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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK LIVES OF THE MOST EMINENT PAINTERS
SCULPTORS AND ARCHITECTS, VOL. 04 (OF 10) ***

LIVES OF THE MOST EMINENT PAINTERS SCULPTORS & ARCHITECTS

BY

GIORGIO VASARI:

VOLUME IV.

FILIPPINO LIPPI TO DOMENICO PULIGO

1913

**NEWLY TRANSLATED BY GASTON DU C. DE VERE. WITH FIVE HUNDRED
ILLUSTRATIONS: IN TEN VOLUMES**

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1511-1574

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FILIPPO LIPPI (FILIPPINO): THE VISION OF S. BERNARD
(Florence: Church of the Badia. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

LIFE OF FILIPPO LIPPI, CALLED FILIPPINO

[Pg 3]

PAINTER OF FLORENCE

There was at this same time in Florence a painter of most beautiful intelligence and most lovely invention, namely, Filippo, son of Fra Filippo of the Carmine, who, following in the steps of his dead father in the art of painting, was brought up and instructed, being still very young, by Sandro Botticelli, notwithstanding that his father had commended him on his death-bed to Fra Diamante, who was much his friend—nay, almost his brother. Such was the intelligence of Filippo, and so abundant his invention in painting, and so bizarre and new were his ornaments, that he was the first who showed to the moderns the new method of giving variety to vestments, and embellished and adorned his figures with the girt-up garments of antiquity. He was also the first to bring to light grotesques, in imitation of the antique, and he executed them on friezes in terretta or in colours, with more design and grace than the men before him had shown; wherefore it was a marvellous thing to see the strange fancies that he expressed in painting. What is more, he never executed a single work in which he did not avail himself with great diligence of Roman antiquities, such as vases, buskins, trophies, banners, helmet-crests, adornments of temples, ornamental head-dresses, strange kinds of draperies, armour, scimitars, swords, togas, mantles, and such a variety of other beautiful things, that we owe him a very great and perpetual obligation, seeing that he added beauty and adornment to art in this respect.

In his earliest youth he completed the Chapel of the Brancacci in the Carmine at Florence, begun by Masolino, and left not wholly finished by Masaccio on account of his death. Filippo, therefore, gave it its final perfection with his own hand, and executed what was lacking in one scene, wherein S. Peter and S. Paul are restoring to life the nephew of the Emperor. In the nude figure of this boy he portrayed the painter Francesco Granacci, then a youth; and he also made portraits of the Chevalier, Messer Tommaso Soderini, Piero Guicciardini, father of Messer Francesco the historian, Piero del Pugliese, and the poet Luigi Pulci; likewise Antonio Pollaiuolo, and himself as a youth, as he then was, which he never did again throughout the whole of his life, so that it has not been possible to find a portrait of him at a more mature age. In the scene following this he portrayed Sandro Botticelli, his master, and many other friends and people of importance; among others, the broker Raggio, a man of great intelligence and wit, who executed in relief on a conch the whole Inferno of Dante, with all the circles and divisions of the pits and the nethermost well in their exact proportions, and all the figures and details that were most ingeniously imagined and described by that great poet; which conch was held in those times to be a marvellous thing.

[Pg 4]

Next, in the Chapel of Francesco del Pugliese at Campora, a seat of the Monks of the Badia,

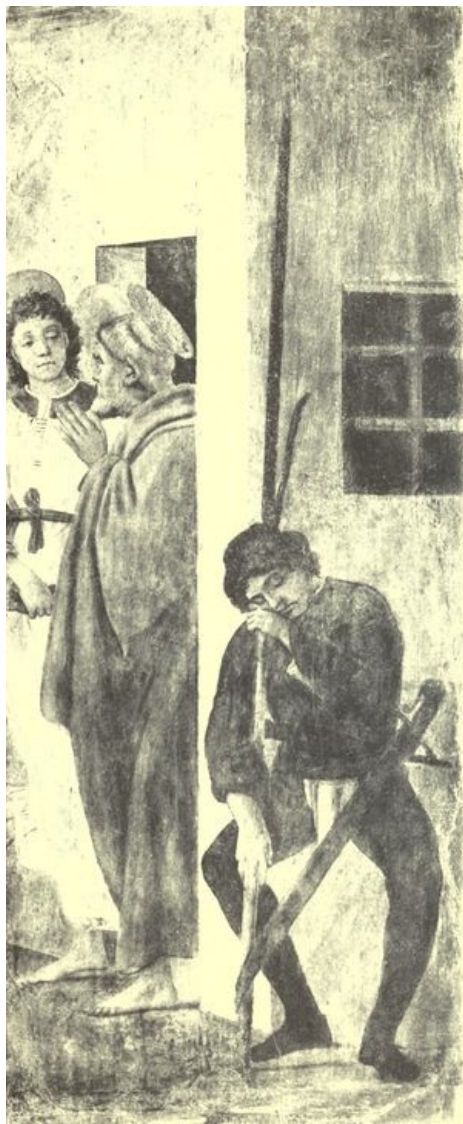
without Florence, he painted a panel in distemper of S. Bernard, to whom Our Lady is appearing with certain angels, while he is writing in a wood; which picture is held to be admirable in certain respects, such as rocks, books, herbage, and similar things, that he painted therein, besides the portrait from life of Francesco himself, so excellent that he seems to lack nothing save speech. This panel was removed from that place on account of the siege, and placed for safety in the Sacristy of the Badia of Florence. In S. Spirito in the same city, for Tanai de' Nerli, he painted a panel with Our Lady, S. Martin, S. Nicholas, and S. Catherine; with a panel in the Chapel of the Rucellai in S. Pancrazio, and a Crucifix and two figures on a ground of gold in S. Raffaello. In front of the Sacristy of S. Francesco, without the Porta a S. Miniato, he made a God the Father, with a number of children. At Palco, a seat of the Frati del Zoccolo, without Prato, he painted a panel; and in the Audience Chamber of the Priori in that territory he executed a little panel containing the Madonna, S. Stephen, and S. John the Baptist, which has been much extolled. On the Canto al Mercatale, also in Prato, in a shrine opposite to the Nuns of S. Margherita, and near some houses belonging to them, he painted in fresco a very beautiful Madonna, with a choir of seraphim, on a ground of dazzling light. In this work, among other things, he showed art and beautiful judgment in a dragon that is at the feet of S. Margaret, which is so strange and horrible, that it is revealed to us as a true fount of venom, fire, and death; and the whole of the rest of the work is so fresh and vivacious in colouring, that it deserves infinite praise.

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He also wrought certain things in Lucca, particularly a panel in a chapel of the Church of S. Ponziano, which belongs to the Monks of Monte Oliveto; in the centre of which chapel there is a niche containing a very beautiful S. Anthony in relief by the hand of Andrea Sansovino, a most excellent sculptor. Being invited to go to Hungary by King Matthias, Filippo refused, but made up for this by painting two very beautiful panels for that King in Florence, and sending them to him; and in one of these he made a portrait of the King, taken from his likeness on medals. He also sent certain works to Genoa; and beside the Chapel of the High-Altar in S. Domenico at Bologna, on the left hand, he painted a S. Sebastian on a panel, which was a thing worthy of much praise. For Tanai de' Nerli he executed another panel in S. Salvatore, without Florence; and for his friend Piero del Pugliese he painted a scene with little figures, executed with so much art and diligence that when another citizen besought him to make a second like it, he refused, saying that it was not possible to do it.

After these things he executed a very great work in Rome for the Neapolitan Cardinal, Olivieri Caraffa, at the request of the elder Lorenzo de' Medici, who was a friend of that Cardinal. While going thither for that purpose, he passed through Spoleto at the wish of Lorenzo, in order to give directions for the making of a marble tomb for his father Fra Filippo at the expense of Lorenzo, who had not been able to obtain his body from the people of Spoleto for removal to Florence. Filippo, therefore, made a beautiful design for the said tomb, and Lorenzo had it erected after that design (as has been told in another place), sumptuous and beautiful. Afterwards, having arrived in Rome, Filippo painted a chapel in the Church of the Minerva for the said Cardinal Caraffa, depicting therein scenes from the life of S. Thomas Aquinas, and certain most beautiful poetical compositions ingeniously imagined by himself, for he had a nature ever inclined to this. In the scene, then, wherein Faith has taken Infidelity captive, there are all the heretics and infidels. Hope has likewise overcome Despair, and so, too, there are many other Virtues that have subjugated the Vice that is their opposite. In a disputation is S. Thomas defending the Church "ex cathedra" against a school of heretics, and holding vanquished beneath him Sabellius, Arius, Averroes, and others, all clothed in graceful garments; of which scene we have in our book of drawings the original design by Filippo's own hand, with certain others by the same man, wrought with such mastery that they could not be bettered. There, too, is the scene when, as S. Thomas is praying, the Crucifix says to him, "Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma"; while a companion of the Saint, hearing that Crucifix thus speaking, is standing amazed and almost beside himself. In the panel is the Virgin receiving the Annunciation from Gabriel; and on the main wall there is her Assumption into Heaven, with the twelve Apostles round the sepulchre. The whole of this work was held, as it still is, to be very excellent and wrought perfectly for a work in fresco. It contains a portrait from life of the said Cardinal Olivieri Caraffa, Bishop of Ostia, who was buried in this chapel in the year 1511, and afterwards removed to the Piscopio in Naples.

[Pg 6]



THE LIBERATION OF S. PETER
(After the fresco by Filippo Lippi (Filippino).
Florence: S. Maria del Carmine)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

Having returned to Florence, Filippo undertook to paint at his leisure the Chapel of the elder Filippo Strozzi in S. Maria Novella, and he actually began it; but, having finished the ceiling, he was compelled to return to Rome, where he wrought a tomb with stucco-work for the said Cardinal, and decorated with gesso a little chapel beside that tomb in a part of the same Church of the Minerva, together with certain figures, some of which were executed by his disciple, Raffaellino del Garbo. The chapel described above was valued by Maestro Lanzilago of Padua and by the Roman Antonio, known as Antoniasso, two of the best painters that were then in Rome, at 2,000 ducats of gold, without the cost of the blues and of the assistants. Having received this sum, Filippo returned to Florence, where he finished the aforesaid Chapel of the Strozzi, which was executed so well, and with so much art and design, that it causes all who see it to marvel, by reason of the novelty and variety of the bizarre things that are seen therein—armed men, temples, vases, helmet-crests, armour, trophies, spears, banners, garments, buskins, head-dresses, sacerdotal vestments, and other things—all executed in so beautiful a manner that they deserve the highest commendation. In this work there is the scene of Drusiana being restored to life by S. John the Evangelist, wherein we see most admirably expressed the marvel of the bystanders at beholding a man restore life to a dead woman by a mere sign of the cross; and the greatest amazement of all is seen in a priest, or rather philosopher, whichever he may be, who is clothed in ancient fashion and has a vase in his hand. In the same scene, likewise, among a number of women draped in various manners, there is a little boy, who, terrified by a small spaniel spotted with red, which has seized him with its teeth by one of his swathing-bands, is running round his mother and hiding himself among her clothes, and appears to be as much afraid of being bitten by the dog as his mother is awestruck and filled with a certain horror at the resurrection of Drusiana. Next to this, in the scene where S. John himself is being boiled in oil, we see the wrath of the judge, who is giving orders for the fire to be increased, and the flames reflected on the face of the man who is blowing at them; and all the figures are painted in beautiful and varied attitudes. On the other side is S. Philip in the Temple of Mars, compelling the serpent, which has slain the son of the King with its stench, to come forth from below the altar. In certain steps the painter depicted the hole through which the serpent issued from beneath the altar, and so well did he paint the cleft in one of the steps, that one evening one of Filippo's lads, wishing to hide something, I know not what, from the sight of someone who was

knocking for admittance, ran up in haste in order to conceal it in the hole, being wholly deceived by it. Filippo also showed so much art in the serpent, that its venom, fetid breath, and fire, appear rather real than painted. Greatly extolled, too, is his invention in the scene of the Crucifixion of that Saint, for he imagined to himself, so it appears, that the Saint was stretched on the cross while it lay on the ground, and that afterwards the whole was drawn up and raised on high by means of ropes, cords, and poles; which ropes and cords are wound round certain fragments of antiquities, pieces of pillars, and bases, and pulled by certain ministers. On the other side the weight of the said cross and of the Saint who is stretched nude thereon is supported by two men, on the one hand by a man with a ladder, with which he is propping it up, and on the other hand by another with a pole, upholding it, while two others, setting a lever against the base and stem of the cross, are balancing its weight and seeking to place it in the hole made in the ground, wherein it had to stand upright. But why say more? It would not be possible for the work to be better either in invention or in drawing, or in any other respect whatsoever of industry or art. Besides this, it contains many grotesques and other things wrought in chiaroscuro to resemble marble, executed in strange fashion with invention and most beautiful drawing.

[Pg 8]



S. JOHN THE EVANGELIST RAISING DRUSIANA FROM THE DEAD
(After the fresco by Filippo Lippi [Filippino].
Florence: S. Maria Novella, Strozzi Chapel)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

For the Frati Scopetini, also, at S. Donato, without Florence, which is called Scopeto and is now in ruins, he painted a panel with the Magi presenting their offerings to Christ, finished with great diligence, wherein he portrayed the elder Pier Francesco de' Medici, son of Lorenzo di Bicci, in the figure of an astrologer who is holding a quadrant in his hand, and likewise Giovanni, father of Signor Giovanni de' Medici, and another Pier Francesco, brother of that Signor Giovanni, and other people of distinction. In this work are Moors, Indians, costumes of strange shapes, and a most bizarre hut. In a loggia at Poggio a Cajano he began a Sacrifice in fresco for Lorenzo de' Medici, but it remained unfinished. And for the Nunnery of S. Geronimo, above the Costa di S. Giorgio in Florence, he began the panel of the high-altar, which was brought nearly to completion after his death by the Spaniard Alonzo Berughetta, but afterwards wholly finished by other painters, Alonzo having gone to Spain. In the Palazzo della Signoria he painted the panel of the hall where the Council of Eight held their sittings, and he made the design for another large panel, with its ornament, for the Sala del Consiglio; which design his death prevented him from beginning to put into execution, although the ornament was carved; which ornament is now in the possession of Maestro Baccio Baldini, a most excellent physician of Florence, and a lover of every sort of talent. For the Church of the Badia of Florence he made a very beautiful S. Jerome; and he began a Deposition from the Cross for the high-altar of the Friars of the Nunziata, but only finished the figures in the upper half of the picture, for, being overcome by a most cruel fever and by that contraction of the throat that is commonly known as quinsy, he died in a few days at the age of forty-five.

[Pg 9]

Thereupon, having ever been courteous, affable, and kindly, he was lamented by all those who had known him, and particularly by the youth of his noble native city, who, in their public festivals, masques, and other spectacles, ever availed themselves, to their great satisfaction, of the ingenuity and invention of Filippo, who has never had an equal in things of that kind. Nay, he was so excellent in all his actions, that he blotted out the stain (if stain it was) left to him by his father—blotted it out, I say, not only by the excellence of his art, wherein he was inferior to no man of his time, but also by the modesty and regularity of his life, and, above all, by his courtesy and amiability; and how great are the force and power of such qualities to conciliate the minds of all men without exception, is only known to those who either have experienced or are experiencing it. Filippo was buried by his sons in S. Michele Bisdomini, on April 13, 1505; and while he was being borne to his tomb all the shops in the Via de' Servi were closed, as is done

sometimes for the obsequies of great men.

Among the disciples of Filippo, who all failed by a great measure to equal him, was Raffaellino del Garbo, who made many works, as will be told in the proper place, although he did not justify the opinions and hopes that were conceived of him while Filippo was alive and Raffaellino himself still a young man. The fruits, indeed, are not always equal to the blossoms that are seen in the spring. Nor did any great success come to Niccolò Zoccolo, otherwise known as Niccolò Cartoni, who was likewise a disciple of Filippo, and painted at Arezzo the wall that is over the altar of S. Giovanni Decollato; a little panel, passing well done, in S. Agnesa; a panel over a lavatory in the Abbey of S. Fiora, containing a Christ who is asking for water from the woman of Samaria; and many other works, which, since they were commonplace, are not mentioned.

[Pg 10]



THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI
(After the panel by Filippo Lippi (Filippino).
Florence: Uffizi, 1257)

Alinari

[View larger image](#)

BERNARDINO PINTURICCHIO

[Pg 11]

LIFE OF BERNARDINO PINTURICCHIO

[Pg 13]

PAINTER OF PERUGIA

Even as many are assisted by fortune without being endowed with much talent, so, on the contrary, there is an infinite number of able men who are persecuted by an adverse and hostile fortune; whence it is clearly manifest that she acknowledges as her children those who depend upon her without the aid of any talent, since it pleases her to exalt by her favour certain men who would never be known through their own merit; which is seen in Pinturicchio of Perugia, who, although he made many works and was assisted by various helpers, nevertheless had a much greater name than his works deserved. However, he was a man who had much practice in large works, and ever kept many assistants to aid him in his labours. Now, having worked at many things in his early youth under his master Pietro da Perugia,^[1] receiving a third of all that was earned, he was summoned to Siena by Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini to paint the library made by Pope Pius II in the Duomo of that city. It is true, indeed, that the sketches and cartoons for all the scenes that he painted there were by the hand of Raffaello da Urbino, then a youth, who had been his companion and fellow-disciple under the same Pietro, whose manner the said Raffaello had mastered very well. One of these cartoons is still to be seen at the present day in Siena, and some of the sketches, by the hand of Raffaello, are in our book.



**BERNARDINO PINTURICCHIO: THE MADONNA IN GLORY
(*San Gimignano. Panel*)**

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Now the stories in this work, wherein Pinturicchio was aided by many pupils and assistants, all of the school of Pietro, were divided into ten pictures. In the first is painted the scene when the said Pope Pius II was born to Silvio Piccolomini and Vittoria, and was called Æneas, in the year 1405, in Valdorcia, at the township of Corsignano, which is now called Pienza after the name of that Pope, who afterwards enriched it with buildings and made it a city; and in this picture are portraits from nature of the said Silvio and Vittoria. In the same is the scene when, in company with Cardinal Domenico of Capranica, he is crossing the Alps, which are covered with ice and snow, on his way to the Council of Bâle. In the second the Council is sending Æneas on many embassies—namely, to Argentina (three times), to Trent, to Constance, to Frankfurt, and to Savoy. In the third is the sending of the same Æneas by the Antipope Felix as ambassador to the Emperor Frederick III, with whom the ready intelligence, the eloquence, and the grace of Æneas found so much favour that he was given the poet's crown of laurel by Frederick himself, who made him his Protonotary, received him into the number of his friends, and appointed him his First Secretary. In the fourth he is sent by Frederick to Eugenius IV, by whom he was made Bishop of Trieste, and then Archbishop of Siena, his native city. In the fifth scene the same Emperor, who is about to come to Italy to receive the crown of Empire, is sending Æneas to Telamone, a port of the people of Siena, to meet his wife, Leonora, who was coming from Portugal. In the sixth Æneas is going to Calistus IV,^[2] at the bidding of the said Emperor, to induce him to make war against the Turks; and in this part, Siena being harassed by the Count of Pittigliano and by others at the instigation of King Alfonso of Naples, that Pontiff is sending him to treat for peace. This effected, war is planned against the Orientals; and he, having returned to Rome, is made a Cardinal by the said Pontiff. In the seventh, Calistus being dead, Æneas is seen being created Supreme Pontiff, and called Pius II. In the eighth the Pope goes to Mantua for the Council about the expedition against the Turks, where the Marquis Lodovico receives him with most splendid pomp and incredible magnificence. In the ninth the same Pope is placing in the catalogue of saints—or, as the saying is, canonizing—Catherine of Siena, a holy woman and nun of the Preaching Order. In the tenth and last, while preparing a vast expedition against the Turks with the help and favour of all the Christian Princes, Pope Pius dies at Ancona; and a hermit of the Hermitage of Camaldoli, a holy man, sees the soul of the said Pontiff being borne by Angels into Heaven at the very moment of his death, as may also be read. Afterwards, in the same picture, the body of the same Pope is seen being borne from Ancona to Rome by a vast and honourable company of lords and prelates, who are lamenting the death of so great a man and so rare and holy a Pontiff. The whole of this work is full of portraits from the life, so numerous that it would be a long story to recount their names; and it is all painted with the finest and most lively colours, and wrought with various ornaments of gold, and with very well designed partitions in the ceiling. Below each scene is a Latin inscription, which describes what is contained therein. In the centre of this library the said Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini, nephew of the Pope, placed the three Graces of marble, ancient and most beautiful, which are still there, and which were the first antiquities to be held in price in those times. This library, wherein are all the books left by the said Pius II, was scarcely finished, when the same Cardinal Francesco,

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nephew of the aforesaid Pontiff, Pius II, was created Pope, choosing the name of Pius III in memory of his uncle. Over the door of that library, which opens into the Duomo, the same Pinturicchio painted in a very large scene, occupying the whole extent of the wall, the Coronation of the said Pope Pius III, with many portraits from life; and beneath it may be read these words:

PIUS III SENENSIS, PII SECUNDI NEPOS, MDIII, SEPTEMBRIS XXI,
APERTIS ELECTUS SUFFRAGIIS, OCTAVO OCTOBRIS CORONATUS EST.

When Pinturicchio was working with Pietro Perugino and painting at Rome in the time of Pope Sixtus, he had also been in the service of Domenico della Rovere, Cardinal of San Clemente; wherefore the said Cardinal, having built a very beautiful palace in the Borgo Vecchio, charged Pinturicchio to paint the whole of it, and to make on the façade the coat of arms of Pope Sixtus, with two little boys as supporters. The same master executed certain works for Sciarra Colonna in the Palace of S. Apostolo; and no long time after—namely, in the year 1484—Innocent VIII, the Genoese, caused him to paint certain halls and loggie in the Palace of the Belvedere, where, among other things, by order of that Pope, he painted a loggia full of landscapes, depicting therein Rome, Milan, Genoa, Florence, Venice, and Naples, after the manner of the Flemings; and this, being a thing not customary at that time, gave no little satisfaction. In the same place, over the principal door of entrance, he painted a Madonna in fresco. In S. Pietro, in the chapel that contains the Lance which pierced the side of Christ, he painted a panel in distemper, with the Madonna larger than life, for the said Innocent VIII; and he painted two chapels in the Church of S. Maria del Popolo, one for the aforesaid Domenico della Rovere, Cardinal of San Clemente, who was afterwards buried therein, and the other for Cardinal Innocenzio Cibo, wherein he also was afterwards buried; and in each of these chapels he portrayed the Cardinal who had caused him to paint it. In the Palace of the Pope he painted certain rooms that look out upon the courtyard of S. Pietro, the ceilings and paintings of which were renovated a few years ago by Pope Pius IV. In the same palace Alexander VI caused Pinturicchio to paint all the rooms that he occupied, together with the whole of the Borgia Tower, wherein he wrought stories of the liberal arts in one room, besides decorating all the ceilings with stucco and gold; but, since they did not then know the method of stucco-work that is now in use, the aforesaid ornaments are for the most part ruined. Over the door of an apartment in the said palace he portrayed the Signora Giulia Farnese in the countenance of a Madonna, and, in the same picture, the head of Pope Alexander in a figure that is adoring her.

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Bernardino was much given to making gilt ornaments in relief for his pictures, to satisfy people who had little understanding of his art with the more showy lustre that this gave them, which is a most barbarous thing in painting. Having then executed a story of S. Catherine in the said apartments, he depicted the arches of Rome in relief and the figures in painting, insomuch that, the figures being in the foreground and the buildings in the background, the things that should recede stand out more prominently than those that should strike the eye as the larger—a very grave heresy in our art.



FREDERICK III CROWNING THE POET ÆNEAS SYLVIUS
(After the fresco by Bernardino Pinturicchio.
Siena: Sala Piccolominea)
Brogi

In the Castello di S. Angelo he painted a vast number of rooms with grotesques; and in the Great Tower, in the garden below, he painted stories of Pope Alexander, with portraits of the Catholic Queen, Isabella; Niccolò Orsino, Count of Pittigliano; Gianjacomo Trivulzi, and many other relatives and friends of the said Pope, in particular Cæsar Borgia and his brother and sisters, with many talented men of those times. At Monte Oliveto in Naples, in the Chapel of Paolo Tolosa, there is a panel with an Assumption by the hand of Pinturicchio. This master made an infinite number of other works throughout all Italy, which, since they are of no great excellence, and wrought in a superficial manner, I will pass over in silence. Pinturicchio used to say that a painter could only give the greatest relief to his figures when he had it in himself, without owing anything to principles or to others. He also made works in Perugia, but these were few. In the Araceli he painted the Chapel of S. Bernardino; and in S. Maria del Popolo, where, as we have said, he painted the two chapels, he made the four Doctors of the Church on the vaulting of the principal chapel.



POPE ALEXANDER VI ADORING THE RISEN CHRIST
*(After the fresco by Bernardino Pinturicchio.
Rome: The Vatican, Borgia Apartments)*
Anderson

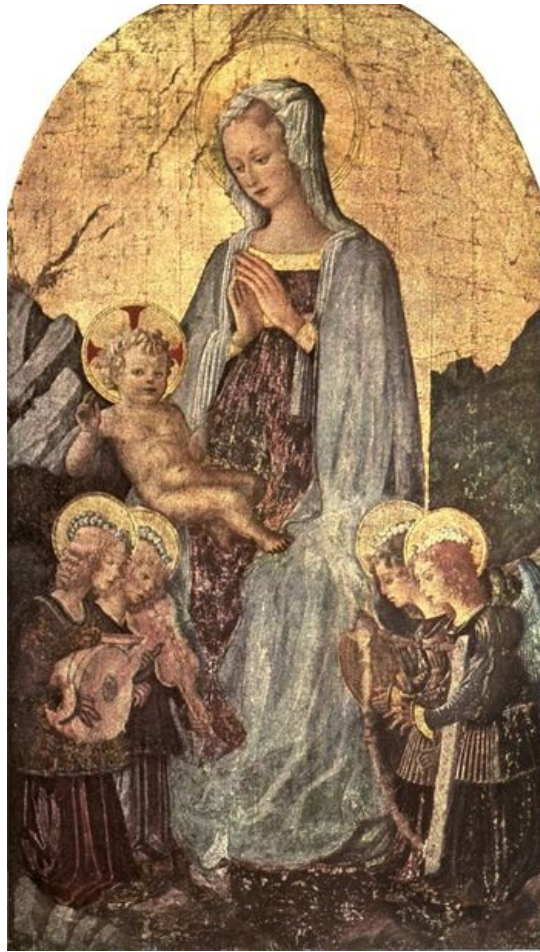
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Afterwards, having reached the age of fifty-nine, he was commissioned to paint the Nativity of Our Lady on a panel in S. Francesco at Siena. To this he set his hand, and the friars assigned to him a room to live in, which they gave to him, as he wished, empty and stripped of everything, save only a huge old chest, which appeared to them too awkward to remove. But Pinturicchio, like the strange and whimsical man that he was, made such an outcry at this, and repeated it so often, that finally in despair the friars set themselves to carry it away. Now their good fortune was such, that in removing it there was broken a plank which contained 500 Roman ducats of gold; at which Pinturicchio was so displeased, and felt so aggrieved at the good luck of those poor friars, that it can hardly be imagined—nay, he took it so much to heart, being unable to get it out of his thoughts, that it was the death of him. His pictures date about the year 1513.

A companion and friend of Pinturicchio, although he was a much older man, was Benedetto Buonfiglio, a painter of Perugia, who executed many works in company with other masters in the Papal Palace at Rome. In the Chapel of the Signoria in Perugia, his native city, he painted scenes from the life of S. Ercolano, Bishop and Protector of that city, and in the same place certain miracles wrought by S. Louis. In S. Domenico he painted the story of the Magi on a panel in distemper, and many saints on another. In the Church of S. Bernardino he painted a Christ in the sky, with S. Bernardino himself, and a multitude below. In short, this master was in no little repute in his native city before Pietro Perugino had come to be known.

Another friend of Pinturicchio, associated with him in not a few of his works, was Gerino Pistoiese, who was held to be a diligent colourist and a faithful imitator of the manner of Pietro Perugino, with whom he worked nearly up to his death. He did little work in his native city of Pistoia; but for the Company of the Buon Gesù in Borgo San Sepolcro he painted a Circumcision in oil on a panel, which is passing good. In the Pieve of the same place he painted a chapel in fresco; and on the bank of the Tiber, on the road that leads to Anghiari, he painted another

chapel, also in fresco, for the Commune. And he painted still another chapel in the same place, in S. Lorenzo, an abbey of the Monks of Camaldoli. By reason of all these works he made so long a stay in the Borgo that he almost adopted it as his home. He was a sorry fellow in matters of art, labouring with the greatest difficulty, and toiling with such pains at the execution of a work, that it was a torture to him.



BENEDETTO BUONFIGLIO: MADONNA, CHILD AND THREE ANGELS
(Perugia: Pinacoteca. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

At this same time there was a painter in the city of Foligno, Niccolò Alunno, who was held to be excellent, for it was little the custom before Pietro Perugino's day to paint in oil, and many were held to be able men who did not afterwards justify this opinion. Niccolò therefore gave no little satisfaction with his works, since, although he only painted in distemper, he portrayed the heads of his figures from life, so that they appeared alive, and his manner won considerable praise. In S. Agostino at Foligno there is a panel by his hand with a Nativity of Christ, and a predella with little figures. At Assisi he painted a banner that is borne in processions, besides the panel of the high-altar in the Duomo, and another panel in S. Francesco. But the best painting that Niccolò ever did was in a chapel in the Duomo, where, among other things, there is a Pietà, with two angels who are holding two torches and weeping so naturally, that I do not believe that any other painter, however excellent, would have been able to do much better. In the same place he also painted the façade of S. Maria degli Angeli, besides many other works of which there is no need to make mention, it being enough to have touched on the best. And let this be the end of the Life of Pinturicchio, who, besides his other qualities, gave no little satisfaction to many princes and lords because he finished and delivered his works quickly, which is their pleasure, although such works are perchance less excellent than those that are made slowly and deliberately.

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MEDALS
(London: British Museum)

1. ULISSE MUSOTTI

3. FRANCESCO ALIDOSI

2. GIOVANNI II BENTIVOGLIO

4. BERNARDO ROSSI

(After Francesco Francia)

(After a pupil of Francesco Francia)

[View larger image](#)

LIFE OF FRANCESCO FRANCA

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GOLDSMITH AND PAINTER OF BOLOGNA

Francesco Francia, who was born in Bologna in the year 1450, of parents who were artisans, but honest and worthy enough, was apprenticed in his earliest boyhood to the goldsmith's art, in which calling he worked with intelligence and spirit; and as he grew up he became so well proportioned in person and appearance, and so sweet and pleasant in manner and speech, that he was able to keep the most melancholy of men cheerful and free from care with his talk; for which reason he was beloved not only by all those who knew him, but also by many Italian princes and other lords. While working as a goldsmith, then, he gave attention to design, in which he took so much pleasure, that his mind began to aspire to higher things, and he made very great progress therein, as may be seen from many works in silver that he executed in his native city of Bologna, and particularly from certain most excellent works in niello. In this manner of work he often put twenty most beautiful and well-proportioned little figures within a space no higher than the breadth of two fingers and not much more in length. He also enamelled many works in silver, which were destroyed at the time of the ruin and exile of the Bentivogli. In a word, he did everything that can be done in that art better than any other man.

But that in which he delighted above all, and in which he was truly excellent, was the making of dies for medals, wherein he was the rarest master of his day, as may be seen in some that he made with a most lifelike head of Pope Julius II, which bear comparison with those of Caradosso; not to mention that he made medals of Signor Giovanni Bentivogli, in which he appears alive, and of an infinite number of princes, who would stop in Bologna on their way through the city, whereupon he would make their portraits in wax for medals, and afterwards, having finished the matrices of the dies, he would send them; for which, besides immortal fame, he also received very rich presents. As long as he lived he was ever Master of the Mint in Bologna, for which he made the stamps of all the dies, both under the rule of the Bentivogli and also during the lifetime of Pope Julius, after their departure, as is proved by the coins struck by that Pope on his entrance into the city, which had on one side his head portrayed from life, and on the other these words: BONONIA PER JULIUM A TYRANNO LIBERATA. So excellent was he held in this profession, that he continued to make the dies for the coinage down to the time of Pope Leo; and the impressions of his dies are so greatly prized, and those who have some hold them in such esteem, that money cannot buy them.

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MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH SAINTS
(After the panel by Francesco Francia.
Bologna: S. Giacomo Maggiore, Bentivoglio Chapel
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

Now it came to pass that Francia, being desirous of greater glory, and having known Andrea Mantegna and many other painters who had gained wealth and honours by their art, determined to try whether he could succeed in that part of painting which had to do with colour; his drawing was already such that it could well bear comparison with theirs. Thereupon, having made arrangements to try his hand, he painted certain portraits and some little things, keeping in his house for many months men of that profession to teach him the means and methods of colouring, insomuch that, having very good judgment, he soon acquired the needful practice. The first work that he made was a panel of no great size for Messer Bartolommeo^[3] Felicini, who placed it in the Misericordia, a church without Bologna; in which panel there is a Madonna seated on a throne, with many other figures, and the said Messer Bartolommeo portrayed from life. This work, which was wrought in oil with the greatest diligence, was painted by him in the year 1490; and it gave such satisfaction in Bologna, that Messer Giovanni Bentivogli, desiring to honour his own chapel, which was in S. Jacopo in that city, with works by this new painter, commissioned him to paint a panel with the Madonna in the sky, two figures on either side of her, and two angels below sounding instruments; which work was so well executed by Francia, that he won from Messer Giovanni, besides praise, a most honourable present. Wherefore Monsignore de' Bentivogli, impressed by this work, caused him to paint a panel containing the Nativity of Christ, which was much extolled, for the high-altar of the Misericordia; wherein, besides the design, which is not otherwise than beautiful, the invention and the colouring are worthy of nothing but praise. In this work he made a portrait of Monsignore de' Bentivogli from the life (a very good likeness, so it is said by those who knew him), clothed in that very pilgrim's dress in which he returned from Jerusalem. He also painted a panel in the Church of the Nunziata, without the Porta di S. Mammolo, representing the Madonna receiving the Annunciation from the Angel, with two figures on either side, which is held to be a very well executed work.

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Now that Francia's works had spread his fame abroad, even as his painting in oil had brought him both profit and repute, so he determined to try whether he would succeed as well at working in fresco. Messer Giovanni Bentivogli had caused his palace to be painted by diverse masters of Ferrara and Bologna, and by certain others from Modena; but, having seen Francia's experiments in fresco, he determined that this master should paint a scene on one wall of an apartment that he occupied for his own use. There Francia painted the camp of Holofernes, guarded by various sentinels both on foot and on horseback, who were keeping watch over the pavilions; and the while that they were intent on something else, the sleeping Holofernes was seen surprised by a woman clothed in widow's garments, who, with her left hand, was holding his hair, which was wet with the heat of wine and sleep, and with her right hand she was striking the blow to slay her enemy, the while that an old wrinkled handmaid, with the true air of a most faithful slave, and with her eyes fixed on those of her Judith in order to encourage her, was bending down and holding a basket near the ground, to receive therein the head of the slumbering lover. This scene was one of the most beautiful and most masterly that Francia ever painted, but it was thrown to the ground in the destruction of that edifice at the time of the expulsion of the Bentivogli, together with another scene over that same apartment, coloured to look like bronze, and representing a disputation of philosophers, which was excellently wrought, with his conception very well expressed. These works brought it about that he was loved and honoured by Messer Giovanni and all the members of his house, and, after them, by all the city.

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In the Chapel of S. Cecilia, which is attached to the Church of S. Jacopo, he painted two scenes wrought in fresco, in one of which he made the Marriage of Our Lady with Joseph, and in the other the Death of S. Cecilia—a work held in great esteem by the people of Bologna. And, indeed, Francia gained such mastery and such confidence from seeing his works advancing towards the perfection that he desired, that he executed many pictures, of which I will make no mention, it being enough for me to point out, to all who may wish to see his works, only the best and most notable. Nor did his painting hinder him from carrying on both the Mint and his other work of making medals, as he had done from the beginning. Francia, so it is said, felt the greatest sorrow at the departure of Messer Giovanni Bentivogli, for he had received such great benefits from Messer Giovanni, that it caused him infinite grief; however, like the prudent and orderly man that he was, he kept at his work. After his parting from his patron, he painted three panels that went to Modena, in one of which there was the Baptism of Christ by S. John; in the second, a very beautiful Annunciation; and in the last, which was placed in the Church of the Frati dell' Osservanza, a Madonna in the sky with many figures.



FRANCESCO FRANZIA: PIETÀ
(London: National Gallery, 180. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

The fame of so excellent a master being spread abroad by means of so many works, the cities contended with one another to obtain his pictures. Whereupon he painted a panel for the Black Friars of S. Giovanni in Parma, containing a Dead Christ in the lap of Our Lady, surrounded by many figures; which panel was universally held to be a most beautiful work; and the same friars, therefore, thinking that they had been well served, induced him to make another for a house of theirs at Reggio in Lombardy, wherein he painted a Madonna with many figures. At Cesena, likewise for the church of these friars, he executed another panel, painting therein the Circumcision of Christ, with lovely colouring. Nor would the people of Ferrara consent to be left behind by their neighbours; nay, having determined to adorn their Duomo with works by Francia, they commissioned him to paint a panel, on which he made a great number of figures; and they named it the panel of Ognissanti. He painted one in S. Lorenzo at Bologna, with a Madonna, a figure on either side, and two children below, which was much extolled; and scarcely had he finished this when he had to make another in S. Giobbe, representing a Crucifixion, with that Saint kneeling at the foot of the Cross, and two figures at the sides.

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So widely had the fame and the works of this craftsman spread throughout Lombardy, that even from Tuscany men sent for something by his hand, as they did from Lucca, whither there went a panel containing a S. Anne and a Madonna, with many other figures, and a Dead Christ above in the lap of His Mother; which work is set up in the Church of S. Fridiano, and is held in great price by the people of Lucca. For the Church of the Nunziata in Bologna he painted two other panels, which were wrought with much diligence; and in the Misericordia, likewise, without the Porta a Strà Castione, at the request of a lady of the Manzuoli family, he painted another, wherein he depicted the Madonna with the Child in her arms, S. George, S. John the Baptist, S. Stephen, and S. Augustine, with an angel below, who has his hands clasped with such grace, that he appears truly to belong to Paradise. He executed another for the Company of S. Francesco in the same city, and likewise one for the Company of S. Gieronimo. He lived in close intimacy with Messer Polo Zambeccaro, who, being much his friend, and wishing to have some memorial of him, caused him to paint a rather large picture of the Nativity of Christ, which is one of the most celebrated works that he ever made; and for this reason Messer Polo commissioned him to paint at his villa two figures in fresco, which are very beautiful. He also executed a most charming scene in fresco in the house of Messer Gieronimo Bolognino, with many varied and very beautiful figures.

All these works together had won him such veneration in that city, that he was held in the light of a god; and what made this infinitely greater was that the Duke of Urbino caused him to paint a set of horse's caparisons, in which he made a vast forest of trees that had caught fire, from which there were issuing great numbers of all sorts of animals, both of the air and of the earth, and certain figures—a terrible, awful, and truly beautiful thing, which was held in no little esteem by reason of the time spent in painting the plumage of the birds, and the various sorts of terrestrial animals, to say nothing of the diversity of foliage and the variety of branches that were seen in the different trees. For this work Francia was rewarded with gifts of great value as a recompense

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for his labours, not to mention that the Duke ever held himself indebted to him for the praises that he received for it. Duke Guido Baldo, also, has in his guardaroba a picture of the Roman Lucretia, which he esteems very highly, by the same man's hand, together with many other pictures, of which mention will be made when the time comes.

