery. Both exhibit his two most noticeable characteristics, namely, the minute care and exquisite feeling that made him the most famous of medallists, and his wonderful drawing of animals. The latter, it is worth remarking, was attributed by a former owner to Albert Dürer. The other is signed "Pisanus"; in the frame are inserted casts of two of his medals, representing Leonello d'Este, his patron, and a profile of himself.

Another very considerable factor in the development of Venetian painting was the influence of Gentile da Fabriano (*c.* 1360-1430), who settled in Venice in the latter part of his life, and there formed the closest intimacy with Antonio Vivarini. The remarkable *Adoration of the Kings* in the Berlin Museum was until lately given to Gentile,

though it is now catalogued as the work of Antonio. Of Gentile's education little is known, and of the numerous works which he executed at Fabriano, in Rome and in Venice very few have survived. From those that exist, however, we can form an estimate of his talents and of the difference between his earlier and later styles. To the first belong a fresco of the Madonna in the Cathedral at Orvieto, and the beautiful picture of the Madonna and saints which is now in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum at Berlin. Also the fine *Adoration of the Kings*, inscribed with his name and the date 1423, formerly in the sacristy of S. Trinità at Florence, and now in the Accademia. This, his masterpiece, is one of the finest conceptions of the subject as well as one of the most excellent productions of the schools descended from Giotto. Of his later period the *Coronation of the Virgin* (called the *Quadro della Romita*) in the Brera gallery at Milan is one of the finest. In many respects his work is like that of Fra Angelico, and was aptly characterised by Michelangelo when he said that "Gentile's pictures were like his name." Apart from the influence of the Paduan School, which will next be noticed, the Venetian owed most to Gentile da Fabriano, if only as the master of Jacopo Bellini, whose son, Giovanni Bellini, may be regarded as the real head of the Venetian School as developed by his pupils Giorgione and Titian at the opening of the sixteenth century.

Whether or not Giotto left any actual pupils in Padua after completing the frescoes in the chapel of the arena there, it must be admitted that the older school of painting in Padua, which centred round the church containing the body of S. Anthony, was an offshoot of the Florentine, and that as Giotto was the great leader in Florence he must be considered the same here; though his followers differ so much from each other in style that beyond their indebtedness to their founder they have no distinctive feature in common. But with the opening of the fifteenth

century one particular tendency was developed under the fostering influence of Francesco Squarcione, born in 1394, which affected in a very sensible degree the style of the great painters of the next generation in Venice. This, in a word, was the cult of the antique.

Among the Florentines, as we have seen, the study of form was chiefly pursued on the principle of direct reference to nature, the especial object in view being an imitation in two dimensions of the actual appearances and circumstances of life existing in three. In the Paduan School it now came to be very differently developed, namely, by the study of the masterpieces of antique sculpture, in which the common forms of nature were already raised to a high ideal of beauty. This school has consequently the merit, as Kugler points out, of applying the rich results of an earlier, long-forgotten excellence in art to modern practice. Of a real comprehension of the idealising principle of classic art there does not appear any trace; what the Paduans borrowed from the antique was limited primarily to mere outward beauty. Accordingly in the earliest examples we find the drapery treated according to the antique costume, and the general arrangement more resembling bas-relief than rounded groups. The accessories display in like manner a special attention to antique models, particularly in the architecture, and the frequent introduction of festoons of fruit; while the exaggerated sharpness in the marking of the forms due to the combined influence of the study of the antique and the naturalising tendency of the time, sometimes borders on excess.

The immediate cause of this almost sudden outbreak of the cult of the antique—whatever natural forces were behind it—was the visit of Squarcione to Greece, and Southern Italy, to collect specimens of the remains of ancient art. On his return to Padua his collection soon attracted a great number of pupils anxious to avail

themselves of the advantages it offered; and by these pupils, who poured in from all parts of Italy, the manner of the school was afterwards spread throughout a great portion of the country. Squarcione himself is better known as a teacher than as an artist, the few of his remaining works being of no great importance. There is no example in the National Gallery, but of the work of his great pupil, Mantegna, we have as much, at any rate, as will serve to commemorate the master.

Andrea Mantegna was born at Vicenza in 1431, and when no more than ten years old was inscribed in the guild of Padua as pupil and adopted son of Squarcione. As early as 1448 he had painted an altar-piece for Santa Sophia, now lost, and in 1452 the fresco in San Antonio. In 1455 he was engaged with Nicolo Pizzolo (Donatello's assistant), and others, on the six frescoes in the Eremitani Church at Padua. The whole of the left side of the chapel of SS. James and Christopher—the life of S. James—and the martyrdom of S. Christopher are his, and in these, his earliest remaining works, we already see the result of pedantic antiquarianism combined with his extraordinary individuality.

In 1460 he went to Mantua, where he remained for the greater part of his life, visiting Florence in 1466 and Rome in 1488.

Among his earlier works are the small *Adoration of the Kings* in the Uffizi at Florence, the *Death of the Virgin* and the *S. George* in the Venice Academy. From 1484 to 1494 he was intermittently engaged on the nine great cartoons of *The Triumph of Cæsar*, which are now at Hampton Court, having been acquired by Charles I. with many other gems from the Duke of Mantua's collection. On the completion of these he painted the celebrated *Madonna della Vittoria*, now in the Louvre—a large altar-piece representing a

Madonna surrounded by saints, with Francesco Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, and his wife, kneeling at her feet. It is a dedication picture for a victory obtained over Charles VIII. of France in 1495. It is no less remarkable for its superb execution than for a softer treatment of the flesh than is usual in Mantegna's work. Two other pictures in the Louvre are, however, distinguished by similar qualities—the *Parnassus*, painted in 1497, and the *Triumph of Virtue*.



PLATE XI.—ANDREA MANTEGNA
THE MADONNA DELLA VITTORIA
Louvre, Paris

In our own collection we have *The Agony in the Garden*, painted in 1459—to which I shall refer presently—two

monochrome paintings (Nos. 1125 and 1145), the beautiful *Virgin and Child Enthroned*, with SS. Mary Magdalen and John the Baptist, which is comparable with the more famous Louvre *Madonna*, and, lastly, the *Triumph of Scipio*, in monochrome, painted for Francesco Cornaro, a Venetian nobleman, completed in 1506, only a few months before the painter's death. In this we see that Mantegna's antiquarianism was not simply a youthful phase, but lasted till the very end of his career. The subject is the reception of the Phrygian mother of the gods among the recognised divinities of the Roman State, as is indicated on the plinth by the inscription. In the centre is Claudia Quinta about to kneel before the bust of the goddess. Behind is Scipio, and in the background are monuments to his family. The composition includes twenty-two figures. It is significant that the subject and its treatment are so entirely classic as only to be appreciated by references to Latin literature.

Another significance attaches to the *Agony in the Garden* above mentioned, which is one of the very earliest, as the *Scipio* is the very latest, of Mantegna's pictures, being painted before he left Padua to go to Mantua. In this we find that the original suggestion for the design appears to have been taken from a drawing in the sketch-book of his father-in-law, Jacopo Bellini, which is now in the British Museum; and the same design appears to have served Giovanni Bellini in the composition of the picture in our gallery (No. 726). This takes us back to Venice, and accounts for the Paduan influence traceable in the works of the Bellini family and their pupils.

Jacopo Bellini, whose considerable talents have been somewhat obscured by the fame of his two sons, Gentile and Giovanni, was originally a pupil of Gentile da Fabriano, after whom he named his eldest son. He was working in Padua in the middle of the fifteenth century, in rivalry with Squarcione, and in 1453 his daughter

Nicolosia married Andrea Mantegna. Thus it happened that both of his sons came under the influence of Mantegna, and evidently, too, of the sculptor Donatello, when working at Padua between 1450 and 1460.

Very few authentic pictures by Jacopo are known to us. *A Crucifixion* (much repainted) was in the sacristy of the Episcopal Palace at Verona; and another, which recalls the treatment of his master, Gentile da Fabriano, at Lovere, near Bergamo. In the sketch-book above mentioned, the contents of which consist of sacred subjects, and studies from the antique, both in architecture and in costume, we see the peculiar tendency of the Paduan School expressed in the most complete and comprehensive manner. These drawings constitute the most remarkable link of connection between Mantegna and the sons of Jacopo Bellini, all three of whom must have studied from them. The book was inherited by Gentile on his mother's death, and bequeathed by him to his brother on condition that he should finish the picture of *S. Mark*, on which Gentile was engaged at the time of his death.

Giovanni Bellini was born in 1428 or 1430 and lived to 1516. Albert Dürer, writing from Venice in 1506, says that "he is very old, but is still the best in painting."

The greater number of Bellini's pictures are to be found in the galleries and churches in Venice, all of those which are dated being the work of his old age. Of his earlier pictures we are fortunate in having two fine examples in the National Gallery, *Christ's Agony in the Garden* (No. 726) and *The Blood of the Redeemer* (No. 1233). In both of these the influence of his famous brother-in-law Andrea Mantegna, is traceable,—the former being till lately attributed to him. Both Giovanni and Gentile worked in Padua, where Mantegna was established, in 1460 or thereabouts, and where another influence, that of the

sculptor Donatello, must have had its effect on the young brothers. Similar in character, and even more beautiful in some respects, is the *Redeemer*, a single half figure in a landscape, recently acquired for the Louvre—the first authentic example of the master in that collection.

In 1464, Giovanni had returned to Venice, and it was some years before the severe Paduan influence melted before "the sensuous feeling of the true Venetian temperament." In 1475, however, the arrival of Antonello da Messina in Venice, bringing with him the practice of painting in oil, effected a revolution, in which Giovanni, if not one of the foremost, was certainly one of the most successful in adopting the new method. His later works, so far from showing any diminution of power, may be said to anticipate the Venetian style of the sixteenth century in the clearest manner. One of the chief, dated 1488, is the large altar-piece in the sacristy of S. Maria di Frari, a *Madonna Enthroned* with two angels and four saints. The two little angels are of the utmost beauty; the one is playing on a lute, and listens with head inclined to hear whether the instrument is in tune; the other is blowing a pipe. The whole is perfectly finished and of a splendid effect of colour. To the year 1486 belongs a *Madonna Enthroned with Six Saints*, now in the Academy at Venice. The famous head of the Doge Loredano in the National Gallery must have been painted in or after 1501. In 1507, he completed the large picture of *S. Mark Preaching at Alexandria*, now in the Brera Gallery at Milan, begun by his brother Gentile. Within three years of his death, namely in 1513, he could produce such a masterwork as the altar-piece in S. Giovanni Crisostomo. His last work, the landscape in which was finished by Titian, is dated 1514. This is the famous *Bacchanal* now in the collection of the Duke of Northumberland.

The influence of Bellini on the Venetian School was

paramount, and his noble example helped more than anything else to develop the excellences observable in the works of Cimada Conegliano, Vincenzo Catena, Lorenzo Lotto, Palma Vecchio and Basaiti, to say nothing of his great pupils Titian and Giorgione. It is impossible to conjecture what course the genius of this younger generation would have taken without his guidance, but when we consider that in 1500 Bellini was seventy years old, and had stored within his mind the experience of his early association with his brother-in-law Andrea Mantegna in Padua, the introduction of the use of oil paints by Antonello da Messina in 1475, since which date he had sedulously developed the new practice; when we also take into account the dignity and gravity of his own works, and the indication they afford of the man himself, it is not difficult to judge how much his pupils and successors owed to him.

The works of Gentile Bellini, the elder brother of Giovanni, are of less importance, but of considerable interest, especially in view of his journey to Constantinople in 1479 at the request of the Sultan, whose portrait he painted there in the following year. A replica



PLATE XII.—GIOVANNI BELLINI
THE DOGE LOREDANO
National Gallery, London

of this portrait has been bequeathed to the National Gallery by Sir Henry Layard, and it is to be hoped that the difficulties raised by the Italian government as to its removal from Venice will shortly be overcome. The picture of *S. Mark Preaching at Alexandria* already mentioned as having been finished by Giovanni, is remarkable for the Oriental costumes of all the figures in it. Gentile's pictures are often ascribed to his brother; in two

examples at the National Gallery (Nos. 808 and 1440) there is actually a false signature on a cartellino. In the latter instance Messrs Ludwig and Molmenti are still of opinion that the picture is the work of Giovanni.

Vincenzo Catena (*c.* 1470-1530) is not known to have been a pupil of Bellini, but he began by so modelling his style upon him that one of his works in the National Gallery was until quite lately officially ascribed to him, namely the *S. Jerome in his Study*. Another, a later work, *A Warrior Adoring the Infant Christ* was similarly ascribed to Giorgione. This is a proof that Catena was very susceptible to various influences, and was "an artist of extraordinary suppleness of mind, never too old to learn or to appreciate new ideals and new sentiments." In a manner more his own is the *Madonna with Four Saints* in the Berlin Gallery (No. 19). The *S. Jerome* and the *Warrior* are among the most popular pictures in the National Gallery—partly perhaps on account of their supposed illustrious parentage, but by no means entirely. A painter who could so absorb the characteristics of two such masters must needs be a master himself.

Cima da Conegliano, so called from his birthplace in Friuli —the rocky height of which serves as a background in some of his pictures—settled in Venice in 1490, when he was about thirty years old. The influence of Bellini may be seen in the temperamental as well as the technical qualities of his work, which is distinguished by sound drawing and proportion, fine and brilliant colour, as well as by sympathetic types of countenance. One of his best and earliest pictures is the *S. John the Baptist* with four other saints, in Santa Maria del Orto in Venice. Another is the *Madonna with S. Jerome and S. Louis*, now in the Vienna Gallery. A smaller but peculiarly attractive piece is the *S. Anianus of Alexandria* healing a shoemaker's wounded hand, at Berlin, distinguished for its beautiful clear colours

and the life-like character of the heads.

Andrea Previtali, born in Bergamo in 1480, came to Venice to study under Bellini, whom he succeeded in imitating with remarkable success. *The Mystic Marriage of S. Catherine* (No. 1409) in the National Gallery was formerly attributed to Bellini. If he had not the originality to carry the art any farther, his pictures are nevertheless a decided and very agreeable proof of the advance that was being made in it at the beginning of the sixteenth century, before the full splendour of Giorgione and Titian had unfolded.

Marco Basaiti, though probably not a pupil of Bellini, nevertheless acquired many of his characteristics. The picture in the National Gallery known as *The Madonna of the Meadow* was until lately assigned to Bellini, and another of his, in the Giovanelli Palace at Venice, which is identical in technique, tone, and general effect with this one, is still so ascribed. Whether or not he learnt from Bellini, he was certainly an assistant to Alvise Vivarini, on whose death he completed the large altar-piece in the Church of S. Maria de Friari at Venice, representing *S. Ambrose surrounded by Saints*. His *Christ on the Mount of Olives* and *The Calling of Zebedee*, both dated 1510, are now in the Academy at Venice, and together with the *Portrait of a Man*, dated 1521, in the Bergamo Gallery, and *The Assumption* in S. Pietro Martire at Murano, may be considered his best performances.

More remote from Bellini, yet not so far as to be entirely free from his influence in some of their more important compositions, was the school formed by Lazzaro di Bastiani or Sebastiani, of which the chief ornament was Vittore Carpaccio, and among the lesser ones Giovanni Mansueti and Benedetto Diana. The history of this independent group of painters has only of late years been elucidated;

Kugler, after a page devoted to Carpaccio, dismissed them with the remark that Mansueti and Bastiani were both pupils of Carpaccio, and that Benedetto Diana was "less distinguished." Our national collection was without any example until 1896, when Mansueti's *Symbolic representation of the Crucifixion* was purchased. In 1905 the National Art-Collections Fund secured Bastiani's *Virgin and Child*, and in 1910 Sir Claude Phillips presented Diana's *Christ Blessing*. Alas! that we are still without anything from the hand of Vittore Carpaccio. Seven portraits by Moroni do not fill a gap like this.

The name of Lazzaro de Bastiani first occurs in Venice as a witness to his brother's will in 1449, and as early as 1460 he was painting an altar-piece for the Church of San Samuele. Ten years later, the brothers of the Scuolo di San Marco ordered a picture of the *Story of David* from him, promising him the same payment as they gave to Jacobo Bellini, who had been working for them with his two sons Gentile and Giovanni. In 1474, another proof of his rank and repute as a painter is afforded by a letter from a gentleman in Constantinople, asking for a picture by him, but that Giovanni Bellini should paint it in the event of Bastiani being already dead. He was thus, it would seem, preferred to Bellini, though it will be remembered that five years later, when the Sultan expressed the wish that a distinguished portrait-painter should be sent him from Venice, it was Gentile Bellini who was nominated. All the same, Gentile was a portrait-painter, and Bastiani was not; and it is fairly evident that the latter was at least in the front rank. One of his best-known pictures the *Vergine dai begli occhi* in the Ducal Palace at Venice used to be attributed to Giovanni Bellini; but though he appears to have drawn inspiration for his larger and more important compositions from Jacobo Bellini, his style was chiefly developed through that of Giambono. His most important work is now in the Academy at Vienna—an altar-piece

painted for the Church of Corpus Domini, Venice, *S. Veneranda Enthroned*. In the Imperial Gallery at Vienna are a *Last Communion* and *Funeral of S. Girolamo*. In the Academy at Venice are *S. Anthony of Padua*, seated between the branches of a walnut-tree, with Cardinal Bonaventura and Brother Leo on either side, a large picture of a *Miracle of the Holy Cross*, and a remarkable rendering of *The Madonna Kneeling*, the child being laid under an elaborate canopy. An *Entombment* in the Church of S. Antonino at Venice is reminiscent of Giovanni Bellini at his best.

In 1508, the name of Vittore Carpaccio occurs with that of Bastiani in connection with the frescoes of Giorgione upon the façade of the Fondaco de Tedeschi, about which there was a dispute. To Carpaccio we are indebted for the most vivid realization of the contemporary life of Venice; for although his subjects were nominally taken from sacred history or legend, they are treated in a thoroughly secular fashion, giving the clearest idea of the buildings, people, and costume of the Venice of his time, with the greatest variety and richest development. His object is not only to represent single events, but a complete scene, and while we observe this characteristic in one or two pictures by the Bellini, Carpaccio not only shows it much oftener, but carries it to a much fuller development—possibly influenced by the Netherlandish masters.

Many of his works are in the Academy at Venice; eight large pictures, painted between 1490 and 1495, represent the history of S. Ursula and the eleven thousand virgins. Such a wealth of charming material might have embarrassed a less capable painter, but "the monotonous incident which forms the groundwork of many of them," as Kugler coldly puts it, "is throughout varied and elevated by a free style of grouping and by happy moral allusions." Another series is that of the *Miracles of the Holy Cross*,

among which may be especially noticed the cure of a man possessed by a devil; the scene is laid in the loggia of a Venetian palace, and is watched from below by a varied group of figures on the Canal and its banks. Larger and broader treatment may be seen in the *Presentation in the Temple*, painted in 1510, which is also in the Academy, and in the altar-piece of *S. Vitale*, dated 1514. This last brings Carpaccio into closer comparison with the later Venetian painters, being in the nature of a *Santa Conversazione*, where the holy personages are grouped in some definite relation to each other, and not independent figures.

Palma Vecchio (1480-1528), so called to distinguish him from Giacomo Palma the younger—Palma Giovane,—was so much influenced by Giorgione and Titian that his indebtedness to Bellini appears to have been comparatively slight. The beautiful *Portrait of a Poet* in the National Gallery has been attributed both to Giorgione and to Titian.

The number of pictures which are now permitted by the experts to be called Giorgione's is so small, that we may learn more about him as an influence on the work of other painters—especially Titian—than from the meagre materials available for his own biography. The only unquestioned examples of his work are three pictures at the Uffizi, *The Trial of Moses*, *The Judgment of Solomon*, and *The Knight of Malta*; the *Venus* at Dresden; *The Three Philosophers* at Vienna; and the famous *Concert Champêtre* in the Louvre. But until the critics deprive him even of these, we are able to agree that "his capital achievement was the invention of the modern spirit of lyrical passion and romance in pictorial art, and his magical charm has never been equalled."

II

TIZIANO VECELLIO

Titian occupies almost, if not quite, as important a place in the history of painting as does Shakespeare in that of literature. His fame, his popularity, the wide range as well as the immense quantity of his works, entitle him to be ranked with our poet, if only for the



PLATE XIII.—GIORGIONE
VENETIAN PASTORAL
Louvre, Paris

enormous influence they have both exercised on posterity: and without carrying the parallel farther than the limits imposed by the difference of their circumstances and their method of expression, it may fairly be said that Titian, in painting, stands for us to-day much as Shakespeare stands for in letters. "Titian," says M. Caro Delvaille,[2] "is the father of modern painting. As the blood of the patriarchs of old infused the veins of a whole race, so the genius of the most productive of painters was destined to infuse those of

artists through all the ages even to the present day. He bequeathed, in his enormous *œuvre*, a heritage in which generations of painters have participated."

Not only was he the father of modern painting, but he was himself the first modern painter, just as Shakespeare was, to all present intents and purposes, the first modern writer. Among a thousand readers of Shakespeare, there is possibly not more than one who has ever read a line of Chaucer, or who has ever heard of any of his other predecessors. So it is with Titian. To the connoisseur, Titian is one of the latest painters; to the public he is the earliest. "In certain of his portraits," we read in the National Gallery Catalogue, "he ranks with the supreme masters; in certain other aspects he is seen as the greatest academician, as perhaps he was the first."

As it happens, too, Titian stands in much the same relation to Giorgione as Shakespeare did to Marlowe. Giorgione was really the great innovator, and Giorgione died young, leaving Titian to carry on the work. It has always been supposed that Titian and Giorgione, like Marlowe and Shakespeare, were born within the same year; but in this respect the parallel is no longer admissible, as Mr Herbert Cook has shown to the verge of actual proof that the story of Titian being born in 1577, and having lived to be ninety-nine years old, is unworthy of acceptance. If this were merely a question of biography, it would not be worth dwelling upon; but as it seriously affects the whole study of early Venetian painting, it is necessary to point out that the probability, according to a critical study of all the evidence available, is that Titian was not born till 1488 or 1489, and was thus really the pupil rather than the contemporary of Giorgione, and therefore more slightly influenced by Giovanni Bellini than has been generally supposed.

Without going into all the evidence adduced by Mr Cook (*Reviews and Appreciations,* Heinemann, 1913) it is nevertheless pretty evident that in the account given by his friend and contemporary, Lodovico Dolce, published in 1557, we have the most authentic story of Titian's early years, and from this it is quite clear that Titian was considerably younger than Giorgione. "Being born at Cadore," he writes, "of honourable parents, he was sent, when a child of nine years old, by his father to Venice, to the house of his father's brother, in order that he might be put under some proper master to study painting; his father having perceived in him even at that tender age strong marks of genius towards the art.... His uncle directly carried the child to the house of Sebastanio, father of the *gentilissimo* Valerio and of Francesco Zuccati (distinguished masters of the art of mosaic, ...) to learn the principles of the art. From them he was removed to Gentile Bellini, brother of Giovanni, but much inferior to him, who at that time was at work with his brother in the Grand Council Chamber. But Titian, impelled by nature to greater excellence and perfection in his art, could not endure following the dry and laboured manner of Gentile, but designed with boldness and expedition. Whereupon Gentile told him he would make no progress in painting because he diverged so much from the old style. Thereupon Titian left the stupid Gentile and found means to attach himself to Giovanni Bellini; but not perfectly pleased with his manner, he chose Giorgio da Castel Franco. Titian, then, drawing and painting with Giorgione, as he was called, became in a short time so accomplished in art that when Giorgione was painting (in 1507-8) the façade of the Fondaco de'Tedeschi, or Exchange of the German merchants, which looks towards the Grand Canal, Titian was allotted the other side which faces the market place, being at the time scarcely twenty years old. Here he represented a Judith of wonderful design and colour, so

remarkable indeed, that when the work came to be uncovered it was commonly thought to be the work of Giorgione, and all the latter's friends congratulated him (Giorgione) as being by far the best thing he had produced. Whereupon Giorgione, in great displeasure, replied that the work was from the hand of his pupil, who showed already how he could surpass his master and (what is more) Giorgione shut himself up for some days at home, as if in despair, seeing that a young (*i.e.* younger) man knew more than he did."

Again, in speaking of the famous altar-piece—the *Assumption*, now in the Academy at Venice—painted by Titian in 1516, Dolce mentions him twice as "giovinetto." "Not long afterwards he was commissioned to paint a large picture for the high altar of the Church of the Frate Minori, where Titian, quite a young man, painted in oil the Virgin ascending to Heaven.... This was the first public work which he painted in oil, and he did it in a very short time, and while still a young man."

Vasari's account of Titian's early years is substantially the same, but unfortunately opens with the statement that he was "born in the year 1480." This might easily have been a slip of the pen or a printer's mistake for 1488 or 1489, and subsequent passages in the life bear out this supposition. But partly because Titian was a Venetian and not a Florentine, and partly, no doubt, because he was still alive, and had been producing picture after picture for over sixty years at the time Vasari published his second edition in 1568, the whole account is so confused and inaccurate that its credit has been severely shaken by modern critics, with the result that it is hardly nowadays considered authentic in any respect. The following extracts, however, there seems no reason to question:——

"About the year 1507, Giorgione not being satisfied [with

the old-fashioned methods of Bellini and others] began to give his works an unwonted softness and relief, painting them in a very beautiful manner." And a little later "Having seen the manner of Giorgione, Titian early resolved to abandon that of Gian Bellino, although well grounded therein. He now, therefore, devoted himself to this purpose, and in a short time so closely imitated Giorgione that his pictures were sometimes taken for those of this master, as will be related below. Increasing in age, judgment and facility of hand, our young artist executed numerous works in fresco.... At the time when he began to adopt the manner of Giorgione, being then not more than eighteen, he took the portrait of a gentleman of the Barberigo family, who was his friend, and this was considered very beautiful, the colouring being true and natural, the hair so distinctly painted that each one could be counted, as might also the stitches in a satin doublet painted in the same work; in a word, it was so well and carefully done that it would have been taken for a work of Giorgione if Titian had not written his name on the dark ground."

With this we may leave the question of Titian's birth date, and consider the exceptional interest attaching to the question of this Barberigo portrait. According to Mr. Cook, and also, under reserve, to several other eminent authorities, it is no other than the so-called *Ariosto*, which was purchased for the National Gallery in 1904. The chief difficulties in deciding the question are, first, whether it is possible that a youth of eighteen could have painted such a masterpiece, second, that the signature *Titianus* is supposed not to have been used by the artist before about 1520, and lastly, that the head, at any rate, is decidedly more in the manner of Giorgione than that of Titian. This last, of course, did not trouble Vasari, and his testimony is therefore all the more valuable; but all difficulties vanish if we accept Mr. Cook's theory that the portrait was begun by

Giorgione in 1508, was left incomplete at his sudden death in 1510, and finished by Titian in 1520. That is to say, the head and general design is that of Giorgione, the marvellous finish of the sleeve and other parts that of Titian.

Of works left unfinished at a master's death and completed by a pupil there are numerous instances; the famous *Bacchanal* at Alnwick is one which takes us a step further in Titian's career. This was begun by Giovanni Bellini, and Titian was invited by the Duke of Ferrara, in 1516, to finish it. The landscape is entirely his. To complete the decoration of the apartment in which the picture was hung, he was called upon to paint two others of the same size, one the *Triumph of Bacchus*, or as it is usually called *Bacchus and Ariadne* (now in the National Gallery) and the other a similar subject, the *Bacchanal*, now in the Prado (No. 418, formerly 450).

Ridolfi, in his life of Titian characterises our picture as one to whose unparalleled merits he is inadequate to do justice; "There is," he says, "such a graceful expression in the figure of Ariadne, such beauty in the children—so strongly marked both in the looks and attitudes is the joyous character of the licentious votaries of Bacchus—the roundness and correct drawing of the man entwined with snakes, the magnificence of the sky and landscape, the sporting play of the leaves and branches of the most vivid tints, and the detailed herbage on the ground tending to enliven the scene, and the rich tone of colour throughout, form altogether such a whole that hardly any other work of Titian can stand in competition with it."

In the composition of the second picture, *The Bacchanal* at Madrid, a number of the votaries of Bacchus are assembled on the bank of a rivulet, flowing with red wine from a hill in the distance; some of them are distributing

the liquor to their associates, while a nymph and two men are dancing. The nymph is supposed to be a portrait of Violante, Titan's mistress, as he has painted, in allusion to her name, a violet on her breast and his own name round her arm. Her light drapery is raised by the breeze, and discovers the beautiful form and *morbidezza* of her limbs. In the foreground Ariadne lies asleep, her head resting on a rich vase in place of a pillow.[3]



PLATE XIV.—TITIAN
PORTRAIT SAID TO BE OF ARIOSTO
National Gallery, London

Cumberland says that Raphael Mengs, who lived long at

Madrid at the time when this picture was in the reception room of the New Palace, was of opinion that Titian's superior taste was nowhere more strikingly displayed, and remarks that he himself could never pass by it without surprise and admiration, more particularly excited by the beauty of the sleeping Ariadne in the foreground.

Respecting the merits of both pictures the testimony of Agostino Carracci should not be omitted; when he viewed them in the possession of the Duke of Ferrara he declared that he considered them the first in the world, and that no one could say he was acquainted with the most marvellous works of art without having seen them.

Commenting upon another picture of Titian's early period, Sir Joshua Reynolds delivers himself of the following criticisms on Titian as compared with Raphael, "It is to Titian that we must turn," he says, "to find excellence in regard to colour, and light and shade in the highest degree. He was both the first and the greatest master of this art; by a few strokes he knew how to mark the general image and character of whatever object he attempted, and produced by this alone a truer representation of nature than his master, Giovanni Bellini, or any of his predecessors, who finished every hair. His greatest object was to express the general colour, to preserve the masses of light and shade, and to give by opposition the idea of that solidity which is inseparable from natural objects....

"Raphael and Titian seemed to have looked at nature for different purposes; they both had the power of extending their view to the whole, but one looked only at the general effect as produced by form, the other as produced by colour. We cannot refuse Titian the merit of attending to the general form of the object, as well as colour; but his deficiency lay—a deficiency at least when he is compared

with Raphael—in not possessing the power, like him, of correcting the form of his model by any general idea of beauty in his own mind. Of this his *St. Sebastian with other Saints* (in the Vatican) is a particular instance. This figure appears to be a most exact representation both of the form and colour of the model which he then happened to have before him, and has all the force of nature, and the colouring of flesh itself; but unluckily the model was of a bad form, especially the legs. Titian has with much care preserved these defects, as he has imitated the beauty and brilliancy of the colouring...."

Of the Sebastian, Vasari says very much the same as Reynolds. "He is nude," he writes, "and has been exactly copied from the life without the slightest admixture of art, no efforts for the sake of beauty have been sought in any part—trunk or limbs; all is as nature left it, so that it might seem to be a sort of cast from the life. It is nevertheless considered very fine, and the figure of our Lady with the infant in her arms, whom all the other figures are looking at, is also accounted most beautiful."

Two more of the pictures of Titian's earliest period are in the National Gallery—the *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen* (No. 270), and the *Holy Family* (No. 4). The former is ascribed to about the year 1514, partly on the ground that the group of buildings in the landscape is identical, line for line, with that in the Dresden *Venus* painted by Giorgione but completed by Titian after his death. The same landscape also occurs in the beautiful little *Cupid* in the Vienna



PLATE XV.—TITIAN
THE HOLY FAMILY
National Gallery, London

Academy, and, as Mr Herbert Cook suggests, possibly represents some cherished spot in Titian's memory connected with his mountain home at Pieve di Cadore.

The *Holy Family*, above mentioned, is a most charming example of the *sacra conversazione* as developed by Titian from the somewhat formal and austere conception of Bellini and his contemporaries into something eminently characteristic of the secular side of his genius. The very titles of two of his most beautiful and most famous pictures of this sort proclaim the hold they have taken on the popular mind. The one is the *Madonna of the Cherries*, in the Vienna Gallery. The other is the *Madonna with the Rabbit*, in the Louvre. In our picture the distinguishing feature is the kneeling shepherd, with his little water-cask slung on his belt, who puts us at once in touch with the whole scene by the simple appeal to our common human experience. Raphael could move our religious feelings to revere the godhead in the child, but could seldom, like

Titian, stir our human emotions and bring home to us that Christ was born on earth for our sakes.

If this particular characteristic of Titian were confined to the pastoral setting of these Holy Conversations, it might be taken as merely accidental, and without further significance than should be accorded to a youthful fancy. But in the wonderful *Entombment*, now in the Louvre, in which he displays "the full splendour of his early maturity," the human element is such an important factor in the presentment of the divine tragedy that even a painter, M. Caro-Delvaille, must postpone his description of the picture to sentences like these:—"Sur un ciel tourmenté," he writes, in phrases which it is impossible to render adequately in English, "se profile le groupe tragique. Aucun geste superflu; le drame est intérieur. La Douleur plane dans l'air alourdi du crépuscule, comme une aile fatale—Jésus est mort! Le grand cadavre livide, que les apôtres angoissés soutiennent, n'a rien dans sa robustesse inerte de la dépouille émaciée des Christs mystiques. Le fils de Dieu semble un patriarche douloureusement frappé par le décret d'en haut.

"Une âpreté primitive, où les larmes se cachent comme une faiblesse, communique a l'œuvre un pathétique si poignant que le mystère de la mort s'étend jusqu'à nous.

"La Vierge et la Madeleine sont là. Elle, la Mère, doute de la réalité, tant elle souffre! Son regard fixe sur le corps chéri, elle ne peut croire que tout est consommé. La pécheresse pitoyable la prend dans ses bras pour essayer de l'arracher à l'horreur de cette vision.

"Drame humain et divin! ne sont-ce point des fils qui ramènent le cadavre de leur père à la poussière? Tous ceux qui passèrent par ces épreuves se souviennent de ce deuil qui semble se prolonger dans la nature entière."

Titian's first period may be said to end in 1530, by which time he had completed the famous *Peter Martyr*, which was destroyed by fire in 1867. In 1530, too, Titian's wife died. This event of itself need not be supposed to have greatly influenced his career, as there is no evidence of her having appealed to his artistic nature as did his daughter Lavinia. As it happened, however, a more certain influence was nearly coincident with this event—the arrival in Venice of the notorious Aretine, who, chiefly as it appears, with an eye to business, entered into the most intimate relations with Titian. The accession of the sculptor



PLATE XVI.—TITIAN
THE ENTOMBMENT
Louvre, Paris

Sansovino to the comradeship earned for the group the name of the Triumvirate.

So far from Titian being corrupted by the society of Aretine, there is direct evidence in one of the poet's letters to him that he was not. "You must come to our feast to-night," he writes, "but I may as well warn you that you had better leave early, as I know how particular you are about

certain things." Nor is there anything in the artist's works of this next period—which we may roughly date from 1530 to 1550, that betrays a more serious devotion to the sensual side of life than can be accounted for by the demands of the high and mighty patrons that Aretine was soon to find for him. As an artist he looked upon woman as a beautiful creature, as a man he most probably never troubled about her, or was troubled by her. There is no proof that any of his pictures are rightly called "Titian's mistress," and we may conclude that he was as good a husband and a father as was Rubens, who revelled in painting woman, or Velasquez, who seems to have frankly disliked it. Like Rowlandson, whom the general public only know as a caricaturist, but who when he once got away from London was the most pure minded and poetical artist, so Titian, when once dissociated from the demands of corrupt patrons, like Philip II., never reveals himself as having fallen under the influence of Aretine—if indeed at all. The *Danaë* and the *Venus and a Musician* at the Prado are the only examples it is possible to cite—unless it be the *Venus*, to which popular opinion would hardly deny its place of honour in the Tribune at the Uffizi.

At the same time the difference in circumstances, the fuller, richer life that he must have led in these years of patronage and prosperity, accounts for a certain "shallowness and complacency" which distinguishes his work during this period as sharply from that which preceded as from that which followed it; and fine as is his accomplishment during these years, especially in portraiture, it includes fewer of those masterpieces which appeal to the heart as much as to the eye.

To 1538 belongs the large and beautiful picture of the *Presentation of the Virgin Mary in the Temple*, painted for the Scuola della Carità in Venice, which is now occupied by the Academy, where it still hangs, as is said, in its

original place. It is twenty-two feet in length, and contains several portraits, among which are those of his daughter Lavinia (the Virgin, as is supposed), Andrea Franchescini, grand chancellor of Venice, in a scarlet robe; next him, in black, Lazzaro Crasso, a lawyer, and certain monks of the convent following them.

We now find Titian employed by the Duke of Urbino on some of the principal works of this period. Among these were the Uffizi *Venus*, said to be a portrait of the Duchess herself. The *Girl in a Fur Mantle* at Vienna, portraits of the Duke and of the Duchess (1537), and the so-called *La Bella* at the Uffizi. The so-called *Duke of Norfolk* at the Pitti, supposed to represent the young Duke Guidobaldo of Urbino. Also the *Isabella d'Este* at Vienna, and somewhat earlier, the *Cardinal Ippolito* in Hungarian dress, at the Pitti; and the *Daughter of Robert Strozzi*, at Berlin.

The large *Ecce Homo* in the Vienna Gallery, dated 1543, measuring 11 ft. 3 in. by 7 ft. 7 in. was for some years in London, and with better fortune might still be in this country if not in our national collection. It was one of the nineteen pictures by Titian in the wonderful collection of Rubens, which the Duke of Buckingham persuaded him to sell to him for a fabulous price. The collection was shipped to England in 1625, when the pictures were taken to York House in the Strand, and the statues and gems to Chelsea. In 1649 a portion of the collection was sold at Brussels, and the *Ecce Homo* was purchased there by the Archduke Leopold for his gallery at Prague, which now forms part of that at Vienna. The Earl of Arundel offered the Duke of Buckingham £7000 for it—an unheard of price, especially when we remember the greater value of money at that time.

With another masterpiece—fortunately still preserved in the Prado, though not entirely uninjured by fire—we may

close the second period. This is the magnificent equestrian portrait of *The Emperor Charles V.* which was painted at Augsburg in 1548. A few years later the Emperor abdicated in favour of his egregious son, Philip II., of whom Titian painted three portraits in succession. The second of these, now in the Prado, has an especial interest for us, inasmuch as it was painted for the benefit or the enticement of Queen Mary before her marriage to Philip. As might be expected, it is a highly flattering likeness,—in white and gold, in half armour. To quote M. Caro-Delvaille, this king of *auto da fés* and sunken galleys is here nothing more than a gallant cavalier—neurasthenic but elegant. For England was also painted the *Venus and Adonis*, in 1554; but unfortunately the original is now in Madrid, and only a copy in our National Gallery. However, the remains of Philip are there too, and not in Westminster Abbey!

A copy of another famous picture painted by Titian for the Emperor Charles V. was also in the collection of the Duke of Buckingham, who probably brought it with him when he returned from his madcap expedition with Prince Charles to Madrid. It is described in his catalogue as "One great Piece of the Emperor Charles, a copy called Titian's Glory, being the principal in Spain, now in the Escurial." This was the great *Paradise*, or Apotheosis of Charles V. which Charles took with him into Spain at the time of his abdication and placed in the monastery of St. Juste, in Estramadura, to which he retired. After his death it was removed by Philip II. to Madrid.

Of the two versions of *The Crowning with Thorns*, the earlier one at the Louvre, painted in 1560, is more familiar to, and probably more popular with, the general public than the much later one at Munich painted in 1571. But for the real merits of the two we need not hesitate to accept M. Caro-Delvaille's judgment, since if he had any bias it

would be in favour of his own country's treasure. The former he characterises as an incoherent composition, in which useless gesticulation diminishes the dramatic effect, while striving to force it; and adds that all the false romanticism of painting comes from this sort of theatrical pathos. Of the other he writes "It was the picture at the Louvre which shocked me with its violent declamation and its forced blows that never hit anything. But here at Munich a mystery so profound broods over the drama that the melodramatic element disappears. The scene becomes tragic, lamentable, hopelessly sad. The great artist with a brush that trembles in his aged hands paints but the sentiment of it, to exhale from his work like a plaintive sigh. The veil of death descends and spreads over life.... Titian might seem to have painted it as an offering to Rembrandt when he, too, should feel the approach of death."

Another of his latest pictures, the *Adam and Eve in Paradise*, is in the Prado (No. 429, formerly 456). This was copied, or one might almost say travestied, by Rubens when he was at Madrid in 1629, and his work was hung in the same room with it. As the colouring is of a lower tone than is usual with Titian, and the attitudes of the figures extremely simple and natural, the contrast is all the more marked, and was well expressed by Cumberland, who said that "when we contemplate Titian's picture of Adam and Eve we are convinced they never wore clothes; turn to the copy, and the same persons seem to have laid theirs aside."

A more generous comparison between these two painters is made by Reynolds in a note on du Fresnoy's poem on Painting respecting the qualities of regularity and uniformity. "An instance occurs to me where those two qualities are separately exhibited by two great painters, Rubens and Titian: the picture of Rubens is in the Church of S. Augustine at Antwerp, the subject (if that may be

called a subject where no story is represented) is the Virgin and Infant Christ placed high in the picture on a pedestal with many saints about them and as many below them, with others on the steps to serve as a link to unite the upper and lower part of the picture. The composition of this picture is perfect in its kind; the artist has shown the greatest skill in composing and contrasting more than twenty figures without confusion and without crowding; the whole appearing as much animated and in motion as it is possible where nothing is to be done.

"The picture of Titian which we would oppose to this is in the Church of the S. Frari at Venice (the "Pesaro Madonna," where the two donors kneel below the Virgin enthroned). One peculiar character of this piece is grandeur and simplicity, which proceed in a great measure from the regularity of the composition, two of the principal figures being represented kneeling directly opposite to each other, and nearly in the same attitude. This is what few painters would have had the courage to venture; Rubens would certainly have rejected so unpicturesque a mode of composition had it occurred to him. Both these pictures are excellent in their kind, and may be said to characterize their respective authors. There is a bustle and animation in the work of Rubens, a quiet solemn majesty in that of Titian. The excellence of Rubens is the picturesque effect he produces; the superior merit of Titian is in the appearance of being above seeking after any such "artificial excellence."

The most important artist besides Titian who was a pupil of Giorgione was Sebastiano Del Piombo, as he was called —his father's name was Luciani. But as two other notable influences determined his career, he is not to be taken as typical of the Venetian School in general or that of Giorgione in particular. Born in Venice about the year 1485, he first studied under Giovanni Bellini, as appears

from the signature as well as from the style of a *Pietà* by him in the Layard collection, which we may hope soon to see in the National Gallery. Of his Giorgionesque period there is only one important picture known to us, the beautiful altar-piece in S. Giovanni Crisostomo in Venice, which is not far removed from the richness of Titian's earlier work. The picture represents the mild and dignified S. Chrysostom seated, reading aloud at a desk in an open hall; S. John the Baptist leaning on his cross is looking attentively at him; behind him are two male and on the left two female saints listening devoutly, and in the foreground the Virgin looking majestically out of the picture at the spectator—a splendid type of the full and grand Venetian ideal of female beauty of that time. The true expression of a *Santa Conversazione* could not be more worthily given than in the relation in which the listeners stand to the reader, and in glow of colour this work is not inferior to the best of Giorgione's or Titian's.

As early as 1510, however, he not only left Venice, but also his Venetian manner. He was invited to Rome by the rich banker and patron of the arts, Agostino Chigi, where he met Raphael, and with astonishing versatility succeeded as well in emulating the excellences of that master as he had those of Bellini and Giorgione. The half-length *Daughter of Herodias* bequeathed to the National Gallery by George Salting is dated 1510, and in 1512 he painted the famous *Fornarina* in the Uffizi, which until the middle of the last century was supposed to be a *chef d'œuvre* of Raphael. To this period also belongs the *S. John in the Desert*, at the Louvre.

Within the next seven years a still mightier influence found him, that of Michelangelo, and how far he was capable of responding to it may be judged by our great *Raising of Lazarus*, painted at Rome in 1517-19 for Giulio de'Medici, afterwards Pope Clement VII., to be placed

with Raphael's *Transfiguration* in the Cathedral of Narbonne. Both pictures were publicly exhibited in Rome, and by some people Sebastiano's was preferred to Raphael's. According to Waagen the whole composition was designed by Michelangelo, with whom Sebastiano had entered into the closest intimacy; and Kugler states that the group of Lazarus and those around him was actually drawn by the master. However that may be, we can hardly fail to see how entirely the Venetian influence is obscured by that of the great Florentine, and to recognise the extraordinary genius of a painter who could do something more than imitate from such masters as Bellini, Giorgione, Raphael and Michelangelo.

The last traces of the Vivarini influence are to be seen in the earlier works of Lorenzo Lotto(1480-1556), who was a pupil of Alvise, though his pictures after 1508, when he had left Venice, Treviso and Reccanti, where he had been employed, show the effect of his changed surroundings. To this date is assigned the *Portrait of a Young Man*, at Hampton Court. At Rome in 1509 he was painting with Raphael in the Vatican, and in his next dated work, the *Entombment*, at Jesi, the echoes of Raphael's Disputation and the *School of Athens* are clear. The Dresden *Madonna and Child with S. John* was probably painted at Bergamo in 1518, and the *Madonna and Saints*, lately bequeathed to the National Gallery, is dated 1521.

At Madrid is a picture by him of *A Bride and Bridegroom* dated 1523, to which year probably belongs the *Family Group* in the National Gallery. These are early instances of the comparatively rare inclusion of more than a single figure in a pure portrait. In our example the father and mother and two children are composed into a delightful picture, in which for once we may see the actual people of the time in something like their natural surroundings, instead of being posed, however effectively, to assist in the

representation of some historic or legendary scene.

In 1527 Lotto was back again in Venice, and was probably influenced by Palma Vecchio when he painted the superb portrait of the sculptor *Odoni*, which is at Hampton Court. A little later the influence of Titian is more visible. Two other portraits are in our National Gallery, those of the Protonotary Juliano and of Agostino and Niccolo della Torre.

Bonifazio di Pitati (1487-1553), sometimes called Bonifazio Veronese or Veneziano, was born at Verona, but studied in Venice under Palma Vecchio. The influence of his native city distinguishes his work in some degree from the pure Venetian, as it did that of the more famous Paolo in later years; but the atmosphere created by Giorgione was so strong as to cause Bonifazio's masterpiece (if we except the *Dives and Lazarus* at the Academy in Venice) to be attributed until quite lately to Giorgione. It is thus described by Kugler:—"A picture in the Brera in Milan, very deserving of notice, is perhaps one of Giorgione's most beautiful works; it is historic in subject, but romantic in conception. The subject is the finding of Moses; all the figures are in the rich costume of Giorgione's time. In the centre the princess sits under a tree, and looks with surprise at the child who is brought to her by a servant. The seneschal of the princess, with knights and ladies, stand around. On one side are seated two lovers on the grass, on the other side musicians and singers, pages with dogs, a dwarf with an ape, etc. It is a picture in which the highest earthly splendour and enjoyment are brought together, and the incident from Scripture only gives it a more pleasing interest. The costume, however inappropriate to the story, disturbs the effect as little as in other Venetian pictures of the same period, since it refers more to a poetic than to a mere historic truth, and the period itself was rich in poetry; its costume too assists the

display of a romantic splendour. This picture, with all its glow of colour, is softer than the earlier works of the master, and reminds us of Titian...."