After these things he painted a panel for the altar of the Madonna in SS. Vitale e Agricola; in which panel are two very beautiful angels, who are playing on the lute. I will not enumerate the pictures that are scattered throughout Bologna in the houses of gentlemen of that city, and still less the infinite number of portraits that he made from life, for it would be too wearisome. Let it be enough to say that while he was living in such glory and enjoying the fruits of his labours in peace, Raffaello da Urbino was in Rome, and all day long there flocked round him many strangers, among them many gentlemen of Bologna, eager to see his works. And since it generally comes to pass that every man extols most willingly the intellects of his native place, these Bolognese began to praise the works, the life, and the talents of Francia in the presence of Raffaello, and they established such a friendship between them with these words, that Francia and Raffaello sent letters of greeting to each other. And Francia, hearing such great praise spoken of the divine pictures of Raffaello, desired to see his works; but he was now old, and too fond of his comfortable life in Bologna. Now after this it came about that Raffaello painted in Rome for Cardinal Santi Quattro, of the Pucci family, a panel-picture of S. Cecilia, which had to be sent to Bologna to be placed in a chapel of S. Giovanni in Monte, where there is the tomb of the Blessed Elena dall' Olio. This he packed up and addressed to Francia, who, as his friend, was to have it placed on the altar of that chapel, with the ornament, just as he had prepared it himself. Right readily did Francia accept this charge, which gave him a chance of seeing a work by Raffaello, as he had so much desired. And having opened the letter that Raffaello had written to him, in which he besought Francia, if there were any scratch in the work, to put it right, and likewise, as a friend, to correct any error that he might notice, with the greatest joy he had the said panel taken from its case into a good light. But such was the amazement that it caused him, and so great his marvel, that, recognizing his own error and the foolish presumption of his own rash confidence, he took it greatly to heart, and in a very short time died of grief.

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Raffaello's panel was divine, not so much painted as alive, and so well wrought and coloured by him, that among all the beautiful pictures that he painted while he lived, although they are all miraculous, it could well be called most rare. Wherefore Francia, half dead with terror at the beauty of the picture, which lay before his eyes challenging comparison with those by his own hand that he saw around him, felt all confounded, and had it placed with great diligence in that chapel of S. Giovanni in Monte for which it was destined; and taking to his bed in a few days almost beside himself, thinking that he was now almost of no account in his art in comparison with the opinion held both by himself and by others, he died of grief and melancholy, so some believe, overtaken by the same fate, through contemplating too attentively that most lifelike picture of Raffaello's, as befell Fivizzano from feasting his eyes with his own beautiful Death, about which the following epigram was written:

Me veram pictor divinus mente recepit;
Admota est operi deinde perita manus.
Dumque opere in facto defigit lumina pictor,
Intentus nimium, palluit et moritur.
Viva igitur sum mors, non mortua mortis imago,
Si fungor quo mors fungitur officio.

However, certain others say that his death was so sudden, that from many symptoms it appeared to be due rather to poison or apoplexy than to anything else. Francia was a prudent man, most regular in his way of life, and very robust. After his death, in the year 1518, he was honourably buried by his sons in Bologna.

PIETRO PERUGINO

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LIFE OF PIETRO PERUGINO

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[PIETRO VANNUCCI, OR PIETRO DA CASTEL DELLA PIEVE]

PAINTER

How great a benefit poverty may be to men of genius, and how potent a force it may be to make them become excellent—nay, perfect—in the exercise of any faculty whatsoever, can be seen clearly enough in the actions of Pietro Perugino, who, flying from the extremity of distress at Perugia, and betaking himself to Florence in the desire to attain to some distinction by means of his talent, remained for many months without any other bed than a miserable chest to sleep in, turning night into day, and devoting himself with the greatest ardour to the unceasing study of

his profession. And, having made a habit of this, he knew no other pleasure than to labour continually at his art, and to be for ever painting; for with the fear of poverty constantly before his eyes, he would do for gain such work as he would probably not have looked at if he had possessed the wherewithal to live. Riches, indeed, might perchance have closed the path on which his talent should advance towards excellence, no less effectually than poverty opened it to him, while necessity spurred him on in his desire to rise from so low and miserable a condition, if not to supreme eminence, at least to a rank in which he might have the means of life. For this reason he never took heed of cold, of hunger, of hardship, of discomfort, of fatigue, or of ridicule, if only he might one day live in ease and repose; ever saying, as it were by way of proverb, that after bad weather there must come the good, and that during the good men build the houses that are to shelter them when there is need.



PIETRO PERUGINO: APOLLO AND MARSYAS
(Paris: Louvre, 1509. Panel)

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But in order that the rise of this craftsman may be better known, let me begin with his origin, and relate that, according to common report, there was born in the city of Perugia, to a poor man of Castello della Pieve, named Cristofano, a son who was baptized with the name of Pietro. This son, brought up amid misery and distress, was given by his father as a shop-boy to a painter of Perugia, who was no great master of his profession, but held in great veneration both the art and the men who were excellent therein; nor did he ever cease to tell Pietro how much gain and honour painting brought to those who practised it well, and he would urge the boy to the study of that art by recounting to him the rewards won by ancient and modern masters; wherefore he fired his mind in such a manner, that Pietro took it into his head to try, if only fortune would assist him, to become one of these. For this reason he was often wont to ask any man whom he knew to have seen the world, in what part the best craftsmen in that calling were formed; particularly his master, who always gave him one and the same answer—namely, that it was in Florence more than in any other place that men became perfect in all the arts, especially in painting, since in that city men are spurred by three things. The first is censure, which is uttered freely and by many, seeing that the air of that city makes men's intellects so free by nature, that they do not content themselves, like a flock of sheep, with mediocre works, but ever consider them with regard to the honour of the good and the beautiful rather than out of respect for the craftsman. The second is that, if a man wishes to live there, he must be industrious, which is naught else than to say that he must continually exercise his intelligence and his judgment, must be ready and adroit in his affairs, and, finally, must know how to make money, seeing that the territory of Florence is not so wide or abundant as to enable her to support at little cost all who live there, as can be done in countries that are rich enough. The third, which is perchance no less potent than the others, is an eager desire for glory and honour, which is generated mightily by that air in the men of all professions; and this desire, in all persons of spirit, will not let them stay content with being equal, much less inferior, to those whom they see to be men like themselves, although they may recognize them as masters—nay, it forces them very often to desire their own advancement so eagerly, that, if they are not kindly or wise by nature, they turn out evil-speakers, ungrateful, and unthankful for benefits. It is true, indeed, that when a man has learnt there as much as suffices him, he must, if he wishes to do more than live from day to day like an

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animal, and desires to become rich, take his departure from that place and find a sale abroad for the excellence of his works and for the repute conferred on him by that city, as the doctors do with the fame derived from their studies. For Florence treats her craftsmen as time treats its own works, which when perfected, it destroys and consumes little by little.

Moved by these counsels, therefore, and by the persuasions of many others, Pietro came to Florence, minded to become excellent; and well did he succeed, for the reason that in those times works in his manner were held in very great price. He studied under the discipline of Andrea Verrocchio, and his first figures were painted without the Porta a Prato, in the Nunnery of S. Martino, now in ruins by reason of the wars. In Camaldoli he made a S. Jerome on a wall, which was then much esteemed by the Florentines and celebrated with great praise, for the reason that he made that Saint old, lean, and emaciated, with his eyes fixed on the Crucifix, and so wasted away, that he seems like an anatomical model, as may be seen from a copy of that picture which is in the hands of the aforesaid Bartolommeo Gondi. In a few years, then, he came into such credit, that his works filled not only Florence and all Italy, but also France, Spain, and many other countries to which they were sent. Wherefore, his paintings being held in very great price and repute, merchants began to buy them up wholesale and to send them abroad to various countries, to their own great gain and profit.

For the Nuns of S. Chiara he painted a Dead Christ on a panel, with such lovely and novel colouring, that he made the craftsmen believe that he would become excellent and marvellous. In this work there are seen some most beautiful heads of old men, and likewise certain figures of the Maries, who, having ceased to weep, are contemplating the Dead Jesus with extraordinary awe and love; not to mention that he made therein a landscape that was then held most beautiful, because the true method of making them, such as it appeared later, had not yet been seen. It is said that Francesco del Pugliese offered to give to the aforesaid nuns three times as much money as they had paid to Pietro, and to have a similar one made for them by the same man's hand, but that they would not consent, because Pietro said that he did not believe he could equal it.

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There were also many things by the hand of Pietro in the Convent of the Frati Gesuati, without the Porta a Pinti; and since the said church and convent are now in ruins, I do not wish, with this occasion, and before I proceed further with this Life, to grudge the labour of giving some little account of them. This church, then, the architect of which was Antonio di Giorgio of Settignano, was forty braccia long and twenty wide. At the upper end one ascended by four treads, or rather steps, to a platform six braccia in extent, on which stood the high-altar, with many ornaments carved in stone; and on the said altar was a panel with a rich ornament, by the hand, as has been related, of Domenico Ghirlandajo. In the centre of the church was a partition-wall, with a door wrought in open-work from the middle upwards, on either side of which was an altar, while over either altar, as will be told, there stood a panel by the hand of Pietro Perugino. Over the said door was a most beautiful Crucifix by the hand of Benedetto da Maiano, with a Madonna on one side and a S. John on the other, both in relief. Before the said platform of the high-altar, and against the said partition-wall, was a choir of the Doric Order, very well wrought in walnut-wood; and over the principal door of the church there was another choir, which rested on well-strengthened woodwork, with the under part forming a ceiling, or rather soffit, beautifully partitioned, and with a row of balusters acting as parapet to the front of the choir, which faced towards the high-altar. This choir was very convenient to the friars of that convent for holding their night services, for saying their individual prayers, and likewise for week-days. Over the principal door of the church—which was made with most beautiful ornaments of stone, and had a portico in front raised on columns, which made a covered way as far as the door of the convent—was a lunette with a very beautiful figure of S. Giusto, the Bishop, and an angel on either side, by the hand of the illuminator Gherardo; and this because that church was dedicated to the said S. Giusto, and within it those friars preserved a relic of that Saint—that is, an arm. At the entrance of the convent was a little cloister of exactly the same size as the church—namely, forty braccia long and twenty wide—with arches and vaulting going right round and supported by columns of stone, thus making a spacious and most commodious loggia on every side. In the centre of the court of this cloister, which was all neatly paved with squared stone, was a very beautiful well, with a loggia above, which likewise rested on columns of stone, and made a rich and beautiful ornament. In this cloister were the chapter-house of the friars, the side-door of entrance into the church, and the stairs that ascended to the dormitory and other rooms for the use of the friars. On the farther side of this cloister, in a straight line with the principal door of the convent, was a passage as long as the chapter-house and the steward's room put together, leading into another cloister larger and more beautiful than the first; and the whole of this straight line—that is, the forty braccia of the loggia of the first cloister, the passage, and the line of the second cloister—made a very long enfilade, more beautiful than words can tell, and the rather as from that farther cloister, in the same straight line, there issued a garden-walk two hundred braccia in length; and all this, as one came from the principal door of the convent, made a marvellous view. In the said second cloister was a refectory, sixty braccia long and eighteen wide, with all those well-appointed rooms, and, as the friars call them, offices, which were required in such a convent. Over this was a dormitory in the shape of a T, one part of which—namely, the principal part in the direct line, which was sixty braccia long—was double—that is to say, it had cells on either side, and at the upper end, in a space of fifteen braccia, was an oratory, over the altar of which there was a panel by the hand of Pietro Perugino; and over the door of this oratory was another work by the same man's hand, in fresco, as will be told. And on the same floor, above the chapter-house, was a large room where those fathers worked at making glass windows, with the little furnaces and other conveniences that were necessary for such an industry; and since while Pietro lived he made the cartoons for many of their works, those that they executed in his time were all

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excellent. Then the garden of this convent was so beautiful and so well kept, and the vines were trained round the cloister and in every place with such good order, that nothing better could be seen in the neighbourhood of Florence. In like manner the room wherein they distilled scented waters and medicines, as was their custom, had all the best conveniences that could possibly be imagined. In short, that convent was one of the most beautiful and best appointed that there were in the State of Florence; and it is for this reason that I have wished to make this record of it, and the rather as the greater part of the pictures that were therein were by the hand of our Pietro Perugino.



THE DEPOSITION
(After the panel by Pietro Perugino.
Florence: Pitti, 164)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

Returning at length to this Pietro, I have to say that of the works that he made in the said convent none have been preserved save the panels, since those executed in fresco were thrown to the ground, together with the whole of that building, by reason of the siege of Florence, when the panels were carried to the Porta a S. Pier Gattolini, where a home was given to those friars in the Church and Convent of S. Giovannino. Now the two panels on the aforesaid partition-wall were by the hand of Pietro; and in one was Christ in the Garden, with the Apostles sleeping, in whom Pietro showed how well sleep can prevail over pains and discomforts, having represented them asleep in attitudes of perfect ease. In the other he made a Pietà—that is, Christ in the lap of Our Lady—surrounded by four figures no less excellent than any others in his manner; and, to mention only one thing, he made the Dead Christ all stiffened, as if He had been so long on the Cross that the length of time and the cold had reduced Him to this; wherefore he painted Him supported by John and the Magdalene, all sorrowful and weeping. In another panel he painted the Crucifixion, with the Magdalene, and, at the foot of the Cross, S. Jerome, S. John the Baptist, and the Blessed Giovanni Colombini, founder of that Order; all with infinite diligence. These three panels have suffered considerably, and they are all cracked in the dark parts and where there are shadows; and this comes to pass when the first coat of colour, which is laid on the ground (for three coats of colour are used, one over the other), is worked on before it is thoroughly dry; wherefore afterwards, with time, in the drying, they draw through their thickness and come to have the strength to make those cracks; which Pietro could not know, seeing that in his time they were only just beginning to paint well in oil.

Now, the works of Pietro being much commended by the Florentines, a Prior of the same Convent of the Ingesuati, who took delight in art, caused him to make a Nativity, with the Magi, on a wall in the first cloister, after the manner of a miniature. This he brought to perfect completion with great loveliness and a high finish, and it contained an infinite number of different heads, many of them portrayed from life, among which was the head of Andrea del Verrocchio, his master. In the same court, over the arches of the columns, he made a frieze with heads of the size of life, very well executed, among which was one of the said Prior, so lifelike and wrought in so good a manner, that it was judged by the most experienced craftsmen to be the best thing that Pietro ever made. In the other cloister, over the door that led into the refectory, he was commissioned to paint a scene of Pope Boniface confirming the habit of his Order to the Blessed Giovanni Colombino, wherein he portrayed eight of the aforesaid friars, and made a most beautiful view receding in perspective, which was much extolled, and rightly, since Pietro made a particular profession of this. In another scene below the first he began a Nativity of Christ, with certain

angels and shepherds, wrought with the freshest colouring. And in an arch over the door of the aforesaid oratory he made three half-length figures—Our Lady, S. Jerome, and the Blessed Giovanni—with so beautiful a manner, that this was held to be one of the best mural paintings that Pietro ever wrought.

The said Prior, so I once heard tell, was very excellent at making ultramarine blues, and, therefore, having an abundance of them, he desired that Pietro should use them freely in all the above-mentioned works; but he was nevertheless so mean and suspicious that he would never trust Pietro, and always insisted on being present when he was using blue in the work. Wherefore Pietro, who had an honest and upright nature, and had no desire for another man's goods save in return for his own labour, took the Prior's distrust very ill, and resolved to put him to shame; and so, having taken a basin of water, and having laid on the ground for draperies or for anything else that he wished to paint in blue and white, from time to time he caused the Prior, who turned grudgingly to his little bag, to put some ultramarine into the little vase that contained the tempera-water, and then, setting to work, at every second stroke of the brush Pietro would dip his brush in the basin, so that there remained more in the water than he had used on the picture. The Prior, who saw his little bag becoming empty without much to show for it in the work, kept saying time after time: "Oh, what a quantity of ultramarine this plaster consumes!" "Does it not?" Pietro would answer. After the departure of the Prior, Pietro took the ultramarine from the bottom of the basin, and gave it back to him when he thought the time had come, saying: "Father, this is yours; learn to trust honest men, who never cheat those who trust them, although, if they wished, they could cheat such distrustful persons as yourself."

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By reason of these works, then, and many others, Pietro came into such repute that he was almost forced to go to Siena, where he painted a large panel, which was held very beautiful, in S. Francesco; and he painted another in S. Agostino, containing a Crucifix with some saints. A little time after this, for the Church of S. Gallo in Florence, he painted a panel-picture of S. Jerome in Penitence, which is now in S. Jacopo tra Fossi, where the aforesaid friars live, near the Canto degli Alberti. He was commissioned to paint a Dead Christ, with the Madonna and S. John, above the steps of the side-door of S. Pietro Maggiore; and this he wrought in such a manner, that it has been preserved, although exposed to rain and wind, as fresh as if it had only just been finished by Pietro's hand. Truly intelligent was Pietro's understanding of colour, both in fresco and in oil; wherefore all experienced craftsmen are indebted to him, for it is through him that they have knowledge of the lights that are seen throughout his works.



CHRIST GIVING THE KEYS TO S. PETER
*(After the fresco by Pietro Perugino.
Rome: Sistine Chapel)*
Alinari

[View larger image](#)

In S. Croce, in the same city, he made a Pietà—that is, Our Lady with the Dead Christ in her arms—and two figures, which are marvellous to behold, not so much for their excellence, as for the fact that they have remained so fresh and vivid in colouring, painted as they are in fresco. He was commissioned by Bernardino de' Rossi, a citizen of Florence, to paint a S. Sebastian to be sent into France, the price agreed on being one hundred gold crowns; but this work was sold by Bernardino to the King of France for four hundred gold ducats. At Vallombrosa he painted a panel for the high-altar; and in the Certosa of Pavia, likewise, he executed a panel for the friars of that place. At the command of Cardinal Caraffa of Naples he painted an Assumption of Our Lady, with the Apostles marvelling round the tomb, for the high-altar of the Piscopio; and for Abbot Simone de' Graziani of Borgo a San Sepolcro he executed a large panel, which was painted in Florence, and then borne to S. Gilio in the Borgo on the shoulders of porters, at very great expense. To S. Giovanni in Monte at Bologna he sent a panel with certain figures standing

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upright, and a Madonna in the sky.



FORTITUDE AND TEMPERANCE, WITH WARRIORS

(After the fresco by Pietro Perugino.

Perugia: Collegio del Cambio)

Alinari

[View larger image](#)

Thereupon the fame of Pietro spread so widely throughout Italy and abroad, that to his great glory he was summoned to Rome by Pope Sixtus IV to work in his chapel in company with the other excellent craftsmen. There, in company with Don Bartolommeo della Gatta, Abbot of S. Clemente at Arezzo, he painted the scene of Christ giving the keys to S. Peter; and likewise the Nativity and Baptism of Christ, and the Birth of Moses, with the daughter of Pharaoh finding him in the little ark. And on the same wall where the altar is he painted a mural picture of the Assumption of Our Lady, with a portrait of Pope Sixtus on his knees. But these works were thrown to the ground in preparing the wall for the Judgment of the divine Michelagnolo, in the time of Pope Paul III. On a vault of the Borgia Tower in the Papal Palace he painted certain stories of Christ, with some foliage in chiaroscuro, which had an extraordinary name for excellence in his time. In S. Marco, likewise in Rome, he painted a story of two martyrs beside the Sacrament—one of the best works that he made in Rome. For Sciarra Colonna, also, in the Palace of S. Apostolo, he painted a loggia and certain rooms.

These works brought him a very great sum of money; wherefore, having resolved to remain no longer in Rome, and having departed in good favour with the whole Court, he returned to his native city of Perugia, in many parts of which he executed panels and works in fresco; and, in particular, a panel-picture painted in oils for the Chapel of the Palace of the Signori, containing Our Lady and other saints. In S. Francesco del Monte he painted two chapels in fresco, one with the story of the Magi going to make offering to Christ, and the other with the martyrdom of certain friars of S. Francis, who, going to the Soldan of Babylon, were put to death. In S. Francesco del Convento, likewise, he painted two panels in oil, one with the Resurrection of Christ, and the other with S. John the Baptist and other saints. For the Church of the Servi he also painted two panels, one of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, and in the other, which is beside the sacristy, the Story of the Magi; but, since these are not of the same excellence as the other works of Pietro, it is held to be certain that they are among the first that he made. In the Chapel of the Crocifisso in S. Lorenzo, the Duomo of the same city, there are by the hand of Pietro the Madonna, the other Maries, S. John, S. Laurence, S. James, and other saints. And for the Altar of the Sacrament, where there is preserved the ring with which the Virgin Mary was married, he painted the Marriage of the Virgin.



PIETRO PERUGINO: TRIPTYCH
(London: National Gallery, 288. Panel)
[View larger image](#)

Afterwards he painted in fresco the whole of the Audience Chamber of the Cambio,^[4] adorning the compartments of the vaulting with the seven planets, drawn in certain cars by diverse animals, according to the old usage; on the wall opposite to the door of entrance he painted the Nativity and Resurrection of Christ, with a panel containing S. John the Baptist in the midst of certain other saints. The side-walls he painted in his own manner; one with figures of Fabius Maximus, Socrates, Numa Pompilius, F. Camillus, Pythagoras, Trajan, L. Sicinius, the Spartan Leonidas, Horatius Cocles, Fabius, Sempronius, the Athenian Pericles, and Cincinnatus. On the other wall he made the Prophets, Isaiah, Moses, Daniel, David, Jeremiah, and Solomon; and the Sibyls, the Erythræan, the Libyan, the Tiburtine, the Delphic, and the others. Below each of the said figures he placed, in the form of a written motto, something said by them, and appropriate to that place. And in one of the ornaments he made his own portrait, which appears absolutely alive, and he wrote his own name below it in the following manner:

PETRUS PERUSINUS EGREGIUS PICTOR.
 PERDITA SI FUERAT, PINGENDO HIC RETULIT ARTEM;
 SI NUNQUAM INVENTA ESSET HACTENUS, IPSE DEDIT.
 ANNO D. 1500.

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This work, which was very beautiful and more highly extolled than any other that was executed by Pietro in Perugia, is now held in great price by the men of that city in memory of so famous a craftsman of their own country. Afterwards, in the principal chapel of the Church of S. Agostino, the same man executed a large panel standing by itself and surrounded by a rich ornament, with S. John baptizing Christ on the front part, and on the back—that is, on the side that faces the choir—the Nativity of Christ, with certain saints in the upper parts, and in the predella many scenes wrought very diligently with little figures. And in the Chapel of S. Niccolò, in the said church, he painted a panel for Messer Benedetto Calera.

After this, returning to Florence, he painted a S. Bernard on a panel for the Monks of Cestello, and in the chapter-house a Crucifix, the Madonna, S. Benedict, S. Bernard, and S. John. And in S. Domenico da Fiesole, in the second chapel on the right hand, he painted a panel containing Our Lady and three figures, among which is a S. Sebastian worthy of the highest praise. Now Pietro had done so much work, and he always had so many works in hand, that he would very often use the same subjects; and he had reduced the theory of his art to a manner so fixed, that he made all his figures with the same expression. By that time Michelagnolo Buonarroti had already come to the front, and Pietro greatly desired to see his figures, by reason of the praise bestowed on him by craftsmen; and seeing the greatness of his own name, which he had acquired in every place through so grand a beginning, being obscured, he was ever seeking to wound his fellow-workers with biting words. For this reason, besides certain insults aimed at him by the craftsmen, he had only himself to blame when Michelagnolo told him in public that he was a clumsy fool at his art. But Pietro being unable to swallow such an affront, they both appeared before the Tribunal of Eight, where Pietro came off with little honour. Meanwhile the Servite Friars of Florence, wishing to have the altar-piece of their high-altar painted by some famous master, had handed it over, by reason of the departure of Leonardo da Vinci, who had gone off to France, to Filippino; but he, when he had finished half of one of two panels that were to adorn the altar, passed from this life to the next; wherefore the friars, by reason of the faith that they had in Pietro, entrusted him with the whole work. In that panel, wherein he was painting the Deposition of Christ from the Cross, Filippino had finished the figures of Nicodemus that are taking Him down; and Pietro continued the lower part with the Swooning of the Madonna, and certain other figures. Now this work was to be composed of two panels, one facing towards the choir of the friars, and the other towards the body of the church, and the Deposition from the Cross was to be placed behind,

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facing the choir, with the Assumption of Our Lady in front; but Pietro made the latter so commonplace, that the Deposition of Christ was placed in front, and the Assumption on the side of the choir. These panels have now been removed, both one and the other, and replaced by the Tabernacle of the Sacrament; they have been set up over certain other altars in that church, and out of the whole work there only remain six pictures, wherein are some saints painted by Pietro in certain niches. It is said that when the work was unveiled, it received no little censure from all the new craftsmen, particularly because Pietro had availed himself of those figures that he had been wont to use in other pictures; with which his friends twitted him, saying that he had taken no pains, and that he had abandoned the good method of working, either through avarice or to save time. To this Pietro would answer: "I have used the figures that you have at other times praised, and which have given you infinite pleasure; if now they do not please you, and you do not praise them, what can I do?" But they kept assailing him bitterly with sonnets and open insults; whereupon, although now old, he departed from Florence and returned to Perugia.

There he executed certain works in fresco in the Church of S. Severo, a place belonging to the Monks of the Order of Camaldoli, wherein Raffaello da Urbino, when quite young and still the disciple of Pietro, had painted certain figures, as will be told in his Life. Pietro likewise worked at Montone, at La Fratta, and in many other places in the district of Perugia; more particularly in S. Maria degli Angeli at Assisi, where he painted in fresco a Christ on the Cross, with many figures, on the wall at the back of the Chapel of the Madonna, which faces the choir of the monks. And for the high-altar of the Church of S. Pietro, an abbey of Black Friars in Perugia, he painted a large panel containing the Ascension, with the Apostles below gazing up to Heaven; in the predella of which panel are three stories, wrought with much diligence—namely, that of the Magi, the Baptism of Christ, and His Resurrection. The whole of this picture is seen to be full of beautiful and careful work, insomuch that it is the best of those wrought in oil by the hand of Pietro which are in Perugia. The same man began a work in fresco of no small importance at Castello della Pieve, but did not finish it.

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It was ever Pietro's custom on his going and coming between the said Castello and Perugia, like a man who trusted nobody, to carry all the money that he possessed about his person. Wherefore certain men, lying in wait for him at a pass, robbed him, but at his earnest entreaty they spared his life for the love of God; and afterwards, by means of the services of his friends, who were numerous enough, he also recovered a great part of the money that had been taken from him; but none the less he came near dying of vexation. Pietro was a man of very little religion, and he could never be made to believe in the immortality of the soul—nay, with words in keeping with his head of granite, he rejected most obstinately every good suggestion. He placed all his hopes in the goods of fortune, and he would have sold his soul for money. He earned great riches; and he both bought and built houses in Florence, and acquired much settled property both at Perugia and at Castello della Pieve. He took a most beautiful young woman to wife, and had children by her; and he delighted so greatly in seeing her wearing beautiful head-dresses, both abroad and at home, that it is said that he would often tire her head with his own hand. Finally, having reached the age of seventy-eight, Pietro finished the course of his life at Castello della Pieve, where he was honourably buried, in the year 1524.

Pietro made many masters in his own manner, and one among them, who was truly most excellent, devoted himself heart and soul to the honourable studies of painting, and surpassed his master by a great measure; and this was the miraculous Raffaello Sanzio of Urbino, who worked for many years under Pietro in company with his father, Giovanni de' Santi. Another disciple of this man was Pinturicchio, a painter of Perugia, who, as it has been said in his Life, ever held to Pietro's manner. His disciple, likewise, was Rocco Zoppo, a painter of Florence, by whose hand is a very beautiful Madonna in a round picture, which is in the possession of Filippo Salviati; although it is true that it was brought to completion by Pietro himself. The same Rocco painted many pictures of Our Lady, and made many portraits, of which there is no need to speak; I will only say that in the Sistine Chapel in Rome he painted portraits of Girolamo Riario and of F. Pietro, Cardinal of San Sisto. Another disciple of Pietro was Montevarchi, who painted many pictures in San Giovanni di Valdarno; more particularly, in the Madonna, the stories of the Miracle of the Milk. He also left many works in Montevarchi, his birth-place. Likewise a pupil of Pietro's, working with him for no little time, was Gerino da Pistoia, of whom there has been mention in the Life of Pinturicchio; and so also was Baccio Ubertino of Florence, who was most diligent both in colouring and in drawing, for which reason Pietro made much use of him. By this man's hand is a drawing in our book, done with the pen, of Christ being scourged at the Column, which is a very lovely thing.

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MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH SAINTS
(After the panel by Giovanni (Lo Spagna).
Assisi: Lower Church)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

A brother of this Baccio, and likewise a disciple of Pietro, was Francesco, called Il Bacchiaccha by way of surname, who was a most diligent master of little figures, as may be seen in many works wrought by him in Florence, above all in the house of Giovan Maria Benintendi and in that of Pier Francesco Borgherini. Bacchiaccha delighted in painting grotesques, wherefore he covered a little cabinet belonging to the Lord Duke Cosimo with animals and rare plants, drawn from nature, which are held very beautiful. Besides this, he made the cartoons for many tapestries, which were afterwards woven in silk by the Flemish master, Giovanni Rosto, for the apartments of his Excellency's Palace. Still another disciple of Pietro was the Spaniard Giovanni, called Lo Spagna by way of surname, who was a better colourist than any of the others whom Pietro left behind him at his death; after which this Giovanni would have settled in Perugia, if the envy of the painters of that city, so hostile to strangers, had not persecuted him in such wise as to force him to retire to Spoleto, where, by reason of his excellence and virtue, he obtained a wife of good family and was made a citizen of that city. He made many works in that place, and likewise in all the other cities of Umbria; and at Assisi, in the lower Church of S. Francesco, he painted the panel of the Chapel of S. Caterina, for the Spanish Cardinal Egidio, and also one in S. Damiano. In S. Maria degli Angeli, in the little chapel where S. Francis died, he painted some half-length figures of the size of life—that is, certain companions of S. Francis and other saints—all very lifelike, on either side of a S. Francis in relief.

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But the best master among all the aforesaid disciples of Pietro was Andrea Luigi of Assisi, called L'Ingegno, who in his early youth competed with Raffaello da Urbino under the discipline of Pietro, who always employed him in the most important pictures that he made; as may be seen in the Audience Chamber of the Cambio in Perugia, where there are some very beautiful figures by his hand; in those that he wrought at Assisi; and, finally, in the Chapel of Pope Sixtus at Rome. In all these works Andrea gave such proof of his worth, that he was expected to surpass his master by a great measure, and so, without a doubt, it would have come to pass; but fortune, which is almost always pleased to oppose herself to lofty beginnings, did not allow L'Ingegno to reach perfection, for a flux of catarrh fell upon his eyes, whence the poor fellow became wholly blind, to the infinite grief of all who knew him. Hearing of this most pitiful misfortune, Pope Sixtus, like a man who ever loved men of talent, ordained that a yearly provision should be paid to Andrea in Assisi during his lifetime by those who managed the revenues there; and this was done until he died at the age of eighty-six.

Likewise disciples of Pietro, and also natives of Perugia, were Eusebio San Giorgio, who painted the panel of the Magi in S. Agostino; Domenico di Paris, who made many works in Perugia and in the neighbouring townships, being followed by his brother Orazio; and also Gian Niccola, who painted Christ in the Garden on a panel in S. Francesco, the panel of Ognissanti in the Chapel of the Baglioni in S. Domenico, and stories of S. John the Baptist in fresco in the Chapel of the Cambio. Benedetto Caporali, otherwise called Bitti, was also a disciple of Pietro, and there are many pictures by his hand in his native city of Perugia. And he occupied himself so greatly with architecture, that he not only executed many works, but also wrote a commentary on Vitruvius in the manner that all can see, for it is printed; in which studies he was followed by his son Giulio, a

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painter of Perugia.

But not one out of all these disciples ever equalled Pietro's diligence, or the grace of colouring that he showed in that manner of his own, which pleased his time so much, that many came from France, from Spain, from Germany, and from other lands, to learn it. And a trade was done in his works, as has been said, by many who sent them to diverse places, until there came the manner of Michelagnolo, which, having shown the true and good path to these arts, has brought them to that perfection which will be seen in the Third Part, about to follow, wherein we will treat of the excellence and perfection of art, and show to craftsmen that he who labours and studies continuously, and not in the way of fantasy or caprice, leaves true works behind him and acquires fame, wealth, and friends.

VITTORE SCARPACCIA (CARPACCIO), AND OTHER VENETIAN AND LOMBARD PAINTERS

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LIVES OF VITTORE SCARPACCIA (CARPACCIO), AND OF OTHER VENETIAN AND LOMBARD PAINTERS

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It is very well known that when some of our craftsmen make a beginning in some province, they are afterwards followed by many, one after another; and very often there is an infinite number of them at one and the same time, for the reason that rivalry, emulation, and the fact that they have been dependent on others, one on one excellent master, and one on another, bring it about that the craftsmen seek with all the greater effort to surpass one another, to the utmost of their ability. And even when many depend on one, no sooner do they separate, either at the death of their master or for some other reason, than they straightway also separate in aim; whereupon each seeks to prove his own worth, in order to appear better than the rest and a master by himself.

Of many, then, who flourished almost at one and the same time and in one and the same province, and about whom I have not been able to learn and am not able to write every particular, I will give some brief account, to the end that, now that I find myself at the end of the Second Part of this my work, I may not omit some who have laboured to leave the world adorned by their works. Of these men, I say, besides having been unable to discover their whole history, I have not even been able to find the portraits, excepting that of Scarpaccia, whom for this reason I have made head of the others. Let my readers therefore accept what I can offer in this connection, seeing that I cannot offer what I would wish. There lived, then, in the March of Treviso and in Lombardy, during a period of many years, Stefano Veronese, Aldigieri da Zevio, Jacopo Davanzo of Bologna, Sebeto da Verona, Jacobello de Flore, Guerriero da Padova, Giusto, Girolamo Campagnola and his son Giulio, and Vincenzo Bresciano; Vittore, Sebastiano,^[5] and Lazzaro^[5] Scarpaccia, Venetians; Vincenzo Catena, Luigi Vivarini, Giovan Battista da Conigliano, Marco Basarini,^[6] Giovanetto Cordegliaghi, Il Bassiti, Bartolommeo Vivarini, Giovanni Mansueti, Vittore Bellini, Bartolommeo Montagna of Vicenza, Benedetto Diana, and Giovanni Buonconsigli, with many others, of whom there is no need to make mention here.

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THE MADONNA AND CHILD WITH S. CATHARINE IN A ROSE GARDEN
(After the panel by Stefano da Verona (da Zevio).
Verona: Gallery, 559)
Brogi

[View larger image](#)

To begin with the first, I start by saying that Stefano Veronese, of whom I gave some account in the Life of Agnolo Gaddi, was a painter more than passing good in his day. And when Donatello was working in Padua, as has been already told in his Life, going on one of several occasions to Verona, he was struck with marvel at the works of Stefano, declaring that the pictures which he had made in fresco were the best that had been wrought in those parts up to that time. The first works of this man were in the tramezzo^[7] of the Church of S. Antonio at Verona, at the top of a wall on the left, below the curve of a part of the vaulting; and the subjects were a Madonna with the Child in her arms, and S. James and S. Anthony, one on either side of her. This work is held very beautiful in that city even at the present day, by reason of a certain liveliness that is seen in the said figures, particularly in the heads, which are wrought with much grace. In S. Niccolò, a parish church of that city, likewise, he painted a S. Nicholas in fresco, which is very beautiful. On the front of a house in the Via di S. Polo, which leads to the Porta del Vescovo, he painted the Virgin, with certain very beautiful angels and a S. Christopher; and over the wall of the Church of S. Consolata in the Via del Duomo, in a recess made in the wall, he painted a Madonna and certain birds, in particular a peacock, his emblem. In S. Eufemia, a convent of the Eremite Friars of S. Augustine, he painted over the side-door a S. Augustine with two other saints, and under the mantle of this S. Augustine are many friars and nuns of his Order; but the most beautiful things in this work are two half-length prophets of the size of life, for the reason that they have the most beautiful and most lifelike heads that Stefano ever made; and the colouring of the whole work, having been executed with diligence, has remained beautiful even to our own day, notwithstanding that it has been much exposed to rain, wind, and frost. If this work had been under cover, it would still be as beautiful and fresh as it issued from his hands, for the reason that Stefano did not retouch it on the dry, but used diligence in executing it well in fresco; as it is, it has suffered a little. Within the church, in the Chapel of the Sacrament—namely, round the Tabernacle—he afterwards painted certain angels flying, some of whom are sounding instruments, some singing, and others burning incense before the Sacrament; together with a figure of Jesus Christ, which he painted at the top as a finish to the Tabernacle. Below there are other angels, who are supporting Him, clothed in white garments reaching to their feet, and ending, as it were, in clouds, which was an idea peculiar to Stefano in painting figures of angels, whom he always made most gracious in countenance and very beautiful in expression. In this same work are life-size figures of S. Augustine and S. Jerome, one on either side; and these are supporting with their hands the Church of God, as if to show that both of them defend Holy Church from heretics with their learning, and support her. On a pilaster of the principal chapel in the same church he painted a S. Eufemia in fresco, with a beautiful and gracious expression of countenance; and there he wrote his own name in letters of gold, perchance since it appeared to him to be, as in fact it is, one of the best pictures that he had made; and according to his custom he painted there a very beautiful peacock, and beside it two lion cubs, which are not very beautiful, because at that time he could not see live ones, as he saw the peacock. He also painted for the same place a panel containing, as was the custom in those times, many half-length

figures, such as S. Niccola da Tolentino and others; and he filled the predella with scenes in little figures from the life of that Saint. In S. Fermo, a church in the same city belonging to the Friars of S. Francis, he painted, as an ornament for a Deposition from the Cross on the wall opposite to the side-door of entrance, twelve half-length prophets of the size of life, with Adam and Eve lying below them, and his usual peacock, which is almost the hall-mark of pictures executed by him.

In Mantua, at the Martello gate of the Church of S. Domenico, the same Stefano painted a most beautiful Madonna; the head of which Madonna, when they had need to build in that place, those fathers placed with care in the tramezzo^[8] of the church—that is, in the Chapel of S. Orsola, which belongs to the Recuperati family, and contains some pictures in fresco by the hand of the same man. And in the Church of S. Francesco, on the right hand as one enters by the principal door, there is a row of chapels formerly built by the noble Della Ramma family, in one of which are seated figures of the four Evangelists, painted on the vaulting by the hand of Stefano; and behind their shoulders, for a background, he made certain espaliers of roses, with a cane trellis-work in a pattern of mandorle, above which are various trees and other greenery full of birds, particularly of peacocks; and there are also some very beautiful angels. In this same church, on a column on the right hand as one enters, he painted a life-size figure of S. Mary Magdalene. And in the same city, on the frontal of a door in the street called Rompilanza, he painted in fresco a Madonna with the Child in her arms, and some angels kneeling before her; and the background he made of trees covered with fruit.

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These, then, are the works that are found to have been executed by Stefano, although it may well be believed, since his life was not a short one, that he made many others. But even as I have not been able to discover any more of them, so I have failed to find his surname, his father's name, his portrait, or any other particulars. Some declare that before he came to Florence he was a disciple of Maestro Liberale, a painter of Verona; but this matters nothing. It is enough that he learnt all that there was of the good in him from Agnolo Gaddi in Florence.



PRESENTATION TO THE MADONNA OF THREE KNIGHTS OF THE CAVALLI FAMILY
(After the fresco by Aldigieri da Zevio [Altichiero].

Verona: S. Anastasia)

Alinari

[View larger image](#)

Of the same city of Verona was Aldigieri da Zevio, who was very much the friend of the Signori della Scala, and who, besides many other works, painted the Great Hall of their Palace (which is now the habitation of the Podestà), depicting therein the War of Jerusalem, according as it is described by Josephus. In this work Aldigieri showed great spirit and judgment, distributing one scene over the walls of that hall on every side, with a single ornament encircling it right round; on the upper part of which ornament, as it were to set it off, he placed a row of medallions, in which it is believed that there are the portraits from life of many distinguished men of those times, particularly of many of those Signori della Scala; but, since the truth about this is not known, I will say no more of it. I must say, indeed, that Aldigieri showed in this work that he had intelligence, judgment, and invention, seeing that he took into consideration all the things that can be taken into consideration in a serious war. Besides this, the colouring has remained very fresh; and among many portraits of men of distinction and learning, there is seen that of Messer Francesco Petrarca.

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Jacopo Avanzi, a painter of Bologna, shared the work of this hall with Aldigieri, and below the aforesaid pictures he painted two most beautiful Triumphs, likewise in fresco, with so much art and so good a manner, that Girolamo Campagnola declares that Mantegna used to praise them as pictures of the rarest merit. The same Jacopo, together with Aldigieri and Sebeto da Verona, painted the Chapel of S. Giorgio, which is beside the Church of S. Antonio, in Padua, according to the directions left in the testaments of the Marquesses of Carrara. Jacopo Avanzi painted the upper part; below this were certain stories of S. Lucia, with a Last Supper, by Aldigieri; and Sebeto painted stories of S. John. Afterwards these three masters, having all returned to Verona,

joined together to paint a wedding-feast, with many portraits and costumes of those times, in the house of the Counts Serenghi. Now the work of Jacopo Avanzi was held to be the best of all; but, since mention has been made of him in the Life of Niccolò d' Arezzo by reason of the works that he made in Bologna in competition with the painters Simone, Cristofano, and Galasso, I will say no more about him in this place.

A man who was held in esteem at Venice about the same time, although he adhered to the Greek manner, was Jacobello de Flore, who made a number of works in that city; in particular, a panel for the Nuns of the Corpus Domini, which stands on the altar of S. Domenico in their church. A competitor of this master was Giromin Morzone, who painted a number of pictures in Venice and in many cities of Lombardy; but, since he held to the old manner and made all his figures on tiptoe, we will say nothing about him, save that there is a panel by his hand, with many saints, on the Altar of the Assumption in the Church of S. Lena.

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A much better master than Morzone was Guerriero, a painter of Padua, who, besides many other works, painted the principal chapel of the Eremite Friars of S. Augustine in Padua, and a chapel for the same friars in the first cloister. He also painted a little chapel in the house of the Urban Prefect, and the Hall of the Roman Emperors, where the students go to dance at the time of the Carnival. He also painted in fresco, in the Chapel of the Podestà of the same city, some scenes from the Old Testament.

Giusto, likewise a painter of Padua, painted in the Chapel of S. Giovanni Battista, without the Church of the Vescovado, not only certain scenes from the Old Testament and the New, but also the Revelations of the Apocalypse of S. John the Evangelist; and in the upper part he made a Paradise containing many choirs of angels and other adornments, wrought with beautiful conceptions. In the Church of S. Antonio he painted in fresco the Chapel of S. Luca; and in a chapel in the Church of the Eremite Friars of S. Augustine he painted the liberal arts, with the virtues and vices beside them, and likewise those who have been celebrated for their virtues, and those who have fallen by reason of their vices into the extreme of misery and into the lowest depth of Hell.

There was working in Padua, in this man's time, Stefano, a painter of Ferrara, who, as has been said elsewhere, adorned with various pictures the chapel and the tomb wherein is the body of S. Anthony, and also painted the Virgin Mary that is called the Vergine del Pilastro.



VITTORE SCARPACCIA (CARPACCIO): THE VISION OF S. URSULA
(Venice: Accademia, 578. Canvas)

[View larger image](#)

Another man who was held in esteem in the same times was Vincenzo, a painter of Brescia, according to the account of Filarete, as was also Girolamo Campagnola, another Paduan painter, and a disciple of Squarcione. Then Giulio, son of Girolamo, made many beautiful works of painting, illumination, and copper-engraving, both in Padua and in other places. In the same city of Padua many things were wrought by Niccolò Moreto, who lived eighty years, and never ceased to exercise his art.

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S. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
(After the panel by Vittore Scarpaccia [Carpaccio].
Venice: S. Giorgio Segli Schiavoni)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

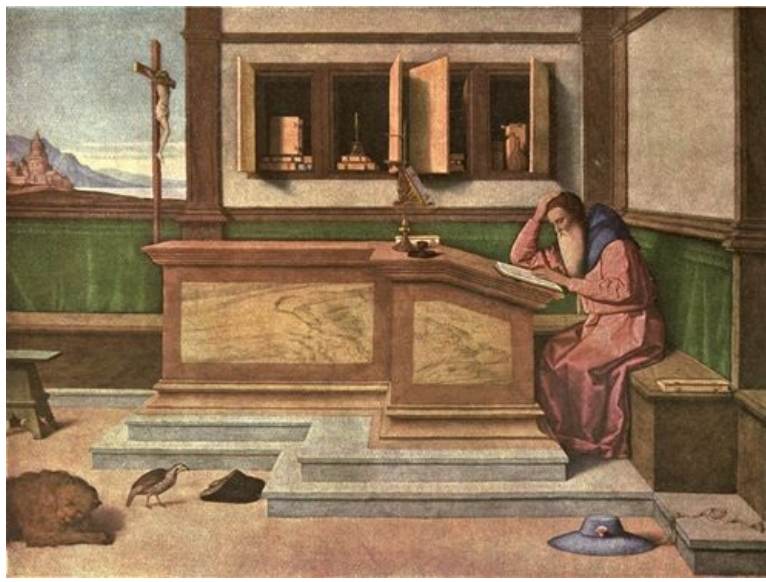
Besides these there were many others, who were connected with Gentile and Giovanni Bellini; but Vittore Scarpaccia was truly the first among them who made works of importance. His first works were in the Scuola of S. Orsola, where he painted on canvas the greater part of the stories that are there, representing the life and death of that Saint; the labours of which pictures he contrived to carry out so well and with such great diligence and art, that he acquired thereby the name of a very good and practised master. This, so it is said, was the reason that the people of Milan caused him to paint a panel in distemper with many figures for the Friars Minor, in their Chapel of S. Ambrogio. On the altar of the Risen Christ in the Church of S. Antonio he painted the scene of Christ appearing to the Magdalene and the other Maries, in which he made a very beautiful view in perspective of a landscape receding into the distance; and in another chapel he painted the story of the Martyrs—that is, their crucifixion—in which work he made more than three hundred figures, what with the large and the small, besides a number of horses and trees, an open Heaven, figures both nude and clothed in diverse attitudes, many foreshortenings, and so many other things, that it can be seen that he did not execute it without extraordinary labour. For the altar of the Madonna, in the Church of S. Giobbe in Canareio, he painted her presenting the Infant Christ to Simeon, and depicted the Madonna herself standing, and Simeon in his cope between two ministers clothed as Cardinals; behind the Virgin are two women, one of whom has two doves, and below are three boys, who are playing on a lute, a serpent, and a lyre, or rather a viol; and the colouring of the whole panel is very charming and beautiful. And, in truth, Vittore was a very diligent and practised master, and many pictures by his hand that are in Venice, both portraits from life and other kinds, are much esteemed for works wrought in those times. He taught his art to two brothers of his own, who imitated him closely, one being Lazzaro, and the other Sebastiano; and by their hand is a panel on the altar of the Virgin in the Church of the Nuns of the Corpus Domini, showing her seated between S. Catherine and S. Martha, with other female saints, two angels who are sounding instruments, and a very beautiful view of buildings in perspective as a background to the whole work, of which we have the original drawings, by the hand of these men, in our book.

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Another passing good painter in the time of these masters was Vincenzio Catena, who occupied himself much more with making portraits from the life than with any other sort of painting; and, in truth, some that are to be seen by his hand are marvellous—among others, that of a German of the Fugger family, a man of rank and importance, who was then living in the Fondaco de' Tedeschi at Venice, was painted with great vivacity.

Another man who made many works in Venice, about the same time, was a disciple of Giovanni Bellini, Giovan Battista da Conigliano, by whose hand is a panel on the altar of S. Pietro Martire in the aforesaid Church of the Nuns of the Corpus Domini, containing the said Saint, S. Nicholas, and S. Benedict, with landscapes in perspective, an angel tuning a cithern, and many little figures more than passing good. And if this man had not died young, it may be believed that he would have equalled his master.

The name of a master not otherwise than good, likewise, in the same art and at the same time, was enjoyed by Marco Basarini, who, painting in Venice, where he was born from a Greek father and mother, executed in S. Francesco della Vigna a panel with a Deposition of Christ from the Cross, and another panel in the Church of S. Giobbe, representing Christ in the Garden, and below Him the three Apostles, who are sleeping, and S. Francis, S. Dominic, and two other saints; but what was most praised in this work was a landscape with many little figures wrought with good grace. In that same church the same Marco painted S. Bernardino on a rock, with other saints.



VINCENZIO CATENA (DI BIAGIO): S. JEROME IN HIS STUDY
(London: National Gallery, 694. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

Giovanetto Cordegliaghi made an infinity of devotional pictures in the same city; nay, he scarcely worked at anything else, and, in truth, he had in this sort of painting a very delicate and sweet manner, no little better than that of the aforesaid masters. In S. Pantaleone, in a chapel beside the principal one, this man painted S. Peter making disputation with two other saints, who are wearing most beautiful draperies, and are wrought with a beautiful manner.

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GIOVAN BATTISTA DA CONIGLIANO (CIMA): TOBIT AND THE ANGEL (DETAIL)
(Venice: Accademia, 592. Panel transferred to Canvas)

[View larger image](#)

Marco Bassiti was in good repute almost at the same time, and by his hand is a large panel in the Church of the Carthusian Monks at Venice, in which he painted Christ between Peter and Andrew on the Sea of Tiberias, with the sons of Zebedee; making therein an arm of the sea, a mountain, and part of a city, with many persons in the form of little figures. Many other works by this man could be enumerated, but let it be enough to have spoken of this one, which is the best.

Bartolommeo Vivarini of Murano also acquitted himself very well in the works that he made, as may be seen, besides many other examples, in the panel that he executed for the altar of S. Luigi in the Church of SS. Giovanni e Polo; in which panel he portrayed the said S. Luigi seated, wearing the cope, with S. Gregory, S. Sebastian, and S. Dominic on one side of him, and on the

other side S. Nicholas, S. Jerome, and S. Rocco, and above them half-length figures of other saints.

Another man who executed his pictures very well, taking much delight in counterfeiting things of nature, figures, and distant landscapes, was Giovanni Mansueti, who, imitating the works of Gentile Bellini not a little, made many pictures in Venice. At the upper end of the Audience Chamber of the Scuola of S. Marco he painted a S. Mark preaching on the Piazza; in which picture he painted the façade of the church, and, among the multitude of men and women who are listening to the Saint, Turks, Greeks, and the faces of men of diverse nations, with bizarre costumes. In the same place, in another scene wherein he painted S. Mark healing a sick man, he made a perspective view of two staircases and many loggie. In another picture, near to that one, he made a S. Mark converting an infinite multitude to the faith of Christ; in this he made an open temple, with a Crucifix on an altar, and throughout the whole work there are diverse persons with a beautiful variety of expression, dress, and features.

The work in the same place was continued after him by Vittore Bellini, who made a view of buildings in perspective, which is passing good, in a scene wherein S. Mark is taken prisoner and bound, with a number of figures, in which he imitated his predecessors. After these men came Bartolommeo Montagna of Vicenza, a passing good painter, who lived ever in Venice and made many pictures there; and he painted a panel in the Church of S. Maria d' Artone at Padua. Benedetto Diana, likewise, was a painter no less esteemed than the masters mentioned above, as is proved, to say nothing of his other works, by those from his hand that are in S. Francesco della Vigna at Venice, where, for the altar of S. Giovanni, he painted that Saint standing between two other saints, each of whom has a book in his hand.

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Another man who was accounted a good master was Giovanni Buonconsigli, who painted a picture in the Church of SS. Giovanni e Polo for the altar of S. Tommaso d' Aquino, showing that Saint surrounded by many figures, to whom he is reading the Holy Scriptures; and he made therein a perspective view of buildings, which is not otherwise than worthy of praise. There also lived in Venice throughout almost the whole course of his life the Florentine sculptor, Simon Bianco, as did Tullio Lombardo, an excellent master of intaglio.

In Lombardy, likewise, there were excellent sculptors in Bartolommeo Clemente of Reggio and Agostino Busto; and, in intaglio, Jacopo Davanzo of Milan, with Gasparo and Girolamo Misceroni. In Brescia there was a man who was able and masterly at working in fresco, called Vincenzio Verchio, who acquired a very great name in his native place by reason of his beautiful works. The same did Girolamo Romanino, a fine master of design, as is clearly demonstrated by the works made by him in Brescia and in the neighbourhood for many miles around. And not inferior to these—nay, even superior—was Alessandro Moretto, who was very delicate in his colouring, and much the friend of diligence, as the works made by him demonstrate.



CHRIST ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES
(After the panel by Marco Bassiti [Basaiti].
Venice: Accademia, 69)

Anderson

[View larger image](#)

But to return to Verona, in which city there have flourished excellent craftsmen, even as they flourish more than ever to-day; there, in times past, were excellent masters in Francesco Bonsignori and Francesco Caroto, and afterwards Maestro Zeno of Verona, who painted the panel of S. Marino in Rimini, with two others, all with much diligence. But the man who surpassed all others in making certain marvellous figures from life was Il Moro of Verona, or rather, as others called him, Francesco Turbido, by whose hand is a portrait now in the house of Monsignor de' Martini at Venice, of a gentleman of the house of Badovaro, painted in the character of a shepherd; which portrait appears absolutely alive, and can challenge comparison with any of the great number that have been seen in these parts. Battista d' Angelo, son-in-law of this Francesco, is also so lovely in colouring and so masterly in drawing, that he is rather superior than inferior to his father-in-law. But since it is not my intention to speak at present of the living, it must suffice me to have spoken in this place of some with regard to whose lives, as I said at the beginning of this Life, I have not been able to discover every particular with equal minuteness, to the end that their talents and merits may receive from me at least all that little which I, who would fain make it much, am able to give them.

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PIETÀ

(After the panel by Giovanni Buonconsigli.
Vincenza: Pinacoteca, 22)

Alinari

[View larger image](#)

JACOPO, CALLED L'INDACO

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LIFE OF JACOPO, CALLED L'INDACO

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PAINTER

Jacopo, called L'Indaco, who was a disciple of Domenico del Ghirlandajo, and who worked in Rome with Pinturicchio, was a passing good master in his day; and although he did not make many works, yet those that he did make are worthy of commendation. Nor is there any need to marvel that only very few works issued from his hands, for the reason that, being a gay and humorous fellow and a lover of good cheer, he harboured but few thoughts and would never work save when he could not help it; and so he used to say that doing nothing else but labour, without

taking a little pleasure in the world, was no life for a Christian. He lived in close intimacy with Michelagnolo, for when that craftsman, supremely excellent beyond all who have ever lived, wished to have some recreation after his studies and his continuous labours of body and mind, no one was more pleasing to him for the purpose or more suited to his humour than this man.

Jacopo worked for many years in Rome, or, to be more precise, he lived many years in Rome, working very little. By his hand, in that city, is the first chapel on the right hand as one enters the Church of S. Agostino by the door of the façade; on the vaulting of which chapel are the Apostles receiving the Holy Spirit, and on the wall below are two stories of Christ—in one His taking Peter and Andrew from their nets, and in the other the Feast of Simon and the Magdalene, in which there is a ceiling of planks and beams, counterfeited very well. In the panel of the same chapel, which he painted in oil, is a Dead Christ, wrought and executed with much mastery and diligence. In the Trinità at Rome, likewise, there is a little panel by his hand with the Coronation of Our Lady. But what need is there to say more about this man? What more, indeed, is there to say? It is enough that he loved gossiping as much as he always hated working and painting.

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Now seeing that, as has been said, Michelagnolo used to take pleasure in this man's chattering and in the jokes that he was ever making, he kept him almost always at his table; but one day Jacopo wearied him—as such fellows more often than not do come to weary their friends and patrons with their incessant babbling, so often ill-timed and senseless; babbling, I call it, for reasonable talk it cannot be called, since for the most part there is neither reason nor judgment in such people—and Michelagnolo, who, perchance, had other thoughts in his mind at the time and wished to get rid of him, sent him to buy some figs; and no sooner had Jacopo left the house than Michelagnolo bolted the door behind him, determined not to open to him when he came back. L'Indaco, then, on returning from the market-square, perceived, after having knocked at the door for a time in vain, that Michelagnolo did not intend to open to him; whereupon, flying into a rage, he took the figs and the leaves and spread them all over the threshold of the door. This done, he went his way and for many months refused to speak to Michelagnolo; but at last, becoming reconciled with him, he was more his friend than ever. Finally, having reached the age of sixty-eight, he died in Rome.

Not unlike Jacopo was a younger brother of his, whose proper name was Francesco, although he too was afterwards called L'Indaco by way of surname; and he, likewise, was a painter, and more than passing good. He was not unlike Jacopo—I mean, in his unwillingness to work (to say the least), and in his love of talking—but in one respect he surpassed Jacopo, for he was ever speaking evil of everyone and decrying the works of every craftsman. This man, after having wrought certain things in Montepulciano both in painting and in clay, painted a little panel for the Audience Chamber of the Company of the Nunziata in Arezzo, containing an Annunciation, and a God the Father in Heaven surrounded by many angels in the form of children. And in the same city, on the first occasion when Duke Alessandro went there, he made a most beautiful triumphal arch, with many figures in relief, at the gate of the Palazzo de' Signori; and also, in competition with other painters who executed a number of other works for the entry of the said Duke, the scenery for the representation of a play, which was held to be very beautiful. Afterwards, having gone to Rome at the time when the Emperor Charles V was expected there, he made some figures in clay, and a coat of arms in fresco for the Roman people on the Campidoglio, which was much extolled. But the best work that ever issued from the hands of this master, and the most highly praised, was a little study wrought in stucco for the Duchess Margherita of Austria in the Palace of the Medici at Rome—a thing so beautiful and so ornate that there is nothing better to be seen; nor do I believe that it is possible, in a certain sense, to do with silver what L'Indaco did in this work with stucco. From these things it may be judged that if this man had taken pleasure in work and had made use of his intelligence, he would have become excellent.

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Francesco drew passing well, but Jacopo much better, as may be seen in our book.

LUCA SIGNORELLI OF CORTONA

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LIFE OF LUCA SIGNORELLI OF CORTONA

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[*LUCA DA CORTONA*]

PAINTER

Luca Signorelli, an excellent painter, of whom, according to the order of time, we have now to speak, was more famous throughout Italy in his day, and his works were held in greater price than has ever been the case with any other master at any time whatsoever, for the reason that in the works that he executed in painting he showed the true method of making nudes, and how they can be caused, although only with art and difficulty, to appear alive. He was a pupil and

disciple of Piero dal Borgo a San Sepolcro, and greatly did he strive in his youth to imitate his master, and even to surpass him; and the while that he was working with Piero at Arezzo, living in the house of his uncle Lazzaro Vasari, as it has been told, he imitated the manner of the said Piero so well that the one could scarcely be distinguished from the other.

The first works of Luca were in S. Lorenzo at Arezzo, where he painted the Chapel of S. Barbara in fresco in the year 1472; and he painted for the Company of S. Caterina, on cloth and in oil, the banner that is borne in processions, and likewise that of the Trinità, although this does not appear to be by the hand of Luca, but by Piero dal Borgo himself. In S. Agostino in the same city he painted the panel of S. Niccola da Tolentino, with most beautiful little scenes, executing the work with good drawing and invention; and in the same place, in the Chapel of the Sacrament, he made two angels wrought in fresco. In the Chapel of the Accolti in the Church of S. Francesco, for Messer Francesco, Doctor of Laws, he painted a panel in which he portrayed the said Messer Francesco with some of his relatives. In this work is a S. Michael weighing souls, who is admirable; and in him there is seen the knowledge of Luca, both in the splendour of his armour and in the reflected lights, and, in short, throughout the whole work. In his hands he placed a pair of scales, in which are nude figures, very beautifully foreshortened, one going up and the other down; and among other ingenious things that are in this picture is a nude figure most skilfully transformed into a devil, with a lizard licking the blood from a wound in its body. Besides this, there is a Madonna with the Child on her lap, with S. Stephen, S. Laurence, S. Catherine, and two angels, of whom one is playing on a lute and the other on a rebec; and all these figures are draped and adorned so beautifully that it is a marvel. But the most miraculous part of this panel is the predella, which is full of Friars of the said S. Catherine in the form of little figures.

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LUCA SIGNORELLI: PAN
(Berlin: Kaiser Friedrich Museum, 79A. Canvas)

[View larger image](#)

In Perugia, also, he made many works; among others, a panel in the Duomo for Messer Jacopo Vannucci of Cortona, Bishop of that city; in which panel are Our Lady, S. Onofrio, S. Ercolano, S. John the Baptist, and S. Stephen, with a most beautiful angel, who is tuning a lute. At Volterra, over the altar of a Company in the Church of S. Francesco, he painted in fresco the Circumcision of Our Lord, which is considered beautiful to a marvel, although the Infant, having been injured by damp, was restored by Sodoma and made much less beautiful than before. And, in truth, it would be sometimes better to leave works half spoilt, when they have been made by men of excellence, rather than to have them retouched by inferior masters. In S. Agostino in the same city he painted a panel in distemper, and the predella of little figures, with stories of the Passion of Christ; and this is held to be extraordinarily beautiful. At S. Maria a Monte he painted a Dead Christ on a panel for the monks of that place; and at Città di Castello a Nativity of Christ in S. Francesco, with a S. Sebastian on another panel in S. Domenico. In S. Margherita, a seat of the Frati del Zoccolo in his native city of Cortona, he painted a Dead Christ, one of the rarest of his works; and for the Company of the Gesù, in the same city, he executed three panels, of which the one that is on the high-altar is marvellous, showing Christ administering the Sacrament to the Apostles, and Judas placing the Host into his wallet. In the Pieve, now called the Vescovado, in the Chapel of the Sacrament, he painted some life-size prophets in fresco; and round the tabernacle are some angels who are opening out a canopy, with S. Jerome and S. Thomas Aquinas at the sides. For the high-altar of the said church he painted a panel with a most beautiful Assumption, and he designed the pictures for the principal round window of the same church; which pictures were afterwards executed by Stagio Sassoli of Arezzo. In Castiglione Aretino he made a Dead Christ, with the Maries, over the Chapel of the Sacrament; and in S. Francesco, at Lucignano, he painted the folding-doors of a press, wherein there is a tree of coral surmounted by a cross. At Siena, in the Chapel of S. Cristofano in S. Agostino, he painted a panel with some saints, in the midst of whom is a S. Christopher in relief.

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Having gone from Siena to Florence in order to see both the works of those masters who were

then living and those of many already dead, he painted for Lorenzo de' Medici certain nude gods on a canvas, for which he was much commended, and a picture of Our Lady with two little prophets in terretta, which is now at Castello, a villa of Duke Cosimo's. These works, both the one and the other, he presented to the said Lorenzo, who would never be beaten by any man in liberality and magnificence. He also painted a round picture of Our Lady, which is in the Audience Chamber of the Captains of the Guelph party—a very beautiful work. At Chiusuri in the district of Siena, the principal seat of the Monks of Monte Oliveto, he painted eleven scenes of the life and acts of S. Benedict on one side of the cloister. And from Cortona he sent some of his works to Montepulciano; to Foiano the panel which is on the high-altar of the Pieve; and other works to other places in Valdichiana. In the Madonna, the principal church of Orvieto, he finished with his own hand the chapel that Fra Giovanni da Fiesole had formerly begun there; in which chapel he painted all the scenes of the end of the world with bizarre and fantastic invention—angels, demons, ruins, earthquakes, fires, miracles of Antichrist, and many other similar things besides, such as nudes, foreshortenings, and many beautiful figures; imagining the terror that there shall be on that last and awful day. By means of this he encouraged all those who have lived after him, insomuch that since then they have found easy the difficulties of that manner; wherefore I do not marvel that the works of Luca were ever very highly extolled by Michelagnolo, nor that in certain parts of his divine Judgment, which he made in the chapel, he should have deigned to avail himself in some measure of the inventions of Luca, as he did in the angels, the demons, the division of the Heavens, and other things, in which Michelagnolo himself imitated Luca's method, as all may see. In this work Luca portrayed himself and many of his friends; Niccolò, Paolo, and Vitellozzo Vitelli, Giovan Paolo and Orazio Baglioni, and others whose names are not known. In the Sacristy of S. Maria at Loreto he painted in fresco the four Evangelists, the four Doctors, and other saints, all very beautiful; and for this work he was liberally rewarded by Pope Sixtus.

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It is said that a son of his, most beautiful in countenance and in person, whom he loved dearly, was killed at Cortona; and that Luca, heart-broken as he was, had him stripped naked, and with the greatest firmness of soul, without lamenting or shedding a tear, portrayed him, to the end that, whenever he might wish, he might be able by means of the work of his own hands to see that which nature had given him and adverse fortune had snatched away.

Being then summoned by the said Pope Sixtus to work in the chapel of his Palace in competition with many other painters, he painted therein two scenes, which are held the best among so many; one is Moses declaring his testament to the Jewish people on having seen the Promised Land, and the other is his death.



THE LAST JUDGMENT
(Detail, after the fresco by Luca Signorelli.
Orvieto: Duomo)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

Finally, having executed works for almost every Prince in Italy, and being now old, he returned to Cortona, where, in those last years of his life, he worked more for pleasure than for any other reason, as one who, being used to labour, neither could nor would stay idle. In this his old age, then, he painted a panel for the Nuns of S. Margherita at Arezzo, and one for the Company of S. Girolamo, which was paid for in part by Messer Niccolò Gamurrini, Doctor of Laws and Auditor of the Ruota,^[9] who is portrayed from life in that panel, kneeling before the Madonna, to whom he is being presented by a S. Nicholas who is in the same panel; there are also S. Donatus and S. Stephen, and lower down a nude S. Jerome, and a David who is singing to a psaltery; and also two prophets, who, as it appears from the scrolls that they have in their hands, are speaking about the Conception. This work was brought from Cortona to Arezzo on the shoulders of the men of that Company; and Luca, old as he was, insisted on coming to set it in place, and partly also in order to revisit his friends and relatives. And since he lodged in the house of the Vasari, in which I then was, a little boy of eight years old, I remember that the good old man, who was most

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gracious and courteous, having heard from the master who was teaching me my first letters, that I gave my attention to nothing in lesson-time save to drawing figures, I remember, I say, that he turned to my father Antonio and said to him: "Antonio, if you wish little Giorgio not to become backward, by all means let him learn to draw, for, even were he to devote himself to letters, design cannot be otherwise than helpful, honourable, and advantageous to him, as it is to every gentleman." Then, turning to me, who was standing in front of him, he said: "Mind your lessons, little kinsman." He said many other things about me, which I withhold, for the reason that I know that I have failed by a great measure to justify the opinion which the good old man had of me. And since he heard, as was true, that the blood used to flow from my nose at that age in such quantities that this left me sometimes half dead, with infinite lovingness he bound a jasper round my neck with his own hand; and this memory of Luca will stay for ever fixed in my mind. The said panel set in place, he returned to Cortona, accompanied for a great part of the way by many citizens, friends, and relatives, as was due to the excellence of Luca, who always lived rather as a noble and a man of rank than as a painter.

About the same time a palace had been built for Cardinal Silvio Passerini of Cortona, half a mile beyond the city, by Benedetto Caporali, a painter of Perugia, who, delighting in architecture, had written a commentary on Vitruvius a short time before; and the said Cardinal determined to have almost the whole of it painted. Wherefore Benedetto, putting his hand to this with the aid of Maso Papacello of Cortona (who was his disciple and had also learnt not a little from Giulio Romano, as will be told), of Tommaso, and of other disciples and lads, did not cease until he had painted it almost all over in fresco. But the Cardinal wishing to have some painting by the hand of Luca as well, he, old as he was, and hindered by palsy, painted in fresco, on the altar-wall of the chapel of that palace, the scene of S. John the Baptist baptizing the Saviour; but he was not able to finish it completely, for while still working at it he died, having reached the age of eighty-two.

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Luca was a man of most excellent character, true and loving with his friends, sweet and amiable in his dealings with every man, and, above all, courteous to all who had need of him, and kindly in teaching his disciples. He lived splendidly, and he took delight in clothing himself well. And for these good qualities he was ever held in the highest veneration both in his own country and abroad.

And so, with the end of this master's life, which was in 1521, we will bring to an end the Second Part of these Lives; concluding with Luca, as the man who, with his profound mastery of design, particularly in nudes, and with his grace in invention and in the composition of scenes, opened to the majority of craftsmen the way to the final perfection of art, to which those men who followed were afterwards enabled to add the crown, of whom we are henceforward to speak.

THE THIRD PART OF THE LIVES OF THE SCULPTORS, PAINTERS, AND ARCHITECTS, WHO
HAVE LIVED FROM CIMABUE TO OUR OWN DAY. WRITTEN BY MESSER GIORGIO VASARI,
PAINTER AND ARCHITECT OF AREZZO

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD PART

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Truly great was the advancement conferred on the arts of architecture, painting, and sculpture by those excellent masters of whom we have written hitherto, in the Second Part of these Lives, for to the achievements of the early masters they added rule, order, proportion, draughtsmanship, and manner; not, indeed, in complete perfection, but with so near an approach to the truth that the masters of the third age, of whom we are henceforward to speak, were enabled, by means of their light, to aspire still higher and attain to that supreme perfection which we see in the most highly prized and most celebrated of our modern works. But to the end that the nature of the improvement brought about by the aforesaid craftsmen may be even more clearly understood, it will certainly not be out of place to explain in a few words the five additions that I have named, and to give a succinct account of the origin of that true excellence which, having surpassed the age of the ancients, makes the modern so glorious.

Rule, then, in architecture, was the process of taking measurements from antiquities and studying the ground-plans of ancient edifices for the construction of modern buildings. Order was the separating of one style from another, so that each body should receive its proper members, with no more interchanging between Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Tuscan. Proportion was the universal law applying both to architecture and to sculpture, that all bodies should be made correct and true, with the members in proper harmony; and so, also, in painting. Draughtsmanship was the imitation of the most beautiful parts of nature in all figures, whether in sculpture or in painting; and for this it is necessary to have a hand and a brain able to reproduce with absolute accuracy and precision, on a level surface—whether by drawing on paper, or on panel, or on some other level surface—everything that the eye sees; and the same is true of relief in sculpture. Manner then attained to the greatest beauty from the practice which arose of constantly copying the most beautiful objects, and joining together these most beautiful things, hands, heads, bodies, and legs, so as to make a figure of the greatest possible beauty. This practice was carried out in every work for all figures, and for that reason it is called the beautiful manner.

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These things had not been done by Giotto or by the other early craftsmen, although they had

discovered the rudiments of all these difficulties, and had touched them on the surface; as in their drawing, which was sounder and more true to nature than it had been before, and likewise in harmony of colouring and in the grouping of figures in scenes, and in many other respects of which enough has been said. Now although the masters of the second age improved our arts greatly with regard to all the qualities mentioned above, yet these were not made by them so perfect as to succeed in attaining to complete perfection, for there was wanting in their rule a certain freedom which, without being of the rule, might be directed by the rule and might be able to exist without causing confusion or spoiling the order; which order had need of an invention abundant in every respect, and of a certain beauty maintained in every least detail, so as to reveal all that order with more adornment. In proportion there was wanting a certain correctness of judgment, by means of which their figures, without having been measured, might have, in due relation to their dimensions, a grace exceeding measurement. In their drawing there was not the perfection of finish, because, although they made an arm round and a leg straight, the muscles in these were not revealed with that sweet and facile grace which hovers midway between the seen and the unseen, as is the case with the flesh of living figures; nay, they were crude and excoriated, which made them displeasing to the eye and gave hardness to the manner. This last was wanting in the delicacy that comes from making all figures light and graceful, particularly those of women and children, with the limbs true to nature, as in the case of men, but veiled with a plumpness and fleshiness that should not be awkward, as they are in nature, but refined by draughtsmanship and judgment. They also lacked our abundance of beautiful costumes, our great number and variety of bizarre fancies, loveliness of colouring, wide knowledge of buildings, and distance and variety in landscapes. And although many of them, such as Andrea Verrocchio and Antonio del Pollaiuolo, and many others more modern, began to seek to make their figures with more study, so as to reveal in them better draughtsmanship, with a degree of imitation more correct and truer to nature, nevertheless the whole was not yet there, even though they had one very certain assurance—namely, that they were advancing towards the good, and their figures were thus approved according to the standard of the works of the ancients, as was seen when Andrea Verrocchio restored in marble the legs and arms of the Marsyas in the house of the Medici in Florence. But they lacked a certain finish and finality of perfection in the feet, hands, hair, and beards, although the limbs as a whole are in accordance with the antique and have a certain correct harmony in the proportions. Now if they had had that minuteness of finish which is the perfection and bloom of art, they would also have had a resolute boldness in their works; and from this there would have followed delicacy, refinement, and supreme grace, which are the qualities produced by the perfection of art in beautiful figures, whether in relief or in painting; but these qualities they did not have, although they give proof of diligent striving. That finish, and that certain something that they lacked, they could not achieve so readily, seeing that study, when it is used in that way to obtain finish, gives dryness to the manner.

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After them, indeed, their successors were enabled to attain to it through seeing excavated out of the earth certain antiquities cited by Pliny as amongst the most famous, such as the Laocoon, the Hercules, the Great Torso of the Belvedere, and likewise the Venus, the Cleopatra, the Apollo, and an endless number of others, which, both with their sweetness and their severity, with their fleshy roundness copied from the greatest beauties of nature, and with certain attitudes which involve no distortion of the whole figure but only a movement of certain parts, and are revealed with a most perfect grace, brought about the disappearance of a certain dryness, hardness, and sharpness of manner, which had been left to our art by the excessive study of Piero della Francesca, Lazzaro Vasari, Alesso Baldovinetti, Andrea dal Castagno, Pesello, Ercole Ferrarese, Giovanni Bellini, Cosimo Rosselli, the Abbot of S. Clemente, Domenico del Ghirlandajo, Sandro Botticelli, Andrea Mantegna, Filippo, and Luca Signorelli. These masters sought with great efforts to do the impossible in art by means of labour, particularly in foreshortenings and in things unpleasant to the eye, which were as painful to see as they were difficult for them to execute. And although their works were for the most part well drawn and free from errors, yet there was wanting a certain resolute spirit which was never seen in them, and that sweet harmony of colouring which the Bolognese Francia and Pietro Perugino first began to show in their works; at the sight of which people ran like madmen to this new and more lifelike beauty, for it seemed to them quite certain that nothing better could ever be done. But their error was afterwards clearly proved by the works of Leonardo da Vinci, who, giving a beginning to that third manner which we propose to call the modern—besides the force and boldness of his drawing, and the extreme subtlety wherewith he counterfeited all the minutenesses of nature exactly as they are—with good rule, better order, right proportion, perfect drawing, and divine grace, abounding in resources and having a most profound knowledge of art, may be truly said to have endowed his figures with motion and breath.

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There followed after him, although at some distance, Giorgione da Castelfranco, who obtained a beautiful gradation of colour in his pictures, and gave a sublime movement to his works by means of a certain darkness of shadow, very well conceived; and not inferior to him in giving force, relief, sweetness, and grace to his pictures, with his colouring, was Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco. But more than all did the most gracious Raffaello da Urbino, who, studying the labours of the old masters and those of the modern, took the best from them, and, having gathered it together, enriched the art of painting with that complete perfection which was shown in ancient times by the figures of Apelles and Zeuxis; nay, even more, if we may make bold to say it, as might be proved if we could compare their works with his. Wherefore nature was left vanquished by his colours; and his invention was facile and peculiar to himself, as may be perceived by all who see his painted stories, which are as vivid as writings, for in them he showed us places and buildings true to reality, and the features and costumes both of our own people and of strangers,

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according to his pleasure; not to mention his gift of imparting grace to the heads of young men, old men, and women, reserving modesty for the modest, wantonness for the wanton, and for children now mischief in their eyes, now playfulness in their attitudes; and the folds of his draperies, also, are neither too simple nor too intricate, but of such a kind that they appear real.

In the same manner, but sweeter in colouring and not so bold, there followed Andrea del Sarto, who may be called a rare painter, for his works are free from errors. Nor is it possible to describe the charming vivacity seen in the works of Antonio da Correggio, who painted hair in detail, not in the precise manner used by the masters before him, which was constrained, sharp, and dry, but soft and feathery, with each single hair visible, such was his facility in making them; and they seemed like gold and more beautiful than real hair, which is surpassed by that which he painted.

The same did Francesco Mazzuoli of Parma, who excelled him in many respects in grace, adornment, and beauty of manner, as may be seen in many of his pictures, which smile on whoever beholds them; and even as there is a perfect illusion of sight in the eyes, so there is perceived the beating of the pulse, according as it best pleased his brush. But whosoever shall consider the mural paintings of Polidoro and Maturino, will see figures in attitudes that seem beyond the bounds of possibility, and he will wonder with amazement how it can be possible, not to describe with the tongue, which is easy, but to express with the brush the tremendous conceptions which they put into execution with such mastery and dexterity, in representing the deeds of the Romans exactly as they were.

And how many there are who, having given life to their figures with their colours, are now dead, such as Il Rosso, Fra Sebastiano, Giulio Romano, and Perino del Vaga! For of the living, who are known to all through their own efforts, there is no need to speak here. But what most concerns the whole world of art is that they have now brought it to such perfection, and made it so easy for him who possesses draughtsmanship, invention, and colouring, that, whereas those early masters took six years to paint one panel, our modern masters can paint six in one year, as I can testify with the greatest confidence both from seeing and from doing; and our pictures are clearly much more highly finished and perfect than those executed in former times by masters of account.

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But he who bears the palm from both the living and the dead, transcending and eclipsing all others, is the divine Michelagnolo Buonarroti, who holds the sovereignty not merely of one of these arts, but of all three together. This master surpasses and excels not only all those moderns who have almost vanquished nature, but even those most famous ancients who without a doubt did so gloriously surpass her; and in his own self he triumphs over moderns, ancients, and nature, who could scarcely conceive anything so strange and so difficult that he would not be able, by the force of his most divine intellect and by means of his industry, draughtsmanship, art, judgment, and grace, to excel it by a great measure; and that not only in painting and in the use of colour, under which title are comprised all forms, and all bodies upright or not upright, palpable or impalpable, visible or invisible, but also in the highest perfection of bodies in the round, with the point of his chisel. And from a plant so beautiful and so fruitful, through his labours, there have already spread branches so many and so noble, that, besides having filled the world in such unwonted profusion with the most luscious fruits, they have also given the final form to these three most noble arts. And so great and so marvellous is his perfection, that it may be safely and surely said that his statues are in all their parts much more beautiful than the ancient; for if we compare the heads, hands, arms, and feet shaped by the one with those of the others, we see in his a greater depth and solidity, a grace more completely graceful, and a much more absolute perfection, accomplished with a manner so facile in the overcoming of difficulties, that it is not possible ever to see anything better. And the same may be believed of his pictures, which; if we chanced to have some by the most famous Greeks and Romans, so that we might compare them face to face, would prove to be as much higher in value and more noble as his sculptures are clearly superior to all those of the ancients.

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But if we admire so greatly those most famous masters who, spurred by such extraordinary rewards and by such good-fortune, gave life to their works, how much more should we not celebrate and exalt to the heavens those rare intellects who, not only without reward, but in miserable poverty, bring forth fruits so precious? We must believe and declare, then, that if, in this our age, there were a due meed of remuneration, there would be without a doubt works greater and much better than were ever wrought by the ancients. But the fact that they have to grapple more with famine than with fame, keeps our hapless intellects submerged, and, to the shame and disgrace of those who could raise them up but give no thought to it, prevents them from becoming known.

And let this be enough to have said on this subject; for it is now time to return to the Lives, and to treat in detail of all those who have executed famous works in this third manner, the creator of which was Leonardo da Vinci, with whom we will now begin.

PAINTER AND SCULPTOR OF FLORENCE

The greatest gifts are often seen, in the course of nature, rained by celestial influences on human creatures; and sometimes, in supernatural fashion, beauty, grace, and talent are united beyond measure in one single person, in a manner that to whatever such an one turns his attention, his every action is so divine, that, surpassing all other men, it makes itself clearly known as a thing bestowed by God (as it is), and not acquired by human art. This was seen by all mankind in Leonardo da Vinci, in whom, besides a beauty of body never sufficiently extolled, there was an infinite grace in all his actions; and so great was his genius, and such its growth, that to whatever difficulties he turned his mind, he solved them with ease. In him was great bodily strength, joined to dexterity, with a spirit and courage ever royal and magnanimous; and the fame of his name so increased, that not only in his lifetime was he held in esteem, but his reputation became even greater among posterity after his death.