The beautiful *Santa Conversazione* in the National Gallery, again, which was formerly in the Casa Terzi at Bergamo, was there attributed to Palma Vecchio. Here the Virgin in a rose-coloured mantle is the centre of the composition, with the Child on her knee, whose foot the little S. John is bending to kiss. On the right is S. Catherine and on the left S. James the Less and S. Jerome. In the landscape are seen a shepherd lying beside his flock, while other shepherds are fleeing from a lion who has seized their dog. A copy of this composition is in the Academy at Venice.

Oddly enough it was a pupil of Bonifazio who employed the grand Venetian manner in the humbler and more commonplace walks of life, and neglecting alike the *Sacra Conversazione* and the pompous scenes of festivity, developed into the first Italian painter of *genre*. This was Jacopo da Ponte, called from his birthplace Bassano, who was working in Venice under Bonifazio as early as 1535. He afterwards returned to Bassano, and selecting those scenes in which he could most extensively introduce cottages, peasants, and animals, he connected them with events from sacred history or mythology. A peculiar feature by which his pictures may be known is the invariable and apparently intentional hiding of the feet of his figures, for which purpose sheep and cattle and household utensils are introduced. He confines himself to a bold, straightforward imitation of familiar objects, united, however, with pleasing composition, colour, and chiaroscuro. His colours, indeed, sparkle like gems, particularly the greens, in which he displays a brilliancy quite peculiar to himself. His lights are boldly infringed on the objects, and are seldom introduced except on

prominent parts of the figures. In accordance with this treatment his handling is spirited and peculiar, somewhat in the manner of Rembrandt; and what on close inspection appears dark and confused, forms at a distance the very strength and magic of his colouring. The picture of the *Good Samaritan* in the National Gallery is a good example, and was formerly in the collection of Reynolds, who it is said always kept it in his studio. The *Portrait of a Man* (No. 173) is excelled by that of an *Old Man* at Berlin.

III

PAOLO VERONESE AND IL TINTORETTO

It cannot be said that the Venetian artists of the second half of the sixteenth century equalled in their collective excellence the great masters of the first, but in single instances they are frequently entitled to rank beside them. At the head of these is Jacopo Robusti (1518-1594), called Il Tintoretto (the dyer), in allusion to his father's trade. He was one of the most vigorous painters in all the history of art; one who sought rather than avoided the greatest difficulties, and who possessed a true feeling for animation and grandeur. If his works do not always charm, it should be imputed to the foreign and non-Venetian element which he adopted, but never completely mastered; and also to the times in which he lived, when Venetian art had fallen somewhat into the mistaken way of colossal and rapid productiveness. His off-hand style, as Kugler calls it, is always full of grand and significant detail, and with a few patches of colour he sometimes achieves the liveliest forms and expressions. But he fails in that artistic arrangement of the whole and in that nobility of motives in the parts which are necessary exponents of a really high ideal. His

compositions are achieved less by finely studied degrees of participation in the principal action than by great masses of light and shade. Attitudes and movements are taken immediately from common life, not chosen from the best models. With Titian the highest ideal of earthly happiness in existence is expressed by beauty; with Tintoretto in mere animal strength, sometimes of an almost rude character.

For a short time he was a pupil of Titian, but for some unknown reason he soon left him, and struck out for himself. In the studio which he occupied in his youth he had inscribed, as a definition of the style he professed, "The drawing of Michelangelo, the colouring of Titian." He copied the works of the latter, and also designed from casts of Florentine and antique sculpture, particularly by lamplight—as did Romney a couple of centuries later—to exercise himself in a more forcible style of relief. He also made models for his works, which he lighted artificially, or hung up in his room, in order to master perspective. By these means he united great strength of shadow with the Venetian colouring, which gives a peculiar character to his pictures, and is very successful when limited to the direct imitation of nature. But apart from the impossibility of combining two such totally different excellences as the colouring of Titian and the drawing of Michelangelo, it appears that Tintoretto's acquaintance with the works of the latter only developed his tendency to a naturalistic style. That which with Michelangelo was the symbol of a higher power in nature was adopted by Tintoretto in its literal form. Most of his defects, it is probable, arose from his indefatigable vigour, which earned for him the nickname of *Il Furioso*. Sebastian del Piombo said that Tintoretto could paint as much in two days as would occupy him two years. Other sayings were that he had three brushes, one of gold, one of silver, and a third of brass, and that if he was sometimes equal to Titian he was

often inferior to Tintoretto! In this last category Kugler puts two of his earliest works, the enormous *Last Judgment*, and *The Golden Calf*, in the church of S. Maria dell'Orto, while on his much later *Last Supper* he is still more severe. "Nothing more utterly derogatory," he writes, "both to the dignity of art and to the nature of the subject can be imagined. S. John is seen with folded arms, fast asleep, while others of the Apostles with the most burlesque gestures are asking, 'Lord, is it I?' Another Apostle is uncovering a dish which stands on the floor without remarking that a cat has stolen in and is eating from it. A second is reaching towards a flask; a beggar sits by, eating. Attendants fill up the picture. To judge from an overthrown chair the scene appears to have been a revel of the lowest description. It is strange that a painter should venture on such a representation of this subject scarcely a hundred years after the creation of Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*."

It was in 1548, when but thirty years old, that Tintoretto first became famous, with the large *Miracle of S. Mark*, now in the Venice Academy. This is perhaps his finest as well as his most celebrated work; but the greatest monument to his industry and general ability is the Scuola di'San Rocco, where he began to work in 1560 under a contract to produce three pictures a year for an annuity of a hundred ducats. In all there are sixty-two of his pictures in this building, the greater part of them very large, the figures throughout being of the size of life. *The Crucifixion*, painted in 1565, is the most extensive of them, and on the whole the most perfect. In 1590, four years before his death, he completed the enormous *Paradise* in the Sala del Gran Consiglio, measuring seventy-four feet in length and thirty in height.

In the National Gallery we have three characteristic examples, fortunately on a smaller scale, namely, the *S.*

George on a white horse, which, with its greyish flesh tones and the blue of the princess's mantle, is cooler in tone than the generality of his pictures; *Christ washing the Disciples' Feet*, and the very beautiful and radiant *Origin of the Milky Way*, purchased from Lord Darnley in 1890. At Hampton Court a still finer example, *The Nine Muses*, is so discoloured by age and hung in such a difficult light that it is impossible to enjoy its full beauty.

Paolo Caliari, better known as Veronese, was born ten years later than Tintoretto, and died six years before him (1528-1588). He studied in his native city of Verona till he was twenty, and after working for some time at Mantua he came to Venice in 1555, where he was quickly recognised by Titian and by Sansovino, the sculptor and Director of Public Buildings, and was commissioned in that year to paint a *Coronation of the Virgin* and other works in the church of S. Sebastian. The *Martyrdom of S. Giustino*, now in the Uffizi, and the *Madonna and Child* in the Louvre are also among his earlier works. As early as 1562 he was at work on the enormous *Feast at Cana*, now in the Louvre, and a similar work at Dresden is of the same date. In 1564 he went to Rome, where he studied the works of Raphael and Michelangelo. On his return to Venice in



PLATE XVII.—TINTORETTO
ST GEORGE AND THE DRAGON ***National Gallery***

1565—after visiting Verona, where he painted in his parish church, and also married—he was employed to decorate the Ducal Palace, but much of his best work there was destroyed by fire. Two of his most important works completed before 1573 are in the Academy at Venice, *The Battle of Lepanto* and the *Feast in the House of Levi*. In this last he incurred strictures from the Inquisition more

severe than those of Kugler upon Tintoretto's *Last Supper*, and possibly with as much reason, it being objected that the introduction of German soldiery, buffoons, and a parrot was "irreligious." His *Family of Darius*, now in the National Gallery, was one of his latest works.

Veronese, even more than Titian, whom in colouring he sought to emulate, and Tintoretto, whom in this respect he certainly excelled, expresses the spirit of the Venetians of his time—a powerful and noble race of human beings, as Kugler calls them, elate with the consciousness of existence, and in full enjoyment of all that renders earth attractive. By the splendour of his colour, assisted by rich draperies and other materials, by a very clear and transparent treatment of the shadows, he infused a magic into his great canvases which surpasses almost all the other masters of the Venetian School. Never had the pomp of colour, on a large scale, been so exalted and glorified as in his works. This, his peculiar quality, is most decidedly and grandly developed in scenes of worldly splendour; he loved to paint festive subjects for the refectories of rich convents, suggested of course from particular passages in the Scriptures, but treated with the greatest freedom, especially as regards the costume, which is always of his own time. Instead, therefore, of any religious sentiment, we are presented with a display of the most cheerful human scenes and the richest worldly splendour. That which distinguishes him from Tintoretto, and which in his later period, after the death of Titian and Michelangelo, earned for him the rank of the first living master, was that beautiful vitality, that poetic feeling, which as far as it was possible he infused into a declining period of art. At the same time it becomes more and more evident, as our attention is turned to the deeper and nobler spirit of the earlier masters in Venice, that the beauty of his figures is more addressed to the senses than to the soul, and that his naturalistic tendencies are often allowed to run wild.

The most celebrated, and as it happens the most historically interesting, of his great pictures is the *Feast at Cana*, in the Louvre, measuring thirty feet wide and twenty feet high. This was formerly in the refectory of S. Giorgio Maggiore in Venice. The scene is a brilliant atrium, surrounded by majestic pillars. The tables at which the guests are seated form three sides of a parallelogram. The guests are supposed to be almost entirely contemporary portraits, so that the figures of Christ and His mother, of themselves insignificant enough, lose even more in the general interest of the subject. Servants occupy the foreground, while on the raised balustrades and the balconies of distant houses are innumerable onlookers. The most remarkable feature of the whole composition is a group of musicians in the centre of the foreground, which are portraits of the artist himself and Tintoretto, playing on violon-cellos, and Titian, in a red robe, with the contra-bass.

Christ in the House of Simon, the Magdalen washing His feet, is another scarcely less gigantic picture in the Louvre; but it is much simpler in arrangement, and is distinguished by the fineness of the heads, especially that of the Christ. An interesting piece of technical criticism on the *Feast at Cana* occurs in Reynolds's Eighth Discourse:—

"Another instance occurs to me," he says, "where equal liberty may be taken in regard to the management of light. Though the general practice is to make a large mass about the middle of the picture surrounded by shadow, the reverse may be practised, and the spirit of rule may still be preserved.... In the great composition of Paul Veronese, the *Marriage at Cana*, the figures are for the most part in half shadow; the great light is in the sky; and indeed the general effect of this picture, which is so striking, is no more than what we often see in landscapes, in small pictures of fairs and country feasts; but those principles of light and

shadow, being transferred to a large scale, to a space containing near a hundred figures as large as life, and conducted to all appearance with as much facility and with an attention as steadily fixed upon the *whole together* as if it were a small picture immediately under the eye, the work justly excites our admiration; the difficulty being increased as the extent is enlarged."

With the death of the great Venetians, Titian, Tintoretto, and Paul Veronese, in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, the history of Italian painting of the first rank comes to an end. In Florence, the imitation of Michelangelo was the chief object striven after, and, as might be expected, the attempt was not eminently successful. The greater number of the Italian painters of the early seventeenth century who attained any fame are known by the name of Eclectics, from their having endeavoured, instead of imitating any one of their great predecessors, to select and unite the best qualities of each, without, however, excluding the direct study of nature. The fallacy of this aim, when carried to an extreme, is, of course, that the greatness of the earlier masters consisted really in their individual and peculiar qualities, and to endeavour to unite characteristics essentially different involves a contradiction.

The most important of the Eclectic schools was that of the Carracci, at Bologna, which was founded by Lodovico Carracci (*c*. 1555-1619), a scholar of Prospero Fontana and Passignano at Florence. In his youth he was nicknamed "the ox," partly from his slowness, but possibly also for his study of long-forgotten methods, by which he arrived at the decision that reform was necessary to counteract the independence of the mannerists. He therefore obtained the assistance of his two nephews, Agostino and Annibale Carracci, sons of a tailor, and in concert with them opened an academy at Bologna in 1589. This he furnished with

casts, drawings, and engravings, and provided living models and gave instruction in perspective, anatomy, etc. In spite of opposition this academy became more and more popular, and before long all the other schools of art in Bologna were closed.

The principles of their teaching was succinctly expressed in a sonnet written by Agostino, in substance as follows:—"Let him who wishes to be a good painter acquire the design of Rome, Venetian action and chiaroscuro, the dignified colouring of Lombardy (that is to say, of Leonardo da Vinci), the terrible manner of Michelangelo, Titian's truth and nature, the sovereign purity of Correggio, and the perfect symmetry of Raphael. The decorum and well-grounded study of Tibaldi, the invention of the learned Primaticcio, and a *little* of the grace of Parmigiano."

This "patchwork ideal," as Kugler calls it, was, however, but a transition step in the history of the Carracci and their art. In the prime of their activity they threw off a great deal of their eclecticism, and attained an independence of their own. The merit of Lodovico is chiefly that of a reformer and a teacher, and the pictures by Agostino are few and of no great account. But in Annibale we find much more than imitation of the characteristics of great masters. In his earlier works there are rather obvious traces of Correggio and Paul Veronese, but under the influence of the works of Raphael and Michelangelo and of the antique, as he understood it, he developed a style of his own. Though in recent years he is a little out of fashion with the public, there is no question about his having a place among the greater artists. To show how opinion can change, I venture to quote a passage from a letter written to me on the subject of Carracci's *The Three Maries*, lately presented to the National Gallery by the Countess of Carlisle:—"I saw the gallery at Castle Howard in 1850. *The Three Maries*

was then still regarded as one of *the* great pictures of the world; and they told the story of how Lord Carlisle and Lord Ellesmere and Lord——, who shared the Paris purchases [after the Peace of 1815] between them, had to cast lots for this, because it was thought to be worth more than all the rest of the spoil."

The most important, or at any rate one of the most popular, of the pupils of Carracci was Domenico Zampieri, commonly called Domenichino (1581-1641). If we are less enthusiastic about him at the present, it may still be remembered that Constable particularly admired him, but it is significant that the four examples in the National Gallery are numbered 48, 75, 77 and 85—there is no more recent acquisition. He had great facility, and his compositions—not always original—are treated with great charm if with no real depth. His most famous picture, the *Communion of S. Jerome*, now in the Vatican, is closely imitated from Agostino Carracci's.

Guido Reni (1575-1642), even more popular in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries than Domenichino, was as skilful in some respects, but hardly as admirable. The *Ecce Homo*, bequeathed by Samuel Rogers to the National Gallery, is an excellent example of his ability to charm the sentimentalist, and if ever there should be a popular revival of taste in the direction of the now neglected school of the Carracci, he will possibly resume all the honour formerly paid to him. The same can hardly be predicted for the far inferior Carlo Maratti, Guercino, and Carlo Dolce.

Space forbids me more than the bare mention in these pages of the brilliant revival of painting in Venice during the earlier part of the eighteenth century by Antonio Canale (1697-1768), Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1692-1769), Pietro Longhi (1702-1785), and Francesco Guardi (1712-1793).

Charming as their excellent accomplishments were, they must give place to more important claims awaiting our attention in other countries.

SPANISH SCHOOL

One of the sensations of the Exhibition of Spanish Old Masters at the Grafton Gallery in the autumn of 1913 was an altar panel, dated 1250, which was acquired by Mr Roger Fry in Paris, and catalogued as of the "Early Catalan School." In view of the fact that this picture is "certainly to be regarded as one of the very oldest of primitive pictures painted on wood in any country ... a decade earlier than the picture by Margaritone in the National Gallery," it seems somewhat dogmatic to assert that while retaining a strongly Byzantine character "the style is distinctly that of Catalonia." What was the style of Catalonia?

So far as the history of the art is concerned, the chapter on Spain is, with one exception, a very short and a singularly uninteresting one, whether Mr Fry's panel was painted in Catalonia or whether it was not; and in spite of every effort to find in this uncongenial country that expansion of painting that might reasonably have been expected to flow from Italy and moisten its barren soil for the production of so wonderful a genius as Velasquez, there is positively nothing earlier than Velasquez, and not very much after him, that has more than what we may call a documentary interest. While in Italy or the Netherlands the names of scores of painters earlier than the seventeenth century are endeared to us by the recollection of the works they have left us, the enumeration of those of the few Spaniards of

whom we have any knowledge awakens no such thrill, and if we have ever heard of them, their works mean little more to us than their names. Only when we come within touch of Velasquez does our interest awaken—as in the case of Ribera and Zurbaran—and that is less because of them than because of Velasquez. El Greco was not a Spaniard by birth, but a Cretan; and if he were ranged with the Italians, to whom he more properly belongs, he would scarcely be more famous than some Bolognese masters whose names are now—or perhaps we ought to say, at the present moment—almost forgotten. The announcement that one of his portraits has been sold to an American for £30,000 is of commercial rather than of artistic interest.

If one had to sum up the career and the art of Velasquez in a sentence, it might be done by calling him a Court painter who never flattered. After recording his life from the time when he left his master Pacheco to enter the service of Philip IV. to the day that he died in it, we shall find that only a bare percentage of his work was not commissioned by the king; and in all his pictures which were not simply portraits there is little if anything to be found which is not as literal and truthful a presentment of the model in front of him as the life-like representations of Philip and those about his Court, of which the supreme quality is that of living resemblance, or to put it in more general terms, vivid realism. Gifted as he must have been with an extraordinary vision and a still rarer, if not unique, ability to put down on canvas what he saw, he confined himself entirely within the limits of actuality, and thereby attained to heights which his great contemporaries Rubens and Rembrandt in their noblest flights of imagination never reached.

Velasquez was baptised on the 6th of June 1599, in the church of S. Peter at Seville. He was the son of well-to-do parents; his father, a native of Seville, was named Juan

Rodriguez de Silva, his mother Geronima Velasquez. At thirteen years old he had displayed so strong an inclination towards painting that he was put to study under Francisco de Herrera, then the most considerable painter in Spain (his son, also Francisco, was the painter of the *Christ Disputing with the Doctors*, in the National Gallery), but owing to Herrera's violent temper Velasquez was shortly transferred to the studio of Francisco Pacheco, whose daughter he eventually married.

Pacheco who was, besides being an accomplished artist, a man of literary tastes, and much sought after in Seville by the more intellectual class of society, was exceedingly proud of his pupil, and said of him that he was induced to bestow the hand of his daughter upon him "by the rectitude of his conduct, the purity of his morals, and his great talents, and from the high expectation he entertained of his natural abilities and transcendent genius," adding that the honour of having been his instructor was far greater than that of being his father-in-law, and that he felt it no demerit to be surpassed by so brilliant a pupil.

In 1649 Pacheco published a book on painting, in which we are told that the first attempts of Velasquez were studies in still life, or simple compositions of actual figures, called *bodegones* in Spanish, of which we have a fair example at the National Gallery in the *Christ at the House of Martha*. Sir Frederick Cook, at Richmond, has another, an *Old Woman Frying Eggs*, and the Duke of Wellington two more, of which *The Water Carrier of Seville* is probably the summit of the young painter's achievement before he left Seville, in 1623, and entered the service of Philip IV. as Court painter.

His first portrait of the king was the magnificent whole length in the Prado Gallery, now numbered 1182, standing in front of a table with a letter in his right hand. No. 1183

is the head of the same portrait, possibly done as a study for it. Philip was so pleased with this that he ordered all existing portraits of himself to be removed from the palace, and appointed Velasquez exclusively as his painter.

Another of his earliest successes at Court was the whole length portrait of the king's brother, Don Carlos, holding a glove in his right hand; and the picture now in the Museum at Rouen of *A Geographer* is probably of this date.

In 1628, when Velasquez was still quite young, and had fallen under no influence save that of Pacheco and the school of Seville, he was charged by the king to entertain Rubens, who came to the Spanish Court on a diplomatic mission, and show him all the treasures in the palace. If any one could influence Velasquez, we might suppose it would have been Rubens, who was not only a great painter, but a man of the most captivating manners and disposition, ever ready to help younger artists. But not only did he have no perceptible effect on the style of Velasquez, but in the picture of *The Topers*, which must have been painted while Rubens was at Madrid, or very shortly after he left, we can almost see a determination not to be influenced by him; for the subject was a favourite one of Rubens's, and yet there is nothing in this most realistic presentment of



PLATE XVIII.—VELAZQUEZ
THE INFANTE PHILIP PROSPER
Imperial Gallery, Vienna

actual figures under the title of Bacchus and his votaries which has anything at all in common with the florid and imaginative compositions of the Flemish painter. Velasquez had begun as a realist, and a realist he was to continue till the end of his days.

Shortly after painting this picture he left his native country for the first time, and visited Venice and Rome. At Venice he made copies of Tintoretto's *Last Supper* and

Crucifixion; but little if any of Tintoretto's influence is to be seen in the two pictures he painted in Rome—*The Forge of Vulcan* and *Joseph's Coat*, both of which are still as realistic as ever in treatment, though showing great advances in technical skill. Soon after his return to Spain in 1631, he probably painted the magnificent whole length *Philip IV.* in the National Gallery, which compares so well, on examination with the more popular and showy *Admiral Pulido Pareja* purchased some years ago from Longford Castle. Senor Beruete, who has studied the work of Velasquez more closely and more intelligently than any one else, considers that whereas there is not a single touch upon the former that is not from the brush of Velasquez, the latter cannot be properly attributed to him at all—any more than can another popular favourite, the *Alexandro del Borro* in the Berlin Gallery, now given to Bernard Strozzi.

To this period may be also assigned the *Christ at the Column* in the National Gallery, a picture which though not at first sight attractive, is nevertheless as fine in technique, and in sentiment, as any other picture in the Spanish room, and deserves far more attention than is usually given to it. Its simple realism and its pathetic sweetness are qualities which are wanting in many a more showy or sensational composition, and the more it is studied the nearer we find we are getting to the real excellences that distinguish Velasquez from any painter who has ever lived. The *Crucifixion* at the Prado is perhaps more wonderful, but the familiar subject helps the imagination of the spectator to admire it, whereas the unfamiliar setting of our picture is apt at first sight to repel.

The most important composition undertaken by Velasquez in this middle period of his career—that is to say between his two visits to Italy in 1629 and 1649—is the famous *Surrender of Breda*, or, as it is sometimes called, *The Lances*. Soon after his arrival in Madrid he had

once painted an historical subject, *The Expulsion of the Moors*, in competition with his rivals who had asserted that he could paint nothing but heads. In this competition the prize was awarded to him, but as the picture has perished we are unable to judge of its merits for ourselves. But apart from this, and such unimportant groups of figures as we have mentioned, he had been occupied wholly in painting single portraits, and it is a marvellous proof of his genius that he should produce such a masterpiece of composition as *The Lances* with so little practice in this branch of his art. Here, at least, we might have expected to trace the influence of Rubens, but there is actually no sign of it; and if he sought any inspiration at all from other painters, it was from what he recalled of Tintoretto's work which he had seen and studied in Venice.

In the king's eldest boy, *Baltazar Carlos*, who was born in 1629, Velasquez found a model for two or three of his most charming pictures. One is at Castle Howard; a second the equestrian portrait, on a galloping pony, at the Prado; and a third the full length hunting portrait, also at the Prado, in which we see the little prince standing under a tree, gun in hand, with an enormous dog lying beside him. Another is at Vienna, representing him as of about eleven years old, full length, with his hand resting on the back of a chair. All of these owe some of their charm to the youth and attractive personality of the subject; but if we want to see the power of Velasquez without any outside element to help us to appreciate it, there is the portrait of the sculptor *Martinez Montanes* at the Prado. "The head is wonderful in its colour and its modelling," writes Senor Beruete; "and what a lesson in technique! The eyes, lightly touched with colour, are set deep in their sockets, and surmounted by a strongly marked forehead. The high lights are of a rich *impasto*, manipulated with extraordinary skill; the greyer tones of the flesh, so true and so delicate, are painted in a way that brings out with marvellous truth, both the soft

parts of the cheeks and the harder structure of the face, under which one can follow the bones of the nose and forehead.... Everything in the picture is spontaneous, and one can see that it is a pledge of friendship given by one artist to another; there is nothing here of that artificial arrangement that spoils commissioned portraits even when they are the work of a painter as independent as Velasquez was. One feels here the assurance of an artist who knows that his work will be understood by his friend in the spirit in which it was executed." M. Lefort, the French critic, is even more enthusiastic. "Ah! these redoubtable neighbours," he exclaims, seeing it surrounded by the works of other painters at the Prado. "This canvas makes them look like mere imitations—dead conventional likenesses. Van Dyck is dull, Rubens oily, Tintoret yellow; it is Velasquez alone who can give us the illusion of life in all its fulness!"

In 1649 Velasquez paid his second visit to Rome, where he painted the famous portrait of His Holiness, *Pope Innocent X.* which is now in the Doria palace. This is exceptional in treatment, inasmuch as it is the only portrait by Velasquez in which the subject is seated—excepting of course equestrian portraits—and instead of the usual quiet tones of grey and brown which he was so fond of employing, the picture of the Pope is a radiant harmony of rose red and white. In its realism it is even more surprising than most of the other portraits, considering how ugly the face had to be made to resemble nature, although the sitter was of a still higher rank than Velasquez's royal master.

Returning to Madrid in 1651, Velasquez never again left Spain, and the remaining twenty years of his life may be considered the third period of his artistic development, inasmuch as no special influence was exerted upon him outside the ordinary and somewhat tedious course of his employment at the Court. To this period are assigned

twenty-six pictures—Senor Beruete only admits the authenticity of eighty-three in all, it may be mentioned—twelve of which are royal portraits, seven those of buffoons and dwarfs, three mythological and two sacred subjects, and the two famous pieces of real life, *Las Meninas* and *Las Hilanderas*.

Of the royal portraits those of the *Infanta Margarita* are among the most fascinating, no less from their technical excellence than on account of the youthful charm of the little Princess. The one at Vienna represents her as about three years old, dressed in red, standing by a little table. Of this, Senor Beruete says that it is "one of the most beautiful inspirations of Velasquez, and perhaps one that reveals better than any other his power as a colourist; it is a flower, perfumed with every infantine grace." Another standing portrait, though only a half length, when she was not many years older, is that in the Salon Carré at the Louvre, which is more familiar to us being nearer home and more often reproduced. M. de Wyczewa praises it thus:—"The perfect *chefs-d'œuvre* collected in this glorious salon pale in the presence of this child portrait; not one of them can bear comparison with this simple yet powerful painting, which seems to aim only at external resemblance and without other effort to attain a mysterious beauty of form and colour." At Frankfort again is a charming picture of the little Princess, whole length, at the age of six or seven—a replica of which is at Vienna. She is dressed in greyish white with trimmings of black, and her hoop skirt is so enormous that her arms have to be stretched out straight to allow her hands to reach the edge of her coat.

Of the three mythological subjects two are in the Prado, namely the *Mars* and the *Mercury and Argus*, while the third and most beautiful is the *Venus at the Mirror* recently purchased for our national collection. These were all of them painted for the decoration of the royal palaces, and

we may therefore suppose that the artist was not entirely at liberty either in the choice of his subject or in his method of treating it. Certainly he does not seem to have been fond of painting the nude, unless with men, and it is noticeable that he has posed his model in this case with more modesty and reserve than is to be observed in the pictures of Rubens and Titian. The Holy Church was sternly averse to this class of painting, in which, accordingly, none of the Spanish school indulged; but at the same time the royal galleries did not exclude the most exuberant fancies of Rubens, Titian, Tintoretto, and others, and Velasquez was in all probability commissioned by Philip to paint this Venus—and another which has perished—along with the Mars and Mercury without regard to the ecclesiastical authorities. But it is hardly surprising if Velasquez availed himself less fully of the privilege than a Flemish or Italian painter would no doubt have done, and has given us so chaste and beautiful a realisation of the goddess. Having regard to the scepticism with which this masterpiece was received in England at the time of its purchase for the nation it is worth quoting Senor Beruete's remarks upon it in that connection. "The authenticity of this work," he writes "has found numerous doubters in Spain, less on account of its subject—being the only nude female figure in the whole *œuvre* of Velasquez—than because so few people ever suspected its existence; but after it was exhibited at Manchester in 1857 and in London in 1890, it was recognised that its attribution to Velasquez was well founded. At the sight of the canvas all doubt vanishes. There, indeed, is the style, the inimitable technique of Velasquez."

This, from the connoisseur who has devoted years of study to the work of the master, and who rejects such well established examples as the Dulwich *Philip IV.* and the *Admiral Pulido Pareja*, is surely more conclusive than the academic pedantry of ignorance masquerading as

authority.

Bartolomé Estéban Murillo (1617-1682) has always been accounted the most popular of the Spanish painters, and it is only in recent times that his popularity has faded into comparative insignificance on the fuller recognition and understanding of the genius of Velasquez. The intensely Anglican feeling in this country during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries



PLATE XIX.—VELAZQUEZ
THE ROKEBY VENUS
National Gallery, London

seems to have found peculiar relief in the sentimental aspirations of the followers of Raphael in the rendering of religious subjects from the Romish point of view. At the present time we are readier to estimate Murillo's justly high place in the annals of painting by such a picture as his own portrait, lent by Lord Spencer to the recent Exhibition, than to allow it on the strength of our recollection of the Madonnas and Holy Families, Immaculate Conceptions and Assumptions, of which there exist so many copies in the dining rooms of country rectories. The *Boy Drinking*,

which is here reproduced, if it is the least "important" of the four examples in the National Gallery, is certainly not the least excellent.

From the miserable state into which Spain had fallen by the end of the seventeenth century, it could hardly be expected that anything further in the nature of art would result, and it was not until towards the end of the eighteenth that another genius arose, in the person of Francisco Goya (1746-1828). Of this extraordinary phenomenon in the firmament of art it is impossible to say more than a very few words in this place. Like a meteor, he is rather to be pointed at than talked about, when there are so many stars and planets whose regular courses have to be observed and recorded. He was like a sharp knife drawn across the face of Spain, gashing it here and there, but for the most part just touching it lightly enough to sting and to leave a mark. As a Court painter he was an unqualified success, his salary under Charles IV. rising in ten years from 15,000 to 50,000 reals; but his official productions are not the less devoid of interest on that account, and are sometimes the more satirical from the necessity for concealment. In his more outspoken works, such as the *Disasters of War*, and the series of prints called *Los Caprichos* and *Tauromachia*, he is too brutal not to affect the ordinary observer's judgment upon his artistic qualities. Velasquez himself could scarcely stop short enough, when painting dwarfs and idiots and cripples, to let us admire his genius unhampered by shivers of repulsion. Goya, being exactly the opposite of Velasquez in temperament, had no scruples about expressing the utmost of his subject; and even in decorating a church was reproved for "falling short of the standard of chastity" required. But between the extremes of brutality and conventionalism there is such a wide expanse of pure joy of painting that nothing can diminish the reputation of Goya, however much it is likely to be enhanced. To the modern Spanish painter he is

probably as fixed a beacon as Velasquez.



PLATE XX.—MURILLO
A BOY DRINKING ***National Gallery, Londo***

FLEMISH SCHOOL

I

HUBERT AND JAN VAN EYCK

In 1383, on the death of Louis de Maele, his son-in-law Philip the Hardy, Duke of Burgundy, assumed the government of Flanders. In the same year Philip founded the Carthusian Convent at Dijon and employed a Flemish painter named Melchin Broederlam to embellish two great shrines within it. To the strong-handed policy of Philip and his successors during the ensuing century may be attributed the rise of Netherlandish art which, though existing before their time, required their vigorous repression of intestine feuds to give it an opportunity of developing. Under Louis and his predecessors Flanders and its cities had risen to great commercial importance, but its rulers had neither the strength nor the prestige to keep the turbulent spirit of their subjects in due bounds. The school of painting which now arose so rapidly to perfection under the Dukes of Burgundy thus owed a portion of its progress to the wealth and independence of the commercial classes. The taste, power, and cultivation of a Court gave it an additional spur; and the clergy throwing in their weight, added their support in aid of art.

Two wings of one of the Dijon shrines are still preserved in the museum there, and in these Messrs Crowe and Cavalcaselle observe the characteristics of much that was to follow:—"Although Melchior's style was founded on the study of the painters of the Rhine, his composition was similar to the later productions of the Flemish school. A tendency to realism already marks this early Fleming, and is the distinctive feature of a manner in which the painter strives to imitate nature in its most material forms. Idealism and noble forms are lacking, but Broederlam is a fair imitator of the truth. Distinctive combination and choice of colours in draperies, and vigorous tone,

characterise him as they do the early works at Bruges and other cities of the Netherlands which may be judged by his standard." And again, "the painter evidently struggled between the desire to give a material imitation, and the inspirations of graceful teachers like those of Cologne.... Penetrated with similar ideas the early Flemings might under similar circumstances have risen to a sweet and dignified conception of nature; and if we fail to discover that they attained this aim we must attribute the failure to causes peculiar to Flanders. Amongst these we may class the social status of the Flemish painters, whose positions in the household of princes subjected them perhaps to caprices unfavourable to the development of high aspirations, or the contemplation and free communion with self which are the soul of art."

It is interesting to compare these observations, so far as they refer to the realism which characterises Netherlandish painting, with those of Dr Waagen, who it will be seen explains it on the broader grounds of national temperament. "Early Netherlandish painting," he contends, "in its freedom from all foreign influence, exhibits the contrast between the natural feeling of the Greek and the German races respectively in the department of art—these two races being the chief representatives of the cultivation of the ancient and the modern world. In this circumstance consists the high significance of this school when considered in reference to the general history of art. While it is characteristic of the Greek feeling—from which was derived the Italian—to idealise,—and to idealise, be it observed, not only the conceptions of the ideal world but even such material objects as portraits,—by the simplification of forms and the prominence given to the more important parts of a work of art, the early Netherlanders, on the other hand, conferred a portrait-like character upon the most ideal personifications of the Virgin, the Apostles, Prophets, and Martyrs, and in actual

portraiture aimed at rendering even the most accidental peculiarities of nature, like warts and wrinkles, with excruciating fidelity.

"While the Greeks expressed the various features of outward nature—such as rivers, fountains, hills, trees, etc. —under abstract human forms, the Netherlanders endeavoured to express them as they had seen them in nature, and with a truth which extended to the smallest details.

"In opposition to the ideal, and what may be called the personifying tendency of the Greeks, the Netherlanders developed a purely realistic and landscape school.

"In this respect the other Teutonic nations are found to approach them most nearly, the Germans first, and then the English."

But whatever may have been the causes which produced the distinguishing features of Netherlandish painting, we have still to enquire the origin from which the practice of painting in northern Europe proceeded. For in taking Melchior Broederlam as a starting-point we are only going as far back—with the exception of certain rude wall paintings—as the earliest examples take us; and having seen how in Italy the whole history of the art is traceable to Cimabue, Duccio, and Giotto, through the Byzantines, at least a century before Broederlam comes under our notice, we might naturally conclude that it was from Italy that it spread to Cologne, and from Cologne to the Netherlands. So far as is known, however, this was not the case, and we must look elsewhere than to Italy for the influences which formed this school. Nevertheless it was a collateral branch of the same stock—Byzantine art—and the family resemblance comes out none the less strongly from the two branches having developed under different circumstances. In Italy, as we have seen, the Byzantine seed, sown in such

fertile soil, attained suddenly a great luxuriance. In the north, transplanted by Charlemagne to Aix-la-Chapelle in the ninth century, it grew slowly and more timidly, but none the less surely, under the cover of Monasticism, in the manuscripts illuminated with miniatures; and thus when it did burst forth into fuller blossom, the boldness of the Italian masters, who worked at large in fresco, was wanting, and a detailed and almost meticulous realism was its chief characteristic. Another point worth noticing is that though primarily introduced for religious purposes, as in Italy, namely the decoration of the cathedral erected by Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle, the paintings in his palace showed forth events in his own life, such as his campaigns in Spain, seiges of towns and feats of arms by Frankish warriors. At Upper Ingelheim, likewise, his chapel was adorned with scenes from the Old and New Testaments, while the banqueting hall exhibited on one wall the deeds of great Pagan rulers, such as Cyrus, Hannibal, and Alexander, and on the other those of Constantine and Theodosius, the seizure of Acquitaine by Pepin, and Charlemagne's own conquest over the Saxons and finally himself enthroned as conqueror. Although no trace remains of these paintings, contemporary manuscripts executed by his order are still in existence in the libraries of Paris, Trèves, and elsewhere from which we can form some idea of the style in which they were rendered and of the source from which they were derived.

Of these we need only mention the Vulgate decorated by John of Bruges, painter to King Charles V. of France, in 1371, which contains a portrait of the king in profile with a figure kneeling before him, and a few small historical subjects. From these it is evident that the art of painting, at any rate in little, had made considerable progress in the Netherlands at that date, and the express designation of *pictor* applied to John of Bruges, while the ordinary miniaturist was called *illuminator*, shows the probability of

his having painted pictures on a larger scale. The high development of realistic feeling as it first appears to us in the pictures of Hubert and Jan van Eyck is thus partly accounted for, especially when we also consider the wholesale destruction of larger works of art that took place in the disturbed condition of the Netherlands in the sixteenth century. The main points, however, to be borne in mind is that whereas Cimabue and Duccio started painting on walls under the influence of Byzantine teachers, Hubert van Eyck, a century later, began painting on wooden panels under that of illuminators and painters in books.

To these, nevertheless, there must be added another scarcely less important, namely, that the early Italians were ignorant of the use of what we now call oil paints, and worked entirely in tempera—that is to say, there was no admixture of oil or varnish with their pigments. To Hubert van Eyck is attributed the invention of the modern practice, as Vasari relates with more colour than historic truth in his life of Antonello da Messina, who is supposed to have carried it into Italy. Be that as it may, the works of the van Eycks and their successors are all in oils, and there is no doubt that the employment of this medium from the first considerably influenced the style, colour, and execution of all the works of this school.

Hubert van Eyck who according to the common acceptation was born in the year 1366 at Maaseyck, a small town not far from Maestricht, must have been settled before the year 1412 in Bruges, when we hear of him as a member of the Brotherhood of the Virgin with Rays.

There can be little doubt that Hubert van Eyck was acquainted with the work of this John of Bruges, and that it had a considerable influence on him. But while on the one hand he carried the realistic tendencies of such works to an

extraordinary pitch of excellence, it is evident that in many essential respects he was actuated by a more ideal feeling and imparted to the realism of his contemporaries, by means of his far richer powers of representation, greater distinctness, truth to nature, and variety of expression. Throughout his works is seen an elevated and highly energetic conception of the stern import of his labours in the service of the Church.

The prevailing arrangement of his subjects is symmetrical, holding fast to the earliest rules of ecclesiastical art. His heads appear to aim at an ideal beauty and dignity only combined with actual truth to nature. His draperies exhibit the purest taste and softness of folds, the realistic principle being apparent in that greater attention to detail which a delicate indication of the material of the drapery necessitates. Nude figures are studied from nature with the utmost fidelity; undraped portions of figures are also given with much truth, especially the hands. But what is the principal distinguishing characteristic of his art is the hitherto unprecedented power, depth, transparency and harmony of his colouring. Whatever want of exact truth there may be in the story as related by Vasari's story of the discovery of oil painting, there is no doubt that Hubert Van Eyck succeeded in preparing so transparent a varnish that he could apply it without disadvantage to all colours.

The chief work by Hubert Van Eyck is the large altar-piece painted for the cathedral of S. Bavon at Ghent;—parts of this have been removed and are now in the Berlin Gallery, and supplemented with excellent copies of the rest, the whole of the wonderful composition may there be well studied; a large photograph of the whole altar piece may also be seen in the library at the Victoria and Albert Museum, which shows how the work was originally designed. It was painted for Jodocus Vyts, Burgomaster of

Ghent, and his wife Elizabeth, for their mortuary chapel in the cathedral.

The subject of the three central panels of the upper portion is the Deity seated between *the Virgin and S. John the Baptist*. Underneath these, of the same width, is the famous *Adoration of the Lamb*. These together formed the back of the altar-piece, and were covered by wings which opened out on hinges on either side.

The three large figures of the upper part are designed with all the dignity and statuesque repose belonging to an earlier style, and they are painted on a ground of gold and tapestry, as was constantly the practice in earlier times: but united with the traditional type we already find a successful representation of life and nature in all their truth. They stand as it were on the frontier of two different styles, and from the excellence of both form a wonderful and most impressive whole. The Heavenly Father sits directly fronting the spectator, in all the solemnity of ancient dignity, His right hand raised to give the benediction to the Lamb and to all the multitude of figures below; in His left hand is a crystal sceptre; on His head the triple crown, the emblem of the Trinity. The features are such as are ascribed to Christ by the traditions of the Church, but noble and well proportioned; the expression is forcible, though passionless.

The tunic and the mantle of this figure are of a deep red, the latter being fastened over the breast by a clasp, and falling down in ample folds over the feet. Behind, as high as the head, is a hanging of green tapestry which is ornamented with a golden pelican—a symbol of the Redeemer. Behind the head the ground is gold, and on it in a semicircle are three inscriptions describing the Trinity as almighty, all-good, and all-bountiful. The figures of S. John and of the Virgin display equal majesty; both are

reading holy books, as they turn towards the centre figure. The countenance of S. John expresses ascetic seriousness, but in that of the Virgin we find a serene grace and a purity of form which approach very nearly to the happier effects of Italian art.

The arrangement of the lower central picture, the worship of the Lamb, is strictly symmetrical, as the mystic nature of the allegorical subject might seem to



PLATE XXI.—JAN VAN EYCK
JAN ARNOLFINI AND HIS WIFE
National Gallery, London

have demanded; but there is such beauty in the landscape, in the pure atmosphere, in the bright green of the grass, in the masses of trees and flowers—even in single figures which stand out from the four principal groups—that we no longer perceive either hardness or severity in this symmetry.

The landscape of this composition and that part of it containing the patriarchs and prophets are generally supposed to have been completed by Jan Van Eyck (*c.* 1385-1441), whose name till within a comparatively recent period had almost obscured that of Hubert. For although there is little doubt that the elder brother was the first to develop the new method of painting, yet the fame of it did not extend beyond Belgium and across the Alps until after the death of Hubert, when the celebrity it so speedily acquired throughout Europe was transferred to Jan Van Eyck. Within fifteen years after his death, 1455, Jan was commemorated in Italy as the greatest painter of the century, while the name of Hubert was not even mentioned. It was Jan van Eyck to whom Antonello da Messina is said by Vasari to have resorted in Bruges in order to learn the new style of painting; he alone also is mentioned in Vasari's first edition of 1550, Hubert not until the second edition in 1568, and then only incidentally.

Fortunately there are in existence various authentic pictures by Jan Van Eyck in which his original powers are more easily recognised than in the part he took in the execution of the great altar-piece at Ghent, in which he doubtless accommodated himself with proper fraternal piety both to the composition and to the style of his elder brother—who was also his master. In these we can see that he possessed neither the enthusiasm for the rich imagery and symbolism of the ecclesiastical art of the Middle Ages, nor that feeling for beauty in human forms or in drapery which belonged to his elder brother. His feeling, on the

other hand, led him to the closest and truest conception of individual nature. Where he had to paint portraits only—a task which was most congenial to the tendency of his mind—he attained a life-like truth of form and colouring in every part, extending even to the minutest details, such as no other artist of his time could rival, and which art in general has seldom produced. In his actual brush work he shows greater facility than was ever attained by Hubert, by which he was enabled to render the material of every substance with marvellous fidelity.

What little we know of the personal history of Jan Van Eyck is of exceptional interest, inasmuch as we find him employed on diplomatic errands to foreign countries, like his great successor Rubens; and as it happens he landed in England, though not intentionally, in the course of one of these voyages, being driven into Shoreham and Falmouth by adverse weather. It was in 1425 that he was taken into the service of Philip III., Duke of Burgundy, as painter and "varlet de chambre," shortly after which he went to Lille. In the following year he was sent on a pilgrimage as the Duke's proxy, and again on two secret missions. In 1428 he went with the Duke's Embassy to the King of Portugal which was to sue for the hand of Isabella, the Portuguese princess. It was on this occasion that he was driven on to our shores. Arriving at Lisbon he painted two portraits of Isabella, one of which was sent home by sea and the other overland. After a happy and successful career he died in 1441 at Bruges, where he had married and settled down on his return from Portugal.

The most beautiful example of Jan Van Eyck's work in England is the portrait of Jean Arnolfini and Jeanne de Chenany his wife, now in the National Gallery (No. 186). This is dated with the charming inscription, "Johannes de Eyck fuit hic 1434"—that is to say, instead of simply signing the picture, he writes, "Jan Van Eyck was here,

1434." No other picture shows so high a development of the master's extraordinary power and charm. Besides every other quality peculiar to him, we observe here a perfection of tone and of chiaroscuro which no other specimen of this whole period affords. It is recorded that Princess Mary, sister of Charles V. and Governess of the Netherlands, purchased this picture from a barber to whom it belonged at the price of a post worth a hundred gulden a year. Among its subsequent possessors were Don Diego de Guevara, majordomo of Joan, Queen of Castile, by whom it was presented to Margaret of Austria. In 1530 it was acquired by Mary of Hungary, and later it returned to Spain. In 1789 it was in the palace at Madrid, and soon after it was taken by one of the French Generals, in whose quarters Major-General Hay found it after the battle of Waterloo.

Two other portraits in the National Gallery bear the signature of Jan Van Eyck. No. 222, An elderly man, head and shoulders, on the frame of which is the painter's motto, "als ich can," and his signature, "Johannes de Eyck me fecit anno 1433, 21 Octobris." The other, No. 290, is a younger man, half length, standing inside an open window, on the sill of which is inscribed "Τιμὸθεος," and "Léal Souvenir," and below the date and signature, "Actum anno domini 1432, 10 die Octobris a Iohanne de Eyck."

Among the Netherlandish scholars and followers of the Van Eycks of whom any record has been preserved some appear to have been gifted with considerable powers, though none attained the excellence of their great precursors. Although a number of works representing this school still exist in the various countries of Europe, yet compared with the actual abundance of them at one time they constitute but a scanty remnant.

Though not actually a pupil of Jan Van Eyck, Roger Van

der Weyden acquired after him the greatest celebrity. As early as 1436 he filled the honourable post of official painter to the city of Brussels. The chief work executed by him in this capacity was an altar-piece for the Chamber of Justice in Hôtel de Ville. According to the custom of the time, it set forth in the most realistic fashion examples of stern observance of the law for the admonition of those placed in authority. The principal picture showed how Herkenbald, a judge in the eleventh century, executed his own nephew (convicted of a grave crime, but who would otherwise have escaped the penalty of the law) with his own hands; and how the sacramental wafer which, on the plea of murder, was denied to him by the priest, reached the lips of the upright judge by means of a miracle. The wings contained an example of the justice of the Emperor Trajan. These pictures are unfortunately no longer in existence, having probably been burned when Brussels was besieged in 1695.

In the Museum of the Hospital at Beaune is one of the most important of his works still in existence, *The Last Judgment*, though in this it is generally supposed he was assisted by Dirk Bouts and Hans Memling. It contains several portraits, notably those of the Pope, Eugenius IV., who stands behind the Apostles in the right wing, and next to him Philip the Good. The crowned female in the opposite wing is probably Philip's



PLATE XXII.—JAN VAN EYCK
PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER'S WIFE
Town Gallery, Bruges

second wife, Isabella of Portugal, whose portrait Jan Van Eyck went to Lisbon to paint before her marriage. On the outer sides are excellently painted portraits of the founder of the Hospital, Nicolas Rolin, and his wife. This work has been classed with the Van Eycks' *Adoration of the Lamb*, and the *Adoration of the Shepherds* by Hugo Van der Goes, as crystallizing the finest expression of early northern painting.