Truly marvellous and celestial was Leonardo, the son of Ser Piero da Vinci; and in learning and in the rudiments of letters he would have made great proficiencie, if he had not been so variable and unstable, for he set himself to learn many things, and then, after having begun them, abandoned them. Thus, in arithmetic, during the few months that he studied it, he made so much progress, that, by continually suggesting doubts and difficulties to the master who was teaching him, he would very often bewilder him. He gave some little attention to music, and quickly resolved to learn to play the lyre, as one who had by nature a spirit most lofty and full of refinement: wherefore he sang divinely to that instrument, improvising upon it. Nevertheless, although he occupied himself with such a variety of things, he never ceased drawing and working in relief, pursuits which suited his fancy more than any other. Ser Piero, having observed this, and having considered the loftiness of his intellect, one day took some of his drawings and carried them to Andrea del Verrocchio, who was much his friend, and besought him straitly to tell him whether Leonardo, by devoting himself to drawing, would make any proficiencie. Andrea was astonished to see the extraordinary beginnings of Leonardo, and urged Ser Piero that he should make him study it; wherefore he arranged with Leonardo that he should enter the workshop of Andrea, which Leonardo did with the greatest willingness in the world. And he practised not one branch of art only, but all those in which drawing played a part; and having an intellect so divine and marvellous that he was also an excellent geometrician, he not only worked in sculpture, making in his youth, in clay, some heads of women that are smiling, of which plaster casts are still taken, and likewise some heads of boys which appeared to have issued from the hand of a master; but in architecture, also, he made many drawings both of ground-plans and of other designs of buildings; and he was the first, although but a youth, who suggested the plan of reducing the river Arno to a navigable canal from Pisa to Florence. He made designs of flour-mills, fulling-mills, and engines, which might be driven by the force of water: and since he wished that his profession should be painting, he studied much in drawing after nature, and sometimes in making models of figures in clay, over which he would lay soft pieces of cloth dipped in clay, and then set himself patiently to draw them on a certain kind of very fine Rheims cloth, or prepared linen: and he executed them in black and white with the point of his brush, so that it was a marvel, as some of them by his hand, which I have in our book of drawings, still bear witness; besides which, he drew on paper with such diligence and so well, that there is no one who has ever equalled him in perfection of finish; and I have one, a head drawn with the style in chiaroscuro, which is divine.

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And there was infused in that brain such grace from God, and a power of expression in such sublime accord with the intellect and memory that served it, and he knew so well how to express his conceptions by draughtsmanship, that he vanquished with his discourse, and confuted with his reasoning, every valiant wit. And he was continually making models and designs to show men how to remove mountains with ease, and how to bore them in order to pass from one level to another; and by means of levers, windlasses, and screws, he showed the way to raise and draw great weights, together with methods for emptying harbours, and pumps for removing water from low places, things which his brain never ceased from devising; and of these ideas and labours many drawings may be seen, scattered abroad among our craftsmen; and I myself have seen not a few. He even went so far as to waste his time in drawing knots of cords, made according to an order, that from one end all the rest might follow till the other, so as to fill a round; and one of these is to be seen in stamp, most difficult and beautiful, and in the middle of it are these words, "Leonardus Vinci Accademia." And among these models and designs, there was one by which he often demonstrated to many ingenious citizens, who were then governing Florence, how he proposed to raise the Temple of S. Giovanni in Florence, and place steps under it, without damaging the building; and with such strong reasons did he urge this, that it appeared possible, although each man, after he had departed, would recognize for himself the impossibility of so vast an undertaking.

He was so pleasing in conversation, that he attracted to himself the hearts of men. And although he possessed, one might say, nothing, and worked little, he always kept servants and horses, in which latter he took much delight, and particularly in all other animals, which he managed with the greatest love and patience; and this he showed when often passing by the places where birds were sold, for, taking them with his own hand out of their cages, and having paid to those who sold them the price that was asked, he let them fly away into the air, restoring to them their lost liberty. For which reason nature was pleased so to favour him, that, wherever he turned his

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thought, brain, and mind, he displayed such divine power in his works, that, in giving them their perfection, no one was ever his peer in readiness, vivacity, excellence, beauty, and grace.

It is clear that Leonardo, through his comprehension of art, began many things and never finished one of them, since it seemed to him that the hand was not able to attain to the perfection of art in carrying out the things which he imagined; for the reason that he conceived in idea difficulties so subtle and so marvellous, that they could never be expressed by the hands, be they ever so excellent. And so many were his caprices, that, philosophizing of natural things, he set himself to seek out the properties of herbs, going on even to observe the motions of the heavens, the path of the moon, and the courses of the sun.

He was placed, then, as has been said, in his boyhood, at the instance of Ser Piero, to learn art with Andrea del Verrocchio, who was making a panel-picture of S. John baptizing Christ, when Leonardo painted an angel who was holding some garments; and although he was but a lad, Leonardo executed it in such a manner that his angel was much better than the figures of Andrea; which was the reason that Andrea would never again touch colour, in disdain that a child should know more than he.



ANDREA VERROCCHIO: THE BAPTISM IN JORDAN
(Florence: Accademia, 71. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

He was commissioned to make a cartoon for a door-hanging that was to be executed in Flanders, woven in gold and silk, to be sent to the King of Portugal, of Adam and Eve sinning in the Earthly Paradise; wherein Leonardo drew with the brush in chiaroscuro, with the lights in lead-white, a meadow of infinite kinds of herbage, with some animals, of which, in truth, it may be said that for diligence and truth to nature divine wit could not make it so perfect. In it is the fig-tree, together with the foreshortening of the leaves and the varying aspects of the branches, wrought with such lovingness that the brain reels at the mere thought how a man could have such patience. There is also a palm-tree which has the radiating crown of the palm, executed with such great and marvellous art that nothing save the patience and intellect of Leonardo could avail to do it. This work was carried no farther; wherefore the cartoon is now at Florence, in the blessed house of the Magnificent Ottaviano de' Medici, presented to him not long ago by the uncle of Leonardo.

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It is said that Ser Piero da Vinci, being at his villa, was besought as a favour, by a peasant of his, who had made a buckler with his own hands out of a fig-tree that he had cut down on the farm, to have it painted for him in Florence, which he did very willingly, since the countryman was very skilful at catching birds and fishing, and Ser Piero made much use of him in these pursuits. Thereupon, having had it taken to Florence, without saying a word to Leonardo as to whose it was, he asked him to paint something upon it. Leonardo, having one day taken this buckler in his hands, and seeing it twisted, badly made, and clumsy, straightened it by the fire, and, having given it to a turner, from the rude and clumsy thing that it was, caused it to be made smooth and even. And afterwards, having given it a coat of gesso, and having prepared it in his own way, he began to think what he could paint upon it, that might be able to terrify all who should come upon it, producing the same effect as once did the head of Medusa. For this purpose, then, Leonardo carried to a room of his own into which no one entered save himself alone, lizards great and small, crickets, serpents, butterflies, grasshoppers, bats, and other strange kinds of suchlike animals, out of the number of which, variously put together, he formed a great ugly creature, most horrible and terrifying, which emitted a poisonous breath and turned the air to flame; and

he made it coming out of a dark and jagged rock, belching forth venom from its open throat, fire from its eyes, and smoke from its nostrils, in so strange a fashion that it appeared altogether a monstrous and horrible thing; and so long did he labour over making it, that the stench of the dead animals in that room was past bearing, but Leonardo did not notice it, so great was the love that he bore towards art. The work being finished, although it was no longer asked for either by the countryman or by his father, Leonardo told the latter that he might send for the buckler at his convenience, since, for his part, it was finished. Ser Piero having therefore gone one morning to the room for the buckler, and having knocked at the door, Leonardo opened to him, telling him to wait a little; and, having gone back into the room, he adjusted the buckler in a good light on the easel, and put to the window, in order to make a soft light, and then he bade him come in to see it. Ser Piero, at the first glance, taken by surprise, gave a sudden start, not thinking that that was the buckler, nor merely painted the form that he saw upon it, and, falling back a step, Leonardo checked him, saying, "This work serves the end for which it was made; take it, then, and carry it away, since this is the effect that it was meant to produce." This thing appeared to Ser Piero nothing short of a miracle, and he praised very greatly the ingenious idea of Leonardo; and then, having privately bought from a pedlar another buckler, painted with a heart transfixed by an arrow, he presented it to the countryman, who remained obliged to him for it as long as he lived. Afterwards, Ser Piero sold the buckler of Leonardo secretly to some merchants in Florence, for a hundred ducats; and in a short time it came into the hands of the Duke of Milan, having been sold to him by the said merchants for three hundred ducats.

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Leonardo then made a picture of Our Lady, a most excellent work, which was in the possession of Pope Clement VII; and, among other things painted therein, he counterfeited a glass vase full of water, containing some flowers, in which, besides its marvellous naturalness, he had imitated the dew-drops on the flowers, so that it seemed more real than the reality. For Antonio Segni, who was very much his friend, he made, on a sheet of paper, a Neptune executed with such careful draughtsmanship that it seemed absolutely alive. In it one saw the ocean troubled, and Neptune's car drawn by sea-horses, with fantastic creatures, marine monsters and winds, and some very beautiful heads of sea-gods. This drawing was presented by Fabio, the son of Antonio, to Messer Giovanni Gaddi, with this epigram:

Pinxit Virgilius Neptunum, pinxit Homerus,
Dum maris undisoni per vada flectit equos.
Mente quidem vates illum conspexit uterque,
Vincius ast oculis; jureque vincit eos.



THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI
(After the panel by Leonardo da Vinci.
Florence: Uffizi, 1252)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

The fancy came to him to paint a picture in oils of the head of a Medusa, with the head attired with a coil of snakes, the most strange and extravagant invention that could ever be imagined; but since it was a work that took time, it remained unfinished, as happened with almost all his things. It is among the rare works of art in the Palace of Duke Cosimo, together with the head of an angel, who is raising one arm in the air, which, coming forward, is foreshortened from the shoulder to the elbow, and with the other he raises the hand to the breast.

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It is an extraordinary thing how that genius, in his desire to give the highest relief to the works that he made, went so far with dark shadows, in order to find the darkest possible grounds, that he sought for blacks which might make deeper shadows and be darker than other blacks, that by their means he might make his lights the brighter; and in the end this method turned out so dark,

that, no light remaining there, his pictures had rather the character of things made to represent an effect of night, than the clear quality of daylight; which all came from seeking to give greater relief, and to achieve the final perfection of art.

He was so delighted when he saw certain bizarre heads of men, with the beard or hair growing naturally, that he would follow one that pleased him a whole day, and so treasured him up in idea, that afterwards, on arriving home, he drew him as if he had had him in his presence. Of this sort there are many heads to be seen, both of women and of men, and I have several of them, drawn by his hand with the pen, in our book of drawings, which I have mentioned so many times; such was that of Amerigo Vespucci, which is a very beautiful head of an old man drawn with charcoal, and likewise that of Scaramuccia, Captain of the Gypsies, which afterwards came into the hands of M. Donato Valdambrini of Arezzo, Canon of S. Lorenzo, left to him by Giambullari.

He began a panel-picture of the Adoration of the Magi, containing many beautiful things, particularly the heads, which was in the house of Amerigo Benci, opposite the Loggia de' Peruzzi; and this, also, remained unfinished, like his other works.

It came to pass that Giovan Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, being dead, and Lodovico Sforza raised to the same rank, in the year 1494, Leonardo was summoned to Milan in great repute to the Duke, who took much delight in the sound of the lyre, to the end that he might play it: and Leonardo took with him that instrument which he had made with his own hands, in great part of silver, in the form of a horse's skull—a thing bizarre and new—in order that the harmony might be of greater volume and more sonorous in tone; with which he surpassed all the musicians who had come together there to play. Besides this, he was the best improviser in verse of his day. The Duke, hearing the marvellous discourse of Leonardo, became so enamoured of his genius, that it was something incredible: and he prevailed upon him by entreaties to paint an altar-panel containing a Nativity, which was sent by the Duke to the Emperor.

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He also painted in Milan, for the Friars of S. Dominic, at S. Maria delle Grazie, a Last Supper, a most beautiful and marvellous thing; and to the heads of the Apostles he gave such majesty and beauty, that he left the head of Christ unfinished, not believing that he was able to give it that divine air which is essential to the image of Christ. This work, remaining thus all but finished, has ever been held by the Milanese in the greatest veneration, and also by strangers as well; for Leonardo imagined and succeeded in expressing that anxiety which had seized the Apostles in wishing to know who should betray their Master. For which reason in all their faces are seen love, fear, and wrath, or rather, sorrow, at not being able to understand the meaning of Christ; which thing excites no less marvel than the sight, in contrast to it, of obstinacy, hatred, and treachery in Judas; not to mention that every least part of the work displays an incredible diligence, seeing that even in the tablecloth the texture of the stuff is counterfeited in such a manner that linen itself could not seem more real.



THE LAST SUPPER
(After the oil fresco by Leonardo da Vinci.
Milan: S. Maria delle Grazie)
M.S.

[View larger image](#)

It is said that the Prior of that place kept pressing Leonardo, in a most importunate manner, to finish the work; for it seemed strange to him to see Leonardo sometimes stand half a day at a time, lost in contemplation, and he would have liked him to go on like the labourers hoeing in his garden, without ever stopping his brush. And not content with this, he complained of it to the Duke, and that so warmly, that he was constrained to send for Leonardo and delicately urged him to work, contriving nevertheless to show him that he was doing all this because of the importunity of the Prior. Leonardo, knowing that the intellect of that Prince was acute and discerning, was pleased to discourse at large with the Duke on the subject, a thing which he had never done with the Prior: and he reasoned much with him about art, and made him understand that men of lofty genius sometimes accomplish the most when they work the least, seeking out inventions with the mind, and forming those perfect ideas which the hands afterwards express and reproduce from the images already conceived in the brain. And he added that two heads were still wanting for him to paint; that of Christ, which he did not wish to seek on earth; and he could not think that it was possible to conceive in the imagination that beauty and heavenly grace

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which should be the mark of God incarnate. Next, there was wanting that of Judas, which was also troubling him, not thinking himself capable of imagining features that should represent the countenance of him who, after so many benefits received, had a mind so cruel as to resolve to betray his Lord, the Creator of the world. However, he would seek out a model for the latter; but if in the end he could not find a better, he should not want that of the importunate and tactless Prior. This thing moved the Duke wondrously to laughter, and he said that Leonardo had a thousand reasons on his side. And so the poor Prior, in confusion, confined himself to urging on the work in the garden, and left Leonardo in peace, who finished only the head of Judas, which seems the very embodiment of treachery and inhumanity; but that of Christ, as has been said, remained unfinished. The nobility of this picture, both because of its design, and from its having been wrought with an incomparable diligence, awoke a desire in the King of France to transport it into his kingdom; wherefore he tried by all possible means to discover whether there were architects who, with cross-stays of wood and iron, might have been able to make it so secure that it might be transported safely; without considering any expense that might have been involved thereby, so much did he desire it. But the fact of its being painted on the wall robbed his Majesty of his desire; and the picture remained with the Milanese. In the same refectory, while he was working at the Last Supper, on the end wall where is a Passion in the old manner, Leonardo portrayed the said Lodovico, with Massimiliano, his eldest son; and, on the other side, the Duchess Beatrice, with Francesco, their other son, both of whom afterwards became Dukes of Milan; and all are portrayed divinely well.

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While he was engaged on this work, he proposed to the Duke to make a horse in bronze, of a marvellous greatness, in order to place upon it, as a memorial, the image of the Duke. And on so vast a scale did he begin it and continue it, that it could never be completed. And there are those who have been of the opinion (so various and so often malign out of envy are the judgments of men) that he began it with no intention of finishing it, because, being of so great a size, an incredible difficulty was encountered in seeking to cast it in one piece; and it might also be believed that, from the result, many may have formed such a judgment, since many of his works have remained unfinished. But, in truth, one can believe that his vast and most excellent mind was hampered through being too full of desire, and that his wish ever to seek out excellence upon excellence, and perfection upon perfection, was the reason of it. "Tal che l' opera fosse ritardata dal desio," as our Petrarca has said. And, indeed, those who saw the great model that Leonardo made in clay vow that they have never seen a more beautiful thing, or a more superb; and it was preserved until the French came to Milan with King Louis of France, and broke it all to pieces. Lost, also, is a little model of it in wax, which was held to be perfect, together with a book on the anatomy of the horse made by him by way of study.



THE MADONNA AND CHILD WITH S. ANNE
(After the cartoon by Leonardo da Vinci.
London: Burlington House)
Vasari Society
[View larger image](#)

He then applied himself, but with greater care, to the anatomy of man, assisted by and in turn

assisting, in this research, Messer Marc' Antonio della Torre, an excellent philosopher, who was then lecturing at Pavia, and who wrote of this matter; and he was one of the first (as I have heard tell) that began to illustrate the problems of medicine with the doctrine of Galen, and to throw true light on anatomy, which up to that time had been wrapped in the thick and gross darkness of ignorance. And in this he found marvellous aid in the brain, work, and hand of Leonardo, who made a book drawn in red chalk, and annotated with the pen, of the bodies that he dissected with his own hand, and drew with the greatest diligence; wherein he showed all the frame of the bones; and then added to them, in order, all the nerves, and covered them with muscles; the first attached to the bone, the second that hold the body firm, and the third that move it; and beside them, part by part, he wrote in letters of an ill-shaped character, which he made with the left hand, backwards; and whoever is not practised in reading them cannot understand them, since they are not to be read save with a mirror. Of these papers on the anatomy of man, a great part is in the hands of Messer Francesco da Melzo, a gentleman of Milan, who in the time of Leonardo was a very beautiful boy, and much beloved by him, and now is a no less beautiful and gentle old man; and he holds them dear, and keeps such papers together as if they were relics, in company with the portrait of Leonardo of happy memory; and to all who read these writings, it seems impossible that that divine spirit should have discoursed so well of art, and of the muscles, nerves, and veins, and with such diligence of everything. So, also, there are in the hands of —, [11] a painter of Milan, certain writings of Leonardo, likewise in characters written with the left hand, backwards, which treat of painting, and of the methods of drawing and colouring. This man, not long ago, came to Florence to see me, wishing to print this work, and he took it to Rome, in order to put it into effect; but I do not know what may afterwards have become of it.

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And to return to the works of Leonardo; there came to Milan, in his time, the King of France, wherefore Leonardo being asked to devise some bizarre thing, made a lion which walked several steps and then opened its breast, and showed it full of lilies.

In Milan he took for his assistant the Milanese Salai, who was most comely in grace and beauty, having fine locks, curling in ringlets, in which Leonardo greatly delighted; and he taught him many things of art; and certain works in Milan, which are said to be by Salai, were retouched by Leonardo.

He returned to Florence, where he found that the Servite Friars had entrusted to Filippino the painting of the panel for the high-altar of the Nunziata; whereupon Leonardo said that he would willingly have done such a work. Filippino, having heard this, like the amiable fellow that he was, retired from the undertaking; and the friars, to the end that Leonardo might paint it, took him into their house, meeting the expenses both of himself and of all his household; and thus he kept them in expectation for a long time, but never began anything. In the end, he made a cartoon containing a Madonna and a S. Anne, with a Christ, which not only caused all the craftsmen to marvel, but, when it was finished, men and women, young and old, continued for two days to flock for a sight of it to the room where it was, as if to a solemn festival, in order to gaze at the marvels of Leonardo, which caused all those people to be amazed; for in the face of that Madonna was seen whatever of the simple and the beautiful can by simplicity and beauty confer grace on a picture of the Mother of Christ, since he wished to show that modesty and that humility which are looked for in an image of the Virgin, supremely content with gladness at seeing the beauty of her Son, whom she was holding with tenderness in her lap, while with most chastened gaze she was looking down at S. John, as a little boy, who was playing with a lamb; not without a smile from S. Anne, who, overflowing with joy, was beholding her earthly progeny become divine—ideas truly worthy of the brain and genius of Leonardo. This cartoon, as will be told below, afterwards went to France. He made a portrait of Ginevra d' Amerigo Benci, a very beautiful work; and abandoned the work for the friars, who restored it to Filippino; but he, also, failed to finish it, having been overtaken by death.

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Leonardo undertook to execute, for Francesco del Giocondo, the portrait of Monna Lisa, his wife; and after toiling over it for four years, he left it unfinished; and the work is now in the collection of King Francis of France, at Fontainebleau. In this head, whoever wished to see how closely art could imitate nature, was able to comprehend it with ease; for in it were counterfeited all the minutenesses that with subtlety are able to be painted, seeing that the eyes had that lustre and watery sheen which are always seen in life, and around them were all those rosy and pearly tints, as well as the lashes, which cannot be represented without the greatest subtlety. The eyebrows, through his having shown the manner in which the hairs spring from the flesh, here more close and here more scanty, and curve according to the pores of the skin, could not be more natural. The nose, with its beautiful nostrils, rosy and tender, appeared to be alive. The mouth, with its opening, and with its ends united by the red of the lips to the flesh-tints of the face, seemed, in truth, to be not colours but flesh. In the pit of the throat, if one gazed upon it intently, could be seen the beating of the pulse. And, indeed, it may be said that it was painted in such a manner as to make every valiant craftsman, be he who he may, tremble and lose heart. He made use, also, of this device: Monna Lisa being very beautiful, he always employed, while he was painting her portrait, persons to play or sing, and jesters, who might make her remain merry, in order to take away that melancholy which painters are often wont to give to the portraits that they paint. And in this work of Leonardo's there was a smile so pleasing, that it was a thing more divine than human to behold; and it was held to be something marvellous, since the reality was not more alive.

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By reason, then, of the excellence of the works of this most divine craftsman, his fame had so increased that all persons who took delight in art—nay, the whole city of Florence—desired that

he should leave them some memorial, and it was being proposed everywhere that he should be commissioned to execute some great and notable work, whereby the commonwealth might be honoured and adorned by the great genius, grace and judgment that were seen in the works of Leonardo. And it was decided between the Gonfalonier and the chief citizens, the Great Council Chamber having been newly built—the architecture of which had been contrived with the judgment and counsel of Giuliano da San Gallo, Simone Pollaiuolo, called Il Cronaca, Michelagnolo Buonarroti, and Baccio d' Agnolo, as will be related with more detail in the proper places—and having been finished in great haste, it was ordained by public decree that Leonardo should be given some beautiful work to paint; and so the said hall was allotted to him by Piero Soderini, then Gonfalonier of Justice. Whereupon Leonardo, determining to execute this work, began a cartoon in the Sala del Papa, an apartment in S. Maria Novella, representing the story of Niccolò Piccinino, Captain of Duke Filippo of Milan; wherein he designed a group of horsemen who were fighting for a standard, a work that was held to be very excellent and of great mastery, by reason of the marvellous ideas that he had in composing that battle; seeing that in it rage, fury, and revenge are perceived as much in the men as in the horses, among which two with the fore-legs interlocked are fighting no less fiercely with their teeth than those who are riding them do in fighting for that standard, which has been grasped by a soldier, who seeks by the strength of his shoulders, as he spurs his horse to flight, having turned his body backwards and seized the staff of the standard, to wrest it by force from the hands of four others, of whom two are defending it, each with one hand, and, raising their swords in the other, are trying to sever the staff; while an old soldier in a red cap, crying out, grips the staff with one hand, and, raising a scimitar with the other, furiously aims a blow in order to cut off both the hands of those who, gnashing their teeth in the struggle, are striving in attitudes of the utmost fierceness to defend their banner; besides which, on the ground, between the legs of the horses, there are two figures in foreshortening that are fighting together, and the one on the ground has over him a soldier who has raised his arm as high as possible, that thus with greater force he may plunge a dagger into his throat, in order to end his life; while the other, struggling with his legs and arms, is doing what he can to escape death.

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It is not possible to describe the invention that Leonardo showed in the garments of the soldiers, all varied by him in different ways, and likewise in the helmet-crests and other ornaments; not to mention the incredible mastery that he displayed in the forms and lineaments of the horses, which Leonardo, with their fiery spirit, muscles, and shapely beauty, drew better than any other master. It is said that, in order to draw that cartoon, he made a most ingenious stage, which was raised by contracting it and lowered by expanding. And conceiving the wish to colour on the wall in oils, he made a composition of so gross an admixture, to act as a binder on the wall, that, going on to paint in the said hall, it began to peel off in such a manner that in a short time he abandoned it, seeing it spoiling.



LEONARDO DA VINCI: MONNA LISA
(Formerly Paris: The Louvre, 1601. Canvas on Panel)

Leonardo had very great spirit, and in his every action was most generous. It is said that, going to the bank for the allowance that he used to draw every month from Piero Soderini, the cashier wanted to give him certain paper-packets of pence; but he would not take them, saying in answer, "I am no penny-painter." Having been blamed for cheating Piero Soderini, there began to be murmurings against him; wherefore Leonardo so wrought upon his friends, that he got the money together and took it to Piero to repay him; but he would not accept it.

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He went to Rome with Duke Giuliano de' Medici, at the election of Pope Leo, who spent much of his time on philosophical studies, and particularly on alchemy; where, forming a paste of a certain kind of wax, as he walked he shaped animals very thin and full of wind, and, by blowing into them, made them fly through the air, but when the wind ceased they fell to the ground. On the back of a most bizarre lizard, found by the vine-dresser of the Belvedere, he fixed, with a mixture of quicksilver, wings composed of scales stripped from other lizards, which, as it walked, quivered with the motion; and having given it eyes, horns, and beard, taming it, and keeping it in a box, he made all his friends, to whom he showed it, fly for fear. He used often to have the guts of a wether completely freed of their fat and cleaned, and thus made so fine that they could have been held in the palm of the hand; and having placed a pair of blacksmith's bellows in another room, he fixed to them one end of these, and, blowing into them, filled the room, which was very large, so that whoever was in it was obliged to retreat into a corner; showing how, transparent and full of wind, from taking up little space at the beginning they had come to occupy much, and likening them to virtue. He made an infinite number of such follies, and gave his attention to mirrors; and he tried the strangest methods in seeking out oils for painting, and varnish for preserving works when painted.

He made at this time, for Messer Baldassarre Turini da Pescia, who was Datary to Pope Leo, a little picture of the Madonna with the Child in her arms, with infinite diligence and art; but whether through the fault of whoever primed the panel with gesso, or because of his innumerable and capricious mixtures of grounds and colours, it is now much spoilt. And in another small picture he made a portrait of a little boy, which is beautiful and graceful to a marvel; and both of them are now at Pescia, in the hands of Messer Giuliano Turini. It is related that, a work having been allotted to him by the Pope, he straightway began to distil oils and herbs, in order to make the varnish; at which Pope Leo said: "Alas! this man will never do anything, for he begins by thinking of the end of the work, before the beginning."

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There was very great disdain between Michelagnolo Buonarroti and him, on account of which Michelagnolo departed from Florence, with the excuse of Duke Giuliano, having been summoned by the Pope to the competition for the façade of S. Lorenzo. Leonardo, understanding this, departed and went into France, where the King, having had works by his hand, bore him great affection; and he desired that he should colour the cartoon of S. Anne, but Leonardo, according to his custom, put him off for a long time with words.

Finally, having grown old, he remained ill many months, and, feeling himself near to death, asked to have himself diligently informed of the teaching of the Catholic faith, and of the good way and holy Christian religion; and then, with many moans, he confessed and was penitent; and although he could not raise himself well on his feet, supporting himself on the arms of his friends and servants, he was pleased to take devoutly the most holy Sacrament, out of his bed. The King, who was wont often and lovingly to visit him, then came into the room; wherefore he, out of reverence, having raised himself to sit upon the bed, giving him an account of his sickness and the circumstances of it, showed withal how much he had offended God and mankind in not having worked at his art as he should have done. Thereupon he was seized by a paroxysm, the messenger of death; for which reason the King having risen and having taken his head, in order to assist him and show him favour, to the end that he might alleviate his pain, his spirit, which was divine, knowing that it could not have any greater honour, expired in the arms of the King, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.



FRAGMENT FROM "THE BATTLE OF THE STANDARD"
(After the cartoon attributed to Leonardo da Vinci.
Oxford: Ashmolean Museum)

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The loss of Leonardo grieved beyond measure all those who had known him, since there was never any one who did so much honour to painting. With the splendour of his aspect, which was very beautiful, he made serene every broken spirit: and with his words he turned to yea, or nay, every obdurate intention. By his physical force he could restrain any outburst of rage: and with his right hand he twisted the iron ring of a door-bell, or a horse-shoe, as if it were lead. With his liberality he would assemble together and support his every friend, poor or rich, if only he had intellect and worth. He adorned and honoured, in every action, no matter what mean and bare dwelling; wherefore, in truth, Florence received a very great gift in the birth of Leonardo, and an incalculable loss in his death. In the art of painting, he added to the manner of colouring in oils a certain obscurity, whereby the moderns have given great force and relief to their figures. And in statuary, he proved his worth in the three figures of bronze that are over the door of S. Giovanni, on the side towards the north, executed by Giovan Francesco Rustici, but contrived with the advice of Leonardo; which are the most beautiful pieces of casting, the best designed, and the most perfect that have as yet been seen in modern days. By Leonardo we have the anatomy of the horse, and that of man even more complete. And so, on account of all his qualities, so many and so divine, although he worked much more by words than by deeds, his name and fame can never be extinguished; wherefore it was thus said in his praise by Messer Giovan Battista Strozzi:

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Vince costui pur solo
Tutti altri; e vince Fidia e vince Apelle
E tutto il lor vittorioso stuolo.



MAN AND WOMAN PRAYING
(After the panel by Giovan Antonio Boltraffio.
Milan: Brera, 281)

Anderson

[View larger image](#)

A disciple of Leonardo was Giovan Antonio Boltraffio of Milan, a person of great skill and understanding, who, in the year 1500, painted with much diligence, for the Church of the Misericordia, without Bologna, a panel in oils containing Our Lady with the Child in her arms, S. John the Baptist, S. Sebastian naked, and the patron who caused it to be executed, portrayed from the life, on his knees—a truly beautiful work, on which he wrote his name, calling himself a disciple of Leonardo. He has made other works, both at Milan and elsewhere; but it must be enough here to have named this, which is the best. Another (of his disciples) was Marco Oggioni, who painted, in S. Maria della Pace, the Passing of Our Lady and the Marriage of Cana in Galilee.

GIORGIONE DA CASTELFRANCO

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LIFE OF GIORGIONE DA CASTELFRANCO

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PAINTER OF VENICE

At the same time when Florence was acquiring such fame by reason of the works of Leonardo, no little adornment was conferred on Venice by the talent and excellence of one of her citizens, who surpassed by a great measure not only the Bellini, whom the Venetians held in such esteem, but also every other master who had painted up to that time in that city. This was Giorgio, who was born at Castelfranco in the territory of Treviso, in the year 1478, when the Doge was Giovanni Mozenigo, brother of Doge Piero. In time, from the nature of his person and from the greatness of his mind, Giorgio came to be called Giorgione; and although he was born from very humble stock, nevertheless he was not otherwise than gentle and of good breeding throughout his whole life. He was brought up in Venice, and took unceasing delight in the joys of love; and the sound of the lute gave him marvellous pleasure, so that in his day he played and sang so divinely that he was often employed for that purpose at various musical assemblies and gatherings of noble persons. He studied drawing, and found it greatly to his taste; and in this nature favoured him so highly, that he, having become enamoured of her beauties, would never represent anything in his works without copying it from life; and so much was he her slave, imitating her continuously, that he acquired the name not only of having surpassed Giovanni and Gentile Bellini, but also of being the rival of the masters who were working in Tuscany and who were the creators of the modern manner. Giorgione had seen some things by the hand of Leonardo with a beautiful gradation of colours, and with extraordinary relief, effected, as has been related, by means of dark shadows; and this manner pleased him so much that he was for ever studying it as long as he lived, and in oil-painting he imitated it greatly. Taking pleasure in the delights of good work, he was ever

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selecting, for putting into his pictures, the greatest beauty and the greatest variety that he could find. And nature gave him a spirit so benign, and with this, both in oil-painting and in fresco, he made certain living forms and other things so soft, so well harmonized, and so well blended in the shadows, that many of the excellent masters of his time were forced to confess that he had been born to infuse spirit into figures and to counterfeit the freshness of living flesh better than any other painter, not only in Venice, but throughout the whole world.



GIORGIONE DA CASTELFRANCO: FIGURES IN A LANDSCAPE
(Venice: Prince Giovanelli. Canvas)

[View larger image](#)

In his youth he executed in Venice many pictures of Our Lady and other portraits from nature, which are very lifelike and beautiful; of which we still have proof in three most beautiful heads in oils by his hand, which are in the study of the Very Reverend Grimani, Patriarch of Aquileia. One represents David—and it is reported to be his own portrait—with long locks reaching to the shoulders, as was the custom of those times; it is so vivacious and so fresh in colouring that it seems to be living flesh, and there is armour on the breast, as there is on the arm with which he is holding the severed head of Goliath. The second is a much larger head, portrayed from nature; one hand is holding the red cap of a commander, and there is a cape of fur, below which is one of the old-fashioned doublets. This is believed to represent some military leader. The third is that of a boy, as beautiful as could be, with fleecy hair. These works demonstrate the excellence of Giorgione, and no less the affection which that great Patriarch has ever borne to his genius, holding them very dear, and that rightly. In Florence, in the house of the sons of Giovanni Borgherini, there is a portrait by his hand of the said Giovanni, taken when he was a young man in Venice, and in the same picture is the master who was teaching him; and there are no two heads to be seen with better touches in the flesh-colours or with more beautiful tints in the shadows. In the house of Anton de' Nobili there is another head of a captain in armour, very lively and spirited, which is said to be one of the captains whom Consalvo Ferrante took with him to Venice when he visited Doge Agostino Barberigo; at which time, it is related, Giorgione made a portrait of the great Consalvo in armour, which was a very rare work, insomuch that there was no more beautiful painting than this to be seen, and Consalvo took it away with him. Giorgione made many other portraits which are scattered throughout many parts of Italy; all very beautiful, as may be believed from that of Leonardo Loredano, painted by Giorgione when Leonardo was Doge, which I saw exhibited on one Ascension day, when I seemed to see that most illustrious Prince alive. There is also one at Faenza, in the house of Giovanni da Castel Bolognese, an excellent engraver of cameos and crystals; which work, executed for his father-in-law, is truly divine, since there is such a harmony in the gradation of the colours that it appears to be rather in relief than painted.

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Giorgione took much delight in painting in fresco, and one among many works that he executed was the whole of a façade of the Ca Soranzo on the Piazza di S. Polo; wherein, besides many pictures and scenes and other things of fancy, there may be seen a picture painted in oils on the plaster, a work which has withstood rain, sun, and wind, and has remained fresh up to our own day. There is also a Spring, which appears to me to be one of the most beautiful works that he painted in fresco, and it is a great pity that time has consumed it so cruelly. For my part, I know nothing that injures works in fresco more than the sirocco, and particularly near the sea, where it always brings a salt moisture with it.

There broke out at Venice, in the year 1504, in the Fondaco de' Tedeschi by the Ponte del Rialto, a most terrible fire, which consumed the whole building and all the merchandise, to the very

great loss of the merchants; wherefore the Signoria of Venice ordained that it should be rebuilt anew, and it was speedily finished with more accommodation in the way of living-rooms, and with greater magnificence, adornment, and beauty. Thereupon, the fame of Giorgione having grown great, it was ordained after deliberation by those who had charge of the matter, that Giorgione should paint it in fresco with colours according to his own fancy, provided only that he gave proof of his genius and executed an excellent work, since it would be in the most beautiful place and most conspicuous site in the city. And so Giorgione put his hand to the work, but thought of nothing save of making figures according to his own fancy, in order to display his art, so that, in truth, there are no scenes to be found there with any order, or representing the deeds of any distinguished person, either ancient or modern; and I, for my part, have never understood them, nor have I found, for all the inquiries that I have made, anyone who understands them, for in one place there is a woman, in another a man, in diverse attitudes, while one has the head of a lion near him, and another an angel in the guise of a Cupid, nor can one tell what it may all mean. There is, indeed, over the principal door, which opens into the Merceria, a woman seated who has at her feet the severed head of a giant, almost in the form of a Judith; she is raising the head with her sword, and speaking with a German, who is below her; but I have not been able to determine for what he intended her to stand, unless, indeed, he may have meant her to represent Germany. However, it may be seen that his figures are well grouped, and that he was ever making progress; and there are in it heads and parts of figures very well painted, and most vivacious in colouring. In all that he did there he aimed at being faithful to nature, without any imitation of another's manner; and the work is celebrated and famous in Venice, no less for what he painted therein than through its convenience for commerce and its utility to the commonwealth.

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He executed a picture of Christ bearing the Cross, with a Jew dragging him along, which in time was placed in the Church of S. Rocco, and which now, through the veneration that many feel for it, works miracles, as all may see. He worked in various places, such as Castelfranco, and throughout the territory of Treviso, and he made many portraits for Italian Princes; and many of his works were sent out of Italy, as things truly worthy to bear testimony that if Tuscany had a superabundance of craftsmen in every age, the region beyond, near the mountains, was not always abandoned and forgotten by Heaven.



PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN
(After the painting by Giorgione da Castelfranco.
Berlin: Kaiser Friedrich Museum, 12A)
Bruckmann

[View larger image](#)

It is related that Giorgione, at the time when Andrea Verrocchio was making his bronze horse, fell into an argument with certain sculptors, who maintained, since sculpture showed various attitudes and aspects in one single figure to one walking round it, that for this reason it surpassed painting, which only showed one side of a figure. Giorgione was of the opinion that there could be shown in a painted scene, without any necessity for walking round, at one single glance, all the various aspects that a man can present in many gestures—a thing which sculpture cannot do without a change of position and point of view, so that in her case the points of view are many, and not one. Moreover, he proposed to show in one single painted figure the front, the

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back, and the profile on either side, a challenge which brought them to their senses; and he did it in the following way. He painted a naked man with his back turned, at whose feet was a most limpid pool of water, wherein he painted the reflection of the man's front. At one side was a burnished cuirass that he had taken off, which showed his left profile, since everything could be seen on the polished surface of the piece of armour; and on the other side was a mirror, which reflected the other profile of the naked figure; which was a thing of most beautiful and bizarre fancy, whereby he sought to prove that painting does in fact, with more excellence, labour, and effect, achieve more at one single view of a living figure than does sculpture. And this work was greatly extolled and admired, as something ingenious and beautiful.



JUDITH
*(After the painting by Giorgione da Castelfranco.
S. Petersburg: Hermitage, 112)
M.S.*

[View larger image](#)

He also made a portrait from life of Caterina, Queen of Cyprus, which I once saw in the hands of the illustrious Messer Giovanni Cornaro. There is in our book a head coloured in oils, the portrait of a German of the Fugger family, who was at that time one of the chief merchants in the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, which is an admirable work; together with other sketches and drawings made by him with the pen.

While Giorgione was employed in doing honour both to himself and to his country, and frequenting many houses in order to entertain his various friends with his music, he became enamoured of a lady, and they took much joy, one with another, in their love. Now it happened that in the year 1511 she became infected with plague, without, however, knowing anything about it; and Giorgione, visiting her as usual, caught the plague in such a manner, that in a short time, at the age of thirty-four, he passed away to the other life, not without infinite grief on the part of his many friends, who loved him for his virtues, and great hurt to the world, which thus lost him. However, they could bear up against this hurt and loss, in that he left behind him two excellent disciples in Sebastiano, the Venetian, who afterwards became Friar of the Piombo^[12] at Rome, and Tiziano da Cadore, who not only equalled him, but surpassed him greatly; of both of whom we will speak at the proper time, describing fully the honour and benefit that they have conferred on art.



CATERINA, QUEEN OF CYPRUS
*(After the painting by Giorgione da Castelfranco (?).
Milan: Crespi Collection)*
Anderson
[View larger image](#)

ANTONIO DA CORREGGIO

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LIFE OF ANTONIO DA CORREGGIO

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PAINTER

I do not wish to leave that country wherein our great mother Nature, in order not to be thought partial, gave to the world extraordinary men of that sort with which she had already for many and many a year adorned Tuscany; among whom was one endowed with an excellent and very beautiful genius, by name Antonio da Correggio, a most rare painter, who acquired the modern manner so perfectly, that in a few years, what with his natural gifts and his practice in art, he became a most excellent and marvellous craftsman. He was very timid by nature, and with great discomfort to himself he was continually labouring at the exercise of his art, for the sake of his family, which weighed upon him; and although it was a natural goodness that impelled him, nevertheless he afflicted himself more than was right in bearing the burden of those sufferings which are wont to crush mankind. He was very melancholy in his practice of art, a slave to her labours, and an unwearying investigator of all the difficulties of her realm; to which witness is borne by a vast multitude of figures in the Duomo of Parma, executed in fresco and well finished, which are to be found in the great tribune of the said church, and are seen foreshortened from below with an effect of marvellous grandeur.

Antonio was the first who began to work in the modern manner in Lombardy; wherefore it is thought that if he, with his genius, had gone forth from Lombardy and lived in Rome, he would have wrought miracles, and would have brought the sweat to the brow of many who were held to be great men in his time. For, his works being such as they are without his having seen any of the ancient or the best of the modern, it necessarily follows that, if he had seen them, he would have vastly improved his own, and, advancing from good to better, would have reached the highest rank. It may, at least, be held for certain that no one ever handled colours better than he, and that no craftsman ever painted with greater delicacy or with more relief, such was the softness of his flesh-painting, and such the grace with which he finished his works.

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ANTONIO DA CORREGGIO: ANTIOPE
(Paris: Louvre, 1118. Canvas)

[View larger image](#)

In the same place, also, he painted two large pictures executed in oils, in one of which, among other figures, there may be seen a Dead Christ, which was highly extolled. And in S. Giovanni, in the same city, he painted a tribune in fresco, wherein he represented Our Lady ascending into Heaven amidst a multitude of angels, with other saints around; as to which, it seems impossible that he should have been able, I do not say to express it with his hand, but even to conceive it in his imagination, so beautiful are the curves of the draperies and the expressions that he gave to those figures. Of these there are some drawings in our book, done in red chalk by his hand, with some very beautiful borders of little boys, and other borders drawn in that work by way of ornament, with various fanciful scenes of sacrifices in the ancient manner. And in truth, if Antonio had not brought his works to that perfection which is seen in them, his drawings (although they show excellence of manner, and the charm and practised touch of a master) would not have gained for him among craftsmen the name that he has won with his wonderful paintings. This art is so difficult, and has so many branches, that very often a craftsman is not able to practise them all to perfection; for there have been many who have drawn divinely well, but have shown some imperfection in colouring, and others have been marvellous in colouring, but have not drawn half so well. All this depends on choice, and on the practice bestowed, in youth, in one case on drawing, in another on colour. But since all is learnt in order to carry works to the height of perfection, which is to put good colouring, together with draughtsmanship, into everything that is executed, for this reason Correggio deserves great praise, having attained to the height of perfection in the works that he coloured either in oils or in fresco; as he did in the Church of the Frati de' Zoccoli di S. Francesco, in the same city, where he painted an Annunciation in fresco so well, that, when it became necessary to pull it down in making some changes in that building, those friars caused the wall round it to be bound with timber strengthened with iron, and, cutting it away little by little, they saved it; and it was built by them into a more secure place in the same convent.

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He painted, also, over one of the gates of that city, a Madonna who has the Child in her arms; and it is an astounding thing to see the lovely colouring of this work in fresco, through which he has won from passing strangers, who have seen nothing else of his, infinite praise and honour. For S. Antonio, likewise in that city, he painted a panel wherein is a Madonna, with S. Mary Magdalene; and near them is a boy in the guise of a little angel, holding a book in his hand, who is smiling, with a smile that seems so natural that he moves whoever beholds him to smile also, nor can any person, be his nature ever so melancholy, see him without being cheered. There is also a S. Jerome; and the whole work is coloured in a manner so wonderful and so astounding, that painters revere it for the marvel of its colouring, and it is scarcely possible to paint better.

In like manner, he executed square pictures and other paintings for many lords throughout Lombardy; and, among other works, two pictures in Mantua for Duke Federigo II, to be sent to the Emperor, a gift truly worthy of such a Prince. Giulio Romano, seeing these works, said that he

had never seen any colouring that attained to such perfection. One was a naked Leda, and the other a Venus; both so soft in colouring, with the shadows of the flesh so well wrought, that they appeared to be not colours, but flesh. In one there was a marvellous landscape, nor was there ever a Lombard who painted such things better than he; and, besides this, hair so lovely in colour, and executed in detail with such exquisite finish, that it is not possible to see anything better. There were also certain Loves, executed with beautiful art, who were making trial of their arrows, some of gold and some of lead, on a stone; and what lent most grace to the Venus was a clear and limpid stream, which ran among some stones and bathed her feet, but scarcely concealed any part of them, so that the sight of their delicate whiteness was a moving thing for the eye to behold. For which reason Antonio most certainly deserved all praise and honour during his lifetime, and the greatest glory from the lips and pens of men after his death.

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In Modena, also, he painted a panel-picture of Our Lady, which is held in esteem by all painters, as the best picture in that city. In Bologna, likewise, in the house of the Ercolani, gentlemen of that city, there is a work by his hand, a Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene in the Garden, which is very beautiful. In Reggio there was a rare and most beautiful picture; and not long since, Messer Luciano Pallavigino, who takes much delight in noble paintings, passing through the city and seeing it, gave no thought to the cost, and, as if he had bought a jewel, sent it to his house in Genoa. At Reggio, likewise, is a panel containing a Nativity of Christ, wherein the splendour radiating from Him throws its light on the shepherds and all around on the figures that are contemplating Him; and among the many conceptions shown in that subject, there is a woman who, wishing to gaze intently at Christ, and not being able with her mortal sight to bear the light of His Divinity, which seems to be beating upon her with its rays, places a hand before her eyes; which is expressed so well that it is a marvel. Over the hut is a choir of angels singing, who are so well executed, that they appear rather to have rained down from Heaven than to have been made by the hand of a painter. And in the same city there is a little picture, a foot square, the rarest and most beautiful work that is to be seen by his hand, of Christ in the Garden, representing an effect of night, and painted with little figures; wherein the Angel, appearing to Christ, illumines Him with the splendour of his light, with such truth to nature, that nothing better can be imagined or expressed. Below, on a plain at the foot of the mountain, are seen the three Apostles sleeping, over whom the mountain on which Christ is praying casts a shadow, giving those figures a force which one is not able to describe. Far in the background, over a distant landscape, there is shown the appearing of the dawn; and on one side are seen coming some soldiers, with Judas. And although it is so small, this scene is so well conceived, that there is no work of the same kind to equal it either in patience or in study.



S. THOMAS AND S. JAMES THE LESS
(Detail, after the fresco by Antonio da Correggio.
Parma: S. Giovanni Evangelista)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

Many things might be said of the works of this master; but since, among the eminent men of our art, everything that is to be seen by his hand is admired as something divine, I will say no more. I have used all possible diligence in order to obtain his portrait, but, since he himself did not make it, and he was never portrayed by others, for he always lived in retirement, I have not been able to find one. He was, in truth, a person who had no opinion of himself, nor did he believe himself to be an able master of his art, contrasting his deficiencies with that perfection which he would have liked to achieve. He was contented with little, and he lived like an excellent Christian.

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THE MADONNA AND CHILD WITH S. JEROME
(After the painting by Antonio da Correggio.
Parma: Gallery, 351)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

Antonio, like a man who was weighed down by his family, was anxious to be always saving, and he had thereby become as miserly as he could well be. Wherefore it is related that, having received at Parma a payment of sixty crowns in copper coins, and wishing to take them to Correggio to meet some demand, he placed the money on his back and set out to walk on foot; but, being smitten by the heat of the sun, which was very great, and drinking water to refresh himself, he was seized by pleurisy, and had to take to his bed in a raging fever, nor did he ever raise his head from it, but finished the course of his life at the age of forty, or thereabout.

His pictures date about 1512; and he bestowed a very great gift on painting by his handling of colours, which was that of a true master; and it was by means of him that men's eyes were opened in Lombardy, where so many beautiful intellects have been seen in painting, following him in making works worthy of praise and memory. Thus, by showing them his treatment of hair, executed with such facility, for all the difficulty of painting it, he taught them how it should be painted; for which all painters owe him an everlasting debt. At their instance the following epigram was written to him by Messer Fabio Segni, a gentleman of Florence:

Hujus cum regeret mortales spiritus artus
Pictoris, Charites supplicuere Jovi.
Non alia pingi dextra, Pater alme, rogamus;
Hunc præter, nulli pingere nos liceat.
Annuit his votis summi regnator Olympi,
Et juvenem subito sidera ad alta tulit,
Ut posset melius Charitum simulacra referre
Præsens, et nudas cerneret inde Deas.

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At this same time lived Andrea del Gobbo of Milan, a very pleasing painter and colourist, many of whose works are scattered about in the houses of his native city of Milan. There is a large panel-picture of the Assumption of Our Lady, by his hand, in the Certosa of Pavia, but it was left unfinished, on account of death overtaking him; which panel shows how excellent he was, and how great a lover of the labours of art.



ANTONIO DA CORREGGIO: THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI
(Milan: Brera, 427. Canvas)

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PIERO DI COSIMO

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LIFE OF PIERO DI COSIMO

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PAINTER OF FLORENCE

While Giorgione and Correggio, to their own great credit and glory, were honouring the regions of Lombardy, Tuscany, on her part, was not wanting in men of beautiful intellect; among whom, not one of the least was Piero, the son of one Lorenzo, a goldsmith, and a pupil of Cosimo Rosselli, after whom he was always called Piero di Cosimo, and known by no other name. And in truth, when a man teaches us excellence and gives us the secret of living rightly, he deserves no less gratitude from us, and should be held no less as a true father, than he who begets us and gives us life and nothing more.

Piero was entrusted by his father, who saw in his son a lively intelligence and an inclination to the art of design, to the care of Cosimo, who took him with no ordinary willingness; and seeing him grow no less in ability than in years, among the many disciples that he had, he bore him love as to a son, and always held him as such. This young man had by nature a most lofty spirit, and he was very strange, and different in fancy from the other youths who were working with Cosimo in order to learn the same art. He was at times so intent on what he was doing, that when some subject was being discussed, as often happens, at the end of the discussion it was necessary to go back to the beginning and tell him the whole, so far had his brain wandered after some other fancy of his own. And he was likewise so great a lover of solitude, that he knew no pleasure save that of going off by himself with his thoughts, letting his fancy roam and building his castles in the air. Right good reason had Cosimo, his master, for wishing him well, seeing that he made so much use of him in his works, that very often he caused him to execute things of great importance, knowing that Piero had a more beautiful manner, as well as better judgment, than himself. For this reason he took Piero with him to Rome, when he was summoned thither by Pope Sixtus in order to paint the scenes in his chapel; in one of which Piero executed a very beautiful landscape, as was related in the Life of Cosimo.

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And since Piero drew most excellently from the life, he made in Rome many portraits of distinguished persons; in particular, those of Virginio Orsino and Ruberto Sanseverino, which he placed in the aforesaid scenes. Afterwards, also, he made a portrait of Duke Valentino, the son of Pope Alexander VI; which painting, to my knowledge, is not now to be found; but the cartoon by his hand still exists, being in the possession of the reverend and cultured M. Cosimo Bartoli, Provost of S. Giovanni. In Florence, he painted many pictures for a number of citizens, which are dispersed among their various houses, and of such I have seen some that are very good; and so, also, various things for many other persons. In the Noviciate of S. Marco is a picture by his hand of Our Lady, standing, with the Child in her arms, coloured in oils. And for the Chapel of Gino Capponi, in the Church of S. Spirito at Florence, he painted a panel wherein is the Visitation of Our Lady, with S. Nicholas, and a S. Anthony who is reading with a pair of spectacles on his nose, a very spirited figure. Here he counterfeited a book bound in parchment, somewhat old, which seems to be real, and also some balls that he gave to the S. Nicholas, shining and casting gleams of light and reflections from one to another; from which even by that time men could perceive the strangeness of his brain, and his constant seeking after difficulties.



PIERO DI COSIMO: THE DEATH OF PROCRIS
(London: National Gallery, 698. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

Even better did he show this after the death of Cosimo, when he kept himself constantly shut up, and would not let himself be seen at work, leading the life of a man who was less man than beast. He would never have his rooms swept, he would only eat when hunger came to him, and he would not let his garden be worked or his fruit-trees pruned; nay, he allowed his vines to grow, and the shoots to trail over the ground, nor were his fig-trees ever trimmed, or any other trees, for it pleased him to see everything wild, like his own nature; and he declared that Nature's own things should be left to her to look after, without lifting a hand to them. He set himself often to observe such animals, plants, or other things as Nature at times creates out of caprice, or by chance; in which he found a pleasure and satisfaction that drove him quite out of his mind with delight; and he spoke of them so often in his discourse, that at times, although he found pleasure in them, it became wearisome to others. He would sometimes stop to gaze at a wall against which sick people had been for a long time discharging their spittle, and from this he would picture to himself battles of horsemen, and the most fantastic cities and widest landscapes that were ever seen; and he did the same with the clouds in the sky.

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He gave his attention to colouring in oils, having seen some works of Leonardo's, executed with that gradation of colour, and finished with that extraordinary diligence, which Leonardo used to employ when he wished to display his art. And so Piero, being pleased with his method, sought to imitate it, although he was afterwards very distant from Leonardo, and worlds away from any other manner. It may be said, in truth, that he changed his manner almost for every work that he executed.

If Piero had not been so solitary, and had taken more care of himself in his way of living than he did, he would have made known the greatness of his intellect in such a way that he would have been revered, whereas, by reason of his uncouth ways, he was rather held to be a madman, although in the end he did no harm save to himself alone, while his works were beneficial and useful to his art. For which reason every good intellect and every excellent craftsman should always be taught, from such an example, to keep his eyes on the end of life.

Nor will I refrain from saying that Piero, in his youth, being fanciful and extravagant in invention, was much employed for the masquerades that are held during the Carnival; and he became very dear to the young noblemen of Florence, having improved their festivals much in invention, adornment, grandeur, and pomp. As to that kind of pastime, it is said that he was one of the first to contrive to marshal them in the form of triumphal processions; at least, he improved them greatly, by accompanying the invention of the story represented, not only with music and with words suited to the subject, but also with a train of incredible pomp, formed of men on foot and on horseback, with habits and ornaments in keeping with the story; which produced a very rich and beautiful effect, and had in it something both grand and ingenious. And it was certainly a very beautiful thing to see, by night, twenty-five or thirty pairs of horses, most richly caparisoned, with their riders in costume, according to the subject of the invention, and six or eight grooms to each rider, with torches in their hands, and all clothed in one and the same livery, sometimes more than four hundred in number; and then the chariot, or triumphal car, covered with ornaments, trophies, and most bizarre things of fancy; altogether, a thing which makes men's intellects more subtle, and gives great pleasure and satisfaction to the people.

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PERSEUS DELIVERING ANDROMEDA
(After the panel by Piero di Cosimo.
Florence: Uffizi, 1312)
Brogi

Among these spectacles, which were numerous and ingenious, it is my pleasure to give a brief description of one, which was contrived mostly by Piero, when he was already of a mature age, and which was not, like many, pleasing through its beauty, but, on the contrary, on account of a strange, horrible, and unexpected invention, gave no little satisfaction to the people: for even as in the matter of food bitter things sometimes give marvellous delight to the human palate, so do horrible things in such pastimes, if only they be carried out with judgment and art; which is evident in the representation of tragedies. This was the Car of Death, wrought by him with the greatest secrecy in the Sala del Papa, so that nothing could ever be found out about it, until it was seen and known at one and the same moment. This triumphal chariot was an enormous car drawn by buffaloes, black all over and painted with skeletons and white crosses; and upon the highest point of the car stood a colossal figure of Death, scythe in hand, and right round the car were a number of covered tombs; and at all the places where the procession halted for the chanting of dirges, these tombs opened, and from them issued figures draped in black cloth, upon which were painted all the bones of a skeleton, over their arms, breasts, flanks, and legs; which, what with the white over the black, and the appearing in the distance of some figures carrying torches, with masks that represented a death's head both in front and behind, as well as the neck, not only gave an appearance of the greatest reality, but was also horrible and terrifying to behold. And these figures of the dead, at the sound of certain muffled trumpets, low and mournful in tone, came half out of their tombs, and, seating themselves upon them, sang to music full of melancholy that song so celebrated at the present day: "Dolor, pianto, e penitenzia." Before and after the car came a great number of the dead, riding on certain horses picked out with the greatest diligence from among the leanest and most meagre that could be found, with black caparisons covered with white crosses; and each had four grooms draped in the garb of death, with black torches, and a large black standard with crosses, bones, and death's heads. After the car were trailed ten black standards; and as they walked, the whole company sang in unison, with trembling voices, that Psalm of David that is called the Miserere.

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This dread spectacle, through its novelty and terror, as I have said, filled the whole city with fear and marvel together; and although at the first sight it did not seem suited to a Carnival, nevertheless, being new and very well arranged, it pleased the minds of all, and Piero, the creator and inventor of the whole, gained consummate praise and commendation for it; and it was the reason that afterwards, going from one thing to another, men continued to contrive lively and ingenious inventions, so that in truth, for such representations and for holding similar festivals, this city has never had an equal. And in those old men who saw it there still remains a vivid memory of it, nor are they ever weary of celebrating this fantastic invention. I have heard from the lips of Andrea di Cosimo, who helped him to carry out the work, and of Andrea del Sarto, who was Piero's disciple, and who also had a hand in it, that it was a common opinion at that time that this invention was intended to foreshadow the return of the Medici family to Florence in the year 1512, since at the time when the procession was held they were exiles, and, so to speak, dead, but destined in a short time to come to life; and in this sense were interpreted the following words in the song—

Morti siam come vedete,
Così morti vedrem voi;
Fummo già come voi siete,
Voi sarete come noi, etc.

whereby men wished to signify the return of that family (a resurrection, as it were, from death to life), and the expulsion and abasement of their enemies; or it may have been that many gave it that significance from the subsequent fact of the return of that illustrious house to Florence—so prone is the human intellect to applying every word and act that has come previously, to the events that happen afterwards. Certain it is that this was the opinion of many at that time; and it was much spoken of.

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VENUS, MARS, AND CUPID
(After the panel by Piero di Cosimo.
Berlin: Kaiser Friedrich Museum, 107)
Hanfstaengl
[View larger image](#)

But to return to the art and actions of Piero; he was given the commission for a panel in the

Church of the Servite Friars, in the Chapel of the Tedaldi, where they keep the garment and the pillow of S. Filippo, a brother of their Order; wherein he depicted Our Lady standing, raised from the ground on a pedestal, and uplifting her head towards Heaven, with a book in her hand, but without her Son; and above her is the Holy Spirit, bathing her with light. Nor did he wish that any other light than that of the Dove should illumine her and the figures that are round her, such as a S. Margaret and a S. Catherine, who are on their knees, adoring her, while S. Peter and S. John the Evangelist are standing, contemplating her, together with S. Filippo, the Servite Friar, and S. Antonino, Archbishop of Florence. Moreover, he made there a landscape that is very bizarre, what with the strange trees and certain grottoes. And in truth, there are some very beautiful things in this work, such as certain heads that reveal both draughtsmanship and grace; besides the colouring, which is very harmonious, for it is certain that Piero was a great master of colouring in oils. In the predella he painted some little scenes, very well executed; and, among others, there is one of S. Margaret issuing from the belly of the Dragon, wherein he made that animal so monstrous and hideous, that I do not think that there is anything better of that kind to be seen, for with its eyes it reveals venom, fire, and death, in an aspect truly terrifying. And certainly, as for such things, I do not believe that any one ever did them better than he, or came near him in imagining them; to which witness is borne by a marine monster that he made and presented to the Magnificent Giuliano de' Medici, which is so extravagant, bizarre, and fantastic in its deformity, that it seems impossible that Nature should produce anything so deformed and strange among her creations. This monster is now in the guardaroba of Duke Cosimo de' Medici, as is also a book, likewise by the hand of Piero, of animals of the same kind, most beautiful and bizarre, hatched very diligently with the pen, and finished with an incredible patience; which book was presented to him by M. Cosimo Bartoli, Provost of S. Giovanni, who is very much my friend, as he is of all our craftsmen, being a man who has always delighted, and still delights, in our profession.

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He also executed, round a chamber in the house of Francesco del Pugliese, various scenes with little figures; nor is it possible to describe the different fantastic things that he delighted to paint in all those scenes, what with the buildings, the animals, the costumes, the various instruments, and any other fanciful things that came into his head, since the stories were drawn from fables. These scenes, after the death of Francesco del Pugliese and his sons, were taken away, nor do I know what has become of them; and the same thing has happened to a picture of Mars and Venus, with her Loves and Vulcan, executed with great art and with an incredible patience.

Piero painted, for the elder Filippo Strozzi, a picture with little figures of Perseus delivering Andromeda from the Monster, in which are some very beautiful things. It is now in the house of Signor Sforza Almeni, First Chamberlain to Duke Cosimo, having been presented to him by Messer Giovanni Battista, the son of Lorenzo Strozzi, who knew how much that nobleman delighted in painting and sculpture; and he holds it in great account, for Piero never made a more lovely or more highly finished picture than this one, seeing that it is not possible to find a more bizarre or more fantastic sea-monster than that which Piero imagined and painted, or a fiercer attitude than that of Perseus, who is raising his sword in the air to smite the beast. In it, trembling between fear and hope, Andromeda is seen bound, most beautiful in countenance; and in the foreground are many people in various strange costumes, playing instruments and singing; among whom are some heads, smiling and rejoicing at seeing the deliverance of Andromeda, that are divine. The landscape is very beautiful, and the colouring sweet and full of grace. In short, with regard to the harmony and gradation of the colours, he executed this work with the greatest possible diligence.

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He painted, also, a picture containing a nude Venus, with a Mars, likewise nude, who is sleeping in a meadow full of flowers, and all around are various Loves, who are carrying away, some here, some there, the helmet, armllets, and other pieces of armour of Mars; there is a grove of myrtle, with a Cupid that is afraid of a rabbit, and there are also the Doves of Venus and the other emblems of Love. This picture is at Florence, in the house of Giorgio Vasari, who keeps it in memory of that master, whose caprices have always pleased him.

The Director of the Hospital of the Innocenti was much the friend of Piero; and wishing to have a panel painted, which was to be placed in the Pugliese Chapel, near the entrance into the church, on the left hand, he gave the commission for it to Piero, who brought it to completion at his leisure; but first he reduced his patron to despair, for on no account would he let him see it until it was finished. How strange this seemed to the patron, both because of their friendship, and because of his supplying Piero continually with money, without seeing what was being done, he himself showed, when, on the occasion of the final payment, he refused to give it to him without seeing the work. But, on Piero threatening that he would destroy all that he had painted, he was forced to give him the rest, and to wait patiently, in a greater rage than ever, for it to be set in place. This picture contains much that is truly beautiful.

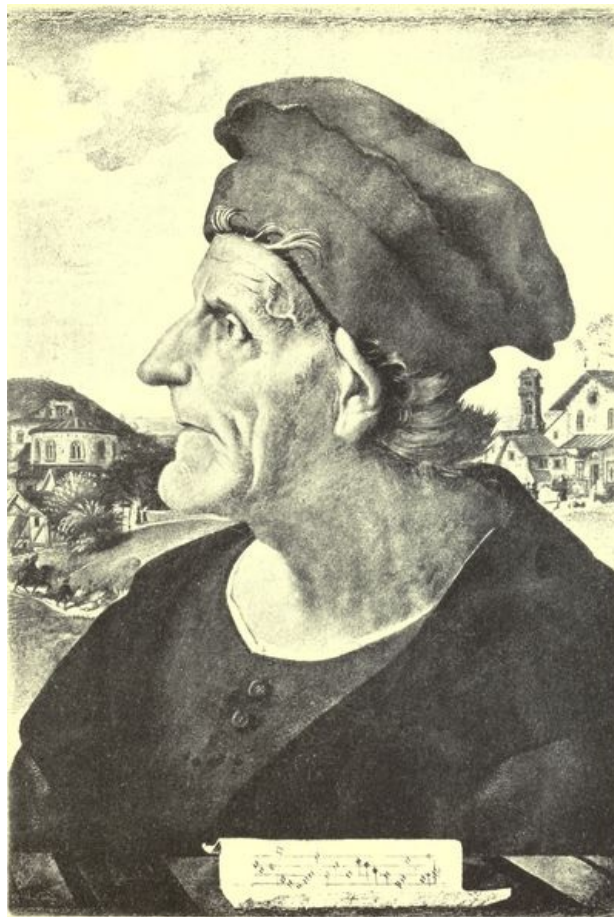
He undertook to paint a panel for a chapel in the Church of S. Piero Gattolini, and in this he represented Our Lady seated, with four figures round her, and two angels in the sky, who are crowning her; which work, executed with such diligence that it brought him praise and honour, is now to be seen in S. Friano, the other church having been ruined. For the tramezzo^[13] of the Church of S. Francesco, at Fiesole, he painted a little panel-picture of the Conception, which is a passing good little work, the figures being of no great size. For Giovanni Vespucci, who lived in a house now belonging to Piero Salviati, opposite to S. Michele, in the Via de' Servi, he executed some bacchanalian scenes, which are round an apartment; wherein he made such strange fauns, satyrs, sylvan gods, little boys, and bacchanals, that it is a marvel to see the diversity of the bay

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horses and garments, and the variety of the goatlike features, and all with great grace and most vivid truth to nature. In one scene is Silenus riding on an ass, with many children, some supporting him, and some giving him drink; and throughout the whole is a feeling of the joy of life, produced by the great genius of Piero. And in truth, in all that there is to be seen by his hand, one recognizes a spirit very different and far distant from that of other painters, and a certain subtlety in the investigation of some of the deepest and most subtle secrets of Nature, without grudging time or labour, but only for his own delight and for his pleasure in the art. And it could not well be otherwise; since, having grown enamoured of her, he cared nothing for his own comfort, and reduced himself to eating nothing but boiled eggs, which, in order to save firing, he cooked when he was boiling his glue, and not six or eight at a time, but in fifties; and, keeping them in a basket, he would eat them one by one. In this life he found such peculiar pleasure that any other, in comparison with his own, seemed to him slavery. He could not bear the crying of children, the coughing of men, the sound of bells, and the chanting of friars; and when the rain was pouring in torrents from the sky, it pleased him to see it streaming straight down from the roofs and splashing on the ground. He had the greatest terror of lightning; and, when he heard very loud thunder, he wrapped himself in his mantle, and, having closed the windows and the door of the room, he crouched in a corner until the storm should pass. He was very varied and original in his discourse, and sometimes said such beautiful things, that he made his hearers burst with laughter. But when he was old, and near the age of eighty, he had become so strange and eccentric that nothing could be done with him. He would not have assistants standing round him, so that his misanthropy had robbed him of all possible aid. He was sometimes seized by a desire to work, but was not able, by reason of the palsy, and fell into such a rage that he tried to force his hands to labour; but, as he muttered to himself, the mahlstick fell from his grasp, and even his brushes, so that it was pitiable to behold. Flies enraged him, and even shadows annoyed him. And so, having become ill through old age, he was visited by one or two friends, who besought him to make his peace with God; but he would not believe that he was dying, and put them off from one day to another; not that he was hard of heart, or an unbeliever, for he was a most zealous Christian, although his life was that of a beast. He discoursed at times on the torments of those ills that destroy men's bodies, and of the suffering endured by those who come to die with their strength wasting away little by little, which he called a great affliction. He spoke evil of physicians, apothecaries, and those who nurse the sick, saying that they cause them to die of hunger; besides the tortures of syrups, medicines, clysters, and other martyrdoms, such as not being allowed to sleep when you are drowsy, making your will, seeing your relatives round you, and staying in a dark room. He praised death by the hand of justice, saying that it was a fine thing to go to your death in that way; to see the broad sky about you, and all that throng; to be comforted with sweetmeats and with kind words; to have the priest and the people praying for you; and to go into Paradise with the Angels; so that whoever departed from this life at one blow, was very fortunate. And as he discoursed, he would twist everything to the strangest meanings that were ever heard. Wherefore, living in such strange fashion, he reduced himself to such a state with his extravagant fancies, that one morning he was found dead at the foot of a staircase, in the year 1521; and he was given burial in S. Piero Maggiore.

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His disciples were many, and one among them was Andrea del Sarto, who was a host in himself. Piero's portrait I received from Francesco da San Gallo, who was much his friend and intimate companion, and who made it when Piero was old; which Francesco still has a work by the hand of Piero that I must not pass by, a very beautiful head of Cleopatra, with an asp wound round her neck, and two portraits, one of his father Giuliano, and the other of his grandfather Francesco Giamberti, which seem to be alive.



FRANCESCO GIAMBERTI
*(After the panel by Piero di Cosimo.
Hague: Royal Museum, 255)*
Bruckmann
[View larger image](#)

BRAMANTE DA URBINO

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LIFE OF BRAMANTE DA URBINO

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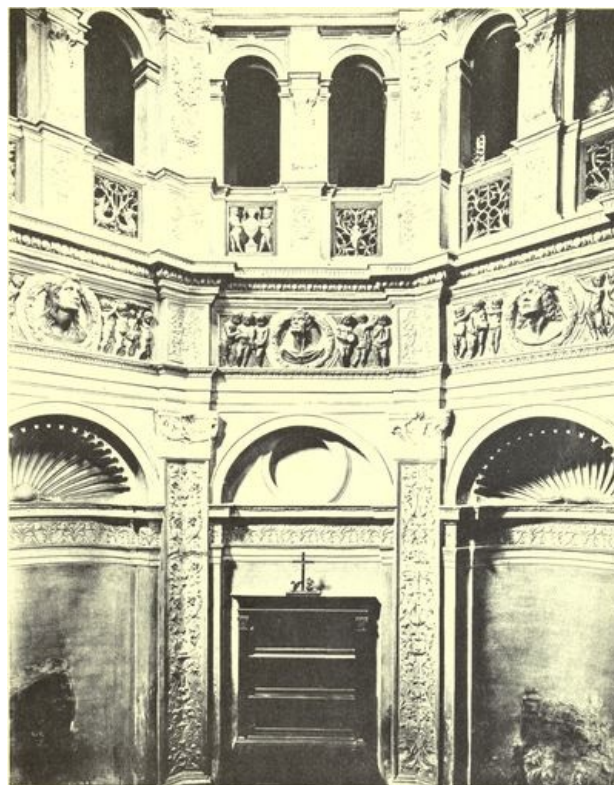
ARCHITECT

Of very great advantage to architecture, in truth, was the new method of Filippo Brunelleschi, who imitated and restored to the light, after many ages, the noble works of the most learned and marvellous ancients. But no less useful to our age was Bramante, in following the footsteps of Filippo, and making the path of his profession of architecture secure for all who came after him, by means of his courage, boldness, intellect, and science in that art, wherein he had the mastery not of theory only, but of supreme skill and practice. Nor could nature have created a more vigorous intellect, or one to exercise his art and carry it into execution with greater invention and proportion, or with a more thorough knowledge, than Bramante. But no less essential than all this was the election to the Pontificate, at that time, of Julius II, a Pope of great spirit, full of desire to leave memorials behind him. And it was fortunate both for us and for Bramante that he found such a Prince (a thing which rarely happens to men of great genius), at whose expense he might be able to display the worth of his intellect, and that mastery over difficulties which he showed in architecture. His ability was so universal in the buildings that he erected, that the outlines of the cornices, the shafts of the columns, the graceful capitals, the bases, the consoles and corners, the vaults, the staircases, the projections, and every detail of every Order of architecture, contrived from the counsel or model of this craftsman, never failed to astonish all who saw them. Wherefore it appears to me that the everlasting gratitude which is due to the ancients from the intellects that study their works, is also due from them to the labours of Bramante; for if the Greeks were the inventors of architecture, and the Romans their imitators, Bramante not only imitated what he saw, with new invention, and taught it to us, but also added very great beauty and elaboration to the art, which we see embellished by him at the present day.

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He was born at Castel Durante, in the State of Urbino, of poor but honest parentage. In his

boyhood, besides reading and writing, he gave much attention to arithmetic; but his father, who had need that he should earn money, perceiving that he delighted much in drawing, applied him, when still a mere boy, to the art of painting; whereupon Bramante gave much study to the works of Fra Bartolommeo, otherwise called Fra Carnovale da Urbino, who painted the panel-picture of S. Maria della Bella at Urbino. But since he always delighted in architecture and perspective, he departed from Castel Durante, and made his way to Lombardy, where he went now to one city, and now to another, working as best he could, but not on things of great cost or much credit, having as yet neither name nor reputation. For this reason he determined at least to see some noteworthy work, and betook himself to Milan, in order to see the Duomo. In that city there was then living one Cesare Cesariano, reputed to be a good geometrician and an able architect, who wrote a commentary on Vitruvius, and, out of despair at not having received for this the remuneration that he had expected, became so strange that he would work no more; and, having grown almost savage, he died more like a beast than like a human being. There was also one Bernardino da Trevio, a Milanese, engineer and architect for the Duomo, and an excellent draughtsman, who was held by Leonardo da Vinci to be a rare master, although his manner was rather crude and somewhat hard in painting. By his hand is a Resurrection of Christ to be seen at the upper end of the cloister of the Grazie, with some very beautiful foreshortenings; and a chapel in fresco in S. Francesco, containing the deaths of S. Peter and S. Paul. He painted many other works in Milan, and he also made a good number in the surrounding district, which are held in esteem; and in our book there is a head of a very beautiful woman, in charcoal and lead-white, which still bears witness to the manner that he followed.



INTERIOR OF SACRISTY
(After Bramante da Urbino.
Milan: S. Satiro)
Brogi
[View larger image](#)

But to return to Bramante; having studied that building, and having come to know those engineers, he so took courage, that he resolved to devote himself wholly to architecture. Having therefore departed from Milan, he betook himself, just before the holy year of 1500, to Rome, where he was recognized by some friends, both from his own country and from Lombardy, and received a commission to paint, over the Porta Santa of S. Giovanni Laterano, which is opened for the Jubilee, the coat of arms of Pope Alexander VI, to be executed in fresco, with angels and other figures acting as supporters.

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Bramante had brought some money from Lombardy, and he earned some more in Rome by executing certain works; and this he spent with the greatest economy, since he wished to be able to live independently, and at the same time, without having to work, to be free to take measurements, at his ease, of all the ancient buildings in Rome. And having put his hand to this, he set out, alone with his thoughts; and within no great space of time he had measured all the buildings in that city and in the Campagna without; and he went as far as Naples, and wherever he knew that there were antiquities. He measured all that was at Tivoli and in the Villa of Hadrian, and, as will be related afterwards in the proper place, made great use of it. The mind of Bramante becoming known in this way, the Cardinal of Naples, having noticed him, began to favour him. Whereupon, while Bramante was continuing his studies, the desire came to the said

Cardinal to have the cloister of the Frati della Pace rebuilt in travertine, and he gave the charge of this cloister to Bramante, and he, desiring to earn money and to gain the good will of that Cardinal, set himself to work with all possible industry and diligence, and brought it quickly to perfect completion. And although it was not a work of perfect beauty, it gave him a very great name, since there were not many in Rome who followed the profession of architecture with such zeal, study, and resolution as Bramante.

At the beginning he served as under-architect to Pope Alexander VI for the fountain of Trastevere, and likewise for that which was made on the Piazza di S. Pietro. He also took part, together with other excellent architects, when his reputation had increased, in the planning of a great part of the Palace of S. Giorgio, and of the Church of S. Lorenzo in Damaso, at the commission of Raffaello Riario, Cardinal of S. Giorgio, near the Campo di Fiore; which palace, whatever better work may have been executed afterwards, nevertheless was and still is held, on account of its greatness, to be a commodious and magnificent habitation; and the building of this edifice was carried out by one Antonio Montecavallo. Bramante was consulted with regard to the enlargement of S. Jacopo degli Spagnuoli, on the Piazza Navona, and likewise in the deliberations for the building of S. Maria de Anima, which was afterwards carried out by a German architect. From his design, also, was the Palace of Cardinal Adriano da Corneto in the Borgo Nuovo, which was built slowly, and then finally remained unfinished by reason of the flight of that Cardinal; and in like manner, the enlargement of the principal chapel of S. Maria del Popolo was executed from his design.

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These works brought him so much credit in Rome, that he was considered the best architect, in that he was resolute, prompt, and most fertile in invention; and he was continually employed by all the great persons in that city for their most important undertakings. Wherefore, after Julius II had been elected Pope, in the year 1503, he entered into his service. The fancy had taken that Pontiff to so transform the space that lay between the Belvedere and the Papal Palace, as to give it the aspect of a square theatre, embracing a little valley that ran between the old Papal Palace and the new buildings that Innocent VIII had erected as a habitation for the Popes; and he intended, by means of two corridors, one on either side of this little valley, to make it possible to go from the Belvedere to the Palace under loggia, and also to go from the Palace to the Belvedere in the same way, and likewise, by means of various flights of steps, to ascend to the level of the Belvedere. Whereupon Bramante, who had very good judgment and an inventive genius in such matters, distributed two ranges of columns along the lowest part; first, a very beautiful Doric loggia, similar to the Colosseum of the Savelli (although, in place of half-columns, he used pilasters), and all built of travertine; and over this a second range of the Ionic Order, full of windows, of such a height as to come to the level of the first-floor rooms of the Papal Palace, and to the level of those of the Belvedere; intending to make, afterwards, a loggia more than four hundred paces long on the side towards Rome, and likewise another on the side towards the wood, with which, one on either hand, he proposed to enclose the valley; into which, after it had been levelled, was to be brought all the water from the Belvedere; and for this a very beautiful fountain was to be made. Of this design, Bramante finished the first corridor, which issues from the Palace and leads to the Belvedere on the side towards Rome, except the upper loggia, which was to go above it. As for the opposite part, on the side towards the wood, the foundations, indeed, were laid, but it could not be finished, being interrupted by the death of Julius, and then by that of Bramante. His design was held to be so beautiful in invention, that it was believed that from the time of the ancients until that day, Rome had seen nothing better. But of the other corridor, as has been said, he left only the foundations, and the labour of finishing it has dragged on down to our own day, when Pius IV has brought it almost to completion.

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Bramante also erected the head-wall of the Museum of ancient statues in the Belvedere, together with the range of niches; wherein were placed, in his lifetime, the Laocoon, one of the rarest of ancient statues, the Apollo, and the Venus; and the rest of the statues were set up there afterwards by Leo X, such as the Tiber, the Nile, and the Cleopatra, with some others added by Clement VII; and in the time of Paul III and Julius III many important improvements were made, at great expense.

But to return to Bramante; he was very resolute, although he was hindered by the avarice of those who supplied him with the means to work, and he had a marvellous knowledge of the craft of building. This construction at the Belvedere was executed by him with extraordinary speed, and such was his eagerness as he worked, and that of the Pope, who would have liked to see the edifice spring up from the ground, without needing to be built, that the builders of the foundations brought the sand and the solid foundation-clay by night and let^[14] it down by day in the presence of Bramante, who caused the foundations to be made without seeing anything more of the work. This inadvertence was the reason that all his buildings have cracked, and are in danger of falling down, as did this same corridor, of which a piece eighty braccia in length fell to the ground in the time of Clement VII, and was afterwards rebuilt by Pope Paul III, who also had the foundations restored and the whole strengthened.

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From his design, also, are many flights of steps in the Belvedere, varied according to their situations, whether high or low, in the Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian Orders—a very beautiful work, executed with extraordinary grace. And he had made a model for the whole, which is said to have been a marvellous thing, as may still be imagined from the beginning of the work, unfinished as it is. Moreover, he made a spiral staircase upon mounting columns, in such a way that one can ascend it on horseback; wherein the Doric passes into the Ionic, and the Ionic into the Corinthian, rising from one into the other; a work executed with supreme grace, and with truly excellent art,

which does him no less honour than any other thing by his hand that is therein. This invention was copied by Bramante from S. Niccolò at Pisa, as was said in the Lives of Giovanni and Niccola of Pisa.

The fancy took Bramante to make, in a frieze on the outer façade of the Belvedere, some letters after the manner of ancient hieroglyphics, representing the name of the Pope and his own, in order to show his ingenuity: and he had begun thus, "Julio II, Pont. Massimo," having caused a head in profile of Julius Cæsar to be made, and a bridge, with two arches, which signified, "Julio II, Pont.," and an obelisk from the Circus Maximus, to represent "Max." At which the Pope laughed, and caused him to make the letters in the ancient manner, one braccio in height, which are there at the present day; saying that he had copied this folly from a door at Viterbo, over which one Maestro Francesco, an architect, had placed his name, carved in the architrave, and represented by a S. Francis (S. Francesco), an arch (arco), a roof (tetto), and a tower (torre), which, interpreted in his own way, denoted, "Maestro Francesco Architetto." The Pope, on account of his ability in architecture, was very well disposed towards him.



TEMPIETTO
(After Bramante da Urbino.
Rome: S. Pietro in Montorio)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

For these reasons he was rightly held worthy by the aforesaid Pope, who loved him very dearly for his great gifts, to be appointed to the Office of the Piombo, for which he made a machine for printing Bulls, with a very beautiful screw. In the service of that Pontiff Bramante went to Bologna, in the year 1504, when that city returned to the Church; and he occupied himself, throughout the whole war against Mirandola, on many ingenious things of the greatest importance. He made many designs for ground-plans and complete buildings, which he drew very well; and of such there are some to be seen in our book, accurately drawn and executed with very great art. He taught many of the rules of architecture to Raffaello da Urbino; designing for him, for example, the buildings that Raffaello afterwards drew in perspective in that apartment of the Pope wherein there is Mount Parnassus; in which apartment he made a portrait of Bramante taking measurements with a pair of compasses.