In 1450 he visited Italy, where he painted the beautiful

little altar-piece which is now in the Städel Institute at Frankfort, for Piero and Giovanni de'Medici.

Another very fine example of his work is the triptych, now in the Berlin Museum, executed for Pierre Bladelin. In the centre is the Nativity, with a portrait of Bladelin kneeling, and angels. On the one side is the annunciation of the Redeemer to the ruler of the West—the Emperor Augustus—by the agency of the Tiburtine Sibyl; on the other to those of the East—the Three Kings—who are keeping watch on a mountain, where the child appears to them in a star.

One of the largest as well as of the finest of the master's works is a triptych in the Munich Gallery—the *Adoration of the Kings*, with the *Annunciation* and the *Presentation in the Temple* in the wings. The figure of the Virgin in the *Presentation* is particularly pleasing for its simple and unaffected realism. *S. Luke painting the Virgin*, also in the Munich Gallery, is ascribed to Roger.

No painter of this school, the Van Eycks even not excepted, exercised so great and widely extended an influence as Roger Van der Weyden. Not only were Hans Memling—the greatest master of the next generation in Belgium—and his own son, also named Roger, his pupils, but innumerable works other than pictures were produced, such as miniatures, block-books, and engravings, in which his form of art is recognisable. It was under his auspices that the realistic tendency of the Van Eycks pervaded all Germany; for it was only after the death of Jan Van Eyck, in 1441, that the widespread fame of Roger Van der Weyden induced Germans to visit his studio at Brussels. Martin Schongauer, one of the greatest German masters of the sixteenth century, is known to have been his pupil, and it is certain that there must have been many others.

It is in Hans Memling (*c.* 1435-1494), whom Vasari states

to have been the pupil of Roger, that the early Netherlandish School attains the highest delicacy of artistic development. His poetical and profoundly human qualities had a special attraction for the "Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood" inaugurated by Rossetti and Holman Hunt in the middle of the nineteenth century. This unusual tenderness of feeling is probably also the origin of the legend that Memling was taken into the Hospital of S. John at Bruges—where he painted most of his masterpieces—as a sick soldier after the battle of Nancy. In feeling for beauty and grace he was more gifted than any painter except Hubert Van Eyck, and this quality, conspicuous amid the somewhat ugly realism of most of his contemporaries, has ensured him perhaps a little more popularity than is rightly his share. Compared with the works of his master, Roger Van der Weyden, his figures are certainly of better proportions and less meagreness of form; his hands and feet truer to nature; the heads of his women are sweeter, and those of his men less severe. His outlines are softer, and in the modelling of his flesh parts more delicacy of half tones is observable. His colours are still more luminous and transparent. On the other hand he is inferior to Van der Weyden in the carrying out of detail, such as the materials of his draperies or the rendering of the full brilliancy of gold.

In 1467 Memling was a master painter at Bruges, and painted the portrait of the medallist, Nicolas Spinelli, which is now in the Royal Museum at Antwerp, and a small altar-piece now at Chatsworth. His most famous works, those in the Hospital at Bruges, belong to a somewhat later date, the *Shrine of S. Ursula* not being completed till 1489. The *Adoration of the Kings* and the altar-piece were some ten years earlier. The famous shrine of S. Ursula is about four feet in length, and the whole of the outside is adorned with painting. On each side of the cover are three medallions, a large one in the centre and

two smaller at the sides. The latter contain angels playing on musical instruments; in the centre on one side is a Coronation of the Virgin, on the other the Glorification of S. Ursula and her companions, with two figures of Bishops. On the gable-ends are the Virgin and Child with two sisters of the hospital kneeling before them, and S. Ursula with the arrow, the instrument of her martyrdom, and virgins seeking protection under her mantle. On the longer sides of the reliquary itself, in six rather larger compartments, is painted the history of S. Ursula.

Of about the same period, possibly a little earlier, is the *Marriage of S. Catherine*, which is also in S. John's Hospital at Bruges. The central figure is that of the Virgin, seated under a porch, with tapestry hanging down behind it; two angels hold a crown over her head: beside her is S. Catherine kneeling, whose head is one of the finest ever painted by Memling. Behind her is an angel playing on the organ, and further back S. John the Baptist. On the other side kneels S. Barbara, reading: behind her another angel holds a book to the Virgin, and still further back is S. John the Evangelist, a figure of great beauty, and of a singularly mild and thoughtful character. Through the arcades of the porch we look out, on either side of the throne, on a rich landscape, in which are represented scenes from the lives of the two S. Johns. The panel on the right contains the beheading of the Baptist, on the left the Evangelist in the Isle of Patmos, where the vision of the Apocalypse appears to him—the Almighty on a throne in a glory of dazzling light, encompassed with a rainbow.

The whole forms a work strikingly poetical and most impressive in character; it is highly finished, both in drawing and composition.

Ian Gossaert (*c.* 1472-1535), called Jan van Mabuse from his native town of Maubeuge, was the son of a bookbinder

who worked for the Abbey of Sainte-Aldegonde. It is possible therefore that he might have formed an early acquaintance with illuminated manuscripts before studying the art of painting in the studio of a master. Memling, Gerard, David, and Quentin Massys have been suggested as his instructors, but it is not known for certain that he was actually a pupil of any of them. In 1508 he went to Italy, where he appears to have been greatly influenced both by the work of the Renaissance painters and by the antique. The *Adoration of the Kings*, which was lately purchased from Castle Howard for the National Gallery for £40,000, was painted before he went to Italy.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, in consequence of the transfer of commerce from Bruges to Antwerp, this latter city first became and long continued the centre of art, and especially of Netherlandish painting. Here it is that we find Quentin Massys, the greatest Belgian painter of this later time. He was born



PLATE XXIII.—JAN MABUSE
PORTRAIT OF JEAN CARONDELET
Louvre, Paris

probably in 1466. His father is said to have been a blacksmith and clockmaker, and there is a tradition that Quentin only forsook the hammer for the brush at instigation of a tender passion for a beautiful lady. Be that as it may, he is an important figure in the history of Belgian art. He distinguishes, broadly speaking, the close of the last period and the beginning of the next. A number of pictures representing sacred subjects exhibit, with little feeling for real beauty of form, such delicacy of features, beauty and earnestness of feeling, tenderness and clearness

of colouring and skill in finish, as worthily recall the religious painting of the Middle Ages, though at the very end of them. In his draperies, especially, we observe a charm which is peculiar to Massys. At the same time, in the subordinate figures introduced into sacred subjects, such as the executioners, etc., he seems to take pleasure in coarse and tasteless caricatures.

In subjects taken from common life, such as money changers, loving couples, or ugly old women, he uses his brush with evident zest, and with great success. The pictures of his later period are also distinguished from those of other painters by the large size of the figures, which for the first time in his country are of three-quarters or even actual life size.

Among his most original and attractive pictures are the half-length figures of Christ and the Virgin. These must have been very popular in his own time, for he has left several repetitions of them. Two heads of this class are at Antwerp, and two others of equal beauty are in the National Gallery in one frame (No. 295).

The most celebrated of his subject pictures is that known by the name of *The Misers*, or *The Money Changers*, at Windsor Castle—of which there are numerous copies, and this is not supposed to be the original. *The Money Changer and His Wife* at the Louvre is undoubtedly his.

Lucas van Leyden, as he was called (his real name being Luc Jacobez), was born in 1494, and died in 1533. He was a pupil of a little known artist, Cornelis Engelbrechstein, who was a follower if not a pupil of Memling. Lucas was an artist of multifarious powers and very early development. He painted admirably—though his authenticated works are very scarce—drew, and engraved. He pursued the path of realism in the treatment of sacred subjects, but with less beauty or elevation of mind. His

heads are generally of a very ugly character. At the same time his form of expression found sympathy in the feeling of the period, and by the skill with which it was expressed, especially in his engravings, attracted a number of followers. In scenes from common life he is full of truth and delicate observation of nature, though showing now and then a somewhat coarse sense of humour. One of his most important works is a large composition of *The Last Judgment*, which is at Leyden.

Very early in the sixteenth century—beginning in fact, as we have seen, with Jan Mabuse in 1508—the Netherlandish and German artists made it the fashion to repair to Italy, attracted by the reputation of the great masters; so that from this time onwards their work ceases to exhibit the purely northern characteristics of their predecessors. For it appears that precisely those qualities most opposed to their own native feeling for art made the deepest impression on their minds; more especially such general qualities as grandeur, beauty, simplicity of forms, drawing of the nude, unrestrained freedom, boldness, and grace of movement—in short, all that is comprised in art under the term "ideal."

But the attempt to appropriate all these qualities could lead to no successful result. Being based on no inherent want on the part of their own original feeling for art, it became only the outward imitation of something foreign to themselves, and they never therefore succeeded in mastering the complete understanding of form, or in adopting the true feeling for beauty of line or grace of movement; and in aiming at them they only degenerated into artificiality, exaggeration in drawing, and violence in attitude. The pictures of this class, even of religious subjects, have accordingly but little to attract the eye, and when they selected scenes from ancient mythology, and allegories decked out with an ostentation of learning, the

result is positively disagreeable.

The most satisfactory productions of this period will be found in the department of portrait painting, which, by its nature, threw the artist upon the exercise of his own original feeling for art. As in every other respect this epoch is far more important as a link in the chain of history than from any pleasure arising from its own works, it will be sufficient to mention only the more important painters and a few of their principal pictures.

The first painter who deserted his native style of art was, as before mentioned, Jan Mabuse. After the large *Adoration of the Kings* in the National Gallery the most important picture of his pre-Italian period is the *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane* at Berlin. Nearly all his works subsequent to 1512, by which time he had settled in Brussels, are characterised by all the faults above mentioned. Their redeeming quality is their masterly treatment. Among those of religious subjects the smallest are as a rule the best. The *Ecce Homo* at Antwerp, so frequently copied by contemporary painters, is a specimen of masterly modelling and vigorous colour. He is less successful with his life-size *Adam and Eve*, of which there are repetitions at Brussels, Hatfield, Hampton Court and Berlin. But his most unpleasing efforts are the mythological subjects such as the *Danaë* at Munich, and the *Neptune and Amphitrite* at Berlin. On the other hand, his portraits are attractive both from being more original, and less influenced by his acquired mannerisms of style Four of these are in the National Gallery, and the *Girl weighing Gold Pieces*, in the Berlin gallery, is also worthy of mention.

Bernard van Orley, born at Brussels in 1471, is characterised in the catalogue of the National Gallery as "taking his place after Massys and Mabuse on the

downward slope of Netherlandish painting." He has been immortalised by the fine portrait head of him by Albert Dürer which is now in the Dresden Gallery. He was Court painter to Margaret of Austria, Governess of the Low Countries, and retained the same post under her successor, Mary of Hungary. He is said to have visited Rome in 1509, and there made the acquaintance of Raphael, whose influence is certainly apparent, though hardly his inspiration, in the *Holy Family* in the Louvre. A more Netherlandish work, both in feeling and in treatment, is the *Pietà* in the Gallery at Brussels.

Ian Scorel, born in 1495, was a pupil of Mabuse, and appears to have been the first to introduce the Italian style into his native country—Holland. When on a pilgrimage to Palestine he happened to pass through Rome at the time his countryman was raised to the papal dignity as Adrian VI., and after painting his portrait he was appointed overseer of the art treasures of the Vatican. Returning to Utrecht, where he died, he painted the picture of the *Virgin and Child*, with donors, which is now in the Town Hall.

A fine portrait by Scorel of Cornelius Aerntz van der Dussen is in the Berlin Gallery.

The decided and strongly realistic style in which Quentin Massys had painted scenes from common life, as for instance the Misere or Money Changers, became the model for various painters in their treatment of similar subjects. First among these was his son, Jan Massys, born about 1500, who followed closely but rather clumsily in his father's footsteps, and need only be mentioned for carrying on the tradition. More interesting were the Breughels, namely, Pieter Breughel the elder, born about 1520, called Peasant Breughel, and his two sons Pieter and Jan. Old Breughel is best studied at Vienna, where there are good examples of his various subjects, notably a *Crucifixion* and

The Tower of Babel—both dated 1563—and secular scenes like *A Peasant Wedding* and a *Fight between Carnival and Lent*, which are full of clever and droll invention.

His elder son, Pieter, was called Hell Breughel, from his choice of subject. He is far inferior to his father or to his younger brother Jan, called Velvet Breughel, born in 1568. Though more especially a landscape painter, Jan also takes an important place in the development of subject pictures, which, though seldom rising above a somewhat coarse reality, are of a lively character, and worthy forerunners of the more accomplished productions of Teniers, Ostade, and Brouwer.

It is in portrait painting, however, that the Netherlandish School chiefly distinguished itself during its decline in the seventeenth century, and had all its sons remained in the country to enhance its glory, it is probable that the effect on the general practice of painting would have been more than beneficial. But portrait painters have not always been content to sit at home and wait for sitters to come to them, especially when the state of society in which they happen to find themselves makes waiting rather a long and tedious process. From the Reformation onwards, for over two centuries, there was a steady demand for portrait painters in England, and after the foundation of a really English school of painting by Reynolds in the middle of the eighteenth century, the stream of foreign, especially Netherlandish, talent never entirely ceased to flow. But confining ourselves for the present to the sixteenth century, we find that all the considerable Netherlandish portrait painters were employed for the most part outside their own country.

Typical of these is Joos van Cleef, of Antwerp, who died in 1540. According to Vasari he visited Spain and painted portraits for the Court of France. At all events it is certain

that he worked for a time in England, where the great success of Sir Antonio Mor is said to have disordered his brain. The few pictures that can be assigned to him with any certainty thoroughly justify the high reputation he enjoyed in his time—the two male portraits for example at Berlin and Munich, the portraits of himself and his wife at Windsor, and his own at Althorp. His style may be classed as between that of Holbein and Antonio Mor. His well-drawn forms are decided without being hard, and his warm and transparent colouring recalls the great masters of the Venetian School.

II

PETER PAUL RUBENS

Dr Waagen thus summarises the history of painting in the Netherlands during the interval of about a century and a half that elapsed between the death of Jan van Eyck in 1440 and the birth of Peter Paul Rubens in 1577.

"The great school of the brothers van Eyck," he writes, "which united with a profound and genuine enthusiasm for religious subjects a pure and healthy feeling for nature, and a talent for portraying her minutest details with truth and fidelity, had continued till the end of the fifteenth century, and in some instances even later, to produce the most admirable works, combining the utmost technical perfection in touch and finish with most vivid and beautiful colouring. To this original school, however, had succeeded a perverted rage for imitating the Italian masters, which had been introduced into the Netherlands by a few painters of talent, particularly by Jean Mabuse and Bernard van Orley. To display their science by throwing their figures into forced and difficult positions and strongly marking the

muscles, by which they thought to emulate the grandeur of Michel Angelo, and to exhibit their learning by the choice of mythological and allegorical subjects, became the aim of succeeding painters, and before these false and artificial views of art, the spirit of religious enthusiasm and the pure, naïve perception of the truth and beauty of nature gradually disappeared.

"In proportion as the Flemish painters lost the proper conception of form, and the feeling for delicacy and beauty of outline, it followed of course that they became more and more removed from nature in their desire to rival each other in the forced attitudes of their figures, and in the exhibition of nudity, until at last such disgusting caricatures were produced as we find in the works of Martin Heemskirk or Franz Floris, artists who were even deficient in good colouring, the old inheritance of the school.

"Some few painters, however, whose feeling for truth and nature repelled them instinctively from a path so far removed from both, took to portraying scenes of real life with considerable humour and vivacity; or they delineated nature in her commonest aspects with great minuteness of detail; and thus *tableaux de genre* and landscape originated. Although a few isolated efforts to introduce a better state of things were visible towards the end of the sixteenth century, it was reserved for a mind of no common power to bring about a complete revolution."

That Rubens was possessed of a "mind of no common power" will be readily admitted. He was an extraordinary person, in whom were combined such a variety of excellent qualities that there seems to have been no room left in him for any of the inferior ones which are usually necessary, as one must almost admit, for an alloy that will harden the finer metal for the practical purposes of success.

With all his feeling for religion, he was seldom prudish; his amazing vitality never led him into excess or intemperance. His intense patriotism was all for peace; classical learning never made him dry or bumptious, nor the favour of kings servile. As fine a gentleman as Buckingham, he had no enemies.

Something more than temperament and natural ability, however, was necessary to make Rubens exactly what he turned out to be, and that was environment. Had he remained in Flanders all his life we should have been deprived of much that is most characteristic in his art. He was too big, that is to say, for the flower pot. He needed to be bedded out, so that his exuberant natural genius might have the proper opportunities for expanding under suitable conditions. It was in Venice and Mantua, in Florence and Rome that he found himself, and took his measure from the giants.

Rubens was born in 1577 at Cologne, where his father, a jurist of considerable attainments, had taken refuge from the disturbances at Antwerp in 1566. He was christened Peter Paul in honour of the saints on whose festival his birthday fell—29th June. At the age of sixteen he was placed as a page in the household of the widowed Countess of Lalaing, but as he showed a remarkable love for drawing he was apprenticed first to Tobias Verhaegt, a landscape painter, and then to Adam Van Oort. The latter was so unsuitable a master, however, that Rubens was soon committed to the care of Otto Vennius, at that time Court painter to the Infanta Isabella and the Archduke Albert, her husband; he prospered so well that in 1600 Vennius advised him to go to Italy to finish his education as a painter.

Rubens was now in his twenty-third year, and besides being proficient in painting he was so well grounded in the

classics and in general education and manners that he was recommended by the Archduke to Vincenzio, Duke of Gonzaga, whose palace at Mantua was famous for containing an immense collection of art treasures, a great part of which within the next quarter of a century were purchased by King Charles, the Duke of Buckingham, and the Earl of Arundel. The influence exerted on the young painter by surroundings like these is exemplified in a note by Waagen:—

"Rubens during his residence at Mantua was so pleased with the *Triumph of Julius Cæsar* by Mantegna (the large cartoons now at Hampton Court Palace), that he made a free copy of one of them. His love for the fantastic and pompous led him to choose that with the elephants carrying the candelabra; but his ardent imagination, ever directed to the dramatic, could not be contented with this. Instead of a harmless sheep, which, in Mantegna, is walking by the side of the foremost elephant, Rubens has introduced a lion and a lioness, which growl angrily at the elephant. The latter is looking furiously round, and is on the point of striking the lion a blow with his trunk."

That Rubens should have been so specially attracted by Mantegna may seem a little surprising, until we remember that both were lovers and students of classical antiquities—a fact that is often forgotten in recalling only the principal achievements of either. But it is important to know what sort of foundations underlie the most splendid erections if we wish to understand how they came into existence and what their place is in the history of the arts. A glance through Lemprière's *Dictionary* may furnish a modern Academician with a subject for a popular picture,—but that is stucco rather than foundation. The roots of tall trees go deep. Rubens when he was in Rome studied the antiquities of the place with the utmost diligence and zeal, as is evidenced by a book published by his brother Philip

in 1608.

It was in the autumn of this year that he received the news, when at Genoa, of his mother's illness, which induced him to return to Antwerp forthwith. On his arrival he found she had died before the messenger had reached Genoa.

After four months of mourning he was ready to return to Flanders; his sojourn of eight years in Italy had so far influenced him that he might have remained there indefinitely had it not been for the Archduke and the Infanta pressing him to remain at Brussels and attach himself to their Court. Another circumstance may possibly have weighed with him; for within a year we find him married to Elizabeth Brant, the daughter of a magistrate of Antwerp, and it was not at Brussels, but at Antwerp, that he took up his quarters. Here he proceeded to build a wonderful house—said to have cost him 60,000 florins—after designs of his own in the Italian style, which he filled with the treasures he had collected in Italy.

Rubens's first pictures were nearly all of them religious subjects. Before he went to Italy he had painted an *Adoration of the Kings*, a *Holy Trinity*, and the *Dead Christ in the Arms of God the Father*, which was engraved by Bolswert. When Vincenzio sent him to Rome to copy pictures there for him, he found time to execute a commission which he received from the Archduke Albert to paint three pictures for the Church of Santa Croce di Gerusalamme, namely, the *Crowning with Thorns*, the *Crucifixion*, and the *Finding of the Cross*. A year later—after returning from a journey to Madrid—he painted the altar-piece for the Church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, in which the influence of Paul Veronese is conspicuous. At Genoa, he painted the Circumcision and S. Ignatius for the church of the Jesuits.

One of the first pictures which he painted on his return to Antwerp was an altar-piece for the private chapel of the Archduke Albert, of the Holy Family. This picture was so much admired that the members of the fraternity of S. Ildefonso, at the head of which was the Archduke Albert, commissioned him to paint an altar-piece for the Chapel of the Order of S. James near Brussels. This picture, which is now at Vienna, represents the Virgin enthroned, surrounded by four female saints, putting the Cloak of the Order on the shoulders of S. Ildefonso. On the wings are the portraits of the Archduke and Isabella, with their patron saints.

Thus we find that, like the earliest painters in his own country as well as in Italy, the beginning of Rubens's art was under the influence of the Church. Further, we find that the most celebrated work of his earlier period, the *Descent from the Cross*, in the cathedral at Antwerp, was undertaken in circumstances which abundantly show how thoroughly he was imbued with the principles of the religion he professed. The story is that when preparing the foundations of his new house he had unwittingly trespassed upon a piece of ground belonging to the Company of Arquebusiers at Antwerp. A lawsuit was threatened, and Rubens, with all the vivacity of his nature, prepared measures of resistance. But when his friend Rockox, a lawyer, had proved him that he was in the wrong, he immediately drew back, and offered to paint a picture by way of compensation. The offer was accepted, and the Arquebusiers asked for a representation of their patron, S. Christopher, to be placed in his chapel in the cathedral. In the magnificent spirit which always distinguished the man, he presented to his adversaries not merely the figure of the great Saint, but an elaborate and significant illustration of his name (Christ-bearer). Thus, in the centre, the disciples are lifting the Saviour from the Cross; in the wings the Visitation—S. Simeon with Christ

in his arms, S. Christopher with Christ on his shoulders, and an old hermit bearing a light.

Among the earlier examples of secular pictures one of the most famous is the portrait of himself and his bride, which is now in the Munich Gallery. This was painted in 1609, when Rubens was over thirty years old.

In 1627 Rubens went to Madrid on a diplomatic errand, but still as a painter, as we shall see when discussing his relations with Velasquez.

Towards the end of the year 1629 he was sent on another diplomatic mission, this time to England. The choice of an ambassador could not have fallen on anyone better calculated to suit the personal character of Charles I., who was a passionate lover of art and easily captivated by men of cultivated intellect and refined manners. Rubens therefore, in whom the most admirable and attractive qualities were united to the rarest genius as an artist, soon succeeded in winning the attention and regard of the king. At Paris, too, Rubens had made friends with Buckingham, who had purchased his whole collection of statues, paintings, and other works of art for about ten thousand pounds.

It was during his stay in London that he painted the picture now in the National Gallery, called *Peace and War* (No. 46). This was intended as an allegory representing the blessings of peace and the horrors of war, which he presented to the king as a tangible recommendation of the pacific measures which he had come to propose. After the dispersion of the Royal Collection during the Commonwealth this picture was acquired by the Doria family at Genoa, where it was called, oddly enough, *Rubens's Family*. As a matter of fact the children are those of Balthazar Gerbier. He also painted the *S. George and the Dragon*, which is now at Windsor Castle, and made the

sketches for the nine pictures on the ceiling of the Banqueting Hall—now the United Service Institution Museum—in Whitehall. It was on this occasion, too, that he received the honour of knighthood from Charles I., who is said to have presented him with his own sword.

In the following year, 1630, Rubens married his second wife, Helena Fourment, who was only sixteen years old—he was now fifty-two or fifty-three. She belonged to one of the richest and most respectable families in Antwerp, and was by no means unworthy of the compliment of being painted in the character of the Virgin receiving instruction from S. Anne, in the picture which is still at Antwerp.

In 1633 his painting was again interrupted by a diplomatic mission, this time to Holland; and his remaining years were subject to more distressing interruptions, from the gout, to which he finally succumbed in 1640.

When we come to consider the English School of painting we shall see how much of its revival in the middle of the eighteenth century was due to the personality as well as to the genius of Sir Joshua Reynolds. In the Netherlands, likewise, it was not merely a great painter that was required to raise the art to life, but a great personality as well; and to the influence of Rubens may be attributed much if not all of the extraordinary fertility of the Flemish and Dutch Schools of the seventeenth century. Making every allowance for the difference in the times in which the Van Eycks and Rubens were working, there is no doubt that the former lived in too rarefied an atmosphere ever to influence their fellows, and with the exception of Hans Memling they left no



PLATE XXIV.—RUBENS
PORTRAIT OF HÉLÈNE FOURMENT, THE ARTIST'S SECO CHILDREN
Louvre, Paris

one worthy to carry on their tradition. Rubens showed his contemporaries that art was a mistress who could be served in many ways that were yet unthought of, and that she did not by any means disdain the tribute of other than religious votaries. Beginning, as we have pointed out, with sacred subjects, Rubens soon turned to the study of the classics, and found in them not so much the classical severity that

Mantegna had sought for as the pagan spirit of fulness and freedom. "I am convinced that to reach the highest perfection as a painter," he himself writes "it is necessary, not only to be acquainted with the ancient statues, but we must be inwardly imbued with the thorough comprehension of them. An insight into the laws which pertain to them is necessary before they can be turned to any real account in painting. This will prevent the artist from transferring to the canvas that which in sculpture is dependent on the material employed—marble, for instance. Many inexperienced and indeed experienced painters do not distinguish the material from the form which it expresses—the stone from the figure which is carved in it; that which the artist forces from the dead marble, from the universal laws of art which are independent of it.

"One leading rule may be laid down, that inasmuch as the best statues of antiquity are of great value for the painter, the inferior ones are not only worthless but mischievous: for while beginners fancy they can perform wonders if they can borrow from these statues, and transfer something hard, heavy, with sharp outlines and an exaggerated anatomy to their canvas, this can only be done by outraging the truth of nature, since instead of representing flesh with colours, they do but give colour to marble.

"In studying even the best of the antique statues, the painter must consider and avoid many things which are not connected with the art of the sculptor, but solely with the material in which he worked. I may mention particularly the difference in the shading. In nature, owing to the transparency of the flesh, the skin, and the cartilages, the shading of many parts is moderated, which in sculpture appear hard and abrupt, for the shadows become doubled, as it were, owing to the natural and unavoidable thickness of the stone. To this must be added that certain less important parts which lie on the surface of the human

body, as the veins, folds of the skin, etc., which change their appearance with every movement, and which owing to the pliancy of the skin become easily extended or contracted, are not expressed at all in the works of sculptors in general—though it is true that sculptors of high talent have marked them in some degree. The painter, however, must never omit to introduce them—with proper discretion.

"In the manner in which lights fall, too, statues are totally different from nature; for the natural brilliancy of marble, and its own light, throws out the surface far more strongly than in nature, and even dazzles the eye."

I have quoted rather more of this passage (from Mrs Jameson's translation) than I at first intended, because it discloses one of the most important secrets of the successful painting of figures, by other artists besides Rubens himself—George Romney for example. The advantages of a "classical education" at our English public schools and universities are questioned, and there can be no doubt that for the bulk of the pupils they are questionable. But Rubens shows that the case is exactly the same for painters studying classical art as for scholars acquainting themselves with classical literature. A superficial study of the antique, just because it is antique, is of no use at all, but rather a hindrance. But if the study is properly undertaken, there is no surer foundation, in art or literature, on which to build. It makes no difference what is built; the foundation is there, beneath the surface, and whatever is placed upon it will stand for all time.

The remarkable freedom and originality of Rubens's treatment of classical subjects is thus accounted for. Under the surface is his familiarity with the antique, but instead of carrying this above ground, he builds on it a palace in accordance with the times and circumstances in which he

lived. The principles of classical art underlie the modern structure. Among his numerous works of classical mythology the picture at Munich of *Castor and Pollux* carrying off the daughters of Leucippus is worthy of being first mentioned. The Dioscuri mounted on spirited steeds, one of which is wildly rearing, are in the act of capturing the two damsels. The calm expression of strength in the male, and the violent but fruitless resistance of the female figures, form a striking contrast. Although the former are merely represented as two coarse and powerful men, and the women have only common and rather redundant forms and Flemish faces, yet the picture produces as a whole such a striking effect, owing to the admirable manner in which the subject is conceived, the power of imagination which it displays, and the exquisite colouring and tone, that it would never occur to any unprejudiced spectator to regret the absence of antique forms and character.

Two other pictures of this class are singled out for description by Waagen as masterpieces. One is the *Rape of Proserpine*, at Blenheim,—Pluto in his car, drawn by fiery brown steeds, is carrying off the goddess, who is struggling in his arms. The other is the *Battle of the Amazons*, in the Munich Gallery, which was painted by Rubens for Van der Geest. With great judgment he has chosen the moment when the Amazons are driven back by the Greeks over the river Thermodon: the battle takes place upon a bridge, and thus the horror of the scene is carried to the highest pitch.

Both in Flanders and in Italy Rubens had been brought into close contact with all the magnificence and splendour which belonged to those gorgeous times, and he delighted in representing the pomp of worldly state and everything connected with it. Of all sacred subjects none afforded such a rich field for display as the *Adoration of the Kings*; he has painted this subject no less than twelve times, and his fancy appears quite inexhaustible in the invention of

the rich offerings of the eastern sages. Among the subjects of a secular character the history of Marie de'Medici, the triumph of the Emperor Charles V., and the Sultan at the head of his Army, gave him abundant opportunities of portraying Oriental and European pageantry, with rich arms and regalia, and all the pomp and circumstance of war. Profusion—pouring forth of abundance, that was one of Rubens's most salient characteristics. Exuberance, plenty, fatness.

As a painter of animals, again, Rubens opened out a new field for the energy of his fellow-countrymen, which was tilled so industriously by Frans Snyders and Jan Fyt, and in a lesser degree by the Dutchmen Jan Weenix, father and son, and Hondecoeter. That the naïve instincts, agility, and vivacity of animals must have had a great attraction for Rubens is easily understood. Those which are remarkable for their courage, strength, intelligence, swiftness—as lions, tigers, wild boars, wolves, horses, dogs—particularly interested him. He paid special attention to animals, seized every opportunity of studying them from nature, and attained the most wonderful skill and facility in painting them. It is related that he had a remarkably fine and powerful lion brought to his house in order to study him in every variety of attitude, and that on one occasion observing him yawn, he was so pleased with the action that he wished to paint it. He therefore desired the keeper to tickle the animal under the chin to make him repeatedly open his jaws: at length the lion became savage at this treatment, and cast such furious glances at his keeper, that Rubens attended to his warning and had the beast removed. The keeper is said to have been torn to pieces by the lion shortly afterwards: apparently the animal had never forgotten the affront put upon him.

By such means—though it is to be hoped not always with such lamentable results—Rubens succeeded in seizing and

portraying the peculiar character and instinct of animals—their quick movements and manifestations of strength—with such perfect truth and energy that not one among the modern painters has approached him in this respect—certainly not Landseer, as Mrs Jameson would ask us to believe.

The celebrated *Wolf Hunt*, in the collection of Lord Ashburton, was one of the earliest, painted in 1612 for the Spanish General Legranes only three years after Rubens's return from Italy. In this picture, his bold creative fancy and dramatic turn of mind are remarkably conspicuous—even at this early stage in his career. Catherine Brant, his first wife, on a brown horse, with a falcon in her hand, is near her husband; a second huntsman on horseback, three on foot, another old wolf and three young ones, with several dogs, complete the composition, which is most carefully painted in a clear and powerful tone throughout.

Of scenes of peasant life, one of his earliest, and yet the most famous, is the *Kermesse*, which is now in the Louvre. A boisterous, merry party of about seventy persons are assembled in front of a country ale-house; several are wildly dancing in a circle, others are drinking and shouting; others, again, are making love.

The Garden of Love, equally famous, was one of Rubens's latest pictures. Of this there are several versions in existence, of which those at Dresden and Madrid may be considered as originals. Several loving couples in familiar conversation are lingering before the entrance of a grotto, the front of which is ornamented with a rustic portico. Amongst them we recognise the portraits of Rubens and his second wife, his pupil Van Dyck, and Simon de Vos.

As Rubens united to such great and various knowledge the disposition to communicate it to others in the most friendly and candid manner, it was natural that young

painters of talent who were admitted into his atelier should soon attain a high degree of skill and cultivation.

At "the House in the Wood," not far from the Hague, there is a salon decorated entirely by the pupils of Rubens. The principal picture, which is one of the largest oil paintings in the world, is by Jacob Jordaens, and represents the triumph of Prince Frederick Henry—the object of the whole scheme being the glorification of the House of Orange, in 1649. Most of the other pictures are of Theodore van Thulden, who in these works has emulated his illustrious master in the force and brilliance of his colouring.

But it is not in any particular salon or palace that we must look for the effects of Rubens' influence; it was far wider than to be able to be contained within four walls. In portraiture he gave us Van Dyck; in historical subjects, Jacob Jordaens; in animal painting and still life, Frans Snyders, Jan Fyt, and the brothers Weenix. In pictures of everyday life he gave us Adrian Brouwer and David Teniers; in landscape, Everdingen, Ruisdael and Waterloo. "Thus was the art of painting in the Netherlands remodelled in every department," says Waagen in the concluding sentence of his memoir, "by the energies of a single great and gifted mind. Thus was Rubens the originator of its second great epoch, to which we are indebted for such numerous and masterly performances in every branch of the art."

III

THE PUPILS OF RUBENS

David Teniers the elder, who was born at Antwerp in

1582, received the first rudiments of his art from Rubens, who soon perceived in him the happy advances towards excelling in his profession that raised him to the head of his school. The prejudice in favour of his son, David Teniers the younger, is so great that the father is generally esteemed but a middling painter; and his pictures not worth the inquiry of a collector. His hand is so little distinguished, however, that the paintings of the father are often taken for those of the son. The father was certainly the inventor of the manner, which the son, who was his pupil, only improved with what little was wanting to perfection.

Rubens was astonished at his early success, and though he followed the manner of Adrian Brouwer, looked on him as his most deserving pupil by the brightness of genius that he showed. He soon saved enough money to undertake the journey to Italy, and when at Rome he established himself with Adam Elsheimer, who was then in great vogue. In Elsheimer's manner he soon became a perfect master, without neglecting at the same time the study of other and greater masters, endeavouring to penetrate into the deepest mysteries of their practice. An abode of ten years in Italy, and the influence of Elsheimer combined with that of Rubens, formed him into what he became.

When he returned to his own country he employed himself entirely in painting small pictures filled with figures of people drinking and merry-making, and numbers of peasants and country women. He displayed so much taste in these that the demand for them was universal. Even Rubens thought them an ornament to his collection.

Teniers drew his own character in his pictures, and in the subjects he usually expressed everything tends to joy and pleasure. Always employed in copying after nature whatsoever presented itself, he taught his two sons, David

and Abraham, to follow his example, and accustomed them to paint nothing but from that infallible model, by which means they both became excellent painters. These were his only disciples, and he died at Antwerp in 1649.

The only distinction between his works and those of his son, David Teniers the younger, is that in the latter you discover a finer touch, a fresher brush, a greater choice of attitudes, and a better disposition of the figures. The father, too, retained something of the tone of Italy in his colouring, which was stronger than his son's; but his pictures have less harmony and union—though to tell the truth, when the father took pains to finish his picture, he very nearly resembled his son.

The latter, David Teniers the younger, was born in 1610. He was nicknamed the Ape of painting, from his powers of imitation. The Archduke Leopold William made him a gentleman of his bedchamber, and he made copies of all his pictures. He came to England to buy several Italian pictures for Count Fuensaldegna, who on his return heaped favours upon him. Don John of Austria and the King of Spain set so great a value upon his pictures that they built a gallery set apart to preserve them—there are no less than fifty-two in the Prado Gallery to-day.

His principal talent was landscape adorned with small figures. He painted men drinking and smoking, alchemists, corps de garde, temptations of S. Anthony, and country fairs and merry-makings. His small pictures are superior to his large ones. His execution displays the greatest ease; the leafing of his trees is light, his skies are admirable: his small figures have an exquisite expression and a most lively touch, and the characters are marked out with the greatest truth. From the thinness of the colours his works seem to have been finished at once; they are generally clear in all their parts, and Teniers had the art, without dark

shades, to relieve his lights by other lights, so well managed as to produce the effect he wanted, an art which few besides himself have attained. He died at Antwerp in 1694.

Frans Snyders was born at Antwerp in the year 1587, ten years later, that is to say, than Rubens. He received his first instruction in the art of painting from Henry van Balen. His genius at first displayed itself only in painting fruit. He afterwards attempted animals, in which kind of study he succeeded so well that he surpassed all that had ever excelled before him. He stayed for some time in Italy, and the works he met with there by Castiglione proved a spur to his genius to attempt outdoing him in painting animals. When he returned to Flanders he fixed his ordinary abode at Brussels, where he was made painter to the Archduke and Duchess, and became attached to the house of Spain. Twenty-two of his pictures are in the Prado Gallery.

When Snyders required large figures in his compositions both Rubens and Jordaens took pleasure in assisting him, and Rubens in turn borrowed the assistance of Snyders to paint the ground of his pictures; thus they mutually assisted each other in their labours, while Snyders' manly and vigorous manner was quite able to hold its own even when joined with that of the great master.

Anthony van Dyck was born at Antwerp in 1599, less than three months before Velasquez at Seville. Both became so famous in their capacity of Court painters that the rest of their achievement is popularly regarded as little more than a bye-product.

In the case of Van Dyck there is the more excuse for the English public, inasmuch as, like Holbein before him, he was exclusively employed while in this country in the production of portraits; and as "his works are so frequent in England," as Horace Walpole observes in the opening

sentence of his memoir in the "Anecdotes of Painting," "that the generality of our people can scarce avoid thinking him their countryman," it is easy enough to forget that he only spent the last nine years of his life here.

Again, the insatiable craze of the English and American public for portraits has helped to obscure the extent of Van Dyck's capabilities in other directions, and while the National Gallery contains not a single subject-piece from his hand, more and more thousands are continually spent in the acquisition of more and more portraits. The bewitching *Cupid and Psyche* in Queen Mary's closet at Hampton Court, painted a year before his death, is scarcely known to exist!

At the same time it would be useless to deny that Van Dyck's principal claim to his place among the greatest masters rests chiefly upon portraiture. The point I wish to make is that portrait painting never yet made a great master, but that none but a great master ever became a great portrait painter; and so long as we are only permitted to see the particular achievement of the artist in our public galleries, so long is it likely that we shall continue to be flooded with mediocre likenesses of fashionable people by painters whose highest or whose only achievement they constitute. Anyone can write a "short story" for the cheaper sort of modern journal; only writers like Hardy, Stevenson, or Kipling can give us a masterpiece in little.

It was said that Rubens advised Van Dyck to devote himself to portraiture out of jealousy: but that is hardly in accordance with what we know of his generous nature. If the advice was given at all we may be sure that it was given in a friendly spirit. But there was something in the temperament of Van Dyck which peculiarly fitted him for the Court, apart from any question as to his excellence in any particular branch of his art, and it is evident that the

personality of Rubens, and his connection with the rich and mighty of the earth, influenced him almost as much as did his art. How much he owed to Rubens, and how much Rubens owed to him in painting is a matter that is arguable. He had been several years with Van Balen before he entered the studio of Rubens, when eighteen years old, not as a pupil but as an assistant. Here he not only had the practical task of painting Rubens's compositions for him, in company with numerous others, but had also the advantage of studying the works of Titian and other of the great Italian masters in Rubens's famous collection. If the hand of Van Dyck is traceable in some of the pictures of Rubens at this period, so the spirit of Rubens is very obvious in those of Van Dyck. The chief thing to be remembered is that in these early days he was not painting portraits. His earliest works, in which the influence of Titian is perceptible as well as that of Rubens, are the *Christ bearing the Cross*, in S. Paul's at Antwerp, painted in 1618; the *S. Sebastian* at Munich, and the *Christ Mocked*, at Berlin. The familiar portrait of *Cornelius van der Geest* in the National Gallery, is one of his very earliest, probably before 1620. Again, on his first visit to Genoa, in 1621, on the advice of Rubens, his ambition was not to paint portraits, as on his second visit some years later, but to rival Rubens in the composition of great historical pieces. It was not until 1627, when he left behind him in Genoa the superb series of Balbi, Brignole-Sala, Cattaneo, and Lomellini portraits, and returned to Antwerp to undertake those such as the *Le Roys* at Hertford House, or the *Beatrice de Cusance* at Windsor, that he had really become a portrait painter. Even then, he was still determined not to yield to Rubens at Antwerp, and painted, amongst other subjects, the *Rinaldo and Armida* for Charles I. It was only at the solicitation of George Geldorp, a schemer as well as a painter, that he consented at length, in 1632, to come to England; and it was only the welcome

afforded to him by Charles that induced him to settle here.

Two considerations of personal vanity may be suggested as actuating Charles to be specially indulgent to Van Dyck—an indulgence of which the results posterity should not omit to credit to the sad account of the martyr—first, that his father had failed to retain the painter in his service, and second, that Velasquez, who had made a sketch of him on his mad visit to Madrid in 1623, was then immortalising Philip. Velasquez being out of the question, why not Van Dyck! An excellent idea! Especially when instead of dwarfs, buffoons, and idiots, the English Court contained some exceedingly fine material besides the royal family for the artist to exercise his talent upon.

After this, Flanders knew Van Dyck no more, save for a year or two's sojourn from 1633-1635 when he painted one or two magnificent portraits, and then returned to England, where he died in 1641. With the death of Rubens the year before, Flemish painting had suffered another eclipse; and though Snyders lived till 1657, and Jordaens and the younger Teniers continued till late in the century, no fresh seedlings appeared, and the soil again became barren. Rubens and Van Dyck were both too big for the little garden—their growth overspread Europe.

DUTCH SCHOOL

I

Frans Hals

Meantime we must turn our attention to Holland, where Frans Hals, who was born only three years later than Rubens, namely in 1580, was the forerunner of Rembrandt, Van der Helst, Bol, Lely, and a host more of greater or less painters, who made their country as famous in the seventeenth century for art as their fathers had made it in the sixteenth for arms. Without going into the complications of the political history of the Netherlands at this period, it is important nevertheless to remember that while the Flemish provinces remained Catholic under Spain, the northern states, after heroic struggles, formed themselves into a Republic; so that while it is difficult to draw a hard and fast line between what was Dutch and what was Flemish in estimating the influence of one particular painter upon another, there is no question at all as to vital difference between the conditions which led to the production of the pictures of the two schools. The Flemish pictures were for the Church and for the Court, the Dutch for the house, the Guildhall, or the bourgeoisie. The former were aristocratic, the latter democratic. Rubens and Van Dyck were aristocrats, Hals and Rembrandt democrats. Rubens painted altar-pieces, for the great churches or cathedrals or for the chapels of his patrons. Rembrandt painted Bible stories for whoever would purchase them. Van Dyck painted the portraits of kings and nobles. Hals painted the rough soldiers and sailors, singly, or in the great groups into which they formed themselves as Guilds. For the first time in the history of painting, neither Church nor Court were its patrons.

In any age or under any circumstances Frans Hals would have seemed a remarkable painter, but to measure his extraordinary genius to its full height we must try to realise what those times and those circumstances were. In Florence and Venice, as we have seen, there were great

schools of painting, and in Florence especially, the whole city existed in an atmosphere of art. There was no escape from it. In Haarlem, where Hals spent his youth (he was born in Antwerp), there was no such state of affairs. There were no chapels to be decorated, no courtiers to be flattered. The country was seething with the effects of war, and the whole population were ready for it again at a moment's notice. There were plenty of heroes—every man was one—but not of the romantic sort. They were all bluff, hardy fellows, who wanted to get on with their business. Who would have thought that they wanted to have their portraits painted? And who, accordingly, could have induced them to do so except a bluff, roystering genius like Hals, who slashed them down on canvas before they had time to stop him? Once it got wind that Hals was such a good fellow, and that he dashed off a portrait to the life in as little time as it took to pass the time of day with him, he had plenty of business, and from painting single portraits he was commissioned to glorify the Guilds by depicting their banquets, which he did with almost as much speed and considerably more fidelity than the limelight man at a City dinner in these times. His first great group—*The Archers of S. George*, at Haarlem—has all the appearance of being painted instantaneously as the banqueters stood around the table before dispersing.

When we think of the cultured Rubens, brought up in the atmosphere of Courts, and studying for years among the finest paintings and painters in Italy, and compare him with this low, ignorant fellow, who had never been outside the Netherlands, do we not find his genius still more amazing? Nowadays we see a portrait by Hals surrounded with the finest works of the greatest painters in all times and in all lands, and see how well it stands the comparison. But our admiration must be increased a hundredfold, when we know that he was without any of the training or tradition of a great artist, and that it must have been by sheer character

and genius alone that he forced his art upon his commercial, though heroic public.

One thing especially it is interesting to notice about the Dutch portraits of the early Republican period, namely, that they are obviously inspired by the pleasure of having a living, speaking likeness rather than by pride and ostentation. Bluff and swaggering as some of Hals's portraits of men appear to be—notably *The Laughing Cavalier*, at Hertford House—that is only because the subjects were bluff and swaggering fellows—swaggering, that is to say, in the consciousness of their ability and their readiness to defend their country and their homes again, if need be, against the tyrant. But these swaggerers are the exception, and the prevailing impression conveyed is that of honest, if determined, bluffness. They are not posing, these jolly Dutchmen, they are sitting or standing, for Hals to paint them just as they would sit or stand to be measured for a suit of clothes. Look at the heads of the man and the woman in the National Gallery. Could anything be more natural and unassuming? Look at the *Laughing Cavalier*, and ask if it is not the man himself, as Hals saw and knew him, not a faked up hero? Hals caught him in his best clothes, that is all. He did not put them on to be painted in—he was out on a jaunt. Look at Hals's women, how pleased they are to be painted, just as they are.

Poor Hals, he was a good, honest fellow, though sadly given to drink and low company. But for sheer genius he has never had an equal. The vast number of his paintings—many of which now only exist in copies—shows that with every predilection to ease and comfort, he could not help painting—it simply welled out of him. It was a natural gift which seems to have needed no labour and no study.

It is certain that this fecundity was a very potent factor in the development of the Dutch School of painting. Had Hals

confined his talent to painting the portraits of the highest in the land, which would never have been seen by the public at large, it is improbable that such a business-like community would have produced many painters. But Hals must have popularised painting much more than we generally suppose. An example occurs to me in the picture of *The Rommelpot Player*, of which no less than thirteen versions are enumerated by De Groot, none of which can claim to be the original. One is at Wilton, another in Sir Frederick Cook's gallery at Richmond, and a third at Arthingworth Hall in Northamptonshire.