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The Pope resolved, having had the Strada Julia straightened out by Bramante, to place in it all the public offices and tribunals of Rome, on account of the convenience which this would bring to the merchants in their business, which up to that time had always been much hindered. Wherefore Bramante made a beginning with the palace that is to be seen by S. Biagio sul Tevere, wherein there is still an unfinished Corinthian temple, a thing of rare excellence. The rest of this beginning is in rustic work, and most beautiful; and it is a great pity that a work so honourable, useful, and magnificent, which is held by the masters of the profession to be the most beautiful example of design in that kind that has ever been seen, should not have been finished. He made, also, in the first cloister of S. Pietro a Montorio, a round temple of travertine, than which nothing more shapely or better conceived, whether in proportion, design, variety, or grace, could be imagined; and even more beautiful would it have been, if the whole extent of the cloister, which is not finished, had been brought to the form that is to be seen in a drawing by his hand. He

directed the building, in the Borgo, of the palace which afterwards belonged to Raffaello da Urbino, executed with bricks and mould-castings, the columns and bosses being of the Doric Order and of rustic work—a very beautiful work—with a new invention in the making of these castings. He also made the design and preparations for the decoration of S. Maria at Loreto, which was afterwards continued by Andrea Sansovino; and an endless number of models for palaces and temples, which are in Rome and throughout the States of the Church.

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So sublime was the intellect of this marvellous craftsman, that he made a vast design for restoring and rearranging the Papal Palace. And so greatly had his courage grown, on seeing the powers and desires of the Pope rise to the level of his own wishes and genius, that, hearing that he was minded to throw the Church of S. Pietro to the ground, in order to build it anew, he made him an endless number of designs. And among those that he made was one that was very wonderful, wherein he showed the greatest possible judgment, with two bell-towers, one on either side of the façade, as we see it in the coins afterwards struck for Julius II and Leo X by Caradosso, a most excellent goldsmith, who had no peer in making dies, as may still be seen from the medal of Bramante, executed by him, which is very beautiful. And so, the Pope having resolved to make a beginning with the vast and sublime structure of S. Pietro, Bramante caused half of the old church to be pulled down, and put his hand to the work, with the intention that it should surpass, in beauty, art, invention, and design, as well as in grandeur, richness, and adornment, all the buildings that had been erected in that city by the power of the Commonwealth, and by the art and intellect of so many able masters; and with his usual promptness he laid the foundations, and carried the greater part of the building, before the death of the Pope and his own, to the height of the cornice, where are the arches to all the four piers; and these he turned with supreme expedition and art. He also executed the vaulting of the principal chapel, where the recess is, giving his attention at the same time to pressing on the building of the chapel that is called the Chapel of the King of France.

For this work he invented the method of casting vaults in wooden moulds, in such a manner that patterns of friezes and foliage, like carvings, come out in the plaster; and in the arches of this edifice he showed how they could be turned with flying scaffoldings, a method that we have since seen followed by Antonio da San Gallo. In the part that was finished by him, the cornice that runs right round the interior is seen to be so graceful, that no other man's hand could take away or alter anything from its design without spoiling it. It is evident from his capitals, which are of olive leaves within, and from all the Doric work on the outer side, which is extraordinarily beautiful, how sublime was the courage of Bramante, whereby, in truth, if he had possessed physical powers equal to the intellect that adorned his spirit, he would most certainly have achieved even more unexampled things than he did. This work, as will be related in the proper places, since his death and down to the present day, has been much mutilated by other architects, insomuch that it may be said that with the exception of four arches which support the tribune, nothing of his has remained there. For Raffaello da Urbino and Giuliano da San Gallo, who carried on the work after the death of Julius II, together with Fra Giocondo of Verona, thought fit to begin to alter it; and after the death of those masters, Baldassarre Peruzzi, in building the Chapel of the King of France, in the transept on the side towards the Campo Santo, changed Bramante's design; and under Paul III Antonio da San Gallo changed it again entirely. Finally, Michelagnolo Buonarroti, sweeping away the countless opinions and superfluous expenses, has brought it to such beauty and perfection as not one of those others ever thought of, which all comes from his judgment and power of design; although he said to me several times that he was only the executor of the design and arrangements of Bramante, seeing that he who originally lays the foundations of a great edifice is its true creator. Vast, indeed, seemed the conception of Bramante in this work, and he gave it a very great beginning, which, even if he had begun on a smaller scale, neither San Gallo nor the others, nor even Buonarroti, would have had enough power of design to increase, although they were able to diminish it; so immense, stupendous, and magnificent was this edifice, and yet Bramante had conceived something even greater.

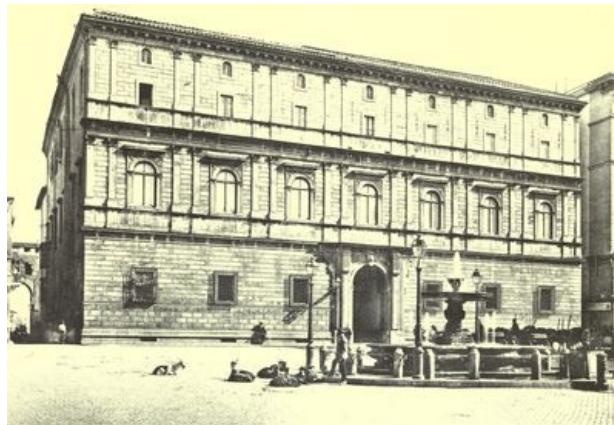
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It is said that he was so eager to see this structure making progress, that he pulled down many beautiful things in S. Pietro, such as tombs of Popes, paintings, and mosaics, and that for this reason we have lost all trace of many portraits of distinguished persons, which were scattered throughout that church, which was the principal church of all Christendom. He preserved only the altar of S. Pietro, and the old tribune, round which he made a most beautiful ornament of the Doric Order, all of peperino-stone, to the end that when the Pope came to S. Pietro to say Mass, he might be able to stand within it with all his Court and with the Ambassadors of the Christian Princes; but death prevented him from finishing it entirely, and the Sienese Baldassarre afterwards brought it to completion.

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Bramante was a very merry and pleasant person, ever delighting to help his neighbour. He was very much the friend of men of ability, and favoured them in whatever way he could; as may be seen from his kindness to the gracious Raffaello da Urbino, most celebrated of painters, whom he brought to Rome. He always lived in the greatest splendour, doing honour to himself; and in the rank to which his merits had raised him, what he possessed was nothing to what he would have been able to spend. He delighted in poetry, and loved to improvise upon the lyre, or to hear others doing this: and he composed some sonnets, if not as polished as we now demand them, at least weighty and without faults. He was much esteemed by the prelates, and was received by an endless number of noblemen who made his acquaintance. In his lifetime he had very great renown, and even greater after his death, because of which the building of S. Pietro was interrupted for many years. He lived to the age of seventy, and he was borne to his tomb in Rome, with most honourable obsequies, by the Court of the Pope and by all the sculptors,

architects, and painters. He was buried in S. Pietro, in the year 1514.



PALAZZO GIRAUD
(After Bramante da Urbino. Rome)

Anderson

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Very great was the loss that architecture suffered in the death of Bramante, who was the discoverer of many good methods wherewith he enriched that art, such as the invention of casting vaults, and the secret of stucco; both of which were known to the ancients, but had been lost until his time through the ruin of their buildings. And those who occupy themselves with measuring ancient works of architecture, find in the works of Bramante no less science and design than in any of the former; wherefore, among those who are versed in the profession, he can be accounted one of the rarest intellects that have adorned our age. He left behind him an intimate friend, Giuliano Leno, who had much to do with the buildings of his time, but was employed rather to make preparations and to carry out the wishes of whoever designed them, than to work on his own account, although he had judgment and great experience.

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During his lifetime, Bramante employed in his works one Ventura, a carpenter of Pistoia, who was a man of very good ability, and drew passing well. This Ventura, while in Rome, delighted much in taking measurements of antiquities; and afterwards, wishing to live once more in his native place, he returned to Pistoia. Now it happened in that city, in the year 1509, that a Madonna, which is now called the Madonna della Umiltà, worked miracles; and since many offerings were brought to her, the Signoria that was then governing the city determined to build a temple in her honour. Whereupon Ventura, confronted with this opportunity, made with his own hand a model of an octagonal temple ...^[15] braccia in breadth and ... braccia in height, with a vestibule or closed portico in front, very ornate within and truly beautiful. This having given satisfaction to the Signoria and to the chief men of the city, the building was begun according to the plans of Ventura, who, having laid the foundations of the vestibule and the temple, completely finished the vestibule, which he made very rich in pilasters and cornices of the Corinthian Order, with other carved stonework; while all the vaults in that work were made in like manner, with squares surrounded by mouldings, also in stone, and filled with rosettes. Afterwards, the octagonal temple was also carried to the height of the last cornice, from which the vaulting of the tribune was to rise, during the lifetime of Ventura; and since he was not very experienced in works of that size, he did not consider how the weight of the tribune might be safely laid on the building, but made within the thickness of the wall, at the first range of windows, and at the second, where the others are, a passage that runs right round, whereby he contrived to weaken the walls so much, that, the edifice being without buttresses at the base, it was dangerous to raise a vault over it, and particularly on the angles at the corners, upon which all the weight of the vault of that tribune must rest. Wherefore, after the death of Ventura, there was no architect with courage enough to raise that vault: nay, they had caused long and stout beams of timber to be brought to the place, in order to make a tent-shaped roof; but this did not please the citizens, and they would not have it put into execution. And so the building remained for many years without a roof, until, in the year 1561, the Wardens of Works besought Duke Cosimo that his Excellency should so favour them as to cause that tribune to be vaulted. Whereupon, in order to meet their wishes, the Duke ordered Giorgio Vasari to go there and see whether he could find some method of vaulting it; and he, having done this, made a model raising the building to the height of eight braccia above the cornice that Ventura had left, in order to make buttresses for it; and he decreased the breadth of the passage that runs right round between the walls, and reinforced the building with buttresses, besides binding the corners and the parts below the passages that Ventura had made, between the windows, with stout keys of iron, double at the angles; which secured the whole in such a manner that the vault could be raised with safety. Whereupon his Excellency was pleased to visit the place, and, being satisfied with everything, gave orders for the work to be executed; and so all the buttresses have been built, and a beginning has already been made with the raising of the cupola. Thus, then, the work of Ventura will become richer, greater in size and adornment, and better in proportions; but he truly deserves to have record made of him, since that building is the most noteworthy modern work in the city of Pistoia.

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LIFE OF FRA BARTOLOMMEO DI SAN MARCO

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[BACCIO DELLA PORTA]**PAINTER OF FLORENCE**

Near the territory of Prato, which is ten miles distant from Florence, in a village called Savignano, was born Bartolommeo, known, according to the Tuscan custom, by the name of Baccio. He, having shown in his childhood not merely inclination, but also aptitude, for drawing, was placed, through the good services of Benedetto da Maiano, with Cosimo Rosselli, and lodged in the house of some relatives of his own, who lived at the Porta a S. Piero Gattolini; where he stayed for many years, so that he was never called or known by any other name than that of Baccio della Porta.

After taking his leave of Cosimo Rosselli, he began to study with great devotion the works of Leonardo da Vinci; and in a short time he made such proficiencie and such progress in colouring, that he acquired the name and reputation of being one of the best young men of his art, both in colouring and in drawing. He had a companion in Mariotto Albertinelli, who in a short time acquired his manner passing well; and together with him he executed many pictures of Our Lady, which are scattered throughout Florence. To speak of all these would take too long, and I will mention only some excellently painted by Baccio. There is one, containing a Madonna, in the house of Filippo di Averardo Salviati, which is most beautiful, and which he holds very dear and in great price. Another was bought not long since, at a sale of old furniture, by Pier Maria delle Pozze, a person greatly devoted to pictures, who, having recognized its beauty, will not let it go for any sum of money; in which work is a Madonna executed with extraordinary diligence. Piero del Pugliese had a little Madonna of marble, in very low relief, a very rare work by the hand of Donatello, for which, in order to do it honour, he caused a wooden tabernacle to be made, with two little doors to enclose it. This he gave to Baccio della Porta, who painted, on the inner side of the doors, two little scenes, of which one was the Nativity of Christ, and the other His Circumcision; which Baccio executed with little figures after the manner of miniatures, in such a way that it would not be possible to do better work in oils; and then he painted Our Lady receiving the Annunciation from the Angel, in chiaroscuro, and likewise in oils, on the outer side of the same little doors, so as to be seen when they are closed. This work is now in the study of Duke Cosimo, wherein he keeps all his little antique figures of bronze, medals, and other rare pictures in miniature; and it is treasured by his most illustrious Excellency as a rare thing, as indeed it is.

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FRA BARTOLOMMEO DI SAN MARCO: THE DEPOSITION FROM THE CROSS
(Florence: Pitti, 64. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

Baccio was beloved in Florence for his virtues, for he was assiduous in his work, quiet and good by nature, and a truly God-fearing man; he had a great liking for a life of peace, and he shunned vicious company, delighted much in hearing sermons, and always sought the society of learned and serious persons. And in truth, it is seldom that nature creates a man of good parts and a gentle craftsman, without also providing him, after some time, with peace and favour, as she did for Baccio, who, as will be told below, obtained all that he desired. The report having spread

abroad that he was no less good than able, his fame so increased that he was commissioned by Gerozzo di Monna Venna Dini to paint the chapel wherein the bones of the dead are kept, in the cemetery of the Hospital of S. Maria Nuova. There he began a Judgment in fresco, which he executed with such diligence and beauty of manner in the part which he finished, that he acquired extraordinary fame thereby, in addition to what he had already, and became greatly celebrated, on account of his having represented with excellent conceptions the Glory of Paradise, and Christ with the twelve Apostles judging the twelve Tribes, wherein the figures are soft in colouring and most beautifully draped. Moreover, in those figures that are being dragged to Hell, in the part that was designed but left unfinished, one sees the despair, grief, and shame of everlasting death, even as one perceives contentment and gladness in those that are being saved; although this work remained unfinished, since Baccio was inclined to give his attention more to religion than to painting. For there was living in S. Marco, at this time, Fra Girolamo Savonarola of Ferrara, of the Order of Preaching Friars, a very famous theologian; and Baccio, going continually to hear his preaching, on account of the devotion that he felt for him, contracted a very strait intimacy with him, and passed almost all his time in the convent, having also become the friend of the other friars. Now it happened that Fra Girolamo, continuing his preaching, and crying out every day from the pulpit that lascivious pictures, music, and amorous books often lead the mind to evil, became convinced that it was not right to keep in houses where there were young girls painted figures of naked men and women. And at the next Carnival—when it was the custom in the city to make little huts of faggots and other kinds of wood on the public squares, and on the Tuesday evening, according to ancient use, to burn these, with amorous dances, in which men and women, joining hands, danced round these fires, singing certain airs—the people were so inflamed by Fra Girolamo, and he wrought upon them so strongly with his words, that on that day they brought to the place a vast quantity of nude figures, both in painting and in sculpture, many by the hand of excellent masters, and likewise books, lutes, and volumes of songs, which was a most grievous loss, particularly for painting. Thither Baccio carried all the drawings of nudes that he had made by way of studies, and he was followed by Lorenzo di Credi and by many others, who had the name of Piagnoni. And it was not long before Baccio, on account of the affection that he bore to Fra Girolamo, made a very beautiful portrait of him in a picture, which was then taken to Ferrara; but not long ago it came back to Florence, and it is now in the house of Filippo di Alamanno Salviati, who, since it is by the hand of Baccio, holds it very dear.

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It happened, after this, that one day the opponents of Fra Girolamo rose against him, in order to take him and deliver him over to the hands of justice, on account of the disturbances that he had caused in the city; and his friends, seeing this, also banded themselves together, to the number of more than five hundred, and shut themselves up in S. Marco, and Baccio with them, on account of the great affection that he had for their party. It is true that, being a person of little courage, nay, even timorous and mean-spirited, and hearing an attack being made a little time after this on the convent, and men being wounded and killed, he began to have serious doubts about himself. For which reason he made a vow that if he were to escape from that turmoil, he would straightway assume the habit of that Order; which vow he carried out afterwards most faithfully, for when the uproar had ceased, and Fra Girolamo had been taken and condemned to death, as the writers of history relate with more detail, Baccio betook himself to Prato and became a monk in S. Domenico, in that city, on July 26, in the year 1500, as is found written in the chronicles of that same convent in which he assumed the habit; to the great displeasure of all his friends, who were grieved beyond measure at having lost him, and particularly because they heard that he had taken it into his head to forsake his painting.

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Whereupon Mariotto Albertinelli, his friend and companion, at the entreaties of Gerozzo Dini, took over the materials of Fra Bartolommeo—which was the name given by the Prior to Baccio, on investing him with the habit—and brought to completion the work of the Ossa in S. Maria Nuova; where he portrayed from life the Director of the Hospital at that time, and some friars skilled in surgery, with Gerozzo, the patron of the work, and his wife, full-length figures on their knees, upon the walls on either side; and in a nude figure that is seated, he portrayed Giuliano Bugiardini, his pupil, as a young man, with long locks according to the custom of that time, in which each separate hair might be counted, so carefully are they painted. He made there, likewise, his own portrait, in the head, with long locks, of a figure that is issuing from one of the tombs; and in that work, in the region of the blessed, there is also the portrait of Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, the painter, whose Life we have written. This painting was executed wholly in fresco, both by Fra Bartolommeo and by Mariotto, so that it has remained, and still remains, marvellously fresh, and is held in esteem by craftsmen, since it is scarcely possible to do better in that kind of work.



THE HOLY FAMILY
(After the panel by Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco.
Rome: Corsini Gallery, 579)
Anderson

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When Fra Bartolommeo had been many months in Prato, he was sent by his superiors to take up his abode in S. Marco at Florence, and on account of his virtues he was received very warmly by the friars of that convent. In those days Bernardo del Bianco had caused to be erected, in the Badia of Florence, a chapel of grey-stone, full of carving, and very rich and beautiful, from the design of Benedetto da Rovezzano: which chapel was and still is much esteemed on account of some ornamental work of great variety, wherein Benedetto Buglioni placed, in some niches, angels and other figures made of glazed terra-cotta, in the round, to adorn it the more, with friezes containing cherubs and the devices of Bianco. And Bernardo, wishing to set up in the chapel a panel-picture that should be worthy of that adornment, and conceiving the idea that Fra Bartolommeo would be the right man for the work, sought in every possible way, through the intervention of his friends, to persuade him. Fra Bartolommeo was living in his convent, giving his attention to nothing save the divine offices and the duties of his Rule, although often besought by the Prior and by his dearest friends that he should work again at his painting; and for more than four years he had refused to touch a brush. But on this occasion, being pressed by Bernardo del Bianco, at length he began the panel-picture of S. Bernard, in which the Saint is writing, and gazing with such deep contemplation at the Madonna, with the Child in her arms, being borne by many angels and children, all coloured with great delicacy, that there is clearly perceived in him a certain celestial quality, I know not what, which seems, to him who studies it with attention, to shine out over that work, into which Baccio put much diligence and love; not to mention an arch executed in fresco, which is above it. He also made some pictures for Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici; and for Agnolo Doni he painted a picture of Our Lady, which stands on the altar of a chapel in his house—a work of extraordinary beauty.

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At this time the painter Raffaello da Urbino came to Florence to study his art, and taught the best principles of perspective to Fra Bartolommeo; and desiring to acquire the friar's manner of colouring, and being pleased with his handling of colours and his method of harmonizing them, Raffaello was always in his company. Fra Bartolommeo painted about the same time, in S. Marco at Florence, a panel with an infinite number of figures, which is now in the possession of the King of France, having been presented to him after being exposed to view for many months in S. Marco. Afterwards, he painted another in that convent, containing an endless number of figures, in place of the one that was sent into France; in which picture are some children who are flying in the air and holding open a canopy, executed with such good drawing and art, and with such strong relief, that they appear to stand out from the panel, while the colouring of the flesh reveals that beauty and excellence which every able craftsman seeks to give to his pictures; and this work is still considered at the present day to be most excellent. In it are many figures surrounding a Madonna, all most admirable, and executed with grace, feeling, boldness, spirit, and vivacity; and coloured, moreover, in so striking a manner, that they seem to be in relief, since he wished to show that he was able not only to draw, but also to give his figures force and make them stand out by means of the darkness of the shadows, as may be seen in some children who are round a canopy, upholding it, who, as they fly through the air, almost project from the panel. Besides this, there is an Infant Christ who is marrying S. Catherine the Nun, than which it would not be possible to paint anything more lifelike with the dark colouring that he used. There is a circle of saints on one side diminishing in perspective, round the depth of a great recess, who are distributed with such fine design that they seem to be real; and the same may be seen on the other side. And in truth, in this manner of colouring, he imitated to a great extent the works of

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Leonardo; particularly in the darks, for which he used printer's smoke-black and the black of burnt ivory. This panel has now become much darker than it was when he painted it, on account of those blacks, which have kept growing heavier and darker. In the foreground, among the principal figures, he made a S. George in armour, who has a standard in his hand, a bold, spirited, and vivacious figure, in a beautiful attitude. There is also a S. Bartholomew, standing, a figure that deserves the highest praise; with two children who are playing, one on a lute, and the other on a lyre, one of whom he made with a leg drawn up and his instrument resting upon it, and with the hands touching the strings in the act of running over them, an ear intent on the harmony, the head upraised, and the mouth slightly open, in such a way that whoever beholds him cannot persuade himself that he should not also hear the voice. No less lifelike is the other, who, leaning on one side, and bending over with one ear to the lyre, appears to be listening to learn how far it is in accord with the sound of the lute and the voice, while, with his eyes fixed on the ground, and his ear turned intently towards his companion, who is playing and singing, he seeks to follow in harmony with the air. These conceptions and expressions are truly ingenious; the children, who are seated, and clothed in veiling, are marvellous and executed with great industry by the practised hand of Fra Bartolommeo; and the whole work is brought out into strong relief by a fine gradation of dark shadows.

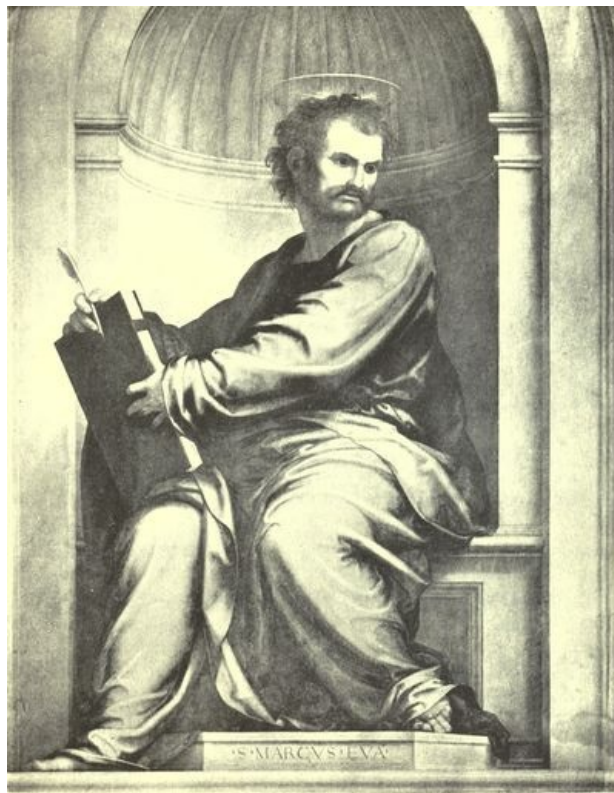
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A little time afterwards he painted another panel, to stand opposite to the former, and containing a Madonna surrounded by some saints, which is held to be a good work. He won extraordinary praise for having introduced a method of blending the colouring of his figures in such a way as to add a marvellous degree of harmony to art, making them appear to be in relief and alive, and executing them with supreme perfection of manner.

Hearing much of the noble works made in Rome by Michelagnolo, and likewise those of the gracious Raffaello, and being roused by the fame, which was continually reaching him, of the marvels wrought by those two divine craftsmen, with leave from his Prior he betook himself to Rome. There he was entertained by Fra Mariano Fetti, Friar of the Piombo, for whom he painted two pictures of S. Peter and S. Paul at his Convent of S. Silvestro a Monte Cavallo. But since he did not succeed in working as well in the air of Rome as he had done in that of Florence, while the vast number of works that he saw, what with the ancient and the modern, bewildered him so that much of the ability and excellence that he believed himself to possess, fell away from him, he determined to depart, leaving to Raffaello the charge of finishing one of those pictures, that of S. Peter, which he had not completed; which picture was retouched all over by the hand of the marvellous Raffaello, and given to Fra Mariano.

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Thus, then, Fra Bartolommeo returned to Florence. There he had been accused many times of not knowing how to paint nudes; for which reason he resolved to put himself to the test, and to show by means of his labour that he was as well fitted as any other master for the highest achievements of his art. Whereupon, to prove this, he painted a picture of S. Sebastian, naked, very lifelike in the colouring of the flesh, sweet in countenance, and likewise executed with corresponding beauty of person, whereby he won infinite praise from the craftsmen. It is said that, while this figure was exposed to view in the church, the friars found, through the confessional, women who had sinned at the sight of it, on account of the charm and melting beauty of the lifelike reality imparted to it by the genius of Fra Bartolommeo; for which reason they removed it from the church and placed it in the chapter-house, where it did not remain long before it was bought by Giovan Battista della Palla and sent to the King of France.



S. MARK
*(After the painting by Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco.
 Florence: Pitti, 125)*
Anderson
[View larger image](#)

Fra Bartolommeo had fallen into a rage against the joiners who made the ornamental frames for his panels and pictures, for it was their custom, as it still is at the present day, always to cover an eighth part of the figures with the projecting inner edges of the frames. He determined, therefore, to invent some means of doing without frames for panels; and for this S. Sebastian he caused the panel to be made in the form of a half-circle, wherein he drew a niche in perspective, which has the appearance of being carved in relief in the panel. Thus, painting a frame all round, he made an ornament for the figure in the middle; and he did the same for our S. Vincent, and for the S. Mark that will be described after the S. Vincent. For the arch of a door leading into the sacristy, he painted in oils, on wood, a figure of S. Vincent, a brother of that Order, representing him in the act of preaching on the Judgment, so that there may be perceived in his gestures, and particularly in his head, that vehemence and fury which are generally seen in the faces of preachers, when they are doing their utmost, with threats of the vengeance of God, to lead men hardened in sin into the perfect life; in such a manner that this figure appears, to one who studies it with attention, to be not painted but real and alive, with such strong relief is it executed; and it is a pity that it is all cracking and spoiling, on account of its having been painted with fresh coats of colour on fresh size, as I said of the works of Pietro Perugino in the Convent of the Ingesuati.

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The fancy took him, in order to show that he was able to make large figures—for he had been told that his manner was that of a miniaturist—to paint on panel, for the wall in which is the door of the choir, a figure of S. Mark the Evangelist, five braccia in height, and executed with very good draughtsmanship and supreme excellence.

After this, Salvadore Billi, a Florentine merchant, on his return from Naples, having heard the fame of Fra Bartolommeo, and having seen his works, caused him to paint a panel-picture of Christ the Saviour, in allusion to his own name, with the four Evangelists round Him; wherein, at the foot, are also two little boys upholding the globe of the world, whose flesh, fresh and tender, is excellently painted, as is the whole work, in which there are likewise two prophets that are much extolled. This panel stands in the Nunziata at Florence, below the great organ, according to the wish of Salvadore; it is a very beautiful work, finished by Fra Bartolommeo with much lovingness and great perfection; and it is surrounded by an ornament of marble, all carved by the hand of Pietro Rosselli.

Afterwards, having need of a change of air, the Prior at that time, who was his friend, sent him away to a monastery of his Order, wherein, while he stayed there, he combined the labour of his hands with the contemplation of death, with profit^[16] both for his soul and for the convent. For S. Martino in Lucca he painted a panel wherein, at the feet of a Madonna, there is a little angel playing on a lute, together with S. Stephen and S. John; in which picture, executed with excellent draughtsmanship and colouring, he proved his ability. For S. Romano, likewise, he painted a panel on canvas of the Madonna della Misericordia, who is placed on a pedestal of stone, with some angels holding her mantle; and together with her he depicted a throng of people on some steps, some standing, others seated, and others kneeling, but all gazing at a figure of Christ on

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high, who is sending down lightnings and thunderbolts upon the people. Clearly did Fra Bartolommeo prove in this work how well he was able to manage the gradation of shadows and darks in painting, giving extraordinary relief to his figures, and showing a rare and excellent mastery over the difficulties of his art in colouring, drawing, and invention; and the work is as perfect as any that he ever made. For the same church he painted another panel, also on canvas, containing a Christ and S. Catherine the Martyr, together with a S. Catherine of Siena, rapt in ecstasy from the earth, a figure as good as any that could possibly be painted in that manner.



GOD THE FATHER, WITH SS. MARY MAGDALEN AND CATHARINE
(After the painting by Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco.
Lucca: Gallery, 12)
Alinari

[View larger image](#)

Returning to Florence, he gave some attention to the study of music; and, delighting much therein, he would sometimes sing to pass the time. At Prato, opposite to the prison, he painted a panel-picture of the Assumption. He executed some pictures of Our Lady for the house of the Medici, and also other paintings for various people, such as a picture of Our Lady which Lodovico di Lodovico Capponi has in his apartment, and likewise another of the Virgin holding the Child in her arms, with two heads of saints, that is in the possession of the very Excellent Messer Lelio Torelli, Chief Secretary to the most Illustrious Duke Cosimo, who holds it very dear both on account of the genius of Fra Bartolommeo, and because he delights in, loves, and favours not only the men of our art, but every fine intellect. In the house of Piero del Pugliese, which now belongs to Matteo Botti, a citizen and merchant of Florence, in an antechamber at the head of a staircase, he painted a S. George in armour, on horseback, who is slaying the Dragon with his lance—a very spirited figure. This he executed in chiaroscuro, in oils, a method that he much delighted to use for all his works, sketching them in the manner of a cartoon, with ink or with bitumen, before colouring them; as may still be seen from many beginnings of pictures and panels, which he left unfinished on account of his death, and as may also be perceived from many drawings by his hand, executed in chiaroscuro, of which the greater part are now in the Monastery of S. Caterina da Siena on the Piazza di S. Marco, in the possession of a nun who paints, and of whom record will be made in the proper place; while many made in the same way adorn our book of drawings, honouring his memory, and some are in the hands of Messer Francesco del Garbo, a most excellent physician.

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Fra Bartolommeo always liked to have living objects before him when he was working; and in order to be able to draw draperies, armour, and other suchlike things, he caused a life-size figure of wood to be made, which moved at the joints; and this he clothed with real draperies, from which he painted most beautiful things, being able to keep them in position as long as he pleased, until he had brought his work to perfection. This figure, worm-eaten and ruined as it is, is in our

possession, treasured in memory of him.

At Arezzo, for the Abbey of the Black Friars, he made a head of Christ in dark tints—a very beautiful work. He painted, also, the panel of the Company of the Contemplanti, which was preserved in the house of the Magnificent Messer Ottaviano de' Medici, and has now been placed in a chapel of that house, with many ornaments, by his son Messer Alessandro, who holds it very dear in memory of Fra Bartolommeo, and also because he takes vast pleasure in painting. In the chapel of the Noviciate of S. Marco there is a panel-picture of the Purification, very lovely, which he executed with good draughtsmanship and high finish. At S. Maria Maddalena, a seat of the Friars of his Order, without Florence, while staying there for his own pleasure, he made a Christ and a Magdalene; and he also painted certain things in fresco in that convent. In like manner, he wrought in fresco an arch over the strangers' apartment in S. Marco, in which he painted Christ with Cleophas and Luke, and made a portrait of Fra Niccolò della Magna, who was then a young man, and who afterwards became Archbishop of Capua, and finally a Cardinal. He began a panel for S. Gallo, afterwards finished by Giuliano Bugiardini, which is now on the high-altar of S. Jacopo fra Fossi, on the Canto degli Alberti; and likewise a picture of the Rape of Dinah, now in the possession of Messer Cristofano Rinieri, and afterwards coloured by the same Giuliano, in which are buildings and conceptions that are much extolled.

From Piero Soderini he received the commission for the panel of the Council Chamber, which he began in such a manner, drawing it in chiaroscuro, that it seemed destined to do him very great credit; and, unfinished as it is, it now has a place of honour in the Chapel of the Magnificent Ottaviano de' Medici, in S. Lorenzo. In it are all the Patron Saints of the city of Florence, and those saints on whose days that city has gained her victories; and there is also the portrait of Fra Bartolommeo himself, made by him with a mirror. He had begun this picture, and had drawn the whole design, when it happened that, from working continually under a window, with the light from it beating on his back, he became completely paralyzed on that side of his body, and quite unable to move. Thereupon he was advised—such being the orders of his physicians—to go to the baths of San Filippo; where he stayed a long time, but became very little better thereby. Now Fra Bartolommeo was a great lover of fruit, which pleased his palate mightily, although it was ruinous to his health. Wherefore one morning, having eaten many figs, there came upon him, in addition to his other infirmity, a very violent fever, which cut short the course of his life in four days, at the age of forty-eight; when, still wholly conscious, he rendered up his soul to Heaven.

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His death grieved his friends, and particularly the friars, who gave him honourable sepulture in their burial-place in S. Marco, on October 8, in the year 1517. He had a dispensation from attending any of the offices in the choir with the other friars, and the gains from his works went to the convent, enough money being left in his hands to pay for colours and other materials necessary for his painting.

He left disciples in Cecchino del Frate, Benedetto Cianfanini, Gabriele Rustici, and Fra Paolo Pistoiese, the latter inheriting all his possessions. This Fra Paolo painted many panels and pictures from his master's drawings, after his death; of which three are in S. Domenico at Pistoia, and one at S. Maria del Sasso in the Casentino.

Fra Bartolommeo gave such grace to his figures with his colouring, and made them so novel and so modern in manner, that for these reasons he deserves to be numbered by us among the benefactors of art.

MARIOTTO ALBERTINELLI

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LIFE OF MARIOTTO ALBERTINELLI

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PAINTER OF FLORENCE

Mariotto Albertinelli, the closest and most intimate friend of Fra Bartolommeo—his other self, one might call him, not only on account of the constant connection and intercourse between them, but also through their similarity of manner during the period when Mariotto gave proper attention to art—was the son of Biagio di Bindo Albertinelli. At the age of twenty he abandoned his calling of gold-beater, in which he had been employed up to that time; and he learnt the first rudiments of painting in the workshop of Cosimo Rosselli, where he formed such an intimacy with Baccio della Porta, that they were one soul and one body. Such, indeed, was the brotherly friendship between them, that when Baccio took his leave of Cosimo, in order to practise his art as a master by himself, Mariotto went off with him; whereupon they lived for a long time, both one and the other, at the Porta a S. Piero Gattolini, executing many works in company. And since Mariotto was not so well grounded in drawing as was Baccio, he devoted himself to the study of such antiquities as were then in Florence, the greater part and the best of which were in the house of the Medici. He made a number of drawings of certain little panels in half-relief that

were under the loggia in the garden, on the side towards S. Lorenzo, in one of which is Adonis with a very beautiful dog, and in another two nude figures, one seated, with a dog at its feet, and the other standing with the legs crossed, leaning on a staff. Both these panels are marvellous; and there are likewise two others of the same size, in one of which are two little boys carrying Jove's thunderbolt, while in the other is the nude figure of an old man, with wings on his shoulders and feet, representing Chance, and balancing a pair of scales in his hands. In addition to these works, that garden was full of torsi of men and women, which were a school not only for Mariotto, but for all the sculptors and painters of his time. A good part of these are now in the guardaroba of Duke Cosimo, and others, such as the two torsi of Marsyas, the heads over the windows, and those of the Emperors over the doors, are still in the same place.

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By studying these antiquities, Mariotto made great proficiencie in drawing; and he entered into the service of the mother of Duke Lorenzo, Madonna Alfonsina, who, desiring that he should devote himself to becoming an able master, offered him all possible assistance. Dividing his time, therefore, between drawing and colouring, he became a passing good craftsman, as is proved by some pictures that he executed for that lady, which were sent by her to Rome, for Carlo and Giordano Orsini, and which afterwards came into the hands of Cæsar Borgia. He made a very good portrait of Madonna Alfonsina from the life; and it seemed to him, on account of his friendship with her, that his fortune was made, when, in the year 1494, Piero de' Medici was banished, and her assistance and favour failed him. Whereupon he returned to the workshop of Baccio, where he set himself with even greater zeal to make models of clay and to increase his knowledge, labouring at the study of nature, and imitating the works of Baccio, so that in a few years he became a sound and practised master. And then, seeing his work succeeding so well, he so grew in courage, that, imitating the manner and method of his companion, the hand of Mariotto was taken by many for that of Fra Bartolommeo.



THE MADONNA ENTHRONED, WITH SAINTS
(After the panel by Mariotto Albertinelli.
Florence: Accademia, 167)
Alinari

[View larger image](#)

But when he heard that Baccio had gone off to become a monk, Mariotto was almost overwhelmed and out of his mind; and so strange did the news seem to him, that he was in despair, and nothing could cheer him. If it had not been, indeed, that Mariotto could not then endure having anything to do with monks, against whom he was ever railing, and belonged to the party that was opposed to the faction of Fra Girolamo of Ferrara, his love for Baccio would have wrought upon him so strongly, that it would have forced him to don the cowl in the same convent as his companion. However, he was besought by Gerozzo Dini, who had given the commission for the Judgment that Baccio had left unfinished in the Ossa, that he, having a manner similar to Baccio's, should undertake to finish it; whereupon, being also moved by the circumstance that the cartoon completed by the hand of Baccio and other drawings were there, and by the entreaties of Fra Bartolommeo himself, who had received money on account of the painting, and was troubled in conscience at not having kept his promise, he finished the work, and executed all that was wanting with diligence and love, in such a way that many, not knowing this, think that it was painted by one single hand; and this brought him vast credit among craftsmen.

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In the Chapter-house of the Certosa of Florence he executed a Crucifixion, with Our Lady and the Magdalene at the foot of the Cross, and some angels in the sky, who are receiving the blood of

Christ; a work wrought in fresco, with diligence and lovingness, and passing well painted. Now some of the young men who were learning art under him, thinking that the friars were not giving them proper food, had counterfeited, without the knowledge of Mariotto, the keys of those windows opening into the friar's rooms, through which their pittance is passed; and sometimes, in secret, they stole some of it, now from one and now from another. There was a great uproar about this among the friars, since in the matter of eating they are as sensitive as any other person; but the lads did it with great dexterity, and, since they were held to be honest fellows, the blame fell on some of the friars, who were said to be doing it from hatred of one another. However, one day the truth was revealed, and the friars, to the end that the work might be finished, gave a double allowance to Mariotto and his lads, who finished the work with great glee and laughter.

For the Nuns of S. Giuliano in Florence he painted the panel of their high-altar, which he executed in a room that he had in the Gualfonda; together with another for the same church, with a Crucifix, some Angels, and God the Father, representing the Trinity, in oils and on a gold ground.

Mariotto was a most restless person, devoted to the pleasures of love, and a good liver in the matter of eating; wherefore, conceiving a hatred for the subtleties and brain-rackings of painting, and being often wounded by the tongues of other painters (according to the undying custom among them, handed down from one to another), he resolved to turn to a more humble, less fatiguing, and more cheerful art. And so, having opened a very fine inn, without the Porta S. Gallo, and a tavern and inn on the Ponte Vecchio, at the Dragon, he followed that calling for many months, saying that he had chosen an art without foreshortenings, muscles, and perspectives, and, what was much more important, free from censure, and that the art which he had given up was quite the contrary of his new one, since the former imitated flesh and blood, and the latter made both blood and flesh; and now, having good wine, he heard himself praised all day long, whereas before he used to hear nothing but censure.

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MARIOTTO ALBERTINELLI: THE SALUTATION
(Florence: Uffizi, 1259. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

However, having grown weary of this as well, and ashamed of the baseness of his calling, he returned to painting, and executed pictures and paintings for the houses of citizens in Florence. For Giovan Maria Benintendi he painted three little scenes with his own hand; and for the house of the Medici, at the election of Leo X, he painted a round picture of his arms, in oils, with Faith, Hope, and Charity, which hung for a long time over the door of their palace. He undertook to make, in the Company of S. Zanobi, near the Chapter-house of S. Maria del Fiore, a panel-picture of the Annunciation, which he executed with great labour. For this he caused special windows to

be made, wishing to work on the spot, in order to be able to make the views recede, where they were high and distant, by lowering the tones, or to bring them forward, at his pleasure. Now he had conceived the idea that pictures which have no relief and force, combined with delicacy, are of no account; but since he knew that they cannot be made to stand out from the surface without shadows, which, if they are too dark, remain indistinct, while, if they are delicate, they have no force, he was eager to combine this delicacy with a certain method of treatment to which up to that time, so it seemed to him, art had not attained in any satisfactory manner. Wherefore, looking on this work as an opportunity for accomplishing this, he set himself, to this end, to make extraordinary efforts, which may be recognized in a figure of God the Father, which is in the sky, and in some little children, who stand out from the panel in strong relief against a dark background in perspective that he made there with a ceiling in the form of a barrel-shaped vault, which, with its arches curving and its lines diminishing to a point, recedes inwards in such a manner that it appears to be in relief; besides which, there are some angels scattering flowers as they fly, that are very graceful.

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This work was painted out and painted in again many times by Mariotto before he could bring it to completion. He was for ever changing the colouring, making it now lighter, now darker, and sometimes more lively and glowing, sometimes less; but, never being completely satisfied, and never persuaded that he had done justice with his hand to the thoughts of his intellect, he wished to find a white that should be more brilliant than lead-white, and set himself, therefore, to clarify the latter, in order to be able to heighten the highest light to his own satisfaction. However, having recognized that he was not able to express by means of art all that the intelligence of the human brain grasps and comprehends, he contented himself with what he had achieved, since he could not attain to what it was not possible to reach. This work brought Mariotto praise and honour among craftsmen, but by no means as much profit as he hoped to gain from his patrons in return for his labours, since a dispute arose between him and those who had commissioned him to paint it. But Pietro Perugino, then an old man, Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, and Francesco Granacci valued it, and settled the price of the work by common consent.

For S. Pancrazio, in Florence, Mariotto painted a semicircular picture of the Visitation of Our Lady. For S. Trinità, likewise, he executed with diligence a panel-picture of Our Lady, S. Jerome, and S. Zanobi, at the commission of Zanobi del Maestro; and for the Church of the Congregation of the Priests of S. Martino, he painted a picture on panel of the Visitation, which is much extolled. He was invited to the Convent of La Quercia, without Viterbo; but after having begun a panel there, he conceived a desire to see Rome. Having made his way to that city, therefore, he executed to perfection for the Chapel of Fra Mariano Fetti in S. Silvestro di Monte Cavallo, a panel-picture in oils of S. Dominic, S. Catherine of Siena, with Christ marrying her, and Our Lady, in a delicate manner. He then returned to La Quercia, where he had a mistress, to whom, on account of the desire that he had felt while he was in Rome and could not enjoy her love, he sought to show that he was valiant in the lists; wherefore he exerted himself so much, that, being no longer young and so stalwart in such efforts, he was forced to take to his bed. And laying the blame for this on the air of the place, he had himself carried to Florence in a litter; but no expedients or remedies availed him in his sickness, from which he died in a few days, at the age of forty-five. He was buried in S. Piero Maggiore, in that city.

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There are some drawings by the hand of this master in our book, executed with the pen and in chiaroscuro, which are very good; particularly a spiral staircase, drawn with great ingenuity in perspective, of which he had a good knowledge.

Mariotto had many disciples; among others, Giuliano Bugiardini and Franciabigio, both Florentines, and Innocenzio da Imola, of whom we will speak in the proper place. Visino, a painter of Florence, was likewise his disciple, and excelled all these others in drawing, colouring, and industry, showing, also, a better manner in the works that he made, which he executed with great diligence. A few of them are still in Florence; and one can study his work at the present day in the house of Giovan Battista d' Agnol Doni, in a mirror^[17]—picture painted in oils after the manner of a miniature, wherein are Adam and Eve naked, eating the apple, a work executed with great care; and from another picture, of Christ being taken down from the Cross, together with the Thieves, in which there is a beautifully contrived complication of ladders, with some men aiding each other to take down the body of Christ, and others bearing one of the Thieves on their shoulders to burial, and all the figures in varied and fantastic attitudes, suited to that subject, and proving that he was an able man. The same master was brought by some Florentine merchants to Hungary, where he executed many works and gained great renown. But the poor man was soon in danger of coming to an evil end, because, being of a frank and free-spoken nature, he was not able to endure the wearisome persistence of some Hungarians, who kept tormenting him all day long with praises of their own country, as if there were no pleasure or happiness in anything except eating and drinking in their stifling rooms, and no grandeur or nobility save in their King and his Court, all the rest of the world being rubbish. It seemed to him (and indeed it is true) that in Italy there was another kind of excellence, culture, and beauty; and one day, being weary of their nonsense, and chancing to be a little merry, he let slip the opinion that a flask of Trebbiano and a berlingozzo^[18] were worth all the Kings and Queens that had ever reigned in those regions. And if the matter had not happened to fall into the hands of a Bishop, who was a gentleman and a man of the world, and also, above all, a tactful person, both able and willing to turn the thing into a joke, Visino would have learnt not to play with savages; for those brutes of Hungarians, not understanding his words, and thinking that he had uttered something terrible, such as a threat that he would rob their King of his life and throne, wished to give him short shrift and crucify him by mob-law. But the good Bishop drew him out of all embarrassment,

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and, appraising the merit of the excellent master at its true value, and putting a good complexion on the affair, restored him to the favour of the King, who, on hearing the story, was much amused by it. His good fortune, however, did not last long, for, not being able to endure the stifling rooms and the cold air, which ruined his constitution, in a short time this brought his life to an end; although his repute and fame survived in the memory of those who knew him when alive, and of those who saw his works in the years after his death. His pictures date about the year 1512.

RAFFAELLINO DEL GARBO

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LIFE OF RAFFAELLINO DEL GARBO

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PAINTER OF FLORENCE

Raffaello del Garbo, while he was a little boy, was called by the pet name of Raffaellino, which he retained ever afterwards; and in his earliest days he gave such promise in his art, that he was already numbered among the most excellent masters, a thing which happens to few. But still fewer meet the fate which afterwards came upon him, in that from a splendid beginning and almost certain hopes, he arrived at a very feeble end. For it is a general rule, in the world both of nature and of art, for things to grow gradually from small beginnings, little by little, until they reach their highest perfection. It is true, however, that many laws both of art and of nature are unknown to us, nor do they hold to one unvarying order at all times and in every case, a thing which very often renders uncertain the judgments of men. How this may happen is seen in Raffaellino, since it appeared that in him nature and art did their utmost to set out from extraordinary beginnings, the middle stage of which was below mediocrity, and the end almost nothing.

In his youth he drew as much as any painter who has ever exercised himself in drawing in order to become perfect; wherefore there may still be seen, throughout the world of art, a great number of his drawings, which have been dispersed by a son of his for ridiculous prices, partly drawn with the style, partly with the pen or in water-colours, but all on tinted paper, heightened with lead-white, and executed with marvellous boldness and mastery; and there are many of them in our book, drawn in a most beautiful manner. Besides this, he learnt to paint so well in distemper and in fresco, that his first works were executed with an incredible patience and diligence, as has been related.

In the Minerva, round the tomb of Cardinal Caraffa, he painted the vaulted ceiling, with such delicacy, that it seems like the work of an illuminator; wherefore it was held in great estimation by craftsmen at that time. His master, Filippo, regarded him in some respects as a much better painter than himself; and Raffaellino had acquired Filippo's manner so well, that there were few who could distinguish the one from the other. Later, after having left his master, he gave much more delicacy to that manner in the draperies, and greater softness to hair and to the expressions of the heads; and he was held in such expectation by craftsmen, that, while he followed this manner, he was considered the first of the young painters of his day. Now the family of the Capponi, having built a chapel that is called the Paradiso, on the hill below the Church of S. Bartolommeo a Monte Oliveto, without the Porta a S. Friano, wished to have the panel executed by Raffaellino, and gave him the commission; whereupon he painted in oils the Resurrection of Christ, with some soldiers who have fallen, as if dead, round the Sepulchre. These figures are very spirited and beautiful, and they have the most graceful heads that it is possible to see; among which, in the head of a young man, is a marvellous portrait of Niccola Capponi, while, in like manner, the head of one who is crying out because the stone covering of the tomb has fallen upon him, is most beautiful and bizarre. Wherefore the Capponi, having seen that Raffaellino's picture was a rare work, caused a frame to be made for it, all carved, with round columns richly adorned with burnished gold on a ground of bole. Before many years had passed, the campanile of that building was struck by lightning, which pierced the vault and fell near that panel, which, having been executed in oils, suffered no harm; but where the fluid passed near the gilt frame, it consumed the gold, leaving nothing there but the bare bole. It has seemed to me right to say that much with regard to oil-painting, to the end that all may see how important it is to know how to guard against such injury, which lightning has done not only to this work, but to many others.

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THE RESURRECTION
(After the panel by Raffaellino del Garbo.
Florence: Accademia, 90)
Anderson
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He painted in fresco, at the corner of a house that now belongs to Matteo Botti, between the Canto del Ponte alla Carraja and the Canto della Cuculia, a little shrine containing Our Lady with the Child in her arms, with S. Catherine and S. Barbara kneeling, a very graceful and carefully executed work. For the Villa of Marignolle, belonging to the Girolami, he painted two most beautiful panels, with Our Lady, S. Zanobi, and other saints; and he filled the predella below both of these with little figures representing scenes from the lives of those saints, executed with great diligence. On the wall above the door of the Church of the Nuns of S. Giorgio, he painted a Pietà, with a group of the Maries; and in like manner, in another arch below this, a figure of Our Lady, a work worthy of great praise, executed in the year 1504. In the Church of S. Spirito at Florence, in a panel over that of the Nerli, which his master Filippo had executed, he painted a Pietà, which is held to be a very good and praiseworthy work; but in another, representing S. Bernard, he fell short of that standard. Below the door of the sacristy are two panel-pictures by his hand; one showing S. Gregory the Pope saying Mass, when Christ appears to him, naked, with the Cross on His shoulder, and shedding blood from His side, with the deacon and sub-deacon, in their vestments, serving the Mass, and two angels swinging censers over the body of Christ. For another chapel, lower down, he executed a panel-picture containing Our Lady, S. Jerome, and S. Bartholomew. On these two works he bestowed no little labour; but he went on deteriorating from day to day. I do not know to what I should attribute his misfortune, for poor Raffaellino was not wanting in industry, diligence, and application; yet they availed him little. It is believed, indeed, that, becoming overburdened and impoverished by the cares of a family, and being compelled to use for his daily needs whatever he earned, not to mention that he was a man of no great spirit and undertook to do work for small prices, in this way he went on growing worse little by little; although there is always something of the good to be seen in his works.

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For the Monks of Cestello, on the wall of their refectory, he painted a large scene coloured in fresco, in which he depicted the miracle wrought by Jesus Christ with the five loaves and two fishes, with which he satisfied five thousand people. For the Abbot de' Panichi he executed the panel-picture of the high-altar in the Church of S. Salvi, without the Porta alla Croce, painting therein Our Lady, S. Giovanni Gualberto, S. Salvi, S. Bernardo, a Cardinal of the Uberti family, and S. Benedetto the Abbot, and, at the sides, S. Batista and S. Fedele in armour, in two niches on either hand of the picture, which had a rich frame; and in the predella are several scenes, with little figures, from the Life of S. Giovanni Gualberto. In all this he acquitted himself very well, because he was assisted in his wretchedness by that Abbot, who took pity on him for the sake of his talents; and in the predella of the panel Raffaellino made a portrait of him from life, together with one of the General who was then ruling his Order. In S. Piero Maggiore, on the right as one enters the church, there is a panel by his hand, and in the Murate there is a picture of S. Sigismund, the King. For Girolamo Federighi, in that part of S. Pancrazio where he was afterwards buried, he painted a Trinity in fresco, with portraits of him and of his wife on their knees; and here he began to decline into pettiness of manner. He also made two figures in distemper for the Monks of Cestello, a S. Rocco and a S. Ignazio, which are in the Chapel of S. Sebastiano. And in a little chapel on the abutment of the Ponte Rubaconte, on the side towards the Mills, he painted a Madonna, a S. Laurence, and another saint.

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In the end he was reduced to undertaking any work, however mean; and he was employed by certain nuns and other persons, who were embroidering a quantity of church vestments and hangings at that time, to make designs in chiaroscuro and ornamental borders containing saints and stories, for ridiculous prices. For although he had deteriorated, there sometimes issued from his hand most beautiful designs and fancies, as is proved by many drawings that were sold and dispersed after the death of those who used them for embroidery; of which there are many in the

book of the illustrious hospital-director,^[19] that show how able he was in draughtsmanship. This was the reason that many vestments, hangings, and ornaments, which are held to be very beautiful, were made for the churches of Florence and throughout the Florentine territory, and also for Cardinals and Bishops in Rome. At the present day this method of embroidery, which was used by Paolo da Verona, the Florentine Galieno, and others like them, is almost lost, and another method, with wide stitches, has been introduced, which has neither the same beauty nor the same careful workmanship, and is much less durable than the other. Wherefore, in return for this benefit, although poverty caused him misery and hardship during his lifetime, he deserves to have honour and glory for his talents after his death.

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And in truth Raffaellino was unfortunate in his connections, for he always mixed with poor and humble people, like a man who had sunk and become ashamed of himself, seeing that in his youth he had given such great promise, and now knew how distant he was from the extraordinary excellence of the works that he had made at that time. And thus, growing old, he fell away so much from his early standard, that his works no longer appeared to be by his hand; and forgetting his art more and more every day, he was reduced to painting, in addition to his usual panels and pictures, the meanest kinds of works. And he sank so low that everything was a torment to him, but above all his burdensome family of children, which turned all his ability in art into mere clumsiness. Wherefore, being overtaken by infirmities and impoverished, he finished his life in misery at the age of fifty-eight, and was buried in S. Simone, at Florence, by the Company of the Misericordia, in the year 1524.

He left behind him many pupils who became able masters. One, who went in his boyhood to learn the rudiments of art from Raffaellino, was the Florentine painter Bronzino, who afterwards acquitted himself so well under the wing of Jacopo da Pontormo, another painter of Florence, that he has made as much proficiencie in the art as his master Jacopo. The portrait of Raffaellino was copied from a drawing that belonged to Bastiano da Monte Carlo, who was also his disciple, and who, for a man with no draughtsmanship, became a passing good master.

TORRIGIANO

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LIFE OF TORRIGIANO

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SCULPTOR OF FLORENCE

Great is the power of anger in the soul of one who is seeking, with arrogance and pride, to gain a reputation for excellence in some profession, when he sees rising in the same art, at a time when he does not expect it, some unknown man of beautiful genius, who not only equals him, but in time surpasses him by a great measure. Of such persons, in truth, it may be said that there is no iron that they would not gnaw in their rage, nor any evil which they would not do if they were able, for it seems to them too grievous an affront in the eyes of the world, that children whom they saw born should have reached maturity almost in one bound from their cradles. They do not reflect that every day one may see the will of young men, spurred on by zeal in their tender years, and exercised by them in continual studies, rise to infinite heights; while the old, led by fear, pride, and ambition, lose the cunning of their hands, so that the better they think to work, the worse they do it, and where they believe that they are advancing, they are going backwards. Wherefore, out of envy, they never give credit to the young for the perfection of their works, however clearly they may see it, on account of the obstinacy that possesses them. And it is known from experience that when, in order to show what they can do, they exert themselves to the utmost of their power, they often produce works that are ridiculous and a mere laughing-stock. In truth, when craftsmen have reached the age when the eye is no longer steady and the hand trembles, their place, if they have saved the wherewithal to live, is to give advice to men who can work, for the reason that the arts of painting and sculpture call for a mind in every way vigorous and awake (as it is at the age when the blood is boiling), full of burning desire, and a capital enemy of the pleasures of the world. And whoever is not temperate with regard to the delights of the world should shun the studies of any art or science whatsoever, seeing that such pleasures and study can never agree well together. Since, therefore, these arts involve so many burdens, few, indeed, are they who attain to the highest rank; and those who start with eagerness from the post are greater in number than those who run well in the race and win the prize.

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Now there was more pride than art, although he was very able, to be seen in Torrigiano, a sculptor of Florence, who in his youth was maintained by the elder Lorenzo de' Medici in the garden which that magnificent citizen possessed on the Piazza di S. Marco in Florence. This garden was in such wise filled with the best ancient statuary, that the loggia, the walks, and all the apartments were adorned with noble ancient figures of marble, pictures, and other suchlike things, made by the hands of the best masters who ever lived in Italy or elsewhere. And all these works, in addition to the magnificence and adornment that they conferred on that garden, were as a school or academy for the young painters and sculptors, as well as for all others who were

studying the arts of design, and particularly for the young nobles; since the Magnificent Lorenzo had a strong conviction that those who are born of noble blood can attain to perfection in all things more readily and more speedily than is possible, for the most part, for men of humble birth, in whom there are rarely seen those conceptions and that marvellous genius which are perceived in men of illustrious stock. Moreover, the less highly born, having generally to defend themselves from hardship and poverty, and being forced in consequence to undertake any sort of work, however mean, are not able to exercise their intellect, or to attain to the highest degree of excellence. Wherefore it was well said by the learned Alciato—when speaking of men of beautiful genius, born in poverty, who are not able to raise themselves, because, in proportion as they are impelled upwards by the wings of their genius, so are they held down by their poverty—

Ut me pluma levat, sic grave mergit onus.

Lorenzo the Magnificent, then, always favoured men of genius, and particularly such of the nobles as showed an inclination for these our arts; wherefore it is no marvel that from that school there should have issued some who have amazed the world. And what is more, he not only gave the means to buy food and clothing to those who, being poor, would otherwise not have been able to pursue the studies of design, but also bestowed extraordinary gifts on any one among them who had acquitted himself in some work better than the others; so that the young students of our arts, competing thus with each other, thereby became very excellent, as I will relate.

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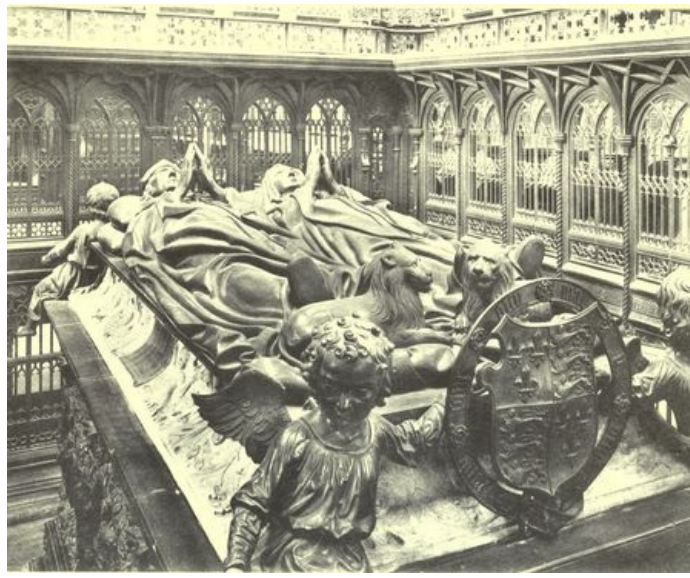
The guardian and master of these young men, at that time, was the Florentine sculptor Bertoldo, an old and practised craftsman, who had once been a disciple of Donato. He taught them, and likewise had charge of the works in the garden, and of many drawings, cartoons, and models by the hand of Donato, Pippo,^[20] Masaccio, Paolo Uccello, Fra Giovanni, Fra Filippo, and other masters, both native and foreign. It is a sure fact that these arts can only be acquired by a long course of study in drawing and diligently imitating works of excellence; and whoever has not such facilities, however much he may be assisted by nature, can never arrive at perfection, save late in life.

But to return to the antiquities of the garden; they were in great part dispersed in the year 1494, when Piero, the son of the aforesaid Lorenzo, was banished from Florence, all being sold by auction. The greater part of them, however, were restored to the Magnificent Giuliano in the year 1512, at the time when he and the other members of the House of Medici returned to their country; and at the present day they are for the most part preserved in the guardaroba of Duke Cosimo. Truly magnificent was the example thus given by Lorenzo, and whenever Princes and other persons of high degree choose to imitate it, they will always gain everlasting honour and glory thereby; since he who assists and favours, in their noble undertakings, men of rare and beautiful genius, from whom the world receives such beauty, honour, convenience and benefit, deserves to live for ever in the minds and memories of mankind.

Among those who studied the arts of design in that garden, the following all became very excellent masters; Michelagnolo, the son of Lodovico Buonarroti; Giovan Francesco Rustici; Torrigiano Torrigiani; Francesco Granacci; Niccolò, the son of Jacopo^[21] Soggi; Lorenzo di Credi, and Giuliano Bugiardini; and, among the foreigners, Baccio da Montelupo, Andrea Contucci of Monte Sansovino, and others, of whom mention will be made in the proper places.

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Torrighiano, then, whose Life we are now about to write, was a student in the garden with those named above; and he was not only powerful in person, and proud and fearless in spirit, but also by nature so overbearing and choleric, that he was for ever tyrannizing over all the others both with words and deeds. His chief profession was sculpture, yet he worked with great delicacy in terra-cotta, in a very good and beautiful manner. But not being able to endure that any one should surpass him, he would set himself to spoil with his hands such of the works of others as showed an excellence that he could not achieve with his brain; and if these others resented this, he often had recourse to something stronger than words. He had a particular hatred for Michelagnolo, for no other reason than that he saw him attending zealously to the study of art, and knew that he used to draw in secret at his own house by night and on feast-days, so that he came to succeed better in the garden than all the others, and was therefore much favoured by Lorenzo the Magnificent. Wherefore, moved by bitter envy, Torrigiano was always seeking to affront him, both in word and deed; and one day, having come to blows, Torrigiano struck Michelagnolo so hard on the nose with his fist, that he broke it, insomuch that Michelagnolo had his nose flattened for the rest of his life. This matter becoming known to Lorenzo, he was so enraged that Torrigiano, if he had not fled from Florence, would have suffered some heavy punishment.



TOMB OF HENRY VII
(After Torrigiano.
London: Westminster Abbey)
Mansell

[View larger image](#)

Having therefore made his way to Rome, where Alexander VI was then pressing on the work of the Borgia Tower, Torrigiano executed in it a great quantity of stucco-work, in company with other masters. Afterwards, money being offered in the service of Duke Valentino, who was making war against the people of Romagna, Torrigiano was led away by certain young Florentines; and, having changed himself in a moment from a sculptor to a soldier, he bore himself valiantly in those campaigns of Romagna. He did the same under Paolo Vitelli in the war with Pisa; and he was with Piero de' Medici at the action on the Garigliano, where he won the right to arms, and the name of a valiant standard-bearer.

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But in the end, recognizing that he was never likely to reach the rank of captain that he desired, although he deserved it, and that he had saved nothing in the wars, and had, on the contrary, wasted his time, he returned to sculpture. For certain Florentine merchants, then, he made small works in marble and bronze, little figures, which are scattered throughout the houses of citizens in Florence, and he executed many drawings in a bold and excellent manner, as may be seen from some by his hand that are in our book, together with others which he made in competition with Michelagnolo. And having been brought by those merchants to England, he executed there, in the service of the King, an endless number of works in marble, bronze, and wood, competing with some masters of that country, to all of whom he proved superior. For this he was so well and so richly rewarded, that, if he had not been as reckless and unbridled as he was proud, he might have lived a life of ease and ended his days in comfort; but what happened to him was the very opposite.

After this, having been summoned from England into Spain, he made many works there, which are scattered about in various places, and are held in great estimation; and, among others, he made a Crucifix of terra-cotta, which is the most marvellous thing that there is in all Spain. For a monastery of Friars of S. Jerome, without the city of Seville, he made another Crucifix; a S. Jerome in Penitence, with his lion, the figure of that Saint being a portrait of an old house-steward of the Botti family, Florentine merchants settled in Spain; and a Madonna with the Child. This last figure was so beautiful that it led to his making another like it for the Duke of Arcus, who, in order to obtain it, made such promises to Torrigiano, that he believed that it would make him rich for the rest of his life. The work being finished, the Duke gave him so many of those coins that are called "maravedis," which are worth little or nothing, that Torrigiano, to whose house there came two persons laden with them, became even more confirmed in his belief that he was to be a very rich man. But afterwards, having shown this money to a Florentine friend of his, and having asked him to count it and reckon its value in Italian coin, he saw that all that vast sum did not amount to thirty ducats; at which, holding himself to have been fooled, he went in a violent rage to where the figure was that he had made for the Duke, and wholly destroyed it. Whereupon that Spaniard, considering himself affronted, denounced Torrigiano as a heretic; on which account he was thrown into prison, and after being examined every day, and sent from one inquisitor to the other, he was finally judged to deserve the severest penalty. But this was never put into execution, because Torrigiano himself was plunged thereby into such melancholy, that, remaining many days without eating, and thus becoming very weak, little by little he put an end to his own life; and in this way, by denying himself his food, he avoided the shame into which he would perchance have fallen, for it was believed that he had been condemned to death.

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The works of this master date about the year of our salvation, 1515, and he died in the year 1522.

LIVES OF GIULIANO AND ANTONIO DA SAN GALLO

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ARCHITECTS OF FLORENCE

Francesco di Paolo Giamberti, who was a passing good architect in the time of Cosimo de' Medici, and was much employed by him, had two sons, Giuliano and Antonio, whom he apprenticed to the art of wood-carving. One of these two sons, Giuliano, he placed with Francione, a joiner, an ingenious person, who gave attention at the same time to wood-carving and to perspective, and with whom Francesco was very intimate, since they had executed many works in company, both in carving and in architecture, for Lorenzo de' Medici. This Giuliano learnt so well all that Francione taught him, that the carvings and beautiful perspectives that he afterwards executed by himself in the choir of the Duomo of Pisa are still regarded not without marvel at the present day, even among the many new perspectives.

While Giuliano was studying design, and his young blood ran hot in his veins, the army of the Duke of Calabria, by reason of the hatred which that lord bore to Lorenzo de' Medici, encamped before Castellina, in order to occupy the dominions of the Signoria of Florence, and also, if this should be successful, in order to accomplish some greater design. Wherefore Lorenzo the Magnificent was forced to send an engineer to Castellina, who might make mills and bastions, and should have the charge of handling the artillery, which few men at that time were able to do; and he sent thither Giuliano, considering him to have a mind more able, more ready, and more resolute than any other man, and knowing him already as the son of Francesco, who had been a devoted servant of the House of Medici.

Arriving at Castellina, therefore, Giuliano fortified that place with good walls and mills, both within and without, and furnished it with everything else necessary for the defence. Then, observing that the artillery-men stood at a great distance from their pieces, handling, loading, and discharging them with much timidity, he gave his attention to this, and so contrived that from that time onwards the artillery did harm to no one, whereas it had previously killed many of them, since they had not had judgment and knowledge enough to avoid suffering injury from the recoil. Having therefore taken charge of the artillery, Giuliano showed great skill in discharging it to the best possible advantage; and the Duke's forces so lost heart by reason of this and other adverse circumstances, that they were glad to make terms and depart from the town. In consequence of this Giuliano won no little praise from Lorenzo in Florence, and was looked upon with favour and affection ever afterwards.

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Having meanwhile given his attention to architecture, he began the first cloister of the Monastery of Cestello, and executed that part of it that is seen to be of the Ionic Order; placing capitals on the columns with volutes curving downwards to the collarino, where the shaft of the column ends, and making, below the ovoli and the fusarole, a frieze, one-third in height of the diameter of the column. This capital was copied from a very ancient one of marble, found at Fiesole by Messer Leonardo Salutati, Bishop of that place, who kept it for some time, together with other antiquities, in a house and garden that he occupied in the Via di S. Gallo, opposite to S. Agata; and it is now in the possession of Messer Giovan Battista da Ricasoli, Bishop of Pistoia, and is prized for its beauty and variety, since among the ancient capitals there has not been seen another like it. But that cloister remained unfinished, because those monks were not then able to bear such an expense.

Meanwhile Giuliano had come into even greater credit with Lorenzo; and the latter, who was intending to build a palace at Poggio a Cajano, a place between Florence and Pistoia, and had caused several models to be made for it by Francione and by others, commissioned Giuliano, also, to make one of the sort of building that he proposed to erect. And Giuliano made it so completely different in form from the others, and so much to Lorenzo's fancy, that he began straightway to have it carried into execution, as the best of all the models; on which account he took Giuliano even more into his favour, and ever afterwards gave him an allowance.

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After this, Giuliano wishing to make a vaulted ceiling for the great hall of that palace in the manner that we call barrel-shaped, Lorenzo could not believe, on account of the great space, that it could be raised. Whereupon Giuliano, who was building a house for himself in Florence, made a ceiling for his hall according to the design of the other, in order to convince the mind of that Magnificent Prince; and Lorenzo therefore gave orders for the ceiling at the Poggio to be carried out, which was successfully done.

By that time the fame of Giuliano had so increased, that, at the entreaty of the Duke of Calabria, he was commissioned by Lorenzo the Magnificent to make the model for a palace that was to be built at Naples; and he spent a long time over executing it. Now while he was working at this, the Castellan of Ostia, then Bishop della Rovere, who after a time became Pope Julius II, wishing to restore that stronghold and to put it into good order, and having heard the fame of Giuliano, sent to Florence for him; and, having supplied him with a good provision, he kept him employed for two years in making therein all the useful improvements that he was able to execute by means of

his art. And to the end that the model for the Duke of Calabria might not be neglected, but might be brought to conclusion, he left it to his brother Antonio, who finished it according to his directions, which, in executing it and carrying it to completion, he followed with great diligence, for he was no less competent in that art than Giuliano himself. Now Giuliano was advised by the elder Lorenzo to present it in person, to the end that he might show from the model itself the difficulties that he had triumphed over in making it. Whereupon he departed for Naples, and, having presented the work, was received with honour; for men were as much impressed by the gracious manner in which the Magnificent Lorenzo had sent him, as they were struck with marvel at the masterly work in the model, which gave such satisfaction that the building was straightway begun near the Castel Nuovo.

After Giuliano had been some time in Naples, he sought leave from the Duke to return to Florence; whereupon he was presented by the King with horses and garments, and, among other things, with a silver cup containing some hundreds of ducats. These things Giuliano would not accept, saying that he served a patron who had no need of silver or gold, but that if he did indeed wish to give him some present or some token of approbation, to show that he had been in that city, he might bestow upon him some of his antiquities, which he would choose himself. These the King granted to him most liberally, both for love of the Magnificent Lorenzo and on account of Giuliano's own worth; and they were a head of the Emperor Hadrian, which is now above the door of the garden at the house of the Medici, a nude woman, more than life-size, and a Cupid sleeping, all in marble and in the round. Giuliano sent them as presents to the Magnificent Lorenzo, who expressed vast delight at the gift, and never tired of praising the action of this most liberal of craftsmen, who had refused gold and silver for the sake of art, a thing which few would have done. That Cupid is now in the guardaroba of Duke Cosimo.

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FAÇADE OF S. MARIA DELLE CARCERI
(After Giuliano da San Gallo.

Prato)

Alinari

[View larger image](#)

Having then returned to Florence, Giuliano was received most graciously by the Magnificent Lorenzo. Now the fancy had taken that Prince to build a convent capable of holding a hundred friars, without the Porta S. Gallo, in order to give satisfaction to Fra Mariano da Ghinazzano, a most learned member of the Order of Eremite Friars of S. Augustine. For this convent models were made by many architects, and in the end that of Giuliano was put into execution, which was the reason that Lorenzo, from this work, gave him the name of Giuliano da San Gallo. Wherefore Giuliano, who heard himself called by everyone "da San Gallo," said one day in jest to the Magnificent Lorenzo, "By giving me this new name of 'da San Gallo,' you are making me lose the ancient name of my house, so that, in place of going forward in the matter of lineage, as I thought to do, I am going backward." Whereupon Lorenzo answered that he would rather have him become the founder of a new house through his own worth, than depend on others; at which Giuliano was well content.

Meanwhile the work of S. Gallo was carried on, together with Lorenzo's other buildings; but

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neither the convent nor the others were finished, by reason of the death of Lorenzo. And even the completed part of this structure of S. Gallo did not long remain standing, because in 1530, on account of the siege of Florence, it was destroyed and thrown to the ground, together with the whole suburb, the piazza of which was completely surrounded by very beautiful buildings; and at the present day there is no trace to be seen there of house, church, or convent.

At this time there took place the death of the King of Naples, whereupon Giuliano Gondi, a very rich Florentine merchant, returned from that city to Florence, and commissioned Giuliano da San Gallo, with whom he had become very intimate on account of his visit to Naples, to build him a palace in rustic work, opposite to S. Firenze, above the place where the lions used to be. This palace was to form the angle of the piazza and to face the old Mercatanzia; but the death of Giuliano Gondi put a stop to the work. In it, among other things, Giuliano made a chimney-piece, very rich in carvings, and so varied and beautiful in composition, that up to that time there had never been seen the like, nor one with such a wealth of figures. The same master made a palace for a Venetian in Camerata, without the Porta a Pinti, and many houses for private citizens, of which there is no need to make mention.

Lorenzo the Magnificent, in order to benefit the commonwealth and adorn the State, and at the same time to leave behind him some splendid monument, in addition to the endless number that he had already erected, wished to execute the fortification of the Poggio Imperiale, above Poggibonsi, on the road to Rome, with a view to founding a city there; and he would not lay it out without the advice and design of Giuliano. Wherefore that master began that most famous structure, in which he made the well-designed and beautiful range of fortifications that we see at the present day.

These works brought him such fame, that he was then summoned to Milan, through the mediation of Lorenzo, by the Duke of Milan, to the end that he might make for him the model of a palace; and there Giuliano was no less honoured by the Duke than he had previously been honoured by the King of Naples, when that Sovereign had invited him to that city. For when he had presented the model to him, on the part of the Magnificent Lorenzo, the Duke was filled with astonishment and marvel at seeing the vast number of beautiful adornments in it, so well arranged and distributed, and all accommodated in their places with art and grace; for which reason all the materials necessary for the work were got together, and they began to put it into execution. In the same city, together with Giuliano, was Leonardo da Vinci, who was working for the Duke; and Leonardo, speaking with Giuliano about the casting of the horse that he was proposing to make, received from him some excellent suggestions. This work was broken to pieces on the arrival of the French, so that the horse was never finished; nor could the palace be brought to completion.

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Having returned to Florence, Giuliano found that his brother Antonio, who worked for him on his models, had become so excellent, that there was no one in his day who was a better master in carving, particularly for large Crucifixes of wood; to which witness is borne by the one over the high-altar of the Nunziata in Florence, by another that is kept by the Friars of S. Gallo in S. Jacopo tra Fossi, and by a third in the Company of the Scalzo, which are all held to be very good. But Giuliano removed him from that profession and caused him to give his attention to architecture, in company with himself, since he had many works to execute, both public and private.

Now it happened, as it is always happening, that Fortune, the enemy of talent, robbed the followers of the arts of their hope and support by the death of Lorenzo de' Medici, which was a heavy loss not only to all able craftsmen and to his country, but also to all Italy. Wherefore Giuliano, together with all the other lofty spirits, was left wholly inconsolable; and in his grief he betook himself to Prato, near Florence, in order to build the Temple of the Madonna delle Carcere, since all building in Florence, both public and private, was at a standstill. He lived in Prato, therefore, three whole years, supporting the expense, discomfort, and sorrow as best he could.

At the end of that time, it being proposed to roof the Church of the Madonna at Loreto, and to raise the cupola, which had been formerly begun but not finished by Giuliano da Maiano, and those who had charge of the matter doubting that the piers were too weak to bear such a weight, they wrote, therefore, to Giuliano, that if he desired such a work, he should go and see it for himself. And having gone, like the bold and able man that he was, he showed them that the cupola could be raised with ease, and that he had courage enough for the task; and so many, and of such a kind, were the reasons that he put before them, that the work was allotted to him. After receiving this commission, he caused the work in Prato to be despatched, and made his way, with the same master-builders and stone-cutters, to Loreto. And to the end that this structure, besides beauty of form, might be firm, solid, stable, and well bound in the stonework, he sent to Rome for pozzolana^[22]; nor was any lime used that was not mixed with it, nor any stone built in without it; and thus, within the space of three years, it was brought to perfect completion, ready for use.

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Giuliano then went to Rome, where, for Pope Alexander VI, he restored the roof of S. Maria Maggiore, which was falling into ruin; and he made there the ceiling that is to be seen at the present day. While he was thus employed about the Court, Bishop della Rovere, who had been the friend of Giuliano from the time when he was Castellan of Ostia, and who had been created Cardinal of S. Pietro in Vincula, caused him to make a model for the Palace of S. Pietro in Vincula. And a little time after, desiring to build a palace in his own city of Savona, he wished to have it erected likewise from the design and under the eye of Giuliano. But such a journey was

difficult for Giuliano, for the reason that his ceiling was not yet finished, and Pope Alexander would not let him go. He entrusted the finishing of it, therefore, to his brother Antonio, who, having a good and versatile intelligence, and coming thus into contact with the Court, entered into the service of the Pope, who conceived a very great affection for him; and this he proved when he resolved to restore, with new foundations and with defences after the manner of a castle, the Mausoleum of Hadrian, now called the Castello di S. Angelo, for Antonio was made overseer of this undertaking, and under his direction were made the great towers below, the ditches, and the rest of the fortifications that we see at the present day. This work brought him great credit with the Pope, and with his son, Duke Valentino; and it led to his building the fortress that is now to be seen at Civit  Castellana. Thus, then, while that Pontiff was alive, he was continually employed in building; and while working for him, he was rewarded by him no less than he was esteemed.

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Giuliano had already carried well forward the work at Savona, when the Cardinal returned to Rome on some business of his own, leaving many workmen to bring the building to completion after the directions and design of Giuliano, whom he took with him to Rome. Giuliano made that journey willingly, wishing to see Antonio and his works; and he stayed there some months. During that time, however, the Cardinal fell into disgrace with the Pope, and departed from Rome, in order not to be taken prisoner, and Giuliano, as before, went in his company. On arriving at Savona, they set a much greater number of master-builders and other artificers to work on the building. But the threats of the Pope against the Cardinal becoming every day louder, it was not long before he made his way to Avignon. From there he sent as a present to the King of France a model for a palace that Giuliano had made for him, which was marvellous, very rich in ornament, and spacious enough for the accommodation of his whole Court. The royal Court was at Lyons when Giuliano presented his model; and the gift was so welcome and acceptable to the King, that he rewarded Giuliano liberally and gave him infinite praise, besides rendering many thanks for it to the Cardinal, who was at Avignon.

Meanwhile they received news that the palace at Savona was already nearly finished; whereupon the Cardinal determined that Giuliano should once more see the work, and Giuliano, having gone for this purpose to Savona, had not been there long when it was completely finished. Then, desiring to return to Florence, where he had not been for a long time, Giuliano took the road for that city together with his master-builders. Now at that time the King of France had restored Pisa her liberty, and the war between the Florentines and the Pisans was still raging; and Giuliano, wishing to pass through Pisan territory, had a safe-conduct made out for his company at Lucca, for they had no small apprehension about the Pisan soldiers. Nevertheless, while passing near Altopascio, they were captured by the Pisans, who cared nothing for safe-conducts or for any other warrant that they might have. And for six months Giuliano was detained in Pisa, his ransom being fixed at three hundred ducats; nor was he able to return to Florence until he had paid it.

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Antonio had heard this news in Rome, and, desiring to see his native city and his brother again, obtained leave to depart from Rome; and on his way he designed for Duke Valentino the fortress of Montefiascone. Finally, in the year 1503, he reached Florence, where the two brothers and their friends took joyful pleasure in each other's company.

There now ensued the death of Alexander VI, and the election of Pius III, who lived but a short time; whereupon the Cardinal of S. Pietro in Vincula was created Pontiff, under the name of Pope Julius II; which brought great joy to Giuliano, on account of his having been so long in his service, and he determined, therefore, to go to kiss the Pope's foot. Having then arrived in Rome, he was warmly received and welcomed lovingly, and was straightway commissioned to execute the first buildings undertaken by that Pope before the coming of Bramante.

Antonio, who had remained in Florence, continued, in the absence of Giuliano (Piero Soderini being Gonfalonier), the building of the Poggio Imperiale, to which all the Pisan prisoners were sent to labour, in order to finish the work the quicker. After this, by reason of the troubles at Arezzo, the old fortress was destroyed, and Antonio made the model for the new one, with the consent of Giuliano, who had come from Rome for this purpose, but soon returned thither; and this work was the reason that Antonio was appointed architect to the Commune of Florence for all the fortifications.

On the return of Giuliano to Rome, the question was being debated as to whether the divine Michelagnolo Buonarroti should make the tomb of Pope Julius; whereupon Giuliano exhorted the Pope to pursue that undertaking, adding that it seemed to him that it was necessary to build a special chapel for such a monument, and that it should not be placed in the old S. Pietro, in which there was no space for it, whereas a new chapel would bring out all the perfection of the work. After many architects, then, had made designs, the matter little by little became one of such importance, that, in place of erecting a chapel, a beginning was made with the great fabric of the new S. Pietro. There had arrived in Rome, about that time, the architect Bramante of Castel Durante, who had been in Lombardy; and he went to work in such a manner, with various extraordinary means and methods of his own, and with his fantastic ideas, having on his side Baldassarre Peruzzi, Raffaello da Urbino, and other architects, that he put the whole undertaking into confusion; whereby much time was consumed in discussions. Finally—so well did he know how to set about the matter—the work was entrusted to him, as the man who had shown the finest judgment, the best intelligence, and the greatest invention.