PLATE XXV.—FRANS HALS

PORTRAIT OF A LADY
Louvre, Paris

The subject is an old beggar man playing in front of the door of a cottage on a ridiculous instrument consisting of an earthen pot covered over like a jampot with a lid of parchment, on which he makes a rude noise with a stick, to the intense delight of a group of children. A picture like this, then, it is evident, instead of hanging in solitary confinement in the house of a great person, was so widely popular that it was copied on all sides, and must have been seen by thousands of people.

Next to Hals, in point of time, was Hendrik Gerritz Pot, who was born, probably at Haarlem, in 1585. It is to him rather than to Ostade, who was a quarter of a century later, that we must trace the origin of smaller *genre* pictures of the Dutch School which in later years became its principal product. Pot's works are neither very important nor very numerous, but as a portrait painter he is represented in the Louvre by a portrait of Charles I., which was probably painted when he was in England in 1631 or thereabouts; while at Hampton Court is a beautiful little piece by him which is catalogued under the title of *A Startling Introduction*. This belonged to Charles I., for his cypher is branded on the back of the panel on which it is painted, and it was sold by the Commonwealth as "a souldier making a strange posture to a Dutch lady by Bott." The painter's monogram H.P. appears on the large chimney piece before which the "soldier" is standing.

Gerard Honthorst, born at Utrecht in 1590, can hardly be said to belong to the Dutch School at all. When he was only twenty he went to Rome, where his devotion to painting effects of candle-light earned him the sobriquet of "Gherardo della Notte." In 1628 he was elected Dean of

the Guild of St. Luke at Utrecht, but he was in no sense a national painter, and neither took nor gave anything in the way of national influence. He was in England for a few months in 1628, to which chance we are indebted for the picture of the Duke of Buckingham and his family which is in the National Portrait Gallery, and another group of the Cavendish family which is at Chatsworth. Pictures of the nobility, or of celebrities like Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, were more in his line than those of his republican patriots, and consequently he plays no part in the development of the school we are now considering.

Bartholomew van Der Helst, born in Amsterdam, 1613, died there 1670. He is by far the most renowned of the Dutch portrait-painters of this period. Although nothing is known as regards the master under whom he studied, it is probable that if Hals was not actually his teacher, his works were the models whence Van der Helst formed himself. We see this in the portrait of Vice-Admiral Kortenaar at Amsterdam, where the conception of forms, and the unscumbled character of the strokes of the brush, recall Hals. The same may be observed in two larger pictures with archers in the Town Hall at Haarlem, where the inartistic arrangement and monotony of the otherwise warm flesh tones point to the earlier time of the painter. By about the year 1640 his character was more fully developed. His arrangement of portrait-pieces with numerous figures became very artistic and easy, his tone excellent, and his drawing masterly. This standard of excellence he retained till about 1660. The following are principal pictures of this period:—A scene from the Archery Guild of Amsterdam in 1639, including thirty figures. The celebrated picture inscribed 1648, an Archery Festival commemorating the Peace of Westphalia, and consisting of a party of twenty-four persons, at Amsterdam. The chief charm of this work consists in the strong and truthful individuality of every part, both in form

and colour; in the capital drawing, which is especially conspicuous in the hands; in the powerful and clear colouring; and finally, in a kind of execution which observes a happy medium between decision and softness. In 1657 he executed the picture of the Archery Guild known by the name "het Doelenstück" at Amsterdam Gallery. This work represents three of the overseers of the Guild, with golden prize vases, and a fourth supposed to be the painter himself. It is almost surpassed by a replica on a smaller scale executed in the following year, which is now in the Louvre. At all events, this picture is in better preservation, and offers one of the most typical examples of portrait-painting that the Dutch School produced.

II

REMBRANDT VAN RYN

But the greatest of all the Dutch painters, in some ways the greatest painter that has ever lived, was Rembrandt van Ryn (1606-1669). Beside him all the rest seem merely commonplace, and their works the product of this or that demand, according to their different times and circumstances, executed with more or less skill. For Rembrandt there seems no place among them all—he must stand somewhere alone; and there is no standard by which to judge his perfections and imperfections except the man himself.

Perhaps the greatest difference between Rembrandt and any other painter is that he never seems to have tried to please the public, but only painted to please himself. It is for this reason, no doubt, that he was never popular with the public, and is never likely to be; but just as Beethoven is only understandable by the really musical soul, so

Rembrandt's appeal is to those who have the feeling for something in painting beyond the mere representation of familiar or heroic scenes and persons on canvas. For the public it is enough that one of his landscapes should be sold for £100,000, and they all flock to see it; but put a fine Rembrandt portrait in a shop-window without a name to it, and there would be little fear of the pavement being blocked.

This failure of Rembrandt to please the public of his own day brings out the truth that the practice of painting had up to then subsisted only so long as it supplied a popular demand; and when we come to consider what that demand was, we find that it is for nothing else but a pleasing representation of natural objects, which may or may not embody some sentimental or historical association, but must first and foremost be a fair representation of more or less familiar things.

The oldest story about pictures is that of Zeuxis and the bunch of grapes, which relates that he painted the fruit so like nature that the birds came and pecked at the painting —some versions, I believe, adding that the fruit itself was there but they preferred the painting. Similar stories with innumerable variations are told of later artists. Rembrandt himself is said to have been deceived by his pupils who, knowing he was careful about collecting money in small quantities, however extravagant he might be in spending it, painted coins on the floor of the studio, and enjoyed the joke of seeing him stoop to pick them up. We have heard, too, of flies painted with surprising skill in conspicuous places to deceive the unwary. But apart from these little pleasantries, one has only to remember how the earlier writers on painting have expressed themselves to see how much importance, consciously or unconsciously, was attached to life-like resemblance to the object painted. Vasari is constantly using phrases in which he extols the

painter for having made a figure look like the life, as though that were the real thing to be aimed at. We remember Ben Jonson's lines under Shakespeare's portrait ——

"Wherein the graver had a strife
With nature to outdo the life."

And though Ben Jonson was not a critic, and if he had been there was little enough art in his time in England for him to criticize, still he expresses the general feeling of the public for any work of art.

With the Dutch people this was most certainly the case, and the popularity of the painters of scenes of everyday life is a proof of it. That Hals, Brouwer, or Ostade were great painters was not half so important to them, if indeed they thought of it all, as that they were capable of turning out pictures which reflected their everyday life like a mirror.

So long as Rembrandt painted portraits like those of the Pellicornes and their offspring—the two pictures at Hertford House—or a plain straightforward group like Dr Tulp's *Anatomy Lesson* (though in this he was already getting away from convention), he was tolerated. And it was not so much his freedom in living and his extravagant notions of the pleasures of life that brought about his downfall, as his failure to realize that when he took the money subscribed for the group of Captain Banning Cocq's Company, the subscribers expected something else for their money than a picture (*The Night Watch*) which might be a masterpiece according to the painter's notions, but was certainly not a portrait group of the subscribers.

Here, then, for the first time in the history of painting, we find an artist definitely at issue with the public. I do not say that this was the first time that an artist had failed to please the public, but it is the first occasion on which it was

decided that if a painter was to undertake commissions, he must consider the wishes of the patron, or starve. It was something new for a painter of Rembrandt's repute to be told that not he, but the persons who commissioned the work, were to be the judges of whether or not it was satisfactory.

The consequences were important. For Rembrandt, instead of taking the matter as a man of business, devoted the rest of his life to being an artist, and leaving the business of painting to men like Backer, Helst, and others, betook himself seriously to developing his art irrespective of what the public might or might not think of it. As a result, we have in the later work of Rembrandt something that the world—I mean the artistic part of it—would be very sorry to do without. Now the meaning of this is, not that Rembrandt was ill-advised in deserting his patrons, or in suffering them to desert him, but that for the first time in the history of painting an artist had the personality—I will not say the conscious determination—to realize that his art was something quite apart from the affairs of this world, and that what he could express on canvas was *not* merely a representation of natural objects designed to please his contemporaries, but something more than human, something that would appeal to humanity for all time. That many before him had felt that of their art, to a lesser or greater degree, is unquestionable—but none of them had ever realised it. Dürer, certainly, may be cited as an exception, especially when contrasted with his phlegmatic and business-like compatriot Holbein. But then Dürer, a century before, and in totally different circumstances, was never assured of regular patronage as was Rembrandt.

Rembrandt was the son of a miller named Harmann Geritz, who called himself Van Ryn, from the hamlet on the arm of the Rhine which runs through Leyden. His mother was the daughter of a baker. He was entered as a

student at the University of Leyden, his parents being comfortably off; but he showed so little taste for the study of the law, for which they intended him, that he was allowed to follow his own bent of painting, in the studio of a now forgotten painter, Jacob van Swanenburg. Here he studied for about three years, after which he went to Amsterdam and was for a short time with another painter named Lastman, who was a clever but superficial imitator of the Italian School then flourishing in Rome.

Returning to Leyden, Rembrandt set up his easel and remained there painting till 1631, when he went to Amsterdam. His works during this first period are not very well known in this country, but at Windsor and at Edinburgh are portraits of his mother, which must belong to it.

The next decade was the happiest and most prosperous in Rembrandt's career. At Amsterdam he soon found favour with wealthy patrons, and his happiness and success were completed by his marrying Saskia van Ulenburgh, the sister of a wealthy connoisseur and art dealer, with whom Rembrandt had formed an intimate friendship. To this period belong the numerous portraits of himself and Saskia, alone or together, most of which are characterized by a barbaric splendour of costume, utterly different from the profusion of Rubens, but far more intense. Living among the wealthiest Jews in Amsterdam, he seems to have been strongly attracted by their orientalism, and while Rubens gloried in natural abundance of every sort, and painted the bounty of nature in the full sunlight, Rembrandt chose out the treasures of art, and painted costume and jewels gleaming out of the darkness. The portraits of himself in a cap at Hertford House (No. 52), and of the Old Lady in the National Gallery (No. 775), both painted in 1634, are notable examples of this period, though they have none of the orientalism to be seen in the

various portraits of Saskia, or in *The Turk* at Munich. The two double portraits at Hertford House of Jean Pellicorne and his wife with their son and daughter respectively, were among the commissions which he received after he set up at Amsterdam, and are therefore less interesting as self-revelations. Prosperity is not always the best condition under which to produce the highest work, and the temperament of Rembrandt was so peculiar that there is little wonder that the prim Dutchmen were not entirely captivated by his exuberant sensuality, or that we ourselves reserve our admiration principally for the more sombre and mysterious products of his later years after misfortune began to fall upon him.



PLATE XXVI.—REMBRANDT
PORTRAIT OF HENDRICKJE STOFFEL

Louvre, Paris

In 1642 the beloved Saskia died, leaving an only child, Titus, whose features are familiar to us in the portrait at Hertford House. As though this were not affliction enough, Rembrandt had the mortification of offending his patrons over the commission to paint Captain Banning Cocq's Company. From this time onward, as the world and Rembrandt drifted farther and farther apart, his work becomes more and more wonderful.

Dr Muther, in his *History of Painting*, observes that perhaps it is only possible to understand Rembrandt by interpreting his pictures not as paintings but as psychological documents. "A picture by Rembrandt in the Dresden Gallery," he says, "represents *Samson Putting Riddles to the Philistines*; and Rembrandt's entire activity, a riddle to the philistines of his time, has remained puzzling to the present day.... As no other man bore his name, so the artist, too, is something unique, mocks every historical analysis, and remains what he was, a puzzling, intangible, Hamlet nature—Rembrandt." The author's theory of the psychological document is hardly a solution of the admitted puzzle, though it is interesting to follow him in tracing it out in Rembrandt's religious pictures, from the *Samson* already mentioned to his last dated work, in 1668, the Darmstadt *Crucifixion*. What distinguishes Rembrandt from all painters up to, and considerably later than his time, and in particular from those of his own school, is the mental, as compared with the physical activity that his pictures represent. Perhaps this is only another way of stating Dr Muther's theory of the psychological documents, but it enables us to test that theory by comparing his work with that of others. In technical skill Beruete claims a far higher place for Velasquez, going so far as to say that the *Lesson in*

Anatomy is not a lesson in painting. But the difference between the two is not as great as that in technique, though infinitely wider in the mental process which led to the production of a picture. A reproduction of the *Portrait of an Old Pole*, at S. Petersburg, is in front of me, as it happens, as I am writing; and I see in this no inferiority in firmness and precision, in truth and vigour, to any portrait by Velasquez.

In their technical ability to present the life-like portrait of a real man, we can place Rembrandt, Velasquez, Hals, and Van Dyck on pretty much of a level; if we had *Van der Geest*, *Montanes*, the *Old Pole* and the *Laughing Cavalier* all in a row, we should find there was not much to choose between them for downright realization. But while in the work of Velasquez we see the working of a fine and sensitive appreciation of his friend's personality, and the most exquisite realization of what was before him, in that of Rembrandt we seem to see less of the Pole and more of Rembrandt himself. It is as though he were singing softly to himself while he was painting, thinking his own thoughts: while Velasquez was simply concerned with the appearance and the thoughts of his model.

That Rembrandt's pictures are self-revelations, or psychological documents, is certainly true; and a proof of it is in the extraordinary number of portraits of himself. The famous Dresden picture of himself with Saskia on his knee can only be regarded in that light, and that brings into the category all the numerous pictures of Saskia and of Hendrike Stoffels, who formed so great a part of his life. If to these we add, with Dr Muther, his Biblical subjects, we find that there is not so very much left, and when we turn to the life's work of Rubens, Titian, Velasquez, or in fact any of the great painters, the difference is at once apparent. So that in the pictures of Rembrandt we may expect to find less of what we look for in those of others in the way of

display, but infinitely more of the qualities which, to whatever extent they exist in other artists, are bound to be sacrificed to display. When we are asked to a feast, we find the room brilliantly lit, and our host the centre of an assemblage for whom he has felt it his duty to make a display consistent with his means and his station. If we were to peep into his house one night we might find him in a room illumined only with his reading-lamp, absorbed in his favourite study; but instead of only exchanging a few conventional phrases with him, and passing on to mingle with his guests and to enjoy his hospitality, we might sit and talk with him into the small hours. That is the difference between the success of Hals with his *Feast of S. George*, and the failure of Rembrandt with *The Night Watch*. Hals was at the feast, and of it. Rembrandt was wrapped up in himself, and didn't enter into the spirit of the company—he was carried away by his own. That is why his pictures are so dark—not of deliberate technical purpose, like those of the *Tenebrosi*, but because to him a subject was felt within him rather than seen as a picture on so many square feet of canvas. When we call up in our own minds the recollection of some event of more than usually deep significance in our past, we only see the deathbed, the two combatants, the face of the beloved, or whatever it may be; the accessories are nothing, unless our imagination is stronger than the sentiment evoked, and sets to work to supply them. It is this characteristic which so sharply distinguishes the work of Rembrandt from that of his closest imitators. There is a large picture in the National Gallery, *Christ Blessing the Children*, catalogued as "School of Rembrandt," in which we see as near an approach to his manner as to justify the attribution, but that is all. I do not know why it has never been suggested that this is the work of Nicolas Maes, who was actually his pupil, and who was one of the few Dutch artists to paint life-sized groups, as he is known to have done in his earlier

days when still under the influence of Rembrandt. *The Card Players*, close beside it, has marked affinities in style, and especially in the very natural characterization of the faces, which is also apparent in that of the child in the other picture, and another on the extreme left of the picture. That it cannot be Rembrandt's is quite evident; the grouping and the lighting of it proclaim the picture seen on the canvas, and not felt within the artist's own consciousness.

The realistic tendency which, as has already been pointed out, was so characteristic of the whole art of the Netherlands, showed the most remarkable and original results in the work of an idealist like Rembrandt. Sandrart, one of the earliest writers on painting, says that Rembrandt "usually painted things of a simple and not thoughtful character, but which were pleasing to the eyes, and picturesque"—*schilderachtig*, as the Netherlanders called it. This combination of realism and picturesqueness, assisted by his marvellous technical power, put him far above and apart from all his compeers. In the absence of any pictures by his masters Van Swanenburg and Pinas, it is difficult to ascertain what, if anything, he learnt from them. From Peter Lastman we may be sure he learnt nothing in the way of technique. Kugler—who in these paragraphs is my principal authority—suggests that it is highly probable that in this respect he formed himself from the pictures of Frans Hals, with which he must have been early acquainted in the neighbouring town of Haarlem. At all events unexampled freedom, spirit, and breadth of his manner is comparable with that of no other earlier Dutch master. But all these admirable qualities would offer no sufficient compensation for the ugly and often vulgar character of his heads and figures, and for the total subversion of all the traditional rules of art in costume and accessory, and would fail to account for the great admiration which his works enjoy, if he had not been

possessed, besides, of an intensely artistic individuality.

In his earliest pictures his touch is already masterly and free, but still careful, while the colour of the flesh is warm and clear and the light full. *Dr Tulp's Anatomy*, painted in 1632, is the most famous of this period. In *The Night Watch*, at Amsterdam, dated 1642, the light is already restricted, falling only on isolated objects; the local tone of the flesh is more golden; the touch more spirited and distinct. Later, that is to say from about 1654 onwards, the golden flesh tones become still more intense, passing sometimes into a brown of less transparency, and accompanied frequently with grey and blackish shadows and sometimes with rather cool lights. The chief picture of this epoch, dated 1661, is *The Syndics*, also at Amsterdam, a group of six men. This, in the depth of the still transparent golden tone, in the animation of the heads, and in body and breadth of handling, is a true masterpiece.

With respect to his treatment of Biblical subjects, two older writers, Kolloff and Guhl, accord him an honour which, as we shall see, Kugler gives to Dürer a century earlier, namely that of being the painter of the true spirit of the Reformed Church. Though it is certain, Kugler admits, that no other school of painting in Rembrandt's time—neither that of Rubens, nor that of the Carracci, nor the French nor Spanish schools—rendered the spiritual import of Biblical subjects with the purity and depth exhibited by the great Dutch master. Here the kindly element of deep sentiment combines most happily with his feeling for composition, as in the *Descent from the Cross*, at Munich, in *The Holy Family*, in the Louvre, and above all in *The Woman taken in Adultery*, in the National Gallery. In this last, a touching truthfulness and depth of feeling, with every other grand quality peculiar to Rembrandt, are seen in their highest perfection. Of hardly less excellence, also, is our *Descent from the Cross*.

Endowed with so many admirable qualities, it follows that Rembrandt was a portrait painter of the highest order, while his peculiar style of lighting, his colouring and treatment, distinguish his portraits from those by all other masters. Even the works of his most successful pupils, who followed his style in this respect, are far behind him in energy of conception and execution. The number of his admirable portraits is so large that it is difficult to know which to mention as most characteristic. No other artist ever painted his own portrait so frequently, and some of these may first be mentioned. That in the Louvre, dated 1633, represents him in youthful years, fresh and full of hope. It is spiritedly painted in the bright tone of his earlier period. Another in the same gallery, of the year 1660, painted with extraordinary breadth and certainty of hand of that later period, shows a man weighed down with the cares of life, with grey hair and deeply furrowed forehead.



PLATE XXVII.—REMBRANDT
PORTRAIT OF AN OLD LADY
National Gallery, London

The one at Hertford House, already mentioned, and two in the National Gallery, fall between these extremes. Of other portraits we have already mentioned the two Pellicorne groups in the Wallace Collection; and another of this earliest period, the very popular *Old Woman*, in the National Gallery, dated 1634. This is of greater interest as showing, if anything does, whether it is fair to attribute any of his training to the influence of Hals. At any rate this picture is a highly important proof that at the early age of

twenty-six, the painter was already in the full possession of that energy and animation of conception, and of that decision of the "broad and marrowy touch" which are so characteristic of him. Of his later period—probably about 1657—a fine example is *The Jewish Rabbi*, and of his latest the *Old Man*, both in the National Gallery.

III

PAINTERS OF GENRE

The painters of *genre*, by the number, quality, and diversity of whose pictures the Dutch School is specially distinguished, may be roughly divided into three classes; namely, those who studied the upper, the middle, and the lower classes respectively. But as Holland was a republic, and the great stream of its art welled up from the earth and was not showered upon it from above, it will be found convenient to reverse the social order in considering them, and begin with the immediate successors of Frans Hals, whose influence was without doubt a very considerable factor in the development of Adrian Brouwer and Adrian and Isaac Ostade.

Adrian Brouwer, now generally classed under the Flemish School, was born at Oudenarde in 1606. But he went early to Haarlem, and it was not until about 1630 that he settled at Antwerp, where he died in 1641. He was a pupil of Frans Hals, and acquired from him not only his spirited and free touch, but also a similar mode of life. His pictures, which for the most part represent the lower orders eating and drinking, often in furious strife, are extraordinary true and life-like in character, and display a singularly delicate and harmonious colouring, which inclines to the cool scale, an admirable individuality, and a *sfumato* of surface in

which he is unrivalled; so that we can well understand the high esteem in which Rubens held them. Owing to his mode of life, and to its early close, the number of his works is not large, and they are now seldom met with. No gallery is so rich in them as Munich, which possesses nine, six of which are masterpieces. *A Party of Peasants at a Game of Cards*, affords an example of the brightness and clearness of those cool tones in which he evidently became the model of Teniers. *Spanish Soldiers Throwing Dice*, is equally harmonious, in a subdued brownish tone. *A Surgeon Removing the Plaster from the Arm of a Peasant* is not only most masterly and animated in expression, but is a type of his bright, clear, and golden tone, and is singularly free and light in touch. *Card-players Fighting*, is in every respect one of his best pictures. The momentary action in each figure, all of them being individualized with singular accuracy even as regards the kind of complexion, is incomparable, the tenderness of the harmony astonishing, and the execution of extraordinary delicacy. The only example in the National Gallery is the *Three Boors Drinking*, bequeathed by George Salting in 1910; and at Hertford House the *Boor Asleep*, though of this we may without hesitation accept the description in the catalogue, "our painting is of the highest quality, and in the audacity of its realism rises almost to grandeur."

Adrian van Ostade, said to have been born at Lubeck, was baptized in 1610 at Haarlem, where he studied under Frans Hals, and he formed a very good taste in colouring. Nature guided his brush in everything he undertook; he devoted himself almost entirely to painting peasants and drunkards, whose gestures and most trifling actions were the subject of his most serious meditation. The subjects of his little pictures are not more elevated than those of Brouwer, and considerably less than those of Teniers—they are nearly always alehouses or kitchens. He is perhaps one of the Dutch masters who best understood chiaroscuro. His

figures are very lively, and he sometimes put them into the pictures of the best painters among his countrymen. Nothing can excel his pictures of stables, in which the light is spread so judiciously that all one could wish is a lighter touch in his drawing, and a little more height in his figures. Many of his brother Isaak's pictures are improperly attributed to him, which, though painted in the same manner, are never of the real excellence of Adrian's.

The *Interior with Peasants* at Hertford House, and *The Alchymist* at the National Gallery are a characteristic pair of his pictures, which were sold in the collection of M. de Jully in 1769 for £164, the former being purchased by the third Marquess of Hertford and the latter passing into the Peel Collection. *Buying Fish*, at Hertford House, dated 1669—when the artist was nearly sixty years old, is remarkable for its breadth of effect and brilliancy of colour.

Jan Steen, born at Leyden about the year 1626, died 1679. He first received instruction under Nicolas Knupler; and afterwards it is said worked with Jan van Goyen, whose daughter he married. An extraordinary genius for painting was unfortunately co-existent in Jan Steen with jovial habits of no moderate kind. The position of tavern-keeper in which he was placed by his family, gave both the opportunity of indulging his propensities and also that of depicting the pleasures of eating and drinking, of song, card-playing and love-making directly from nature. He must have worked with amazing facility, for in spite of the time consumed in this mode of life, to which his comparatively early death may be attributed, the number of his pictures is very great. His favourite subjects were groups like the *Family Jollification*; the *Feast of the Bean King*; and that form of diversion illustrating the proverb, "*So wie die Alten sungen, so pfeifen auch die Jungen*"; fairs, weddings, etc.; he also treated other scenes, such as

the Doctor's Visit, the Schoolmaster with a generally very unmanageable set of boys—of which is a charming example at Dublin. The ludicrous ways of children seem especially to have attracted him; accordingly, he depicts with great zest the old Dutch custom on St. Nicholas's Day, September 3rd, of rewarding the good, and punishing the naughty child; or shows a mischievous little urchin teasing the cat, or stealing money from the pockets of their, alas!—drunken progenitors.

Jan Steen is the most genial painter of the whole Dutch School. His humour has made him so popular with the English, that at least two-thirds of his pictures are in their possession.

A peculiar cluster of masters, belonging to the Dutch



PLATE XXVIII.—TERBORCH
THE CONCERT

Louvre, Paris

School, was formed by Gerard Dou. However careful in execution were such painters as Terburg, Metsu, and Netscher, yet Gerard Dou and his scholars and imitators surpassed them in the development of that technical finish with which they rendered the smallest detail with meticulous exactitude.

Gerard Dou was born at Leyden on the 7th April 1613, died there 1680. He entered Rembrandt's school at fifteen years of age, and in three years had attained the position of an independent artist. He devoted himself at first to portraiture, and, like his master, made his own face frequently his subject. Afterwards he treated scenes from the life chiefly of the middle classes. He took particular pleasure in the representation of hermits; he also painted scriptural events and occasionally still life. His lighting is frequently that of lanterns and candles. Most of his pictures contain only from one to three figures, and do not exceed about 2 ft. high and 1 ft. 3 in. wide, being often smaller. His pictures seldom attain even an animated moral import, and may be said to be limited usually to a certain kindliness of sentiment. On the other hand, he possessed a trace of his master's feeling for the picturesque, and for chiaroscuro. Notwithstanding the incalculable minuteness of his execution, the touch of his brush is free and soft, and his best pictures look like Nature seen through the camera-obscura. His works were so highly estimated in his own time, that the President van Spiring, at the Hague, offered him 1000 florins a year for the right of pre-emption of his pictures. Considering the time which such finish required, and the early age at which he died, the number of his pictures—Smith enumerates about 200—is remarkable. In the Louvre are the following:—An old woman seated at a window, reading the Bible to her husband; this is one of

the best among the many representations by Dou of a similar kind, being of warm sunny effect, and marvellous finish. Also the *Woman with the Dropsy*, which is accounted his *chef-d'œuvre*.

Among the scholars of Gerard Dou, Frans van Mieris, born at Leyden 1635, died 1681, takes the first place. In chiaroscuro, and in delicacy of execution he is not inferior to his master. Although his pictures are generally very small, yet with their extraordinary minuteness of execution it is surprising that, in a life extended only to forty-six years, he should have produced so many. The Munich Gallery has most, then Dresden, Vienna, Florence, and St. Petersburg. The date, 1656, on a picture in the Vienna Gallery, *The Doctor*, shows the painter to have attained the summit of his art at twenty-one years of age. Another dated 1660, in the same gallery, executed for the Archduke Leopold, is one of his best. The scene is a shop with a young woman showing a gentleman, who has taken her by the chin, various handkerchiefs and stuffs. In the Munich Gallery is *A Soldier*, dated 1662, of admirable transparency and softness. Also *A Lady* in a yellow satin dress fainting in the presence of the doctor. In the Hague Gallery is *A Boy Blowing Soap-bubbles*, dated 1663. This is a charming little picture of great depth of the brownish tone. Also *The Painter and His Wife*, whose little shock dog he is teasing; very naïve and lively in the heads, and most delicately treated in a subdued but clear tone. In the Dresden Gallery are Mieris again and his wife before her portrait. This is one of his most successful pictures for chiaroscuro, tone, and spirited handling.

Nicolas Maes, already mentioned, born at



PLATE XXIX.—GABRIEL METSU
THE MUSIC LESSON
National Gallery, London

Dordrecht 1632, died 1693, was actually a pupil of Rembrandt. His much prized and rare *genre* pictures treat very simple subjects, and consist seldom of more than two or three figures, generally of women. The naïvete and homeliness of his feeling, with the addition sometimes of a trait of kindly humour; the admirable lighting, and a touch resembling Rembrandt in impasto and vigour, render his pictures very attractive. In the National Gallery, besides *The Card Players*, are *The Cradle*, *The Dutch Ménage*, dated 1655; and *The Idle Servant*: all these are admirable, and the last-named a *chef-d'œuvre*.

Peter de Hoogh (1629-1677) decidedly belongs to the numerous artistic posterity of Rembrandt, possibly through Karel Fabritius, and stands nearer to Vermeer and to Maes, than to any other painter. His biography can only be gathered from the occasional dates on his pictures, extending from 1658 to 1670. Although he impresses the eye by the same effects as Maes, yet he is also very different from him. He has not his humour, and seldom his kindliness, and his figures, which are either playing cards, smoking or drinking, or engaged in the transaction of some household duty,—with faces that say but little—have generally only the interest of a peaceful or jovial existence. If Maes takes the lead in warm lighting, Peter de Hoogh may be considered *par excellence* the painter of full and clear sunlight. If, again, Maes shows us his figures almost exclusively in interiors, Peter de Hoogh places them most frequently in the open air—in courtyards. In the representation of the poetry of light, and in that marvellous brilliancy and clearness with which he calls it forth in various distances till the background is reached, which is generally illumined by a fresh beam, no other master can compare with him. His prevailing local colour is red, repeated with greater delicacy in various planes of distance. This colour fixes the rest of the scale. His touch is of great delicacy; his impasto admirable.

Gerard Terburg, born at Zwol 1608, died 1681, learned painting under his father, and when still young visited Germany and Italy, painting numerous portraits on a small scale, and occasionally the size of life. But his place in the history of art is owing principally to a number of pictures, seldom representing more than three, and often only one figure, taken from the wealthier classes, in which great elegance of costume, and of all accompanying circumstances, is rendered with the finest keeping, and with a highly delicate but by no means over-smooth execution. He may be considered as the originator of this

class of pictures, in which, after his example, several other Dutch painters distinguished themselves. With him the chief mass of light is generally formed by the white satin dress of a lady, which gives the tone for the prevailing cool harmony of the picture. Among his pictures we occasionally find some which, taken successively, represent several different moments of one scene. Thus in the Dresden Gallery, there are two good pictures: the one of an officer writing a letter, while a trumpter waits for it; the other of a girl in white satin washing her hands in a basin held before her by a maid-servant; while at Munich, is another fine work, in which the trumpeter is offering the young lady the letter, who owing to the presence of the maid, who evidently disapproves, is uncertain whether to take the missive. Finally, in the Amsterdam Gallery, the celebrated picture known by the title of *Conseil paternel*, furnishes



PLATE XXX.—PIETER DE HOOCH
INTERIOR OF A DUTCH HOUSE
National Gallery, London

the closing scene. The maid has betrayed the affair to the father, and he is delivering a lecture to the young lady, in whom by turning her back on the spectator, the painter has happily expressed the feeling of shame; good repetitions are in the Berlin Museum, and in the Bridgewater Gallery. But Terburg's perfection as regards the clearness and harmony of his silvery tone is shown in a picture at Cassel, representing a young lady in white satin sitting playing the lute at a table.

Jan Vermeer of Delft (1632-1675) was certainly a pupil of Fabritius, and thus "grandson" of Rembrandt. To class him with painters of *genre* seems almost a profanation of the

exquisite sense of beauty with which, almost alone among the Dutch painters, he seems to have been endowed. It is like classing Walter Pater with art critics. But as Vermeer had to express himself in some form, it is perhaps fortunate that the school had developed this kind of poetic portraiture, under Terburg, Metsu and others, to a point where a genius like Vermeer could use it as the vehicle of his fascinating self-revelations. In landscape we have the *View of Delft*, at the Hague, which has shown the nineteenth century painters more than they could ever see in their more famous predecessors; but it is in the simple compositions like *The Letter Reader* at Amsterdam, *The Proposal*, at Dresden, or the *Lady at the Virginals*, in the National Gallery, that he displays his greatest power and charm.

IV

PAINTERS OF ANIMALS

As a link between the painters of *genre* and the landscapists, we may here mention some of the numerous artists who either made landscape the background for groups of figures and animals, or peopled their landscapes with groups—it matters not which way we put it. Among these we shall find several of the most famous, or at any rate the most popular artists of the Dutch School.

Philips Wouverman (1619-1668), whose reputation during the last century was greater than that of almost any of the Dutch painters except Rembrandt and Dou, is said to have studied under Hals, but it is more certain that the master from whom he learnt most, if not all, was Jan Wynants at Haarlem, whose whole manner in landscape he quickly succeeded in acquiring, and surpassed him in his facility

with horsemen and other figures.

Wouverman's works have all the excellences that may be expected from high finishing, correctness, agreeable composition and colouring. It does not appear that he was ever in Italy, or even quitted the city of Haarlem, though it would seem probable that his more elaborate compositions owed something to other influences than those of Hals or Wynants. In his earlier pictures there are no horses, but later in his career he generally subordinated his landscapes to the groups or subjects for which he is most famous. In the National Gallery, among eleven examples, are a *Halt of Officers*, *Interior of a Stable*, *A Battle*, *The Bohemians*, and *Shoeing a Horse*, all of which contain numerous figures, mounted and unmounted—and there is nearly always a white horse.

With all his success, he died a poor man, and it is related that in his last hours he burned a box filled with his studies and drawings, saying, "I have been so ill repaid for all my labours, that I would not have



LATE XXXI.—JAN VERMEER
THE LACE MAKER
Louvre, Paris

those designs engage my son to embrace so miserable a profession as mine." This son followed his advice, and became a Chartreux friar. Peter and Jan Wouverman were his brothers. The former painted hawking scenes, and his horses, though well designed, were not equal to those of Philips. The latter is represented in the National Gallery by a landscape in which the spirit of Wynant's, rather than that of Philips's, is discernible.

At Hertford House, out of seven examples, two are of

more than usual excellence, and well represent his earlier and later manners. *The Afternoon Landscape with a White Horse* (No. 226 in Room XIII), which Smith (in his Catalogue Raisonné), characterizes as possessing unusual freedom of pencilling, and powerful effect, dates from the transition from the early to the middle period, and is a very effective picture, as well as being very characteristic. The *Horse Fair* (No. 65, in Room XVI), is not only much larger than the other—it measures 25 x 35 inches—but is a really important picture. Lord Hertford paid £3200 for it in 1854. It was engraved by Moyrean, for his series of a hundred prints after Wouverman, under the title of *Le Grand Marché aux Chevaux*. It is thus described by Smith: —"This very capital picture exhibits an open country divided in the middle distance by a river whose course is lost among the distant mountains. The principal scene of activity is represented along the front and second grounds, on which may be numbered about twenty-four horses, exhibiting that noble animal in every variety of action, and nearly fifty persons. On the right of the picture is a coach, drawn by four fine grey horses, and in front of this object are a grey and a bay horse, on the latter of which are mounted a man and a boy. In advance of them is a group of four horses and several persons, among whom may be noticed a cavalier and a lady observing the paces of a horse which a jockey and his master are showing off. A gentleman on a black horse seems also to be watching the action of the animal. Near this person is a mare lying down, and a foal standing by it which a boy is approaching. On the opposite side of the picture is a gentleman on a cream-coloured horse, near two spirited greys, one of which is kicking, and a woman, a man and a boy are escaping from its heels. From thence the eye looks over an open space occupied by men and horses, receding in succession to the bank of the river, along which are houses and tents concealed in part by trees. This picture is

painted throughout with great care and delicacy in what is termed the last manner of the master, remarkable for the prevalent grey or silvery hues of colouring."

Albert Cuyp, born at Dortrecht 1620, died there about 1672. Of the life of this great painter little more is known with any certainty than that he was the scholar of his father, Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp. Cattle form a prominent feature in many of his works, though never so highly finished as in those of Paul Potter or Adrian van de Velde; indeed, in many of Cuyp's pictures, they are quite subordinate. His favourite subjects, a landscape with a river, with cattle lying or standing on its banks, and landscapes with horsemen in the foreground, were suggested to him no doubt by the country about Dortrecht and the river Maas: but he also painted winter landscapes, and especially views of rivers where the broad extent of water is animated by vessels. Sometimes, too, with great perfection, fowls as large as life, hens, ducks, etc., and still life. He also painted portraits, though less successfully. However great the skill displayed in the composition of his works, their principal charm lies in the beauty and truthfulness of their peculiar lighting. No other painter, with the exception of Claude, has so well understood the cool freshness of morning, the bright but misty light of a hot noon, or the warm glow of a clear sunset. The effect of his pictures is further enhanced by the skill with which he avails himself of the aid of contrasts; as for example, dark, rich colours of the reposing cattle as seen against the bright sky. In his own country no picture of his, till the year 1750, ever sold for more than thirty florins. Indeed, Kugler was informed by a Dutch friend, that in past times, when a picture found no bidder, the auctioneer would offer to throw in "a little Cuyp" in order to induce a sale. The merit of having first given him his due rank belongs to the English, who as early as 1785, gave at the sale of Linden van Slingelandt's collection at Dortrecht high prices for

Cuyp's works; About nine-tenths of his pictures are consequently to be found in England.

One of his finest works is the landscape, in bright, warm, morning light, with two cows reposing in the foreground, and a woman conversing with a horseman, in the National Gallery (No. 53). The whole picture breathes a cheerful and rural tranquillity. In his mature time, these admirable qualities are seen in higher development. In the Louvre (No. 104), is another fine example—a scene with six cows, a shepherd blowing the horn, and two children listening to him. This is admirably arranged, of greater truthfulness as regards the form and colouring of the cattle than usual, and with the warm lighting of the sky executed with equal decision and softness. This picture is one of the master's chief productions, being also about 4 ft. high by 6 ft. wide. Another with three horsemen, and a servant carrying partridges, and in the centre a meadow with cattle, is also in the Louvre. This is less attractive in subject, but ranks equally high as a work of art. In Buckingham Palace are two pictures, one with three cows reposing, and one standing by a clear stream, near them a herdsman and a woman; other cows are in water near the ruins of a castle. In this picture, we see Cuyp in every respect at his culminating point of excellence. Not less fine, and of singular force of colour, is the landscape, with a broad river running through it, and a horseman under a tree in conversation with a countryman.

Paul Potter, born at Enckhuysen 1625, died at Amsterdam 1654. Although the scholar of his father, Pieter Potter, who was but a mediocre painter, he made such astonishing progress as to rank at the age of 15 as a finished artist. He removed very early to the Hague, where his talents met with universal recognition, including that of Prince Maurice of Orange, and where he married. In the year 1652, however, he removed to Amsterdam at the instance

of one of his chief patrons, the Burgomaster Tulp. Of the masters who have striven pre-eminently after truth he is, beyond all question, one of the greatest that ever lived. In order to succeed in this aim, he acquired a correctness of drawing, a kind of modelling which imparts an almost plastic effect to his animals, an extraordinary execution of detail in the most solid impasto, and a truth of colouring which harmonises astonishingly with the time of day. In his landscapes, which generally consist of a few willows in the foreground, and of a wide view over meadows, the most delicate graduation of aërial perspective is seen. With few exceptions, his animals are small, and his pictures proportionately moderate in size. By the year 1647 he had attained his full perfection. Of this date is the celebrated group called *The Young Bull*, in the Hague Gallery. All the figures in this are as large as life, and so extraordinarily true to nature as not only to appear real at a certain distance, but even to keep up the illusion when seen near.

A picture dated 1649, now in Buckingham Palace, of two cows and a young bull in a pasture, combines with his customary fidelity to nature a more than common power of effect, and breadth and freedom of treatment. To the same year belongs also The *Farmyard*, formerly in the Cassel Gallery, now in that of S. Petersburg, which, according to Smith, fully deserves its celebrity both for the clearness and warmth of the sunset effect, as well as for its masterly execution. To 1650 belongs the picture of *Orpheus*, charming the animal world by the strains of his lyre, in the Amsterdam Museum. Here we see that the master had also studied wild animals. He is most successful in the bear. In the same gallery is another *chef-d'œuvre* of the same year —a hilly landscape with a shepherdess singing to her child, a shepherd playing on the bagpipe, and oxen, sheep, and goats around.

The names of Weenix and Hondecoeter are so

inseparably associated in the popular mind as painters of birds, whose respective works are not readily distinguishable moreover by the casual observer, that a short excursion into their family histories is advisable, for the purpose of showing how it was that this particular branch of the art was so successfully practised by the two. Moreover, as there were three Hondecoeters and two Weenixes who were painters, it is necessary to say something about each of them.

Melchior Hondecoeter, the best known, was of an ancient and noble family. He was instructed till the age of seventeen by his father Gysbert, who was a tolerable painter. Giles Hondecoeter, his grandfather, painted live birds admirably, but chiefly cocks and hens in the taste of Savery and Vincaboom. Melchior was born in 1636, and studied for a time with his father; but meantime his aunt Josina had married Jan Baptist Weenix, and a son was born to them, Jan Weenix, who inherited from old Giles Hondecoeter, his grandfather, his talent for painting poultry, and from his father, Jan Baptist Weenix, he acquired the benefit of several influences which were not shared by his cousin Melchior.

Jan Baptist Weenix, who was nicknamed "Rattle," was born at Amsterdam about 1621. His father was an architect, who bred his son up to that profession, but he was afterwards put to study painting under Abraham Bloemart. Soon after his marriage with Josina he was seized with the desire to visit Italy, and he set off alone to Rome, promising to return in four months. In Rome, however, he was so well received that he stayed there four years, and Italianized himself to an extent that may be seen in a picture in the Wallace Collection, a *Coast Scene with Classic Ruins*, which he signs *Gio. Batta. Weenix*. Though he returned to Holland and settled near Utrecht, his manner was sensibly modified by his sojourn in Rome.

Jan Weenix, who was born at Amsterdam in 1649, though he succeeded in so far assimilating his father's style that his earlier works are often confused with those of "Giovanni Battista," did not acquire the energy or the dramatic force displayed by Melchior Hondecoeter in representing live birds and animals, though he sometimes surpassed him in the finish and the harmony of his decorative arrangements of dead game and still life. Accordingly the one usually painted dead and the latter live birds. In other respects there is not much to distinguish their works.

Nicholas Berchem was the only other pupil of Jan Baptist Weenix of whom we know anything. Berchem had other masters, beginning with his father, who was a painter of fish and tables covered with plates, china dishes, and such like. Having given his son the first rudiments of his art he found himself unequal to the task of cultivating the excellent disposition he observed in him, and therefore placed him with Van Goyen, Nicholas Moyaert, Peter Grebber, Jan Wils, and lastly with Jan Baptist Weenix, all of whom had the honour of assisting to form so excellent a painter. Indefatigable at his easel, Berchem acquired a manner both easy and expeditious; to see him work, painting appeared a mere diversion to him.

His wife was the daughter of his instructor, Jan Wils, and was so avaricious that she allowed him no rest. Busy as he was by nature, she used to sit under his studio, and when she neither heard him sing nor stir, she struck upon the ceiling to rouse him. She got from him all the money he earned by his labour, so that he was obliged to borrow from his scholars when he wanted money to buy prints that were offered him, which was the only pleasure he had. *The Musical Shepherdess* at Hertford House is a good example of his style, and the description of it in Smith's catalogue shows in what estimation the artist was held in early

Victorian days:—"This beautiful pastoral scene represents a bold rocky coast under the appearance of the close of day. The rustics have ended their labours and are recreating with music and dancing. A group composed of two peasants and a like number of women occupies the foreground; one of the latter, attired in a blue mantle, is gaily striking a tambourine, and dancing to the music; her companion in a yellow dress sits near her; the shepherds also are seated, and one of them appears to have just ceased playing a pipe which he holds. The goats are browsing near them. Painted in the artist's most fascinating style."

That Berchem had been to Italy is pretty certain, and though no authentic account of his visit is recorded, there is a story that when Jacob Ruisdael went to Rome as a young man, Nicholas Berchem was the first acquaintance he met, and that their friendship was of long standing. Their frequent walks round about Rome gave them the opportunity of working together from Nature, and one day a cardinal seeing them at work, inquired what they were doing. His eminence was agreeably impressed with their drawings, and invited them to visit him in Rome. The painters returned to their work, where they met with a second *rencontre* of a very different nature; a gang of thieves robbed and stripped them of their clothes. They returned in their shirts to the city, and called on the cardinal, who took pity upon them, ordered them clothes, and afterwards employed them in several considerable works in his palace.

Berchem at one time took up his abode in the Castle of Bentheim, and as both he and Ruisdael have left several pictures of this castle it may be inferred that they worked there together, as at Rome.

Apart from personal friendship there is nothing to connect

Berchem with Ruisdael, the popularity of the former being derived from qualities of a totally different nature from those which raise Ruisdael far above any of his contemporaries as a landscape painter.

Jan Van Huysum was born at Amsterdam in 1682. His father, Justus Van Huysum, who dealt in pictures, was himself a middling painter in most kinds of painting. He taught his son to paint screens, figures and vases on wood, landscape, and sometimes flowers; but the son being arrived at a reasoning age perceived that to work in every branch of his art was the way to excel in none, therefore he confined himself to flowers, fruit, and landscape, and quitting his father's school set up for himself.

No one before Van Huysum attained so perfect a manner of representing the beauty of flowers and the down and bloom of fruit; for he painted with greater freedom than Velvet Breughel and Mignon, with more tenderness and nature than Mario di Fiori, Andrea Belvedere, Michel de Campidoglio or Daniel Seghers; with more mellowness than de Heem, and with more vigour of colouring than Baptist Monoyer.

His pictures of flowers and fruit pleasing an English gentleman, he introduced them into his own country, where they came into vogue and yielded a high price. To express the motions of the smallest insects with justice he used to contemplate them through the microscope with great attention. At the times of the year when the flowers were in bloom, and the fruit in perfection, he used to design them in his own garden, and the Sieur Gulet and Voorhelm sent him the most beautiful productions in those kinds they could pick up.

His reputation rose to such a height that all the curious in painting sought his works with great eagerness, which encouraged him to raise his prices so high that his pictures

at last grew out of the reach of any but princes and men of the greatest fortune. He was the first flower painter that ever thought of laying them on light grounds, which requires much greater art than to paint them on dark ones.

Van Huysum died at Amsterdam in 1749. He never had any pupil but a young woman named Haverman, and his brother Michael. Two other brothers have distinguished themselves in painting, one named Justus, who painted battles, and died at twenty-two years old, the other named James, who ended his days in England in 1740. He copied the pictures of his brother John so well as to deceive the connoisseurs: he had usually £20 for each copy. For the originals, it may be noted, from a thousand to fourteen hundred florins was paid.

V

PAINTERS OF LANDSCAPE

Coming now to the landscape painters we find that Jan Van Goyen, born at Leyden in 1596, was destined to exert a really powerful influence, inasmuch as he was the founder, as is generally acknowledged, of the Dutch school of homely native landscape. Beginning with figure subjects, he discovered in their landscape backgrounds his real *métier*, and seems only to have realized his great gifts when he looked further into nature than was possible when painting a foreground picture. He appears to have been by nature or by inclination long-sighted, and he is never so happy as when painting distance, either along the banks of a river or looking out to sea. This extended gaze taught him something of atmosphere that few painters beside himself ever acquired, and helped him to the mastery of tone which appears to have influenced so many of his

followers, as for example Van de Velde in the painting of sea-pieces.

Jan Wynants, born at Haarlem about 1620, and still living in 1677, was the first master who applied all the developed qualities of the Dutch School to the treatment of landscape painting. In general his prevailing tone is clear and bright, more especially in the green of his trees and plants, which in many cases, merges into blue. One of his characteristics is a fallen tree trunk in the foreground, as may be seen in three out of the six examples in the National Gallery. The carefulness of his execution explains how it was that in so long a life he only produced a moderate number of pictures. Smith's catalogue contains about 214. These differ much according to their different periods. In his first manner peasants' cottages or ruins play an important part, and the view is more or less shut in by trees of a heavy dark green, the execution solid and careful. In his middle time he generally paints open views of a rather uneven country, diversified by wood and water. That Wynants retained his full skill even in advanced life is proved by a picture dated 1672, in the Munich Gallery, representing a road leading to a fenced wood and a sandhill, near which in the foreground are some cows (by Lingelbach) being driven along. In his last manner a heavy uniformly brown tone is often observable.

It is his genuine feeling for nature that makes Wynant's pictures so popular in England, where we meet with a considerable number of his best works.

Jacob Ruisdael (born at Haarlem 1628, died there 1682) is supposed to have developed under the influence of a school there that was opposing Van Goyen's tone treatment by local colour. Though not always the most charming, Ruisdael is certainly the greatest and the most profound of the Dutch landscape painters. His wide expanses of sky,

earth or sea, with their tender gradations of aërial perspective, diversified here and there by alternations of sunshine and shadow, attract us as much by the pathos as by the picturesqueness of their character. His scenes of mountainous districts with foaming waterfalls; or bare piles of rock and sombre lakes are imbued with a feeling of melancholy. Ruisdael's work may be well studied in the six examples at Hertford House, and the fourteen in the National Gallery. Among his finer works in Continental collections the following are some of those selected by Kugler for description. At the Hague is one of his wide expanses—a view of the country around Haarlem, the town itself looking small on the horizon, under a lofty expanse of cloudy sky in the foreground a bleaching-ground and some houses reminding us, by the manner in which they are introduced, of Hobbema. The prevailing tone is cool, the sky singularly beautiful, and the execution wonderfully delicate. A flat country with a road leading to a village, and fields with wheatsheaves, is in the Dresden Gallery. This is temperate in colouring and beautifully lighted. Equally fine is an extensive view over a hilly but bare country, through which a river runs; in the Louvre. The horseman and beggar on a bridge are by Wouvermans: here the grey-greenish harmony of the tone is in fine accordance with the poetic grandeur of the subject. A hill covered with oak woods, with a peasant hastening to a hut to escape the gathering shower, is in the Munich Gallery. The golden warmth of the trees and ground, and the contrast between the deep clear chiaroscuro and soft rain-clouds, and the bright gleam of sunshine, render this picture one of the finest by this master.

The peculiar charm which is seen in Holland by the combination of lofty trees and calm water is fully represented in the following works:—*The Chase*; in the Dresden Gallery. Here in the still water in the foreground —through which a stag-hunt (by Adrian van de Velde) is

passing—clouds, warm with morning sunlight, appear reflected. In this picture, remarkable as it is for size, being 3 ft. 10½ in. high, by 5 ft. 2 in. wide, the sense even of the fresh morning is not without a tinge of gentle melancholy. A noble wood of oaks, beeches and elms, about the size of the last-mentioned picture, is in the Louvre. In the centre, through an opening in the woods, are seen distant hills. The cattle and figures upon a flooded road are by Berchem. In power, warmth, and treatment, this is also nearly allied to the preceding work. Of his waterfalls, the most remarkable are—A picture at the Hague, which is particularly striking for its warm lighting, and careful execution. Another with Bentheim Castle, so often repeated by Ruisdael, is at Amsterdam. In the same collection is a landscape, with rocks, woods, and a larger waterfall. This has a grandly poetic character which, with the broad and solid handling, plainly shows the influence of Everdingen. The same remark may be applied to the waterfall, No. 328, in the Munich Gallery. Here the dark, rainy sky, enhances the sublime impression made by the foaming torrent that rushes down the rocky masses. Another work worthy to rank with the fore-going is *The Jewish Cemetry*, in the Dresden Gallery: a pallid sunbeam lights up some of the tombstones, between which a torrent impetuously flows.

The *Landscape with Waterfall* at Hertford House is a good example; the *Landscape with a Farm* in the same collection is another, though in this the figures and cattle are by Adrian Van der Velde. Ostade and Wouverman are also said to have helped him with his figures, and it is possible that one or other of them ought to have some of the credit for the beautiful *View on the Shore at Scheveningen* in the National Gallery (No. 1390). The *Landscape with Ruins* (No. 746) is perhaps the finest of the others there.

Willem van de Velde, the younger, born at Amsterdam 1633, died at Greenwich 1707. His first master was his father, Willem van de Velde the elder, but his principal instructor was Simon de Vlieger. The earlier part of his professional life was spent in Holland, where, besides numerous pictures of the various aspects of marine scenery, he painted several well-known sea-fights in which the Dutch had obtained the victory over the English. He afterwards followed his father to England, where he was greatly patronized by Charles II. and James II. for whom, in turn, he painted the naval victories of the English over the Dutch. He was also much employed by amateurs of art among the English nobility and gentry. There is no question that Willem van de Velde the younger is the greatest marine painter of the whole Dutch School. His perfect knowledge of lineal and aërial perspective, and the incomparable technique which he inherited from his school, enabled him to represent the sea and the sky with the utmost truth of form, atmosphere and colour, and to enliven the scene with the purest feeling for the picturesque, with the most natural incidents of sea-faring life.

Two of his pictures at Amsterdam are particularly remarkable; representing the English flagship *The Prince Royal* striking her colours in the fight with the Dutch fleet of 1666; and its companion, four English men-of-war brought in as prizes at the same fight. Here the painter has represented himself in a small boat, from which he actually witnessed the battle. This accounts for the extraordinary truth with which every particular of the scene is rendered in such small pictures, which, combined with their delicate greyish tone, and the mastery of the execution, render them two of his finest works. A view of the city of Amsterdam, dated 1686, taken from the river, is an especially good specimen of his large pictures. It is about 5 ft. high by 10 ft. wide. The vessels in the river are arranged with great

feeling for the picturesque, and the treatment of details is admirable. His greatest successes, however, are in the representation of calm seas, as may be seen in a small picture at Munich. In the centre of the middle distance is a frigate, and in the foreground smaller vessels. The fine silvery tone in which the whole is kept finds a sufficient counter-balance of colour in the yellowish sun-lit clouds, and in the brownish vessels and their sails. Nothing can be more exquisite than the tender reflections of these in the water. Of almost similar beauty is a picture of about the same size, with four vessels, in the Cassel Gallery, which is signed and dated 1653. As a contrast to this class of works, may be mentioned *The Gathering Tempest*, in the Munich Gallery. This is brilliantly lighted, and of great delicacy of tone in the distance, though the foreground has somewhat darkened.

Meindert Hobbema (1638-1709) was a friend as well as a pupil of Jacob Ruisdael. The fact that such distinguished painters as Adrian van de Velde, Wouvermans, Berchem, and Lingelbach, executed the figures and animals in his pictures proves the esteem in which he was held by his contemporaries; nevertheless it is evident that the public was slow in conceding to him the rank which he deserved, for his name is not found for more than a century after his death in any even of the most elaborate dictionaries of art, while the catalogues of the most important picture sales in Holland make no mention of him at all up to the year 1739; when a picture by him, although much extolled, was sold for only 71 florins, and even in 1768 one of his masterpieces only fetched 300 florins. The English were the first to discover his merits.

The peculiar characteristics of this master, who next to Ruisdael, is confessedly at the head of landscape painters of the Dutch School, will be best appreciated by comparing him with his rival. In two most important qualities—

fertility of inventive genius, and poetry of feeling—he is decidedly inferior: the range of his subjects being far narrower. His most frequent scenes are villages surrounded by trees, such as are frequently met with in the districts of Guelderland, with winding pathways leading from house to house. A water-mill occasionally forms a prominent feature. Often, too, he represents a slightly uneven country, diversified by groups or rows of trees, wheat-fields, meadows, and small pools. Occasionally he gives us a view of part of a town, with its gates, canals with sluices, and quays with houses; more rarely, the ruins of an old castle, with an extensive view of a flat country, or some stately residence. In the composition of all these pictures, however, we do not find that elevated and picturesque taste which characterises Ruisdael; on the contrary they have a thoroughly portrait-like appearance, decidedly prosaic, but always surprizingly truthful. The greater number of Hobbema's pictures are as much characterized by a warm and golden tone as those of Ruisdael by the reverse; his greens being yellowish in the lights and brownish in the shadows—both of singular transparency. In pictures of this kind the influence of Rembrandt is perhaps perceptible, and they are superior in brilliancy to any work by Ruisdael. While these works chiefly present us with the season of harvest and sunset-light, there are others in a cool, silvery, morning lighting, and with the bright green of spring, that surpass Ruisdael's in clearness. His woods also, owing to the various lights that fall on them, are of greater transparency.

As almost all the galleries on the Continent were formed at a period when the works of Hobbema were little prized (Ticcozzi's *Dictionary*, in 1818, does not include his name), they either possess no specimens, or some of an inferior class, so that no adequate idea can be formed of him. The most characteristic example to be met with on the Continent is a landscape in the Berlin Museum, No. 886,

an oak wood, with scattered lights, a calm piece of water in the foreground, and a sun-lit village in the distance. Of the eight pictures in the National Gallery from his hand, most are good, and one world-famous—*The Avenue, Middelharnis*, which may be called his masterpiece. This was painted in 1689, when he had reached the age of fifty. His diploma picture, painted in 1663, is at Hertford House, together with four other interesting examples, all of which repay careful study.

GERMAN SCHOOLS

The origins of the German Schools of painting are obscure, but it is fairly certain that Cologne was the first place in which the art was soonest established to any considerable extent. Here, as in the Netherlands, we cannot find any traces of immediate Italian influences. The first painter who can be identified with any certainty is Wilhelm von Herle, called Meister Wilhelm, whose activity is not traceable earlier than about 1358. Most of the pictures formerly attributed to him have, however, been assigned to his pupil Hermann Wynrich von Wesel, who on the death of his master in 1378 married his widow and continued his practice, until his death somewhere about 1414. His most important works were six panels of the High Altar of the Cathedral, the so-called *Madonna of the Pea Blossoms* and two *Crucifixions* at Cologne, and the *S. Veronica* at Munich, dated 1410.

More important was Stephen Lochner, who died at Cologne in 1451. His influence was widespread and his school apparently numerous, until, in 1450, Roger van der

Weyden, returning from Italy, stopped at Cologne and painted his large triptych, which eclipsed Lochner. From this time onwards the school of Cologne is represented by painters whose names are not known, and who are accordingly distinguished by the subjects of their works; such as *The Master of the Glorification of the Virgin*, *The Master of S. Bartholomew*, etc., until we come to Bartel Bruyn (*c.* 1493-1553), a portrait painter who is represented at Berlin, and by a picture of Dr Fuchsius bequeathed to the National Gallery by George Salting.

In other parts of Germany, particularly in Nuremberg, Ulm, Augsburg, and Basle, various names of painters of the latter half of the fourteenth century have survived, but their works are of little interest except to the connoisseur as showing the influence under which the two great artists of the sixteenth century, Albert Dürer and Hans Holbein, and one or two lesser lights like Lucas Cranach, Albert Altdorfer, and Adam Elsheimer, were formed.

In Germany the taste for the fantastic in art peculiar to the Middle Ages, though it engendered clever and spirited works such as those of Quentin Massys and Lucas van Leyden, was still unfavourable to the cultivation of pure beauty, scenes from the Apocalypse, Dances of Death, etc., being among the favourite subjects for art. On the other hand, the pictorial treatment of antique literature, a world so suggestive of beautiful forms, was so little comprehended by the German mind that they only sought to express it through the medium of those fantastic ideas with very childish and even tasteless results. We must also remember that that average education of the various classes of society which the fine arts require for their protection stood on a very low footing in Germany. In Italy the favour with which works of art was regarded was far more widely extended. This again gave rise to a more elevated personal position on the part of the artist, which in

Italy was not only one of more consideration, but of incomparably greater independence. In this latter respect Germany was so



PLATE XXXII.
"THE MASTER OF ST BARTHOLOMEW
TWO SAINTS

deficient that the genius of Albert Dürer and Holbein was miserably cramped and hindered in development by the poverty and littleness of surrounding circumstances. It is known that of all the German princes no one but the Elector Frederick the Wise ever gave Albert Dürer a commission for pictures, while a writing addressed by the great painter to the magistracy of Nuremberg tells us that his native city never gave him employment even to the value of 500 florins. At the same time his pictures were so meanly paid, that for the means of subsistence, as he says himself, he was compelled to devote himself to engraving. How far more such a man as Dürer would have been appreciated in Italy or in the Netherlands is further evidenced in the above-mentioned writing, where he states that he was offered 200 ducats a year in Venice and 300 Philips-gulden in Antwerp, if he would settle in either of those cities. And Holbein fared still worse: there is no evidence whatever that any German prince ever troubled himself at all about the great painter while at Basle, and his art was so little cared for that necessity compelled him to go to England, where a genius fitted for the highest undertakings of historical painting was limited to the sphere of portraiture. The crowning impediments finally, which hindered the progress of German art, and perverted it from its true aim, were the Reformation, which narrowed the sphere of ecclesiastical works, and the pernicious imitation of the great Italian masters which ensued.

Lucas Cranach, born in 1472, received his first instructions in art from his father, his later teaching probably from Matthew Grunewald. In some instances he attained to the expression of dignity, earnestness and feeling, but generally his characteristics are a naïve and childlike cheerfulness and a gentle and almost timid grace.

The impression produced by his style of representation reminds one of the "Volksbücher" and "Volkslieder." Many of his church pictures have a very peculiar significance: in these he stands forth properly speaking as the painter of the Reformation. Intimate both with Luther and Melanchthon, he seizes on the central aim of their doctrine, viz., the insufficiency of good works and the sole efficacy of faith. His mythological subjects appeal directly to the eye like real portraits; and sometimes also by means of a certain grace and naïveté of motive. We may cite as an instance the Diana seated on a stag in a small picture at Berlin, No. 564. *The Fountain of Youth*, also at Berlin, No. 593, is a picture of peculiar character; a large basin surrounded by steps and with a richly adorned fountain forms the centre. On one side, where the country is stony and barren, a multitude of old women are dragged forward on horses, waggons or carriages, and with much trouble are got into the water. On the other side of the fountain they appear as young maidens splashing about and amusing themselves with all kinds of playful mischief; close by is a large pavilion into which a herald courteously invites them to enter and where they are arrayed in costly apparel. A feast is prepared in a smiling meadow, which seems to be followed by a dance; the gay crowd loses itself in a neighbouring grove. The men unfortunately have not become young, and retain their grey beards. The picture is of the year 1546, the seventy-fourth of Cranach's age.

Albert Altdorfer was born 1488 at Altdorf, near Landshuth, in Bavaria, and settled at Ratisbon, where he died 1528. He invested the fantastic tendency of the time with a poetic feeling—especially in landscape—and he developed it so as to attain a perfection in this sort of romantic painting that no other artist had reached. In his later period he was strongly influenced by Italian art. Altdorfer's principal work is in the Munich Gallery, and is thus described by Schlegel:—

"It represents the Victory of Alexander the Great over Darius; the costume is that of the artist's own day, as it would be treated in the chivalrous poems of the middle ages—man and horse are sheathed in plate and mail, with surcoats of gold or embroidery; the chamfrons upon the heads of the horses, the glittering lances and stirrups, and the variety of the weapons, form altogether a scene of indescribable splendour and richness.... It is, in truth, a little world on a few square feet of canvas; the hosts of combatants who advance on all sides against each other are innumerable, and the view into the background appears interminable. In the distance is the ocean, with high rocks and a rugged island between them; ships of war appear in the offing and a whole fleet of vessels—on the left the moon is setting—on the right the sun rising—both shining through the opening clouds—a clear and striking image of the events represented. The armies are arranged in rank and column without the strange attitudes, contrasts, and distortions generally exhibited in so-called battle-pieces. How indeed would this have been possible with such a vast multitude of figures? The whole is in the plain and severe, or it may be the stiff manner of the old style. At the same time the character and execution of these little figures is most masterly and profound. And what variety, what expression there is, not merely in the character of the single warriors and knights, but in the hosts themselves! Here crowds of black archers rush down troop after troop from the mountain with the rage of a foaming torrent; on the other side high upon the rocks in the far distance a scattered crowd of flying men are turning round in a defile. The point of the greatest interest stands out brilliantly from the centre of the whole—Alexander and Darius both in armour of burnished gold; Alexander on Bucephalus with his lance in rest advances before his men and presses on the flying Darius, whose charioteer has already fallen on his white horses, and who looks back upon his conqueror

with all the despair of a vanquished monarch."

Albert Dürer (1471-1528), by his overpowering genius, may be called the sole representative of German art of his period. He was gifted with a power of conception which traced nature through all her finest shades, and with a lively sense, as well for the solemn and the sublime, as for simple grace and tenderness; above all, he had an earnest and truthful feeling in art united with a capacity for the most earnest study. These qualities were sufficient to place him by the side of the greatest artists whom the world has ever seen.

One of the earliest portraits by Albert Dürer known to us is that of his father, Albert Dürer, the goldsmith, dated 1497, in our National Gallery. In the year 1644, another version of this picture, which was engraved by Hollar, was in the collection of the Earl of Arundel, and is now in that of the Duke of Northumberland, at Syon House. Of about the same time—that is to say, before 1500—are the portraits of Oswald Krell, at Munich, of Frederick the Wise, at Berlin, and of himself, at the Prado.

Several of Albert Dürer's pictures of the year 1500 are known to us. The first and most important is his own portrait in the Munich Gallery, which represents him full face with his hand laid on the fur trimming of his robe.

His finest picture of the year 1504 is an *Adoration of the Kings*, originally painted for Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, subsequently presented by the Elector Christian II. to the Emperor Rudolph II., and finally, on the occasion of an exchange of pictures, transferred from Vienna to Florence, where it now hangs in the Tribune of the Uffizi. The heads are of thoroughly realistic treatment; the Virgin a portrait from some model of no attractive character; the second King a portrait of the painter himself. The landscape background exactly resembles that in the well-

known engraving of S. Eustace, the period of which is thus pretty nearly defined. It is carefully painted in a fine body of colour.

In 1505 Dürer made a second journey into Upper Italy, and remained a considerable time at Venice. Of his occupations in this city the letters written to his friend Wilibald Pirckheimer which have come down to us give many interesting particulars. He there executed for the German Company a picture known as *The Feast of Rose Garlands*, which brought him great fame, and by its brilliant colouring silenced the assertion of his envious adversaries "that he was a good engraver, but knew not how to deal with colours." In the centre of a landscape is the Virgin seated with the Child and crowned by two angels; on her right is a Pope with priests kneeling; on her left the Emperor Maximilian I. with knights; various members of the German Company are also kneeling; all are being crowned with garlands of roses by the Virgin, the Child, S. Dominick—who stands behind the Virgin—and by angels. The painter and his friend Pirckheimer are seen standing in the background on the right; the painter holds a tablet with the inscription, "Albertus Dürer Germanus, MDVI" This picture, which is one of his largest and finest, was purchased from the church at a high price by the Emperor Rudolph II. for his gallery at Prague, where it remained until sold in 1782 by the Emperor Joseph II. It then became the property of the Præmonstratensian monastery of Stratow at Prague, where it still exists, though in very injured condition and greatly over-painted. In the Imperial Gallery at Vienna may be seen an old copy which conveys a better idea of the picture than the original.

With these productions begins the zenith of this master's fame, in which a great number of works follow one another within a short period. Of these we first notice a picture of 1508, in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna, painted

for Duke Frederick of Saxony, and which afterwards adorned the gallery of the Emperor Rudolph II. It represents *The Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand Saints*. In the centre of the picture stand the master and his friend Pirckheimer as spectators, both in black dresses. Dürer has a mantle thrown over his shoulder in the Italian fashion, and stands in a firm attitude. He folds his hands and holds a small flag, on which is inscribed, "Iste faciebat anno domini 1508 Albertus Dürer Alemanus." There are a multitude of single groups exhibiting every species of martyrdom, but there is a want of general connection of the whole. The scenes in the background, where the Christians are led naked up the rocks, and are precipitated down from the top, are particularly excellent. The whole is very minute and miniature-like; the colouring is beautifully brilliant, and it is painted (the accessories particularly) with extraordinary care.

To 1511 belongs also one of his most celebrated pictures, *The Adoration of the Trinity*, which is also at Vienna, painted for the chapel of the Landauer Brüderhaus in Nuremberg. Above in the centre of the picture are seen the First Person, who holds the Saviour in his arms, while the Holy Spirit is seen above; some angels spread out the priestly mantle of the Almighty, whilst others hover near with the instruments of Christ's passion. On the left hand a little lower down is a choir of females with the Virgin at their head; on the right are the male saints with St John the Baptist. Below all these kneel a host of the blessed of all ranks and nations extending over the whole of this part of the picture. Underneath the whole is a beautiful landscape, and in a corner of the picture the artist himself richly clothed in a fur mantle, with a tablet next him with the words, "Albertus Dürer Noricus faciebat anno a Virginis partu, 1511." It may be assumed beyond doubt that he held in particular esteem those pictures into which he introduced his own portrait.

In the Vienna Gallery is also a picture of the year 1512, the Virgin holding the naked Child in her arms. She has a veil over her head and blue drapery. Her face is of the form usual with Albert Dürer, but of a soft and maidenly character; the Child is beautiful—the countenance particularly so. It is painted with exceeding delicacy of finish.

Two altar-pieces of his earliest period must be mentioned. One is in the Dresden Gallery, consisting of three pictures painted in tempera on canvas, representing the Virgin, S. Anthony, and S. Sebastian respectively. Although this is probably one of his very earliest works, it is remarkable for the novelty of its treatment and its independence of tradition.

The other, a little later, is in the Munich Gallery (Nos. 240-3), painted at the request of the Paumgartner family, for S. Catherine's Church at Nuremberg, was brought to Munich in 1612 by Maximilian I. The subject of the middle picture is the Nativity; the Child is in the centre, surrounded by little angels, whilst the Virgin and Joseph kneel at the side. The wings contain portraits of the two donors under the form of S. George and S. Eustace represented as knights in steel armour, each with his standard, and the former holding the slain dragon.

The year 1526 was distinguished by the two pictures of the four Apostles: John and Peter, Mark and Paul; the figures are the size of life. These, which are the master's grandest work, and the last of importance executed by him, are now in the Munich Gallery. We know with certainty that they were presented by Albert Dürer himself to the council of his native city in remembrance of his career as an artist, and at the same time as conveying to his fellow-citizens an earnest and lasting exhortation suited to that stormy period. In the year 1627, however, the pictures

were allowed to pass into the hands of the Elector Maximilian I. of Bavaria. The inscriptions selected by the painter himself might have given offence to a Catholic prince, and were therefore cut off and joined to the copies by John Fischer, which were intended to indemnify the city of Nuremberg for the loss of the originals. These copies are still in the collection of the Landauer Brüderhaus at Nuremberg.

These pictures are the fruit of the deepest thought which then stirred the mind of Albert Dürer, and are executed with overpowering force. Finished as they are, they form the first complete work of art produced by Protestantism. As the inscription taken from the Gospels and Epistles of the Apostles contains pressing warnings not to swerve from the word of God, nor to believe in the doctrines of false prophets, so the figures themselves represent the steadfast and faithful guardians of that holy Scripture which they bear in their hands. There is also an old tradition, handed down from the master's own times, that these figures represent the four temperaments. This is confirmed by the pictures themselves; and though at first sight it may appear to rest on a mere accidental combination, it serves to carry out more completely the artist's thought, and gives to the figures greater individuality. It shows how every quality of the human mind may be called into the service of the Divine Word. Thus in the first picture, we see the whole force of the mind absorbed in contemplation, and we are taught that true watchfulness in behalf of the Scripture must begin by devotion to its study.

S. John stands in front, the open book in his hand; his high forehead and his whole countenance bear the impress of earnest and deep thought. This is the melancholic temperament, which does not shrink from the most profound inquiry. Behind him S. Peter bends over the

book, and gazes earnestly at its contents—a hoary head, full of meditative repose. This figure represents the phlegmatic temperament, which reviews its own thoughts in tranquil reflection. The second picture shows the outward operation of the conviction thus attained and its relation to daily life. S. Mark in the background is the man of sanguine temperament; he looks boldly round, and appears to speak to his hearers with animation, earnestly urging them to share those advantages which he has himself derived from the Holy Scriptures. S. Paul, on the contrary, in the foreground, holds the book and sword in his hands; he looks angrily and severely over his shoulder, ready to defend the Word, and to annihilate the blasphemer with the sword of God's power. He is the representative of the choleric temperament.

We know of no important work of a later date than that just described. His portrait in a woodcut of the year 1527 represents him earnest and serious in demeanour, as would naturally follow from his advancing age and the pressure of eventful times. His head is no longer adorned with those richly flowing locks, on which in his earlier days he had set so high a value, as we learn from his pictures and from jests still recorded of him. With the departure of Hans Holbein to England in 1528 and the death of Albert Dürer in the same year, that excellence to which they had raised German art passed away, and centuries saw no sign of its revival.

Of Hans Holbein, born at Augsburg in 1498, we shall have more to say in a later chapter, when considering the origins of English portraiture. But as in the case of Van Dyck, and in fact of every great portrait painter, his excellence in this particular branch of his art was but one result of his being a born artist and first exercising his talents in a much wider field. In Holbein the realistic tendency of the German School attained its highest development, and he may, next

to Dürer, be pronounced the greatest master in it. While Dürer's art exhibits a close affinity with the religious ideas of the Middle Ages, Holbein appears to have been imbued with more modern and more material sentiments, and accordingly we find him excelling Dürer in closeness and delicacy of observation in the delineation of nature. A proof of this is afforded by the evidence of Erasmus, who said that as regards the portraits painted of him by both these artists, that by Holbein was the most like. In feeling for beauty of form, also in grace of movement, in colouring, and in the actual art of painting—in which his father had thoroughly instructed him—Holbein is to be placed above Dürer. That he did not rival the great Italians of his time in "historical" painting can only be ascribed to the circumstances of his life in Germany, where such subjects were not in fashion.

Of his pictures executed before he left his native country the greater number are at Basle and Augsburg, and are therefore less familiar to the general public than his later works. A notable exception is the famous *Meyer Madonna*, the original of which is at Darmstadt, but a version now relegated, somewhat harshly, to the "copyist" is in the Dresden Gallery, and certainly exhibits as much of the spirit of the master as will serve for an example of his powers. It represents the Virgin as Queen of Heaven, standing in a niche, with the Child in her arms, and with the family of the Burgomaster Jacob Meyer of Basle kneeling on either side of her. With the utmost life and truth to nature, which brings these kneeling figures actually into our presence, says Kugler, there is combined in a most exquisite degree an expression of great earnestness, as if the mind were fixed on some lofty object. This is shown not merely by the introduction of divine beings into the circle of human sympathies, but particularly in the relation so skilfully indicated between the Holy Virgin and her worshippers, and in her manifest desire to communicate to

those who are around her the sacred peace and tranquillity expressed in her own countenance and attitude, and implied in the infantine grace of the Saviour. In the direct union of the divine with the human, and in their reciprocal harmony, there is involved a devout and earnest purity of feeling such as only the older masters were capable of representing.

Another of his most beautiful pictures painted in Germany is the portrait of Erasmus, dated 1523. This was sent by Erasmus to Sir Thomas More, at Chelsea, with a letter recommending Holbein to his care, and as it is still in this country—in the collection of the Earl of Radnor at Longford Castle—it is not perhaps too much to hope that it may one of these days find its way into the National Gallery—perhaps when the alterations to the front entrance are completed. This picture has for a very long time been regarded as one of Holbein's very finest portraits. Mr W. Barclay Squire, in the sumptuous catalogue of the Radnor collection compiled by him, quotes the opinion of Sir William Musgrave, written in 1785, "I am not sure whether it is not the finest I have seen"; and that of Dr Waagen, "Alone worth a pilgrimage to Longford. Seldom has a painter so fully succeeded in bringing to view the whole character of so original a mind as in this instance. In the mouth and small eyes may be seen the unspeakable studies of a long life ... the face also expresses the sagacity and knowledge of a life gained by long experience ... the masterly and careful execution extends to every portion ... yet the face surpasses everything else in delicacy of modelling."

Cruel, indeed, was England to have transplanted the one artist who might have saved Germany from the artistic destitution from which she has suffered ever since!



PLATE XXXIII.—HANS HOLBEIN
PORTRAIT OF CHRISTINA, DUCHESS OF M
National Gallery, London

FRENCH SCHOOL

I

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

When we consider the peculiar beauty of the architecture and ecclesiastical sculpture in France during the Middle Ages and the period of the renaissance, and of the enamels, ivories, and other small works of art, it is wrong to regret that painting was not also practised by the French as assiduously as it was in Italy. For there can be no doubt that in being confined to one channel the artistic impulses of a people cut deeper than if dissipated in various directions. We may suppose, indeed, that if those of the French had found their outlet in painting alone, we should have pictures of wonderful beauty, of a beauty moreover of a markedly different kind from that of the Italian or Spanish or Netherlandish pictures. But on the other hand we should have perhaps lost the amazing fascination of Chartres, and the delights of Limoges enamel and ivories.

As it happens, the earliest mention to be made of painting in France is the arrival of Leonardo da Vinci at Amboise in 1516, whither he had come from Milan in the train of the

young king François I. Unfortunately he was by this time sixty-four years old, and in less than three years he died. At about the same time there was a court painter in the employment of François—under the official designation of *varlet de chambre*—named Jehan Clouet, who is supposed to have been of Flemish extraction. Nothing very definite is known about him or his work, but he had a son François Clouet, who seems to have been born at about the time of Leonardo's arrival, and who succeeded to his father's office. At the funeral of François I. in 1547 he was ordered to make an *effige du dict feu roy*, and he continued to be the official court painter to Henri II. (whose posthumous portrait he was also ordered to paint), François II., and Charles IX. He died in 1572. Every portrait of this period is attributed to him, just as was the case with Holbein in England. Neither of the two examples at the National Gallery can be safely ascribed to him. The little head of the Emperor Charles V., king of Spain, at Hereford House, is identical in style and in dimensions with that of Francis I., king of France, in the Museum at Lyons, which is attributed to Jean Clouet. Both may have been painted when Charles V. passed through Paris in 1539, but whether by Jean or one of his disciples cannot be said with certainty.

Not until the very end of the sixteenth century were born Claude Gellée and Nicholas Poussin, the only two Frenchmen who were painters of considerable importance before the close of the seventeenth. Nor did either of these two contribute anything to the glory of their country by practice or by precept within its confines, both of them passing most of their lives and painting their best works in Italy and under Italian influence.

Nicholas Poussin was born at Villiers near Les Andelys on the banks of the Seine, in 1594, where he studied for some time under Quentin Varin till he was eighteen. After this

he was in Paris, but in 1624 he went to Rome where he lived with Du Quesnoy. His first success was obtained by the execution of two historical pieces which were commissioned by Cardinal Barberini on his return from an Embassy to France. These were *The Death of Germanicus* and *The Capture of Jerusalem*. His next works were *The Martyrdom of S. Erasmus*, *The Plague at Ashdod*, of which a replica is in the National Gallery, and *The Seven Sacraments* now at Belvoir Castle. By these he acquired such fame that on his return to Paris in 1640, Louis XIII. appointed him royal painter, and in order to keep him at home provided him with apartments in the Tuileries and a salary of £120 a year. Within two years, however, Poussin was back in Rome, and after twenty-three years' unbroken success died there in 1665 in his seventy-second year.

Poussin was a most conscientious painter, devoting himself seriously in his earlier years to the study both of the antique and of practical anatomy. Besides being the intimate friend of Du Quesnoy, he was a devout pupil of Domenichino, for whom he had the greatest reverence. It is not surprising therefore to find in his earlier works, such as the *Plague at Ashdod*, a certain academic dulness and lack of spontaneity. He was not the forerunner of a new epoch, but one of the last upholders of the old. He was trying to arrest decay, to infuse a healthier spirit into a declining art, so that he errs on the side of correctness. The influence of Titian, however, was too strong for him to remain long within the narrowest limits, as may be seen in the *Bacchanalian Dance*, No. 62 in the National Gallery, which was probably one of a series painted for Cardinal Richelieu during the short time that Poussin was in Paris in 1641. In this and in No. 42, the *Bacchanalian Festival* as well as in *The Shepherds in Arcadia*, in the Louvre, we get a surprisingly strong reminiscence of Titian, more especially in the brown tones of the flesh and the deep blue of the sky.

As the result of conscientious study of the human body the figures in these pictures are full of life—for correctness of drawing is the first requisite of lively painting without which all the others are useless. The fact that over two hundred prints have been engraved after his pictures is a proof of his popularity at one time or another, and though at the present time his reputation is not as widely recognised as in former years, it is certainly as high among those whose judgment is independent of passing fashions. As evidence of the soundness of his principles, the following is perhaps worth quoting:—

"There are nine things in painting," Poussin wrote in a letter to M. de Chambrai, the author of a treatise on painting, "which can never be taught and which are essential to that art. To begin with, the subject of it should be noble, and receive no quality from the person who treats it; and to give opportunity to the painter to show his talents and his industry it must be chosen as capable of receiving the most excellent form. A painter should begin with disposition (or as we should say, composition), the ornament should follow, their agreement of the parts, beauty, grace, spirit, costume, regard to nature and probability; and above all, judgment. This last must be in the painter himself and cannot be taught. It is the golden bough of Virgil that no one can either find or pluck unless his lucky star conducts him to it."

Gaspar Poussin, whose name was really Gaspard Dughet, was brother-in-law of Nicholas, and acquired his name from being his pupil. He was nineteen years his junior, and survived him by ten years. He was born in Rome of French parents, and died there in 1675, and though he travelled a good deal in Italy he never appears to have visited France. His Italian landscapes are very beautiful, and we are fortunate in the possession of one which is considered his best, No. 31 in the National Gallery, *Landscape with*

Figures, *Abraham and Isaac*. Scarcely less fine is the *Calling of Abraham*, No. 1159, especially in the middle and far distance. The sacred figures, it may as well be said, are of little concern in the compositions, though useful for purposes of identifying the pictures.

Claude Gellée, nowadays usually spoken of as Claude, was born at Chamagne in Lorraine in 1600. Accordingly he has been styled Claude Lorraine, le Lorraine, de Lorrain, Lorrain, or Claudio Lorrenese with wonderful persistency through the ages, though there was no mystery about his surname and it would have served just as well. He was brought up in his father's profession of pastrycook, and in that capacity he went to Rome seeking for employment. As it happened he found it in the house of a landscape painter, Agostino Tassi, who had been a pupil of Paul Bril, and he not only cooked for him but mixed his colours as well, and soon became his pupil. Later he was studying under a German painter, Gottfried Wals, at Naples. A more important influence on him, however, was that of Joachim Sandrart, one of the best of the later German painters, whom he met in Rome.

Claude's earliest pictures of any importance were two which were painted for Pope Urban VII. in 1639, when he was just upon forty years old. These are the *Village Dance* and the *Seaport*, now in the Louvre. The *Seaport at Sunset* and *Narcissus and Echo* in the National Gallery (Nos. 5 and 19) are dated 1644—the former on the canvas and the latter on the sketch for it in the *Liber Veritatis*, where it is stated that it was painted for an English patron.

The *Liber Veritatis*, it should be observed, is the title given to a portfolio of over two hundred drawings in pen and bistre, or Indian ink, which is now in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. Most of these were made from pictures which had been painted, not as sketches or designs

preparatory to painting them, and in some instances there are notes on the back of them giving the date, purchaser, and other particulars relating to them. So great was the vogue for Claude's landscapes in England during the eighteenth century that as early as 1730 or 1740 a good many of his drawings, which had been collected by Jonathan Richardson, Dr. Mead and others, were engraved by Arthur Pond and John Knapton; and in 1777 a series of about two hundred of the Duke of Devonshire's drawings was published by Alderman Boydell, which had been etched and mezzotinted by Richard Earlom, under the title of *Liber Veritatis*. This was the model on which Turner founded the publication of his own sketches under the title of *Liber Studiorum*. Thus, if Claude exerted little influence on the art of his own country, it can hardly be said that he exerted none elsewhere, for Turner was by no means the first Englishman to fall under his spell. Richard Wilson, the first English landscape painter, was undoubtedly influenced by him, both from an acquaintance with his drawings in English collections and from the study of his works when in Rome.

In this connection we may consider the two landscapes, numbered 12 and 14 in the National Gallery Catalogue, as our most important examples by this master, for Turner bequeathed to the nation his two most important pictures *The Sun Rising Through a Vapour* and *Dido Building Carthage*, on condition that they should be hung between these two by Claude. The Court of Chancery could annul the condition, but they could not nullify the effect of Claude's influence on Turner or alter the judgment of posterity with regard to the relations of the two painters to each other and to art in general, and the Director has wisely observed the wishes of Turner in still hanging the four pictures together, the Court of Chancery notwithstanding. Both of Claude's are inscribed, besides being signed and dated, as follows:

No. 12. Mariage d'Isaac avec Rebeca, Claudio Gil. inv. Romae 1648.

No. 14. La Reine de Saba va trover Salomon. Clavde Gil. inv. faict pour son altesse le duc de Buillon à Roma 1648.

Both pictures are familiar in various engravings of them, and though the present fashion leads many people in other directions, there can be no doubt that the appreciation of Claude in this country is never likely to die out, and is only waiting for a turn of the wheel to revive with increased vigour.

Meantime, however, France was not entirely destitute of painters, and though without Claude, Poussin or Dughet, who preferred to exercise their art in Rome, she anticipated England by over a century in that most important step, the foundation of an Academy of Painting. Not many of the names of its original members ever became famous—as may be said in our own country—but among them was Sebastien Bourdon (1616-1671), whose work was so much admired by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Bourdon, also, wandered away from France; within four years after the foundation of the Academy, namely, in 1652, he went to Stockholm, and was appointed principal painter to Queen Christina. On her abdication, however, in 1663, he returned to Paris, and enjoyed a great success in painting landscapes, and historical subjects. *The Return of the Ark from Captivity*, No. 64 in the National Gallery Catalogue, was presented by that distinguished patron of the arts, Sir George Beaumont, to whom it was bequeathed by Sir Joshua Reynolds, as being one of his most treasured possessions. "I cannot quit this subject," he writes in the fourteenth Discourse, alluding to poetry in landscape, "without mentioning two examples, which occur to me at present, in which the poetical style of landscape may be seen happily executed; the one is *Jacob's Dream*, by Salvator Rosa, and

the other, *The Return of the Ark from Captivity*, by Sebastian Bourdon. With whatever dignity those histories are presented to us in the language of scripture, this style of painting possesses the same power of inspiring sentiments of grandeur and sublimity, and is able to communicate them to subjects which appear by no means adapted to receive them. A ladder against the sky has no very promising appearance of possessing a capacity to excite any heroic ideas, and the Ark in the hands of a second-rate master would have little more effect than a common waggon on the highway; yet those subjects are so poetically treated throughout, the parts have such a correspondence with each other, and the whole and every part of the scene is so visionary, that it is impossible to look at them without feeling in some measure the enthusiasm which seems to have inspired the painters."

Eustache le Sueur, born in the same year as Sebastien Bourdon (1616), was another of the original members of the Academy, and was employed by the King at the Louvre. His most famous work was the decorations of the cloister at the monastery of La Chartreuse (now in the Louvre) of which Horace Walpole speaks so ecstatically in the preface to the last volume of the *Anecdotes of Painting*. "The last scene of S. Bruno expiring" (he writes) "in which are expressed all the stages of devotion from the youngest mind impressed with fear to the composed resignation of the Prior, is perhaps inferior to no single picture of the greatest master. If Raphael died young, so did Le Sueur; the former had seen the antique, the latter only prints from Raphael; yet in the Chartreuse, what airs of heads! What harmony of colouring! What aërial perspective! How Grecian the simplicity of architecture and drapery! How diversified a single quadrangle though the life of a hermit be the only subject, and devotion the only pathetic!"

Philippe de Champaigne was another of the original

members. He was born at Brussels in 1602, and did not come to Paris till 1621, where he was soon afterwards employed in the decoration of the Luxembourg Palace. But he was chiefly a portrait painter, his principal works being the fine full-length of Cardinal Richelieu, and another of his daughter as a nun of Port Royal, both of which are in the Louvre. There are four in the Wallace Collection, but perhaps the most familiar to the English public is the canvas at the National Gallery (No. 798), painted for the Roman sculptor Mocchi, to make a bust from, with a full face and two profiles of Richelieu. As a portrait this is exceedingly interesting, the more so from having an inscription over one of the heads, "de ces deux profiles cecy est le meilleur." The full length of the Cardinal presented by Mr. Charles Butler in 1895 (No. 1449), is a good example, which cannot however but suffer by juxtaposition with more accomplished works.

But it was not until the close of the seventeenth century that portrait painting in France became anything like a fine art, and even then it did not get beyond being formal and magnificent. The two principal exponents were Hyacinthe Rigaud and Nicolas Largillière, both of whose works have a sort of grandeur but little subtlety or charm.

Rigaud was born in 1659, at Perpignan in the extreme south of France, and studied at Montpelier in his youth, then at Lyons on his way to Paris—much as a Scottish artist might have studied first at Glasgow, then at Birmingham on his way to London. On the advice of Lebrun he devoted himself specially to portrait painting, which he did with such success that in 1700 he was elected a member of the Academy. He painted Louis XIV. more often than Largillière or any other painter, and in his later years (he lived till 1743) Louis XV. his great-grandson. He is said to have shared with Kneller the distinction, such as it may be, of having painted at least five monarchs.

Rigaud is best known in these days by the fine prints after his portraits by the French engravers. Of his brushwork we are only able to judge by the two doubtful versions at the National Gallery and the Wallace Collection respectively, of the fine portrait at Versailles of *Cardinal Fleury*. The group of *Lulli and the Musicians of the French Court*, which was purchased for the National Gallery in 1906 is not by him, and it is difficult to understand why the public money should have been wasted on it, or at least on the inscription attributing it to him.

Nicolas de Largillière was three years older than Rigaud and survived him by another three. He was born in Paris in 1656 and died six months before completing his ninetieth year. Early in life he went as a pupil to Antwerp, under Antoine Goubeau, and he is said to have worked in England as an assistant to Sir Peter Lely during the later years of that master. On his return to France he was received into the Royal Academy—in 1686.

In the Wallace Collection is an interesting example of his work, the large group of the French Royal Family, in which four living generations are portrayed and the bronze effigies of two more. Henri IV. and Louis XIII., the grandfather and father of the reigning monarch, Louis XIV., the Dauphin his son, the Duc de Bourgogne his grandson, and the Duc d'Anjou, his great-grandson—afterwards Louis XV., are all included in this formal group, which is a useful lesson in history as well as in painting.

II

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Antoine Watteau was born at Valenciennes in 1684, and died near there about thirty-seven years later of consumption. Valenciennes really belonged to Flanders, and had only lately been annexed to France, so that Watteau owed something of his art to Flemish rather than to French sources. At the same time it cannot be said that his development would have been the same if he had gone to Brussels or Antwerp instead of to Paris to study, for though the works of Rubens and Van Dyck were from his earliest years his chief attraction, the influence of the French artist Claude Gillot, as well as that of Audran, the keeper of the Luxembourg Palace, without doubt exerted a very decided help in determining the future course of his work.

When living with Audran, Watteau had every opportunity for studying the works of the older masters, especially those of Rubens, whose decorations, executed for Marie de Medici, had not at that time been removed to the Louvre. Besides copying from these older pictures, Watteau was employed by Audran in the execution of designs for wall decorations, etc.

Watteau's two earliest pictures still in existence are supposed to be the *Départ de Troupe* and the *Halte d'Armée*, which were the first of a series of military pictures on a small scale. To an early period also belong the *Accordée de Village*, at the Soane Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the *Mariée de Village* at Potsdam, and the *Wedding Festivities* in the Dublin National Gallery.

In 1712 other influences began to work upon him. In this year he came into contact with Crozat, the famous collector, in whose house he became familiar with a fresh batch of the Flemish and Italian masterpieces. It was at this time that he was approved by the Royal Academy, though he took five years over his Diploma picture,

"*Embarquement pour l'Île de Cythère*," which is now in the Louvre. Meantime the influence of Rubens and the Italian masters—especially the Venetians, had greatly widened and deepened his art, and these influences, acting on his peculiarly sensitive temperament and poetical spirit, had a magical effect, transforming the actual scenes of Paris and Versailles, which he painted into enchanted places in



PLATE XXXIV.—ANTOINE WATTEAU
L'INDIFFÉRENT *Louvre, Paris*

fairyland, as he transformed the formal actual painting of

the period of Louis XIV. into the romantic school of the eighteenth century in France. The setting of the famous pictures in the Wallace Collection, catalogued as *The Music-Party* or *Les Charnes de la Vie* (No. 410), is a view of the Champs Elysées taken from the gallery of the Tuileries. Who would have thought it? And what does it matter, except to show how entirely Watteau revolutionized the pompous and prosaic methods of his time by investing the actual with poetry and romance.

Two other pictures at Hertford House, Nos. 389 and 391, were painted in the Champs Elysées, and the figures are, for the most part, the same in both, all three of these pictures are fine examples of the artist's power of broad and spirited treatment, combined with extreme delicacy and refinement of conception.

Three other pictures at Hertford House are equally delightful examples of another class of subject, namely groups of figures dressed in the parts of actors in Italian comedy. From a note in the Catalogue we learn that a company of Italian comedians were in Paris in the sixteenth century, but were banished by Louis Quatorze in 1697 for a supposed affront to Madame de Maintenon. In 1716, however, they were recalled by the Regent, the Duc d'Orléans, and became once more the delight of Paris. Several of the figures in the Italian comedy had already passed into French popular drama, and in Watteau's time there seems to have been a fluctuating company, according as one actor or actress or another developed a part, and to Pantalone, Arlecchino, Dottore and Columbina were now added Pierrot—or Gilles—Mezetin, a sort of double of Pierrot, Scaramouche and Scapin. The vague web of courtship, dalliance, intrigue and jealousy called up by these characters attracted Watteau to employ them in his compositions, and to make them also the medium of the more sincere sentiments of conjugal love and friendship,—

as in *The Music Lesson*, *Gilles and his Family* and *Harlequin and Columbine*, at Hertford House. All of these three were engraved in Watteau's life-time or shortly after his death, and the verses sub-joined to the engravings are a charming rendering of the sentiment underlying the pictures.

In *The Music Lesson* we see the half length figures of a lady, seated, reading a music book, and of a man playing a lute opposite to her. Another man looks at the book over the lady's shoulder, and two little children's faces appear at her knee. The verses are as follows:—

Pour nous prouver que cette belle
Trouve l'hymen un nœud fort doux
Le peintre nous la peint fidelle
À suivre le ton d'un Époux.

Les enfants qui sont autour d'elle
Sont les fruits de son tendre amour
Dont ce beau joueur de prunelle
Pouvait bien goûter quelque jour.

In *Gilles and his Family* we have a three-quarter length full-face portrait of le Sieur de Sirois, a friend of Watteau, with these verses under the engraving:—

Sous un habit de mezzetin
Ce gros brun au riant visage
Sur la guitarre avec sa main
Fait un aimable badinage.

Par les doux accords de sa voix
Enfants d'une bouche vermeille
Du beau sexe tant à la fois
Il charme les yeux et l'oreille.

In the little *Lady at her Toilet* (No. 439) we see the influence of Paul Veronese, though it is probable that this was not painted until he visited London in the later part of his short life. For there is a similar piece called *La Toilette du Matin* which was engraved by a French artist who had settled in England, Philip Mercier, and on whose work the influence of Watteau is very noticeable.

Le Rendez-vous de Chasse (No. 416), which is of the same size, and in character similar to *Les Amusements Champêtres* (No. 391), is the last by Watteau of which we have any certain knowledge. It was painted in 1720, the year before his death, when his health prevented him from making any sustained effort. It is said to have been a commission from his friends M. and Mme. de Julienne, in whose shooting-box at Saint Maur, between the woods of Vincennes and the river, he went to repose from time to time.

Nicholas Lancret was only by six years Watteau's junior, so that he can hardly be considered as a pupil or even a disciple, but only as an imitator of Watteau. He was the pupil of Claude Gillot, and afterwards his assistant, and it was not unnatural that a close friendship should have been formed between Lancret and Watteau, or that it should have been dissolved by the deliberate imitation by the former of the latter's style—seeing how successful the imitation was. Two of the pictures by Lancret at Hertford House, Nos. 422, *Conversation Galante* and 440, *Fête in a Wood*, are fair examples of how close, at one period of his career, the imitation became. The latter is the *Bal dans un Bois* which was exhibited at the Place Dauphiné, and was complained of by Watteau on account of its close resemblance to his own work.

Another in the Wallace Collection belongs to the same early period of Watteau's influence. The *Italian Comedians*

by a Fountain (No. 465), being attributed to Watteau in the sale, in 1853, at which it was bought for Lord Hertford. His lordship was particularly anxious to secure this picture, "Between *you* and *I*," he writes, with the quaint regardlessness of grammar peculiar to the Victorian nobility, "(and to no other person but you should I make this *confidence*), I must have the Lancret called Watteau in the Standish Collection. So I depend upon you for *getting it for me*. I need not beg you not to mention a word about this to *anybody*, either *before* or *after* the sale." And again, "I *depend* upon your getting the Lancret (Watteau in the Catalogue) for me. I have no doubt it will sell for a good sum, most likely more than it is worth, but we *must* have it ... I leave it to you, but I must have it, unless by some unheard of chance it was to go beyond 3000 guineas." He was fortunate indeed in getting it for £735.

Mademoiselle Camargo Dancing (No. 393), and *La Belle Grecque* (No. 450), in the Wallace Collection, are good examples of the Comedian motive treated with more actuality, yet with no less grace. The four little allegorical pieces in the National Gallery, *The Four Ages of Man*, are more lively if less romantic, being composed more for the characters illustrating the subject than for poetical setting.

Jean Baptise Joseph Pater was actually a pupil of Watteau. He was ten years his junior, but was equally unhappy on account of his health, and died at forty. Like Lancret, he incurred Watteau's displeasure for a similar reason, though in his case it was rather the fear of what he would do than what he did that was the cause of Watteau's displeasure. At the same time, the names of both Lancret and Pater are inseparable from that of Watteau in the history of painting, and, both in their choice of subject and their treatment of it, they are hardly distinguishable to the casual observer. Watteau, it need hardly be said, was far above the other two, but it was fortunate indeed that his romantic genius

had two such gifted imitators as Lancret and Pater—or to put it the other way, that they had such a master to imitate, without whom neither their work nor their influence would have been nearly as great as it was.

François Boucher, though doubtless influenced by Watteau, more especially at the outset of his brilliant career, was nevertheless independent of him in carrying forward the art painting in his country, choosing rather to revert to the patronage of the Court like his predecessors Le Brun, Rigaud, and Largillière than to devote himself to the expression of his own ideas and feelings. Being a pupil of François Le Moine, whose principal work was the decoration of Versailles, it is not unnatural that Boucher should have succumbed to the influence of Royalty, especially when exerted in his favour by as charming and as powerful an agent as Madame de Pompadour. Another early influence which shaped his artistic tendencies as well as his fortunes was that of Carle van Loo, in whose honour his countrymen coined the verb *vanlotiser*—to frivol agreeably—- on account of the popularity which he achieved as a painter of elegant trifles. There is a picture by Carle van Loo in the Wallace Collection entitled *The Grand Turk giving a Concert to his Mistress* (No. 451), painted in 1737, which is a fair example of his proficiency in this direction, and there are one or two portraits scattered about the country which he painted when over here for a few months towards the end of his life. He died in Paris on the 15th July 1765, and Boucher was immediately appointed his successor as principal painter to Louis XV.

Madame de Pompadour was more than a patron to him, she was a matron! She made an intimate friend and adviser of him, and it is to her that he owed most of his advancement at Court, which continued after her death. The full-length portrait of her at Hertford House (No. 418)

was commissioned by her in 1759, and remained in her possession till her death in 1764. It was purchased by Lord Hertford in 1868 for 28,000 francs. In the Jones Collection at the South Kensington Museum is another portrait of her, and a third in the National Gallery at Edinburgh, not to mention those in private collections. The two magnificent cartoons on the staircase at Hertford House, called the *Rising and Setting of the Sun*, she begged from the king. These were ordered in 1748 as designs to be executed in tapestry at the Manufacture Royale des Gobelins, by Cozette and Audran, according to the catalogue of the Salon in 1753 when they were exhibited. They are characterised by the brothers de Goncourt as *le plus grand effort du peintre, les deux grandes machines de son œuvre*; and the writer of the catalogue of Madame de Pompadour's pictures when they were sold in 1766 testifies thus to the artist's own opinion of them: "J'ai entendu plusieurs fois dire par l'auteur qu'ils étaient du nombre de ceux dont il était le plus satisfait." They were then sold for 9800 livres, and Lord Hertford paid 20,200 francs for them in 1855.

Even without these *chefs d'œuvre* the Wallace Collection is richer than any other gallery in the works of Boucher, with twenty-four examples (in all), of which few if any are of inferior quality. But it must be confessed that the abundance of Boucher's work does not enhance its artistic value, and we have to think of him, in comparison with Watteau and his school, rather as a great decorator than a great painter. With all his skill and charm, that is to say, there is not one of his canvases that we could place beside a picture by Watteau on anything like equal terms. Superficially it may be equally or possibly more attractive, but inwardly there is no comparison. Let us hear what Sir Joshua Reynolds has to say of him:—

"Our neighbours, the French, are much in this practice of extempore invention, and their dexterity is such as even to

excite admiration, if not envy; but how rarely can this praise be given to their finished pictures! The late Director of their Academy, Boucher, was eminent in this way. When I visited him some years since in France, I found him at work on a very large picture without drawings or models of any kind. On my remarking this particular circumstance, he said, when he was young, studying his art, he found it necessary to use models, but he had left them off for many years.... However, in justice, I cannot quit this painter without adding that in the former part of his life, when he was in the habit of having recourse to nature, he was not without a considerable degree of merit —enough to make half the painters of his country his imitators: he had often grace and beauty, and good skill in composition, but I think all under the influence of a bad taste; his imitators are, indeed, abominable."

Twenty-one years elapsed between the birth of Boucher and the next painter of anything like his ability, namely, Jean Baptiste Greuze. He was a native of Tournous, near Macon, and lived to see the century out, dying in 1805, at the age of seventy-eight. His popularity is nowadays due chiefly to his heads of young girls, which he painted in his later life with admirable skill, but with a sentimentality that almost repels. The famous example in the National Gallery is more free from the sickly sweetness that spoils most of them, and reminds us that he could paint more serious works, and paint them exceedingly well. He first came into notice by pictures like *La Lecture du Bible*, *La Malédiction Paternelle*, or *Le Fils Puni*, which are now to be seen—though generally passed by—at the Louvre, and his style was imitated in later years in England by Wheatley and others of that school with more or less success. It was a great blow to him, and one which seriously affected his career when the Academy censured his Diploma picture, *The Emperor Severus reproaching Caracalla*. But for this we might have had more than these sentimental young

ladies from a hand that was undoubtedly worthy of better things. However, as Lord Hertford admired them sufficiently to include no less than twenty-one of them in his collection, we ought not to be severe in criticising them, and we may quote the description of *The Souvenir* (No. 398) given by John Smith, in his Catalogue Raisonné in 1837, as showing the esteem in which it was held.

"*The Souvenir.* An interesting female, about fifteen years of age, pressing fondly to her bosom a little red and white spaniel dog; the pet animal appears to remind her of some favourite object, for whose safety and return she is breathing an earnest wish; her fair oval countenance and melting eyes are directed upwards, and her ruby lips are slightly open; her light hair falls negligently on her shoulder, and is tastefully braided



PLATE XXXV.—JEAN-BAPTISTE GREUZ
THE BROKEN PITCHER
Louvre, Paris

with a crimson riband and pearls. She is attired in a morning dress, consisting of a loose gown and a brownish scarf, the latter of which hangs across her arm. Upon a tree behind her is inscribed the name of the painter. This beautiful production of art abounds in every attractive charm which gives interest to the master's works."

Very different, and far superior to Greuze, was Jean Honoré Fragonard, born at Grasse, in the Alpes Maritimes, in 1732. In England his name was almost unknown until within quite recent years, and the National Gallery has

only one picture by him, which was bequeathed by George Salting in 1910. Fortunately he is well represented in the Wallace Collection, three at least of the nine examples being in his most brilliant manner.

Fragonard's father was a glover. In 1750 the family moved to Paris, and the boy was put into a notary's office. The usual signs of disinclination for office work and a passion for art having duly appeared, he was sent to Boucher, who advised him to go and study under Chardin. This he did for a short time, but finding it dull—for Chardin was not as great a teacher as he was a painter—he went back to Boucher as an assistant. In 1752 he won the Prix de Rome, although he had never attended the Academy Schools, and in 1756 started for Italy.

Reynolds had just returned from Rome at the date of Fragonard's capture of the opportunity of going there, and we know from the *Discourses* how he spent his time there and what direction his studies took. Fragonard pursued an exactly opposite course, being advised thereto by Boucher, who said to him, "If you take Michelangelo and Raphael seriously, you are lost." Feeling that the advice was suitable to himself, if not sound on general principles, Fragonard devoted himself to the lighter and more sparkling works of Tiepolo and others of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He also made a tour in South Italy and Sicily with Hubert Robert, the landscape painter, and the Abbé Saint Non, the latter of whom published a number of etchings he made after Fragonard's drawings, under the title of *Voyages de Naples et de Sicile*.

On returning to Paris in 1761 his first success was the large composition of *Callirhoé and Coresus*, which was exhibited at the Salon in 1765, and is now in the Louvre. But he soon abandoned the grand style, chiefly, it is probable, owing to the patronage of the idle or industrious

rich who showered commissions upon him, for smaller and more sociable pictures with which to adorn and enliven their houses. The beautiful, but exceedingly improper picture at Hertford House, called *The Swing*—or in French, *Les Hazards heureux de l'Escarpolette*, appears to have been commissioned by the Baron de St. Julien, within the next year or two, for in the memoirs of Cotté a conversation is recorded which shows that the Baron had asked another painter, Doyen, to paint it. "Who would have believed," says the indignant Doyen, "that within a few days of my picture of Ste. Geneviéve being exhibited at the Salon, a nobleman would have sent for me to order a picture on a subject like this." He then goes on to relate how the Baron explained to him exactly what he required. We cannot entirely acquit Fragonard of all blame in accepting such a commission, but he was a young man, just starting as a professional artist, with the example of Boucher before him, and it would hardly have seemed wise to begin his career by offending a noble patron. The whole incident throws a glaring light on the conditions under which the art of France flourished in the Louis Quinze period, when Boucher was everybody and Chardin nobody.

For the real Fragonard we may turn to *Le Chiffre d'Amour*, or the "Lady carving an initial," as the prosaic diction of the Wallace Collection has it (No. 382). In this the equal delicacy of the sentiment and of the painting combine to effect a little masterpiece of Louis Quinze art. It is simple and natural, and entirely free from the besetting sins of so slight a picture triviality, affectation, empty prettiness, or simply silliness. In its way it is perfect, and for that perfection is for ever reserved the popularity which we find temporarily accorded to pictures like Frith's *Dolly Varden* or Millais' *Bubbles*.

Another of the Hertford House examples, the portrait of a

Boy as Pierrot, is equally entitled to be popular for all time, and like Reynolds's *Strawberry Girl*, might well be called "one of the half-dozen original things" which no artist ever exceeded in his life's work. A comparison between the two pictures, which were probably painted within a few years of each other, will serve to show the difference between the English and French Schools at this period. On the one hand—to put it very shortly indeed—we see Fragonard influenced by Tiepolo, France, and Louis XV.; on the other, Sir Joshua, influenced by Michelangelo and Raphael, England, and George III.

The mention of Jean Baptiste Simeon Chardin among this brilliant and frivolous galaxy seems almost out of place. "He is not so much an eighteenth-century French artist," Lady Dilke says of him, "as a French artist of pure race and type. Though he treated subjects of the humblest and most unpretentious class, he brought to their rendering not only deep feeling and a penetration which divined the innermost truths of the simplest forms of life, but a perfection of workmanship by which everything he handled was clothed with beauty." That the Wallace Collection includes no work from his hand is perhaps regrettable, but truly Chardin was someone apart from all the magnificence that dazzles us there. His was the treasure of the humble.

The effects of the Revolution upon French painting were as surprising as they were great. That the gay and frivolous art of Boucher and Fragonard should have suddenly ceased might have been considered inevitable; but whereas in Holland, when the Spanish yoke had been thrown off, and a Republic proclaimed, a vigorous democratic school arose under Frans Hals; and in England during the Commonwealth the artistic influence which was beginning to be spread by Charles I. and Buckingham utterly ceased; in France an artistic Dictator arose, as we may well call

him, in the person of Jacques Louis David, who not only made painting a part of the revolutionary propaganda, but succeeded under the Emperor Napoleon also in maintaining his position as painter to the Government, and thereby imposing on his country a style of art which had a great influence on the whole course of French painting for many years to come. But the most remarkable thing was that it was to the classics that this revolutioniser went for inspiration. The explanation is to be found in the fact that he was bitterly aggrieved by the attitude of the Academy to him as a young man, and in the accident of his famous picture of Brutus synchronising with the events of 1789. He was at once hailed as a deliverer, and made, as it were, painter to the Revolution.



PLATE XXXVI.—FRAGONARD
L'ÉTUDE *Louvre, Paris*

But what was even more important in the influence he exerted at this time was his actual appointment as President of the Convention, which gave him the power to revenge himself upon the Academy, which he did by extinguishing it in 1793, and to remove any inconvenient rivals by indicting them as aristocrats. Of the older painters, Fragonard and Greuze were the only important ones left, and as they could not under the altered circumstances be considered as rivals to the classical David, they both saw the century out. Fragonard simply ceased painting for want of patrons, and David was good enough to procure him a post in the Museum des Arts, or he would have starved. Unfortunately he attempted to adapt himself to the new style, and was promptly ejected from his post—ostensibly on his previous connection with royalty—and was wise enough to fly to his native town in the south.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century the dictatorship of David was supreme. How it was finally overthrown we shall see in another chapter.

THE ENGLISH SCHOOL

I

THE EARLY PORTRAIT PAINTERS

In the preface to the *Anecdotes of Painting* written in 1762, Horace Walpole observes that this country had not a single volume to show on the works of its painters. "In truth," he continues, "it has very rarely given birth to a genius in that profession. Flanders and Holland have sent us the greatest men that we can boast. This very circumstance may with reason prejudice the reader against a work, the chief business of which must be to celebrate the art of a country which has produced so few good artists. This objection is so striking, that instead of calling it *The Lives of English Painters*, I have simply given it the title of *Anecdotes of Painting in England*."

As Walpole's work was merely a compilation from the voluminous notes of George Vertue, a painstaking antiquary who had collected every scrap of information he could acquire in the early years of the eighteenth century, his conclusions can hardly be questioned, and the foundation of the English school of painting is therefore generally assumed to have been effected by Reynolds. But as Wren's Cathedral replaced an older one which was destroyed by the fire of London, and as that was reared on the foundation of a Roman temple, so we find that the art of painting in England was certainly practised in earlier times, and but for certain circumstances much more of it would have survived than is now to be found.

In other countries, as we have seen, the Church was in earlier times the greatest if not the only patron of the arts, and there is plenty of evidence to show that in England, too, from the reign of Henry III. onwards till the Reformation, our churches were decorated with frescoes. This evidence is of two kinds; first, entries in royal and other accounts, directing payment for specified work; and secondly, the remains of fresco painting in our cathedrals

and churches. The former is of little interest except to the antiquary. The latter has suffered so much from neglect or actual destruction as to be considered unworthy of the attention of either the artist in search of inspiration or the critic in pursuit of anything to criticise; but when every inconsiderable production in the little world of English art has had its bulky quarto written upon it, it is curious that no one has yet discovered what a splendid harvest awaits the investigation of these old frescoes all over the country.

As it is, we have only to note that as religion was so important an influence on painting in other countries so was it in England, only unfortunately as a destroying and not a cherishing influence. Granting the probability that there were few, if any, of our English frescoes which would be comparable in artistic interest with those in Italy, where the art was so sedulously cultivated, it must nevertheless be remembered that only a fragment remains here and there out of all the work which must have been produced, and that after the Reformation even those works which did survive were treated with positive as well as negative obloquy, so that where they have been preserved at all it is only by having been whitewashed over or otherwise hidden and damaged.

Even worse than the Reformation in 1530, was the Puritan outburst a century later, which not only destroyed works of art, but extinguished all hope of their being created. Is it to be wondered at, then, that the foundation of the English School of painting should have been postponed for a century more?

At the same time it is interesting to note that the little painting which did creep into England in the sixteenth century, was of the very kind that formed the chief feature of the English School when it was finally established, namely portraiture. Here again we see the influence of

religion; for to the reformed church, at least as interpreted by the English temperament, the second commandment was and is still second only in number, not in importance. To Protestant or Puritan the idea of a picture in a church was anathema. As late as 1766, when Benjamin West offered to decorate St. Paul's Cathedral with a painting of Moses receiving the tables of the law on Mount Sinai, the Bishop exclaimed, "I have heard of the proposition, and as I am head of the Cathedral of the Metropolis, I will not suffer the doors to be opened to introduce popery."

The painting of a portrait, however, was a very different matter, and from the earliest times appears to have appealed with peculiar strength to the vanity of Britons. Loudly as they protested against the iniquity of bowing down to and worshipping the likeness of anything in heaven above or in the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth, they were never averse to giving others an opportunity of bowing down to and worshipping the likenesses of themselves; and while religion fostered the arts in other countries, self-importance kept them alive in this. The portrait of Richard II. in Westminster Abbey, if not actually an instance of this, certainly happens to seem like one.

With the exception of Jan de Mabuse, who is said to have been in England for a short time during the reign of Henry VII., the first painter of any importance in this country was Hans Holbein. Hearing that money was to be made by painting portraits at the English Court, he forsook his native town, his religious art, and his wife, and came to stay with Sir Thomas More at Chelsea, with an introduction from Erasmus. Arriving in 1527, he started business by making a sketch in pen and ink of More's entire family, with which marvellous work, still preserved in the Museum at Basle, the history of modern English painting may fairly be said to have begun; for though it

was long before a native of England was forthcoming who was of sufficient force to carry on the tradition, the seed was sown, and in due course the plant appeared, and after many vicissitudes, at last flourished.

The immediate effect may be noted by mentioning here the names of Guillim Streetes, who was possibly English born, and John Bettes who certainly was. To the former is attributed the large whole-length portrait at Hampton Court of Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, in a suit of bright red. Another portrait of Howard belongs to the Duke of Norfolk, having been presented to his ancestor by Sir Robert Walpole. Both were exhibited at the Tudor Exhibition in 1892. Streetes was painter to King Edward VI., and according to Stype he was paid fifty marks, in 1551, "for recompense of three great tables whereof two were the pictures of his Highness sent to Sir Thomas Hoby and Sir John Mason (ambassadors abroad), the third a picture of the late Earl of Surrey attainted, and by the Councils' commandment fetched from the said Guillim's house." Horace Walpole was under the impression that this was the Duke of Norfolk's picture, but the Hampton Court Catalogue claims the other one as the work of Streetes.

In the National Gallery is a bust portrait of Edmund Butts, physician to Henry VIII., which is inscribed *faict par Johan Bettes Anglois*, and with the date 1545. In this the influence of Holbein is certainly discernible, though not all pervading. There were two brothers, Thomas and John Bettes who are mentioned by Meres with several other English painters in *Palladis Tamia*, published in 1598 —"As Greece had moreover their painters, so in England we have also these, William and Francis Segar, brethren, Thomas and John Bettes, Lockie, Lyne, Peake, Peter Cole, Arnolde, Marcus (Mark Garrard)," etc. Walpole, quoting this, adds, "I quote this passage to prove to those who learn one or two names by rote that every old picture you see is

not by Holbein." At the same time it must be admitted that until some considerable fund of information concerning these early days of painting is brought to light, there is very little to be said about any one except Holbein till almost the end of the sixteenth century.

That Holbein was "a wonderful artist," as More wrote to Erasmus, is not to be denied. But in placing him among the very greatest, we must not forget that his range was somewhat limited. We might nowadays call him a specialist, for in England he painted nothing but portraits, and very few of his pictures contained anything besides the single figure, or head, of the subject. The famous exception is the large picture called *The Ambassadors*, which was purchased at an enormous price from the Longford Castle collection, and is now in the National Gallery. Important and interesting as this is as showing us how Holbein could fill a large canvas, there is no doubt that he is far happier in simple portraiture, and that the £60,000 expended on *Christina Duchess of Milan* was, relatively, a better investment for the nation. In the famous half-lengths like the *George Gisze* at Berlin (which was painted in London) and the *Man with the Hawk*, where the portrait is surrounded by accessories, Holbein is perhaps at his very best; but it is as a painter of heads, simply, that he influenced the English School, and set an example which, alas! has never been attainable since.

For one thing, which is apart altogether from talent or genius, Holbein's method was never followed in later times, namely, the practice of making carefully finished drawings in crayon before painting a portrait in oils. He was a wonderful draughtsman, and in the series of over eighty drawings at Windsor we have even more life-like images of the persons represented than their finished portraits. I am not aware that any portrait drawings exists of Holbein's contemporaries or successors in England

earlier than one or two by Van Dyck. There are a good many belonging to the seventeenth century, but with one or two exceptions they are little more than sketches. And though sketches have only survived by accident, as it were, not being intended for anything more than the artist's own purposes, finished drawings would have been kept, like Holbein's, with much greater care.

In a word, then, Holbein's first and chief business was in rendering the likeness of the sitter. Being a



PLATE XXXVII.—HANS HOLBEIN
ANNE OF CLEVES
Louvre, Paris

born genius, he accomplished far more than this; but it is important in tracing the development of the English School of painting to remember that its origin was not in the idealization of religious sentiment, but in the realization of the human features. From the time of the first great genius to that of the next, exactly a century later, there is hardly a portrait in existence that is valued for anything but its historic or personal interest. Between Holbein and Van Dyck is a great gap, in which the only names of Englishmen are those of the miniaturists, Hilliard and Oliver, who were veritably of the seed of Holbein, but only in little.

Van Dyck struck deeper into the English soil, and loosened it sufficiently for the growth of larger stuff, if still somewhat coarse, like the work of William Dobson and Robert Walker. To Van Dyck succeeded Peter Lely, who boldly and worthily assumed the mantle of Van Dyck, and kept English portraiture alive throughout the dismal period of the Commonwealth. After the Restoration he was still in power, and under him flourished one or two painters of English birth, like Greenhill and Riley, who in turn gave way to others under Kneller without ceding the monopoly to foreigners. From these came Jervas, Richardson, and, most important, Hudson, who was Reynolds's master, and so we arrive at the beginning of what is now generally known as the English School.

Another source, however, must here be mentioned as joining the main stream, and contributing a solid body of water to it, chiefly below the surface, namely the art of William Hogarth. Being essentially English, and without any artistic forefathers, it is not surprising that he left less perceptible impressions on his immediate successors than the more accomplished and educated Reynolds; but the solid force of his character, as exemplified in his career and his works, is hardly a less important factor in the

development of the English School, while from his outspoken opinions on the state of the arts in his time he is one of the most valuable sources of its history.

II

WILLIAM HOGARTH

William Hogarth occupies a curious position in the history of English painting. There was nothing ever quite like him in any country—except Greuze in France; for though a comparison between two such opposites, seems at first sight absurd, it must be remembered that French and English painting in the middle of the eighteenth century were no less far apart. Both Greuze and Hogarth, in their own fashion, tried to preach moral lessons in paint, the one in the over-refined atmosphere of French surroundings, the other in the coarse language of England in his time.

Hogarth's chief characteristic was his blunt, honest, bull-dog Englishness, which at the particular moment of his appearance on the artistic stage was a quality which was eminently serviceable to English painting. Though of humble parents, his honest and forceful character won for him the daughter of Sir James Thornhill in marriage (by elopement) and his sturdy talent in painting secured for him his father-in-law's forgiveness and encouragement. Thornhill came of a good, old Wiltshire family, and had been knighted by George I. for his sterling merits as much as for his skill in painting and decorating the royal palaces and the houses of noblemen. His place among English artists is not a very high one, but he deserves the credit of having stood out against the monopoly that was being established by foreigners in this country in every department of artistic work, and in this sense he is a still

earlier forerunner of the great English painters, than his more forcible son-in-law.

If Hogarth had been content to follow the beaten track of portraiture as his main pursuit, and let the country's morals take care of themselves, he would in all probability have attained much greater heights as a painter. But his nature would not allow him to do this. His character was too strong and his originality too uncontrollable. There is enough evidence among the works which have survived him, especially in those which were never finished, to show that his accomplishments in oil painting were of a very high order indeed. I need only refer to the famous head in the National Gallery known as *The Shrimp Girl* to explain what I mean. In this surprisingly vivacious and charming sketch we see something that is not inferior to Hals, in its broad truth and its quick seizure of the essentials of what had to be rendered. In another unfinished piece, which is now in the South London Art Gallery at Camberwell, we see the same powerful qualities differently exhibited, for it is not a single head this time, but a sketch of a ballroom where everybody is dancing, except one gentleman who is even more vivid than the rest, in the act of mopping his head at the open window. There is nothing grotesque in this picture, but it is all perfectly life-like and wonderfully sketched in.

In his finished pictures Hogarth does not appear to such great advantage—I mean as a painter; but it must be remembered that in his day there was little example for him to follow in the higher departments of his art. Nor had he ever been out of England to see fine pictures on the Continent. Not only this, but as his work was intended especially to appeal to ordinary people, it is hardly to be expected that he would express himself in terms other than might most quickly appeal to them. His most famous works, indeed, were executed as well as designed for the

engraver, namely *The Harlot's Progress*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Marriage à la Mode*, and *The Election*, each of which consisted of a series of several minutely finished pictures. In portraiture he showed finer qualities, it is true; but even in these he was thinking more of getting the most out of his model, according to his forcible character, than of any technical refinements for which he might be handed down to posterity as a great painter.

It was easy enough for Reynolds to sneer at Hogarth for his vulgarity, when he was trying to impress upon his pupils the importance of painting in the grand style. "As for the various departments of painting," he says in his third Discourse, "which do not presume to make such high pretensions, they are many. None of them are without their merit, though none enter into competition with this universal presiding idea of the art. The painters who have applied themselves more particularly to low and vulgar characters, and who express with precision the various shades of passion as they are exhibited by vulgar minds (such as we see in the works of Hogarth), deserve great praise; but as their genius has been employed on low and confined subjects, the praise which we must give must be as limited as its object." And yet it was in following an example set by Hogarth in portrait painting that Reynolds gained his



PLATE XXXVIII.—WILLIAM HOGARTH
THE SHRIMP GIRL
National Gallery, London

first success in that art. I mean the full-length portrait of Captain Keppel, painted in 1752. This originality and boldness in disregarding the tame but universal convention in posing the sitter was peculiarly Hogarth's own. With him it amounted almost to perverseness. He would not let anybody "sit" to him, if he could help it. When he did, as in the portraits of Quinn, the actor, and Hoadly, Bishop of Winchester, in the National Gallery, the result is not the happiest; for, with all their force, these portraits lack the grace that a conventional pose requires to render it acceptable in the terms of its convention. If a man must put

on the accepted evening dress of his time, he must see that it conforms in the spirit as well as in the letter of the fashion, or he will only look like a dressed-up greengrocer. Hogarth was too sturdy and too wilful to put on court clothes. If he had to, he struggled with them.

Hogarth's father was a man of literary tastes, and a scholar. He had written a supplement to Littleton's Latin Dictionary, but was unable to get it published. "I saw the difficulties," writes the artist, "under which my father laboured; the many inconveniences he endured from his dependence, living chiefly on his pen, and the cruel treatment he met with from booksellers and printers. I had before my eyes the precarious situation of men of classical education; it was therefore conformable to my wishes that I was taken from school and served a long apprenticeship to a silver-plate engraver." This is printed in Allan Cunningham's *Life of Hogarth*, together with many more extracts from autobiographical memoranda, from which we may learn at first hand a great deal of information bearing on the state of painting at this period, and the circumstances under which it received such a stimulus from Hogarth, before the sun had fully risen (in the person of Reynolds) to illumine the whole period of British art.

"As I had naturally a good eye and fondness for drawing," Hogarth continues, "*shows* of all sorts gave me uncommon pleasure when young, and mimicry, common to all children, was remarkable in me. An early access to a neighbouring painter drew my attention from play, and I was at every possible opportunity engaged in making drawings.... My exercises at school were more remarkable for the ornaments which adorned them than for the exercise itself. In the former I soon found that blockheads with better memories would soon surpass me, but for the latter I was particularly distinguished.

"The painting of St. Paul's and Greenwich Hospital, which were at that time going on, ran in my head, and I determined that silver-plate engraving should be followed no longer than necessity obliged me to it. Engraving on copper was, at twenty years of age, my utmost ambition. To attain that it was necessary that I should learn to draw objects something like nature, instead of the monsters of heraldry, and the common methods of study were much too tedious for one who loved his pleasure and came so late to it.... This led me to consider whether a shorter road than that usually travelled was not to be found.... I had learned by practice to copy with tolerable correctness in the ordinary way, but it occurred to me that there were many disadvantages attending this method of study, as having faulty originals, etc.; and even when the prints or pictures to be imitated were by the best masters, it was little more than pouring water out of one vessel into another. Many reasons led me to wish that I could find a shorter path—fix forms and characters in my mind—and, instead of copying the lines, try to read the language, and if possible find the grammar of the art, by bringing into one focus the various observations I had made, and then trying by my power on the canvas how far my plan enabled me to combine and apply them to practice....

"I had one material advantage over my competitors, viz., the early habit I acquired of retaining in my mind's eye, without coldly copying on the spot, whatever I intended to imitate.... Instead of burdening the memory with musty rules, or tiring the eye with copying dry or damaged pictures, I have ever found studying from nature the shortest and safest way of obtaining knowledge in my art...."

"I entertained some thoughts," he writes again, "of succeeding in what the puffers in books call the great style of history painting, so that, without having had a stroke of

this grand business before, I quitted small portraits and familiar conversations, and with a smile at my own temerity commenced history painter, and on a great staircase at St. Bartholomew's Hospital painted two Scripture stories, *The Pool of Bethesda* and *The Good Samaritan*, with figures seven feet high. These I presented to the charity, and thought that they might serve as a specimen to show that, were there an inclination in England for encouraging historical pictures, such a first essay might prove the painting them more easily attainable than is generally imagined. But as Religion, the great promoter of this style in other countries, rejected it in England, and I was unwilling to sink into a portrait-manufacturer—and still ambitious of being singular, I soon dropped all expectations of advantage from that source, and returned to the pursuit of my former dealings with the public at large."

Few seemed disposed to recognise, in any of Hogarth's works, a higher aim than that of raising a laugh. Somerville, the poet, dedicated his *Rural Games* to Hogarth in these words—"Permit me, Sir, to make choice of you for my patron, being the greatest master in the burlesque way. Your province is the town—leave me a small outride in the country, and I shall be content." Fielding had a different opinion of his merits: "He who would call the ingenious Hogarth a burlesque painter would in my opinion do him very little honour, for sure it is much easier, much less the subject of admiration, to paint a man with a nose, or any other feature of a preposterous size, or to expose him in some absurd or monstrous attitude, than to express the affections of man on canvas. It hath been thought a vast commendation of a painter to say his figures seem to breathe, but surely it is a much greater and nobler applause that they appear to think."

In answer to criticism of his *Analysis of Beauty*, Hogarth writes: "Among other crimes of which I am accused, it is asserted that I have abused the 'Great Masters'; this is far from being just. So far from attempting to lower the ancients, I have always thought, and it is universally admitted, that they knew some fundamental principles in nature which enabled them to produce works that have been the admiration of succeeding ages; but I have not allowed this merit to those leaden-headed imitators, who, having no consciousness of either symmetry or propriety, have attempted to mend nature, and in their truly ideal figures, gave similar proportions to a Mercury and a Hercules."

Another and a better spirit influenced him in the following passage—he is proposing to seek the principles of beauty in nature instead of looking for them in mere learning. His words are plain, direct, and convincing. "Nature is simple, plain, and true in all her works, and those who strictly adhere to her laws, and closely attend to her appearances in their infinite varieties are guarded against any prejudicial bias from truth; while those who have seen many things that they cannot well understand, and read many books which they do not fully comprehend, notwithstanding all their parade of knowledge, are apt to wander about it and about it; perplexing themselves and their readers with the various opinions of other men. As to those painters who have written treatises on painting, they were in general too much taken up with giving rules for the operative part of the art, to enter into physical disquisitions on the nature of the objects."

After this it would be unfair to withhold the praise of Benjamin West (who succeeded Reynolds as President of the Royal Academy)—a painter, prudent in speech, and frugal in commendation. "I remember, when I was a lad," says Smith, in his account of Nollekens, "asking the late

venerable President West what he thought of Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*, and his answer was, 'It is a work of the highest value to everyone studying the art. Hogarth was a strutting consequential little man, and made himself many enemies by that book; but now that most of them are dead, it is examined by disinterested readers, unbiassed by personal animosities, and will be more and more read, studied and understood.'"

In his memoranda respecting the establishment of an Academy of Art in England, Hogarth writes well and wisely. Voltaire asserts that after the establishment of the French Academy not one work of genius appeared, for all the painters became mannerists and imitators. Hogarth agrees with him, declaring that "the institution will serve to raise and pension a few bustling and busy men, whose whole employment will be to tell a few simple students when a leg is too long, or an arm too short. More will flock to the study of art than genius sends; the hope of profit, or the thirst of distinction, will induce parents to push their offspring into the lecture-room, and many will appear and but few be worthy. The paintings of Italy form a sort of ornamental fringe to their gaudy religion, and Rome is the general storeshop of Europe. The arts owe much to Popery, and Popery owes much of its universality to the arts. The French have attained to a sort of foppish magnificence in art; in Holland, selfishness is the ruling passion, and in England vanity is united with selfishness. Portrait-painting, therefore, has succeeded, and ever will succeed better in England than in any other country, and the demand will continue as new faces come into the market.

"Portrait painting is one of the ministers of vanity, and vanity is a munificent patroness; historical painting seeks to revive the memory of the dead, and the dead are very indifferent paymasters. Paintings are plentiful enough in England to keep us from the study of nature; but students

who confine their studies to the works of the dead, need never hope to live themselves; they will learn little more than the names of the painters: true painting can only be learnt in one school, and that is kept by Nature."

Hogarth disliked a formal school, says Cunningham, because he was the pupil of nature, and foresaw that students would flock to it from the feeling of trade rather than the impulse of genius, and that it become a manufactory for conventional forms and hereditary graces. Opulent collectors were filling their galleries with the religious paintings of the Romish Church, and vindicating their purchases by representing these works as the only patterns of all that is noble in art and worthy of imitation. Hogarth perceived that all this was not according to the natural spirit of the nation; he well knew that our island had not yet poured out its own original mind in art, as it had done in poetry; and he felt assured that such a time would come, if native genius were not overlaid systematically by mock patrons and false instructors.

"As a painter," says Walpole, "Hogarth has slender merit." "What is the merit of a painter?" Cunningham concludes. "If it be to represent life—to give us an image of man—to exhibit the workings of his heart—to record the good and evil of his nature—to set in motion before us the very beings with whom earth is peopled—to shake us with mirth—to sadden us with woeful reflection—to please us with natural grouping, vivid action, and vigorous colouring—Hogarth has done all this—and if he that has done so be not a painter, who will show us one?"

III

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS AND THOMAS

GAINSBOROUGH

Whether or not Sir Joshua Reynolds is entitled to be ranked among the very greatest painters, there can be no question that he has a place among the most famous, not only on account of his actual painting, but also because of the influence exerted by his whole-hearted devotion to his art, and his strong character in forming, out of such unpromising elements, a really vigorous school of painting in this country. The example he set in the strenuous exercise of his profession, the precepts he laid down for the guidance of students, and the dignity with which he invested the whole practice of painting which, until he came, had degenerated into a mere business, were of incalculable benefit to his own and succeeding ages, and Edmund Burke was paying him no empty compliment but only stating the bare truth when he said that Sir Joshua Reynolds was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country.

Joshua Reynolds was born at Plympton in Devonshire on the 16th July 1723; the son of the Rev. Samuel Reynolds and his wife Theophila Potter. He was on every side connected with the Church, for both his father and his grandfather were in holy orders, his mother was the daughter of a clergyman, and his maternal grandmother also. His father's elder brother, too, was a clergyman, a fellow of Eton College and Canon of St. Peter's, Exeter. So that here, as in Italy, we start with a basis of religion.

The young artist's first essays were made in copying several little things done by his elder sisters, and he afterwards took great delight in copying such prints as he met with in his father's books, particularly those in Plutarch's *Lives*, and in Jacob Cats's *Book of Emblems*, which his great-grandmother by his father's side, a Dutch woman, had brought from Holland. When he was only

eight years old he read with great avidity a book called *The Jesuits Perspective*, an architectural, not a religious work, and made himself so completely master of it that he never afterwards had occasion to study any other treatise on the subject. In fact, a drawing which he then made of Plympton School so filled his father with wonder that he said to him, "Now this exemplifies what the author of the *Perspective* says in his preface—that by observing the rules laid down in his book a man may do wonders, for this is wonderful!"

From these attempts he proceeded to draw likenesses of his friends and relations with tolerable success. But what most strongly confirmed him in his love of the art was Richardson's *Treatise on Painting*, the perusal of which so delighted and inflamed his mind, that Raphael appeared to him superior to the most illustrious names of ancient or modern times—a notion which he loved to indulge all the rest of his life.

Before he was eighteen years old his father placed him as a pupil with Thomas Hudson, who was then the most distinguished portrait-painter in England; but having some disagreement with his master, the young man returned to Devonshire, where he practised portrait painting with more or less success until in 1749 he accompanied Admiral Keppel to the Mediterranean, and remained for two or three years studying the old masters in Italy.

As this period of Reynold's career had so determining an influence not only on himself but on the whole course of the history of painting in England—inasmuch as it formed the greater part of the groundwork of his discourses when President of the Royal Academy, it is worth having an account of it at first hand from the painter himself. "It has frequently happened," he says, "as I was informed by the Keeper of the Vatican, that many of those whom he had

conducted through the various apartments of that edifice when about to be dismissed, have asked for the works of Raphael, and would not believe that they had already passed through the room where they are preserved, so little impression had those performances made on them. One of the first painters now in France once told me that this circumstance happened to himself, though he now looks on Raphael with that veneration which he deserves from all painters and lovers of the art. I remember very well my own disappointment when I first visited the the Vatican: but on confessing my feelings to a brother student, of whose ingenuousness I had a high opinion, he acknowledged that the works of Raphael had the same effect on him, or rather that they did not produce the effect which he expected. This was a great relief to my mind, and on inquiry further of other students I found that those persons only who from natural imbecility appeared to be incapable of ever relishing those divine performances, made pretensions to instantaneous raptures on first beholding them.

"In justice to myself, however, I must add that though disappointed and mortified at not finding myself enraptured with the works of this great master, I did not for a moment conceive or suppose that the name of Raphael, and those admirable paintings in particular, owed their reputation to the ignorance and prejudice of mankind; on the contrary, my not relishing them as I was conscious I ought to have done was one of the most humiliating circumstances that ever happened to me. I found myself in the midst of works executed upon principles with which I was unacquainted: I felt my ignorance, and stood abashed. All the indigested notions of painting which I had brought with me from England where the art was in the lowest state it had ever been in (it could not indeed be lower) were to be totally done away and eradicated from my mind. It was necessary, as it is expressed on a very solemn occasion,

that I should become *as a little child*.

"Notwithstanding my disappointment, I proceeded to copy some of those excellent works. I viewed them again and again; I even affected to feel their merit and to admire them more than I really did. In a short time a new taste and new perceptions began to dawn upon me, and I was convinced that I had originally formed a false opinion of the perfection of art, and that this great painter was well entitled to the high rank which he holds in the estimation of the world."

"When I was at Venice," he writes in a note on Du Fresnoy's *Art of Painting* about the chiaroscuro of Titian, Paul Veronese and Tintoretto, "the method I took to avail myself of their principles was this. When I observed an extraordinary effect of light and shade in any picture, I took a leaf of my pocket-book and darkened every part of it in the same gradation of light and shade as the picture, leaving the white paper untouched to represent the light, and this without any attention to the subject or to the drawing of the figures. After a few experiments I found the paper blotted nearly alike; their general practice appeared to be to allow not above a quarter of the picture for the light, including in this portion both the principal and secondary lights; another quarter to be as dark as possible, and the remaining half kept in mezzotint or half shadow.

"Rubens appears to have admitted rather more light than a quarter, and Rembrandt much less, scarce an eighth; by this conduct Rembrandt's light is extremely brilliant, but it costs too much, the rest of the picture is sacrificed to this one object."

The results of these studies in Rome and Venice were at once observable on his return to England in the beautiful portrait of *Giuseppe Marchi*, one of the treasures belonging to the Royal Academy. It was altogether too

much for the ignorant British artists, and it excited lively comment. What chiefly attracted the public notice, however, was the whole-length portrait which he painted of his friend and patron Admiral Keppel. On the appearance of this Reynolds was not only universally acknowledged to be at the head of his profession, but to be the greatest painter that England had seen since Van Dyck. The whole interval, as Malone observes, between the time of Charles I. and the conclusion of the reign of George II. seemed to be annihilated, and the only question was whether the new painter or Van Dyck were the more excellent. Reynolds very soon saw how much animation might be obtained by deviating from the insipid manner of his immediate predecessors, and instead of confining himself to mere likeness he dived, as it were, into the minds and habits and manners of those who sat to him, and accordingly the majority of his portraits are so appropriate and characteristic that the many illustrious persons whom he has delineated are almost as well known to us as if we had seen and conversed with them.

Very soon after his return from Italy his acquaintance with Dr Johnson commenced, and their intimacy continued uninterrupted to the time of Johnson's death. How much he profited thereby, especially in the practice of art, he has recorded in a paper which was intended to form a part of one of his discourses. "I remember," he writes, "Mr Burke speaking of the *Essays* of Sir Francis Bacon, said he thought them the best of his works. Dr Johnson was of opinion 'that their excellence and their value consisted in being the observations of a strong mind operating upon life; and in consequence you find there what you seldom find in other books,' It is this kind of excellence which gives a value to the performances of artists also.... The observations which he made on poetry, on life, and on everything about us, I applied to our art; with what success others must judge. Perhaps an artist in his studies should

pursue the same conduct, and instead of patching up a particular work on the narrow plan of imitation, rather endeavour to acquire the art and power of thinking."

In another passage from his memoranda, quoted by Malone, Sir Joshua lets us into some more of the secrets of his pre-eminence in his art, both of painter and preceptor: for we are to remember that the British School of painting owes more to the influence of Reynolds than perhaps any other school to the example of one man:—

"I considered myself as playing a great game," he writes, "and instead of beginning to save money, I laid it out faster than I got it in, purchasing the best examples of art that could be procured; for I even borrowed money for this purpose. The possessing portraits by Titian, Van Dyck, Rembrandt, etc., I considered as the best kind of wealth. By studying carefully the works of great masters, this advantage is obtained—we find that certain niceties of expression are capable of being executed, which otherwise we might suppose beyond the reach of art. This gives us a confidence in ourselves, and we are thus incited to endeavour at not only the same happiness of execution but also at other congenial excellencies. Study indeed consists in learning to see nature, and may be called the art of using other men's minds. By this kind of contemplation and exercise we are taught to think in their way, and sometimes to attain their excellence. Thus, for instance, if I had never seen any of the works of Correggio, I should never perhaps have remarked in nature the expression which I find in one of his pieces; or if I had remarked it I might have thought it too difficult, or perhaps impossible to be executed.

"My success and continual improvement in my art (if I may be allowed that expression), may be ascribed in a good measure to a principle which I will boldly recommend to imitation; I mean the principle of honesty;

which in this as in all other instances is according to the vulgar proverb certainly the best policy: I always endeavoured to do my best.

"My principal labour was employed on the whole together, and I was never weary of changing and trying different modes and different effects. I had always some scheme in my mind, and a perpetual desire to advance. By constantly endeavouring to do my best, I acquired a power of doing that with spontaneous facility that which at first was the effort of my whole mind."

"I had not an opportunity of being early initiated in the principles of colouring"; he continues, "no man indeed could teach me. If I have never been settled with respect to colouring, let it at the same time be remembered that my unsteadiness in this respect proceeded from an inordinate desire to possess every kind of excellence that I ever saw in the works of others, without considering that there are in colouring, as in style, excellencies which are incompatible with each other.... I tried every effect of colour, and by leaving out every colour in its turn, showed every colour that I could do without it. As I alternately left out every



PLATE XXXIX.—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLI
LADY COCKBURN AND HER CHILDRE
National Gallery, London

colour, I tried every new colour; and often, as is well known, failed.... My fickleness in the mode of colouring arose from an eager desire to attain the highest excellence."

In the year 1759 Reynolds began to write, and three of his essays were printed in the *Idler*, which was conducted by Dr. Johnson. Northcote records that at the same time he committed to paper a variety of remarks which afterwards served him as hints for his discourses. One or two of these

will give us as good an idea as we are likely to get from elsewhere of what are the first requisites of a successful painter.

"It is absolutely necessary that a painter, as the first requisite, should endeavour as much as possible to form to himself an idea of perfection not only of beauty, but of what is perfection in a picture. This conception he should always have fixed in his view, and unless he has this view we shall never see any approaches towards perfection in his works; for it will not come by chance.

"If a man has nothing of that which is called genius, that is, if he is not carried away, if I may so say, by the animation, the fire of enthusiasm, all the rules in the world will never make him a painter.

"He who possesses genius is enabled to see a real value in those things which others disregard and overlook. He perceives a difference in cases where inferior capacities see none; as the fine ear for music can distinguish an evident variation in sounds which to another ear more dull seem to be the same. This example will also apply to the eye in respect to colouring."

In the beginning of the year 1760, Reynolds moved into the house on the west side of Leicester Square which he occupied for the rest of his life. It is now tenanted by Messrs. Puttick & Simpson, the Auctioneers. Northcote has usefully recorded the following details his studio. His painting-room was of an octagonal form, about twenty feet long and about sixteen in breath. The window which gave the light to this room was square, and not much larger than one half the size of a common window in a private house, whilst the lower part of this window was nine feet four inches from the floor. The chair for his sitters was raised eighteen inches from the floor, and turned round on castors. His palettes were those which are held by a handle,

not those held on the thumb. The sticks of his pencils (brushes) were long, measuring about nineteen inches. He painted in that part of the room nearest the window, and never sat down when he worked. As the actual methods of a great artist are possibly of more value in a history of painting than the subjects, or even the prices, of his pictures, I venture to quote the following extracts from various parts of Sir Joshua's own memoranda:—

Never give the least touch with your pencil (*i.e.* brush) till you have present in your mind a perfect idea of your future work.

Paint at the greatest possible distance from your sitter, and place the picture ... near to the sitter, or sometimes under him, so as to see both together.

In beautiful faces keep the whole circumference about the eye in a mezzotinto, as seen in the works of Guido and the best of Carlo Maratti.

Endeavour to look at the subject or sitter from which you are painting, as if it was a picture. This will in some degree render it more easy to be copied.

In painting consider the object before you, whatever it may be, as more made out by light and shadow than by lines.

A student should begin his career by a careful finishing and making out the parts; as practice will give him freedom and facility of hand: a bold and unfinished manner is commonly the habit of old age.

On painting a head—

Let those parts which turn or retire from the eye be of broken or mixed colours, as being less distinguished and nearer the borders.

Let all your shadows be of one colour: glaze them till they are so.

Use red colours in the shadows of the most delicate complexions, but with discretion.

Contrive to have a screen with red or yellow colour on it, to reflect the light on the shaded part of the sitter's face.

Avoid the chalk, the brick dust, and the charcoal, and think on a pearl and a ripe peach.

Avoid long continued lines in the eyes, and too many sharp ones.

Take care to give your figure a sweep or sway.

Outlines in waves, soft, and almost imperceptible against the background.

Never make the contour too coarse.

Avoid also those outlines and lines which are equal, which make parallels, triangles, etc.

The parts which are nearest to the eye appear most enlightened, deeper shadowed, and better seen.

Keep broad lights and shadows, and also principal lights and shadows.

Where there is the deepest shadow it is accompanied by the brightest light.

Let nothing start out or be too strong for its place.

Squareness has grandeur; it gives firmness to the forms; a serpentine line in comparison appears feeble and tottering.

One is apt to forget in these enlightened days how greatly the art of painting benefited by the establishment of public

exhibitions. Farington's observations on this point, occasioned by the inauguration of the exhibitions at the Society of Arts from 1760, until the foundation of the Royal Academy in 1768, are both instructive and amusing.

"The history of our exhibitions," he says "affords the strongest evidence of their impressive effect upon public taste. At their commencement, though men of enlightened minds could distinguish and appreciate what was excellent, the admiration of the *many* was confined to subjects either gross or puerile, and commonly to the meanest efforts of intellect; whereas at this time (1819) the whole train of subjects most popular in the earlier exhibitions have disappeared. The loaf and cheese that could provoke hunger, the cat and canary bird, and the dead mackerel on a deal board, have long ceased to produce astonishment and delight; while truth of imitation now finds innumerable admirers though combined with the highest qualities of beauty, grandeur and taste.

"To our public exhibitions, and to arrangements that followed in consequence of their introduction this change must be chiefly attributed. The present generation appears to be composed of a new and, at least with respect to the arts, a superior order of beings. Generally speaking, their thoughts, their feelings and language, differ entirely from what they were sixty years ago. The state of the public mind, incapable of discriminating excellence from inferiority proved incontrovertibly that a right sense of art in the spectator can only be acquired by long and frequent observation, and that without proper opportunities to improve the mind and the eye, a nation would continue insensible of the true value of the fine arts."

In view of these very pertinent observations it is worth inquiring a little as to the origin of exhibitions in England, and the stimulus given by them to British art before the

institution of the Royal Academy. From the introduction to book written by Edward Edwards, in continuation of Walpole's "Anecdotes of Painters," and published in 1808, I extract the following account of them, as far as possible using his own quaint phraseology.

Although the study of the human form had long been cultivated and encouraged in Italy and France by national schools or academies, yet in England until the eighteenth century such seminaries were unknown; and it is therefore difficult to trace the origin or ascertain the precise period when those nurseries of art were first attempted in this country, especially as every establishment of that kind was, at first, of a private and temporary nature, depending chiefly upon the protection of some artist of rank and reputation in his day. The first attempt towards the establishment of an academy is mentioned by Walpole as having been formed by several artists under Sir Godfrey Kneller in 1711. Afterwards we find, by other accounts in the same author, which are corroborated by authentic information, that Sir James Thornhill formed an academy in his own house, in the Piazza, Covent Garden. But this was not of long duration, for it commenced in 1724 and died in 1734; which reduced the artists again to seek some new seminary; for the public of that day were so little acquainted with the use of such schools, that they were even suspected of being held for immoral purposes.

After the death of Thornhill a few of the artists (chiefly foreigners), finding themselves without the necessary example of the living model, formed a small society and established their regular meetings of study in a convenient apartment in Greyhound Court, Arundel Street. The principal conductor of this school was Michael Moser, who when the Royal Academy was established was appointed keeper. Here they were visited by artists such as Hogarth, Wills, and Ellis, who were so well pleased with

the propriety of their conduct, and so thoroughly convinced of the utility of the institution, that a general union took place, and the members thereby becoming numerous, they required and sought for a more convenient situation and accommodation for their school. By the year 1739 they were settled in Peter's Court, St Martin's Lane, where the study of the human figure was carried on till 1767, when they removed to Pall Mall.

But a permanent and conspicuous establishment was still wanting, and on this account the principal artists had several meetings with a view to forming a public academy. This they did not succeed in doing; but they were so far from being discouraged that they continued their meetings and their studies, and the next effort they made towards acquiring the attention of the public was connected with the Foundling Hospital. This institution was incorporated in 1739, and a few years later the present building was erected; but as the income of the charity could not, with propriety, be expended upon decorations, many of the principal artists of that day voluntarily exerted their talents for the purpose of ornamenting several apartments of the Hospital which otherwise must have remained without decoration. The pictures thus produced, and generously given, were permitted to be seen by any visitor upon proper application. The spectacle was so new that it made a considerable impression upon the public, and the favourable reception these works experienced impressed the artists with an idea of forming a public exhibition, which scheme was carried into full effect with the help of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, who lent their great room for the purpose.

The success of this, the first, public display of art was more than equal to the general expectation. Yet there were some circumstances, consequent to the arrangement of the pictures, with which the artists were very justly

dissatisfied; they were occasioned by the following improprieties. The Society in the same year had offered premiums for the best painting of history and landscape, and it was one of the conditions that the pictures produced by the candidates should remain in their great room for a certain time; consequently they were blended with the rest, and formed part of the exhibition. As soon as it was known which performances had obtained the premiums, it was naturally supposed, by such persons who were deficient in judgment, that those pictures were the best in the room, and consequently deserved the chief attention. This partial, though unmerited, selection gave displeasure to the artists in general. Nor were they pleased with the mode of admitting the spectators, for every member of the Society had the discretionary privilege of introducing as many persons as he chose, by means of gratuitous tickets; and consequently the company was far from being select, or suited to the wishes of the exhibition. These circumstances, together with the interference of the Society in the concern of the exhibition, determined the principal artists to withdraw themselves, which they did in the next year.

Encouraged by the success of their first attempt, they engaged the great room in Spring Garden, and their first exhibition at that place opened on the 9th May 1761. Here they found it necessary to change their mode of admission, which they did by making the catalogue the ticket of admission; consequently one catalogue would admit a whole family in succession, for a shilling, which was its price; but this mode of admittance was still productive of crowd and disorder, and it was therefore altered the next year. This exhibition, which was the second in this country, contained several works of the best English artists, among which many of the pictures were equal to any masters then living in Europe; and so strikingly conspicuous were their merits, and so forcible was the effect of this display of art, that it drew from the pen of

Roubilliac, the sculptor, the following lines, which were stuck up in the exhibition room, and were also printed in the *St James's Chronicle*:—

Prétendu Connoiseur qui sur l'Antique glose,
Idolatrant le hom, sans connoitre la Chose,
Vrai Peste des beaux Arts, sans Gout sans Equité,
Quitez ce ton pedant, ce mépris affecté,
Pour tout ce que le Tems n'a pas encore gaté.

Ne peus tu pas, en admirant
Les Maitres de la Grece, ceux d l'Italie
Rendre justice également
A ceux qu'a nourris ta Patrie?

Vois ce Salon, et tu perdras
Cette prévention injuste,
Et bien étonné conviendras
Qu'il ne faut pas qu'un Mecenas
Pour revoir le Siècle d'Auguste.

"In the following season," says Edwards, "they ventured to fix the price of *admission* at one shilling each person, but had the precaution to affix a conciliatory preface to their catalogue, which was given gratis," As it is becoming more and more usual of late years to preface a catalogue with a signed article, or, as in a recent instance, a facsimile letter, it is interesting to know that this "conciliatory preface" was written by Dr Johnson. As a document its value in the history of the British School of Painting demands its reproduction here in full:—

"The public may justly require to be informed of the nature and extent of every design for which the favour of the public is openly solicited. The artists who were themselves the first promoters of an exhibition in this nation, and who have now contributed to the following

catalogue, think it therefore necessary to explain their purpose, and justify their conduct. An exhibition of the works of art being a spectacle new in this kingdom, has raised various opinions and conjectures among those who are unacquainted with the practice in foreign nations. Those who set their performances to general view, have been too often considered as the rivals of each other; as men actuated, if not by avarice, at least by vanity, and contending for superiority of fame, though not for a pecuniary prize. It cannot be denied or doubted, that all who offer themselves to criticism are desirous of praise; this desire is not only innocent but virtuous, while it is undebased by artifice, and unpolluted by envy; and of envy or artifice those men can never be accused, who already enjoying all the honours and profits of their profession are content to stand candidates for public notice, with genius yet unexperienced, and diligence yet unrewarded; who without any hope of increasing their own reputation or interest, expose their names and their works, only that they may furnish an opportunity of appearance to the young, the diffident, and the neglected. The purpose of this exhibition is not to enrich the artist, but to advance the art; the eminent are not flattered with preference, nor the obscure insulted with contempt; whoever hopes to deserve public favour, is here invited to display his merit. Of the price put upon this exhibition some account may be demanded. Whoever sets his work to be shewn, naturally desires a multitude of spectators; but his desire defeats its own end, when spectators assemble in such numbers as to obstruct one another.

"Though we are far from wishing to diminish the pleasures, or to depreciate the sentiments of any class of the community, we know, however, what every one knows, that all cannot be judges or purchasers of works of art. Yet we have already found by experience, that all are desirous to see an exhibition. When the terms of admission

were low, our room was throng'd with such multitudes, as made access dangerous, and frightened away those, whose approbation was most desired.

"Yet because it is seldom believed that money is got but for the love of money, we shall tell the use which we intend to make of our expected profits. Many artists of great abilities are unable to sell their works for their due price; to remove this inconvenience, an annual sale will be appointed, to which every man may send his works, and send them, if he will, without his name. These works will be reviewed by the committee that conduct the exhibition; a price will be secretly set on every piece, and registered by the secretary; if the piece exposed for sale is sold for more, the whole price shall be the artist's; but if the purchasers value it at less than



PLATE XL.—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS
THE AGE OF INNOCENCE
National Gallery, London

the committee, the artist shall be paid the deficiency from the profits of the exhibition."

This mode of admission was found to answer all the wished-for purposes, and the visitors, who were highly respectable, were also perfectly gratified with the display of art, which, for the first time, they beheld with ease and pleasure to themselves.

The exhibition, thus established, continued at Spring Garden Room, under the direction and management of the principal artists by whom it was first promoted, and they

were soon also joined by many of those who had continued to exhibit in the Strand (*i.e.* at the Society of Arts, etc.), which party being mostly composed of young men, and others who chose to become candidates for the premiums given by the Society, thought it prudent to remain under their protection. But the Society finding that those who continued with them began to diminish in their numbers, and that the exhibition interfered with their own concerns, no longer indulged them with the use of their room, and the exhibitions at that place terminated in 1764. These artists, who were mostly the younger part of the profession at that time, thereupon engaged a large room in Maiden Lane, where they exhibited in 1765 and 1766. But this situation not being favourable, they engaged with Mr Christie, in building his room near Pall Mall, and the agreement was that they should have it for their use during one month every year, in the spring. Here they contrived to support a feeble exhibition for eight years, when their engagements interfering with Mr Christie's auctions, he purchased their share of the premises, and they made their last removal to a room in S. Alban's Street, where they exhibited the next season, but never after attempted to attract public notice. It may be observed that while this Society continued there were annually three exhibitions of the works of English artists, namely, the Royal Academy, the Chartered Society, and that last mentioned, the members of which styled themselves the Free Society of Artists. Their exhibition was considerably inferior to those of their rivals. By the Chartered Society, Edwards means the artists who formed the exhibition at the Spring Garden Room, who in 1765 obtained a Charter from the king. Owing partly to internal disagreements, but more no doubt to the foundation of the Royal Academy in 1768, this Society gradually diminished in importance, until Edwards could write of their exhibition in 1791 that "the articles they had then collected were very insignificant, most of

which could not be considered as works of art; such as pieces of needlework, subjects in human hair, cut paper, and such similar productions as deserve not the recommendation of a public exhibition,"

To the first exhibition of the Royal Academy, which was opened on the 2nd of January 1769, Reynolds sent three pictures:—

The Duchess of Manchester and her son, as Diana disarming Cupid.

Lady Blake, as Juno receiving the Cestus of Venus.

Miss Morris as Hope nursing Love.

That all of them were, so to speak, "fancy portraits" is not entirely without significance. Portraiture, the painters bread and butter, was apparently deemed hardly suitable for the occasion, and among a list of the pictures which attracted most attention Northcote only includes the portraits of the *King and Queen* by Nathaniel Dance, *Lady Molyneux* by Gainsborough, and the *Duke of Gloucester* by Cotes. The rest are as follows:—*The Departure of Regulus from Rome*, and *Venus lamenting the Death of Adonis*, by Benjamin West; *Hector and Andromache*, and *Venus directing Aeneas and Achates*, by Angelica Kauffmann; *A Piping Boy*, and *A Candlelight Piece*, by Nathaniel Hone; *An Altar-Piece* of the Annunciation by Cipriani; *Hebe*, and *A Boy Playing Cricket*, by Cotes; A landscape by Barrett, and *Shakespeare's Black-smith*, by Penny.

In all, Reynolds exhibited two hundred and fifty-two pictures during the thirty-two years of his life in which exhibitions existed, namely from 1760 to 1791; of which two hundred and twenty-eight went to the Royal Academy.

Of these, or most of them, ample records and criticisms may be found in the copious literature which has grown up

around his name. For our present purpose a glance at his influence, his methods, and his circumstances has seemed to me to be more in point, and as a succinct estimate of the man and his work from one of his most illustrious contemporaries, the following passage may be added by way of conclusion:—

"Sir Joshua Reynolds," wrote Edmund Burke six years after the painter's death, "was on very many accounts one of the most memorable men of his time. He was the first Englishman who added the praise of the elegant arts to the other glories of his country. In taste, in grace, in facility, in happy invention, and in the richness and harmony of colouring, he was equal to the great masters of the renowned ages. In portraiture he went beyond them, for he communicated to that description of the art, in which English artists are the most engaged, a fancy and a dignity derived from the higher branches, which even those who professed, them in a superior manner, did not always preserve when they delineated individual nature. His portraits remind the spectator of the invention of history and the amenity of landscape. In painting portraits he appeared not to be raised upon that platform, but to descend to it from a higher sphere. His paintings illustrate his lessons, and his lessons seem to be derived from his paintings. He possessed the theory as perfectly as the practice of his art. To be such a painter, he was a profound and penetrating philosopher."

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), whose name we can seldom help thinking of whenever we hear that of Reynolds, was in many ways the very antithesis of his more illustrious rival. In his private life he most certainly was, and so far as his practical influence on his contemporaries is concerned, he is altogether overshadowed by the first President of the Royal Academy. With respect to their works there is a diversity

of opinion, and it is largely a matter of personal feeling whether we prefer those of the one or of the other. Both were great artists, and on the common ground of portraiture they contended so equally, and in some cases with such similarity of method, that it is impossible to say impartially which was the greater. How is it possible to decide except on the ground of individual taste, as to whether we would rather lose Gainsborough or Reynolds as a portrait painter, without considering for a moment that the former was a great landscape painter as well? And, putting aside Wilson, whose landscape was essentially Italian, whether executed in Italy or not, the first landscape painter in England was Gainsborough. We are so accustomed to bracket him with Reynolds as a great portrait painter, so thrilled over the sale of a Gainsborough portrait for many thousands of pounds, that we are apt to forget him altogether as a landscape painter. And yet two or three of his best works in the National Gallery are landscapes, and two of them at least famous ones—*The Market Cart* and *The Watering Place*. How many more beautiful landscapes by him there must be in existence it is impossible to say, but there can be no doubt that there are not a few which are only waiting their turn for a fashionable market, but are now reposing unappreciated in private hands. In the Metropolitan Museum at New York is a splendid example, the like of which I have never seen in this country, but which is so much closer in feeling to his numerous drawings and sketches in chalk or pencil that it is impossible to believe that no similar examples exist. If we could only bring them to light!

The fact is that the state of society in the middle of the eighteenth century was, with all its brilliance and intellect, the cause of hampering the natural development of the three great painters of that period. Reynolds came back from his stay in Italy an ardent disciple of the grand style, burning to follow the example of Raphael and

Michelangelo. Romney, too, was all for Italian art, but looked further back, and worshipped the classics. Gainsborough was a born landscape painter, and his whole time was devoted, when he was not executing commissions for portraits, to making sketches and studies of woods and valleys and trees. But so bent on having their likenesses handed about were the brilliant personages of their time, that Reynolds, Gainsborough and Romney were compelled in spite of themselves to turn their attention to portraiture, to the exclusion of every other branch of their art, and as portrait painters they have made themselves and their country famous.

In the numerous sketches and studies that Gainsborough has left us, we can see how much we have lost in gaining his wonderful portraits. He loved landscape, from his earliest youth to his dying day. Loved it for itself. For among all the drawings of his which I have ever seen, I do not remember one which can be identified as any particular place. In the eighteenth century there was a perfect mania among the smaller fry for making topographical drawings, in pencil or water-colour, views of some town or mountain or castle. But with Gainsborough the place was nothing—it was the spirit of it that charmed him. A cottage in a wood, a glade, a country road, a valley, was to him a beautiful scene, whatever it was called or wherever it happened to be, and out of it accordingly he made a beautiful picture, or at least a drawing. That his pictures of landscape are so extraordinarily few while his drawings are so numerous, may be accounted for in a great measure by the exigences of portrait painting, but not entirely; and the probability is that there are many more which are now forgotten.

For an estimate of Thomas Gainsborough both in regard to his place in the story of the English School and to the abilities and methods by which he attained it, it is needless to look elsewhere than to that of Sir Joshua Reynolds,

contained in the discourse delivered shortly after Gainsborough's death:—

"When such a man as Gainsborough rises to great fame without the assistance of an academical education, without travelling to Italy, or any of those preparatory studies which have been so often recommended, he is produced



PLATE XLI.—THOMAS GAINSBOROUG
THE MARKET CART
National Gallery, London

as an instance how little such studies are necessary, since so great excellence may be acquired without them. This is an inference not warranted by the success of any

individual, and I trust that it will not be thought that I wish to make this use of it.

"It must be remembered that the style and department of art which Gainsborough chose, and in which he so much excelled, did not require that he should go out of his own country for the objects of his study; they were everywhere about him; he found them in the streets, and in the fields; and from the models thus accidentally found he selected with great judgment such as suited his purpose. As his studies were directed to the living world principally, he did not pay a general attention to the works of the various masters, though they are, in my opinion, always of great use even when the character of our subject requires us to depart from some of their principles. It cannot be denied that excellence in the department of the art which he professed may exist without them, that in such subjects and in the manner that belongs to them the want of them is supplied, and more than supplied, by natural sagacity and a minute observation of particular nature. If Gainsborough did not look at nature with a poet's eye, it must be acknowledged that he saw her with the eye of a painter; and gave a faithful, if not a poetical, representation of what he had before him.

"Though he did not much attend to the works of the great historical painters of former ages, yet he was well aware that the language of the art—the art of imitation—must be learned somewhere; and as he knew he could not learn it in an equal degree from his contemporaries, he very judiciously applied himself to the Flemish school, who are undoubtedly the greatest masters of one necessary branch of art, and he did not need to go out of his country for examples of that school; from *that* he learned the harmony of colouring, the management and disposition of light and shadow, and every means of it which the masters practised to ornament and give splendour to their works. And to

satisfy himself, as well as others, how well he knew the mechanism and artifice which they employed to bring out that tone of colour which we so much admire in their works, he occasionally made copies from Rubens, Teniers and Van Dyck, which it would be no disgrace to the most accurate connoisseur to mistake at the first sight for the works of those masters. What he thus learned he applied to the originals of nature, which he saw with his own eyes, and imitated not in the manner of those masters but in his own.

"Whether he most excelled in portraits, landscapes, or fancy pictures, it is difficult to determine; whether his portraits were most admirable for exact truth of resemblance, or his landscapes for a portrait-like representation of nature, such as we see in the works of Rubens, Ruisdael, or others of those schools. In his fancy pictures, when he had fixed on his object of imitation, whether it was the mean and vulgar form of the woodcutter, or a child of an interesting character, as he did not attempt to raise the one, so neither did he lose any of the natural grace and elegance of the other; such a grace and such an elegance as are more frequently found in cottages than in courts. This excellence was his own, the result of his particular observation and taste; for this he was certainly not indebted to the Flemish school, nor indeed to any school; for his grace was not academic, or antique, but selected by himself from the great school of nature....

"Upon the whole we may justly say that whatever he attempted he carried to a high degree of excellence. It is to the credit of his good sense and judgment that he never did attempt that style of historical painting for which his previous studies had made no preparation.

"The peculiarity of his manner or style," Reynolds

continues a little later, "or we may call it the language in which he expressed his ideas, has been considered by many as his greatest defect.... A novelty and peculiarity of manner, as it is often a cause of our approbation, so likewise it is often a ground of censure, as being contrary to the practice of other painters, in whose manner we have been initiated, and in whose favour we have perhaps been prepossessed from our infancy: for fond as we are of novelty, we are upon the whole creatures of habit. However, it is certain that all those odd scratches and marks which on a close examination are so observable in Gainsborough's pictures, and which even to experienced painters appear rather the effect of accident than design; this chaos, this uncouth and shapeless appearance, by a kind of magic, at a certain distance assumes form, and all the parts seem to drop into their proper places; so that we can hardly refuse acknowledging the full effect of diligence under the appearance of chance and hasty negligence.

"That Gainsborough himself considered this peculiarity in his manner, and the power it possesses of exciting surprise, as a beauty in his works, I think may be inferred from the eager desire which we know he always expressed, that his pictures at the exhibition should be seen near as well as at a distance.

"The slightness which we see in his best works cannot always be imputed to negligence. However they may appear to superficial observers, painters know very well that a steady attention to the general effect takes up more time and is much more laborious to the mind than any mode of high finishing or smoothness without such attention. His handling, the manner of leaving the colours, or, in other words, the methods he used for producing the effect, had very much the appearance of the work of an artist who had never learnt from others the usual and

regular practice belonging to the art; but still, like a man of strong intuitive perception of what was required, he found a way of his own to accomplish his purpose."

To Reynolds's opinion of this technique as applied to portraits, we may listen with even more attention. "It must be allowed," he continues, "that this hatching manner of Gainsborough did very much contribute to the lightness of effect which is so eminent a beauty in his pictures; as, on the contrary, much smoothness and uniting the colours is apt to produce heaviness. Every artist must have remarked how often that lightness of hand which was in his dead-colour (or first painting) escaped in the finishing when he had determined the parts with more precision; and another loss which he often experiences, which is of greater consequence: while he is employed in the detail, the effect of the whole together is either forgotten or neglected. The likeness of a portrait, as I have formerly observed, consists more in preserving the general effect of the countenance than in the most minute finishing of the features or any of the particular parts. Now, Gainsborough's portraits were often little more in regard to finishing or determining the form of the features, than what generally attends a first painting; but as he was always attentive to the general effect, or whole together, I have often imagined that this unfinished manner contributed even to that striking resemblance for which his portraits are so remarkable."

IV

THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Not until the year of Gainsborough's death, 1788, was there born another landscape painter. This was John Crome, and he too came from the east of England, nearest to

Holland, being born in Norfolk, the neighbouring county to Gainsborough's native Suffolk. Within ten years more, two still greater landscapists were born, also in the east, Constable in Essex, still closer to Sudbury, and Turner in London.

John Crome—Old Crome, as he is usually called to distinguish him from his less distinguished son, John Bernay Crome—was born at Norwich, and had to support himself most of his life by teaching drawing, not to professional pupils unfortunately; but incidentally he founded "The Norwich School" of landscape painters, who loyally carried forward the traditions he had inculcated. But having to spend his time as a drawing-master, he was not free like the old Dutch painters to put out pictures when and as often as he would, and his work in oils is therefore comparatively scarce. The three examples at the National Gallery are typical of his varied powers, *The Slate Quarries*, *Household Heath*, and *Porringland Oak* are all of them masterpieces.

John Sell Cotman, born in 1782, was, after Crome, the most considerable of the Norwich School. He, too, was compelled to earn a livelihood by being a drawing-master, for there was not as yet a sufficient market, nor for some time later, for landscape pictures, to support existence, however humble. Cotman devoted much of his energies to water-colours, and he is better known in this branch of the art than in painting; that is the only excuse for the National Gallery in having purchased as his the very inferior picture called *A Galliot in a Gale*. The other example, *Wherries on the Yare*, is more worthy of him, though it by no means exhibits all his wonderful power and fascination.

In George Morland (1763-1804) we have something more and something less than a landscape painter. Landscape to him was not what it was to Wilson, Gainsborough or

Crome,—the only end in view; nor was it merely a background for his subjects. But, as it generally happened, it was both. To Morland, the landscape and the figures were one and the same thing. Out of the fulness of his heart he painted pictures of *Boys Robbing an Orchard*, *Horses in a Stable*, or a *Farmer on Horseback* staying to talk to a group of gypsies beside a wood, and whether or not the picture might be classed as a landscape depended entirely on the nature of the scene itself. Whatever he saw or chose to see he painted with equal skill and with equal charm; and as his choice of vision lay in the simple everyday life that surrounded him, his variety is not the least of his attractions.

The fact that his mother was a Frenchwoman (his father was Henry Morland, the painter of the delightful pair of half-lengths, *The Laundry Maids*) suggests to my mind the wild surmise that she may have been the daughter of Chardin. For in the technique as well as in the temperament of Morland,—making allowance for difference of circumstances,—there is something remarkably akin to those of the great Frenchman. Both eschewed the temptation to become fashionable, both painted the humble realities of middle-class life with a zest that could not possibly have been affected, and both painted them with much the same extraordinary charm. At his best, Morland is not much inferior to Chardin, and but for his unfortunate wildness and his susceptibility to the temptations of strong drink, he might easily have excelled the other. The feeling exhibited in two such different subjects as Lord Glenconner's *Boys Robbing an Orchard*, and *The Interior of a Stable*, in the National Gallery, certainly equals that of Chardin's most famous pieces, I mean the feeling for the particular scene he is depicting. The nearest, in fact the only, approach that Morland made to portrait painting was in such pieces as *The Fortune Teller* in the National Gallery, which brings to mind the

"Conversation Pieces," introduced by Hogarth and Highmore into English painting, but which were never widely attempted. In the Portfolio monograph "English Society in the Eighteenth Century" I tried to collect as many examples as I could of this form of art, but found it difficult to fill even a small volume, so entirely was the single figure portrait the vogue. A few notable instances are worth mentioning, if only as exceptions to the general rule. Gainsborough's *Ladies Walking in the Mall*, belonging to Sir Audley Neeld; Reynolds's large group of *The Marlborough Family* at Blenheim, and a very early group of *The Elliott Family*, consisting of eleven figures, belonging to Lord St Germans; John Singleton Copley's *Children of Francis Sitwell, Esq.*, at Renishaw; and lastly Zoffany's *Family Party*, at Panshanger.

For life-like representation of the English people we look to Hogarth and Morland, and yet nothing could be more different than the motives which inspired the two, and the way they went to work upon their subject. Hogarth was above all things theatrical, Morland natural. Hogarth first conceived his idea, then laid his scene, and lastly peopled it with actual characters as they appeared—individually—before him. Morland simply looked about him and painted what he happened to see at the precise moment when what he saw coincided with his natural inclination, or we may even say inspiration, to paint it. It was much the same difference as between the work of Zola and that of Thomas Hardy. The one had a moral to preach, the other a story to tell.

When the most we hear of George Romney nowadays is the price that has been paid for one of his portraits at Christie's, it is refreshing as well as informative to turn to the criticism of one of his greatest though not in these times so highly priced contemporaries, I mean John Flaxman. "When Romney first began to paint," he writes,

"he had seen no gallery of pictures nor the fine productions of ancient sculpture; but then women and children were his statues, and all objects under the canopy of heaven formed his school of painting. The rainbow, the purple distance, or the silver lake, taught him colouring; the various actions and passions of the human figure, with the forms of clouds, woods, and mountains or valleys, afforded him studies of composition. Indeed, his genius bore a strong resemblance to the scenes he was born in; like them, it partook of the grand and beautiful; and like them also, the bright sunshine and enchanting prospects of his fancy were occasionally overspread with mist and gloom. On his arrival in Italy he was witness to new scenes of art and sources of study of which he could only have supposed previously that something



PLATE XLII.—GEORGE ROMNEY
THE PARSON'S DAUGHTER
National Gallery, London

of the kind might exist; for he there contemplated the purity and perfection of ancient sculpture, the sublimity of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, and the simplicity of Cimabue and Giotto's schools. He perceived those qualities distinctly, and judiciously used them in viewing and imitating nature; and thus his quick perception and unwearied application enabled him, by a two years' residence abroad, to acquire as great a proficiency in art as is usually attained by foreign studies of a much longer duration.

"After his return, the novelty and sentiment of his original subjects were universally admired. Most of these were of the delicate class, and each had its peculiar character. Titania with her Indian votaries was arch and sprightly; Milton dictating to his daughters, solemn and interesting. Several pictures of Wood Nymphs and Bacchantes charmed by their rural beauty, innocence, and simplicity. The most pathetic, perhaps, of all his works was never finished—Ophelia with the flowers she had gathered in her hand, sitting on the branch of a tree, which was breaking under her, whilst the moody distraction in her lovely countenance accounts for the insensibility to danger. Few painters have left so many examples in their works of the tender and delicate affections; and several of his pictures breathe a kindred spirit with the *Sigismonda* of Correggio. His cartoons, some of which have unfortunately perished, were examples of the sublime and terrible, at that time perfectly new in English art. As Romney was gifted with peculiar powers for historical and ideal painting, so his heart and soul were engaged in the pursuit of it whenever he could extricate himself from the importunate business of portrait painting. It was his delight by day and study by night, and for this his food and rest were often neglected. His compositions, like those of the ancient pictures and basso-relievos, told their story by a single group of figures in the front, whilst the background is made the simplest

possible, rejecting all unnecessary episode and trivial ornament, either of secondary groups or architectural subdivision. In his compositions the beholder was forcibly struck by the sentiment at the first glance: the gradations and varieties of which he traced through several characters, all conceived in an elevated spirit of dignity and beauty, with a lively expression of nature in all the parts. His heads were various—the male were decided and grand, the female lovely. His figures resembled the antique—the limbs were elegant and finely formed. His drapery was well understood, either forming the figure into a mass with one or two deep folds only, or by its adhesion and transparency discovering the form of the figure, the lines of which were finely varied with the union or expansion of spiral or cascade folds, composing with or contrasting the outline and chiaroscuro. Few artists since the fifteenth century have been able to do so much in so many different branches; for besides his beautiful compositions and pictures, which have added to the knowledge and celebrity of the English School, he modelled like a sculptor, carved ornaments in wood with great delicacy, and could make an architectural design in a fine taste, as well as construct every part of the building."

After the death of Reynolds and the retirement of Romney, in the last decade of the eighteenth century, the field of portraiture was left vacant—in London at least—for John Hoppner, whose name is now generally included with those of Lawrence and Raeburn among the first six portrait painters of the British



PLATE XLIII.—GEORGE ROMNEY
MRS ROBINSON—"PERDITA"
Hertford House, London

School. His fame in recent years has certainly exceeded his merits, but it is due to him to say that he was a conscientious artist, and a firm upholder of the tradition of Reynolds, so far as in him lay. The old King had always disliked Reynolds, and Hoppner was not well enough advised to hold his tongue on the subject of the master: worse than this, he openly accepted the patronage of the Prince of Wales, and by so doing opened the door for the admission of Lawrence as royal painter much sooner than was at all necessary. The story of their rivalry is thus—in substance—sketched by Allan Cunningham, their

contemporary:—The light of the Prince of Wales's countenance was of itself sufficient to guide the courtly and beautiful to Hoppner's easel. Suffice it to say that before he was forty years of age (he was born in 1759), he had been enabled to exhibit no less than fifteen ladies of quality—for so are they named in the catalogues—a score of ladies of lower degree, and noblemen unnumbered. But by this time another star had arisen, destined to outshine that of Hoppner; though some at that period, willing to flatter the older practitioner, called it a meteor that would but flash and disappear—we allude to Lawrence. Urged upon the Academy by the King and Queen, and handed up to public notice by royal favour, this new aspirant rose rapidly in the estimation of the public; and by the most delicate flattery, both with tongue and pencil, became a formidable rival to the painter whom it was the Prince's pleasure to befriend. The factions of Reynolds and Romney seemed revived in those of Hoppner and Lawrence. If Hoppner resided in Charles Street, at the gates of Carlton House, and wrote himself "portrait painter to the Prince of Wales," Lawrence likewise had his residence in the Court end of the town, and proudly styled himself—and that when only twenty-three years old —"portrait painter in ordinary to His Majesty." In other respects, too, were honours equally balanced between them; they were both made Royal Academicians, but in this, youth had the start of age—Lawrence obtained that distinction first. Nature, too, had been kind—some have said prodigal—to both; they were men of fine address, and polished by early intercourse with the world and by their trade of portrait painting could practise all the delicate courtesies of drawing-room and boudoir; but in that most fascinating of all flattery, the art of persuading, with brushes and fine colours, very ordinary mortals that beauty and fine expression were their portions, Lawrence was soon without a rival.

The preference of the King and Queen for Lawrence was for a time balanced by the affection of the Prince of Wales for Hoppner; the Prince was supposed to have the best taste, and as he kept a court of his own filled with the young nobility, and all the wits of that great faction known by the name of Whig, Hoppner had the youth and beauty of the land for a time; and it cannot be denied that he was a rival in every way worthy of contending with any portrait-painter of his day. The bare list of his exhibited portraits will show how and by whom he was supported. It is well said by Williams, in his *Life of Lawrence*, that "the more sober and homely ideas of the King were not likely to be a passport for any portrait-painter to the variety of ladies, and hence Mr. Hoppner for a long time almost monopolised the female beauty and young fashion of the country."

This rivalry continued for a time in the spirit of moderation—but only for a time. Lawrence, the gentler and the smoother of the two, kept silence longest; the warm nature of Hoppner broke out at last. "The ladies of Lawrence," he said, "show a gaudy dissoluteness of taste, and sometimes trespass on moral as well as professional decorum." For his own he claimed, by implication, purity of look as well as purity of style. This sarcastic remark found wings in a moment, and flew through all the coteries and through both courts; it did most harm to him who uttered it; all men laughed, and then began to wonder how Lawrence, limner to perhaps the purest court in Europe, came to bestow indecorous looks on the meek and sedate ladies of quality of St. James's and Windsor, while Hoppner, limner to the court of a gallant young prince, who loved mirth and wine, the sound of the lute and the music of ladies' feet in the dance, should to some of its gayest and giddiest ornaments give the simplicity of manner and purity of style which pertained to the Quaker like sobriety of the other. Nor is it the least curious part of

the story that the ladies, from the moment of the sarcasm of Hoppner, instead of crowding to the easel of him who dealt in the loveliness of virtue, showed a growing preference for the rival who "trespassed on moral as well as on professional decorum." After this, Lawrence had plenty of the fairest sitters.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

I

THE SPIRIT OF REVOLT

In the preceding chapters we have traced the development of painting for five centuries—from the beginning of the fourteenth, that is to say, to the end of the eighteenth—in Italy, in the Netherlands, in Germany, in Spain, and lastly in France and England. In the nineteenth the story is confined to the last two alone, as with one or two minute exceptions the art of painting had by this time entirely ceased to be worth consideration in any of the others. Only in France and England, where it had been most recently established, was it to continue; and besides continuing, reach out with the most astonishing vigour to snatch at and grasp fruits that no one before would have dreamt of being within its reach.

Between France and England—if by the latter we may be taken to mean Great Britain, and include within its artists those who have acclimatised themselves within her shores

—the honours of the achievement are pretty equally divided, though it will have to be left to individual choice to decide exactly on which side the balance of credit is due. A mere list of the greatest names is not sufficient to apportion the praise, though as a preliminary step it may be of value in clearing the issue. Let us take a dozen on either side, and see how they look.

England.	*France.*
Lawrence.	David.
Constable.	Géricault.
Turner.	Ingres.
De Wint.	Delacroix.
Nasmyth.	Corot.
Stevens.	Millet.
Whistler.	Daubigny.
Cotman.	Courbet.
Cox.	Daumier.
Watts.	Decamps.
Rossetti.	Manet.
Hunt.	Degas.

Among these Turner stands out conspicuously from the rest, and he would be included by anyone in a list of twenty, or perhaps a dozen, of the greatest painters in the world. But oddly enough his influence on the art in general has been comparatively small, if we are to judge by its effects on other painters up to the present, while that of Constable has been considerably greater. Manet, again, and Delacroix, have accomplished far more for the history of painting than any other two in our lists—and yet their names are scarcely known outside the circle of those who know anything at all about painting.

For the English public at large an entirely different list would probably prove the superiority of their own race to

their complete satisfaction—in spite of Meissonier, Doré, and Bouguereau on the other side. But that is only because the British public, owing to the monopoly



PLATE XLIV.—JACQUES LOUIS DAVII
PORTRAIT OF MME. RÉCAMIER
Louvre, Paris

enjoyed by the Royal Academy, have never had a chance of judging for themselves what they approve of and what they do not, and their taste has been vitiated for generations by the exhibition of what this self-constituted authority, no doubt unconsciously, conceives to be best for them—and which, as might be expected, is usually found to coincide pretty nearly with the sort of thing they are capable of producing themselves. Hogarth's predictions at the time the Academy was instituted have in a great measure come perfectly true, and the only benefit that it has been to the English School of painting is that it has kept it going. How far this may be called a benefit is at least arguable, but in the main it is probable that if so many bad pictures had not been painted, there would not have been so many good ones. On the other hand, the removal of a man like Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema from his native

sphere of influence is quite enough to account for the unlooked-for flowering of blossoms like the brothers Maris, Bosboom, Israels, and Mauve in the Dutch garden, and if that is so, one need not grudge him his interment amongst Nelson, Wellington, and other heroes of our own.

In a word, the history of painting in the nineteenth century is Revolt. What it is going to be in the twentieth I am fortunately not called upon to say; but if I may throw out an opinion based upon what is already happening, I should say that no word has yet been coined which will adequately express it.

In the last century the issues were simple, and can be easily expressed. On the one side was the complacent body of practitioners following to the best of their ability the practice of painting as handed down to them in a variety of different forms, just as the Byzantine craftsmen earned their living when they were so rudely disturbed by Cimabue and his school. On the other was a small but ever-increasing number of individuals who, like Cimabue, began to think things out for themselves, but, unlike him, did not succeed in effecting a popular triumph without—if at all—first raising both the painters and the public to a pitch of fury. It is indeed curious to read Vasari and modern historians side by side, and to wonder if, after all, Vasari knew or told everything, in his desire to glorify the art, or whether Giotto and other innovators were not in fact burnt at the stake. Probably not. Gallileo, as we know, and Savonarola suffered for their crimes. But they were working against the Church, and the artists were working for it.

In the nineteenth century, painting had altogether broken away from the Church, and so it had to fight its own battles out in the street, or in the law courts. That is what has given it such a swagger and strength. It no longer looks to

its protector, it will hit you in the face before you know where you are. The feeble kind, only, looks to Academies for support, and thereby becomes feebler still.

In the present chapter, accordingly, we shall hear no more of the Madonnas, the Holy Families, and all the sacred and profane subjects on which the old masters exercised their genius. Five centuries of painting had established the art in a position of independence; and in a sixth—that is to say, the nineteenth—it began to assert itself, and to prove that its education was not in itself an end, but only a means to various ends. Instead of following out the fortunes of each painter, therefore, and attempting to set in any sort of order the reputations of artists before sufficient time has elapsed for them to cool, I propose to confine myself in the remaining pages to the broad issues raised during this period between the painters, the critics, and the public.

II

EUGÈNE DELACROIX

The man who began all this street fighting was a Frenchman—Eugène Delacroix. While still a youth he was bullied, and the bully was such a redoubtable giant that it took somebody with the grit and genius of Delacroix to tackle him, but tackle him he did. The story of the fight, which is a long and glorious one, is so admirably told in Madame Bussy's life of Delacroix, that I have obtained permission to give the essence of it in her own words.

In the Salon of 1822 was exhibited Delacroix's picture of *Dante and Virgil*, which is now in the Louvre, and evoked the first of those clamours of abuse which were barely stilled before the artist's death. For nearly thirty years all

French painters, with the exception of Gros and Prudhon; had shown themselves unquestioning disciples of the school founded by Jacques Louis David, whose masterful character and potent personality had reduced all art to a system; and Delacroix himself spoke of him with sympathy and admiration. The chief dogma of David's school was that the nearest approach to the *beau ideal* permitted to the human race had been attained by the Greeks, and that all art must conform as closely as possible to theirs. Unfortunately, the chief specimens of Greek art known at that time were those belonging to a decadent period—neither the Elgin marbles nor the Venus of Milo were accessible before 1816—so that the works from which they drew their inspiration were without character in themselves, or merely the feeble and attenuated copies of ancient Rome. In the pictures of this school, accordingly, we find only the monotonous perfection of rounded and well-modelled limbs, classical features and straight noses. Colour, to the sincere Davidian, was a vain and frivolous accessory, serving only to distract attention from the real purpose of the work, which was to aim at moral elevation as well as at ideal beauty. Everything in the picture was to be equally dwelt upon; there was no sacrifice, no mystery. "These pictures," says Delacroix, "have no epidermis ...they lack the atmosphere, the lights, the reflections which blend into an harmonious whole, objects the most dissimilar in colour."

By the untimely death of Géricault, whose *Raft of the Medusa* had already caused a flutter in 1819, Delacroix was left at the head of the revolt against this pseudo-classicism; and amid the storm that greeted the *Dante and Virgil* it is interesting to find Thiers writing of him in the following strain:—"It seems to me that no picture [in the Salon] reveals the future of a great painter better than M. Delacroix's, in which we see an outbreak of talent, a burst of rising superiority which revives the hopes that had been

slightly discouraged by the too moderate merits of all the rest.... I think I am not mistaken; M. Delacroix has genius; let him go on with confidence, and devote himself to immense labour, the indispensable condition of talent." Delécluze, by the by, the critic-in-chief of the Davidian School, had characterised the picture as *une véritable tartouillade*.

In 1824 the Salon included two pictures which may be regarded as important documents in the history of painting. One of these was Constable's *Hay Wain*—now



PLATE XLV.—EUGÈNE DELACROIX
DANTE AND VIRGIL
Louvre, Paris

in our National Gallery—which had been purchased by a Frenchman; the other was Delacroix's *Massacre of Scio*, the first to receive the enlightenment afforded by the Englishman's methods, which spread so widely over the French School. It was said that Delacroix entirely repainted his picture on seeing Constable's; but his pupil, Lassalle Bordes, is probably nearer the truth in saying that

the master being dissatisfied with its general tone, which was too chalky, transformed it by means of violent glazings. The critics were no less noisy over this picture than the last. "A painter has been revealed to us," said one, "but he is a man who runs along the housetops." "Yes," answered Baudelaire, "but for that one must have a sure foot, and an eye guided by an inward light."

When the Salon opened again in 1827, after an interval of three years, the public were astonished to find how large a number of painters had abandoned Davidism and openly joined the ranks of the enemy. Delacroix himself exhibited the *Marino Faliero* (now at Hertford House) and eleven others. The gauntlet was flung down, and war began in deadly earnest between the opposing parties. It was at this time that the terms Romanticism and Romantic came into common use. Delacroix always resented being labelled as a Romantic, and would only acknowledge that the term might be justly applied to him when used in its widest signification. "If by my Romanticism," he wrote, "is meant the free expression of my personal impressions, my aversion from the stereotypes invariably produced in the schools, and my repugnance to academic receipts, then I must admit I am Romantic."

Here we have the plain truth about the painting of the nineteenth century—and after! The critics were unanimous in their violent condemnation of Delacroix's works: "the compositions of a sick man in delirium," "the fanaticism of ugliness," "barbarous execution," "an intoxicated broom"—such are some of the terms of abuse showered upon him. The gentlest among them commiserate the talent which here and there can be seen "struggling with the systematic *bizarrerie* and the disordered technique of the artist, just as gleams of reason and sometimes flashes of genius may be seen pitiably shining through the speech of a madman." The final touch to Delacroix's disgrace was

given by the Directeur des Beaux Arts sending for him and recommending him to study drawing from casts, warning him at the same time that unless he could change his style he must expect neither commissions nor recognition from the State!

The year 1830 has given its name to that brilliant generation of poets, novelists, painters and philosophers which, as Théophile Gautier says with just pride, "will make its mark on the future and be spoken of as one of the climacteric epochs of the human mind." The revolution of July inspired Delacroix with one of his most interesting pictures. *Le 28 Juillet* is the only one of his works in which he depicts modern life, and was a striking refutation to those who complained that modern costume is too ugly or prosaic to be treated in painting. "Every old master," Baudelaire usefully pointed out, "has been modern in his day. The greater number of fine portraits of former times are dressed in the costume of their period. They are perfectly harmonious because the costumes, the hair, and even the attitude and expression (each period has its own), form a whole of complete vitality." *Le 28 Juillet* gives us the very breath and spirit of modern street fighting. Though the public



PLATE XLVI.—JOHN CONSTABLE
THE HAY WAIN
National Gallery, London

remained hostile and the jury bestowed none of its prizes, as before, the Government acknowledged the artist's talent and politics by making him a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Further, from 1833 to 1853 he was intermittently employed in decorating the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate, and other public buildings. In 1855 he showed at the Great Exhibition a series of thirty-five of his most important pictures, the effect of which was immense. For the first and only time in his life he enjoyed a triumph, none the less great because his life-long rival Ingres also took the opportunity of exhibiting a selection of his works in the same building. But in spite of this success, and in spite of his being elected an Academician in 1857, the critics remained incorrigible. His pictures in the Salon of 1859 once more called forth one of those storms of abuse that Delacroix had the gift of arousing. Weary and disheartened—"All my life long I have been livré aux bêtes," was his bitter exclamation—he vowed to exhibit no more, and kept his word.

III

RUSKIN AGAINST THE PHILISTINES

In England, meantime, great things were being accomplished amid peaceful surroundings. In portraiture Lawrence soon became supreme, and what excellence he possessed was accentuated on his death in 1830 by the appointment of Sir Martin Archer Shee as his successor in the Presidency of the Royal Academy. That was the end of

portraiture in England until a new school arose. But it was in landscape that our country occupied the field in the first half of the nineteenth century, and tilled it with the astonishing results that are usually the effect of doing much and saying little. The work accomplished by Turner, Constable, and Cotman, in the first half of the century, to say nothing of Crome and one or two of the older men who were still alive, has never been equalled in any country, and yet less was heard about the execution of it than would keep a modern journalist in bread and cheese for a week. Turner, who wouldn't sell his pictures, and Constable, who couldn't, between them filled up the measure of English art without any other aid than that of the materials with which they recorded their gorgeous communion with nature. When Ruskin stepped in with the "Modern Painters," originally designed as a vindication of Turner against certain later-day critics, Turner's comment was, "He knows a great deal more about my pictures than I do. He puts things into my head and points out meanings in them that I never intended." That was in 1843, when Turner was well on in his third manner—within eight years of his death. But let us go back to the beginning.

Until he developed his latest manner, Turner was about the most popular artist that ever lived. His pictures were not above the comprehension of the public, educated or otherwise, and no effort was either needed or demanded to understand them. In the diary of a provincial amateur, Thomas Greene, are recorded an impression of Turner's work as early as 1797:—"Visited the Royal Exhibition. Particularly struck with a sea-view by Turner ...the whole composition bold in design and masterly in execution. I am entirely unacquainted with the artist, but if he proceeds as he has begun, he cannot fail to become the first in his department." And again in 1799:—"Was again struck and delighted with Turner's landscapes.... Turner's views are not mere ordinary transcripts of nature,—he always throws

some peculiar and striking *character* into the scene he represents."

Brought up as a topographical draughtsman, he made no departure till quite late in life from the conventional method of depicting scenery; but being a supremely gifted artist, he was capable of utilising this method as no other before or since has ever succeeded in doing. The accepted method was good enough for him, and he laid his paint upon the canvas as anybody else had done before him, and as many of our present-day painters would do well to do after him—if only they had the genius in them to "make the instrument speak." The impressions created on our mind by Turner's earlier pictures are not conveyed by dots, cubes, streaks, or any device save that of pigment laid upon the canvas in such a manner as seemed to the artist to reproduce what he saw in nature. That he did this with surprising and altogether exceptional skill is the proof of his genius. Unflagging energy and devotion to his art enabled him to realise, not all, but a wonderful number of the beauties he saw in the world, with an experience that few beside him have ever taken the trouble to acquire. When barely thirty years old—in 1805—he was already considered as the first of living landscape painters, and was thus noticed by Edward Dayes (the teacher of Girtin): —"Turner may be considered as a striking instance of how much may be gained by industry, if accompanied with perseverance, even without the assistance of a master. The way he acquired his professional powers was by borrowing when he could a drawing or picture to copy; or by making a sketch of any one in the exhibition early in the morning and finishing it up at home. By such practice, and a patient perseverance, he has overcome all the difficulties of the art." Turner himself used to say that his best academy was "the fields and Dr Monro's parlour"—where Girtin and other young artists met and sketched and copied the drawings in the doctor's collection. Burnet, in his notice of

"Turner and his Works," suggests that John Robert Cozens had paved the way for both Girtin and Turner in striking out a broad effect of light and shade. "The early pictures of Turner," he observes, "possess the breadth, but are destitute of the brilliant power of light and colour afterwards pervading his works, and ultimately carried to the greatest extreme in his last pictures. Breadth of light seems to have been latterly his chief aim, supported by the contrast of hot and cold colour; two of his unfinished pictures exemplified the principle; they were divided into large masses of blue where the water or sky was to come and the other portions laid out in broad orange yellow, falling into delicate brown where the trees and landscapes were to be placed. This preparation, while it secured the greatest breadth, would have shone through the other colours when finished, giving the luminous quality observable in his pictures. In many instances his works sent for exhibition to the British Institution had little more than this brilliant foundation, which was worked into detail and completed in the varnishing days, Turner being the first in the morning and the last to leave; his certainty in the command over his colour, and the dexterity in his handling, seemed to convert in a few hours 'an unsubstantial pageant' into a finished landscape. These *ad captandum* effects, however, are not what his fame will depend on for perpetuity; his finest pictures are the production of great study in their composition, careful and repeated painting in the detail, and a natural arrangement of the colour and breadth of the chiaroscuro."



PLATE XLVII.—J. M. W. TURNER
CROSSING THE BROOK
National Gallery of British Art, London

Whether or not we agree with all of Burnet's opinions, we shall be more likely to learn the truth about Turner from prosaic contemporaries of his earlier years than from all the rhapsodies of later days. How significant, when stripped of its amusing circumstances, is the simple fact related thus by Leslie:—"In 1839, when Constable exhibited his *Opening of Waterloo Bridge*, it was placed in one of the small rooms next to a sea-piece by Turner—a grey picture, beautiful and true, but with no positive colour in any part of it. Constable's picture seemed as if painted with liquid gold and silver, and Turner came several times while he was heightening with vermilion and lake the

decorations and flags of the city barges. Turner stood behind him looking from the *Waterloo Bridge* to his own picture, and at last brought his palette from the great room where he was touching another picture, and putting a round daub of red lead, somewhat bigger than a shilling, on his grey sea, went away without saying a word. The intensity of this red lead, made more vivid by the coolness of his picture, caused even the vermilion and lake of Constable to look weak. I came into the room just after Turner had left it. "He has been here," said Constable, "and fired a gun." On the opposite wall was a picture by Jones of Shadrach Meshach and Abednego in the Furnace. "A coal," said Cooper, "has bounced across the room from Jones's picture and set fire to Turner's sea." Turner did not come in again for a day and a half, and then in the last moment allowed for painting, he glazed the scarlet seal he had put on his picture, and shaped it into a buoy."

It was in 1835, after an unbroken popular triumph lasting over thirty years, that the critics openly rounded on him. The occasion seized by *Blackwood's Magazine* was the exhibition of his first Venetian picture exhibited in that year—it is now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. "What is Venice in this picture?" wrote Blackwood's critic. "A flimsy, whitewashed, meagre assemblage of architecture, starting off ghost-like into unnatural perspective, as if frightened at the affected blaze of some dogger vessels (the only attempt at richness in the picture). The greater part of the picture is white, disagreeable white, without light or transparency, and the boats with their red worsted masts are as gewgaw as a child's toy which he may have cracked to see what it is made of. As to Venice, nothing can be more unlike its character."

Ruskin was then only sixteen years old, but eight years later appeared in print the first volume of "Modern Painters," "by an undergraduate of Oxford," as the result of

his growing indignation at this and subsequent attacks on Turner. Without following Ruskin into the dubious regions whither the pursuit of his romantic fancies ultimately led him, we may in fairness quote the opening sentence of his second chapter, "Of Truth of Colour," which will help us, moreover, in understanding the conditions under which painting was being conducted at this period. "There is nothing so high in art," he says, "but that a scurrile jest can reach at, and often the greater the work the easier it is to turn it into ridicule. To appreciate the science of Turner's colour would require the study of a life; but to laugh at it requires little more than the knowledge that the yolk of egg is yellow and spinage green; a fund of critical information on which the remarks of most of our leading periodicals have been of late years exclusively based. We shall, however, in spite of the sulphur and treacle criticisms of our Scotch connoisseurs, and the eggs and spinage of our English ones, endeavour to test the works of this great colourist by a knowledge of nature somewhat more extensive than is to be gained by an acquaintance, however formed, with the apothecary's shop or the dinner table."

So much for the critics. For the artist, if Ruskin said more than Turner himself could understand, he has summed up his achievement in a few passages which may possibly outlast the works themselves. "There has been marked and constant progress in his mind; he has not, like some few artists, been without childhood; his course of study has been as evidently as it has been swiftly progressive; and in different stages of the struggle, sometimes one order of truth, sometimes another, has been aimed at or omitted. But from the beginning to the present height of his career he has never sacrificed a greater truth to a less. As he advanced, the previous knowledge or attainment was absorbed in what succeeded, or abandoned only if incompatible, and never abandoned without a gain: and his present works present the sum and perfection of his

accumulated knowledge, delivered with the impatience and passion of one who feels too much, and has too little time to say it in, to pause for expression or ponder over his syllables." And again of his latest works—"There is in them the obscurity, but the truth, of prophecy; the instinctive and burning language, which would express less if it uttered more; which is indistinct only by its fulness, and dark with its abundant meaning. He feels now, with long-trained vividness and keenness of sense, too bitterly, the impotence of the hand and the vainness of the colour to catch one shadow or one image of the glory which God has revealed to him. He has dwelt and communed with Nature all the days of his life: he knows her now too well, he cannot falter over the material littlenesses of her outward form: he must give her soul, or he has done nothing, and he cannot do this with the flax, the earth, and the oil. 'I cannot gather the beams out of the east, or I would make *them* tell you what I have seen; but read this, and interpret this, and let us remember together. I cannot gather the gloom out of the night sky, or I would make that teach you what I have seen; but read this, interpret this, and let us feel together. And if you have not that within you which I can summon to my aid, if you have not the sun in your spirit, and the passion in your heart, which my words may awaken, though they be indistinct and swift, leave me; for I will give you no patient mockery, no laborious insult of that glorious Nature, whose I am and whom I serve. Let other servants imitate the voice and the gesture of their master, while they forget his message. Hear that message from me; but remember that the teaching of Divine truth must still be a mystery.'"

Within a very few years Ruskin was performing a more useful service for the English School of painting than that of gilding the fine gold of its greatest genius. Whether or not he was aware of the fact, young Holman Hunt had borrowed a copy of "Modern Painters," which, he says,

entirely changed his opinions as to the views held by society at large concerning art, and in 1849 there were exhibited Hunt's *Rienzi*, Rossetti's *Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, and Millais' *Lorenzo and Isabella*, each inscribed with the mystic letters "P.R.B.," meaning "Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood." It is interesting to note that this alliance was formed when the three young artists were looking over a book of engravings of the frescoes in the Campo Santo at Pisa.

In the following year Hunt exhibited the *British Family*, Millais, *The Carpenter's Shop*, and Rossetti the *Ecce Ancilla Domini*, and in 1851 were Hunt's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and three by Millais. The fury of the critics had now reached a point at which some notice had to be taken of it—as of a man in an apopleptic fit. That of the Times in particular:—"These young artists have unfortunately become notorious by addicting themselves to an antiquated style, false perspective, and crude colour of remote antiquity. We want not to see what Fuseli termed drapery "snapped instead of folded," faces bloated into apoplexy, or extenuated into skeletons; colour borrowed from the jars in a druggist's shop, and expression forced into caricature. That morbid infatuation which sacrifices truth, beauty, and genuine feeling to mere eccentricity deserves no quarter at the hands of the public." It was in disapproval of the tone of this outburst that the author of "Modern Painters" addressed his famous and useful letter to the *Times*, vindicating the artists, and following it up with another in which he wishes them all "heartily good speed, believing in sincerity that if they temper the courage and energy which they have shown in the adoption of their systems with patience and discretion in framing it, and if they do not suffer themselves to be driven by harsh and careless criticism into rejection of the ordinary means of obtaining influence over the minds of others, they may, as they gain experience, lay in our England the foundation of a school

of art nobler than the world has seen for three hundred years."

If any one of this strenuous young band had been a painter of the first rank, this prediction might have been abundantly verified. But it must be owned that none of them was. Holman Hunt came nearest to being, and Millais probably thought he was, when he had abandoned his early principles and shaped for the Presidency of the Academy. Rossetti had more genius in him than the others, but it came out in poetry as well as in painting, and perhaps in more lasting form. As it was, the effects of the revolution were widespread and entirely beneficial; but those effects must not be looked for in the works of any one particular artist, but rather in the general aspect of English art in the succeeding half century, and perhaps to-day. It broke up the soil. The flowers that came up were neither rare nor great, but they were many, varied, and pleasing, and in every respect an improvement on the evergreens and hardy annuals with which the English garden had become more and more encumbered from want of intelligent cultivation. More than this, the freedom engendered of revolt had now encouraged the young artist to feel that he was no longer bound to paint in any particular fashion. People's eyes were opened to possibilities as well as to actualities; and though they were prone to close again under the soporific influence of what was regular and conventional, they were capable of opening again, perhaps with a start, but without the necessity for a surgical operation. In 1847, for example, George Frederick Watts had offered to adorn, free of charge, the booking-hall of Euston Station, and had been refused—Watts, by the by, was quite independent of the Pre-Raphaelites—whereas in 1860 the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn accepted his *School of Legislature*, and in 1867 he was elected an academician.

Two somewhat remarkable effects of the movement are

attributed to it by Mr Edmund Gosse (in a note on the work of Alfred Hunt, written in 1884), which are probably typical of many more. The Liverpool Academy, founded in 1810, had an annual grant of £200 from the Corporation. In 1857 it gave a prize to Millais' *Blind Girl* in preference to the most popular picture of the year (Abraham Solomon's *Waiting for the Verdict*), and so great was the public indignation that pressure was brought to bear on the Corporation, the grant was withdrawn, and the Academy ruined.

In the other instance we may not go the whole way with Mr Gosse, when in speaking of the Pre-Raphaelite principle he says that "the school of Turnerian landscape was fatally affected by them," or that all the landscape painters, except Alfred Hunt, "accepted the veto which the Pre-Raphaelites had tacitly laid upon composition or a striving after an artificial harmony of forms in landscape." But to a certain extent their influence undoubtedly was prejudicial in that respect. In suggesting another reason for the cessation of Turner s influence he is quite as near the mark, namely, the action of the Royal Academy in admitting no landscape painters to membership. At Turner's death in 1851 there were only three, among whom was Creswick. "This popular artist," says Mr Gosse, "was the Upas tree under whose shadow the Academical patronage of landscape died in England. From his election as an associate in 1842 to that of Vicat Cole in 1869, no landscape painter entered the doors of the Royal Academy." Of this august body we shall have something to say later on.

IV

MANET AND WHISTLER AGAINST THE WORLD

Let us now cross the channel again, and see what is going on there, in 1863. Evidently there is something on, or there would not be so much excitement. As we approach the Capital we are aware of one name being prominent in the general uproar—that of Édouard Manet.

Manet's revolt against tradition began before he became an artist, as was in fact necessary, or he would never have been allowed to become one. The traditions of the Bourgoisie were sacred, and their power and importance since the revolution of 1848 not to be lightly set aside. But young Manet was so determined that he was at last allowed by his bourgeois parents to have his way, and was sent to study under that very rough diamond Couture. Now again his "revolting" qualities showed themselves, this time in the life class. Théodore Duret, his friend and biographer, puts it so amusingly that a quotation, untranslated, is imperative:—"Cette repulsion qui se développe chez Manet pour l'art de la tradition," he says, "se manifeste surtout par le mépris qu'il témoigne aux modèles posant dans l'atelier et à l'étude du nu telle qu'elle était alors conduite. Le culte de l'antique comme on le comprenait dans la première moitié du xix^{e} siècle parmi les peintres avait amené la recherche de modèles speciaux. On leur demandait des formes pleines. Les hommes en particulier devaient avoir une poitrine large et bombée, un torse puissant, des membres musclés. Les individus doués des qualités requises qui posaient alors dans les ateliers, s'etaient habitués à prendre des attitudes prétendues expressive et heroïques, mais toujours tendues et conventionelles, d'où l'imprévu était banni. Manet, porté vers le naturel et épris de recherches, s'irritait de ces poses d'un type fixe et toujours les mêmes. Aussi faisait-il tres mauvais ménage avec les modèles. Il cherchait à en obtenir des poses contraires à leurs habitudes, auxquelles ils se

refusaient. Les modèles connus qui avaient vu les morceaux faits d'après leurs torses conduire certains élèves à l'école de Rome, alors la suprême récompense, et qui dans leur orgueil s'attribuaient presqu'une part du succès, se revoltaient de voir un tout jeune homme ne leur témoigner aucun respect. Il paraît que fatigué de l'eternelle étude du nu, Manet aurait essayé de draper et même d'habiller les modèles, ce qui aurait causé parmi eux une véritable indignation."

It was in 1863 that the storm of popular fury burst over Manet's head, on the exhibition of his first important picture, painted three years before, generally known as *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*. This wonderful canvas was something so new and so surprising that it was rejected by the jury of the Salon. But in company with less conspicuous though equally unacceptable pieces by such men as Bracquemond, Cazin, Fantin-Latour, Harpignies, Jongkind, J. P. Laurens, Le Gros, Pissarro, Vollon, and Whistler, it was accorded an exhibition, alongside the official Salon, which was called *le Salon des refusés*. Being the largest and most conspicuous work shown, it attracted no less attention than if it had been officially hung, and probably much more. "Ainsi ce Déjeuner sur l'herbe," says M. Duret, "venait-il faire comme une énorme tache. Il donnait la sensation de quelquechose outré. Il heurtait la vision. Il produisait, sur les yeux du public de ce temps, l'effet de la pleine lumière sur les yeux du hibou."

There was more than one reason for this remarkable picture surprising and shocking the sensibilities of the public. It represents a couple of men in everyday bourgeois costume, one sitting and the other reclining on the grass under trees, while next to one of them is seated a young woman, her head turned to the spectator, in no costume at all. A profusion of *articles de déjeuner* is beside her, and it is evident that they are only waiting to arrange the meal till

a second young woman, who is seen bathing in the near background, is ready to join them. The subject and composition are reminiscent of Giorgione's beautiful and famous *Fête Champêtre*, in the Louvre, and Manet quite frankly and in quite good faith pleaded Giorgione as his precedent when assailed on grounds of good taste. But unfortunately he had not put his male figures in "fancy dress," and the public could hardly be expected to realise that Giorgione had not, either. As for the painting, it was a revelation. He had broken every canon of tradition—and yet it was a marvellous success!

Another outburst greeted the appearance of the wonderful *Olympia* in 1865, this time in the official catalogue. This is now enshrined in the Louvre. It was painted in 1863, but fortunately, perhaps, Manet had not the courage to exhibit it then—for who can tell to what length the fury of the Philistines might not have been goaded by two such shocks? As it was, this second violation of the sacred traditions of the nude, which had been exclusively reserved for allegorical subjects, was considered an outrage; and the innocent, natural model, of by no means voluptuous appearance, was regarded as a disgraceful intrusion into the chaste category of nymphs and goddesses. As a painter, however, Manet had shown himself unmistakably as the great figure of

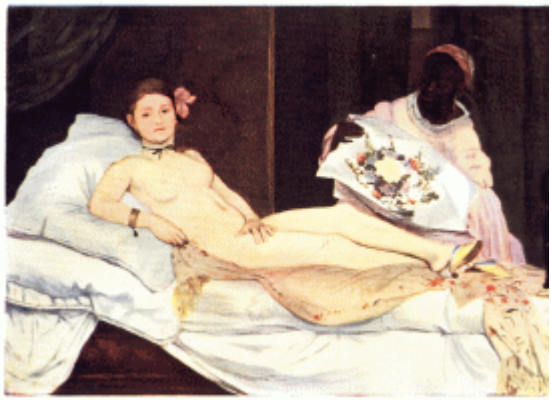


PLATE XLVIII.—ÉDOUARD MANET
OLYMPIA
Louvre, Paris

the age, and if we have to go to Paris or to New York to catch a glimpse of any of his work, it is partly because we are too backward in seizing opportunities so eagerly snapped up by others.

The next great storm in the artistic world followed in the wake of one of Manet's companions in adversity at the *Salon des Refusés*—James M'Neill Whistler, who left Paris and settled with his mother in Chelsea in the late 'sixties. That he should have existed for fifteen whole years without breaking forth into strife is so extraordinary that we are almost tempted to attribute it to the influence of his mother, who used to bring him to the old church on Sundays, as the present writer dimly remembers. In this case it was not the public, but the critic, John Ruskin, who so deftly dropped the fat into the fire. Having, as we saw, taken up the cudgels for poor Turner against the public in 1843, and for the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1850, he now, in 1877, ranged himself on the other side, and accused Whistler of impertinence in "flinging a pot of paint in the face of the public." The action for libel which

Whistler commenced in the following year resulted in strict fact in a verdict of one farthing damages for the libelled one; but in reality the results were much farther reaching. The artist had vindicated not only himself, but his art, from the attacks of the ignorant and bumptious. "Poor art!" Whistler wrote, "What a sad state the slut is in, an these gentlemen shall help her. The artist alone, by the way, is to no purpose and remains unconsulted; his work is explained and rectified without him, by the one who was never in it—but upon whom God, always good though sometimes careless, has thrown away the knowledge refused to the author, poor devil!" This recalls Turner's comment on Ruskin's eulogies—which Whistler had probably never heard of—and making every allowance for Whistler's fiery, combative nature, and sharp pen, there is much truth, and truth that needed telling, in his contention. "Art," he continues, "that for ages has hewn its own history in marble, and written its own comments on canvas, shall it suddenly stand still, and stammer, and wait for wisdom from the passer-by? For guidance from the hand that holds neither brush nor chisel? Out upon the shallow conceit!"

Of the hopeless banality of the critics during this period there are plenty of examples to be found without looking very far. Several of the most amusing have been embodied in a little volume of "Whistler Stories," lately compiled by Mr Don C. Seitz of New York. Here we find *The Standard's* little joke about Whistler paying his costs in the action—apart from those allowed on taxation, that is to say —"But he has only to paint, or, as we believe he expresses it 'knock off' three or four 'symphonies' or 'harmonies'—or perhaps he might try his hand at a Set of Quadrilles in Peacock Blue?—and a week's labour will set all square." Then there is this priceless revelation of his art when questioning his class in Paris. "Do you know what I mean when I say tone, value, light, shade, quality, movement, construction, etc.?" *Chorus*, "Oh, yes, Mr Whistler!" "I'm

glad, for it's more than I do myself." More serious was the verdict of Sir George Scharf, keeper of the National Gallery, when (in 1874) there was a proposal to purchase the portrait of Carlyle. "Well," he said, icily, on looking at the picture, "and has painting come to this!"

High place, it would seem, did not always conduce to an appreciation of high art. Here is the opinion of Sir Charles Eastlake, F.R.I.B.A., also keeper of the



PLATE XLIX.—J. M. WHISTLER
LILLIE IN OUR ALLEY
In the possession of John J. Cowan, Esq.

National Gallery, published in 1883, on one of Rembrandt's pictures in the Louvre:—

"*The Bath*, a very ugly and offensive picture, in which the principal object is the ill-proportioned figure of a naked

woman, distinguished by flesh tones whose colour suggests the need of a bath rather than the fact that it has been taken. The position of the old servant wiping the woman's feet is not very intelligible, and the drawing of the bather's legs is distinctly defective. The light and shade of the picture, though obviously untrue to natural effect, are managed with the painter's usual dexterity."

V

THE ROYAL ACADEMY

The last revolt of the nineteenth century was effected in a peaceable and business-like, but none the less successful manner, by the establishment, in 1886, of the New English Art Club as a means of defence against the mighty *vis inertiæ* of the Royal Academy. As an example of the disadvantage under which any artist laboured who did not bow down to the great Idol, I venture to quote a few sentences from the report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords appointed to inquire into the administration of the Chantrey Trust, in 1904:——

"With five exceptions, all the works in the collection have been bought from summer exhibitions of the Royal Academy."

"It is admitted by those most friendly to the present system that the Chantrey collection regarded as a national gallery of modern British art is incomplete, and in a large degree unrepresentative. The works of many of the most brilliant and capable artists who worked in the last quarter of the nineteenth century are missing from the gallery, and the endeavour to account for these omissions has formed one main branch of the inquiry."

"It has been stated that while containing some fine works of art, it is lacking in variety and interest, and while failing to give expression to much of the finest artistic feeling of its period, it includes not a few works of minor importance. Full consideration of the evidence has led the Committee to regard this view as approximately correct."

Up to 1897, when the collection was handed over to the nation, little short of £50,000 had been spent upon it. And with five exceptions, amounting to less than £5000, the whole of that money had been expended on such works alone as were permitted by the Academy to be exhibited on their walls.

Of the £5000, it may be noted, £2200 was well laid out on Watts's *Psyche*; but with regard to the very first purchase made, in 1877, for £1000,—Hilton's *Christ Mocked*, which had been painted as an altar-piece for S. Peter's, Eaton Square, in 1839, the following question and answer are full of bitter significance for the poor artist of the time:——

> Lord Ribblesdale.—Was Mr Hilton's picture offered by the Vicar and Churchwardens?
>
> The Secretary to the Royal Academy.—Yes, it was offered by them—one of the Churchwardens was the late Lord Maghermorne—he was then Sir James M'Garrell Hogg—he was a great friend of Sir Francis Grant who was the President, and he offered it to him for the Chantrey Collection.

When repeatedly pressed by the Committee for the reasons why so few purchases were made outside the Academy exhibitions, the President, Sir Edward Poynter, repeatedly pleaded the impossibility of a Council of Ten, all of whom must see pictures before they are bought,

travelling about in search of them. In view of this apparent —but obviously unreal—difficulty, the following questions were then put by the Earl of Lytton:——

420. Without actually changing the terms of the will, has the question of employing an agent for the purpose of finding out what pictures were available and giving advice upon them ever been suggested?—No.

421. That would come within the term of the will, would it not, the final voting being, as it is now, in the hands of the Academy; it would be open to the Council to appoint an agent, as was suggested just now, of going to Scotland, and going about the country making suggestions as to pictures which in his opinion might be bought?—The question has never arisen.

422. But that could be done, could it not?—I suppose that could be done under the terms of the will, but I do not suppose that the Academy would ever do it.

As a comment on this let us turn to the "Autobiography of W. P. Frith R. A." (Chapter xl.):—"A portion of the year ... was spent in the service of the winter Exhibition of Old Masters. My duties took me into strange places.... One of my first visits was paid to a huge mansion in the North.... I visited thirty-eight different collections of old masters and named for selection over three hundred pictures.... The pictures of Reynolds are so much desired for the winter Exhibition that neither trouble nor expense are spared in searching for them; so hearing of one described to me as of unusual splendour, I made a journey into Wales with the solitary Reynolds for its object."

Here, where it is not a question of a Trust for the benefit of the public and for the encouragement of artists, there appears to have been no trouble or expense spared. But the real reason for the Academic selection leapt naïvely from

the mouth of the President a little later, in reply to question 545.—"The best artists come into the Academy ultimately. I do not say that there have been no exceptions, but as a general rule all the best artists ultimately become Academicians. It is natural, if we want the best pictures that we should go to the best artists."

On this point the answer to a question put by Lord Lytton to one of the forty, Sir William Richmond, K.C.B., is of value, as showing that the grievances of "the outsiders" were not imaginary:—

767. I just want to ask you one more question. When you said that in your opinion the walls of the Academy have had priority of claim in the past, have you any particular reason for that statement?—Yes. I may mention this to show that I am consistent. Before I was an Associate of the Royal Academy, I fought hard for what are called, in rather undignified language, the outsiders, and I was anxious that men should be elected Associates of the Royal Academy not necessarily because they exhibit on the Royal Academy walls, but because they are competent painters. That was my fight upon which I stood; and I refused to send a picture to the Royal Academy on the understanding that if I did I should probably be elected Associate that year, and also that my picture would be bought by the Chantrey Fund. My answer to that was, "If my picture is good enough to be purchased for the Chantrey Bequest my picture can be purchased from the walls of the Grosvenor Gallery as well as from the walls of the Royal Academy. That seems to me to be justice."

The "New English," then, had some justification for their establishment; and although they did not make very much headway before the close of the nineteenth century, they find themselves at the opening of the twentieth in a position to determine to a very considerable extent what

the future of English painting is to be, just as the Academy succeeded in determining it before they came into existence.

For the Academy everything that was vital in English art in the last half century had no existence—was simply ignored. For the New English, it was the seed that flowered, under their gentle influence, into the many varieties of blossoms with which our garden is already filled. To the Academy there was no such thing as change or development—their ears were deaf to any innovation, their eyes were blind to any fresh beauty. To others, every new movement foretold its significance, and the century closed with the recognition of the fact that art must live and develop if it is to be anything but a comfortable means of subsistence for a self-constituted authority of forty and their friends.

Let me be allowed to conclude this chapter, and my imperfect efforts to indicate the energies of six centuries of art in so small a space, with a passage from a lecture delivered in 1882 by Mr Selwyn Image, now Slade Professor at Oxford, which embodies the spirit in the air at that time, and foreshadows what was to come. "I do not feel that we have come here to sing a requiem for art this afternoon," he said. "As a giant it will renew its strength and rejoice to run its course. I am not a prophet, I cannot tell you just what that course is going to be. Nor is it possible to estimate what is around us with the same security, with the same value, that we estimate what has passed—you must be at a certain distance to take things in. But in contemporary art we can notice some characteristics, which are quite at one with what we call the modern spirit; and extremely suggestive—for they seem to indicate movement, and therefore life, in this imaginative sphere, just as there is movement and life in the sphere of science or of social interests. For instance, in

modern representative work ... I think anyone comparing it as a whole with the work of the old masters, will be struck as against their distinctness, containedness, simplicity and serenity; with its complexity, restlessness, and vagueness, and emotion, and suggestiveness in place of delineation, and impressionism in place of literal transcription—and this alike in execution and motive. I do not mean to say that these qualities are better than the qualities that preceded them, or worse—but only that they are different, only that they are of the modern spirit—only that they indicate movement and life; and so far that is hopeful—is it not?"

THE END

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] National Gallery Catalogue.

[2] "Titien," par Henry Caro-Delvaille. Librairie Félix Alcan.

[3] An old copy of this picture is in the Edinburgh Gallery.

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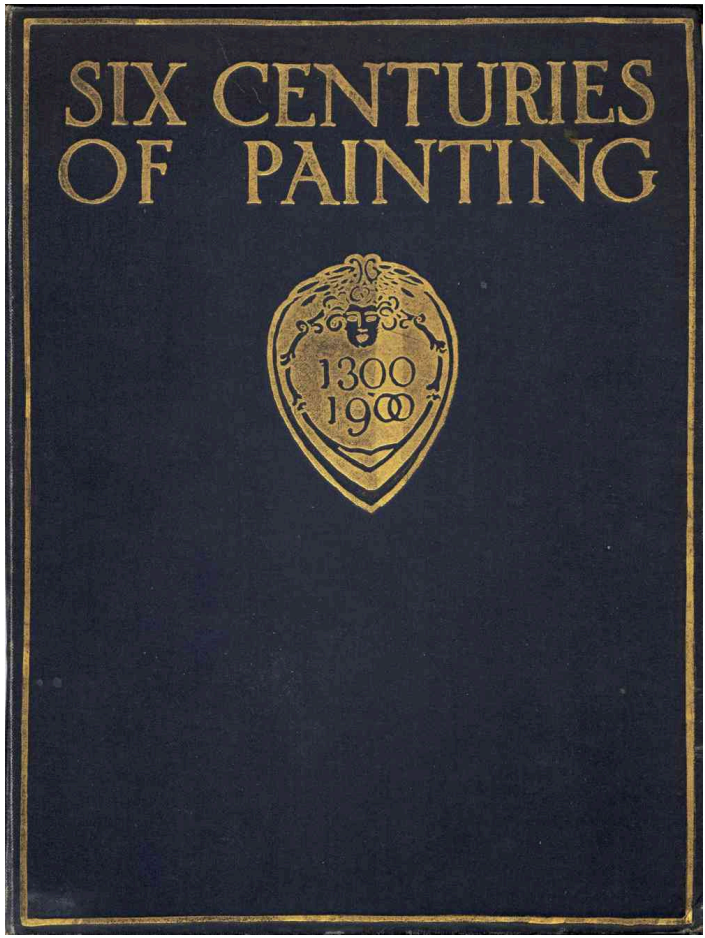
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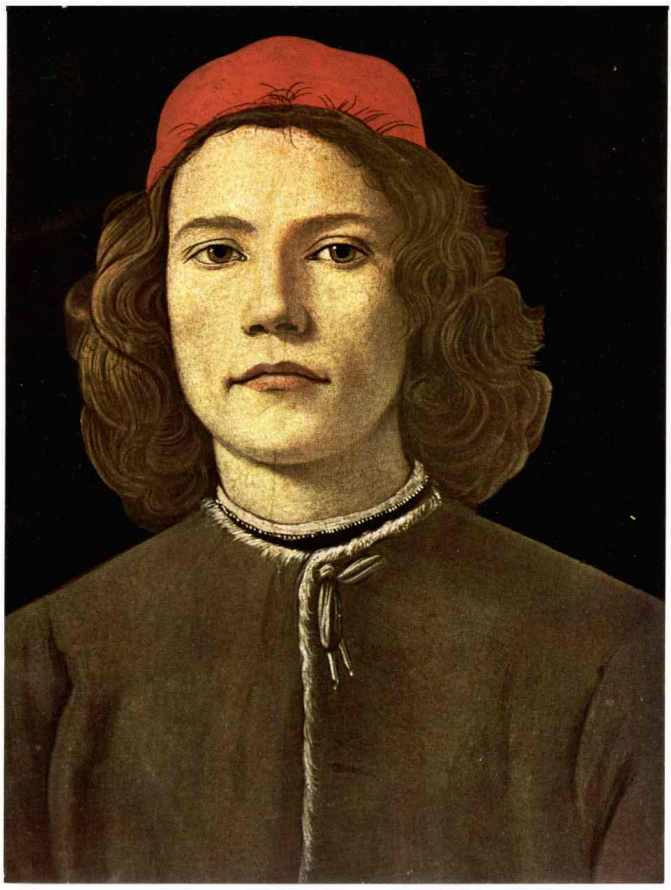
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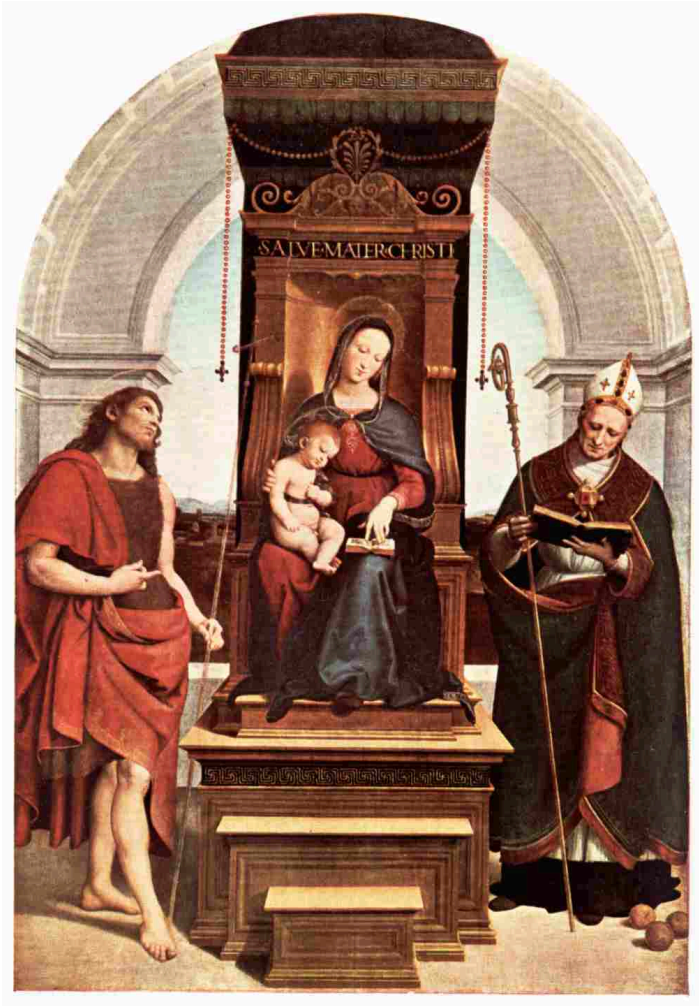
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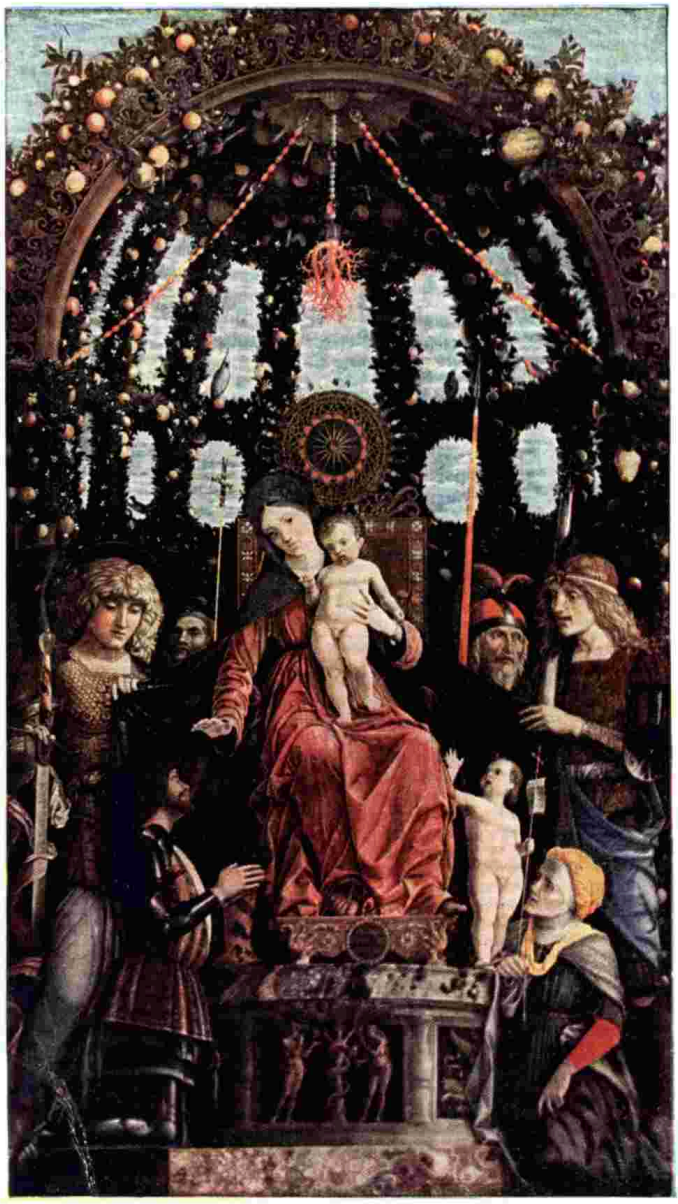
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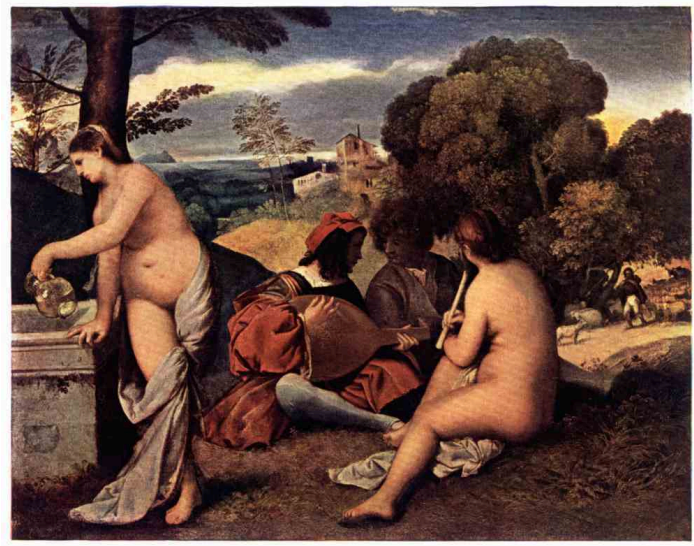
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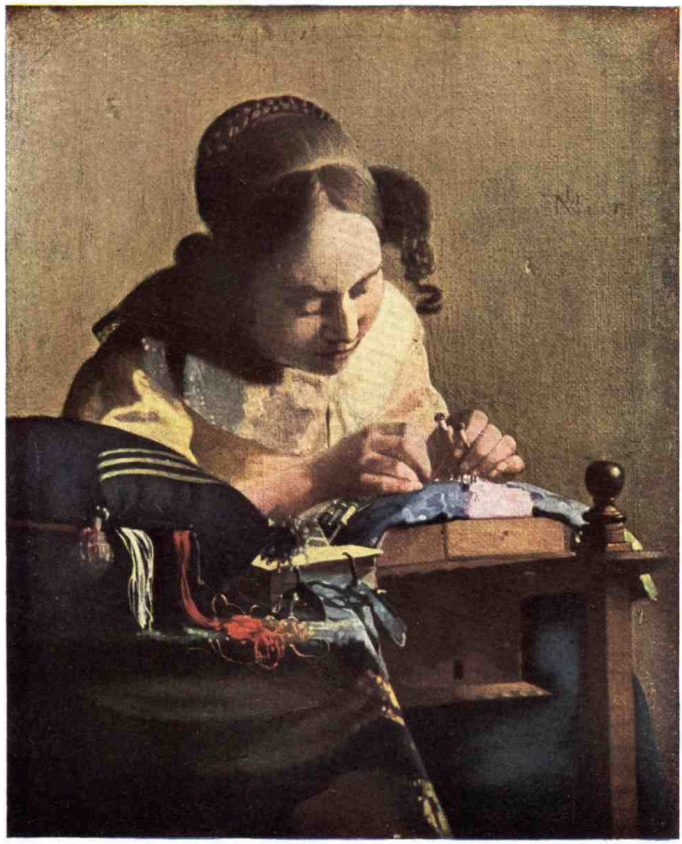
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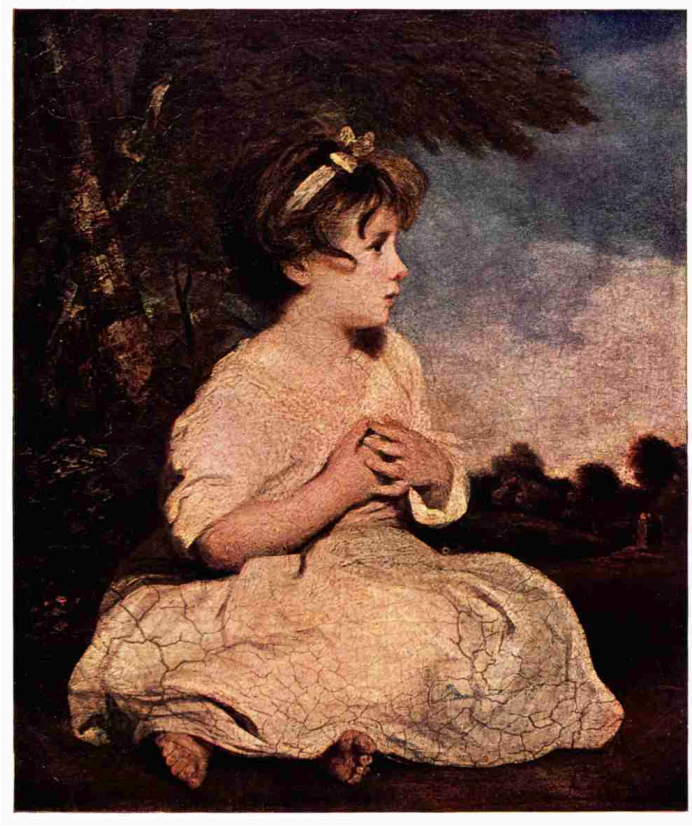
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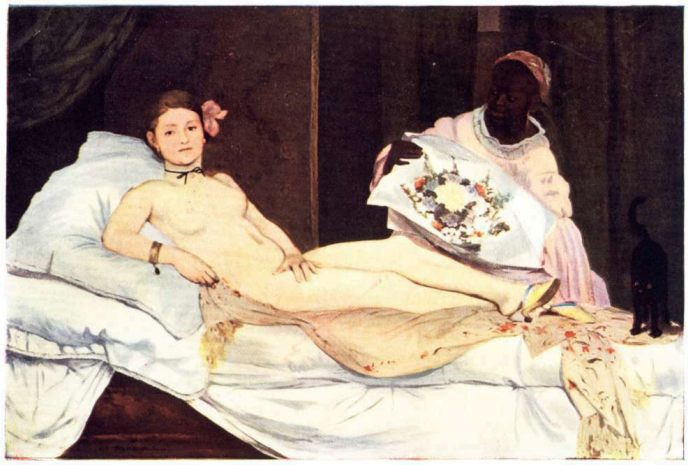
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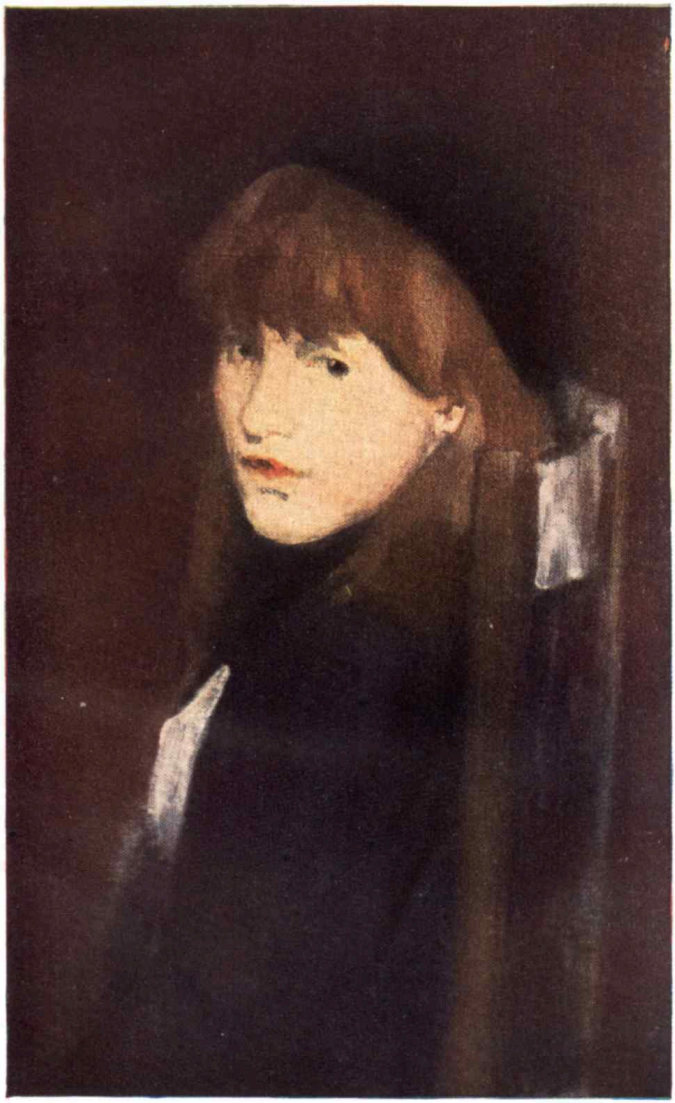
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