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Giuliano, resenting this, for it appeared to him that he had received an affront from the Pope, in view of the faithful service that he had rendered to him when his rank was not so high, and of the

promise made to him by the Pope that he should have that building, sought leave to go; and so, notwithstanding that he was appointed companion to Bramante for other edifices that were being erected in Rome, he departed, and returned, with many gifts received from that Pontiff, to Florence.

This was a great joy to Piero Soderini, who straightway set him to work. Nor had six months gone by, when Messer Bartolommeo della Rovere, the nephew of the Pope, and a friend of Giuliano, wrote to him in the name of his Holiness that he should return for his own advantage to Rome; but neither terms nor promises availed to move Giuliano, who considered that he had been put to shame by the Pope. Finally, however, a letter was written to Piero Soderini, urging him in one way or another to send Giuliano to Rome, since his Holiness wished to finish the fortifications of the Great Round Tower, which had been begun by Nicholas V, and likewise those of the Borgo and the Belvedere, with other works; and Giuliano allowed himself to be persuaded by Soderini, and therefore went to Rome, where he received a gracious welcome and many gifts from the Pope.

Having afterwards gone to Bologna, from which the Bentivogli had just been driven out, the Pope resolved, by the advice of Giuliano, to have a figure of himself in bronze made by Michelagnolo Buonarroti; and this was carried out, as will be related in the Life of Michelagnolo himself. Giuliano also followed the Pope to Mirandola, and after it was taken, having endured much fatigue and many discomforts, he returned with the Court to Rome. But the furious desire to drive the French out of Italy not having yet got out of the head of the Pope, he strove to wrest the government of Florence out of the hands of Piero Soderini, whose power was no small hindrance to him in the project that he had in mind. Whereupon, since the Pontiff, for these reasons, had turned aside from building and had embroiled himself in wars, Giuliano, by this time weary, and perceiving that attention was being given only to the construction of S. Pietro, and not much even to that, sought leave from him to depart. But the Pope answered him in anger, "Do you believe that you are the only Giuliano da San Gallo to be found?" To which he replied that none could be found equal to him in faithful service, while he himself would easily find Princes truer to their promises than the Pope had been towards him. However, the Pontiff would by no means give him leave to go, saying that he would speak to him about it another time.

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Meanwhile Bramante, having brought Raffaello da Urbino to Rome, set him to work at painting the Papal apartments; whereupon Giuliano, perceiving that the Pope took great delight in those pictures, and knowing that he wished to have the ceiling of the chapel of his uncle Sixtus painted, spoke to him of Michelagnolo, adding that he had already executed the bronze statue in Bologna. Which news pleased the Pope so much that he sent for Michelagnolo, who, on arriving in Rome, received the commission for the ceiling of that chapel.

A little time after this, Giuliano coming back once more to seek leave from the Pope to depart, his Holiness, seeing him determined on this, was content that he should return to Florence, without forfeiting his favour; and, after having blessed him, he gave him a purse of red satin containing five hundred crowns, telling him that he might return home to rest, but that he would always be his friend. Giuliano, then, having kissed the sacred foot, returned to Florence, at the very time when Pisa was surrounded and besieged by the army of Florence. No sooner had he arrived, therefore, than Piero Soderini, after the due greetings, sent him to the camp to help the military commissaries, who had found themselves unable to prevent the Pisans from passing provisions into Pisa by way of the Arno. Giuliano made a design for a bridge of boats to be built at some better season, and then went back to Florence; and when spring had come, taking with him his brother Antonio, he made his way to Pisa, where they constructed a bridge, which was a very ingenious piece of work, since, besides the fact that, rising or falling with the water, and being well bound with chains, it stood safe and sound against floods, it carried out the desires of the commissaries in such a manner, cutting off Pisa from access to the sea by way of the Arno, that the Pisans, having no other expedient in their sore straits, were forced to come to terms with the Florentines; and so they surrendered. Nor was it long before the same Piero Soderini again sent Giuliano, with a vast number of master-builders, to Pisa, where with extraordinary swiftness he erected the fortress that still stands at the Porta a S. Marco, and also the gate itself, which he built in the Doric Order. And the while that Giuliano was engaged on this work, which was until the year 1512, Antonio went through the whole dominion, inspecting and restoring the fortresses and other public buildings.

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After this, by the favour of the same Pope Julius, the house of Medici was reinstated in the government of Florence, from which they had been driven out on the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII, King of France, and Piero Soderini was expelled from the Palace; and the Medici showed their gratitude to Giuliano and Antonio for the services that they had rendered in the past to their illustrious family. Now Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici having been elected Pope a short time after the death of Julius II, Giuliano was forced once again to betake himself to Rome; where, Bramante dying not long after his arrival, it was proposed to give to Giuliano the charge of the building of S. Pietro. But he, being worn out by his labours, and crushed down by old age and by the stone, which made his life a burden, returned by leave of his Holiness to Florence; and that commission was given to the most gracious Raffaello da Urbino. And Giuliano, after two years, was pressed so sorely by his malady, that he died at the age of seventy-four in the year 1517, leaving his name to the world, his body to the earth, and his soul to God.

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By his departure he left a heavy burden of sorrow to his brother Antonio, who loved him tenderly, and to a son of his own named Francesco, who was engaged in sculpture, although he was still quite young. This Francesco, who has preserved up to our own day all the treasures of his elders,

and holds them in veneration, executed many works at Florence and elsewhere, both in sculpture and in architecture, and by his hand is the Madonna of marble, with the Child in her arms, and lying in the lap of S. Anne, that is in Orsanmichele; which work, with the figures carved in the round out of one single block, was held, as it still is, to be very beautiful. He has also executed the tomb that Pope Clement caused to be made for Piero de' Medici at Monte Cassino, besides many other works, of which no mention is here made because the said Francesco is still alive.

After the death of Giuliano, Antonio, being a man who was not willing to stay idle, made two large Crucifixes of wood, one of which was sent into Spain, while the other, by order of the Vice-Chancellor, Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, was taken by Domenico Buoninsegni into France. It being then proposed to build the fortress of Livorno, Antonio was sent thither by Cardinal de' Medici to make the design for it; which he did, although it was afterwards not carried completely into execution, nor even after the method suggested by Antonio. After this, the men of Montepulciano determining, by reason of the miracles wrought by an image of Our Lady, to build a temple for it at very great cost, Antonio made the model for this, and became head of the undertaking; on which account he visited that building twice a year. At the present day it is to be seen carried to perfect completion, having been executed with supreme grace, and with truly marvellous beauty and variety of composition, by the genius of Antonio, and all the masonry is of a certain stone that has a tinge of white, after the manner of travertine. It stands without the Porta di S. Biagio, on the right hand, half-way up the slope of the hill. At this time, he made a beginning with a palace in the township of Monte San Sovino, for Antonio di Monte, Cardinal of Santa Prassedia; and he built another for the same man at Montepulciano, both being executed and finished with extraordinary grace.

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He made the design for the side of the buildings of the Servite Friars (in Florence), on their Piazza, following the order of the Loggia of the Innocenti; and at Arezzo he made models for the aisles of the Madonna delle Lacrime, although that work was very badly conceived, because it is out of harmony with the original part of the building, and the arches at the ends are not in true line with the centre. He also made a model for the Madonna of Cortona; but I do not think that this was put into execution. He was employed in the siege on the bastions and fortifications within the city, and in this undertaking he had as a companion his nephew Francesco. After this, the Giant of the Piazza, executed by the hand of Michelagnolo, having been set into place in the time of Giuliano, the brother of our Antonio, it was proposed to set up the other, which had been made by Baccio Bandinelli; and the task of bringing it safely into position was given to Antonio, who, taking Baccio d' Agnolo as his companion, carried this out by means of very powerful machines, and placed it in safety on the base that had been prepared for that purpose.

In the end, having become old, he took no pleasure in anything save agriculture, of which he had an excellent knowledge. And then, when on account of old age he was no longer able to bear the discomforts of this world, he rendered up his soul to God, in the year 1534, and was laid to rest by the side of his brother Giuliano in the tomb of the Giamberti, in the Church of S. Maria Novella.

The marvellous works of these two brothers will bear witness before the world to the extraordinary genius that they possessed; and for their lives, their honourable ways, and their every action, they were held in estimation by all men. Giuliano and Antonio bequeathed to the art of architecture methods that gave the Tuscan Order of building better form than any other architect had yet achieved, and the Doric Order they enriched with better measures and proportions than their predecessors, following the rules and canons of Vitruvius, had been wont to use. They collected in their houses at Florence an infinite number of most beautiful antiquities in marble, which adorned Florence, and still adorn her, no less than those masters honoured themselves and their art. Giuliano brought from Rome the method of casting vaults with such materials as made them ready carved; examples of which may be seen in a room in his own house, and in the vaulting of the Great Hall at Poggio a Cajano, which is still to be seen there. Wherefore we should acknowledge our obligation to their labours, whereby they fortified the dominion of Florence, adorned the city, and gave a name, throughout the many regions where they worked, to Florence and to the intellects of Tuscany, who, to honour their memory, have written to them these verses—

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*Cedite Romani structores, cedite Graii,
Artis, Vitruvi, tu quoque cede parens.
Etruscos celebrare viros, testudinis arcus,
Urna, tholus, statuæ, templa, domusque petunt.*

RAFFAELLO DA URBINO

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LIFE OF RAFFAELLO DA URBINO

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[RAFFAELLO SANZIO]

PAINTER AND ARCHITECT

How bountiful and benign Heaven sometimes shows itself in showering upon one single person the infinite riches of its treasures, and all those graces and rarest gifts that it is wont to distribute among many individuals, over a long space of time, could be clearly seen in the no less excellent than gracious Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino, who was endowed by nature with all that modesty and goodness which are seen at times in those who, beyond all other men, have added to their natural sweetness and gentleness the beautiful adornment of courtesy and grace, by reason of which they always show themselves agreeable and pleasant to every sort of person and in all their actions. His nature presented to the world, when, vanquished by art through the hands of Michelagnolo Buonarroti, she wished to be vanquished, in Raffaello, by art and character together. And in truth, since the greater part of the craftsmen who had lived up to that time had received from nature a certain element of savagery and madness, which, besides making them strange and eccentric, had brought it about that very often there was revealed in them rather the obscure darkness of vice than the brightness and splendour of those virtues that make men immortal, there was right good reason for her to cause to shine out brilliantly in Raffaello, as a contrast to the others, all the rarest qualities of the mind, accompanied by such grace, industry, beauty, modesty, and excellence of character, as would have sufficed to efface any vice, however hideous, and any blot, were it ever so great. Wherefore it may be surely said that those who are the possessors of such rare and numerous gifts as were seen in Raffaello da Urbino, are not merely men, but, if it be not a sin to say it, mortal gods; and that those who, by means of their works, leave an honourable name written in the archives of fame in this earthly world of ours, can also hope to have to enjoy in Heaven a worthy reward for their labours and merits.

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RAPHAEL: S. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
(S. Petersburg: Hermitage, 39. Panel)

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Raffaello was born at Urbino, a very famous city in Italy, at three o'clock of the night on Good Friday, in the year 1483, to a father named Giovanni de' Santi, a painter of no great excellence, and yet a man of good intelligence, well able to direct his children on that good path which he himself had not been fortunate enough to have shown to him in his boyhood. And since Giovanni knew how important it is to rear infants, not with the milk of nurses, but with that of their own mothers, no sooner was Raffaello born, to whom with happy augury he gave that name at baptism, than he insisted that this his only child—and he had no more afterwards—should be suckled by his own mother, and that in his tender years he should have his character formed in the house of his parents, rather than learn less gentle or even boorish ways and habits in the houses of peasants or common people. When he was well grown, he began to exercise him in painting, seeing him much inclined to such an art, and possessed of a very beautiful genius: wherefore not many years passed before Raffaello, still a boy, became a great help to Giovanni in many works that he executed in the state of Urbino. In the end, this good and loving father, knowing that his son could learn little from him, made up his mind to place him with Pietro Perugino, who, as he heard tell, held the first place among painters at that time. He went, therefore, to Perugia: but not finding Pietro there, he set himself, in order to lessen the

annoyance of waiting for him, to execute some works in S. Francesco. When Pietro had returned from Rome, Giovanni, who was a gentle and well-bred person, formed a friendship with him, and, when the time appeared to have come, in the most adroit method that he knew, told him his desire. And so Pietro, who was very courteous and a lover of beautiful genius, agreed to have Raffaello: whereupon Giovanni, going off rejoicing to Urbino, took the boy, not without many tears on the part of his mother, who loved him dearly, and brought him to Perugia, where Pietro, after seeing Raffaello's method of drawing, and his beautiful manners and character, formed a judgment of him which time, from the result, proved to be very true.

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It is a very notable thing that Raffaello, studying the manner of Pietro, imitated it in every respect so closely, that his copies could not be distinguished from his master's originals, and it was not possible to see any clear difference between his works and Pietro's; as is still evident from some figures in a panel in S. Francesco at Perugia, which he executed in oils for Madonna Maddalena degli Oddi. These are a Madonna who has risen into Heaven, with Jesus Christ crowning her, while below, round the sepulchre, are the twelve Apostles, contemplating the Celestial Glory, and at the foot of the panel is a predella divided into three scenes, painted with little figures, of the Madonna receiving the Annunciation from the Angel, of the Magi adoring Christ, and of Christ in the arms of Simeon in the Temple. This work is executed with truly supreme diligence; and one who had not a good knowledge of the two manners, would hold it as certain that it is by the hand of Pietro, whereas it is without a doubt by the hand of Raffaello.

After this work, Pietro returning to Florence on some business of his own, Raffaello departed from Perugia and went off with some friends to Città di Castello, where he painted a panel for S. Agostino in the same manner, and likewise one of a Crucifixion for S. Domenico, which, if his name were not written upon it, no one would believe to be a work by Raffaello, but rather by Pietro. For S. Francesco, also in the same city, he painted a little panel-picture of the Marriage of Our Lady, in which one may recognize the excellence of Raffaello increasing and growing in refinement, and surpassing the manner of Pietro. In this work is a temple drawn in perspective with such loving care, that it is a marvellous thing to see the difficulties that he was for ever seeking out in this branch of his profession.

Meanwhile, when he had acquired very great fame by following his master's manner, Pope Pius II^[23] had given the commission for painting the library of the Duomo at Siena to Pinturicchio; and he, being a friend of Raffaello, and knowing him to be an excellent draughtsman, brought him to Siena, where Raffaello made for him some of the drawings and cartoons for that work. The reason that he did not continue at it was that some painters in Siena kept extolling with vast praise the cartoon that Leonardo da Vinci had made in the Sala del Papa^[24] of a very beautiful group of horsemen, to be painted afterwards in the Hall of the Palace of the Signoria, and likewise some nudes executed by Michelagnolo Buonarroti in competition with Leonardo, and much better; and Raffaello, on account of the love that he always bore to the excellent in art, was seized by such a desire to see them, that, putting aside that work and all thought of his own advantage and comfort, he went off to Florence.

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Having arrived there, and being pleased no less with the city than with those works, which appeared to him to be divine, he determined to take up his abode there for some time; and thus he formed a friendship with some young painters, among whom were Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, Aristotile da San Gallo, and others, and became much honoured in that city, particularly by Taddeo Taddei, who, being one who always loved any man inclined to excellence, would have him ever in his house and at his table. And Raffaello, who was gentleness itself, in order not to be beaten in courtesy, made him two pictures, which incline to his first manner, derived from Pietro, but also to the other much better manner that he afterwards acquired by study, as will be related; which pictures are still in the house of the heirs of the said Taddeo.



LO SPOSALIZIO
*(After the panel by Raffaello da Urbino.
Milan: Brera, 472)*

Anderson

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Raffaello also formed a very great friendship with Lorenzo Nasi; and for this Lorenzo, who had taken a wife about that time, he painted a picture in which he made a Madonna, and between her legs her Son, to whom a little S. John, full of joy, is offering a bird, with great delight and pleasure for both of them. In the attitude of each is a certain childlike simplicity which is wholly lovely, besides that they are so well coloured, and executed with such diligence, that they appear to be rather of living flesh than wrought by means of colour and draughtsmanship; the Madonna, likewise, has an air truly full of grace and divinity; and the foreground, the landscapes, and in short all the rest of the work, are most beautiful. This picture was held by Lorenzo Nasi, as long as he lived, in very great veneration, both in memory of Raffaello, who had been so much his friend, and on account of the dignity and excellence of the work; but afterwards, on August 9, in the year 1548, it met an evil fate, when, on account of the collapse of the hill of S. Giorgio, the house of Lorenzo fell down, together with the ornate and beautiful houses of the heirs of Marco del Nero, and other neighbouring dwellings. However, the pieces of the picture being found among the fragments of the ruins, the son of Lorenzo, Battista, who was a great lover of art, had them put together again as well as was possible.



MADDALENA DONI
(After the panel by Raffaello da Urbino.
Florence: Pitti, 59)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

After these works, Raffaello was forced to depart from Florence and go to Urbino, where, on account of the death of his mother and of his father Giovanni, all his affairs were in confusion. While he was living in Urbino, therefore, he painted for Guidobaldo da Montefeltro, then Captain of the Florentines, two pictures of Our Lady, small but very beautiful, and in his second manner, which are now in the possession of the most illustrious and excellent Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino. For the same patron he painted a little picture of Christ praying in the Garden, with the three Apostles sleeping at some distance from Him. This painting is so highly finished, that a miniature could not be better, or in any way different; and after having been a long time in the possession of Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino, it was then presented by the most illustrious Signora Leonora, his consort, to the Venetians Don Paolo Giustiniano and Don Pietro Quirini, hermits of the holy Hermitage of Camaldoli, who afterwards placed it, as a relic and a very rare thing, and, in a word, as a work by the hand of Raffaello da Urbino, and also to honour the memory of that most illustrious lady, in the apartment of the Superior of that hermitage, where it is held in the veneration that it deserves.

Having executed these works and settled his affairs, Raffaello returned to Perugia, where he painted a panel-picture of Our Lady, S. John the Baptist, and S. Nicholas, for the Chapel of the Ansidei in the Church of the Servite Friars. And in the Chapel of the Madonna in S. Severo, a little monastery of the Order of Camaldoli, in the same city, he painted in fresco a Christ in Glory, and a God the Father with angels round Him, and six saints seated, S. Benedict, S. Romualdo, S. Laurence, S. Jerome, S. Mauro, and S. Placido, three on either side; and on this picture, which was held at that time to be most beautiful for a work in fresco, he wrote his name in large and very legible letters. In the same city, also, he was commissioned by the Nuns of S. Anthony of Padua to paint a panel-picture of Our Lady, with Jesus Christ fully dressed, as it pleased those simple and venerable sisters, in her lap, and on either side of the Madonna S. Peter, S. Paul, S. Cecilia, and S. Catherine; to which two holy virgins he gave the sweetest and most lovely expressions of countenance and the most beautifully varied head-dresses that are anywhere to be seen, which was a rare thing in those times. Above this panel, in a lunette, he painted a very beautiful God the Father, and in the predella of the altar three scenes with little figures, of Christ praying in the Garden, bearing the Cross (wherein are some soldiers dragging Him along with most beautiful movements), and lying dead in the lap of His Mother. This work is truly marvellous and devout; and it is held in great veneration by those nuns, and much extolled by all painters.

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I will not refrain from saying that it was recognized, after he had been in Florence, that he changed and improved his manner so much, from having seen many works by the hands of excellent masters, that it had nothing to do with his earlier manner; indeed, the two might have belonged to different masters, one much more excellent than the other in painting.

Before he departed from Perugia, Madonna Atalanta Baglioni besought him that he should

consent to paint a panel for her chapel in the Church of S. Francesco; but since he was not able to meet her wishes at that time, he promised her that, after returning from Florence, whither he was obliged to go on some affairs, he would not fail her. And so, having come to Florence, where he applied himself with incredible labour to the studies of his art, he made the cartoon for that chapel, with the intention of going, as he did, as soon as the occasion might present itself, to put it into execution.



**RAFFAELLO DA URBINO: ANGELO DONI
(Florence: Pitti, 61. Panel)**

[View larger image](#)

While he was thus staying in Florence, Agnolo Doni—who was very careful of his money in other things, but willing to spend it, although still with the greatest possible economy, on works of painting and sculpture, in which he much delighted—caused him to make portraits of himself and of his wife; and these may be seen, painted in his new manner, in the possession of Giovan Battista, his son, in the beautiful and most commodious house that the same Agnolo built on the Corso de' Tintori, near the Canto degli Alberti, in Florence. For Domenico Canigiani, also, he painted a picture of Our Lady, with the Child Jesus welcoming a little S. John brought to Him by S. Elizabeth, who, as she holds him, is gazing with a most animated expression at a S. Joseph, who is standing with both his hands leaning on a staff, and inclines his head towards her, as though praising the greatness of God and marvelling that she, so advanced in years, should have so young a child. And all appear to be amazed to see with how much feeling and reverence the two cousins, for all their tender age, are caressing one another; not to mention that every touch of colour in the heads, hands, and feet seems to be living flesh rather than a tint laid on by a master of that art. This most noble picture is now in the possession of the heirs of the said Domenico Canigiani, who hold it in the estimation that is due to a work by Raffaello da Urbino.

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This most excellent of painters studied in the city of Florence the old works of Masaccio; and what he saw in those of Leonardo and Michelagnolo made him give even greater attention to his studies, in consequence of which he effected an extraordinary improvement in his art and manner. While he was living in Florence, Raffaello, besides other friendships, became very intimate with Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco, being much pleased with his colouring, and taking no little pains to imitate it: and in return he taught that good father the principles of perspective, to which up to that time the monk had not given any attention.

But at the very height of this friendly intercourse, Raffaello was recalled to Perugia, where he began by finishing the work for the aforesaid Madonna Atalanta Baglioni in S. Francesco, for which, as has been related, he had made the cartoon in Florence. In this most divine picture there is a Dead Christ being borne to the Sepulchre, executed with such freshness and such loving care, that it seems to the eye to have been only just painted. In the composition of this work, Raffaello imagined to himself the sorrow that the nearest and most affectionate relatives of

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the dead one feel in laying to rest the body of him who has been their best beloved, and on whom, in truth, the happiness, honour, and welfare of a whole family have depended. Our Lady is seen in a swoon; and the heads of all the figures are very gracious in their weeping, particularly that of S. John, who, with his hands clasped, bows his head in such a manner as to move the hardest heart to pity. And in truth, whoever considers the diligence, love, art, and grace shown by this picture, has great reason to marvel, for it amazes all who behold it, what with the air of the figures, the beauty of the draperies, and, in short, the supreme excellence that it reveals in every part.



"THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS"
(After the fresco by Raffaello da Urbino.
Rome: The Vatican)
Anderson

[View larger image](#)

This work finished, he returned to Florence, where he received from the Dei, citizens of that city, the commission for an altar-panel that was to be placed in their chapel in S. Spirito; and he began it, and brought the sketch very nearly to completion. At the same time he painted a picture that was afterwards sent to Siena, although, on the departure of Raffaello, it was left with Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, to the end that he might finish a piece of blue drapery that was wanting. This happened because Bramante da Urbino, who was in the service of Julius II, wrote to Raffaello, on account of his being distantly related to him and also his compatriot, that he had so wrought upon the Pope, who had caused some new rooms to be made (in the Vatican), that Raffaello would have a chance of showing his worth in them. This proposal pleased Raffaello: wherefore, abandoning his works in Florence, and leaving the panel for the Dei unfinished, in the state in which Messer Baldassarre da Pescia had it placed in the Pieve of his native city after the death of Raffaello, he betook himself to Rome. Having arrived there, he found that most of the rooms in the Palace had been painted, or were still being painted, by a number of masters. To be precise, he saw that there was one room in which a scene had been finished by Piero della Francesca; Luca da Cortona had brought one wall nearly to completion; and Don Pietro^[25] della Gatta, Abbot of S. Clemente at Arezzo, had begun some works there. Bramantino, the Milanese, had likewise painted many figures, which were mostly portraits from life, and were held to be very beautiful. After his arrival, therefore, having been received very warmly by Pope Julius, Raffaello began in the Camera della Segnatura a scene of the theologians reconciling Philosophy and Astrology with Theology: wherein are portraits of all the sages in the world, disputing in various ways. Standing apart are some astrologers, who have made various kinds of figures and characters of geomancy and astrology on some little tablets, which they send to the Evangelists by certain very beautiful angels; and these Evangelists are expounding them. Among them is Diogenes with his cup, lying on the steps, and lost in thought, a figure very well conceived, which, for its beauty and the characteristic negligence of its dress, is worthy to be extolled. There, also, are Aristotle and Plato, one with the Timæus in his hand, the other with the Ethics; and round them, in a circle, is a great school of philosophers. Nor is it possible to express the beauty of those astrologers and geometricians who are drawing a vast number of figures and characters with compasses on tablets: among whom, in the figure of a young man, shapely and handsome, who is throwing out his arms in admiration, and inclining his head, is the portrait of Federigo II, Duke of Mantua, who was then in Rome. There is also a figure that is stooping to the ground, holding in its hand a pair of compasses, with which it is making a circle on a tablet: this is said to be the architect Bramante, and it is no less the man himself than if he were alive, so well is it drawn. Beside a figure with its back turned and holding a globe of the heavens in its hand, is the portrait of Zoroaster; and next to him is Raffaello, the master of the work, who made his own portrait by means of a mirror, in a youthful head with an air of great modesty, filled with a pleasing and excellent grace, and wearing a black cap.

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Nor is one able to describe the beauty and goodness that are to be seen in the heads and figures of the Evangelists, to whose countenances he gave an air of attention and intentness very true to

life, and particularly in those who are writing. Thus, behind S. Matthew, who is copying the characters from the tablet wherein are the figures (which is held before him by an angel), and writing them down in a book, he painted an old man who, having placed a piece of paper on his knee, is copying all that S. Matthew writes down; and while intent on his work in that uncomfortable position, he seems to twist his head and his jaws in time with the motion of the pen. And in addition to the details of the conceptions, which are numerous enough, there is the composition of the whole scene, which is truly arranged with so much order and proportion, that he may be said to have given therein such a proof of his powers as made men understand that he was resolved to hold the sovereignty, without question, among all who handled the brush.

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He also adorned this work with a view in perspective and with many figures, executed in such a sweet and delicate manner, that Pope Julius was induced thereby to cause all the scenes of the other masters, both the old and the new, to be thrown to the ground, so that Raffaello alone might have the glory of all the labours that had been devoted to these works up to that time. The work of Giovanni Antonio Sodoma of Vercelli, which was above Raffaello's painting, was to be thrown down by order of the Pope; but Raffaello determined to make use of its compartments and grotesques. There were also some medallions, four in number, and in each of these he made a figure as a symbol of the scenes below, each figure being on the same side as the scene that it represented. Over the first scene, wherein he painted Philosophy, Astrology, Geometry, and Poetry making peace with Theology, is a woman representing Knowledge, who is seated on a throne that is supported on either side by a figure of the Goddess Cybele, each with those many breasts which in ancient times were the attributes of Diana Polymastes; and her dress is of four colours, standing for the four elements; from the head downwards there is the colour of fire, below the girdle that of the sky, from the groin to the knees there is the colour of earth, and the rest, down to the feet, is the colour of water. With her, also, are some truly beautiful little boys. In another medallion, on the side towards the window that looks over the Belvedere, is a figure of Poetry, who is in the form of Polyhymnia, crowned with laurel, and holds an antique musical instrument in one hand, and a book in the other, and has her legs crossed. With a more than

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human beauty of expression in her countenance, she stands with her eyes uplifted towards Heaven, accompanied by two little boys, who are lively and spirited, and who make a group of beautiful variety both with her and with the others. On this side, over the aforesaid window, Raffaello afterwards painted Mount Parnassus. In the third medallion, which is above the scene where the Holy Doctors are ordaining the Mass, is a figure of Theology, no less beautiful than the others, with books and other things round her, and likewise accompanied by little boys. And in the fourth medallion, over the other window, which looks out on the court, he painted Justice with her scales, and her sword uplifted, and with the same little boys that are with the others; of which the effect is supremely beautiful, for in the scene on the wall below he depicted the giving of the Civil and the Canon Law, as we will relate in the proper place.

In like manner, on the same ceiling, in the angles of the pendentives, he executed four scenes which he drew and coloured with great diligence, but with figures of no great size. In one of these, that near the Theology, he painted the Sin of Adam, the eating of the apple, which he executed with a most delicate manner; and in the second, near the Astrology, is a figure of that science setting the fixed stars and planets in their places. In the next, that belonging to Mount Parnassus, is Marsyas, whom Apollo has caused to be bound to a tree and flayed; and on the side of the scene wherein the Decretals are given, there is the Judgment of Solomon, showing him proposing to have the child cut in half. These four scenes are all full of expression and feeling, and executed with excellent draughtsmanship, and with pleasing and gracious colouring.

But now, having finished with the vaulting—that is, the ceiling—of that apartment, it remains for us to describe what he painted below the things mentioned above, wall by wall. On the wall towards the Belvedere, where there are Mount Parnassus and the Fount of Helicon, he made round that mount a laurel wood of darkest shadows, in the verdure of which one almost sees the leaves quivering in the gentle zephyrs; and in the air are vast numbers of naked Loves, most beautiful in feature and expression, who are plucking branches of laurel and with them making garlands, which they throw and scatter about the mount. Over the whole, in truth, there seems to breathe a spirit of divinity, so beautiful are the figures, and such the nobility of the picture, which makes whoever studies it with attention marvel how a human brain, by the imperfect means of mere colours, and by excellence of draughtsmanship, could make painted things appear alive. Most lifelike, also, are those Poets who are seen here and there about the mount, some standing, some seated, some writing, and others discoursing, and others, again, singing or conversing together, in groups of four or six, according as it pleased him to distribute them. There are portraits from nature of all the most famous poets, ancient and modern, and some only just dead, or still living in his day; which were taken from statues or medals, and many from old pictures, and some, who were still alive, portrayed from the life by himself. And to begin with one end, there are Ovid, Virgil, Ennius, Tibullus, Catullus, Propertius, and Homer; the last-named, blind and chanting his verses with uplifted head, having at his feet one who is writing them down. Next, in a group, are all the nine Muses and Apollo, with such beauty in their aspect, and such divinity in the figures, that they breathe out a spirit of grace and life. There, also, are the learned Sappho, the most divine Dante, the gracious Petrarca, and the amorous Boccaccio, who are wholly alive, with Tibaldeo, and an endless number of other moderns; and this scene is composed with much grace, and executed with diligence.

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On another wall he made a Heaven, with Christ, Our Lady, S. John the Baptist, the Apostles, the Evangelists, and the Martyrs, enthroned on clouds, with God the Father sending down the Holy Spirit over them all, and particularly over an endless number of saints, who are below, writing

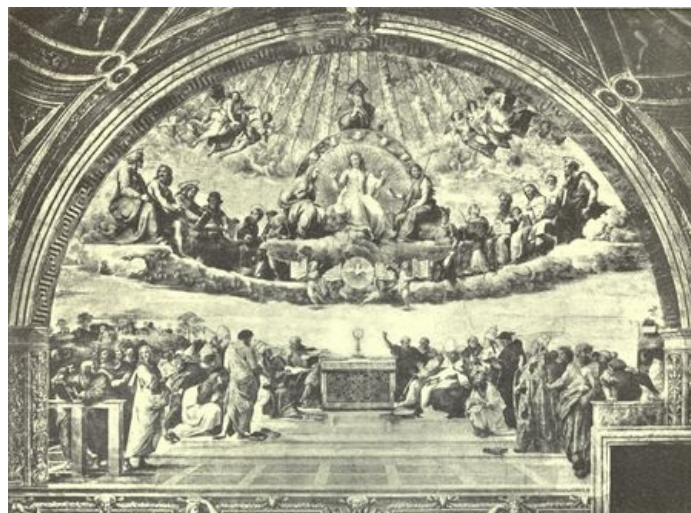
the Mass, and engaged in disputation about the Host, which is on the altar. Among these are the four Doctors of the Church, who have about them a vast number of saints, such as Dominic, Francis, Thomas Aquinas, Buonaventura, Scotus, and Nicholas of Lira, with Dante, Fra Girolamo Savonarola of Ferrara, and all the Christian theologians, with an infinite number of portraits from nature; and in the air are four little children, who are holding open the Gospels. Anything more graceful or more perfect than these figures no painter could create, since those saints are represented as seated in the air, in a circle, and so well, that in truth, besides the appearance of life that the colouring gives them, they are foreshortened and made to recede in such a manner, that they would not be otherwise if they were in relief. Moreover, their vestments show a rich variety, with most beautiful folds in the draperies, and the expressions of the heads are more Divine than human; as may be seen in that of Christ, which reveals all the clemency and devoutness that Divinity can show to mortal men through the medium of painting. For Raffaello received from nature a particular gift of making the expressions of his heads very sweet and gracious; of which we have proof also in the Madonna, who, with her hands pressed to her bosom, gazing in contemplation upon her Son, seems incapable of refusing any favour; not to mention that he showed a truly beautiful sense of fitness, giving a look of age to the expressions of the Holy Patriarchs, simplicity to the Apostles, and faith to the Martyrs. Even more art and genius did he display in the holy Christian Doctors, in whose features, while they make disputation throughout the scene in groups of six or three or two, there may be seen a kind of eagerness and distress in seeking to find the truth of that which is in question, revealing this by gesticulating with their hands, making various movements of their persons, turning their ears to listen, knitting their brows, and expressing astonishment in many different ways, all truly well varied and appropriate; save only the four Doctors of the Church, who, illumined by the Holy Spirit, are unravelling and expounding, by means of the Holy Scriptures, all the problems of the Gospels, which are held up by those little boys who have them in their hands as they hover in the air.

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On another wall, where the other window is, on one side, he painted Justinian giving the Laws to the Doctors to be revised; and above this, Temperance, Fortitude, and Prudence. On the other side he painted the Pope giving the Canonical Decretals; for which Pope he made a portrait from life of Pope Julius, and, beside him, Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici, who became Pope Leo, Cardinal Antonio di Monte, and Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, who afterwards became Pope Paul III, with other portraits.

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The Pope was very well satisfied with this work; and in order to make the panelling worthy of the paintings, he sent to Monte Oliveto di Chiusuri, a place in the territory of Siena, for Fra Giovanni da Verona, a great master at that time of perspective-views in inlaid woodwork, who made there not only the panelling right round, but also very beautiful doors and seats, wrought with perspective-views, which brought him great favour, rewards, and honour from the Pope. And it is certain that in that craft there was never any man more able than Giovanni, either in design or in workmanship: of which we still have proof in the Sacristy, wrought most beautifully with perspective-views in woodwork, of S. Maria in Organo in his native city of Verona, in the choir of Monte Oliveto di Chiusuri and that of S. Benedetto at Siena, in the Sacristy of Monte Oliveto at Naples, and also in the choir of the Chapel of Paolo da Tolosa in the same place, executed by that master. Wherefore he well deserved to be esteemed and held in very great honour by the convent of his Order, in which he died at the age of sixty-eight, in the year 1537. Of him, as of a person truly excellent and rare, I have thought it right to make mention, believing that this was due to his talents, which, as will be related in another place, led to many beautiful works being made by other masters after him.



THE "DISPUTA DEL SACRAMENTO"
(After the fresco by Raffaello da Urbino.
Rome: The Vatican)
Anderson
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But to return to Raffaello; his powers grew in such a manner, that he was commissioned by the Pope to go on to paint a second room, that near the Great Hall. And at this time, when he had gained a very great name, he also made a portrait of Pope Julius in a picture in oils, so true and so lifelike, that the portrait caused all who saw it to tremble, as if it had been the living man himself. This work is now in S. Maria del Popolo, together with a very beautiful picture of Our Lady, painted at the same time by the same master, and containing the Nativity of Jesus Christ, wherein is the Virgin laying a veil over her Son, whose beauty is such, both in the air of the head and in all the members, as to show that He is the true Son of God. And no less beautiful than the Child is the Madonna, in whom, besides her supreme loveliness, there may be seen piety and gladness. There is also a Joseph, who, leaning with both his hands on a staff, and lost in thoughtful contemplation of the King and Queen of Heaven, gazes with the adoration of a most saintly old man. Both these pictures are exhibited on days of solemn festival.

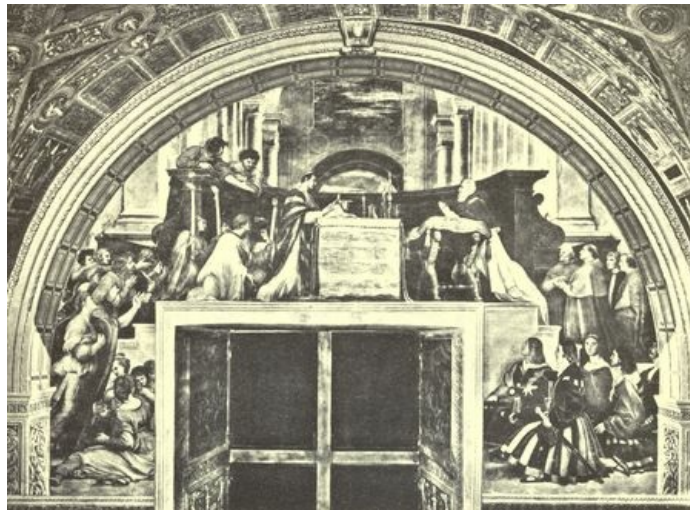
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By this time Raffaello had acquired much fame in Rome; but, although his manner was graceful and held by all to be very beautiful, and despite the fact that he had seen so many antiquities in that city, and was for ever studying, nevertheless he had not yet given thereby to his figures that grandeur and majesty which he gave to them from that time onward. For it happened in those days that Michelagnolo made the terrifying outburst against the Pope in the chapel, of which we will speak in his Life; whence he was forced to fly to Florence. Whereupon Bramante, having the keys of the chapel, allowed Raffaello, who was his friend, to see it, to the end that he might be able to learn the methods of Michelagnolo. And the sight of it was the reason that Raffaello straightway repainted, although he had already finished it, the Prophet Isaiah that is to be seen in S. Agostino at Rome, above the S. Anne by Andrea Sansovino; in which work, by means of what he had seen of Michelagnolo's painting, he made the manner immeasurably better and more grand, and gave it greater majesty. Wherefore Michelagnolo, on seeing afterwards the work of Raffaello, thought, as was the truth, that Bramante had done him that wrong on purpose in order to bring profit and fame to Raffaello.

Not long after this, Agostino Chigi, a very rich merchant of Siena, who was much the friend of every man of excellence, gave Raffaello the commission to paint a chapel; and this he did because a short time before Raffaello had painted for him in his softest manner, in a loggia of his palace, now called the Chigi, in the Trastevere, a Galatea in a car on the sea drawn by two dolphins, and surrounded by Tritons and many sea-gods. Raffaello, then, having made the cartoon for that chapel, which is at the entrance of the Church of S. Maria della Pace, on the right hand as one goes into the church by the principal door, executed it in fresco, in his new manner, which was no little grander and more magnificent than his earlier manner. In this painting Raffaello depicted some Prophets and Sibyls, before Michelagnolo's chapel had been thrown open to view, although he had seen it; and in truth it is held to be the best of his works, and the most beautiful among so many that are beautiful, for in the women and children that are in it, there may be seen a marvellous vivacity and perfect colouring. And this work caused him to be greatly esteemed both in his lifetime and after his death, being the rarest and most excellent that Raffaello executed in all his life.

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Next, spurred by the entreaties of a Chamberlain of Pope Julius, he painted the panel for the high-altar of the Araceli, wherein he made a Madonna in the sky, with a most beautiful landscape, a S. John, a S. Francis, and a S. Jerome represented as a Cardinal; in which Madonna may be seen a humility and a modesty truly worthy of the Mother of Christ; and besides the beautiful gesture of the Child as He plays with His Mother's hand, there is revealed in S. John that penitential air which fasting generally gives, while his head displays the sincerity of soul and frank assurance appropriate to those who live away from the world and despite it, and, in their dealings with mankind, make war on falsehood and speak out the truth. In like manner, the S. Jerome has his head uplifted with his eyes on the Madonna, deep in contemplation; and in them seem to be suggested all the learning and knowledge that he showed in his writings, while with both his hands he is presenting the Chamberlain, in the act of recommending him to her; which portrait of the Chamberlain is as lifelike as any ever painted. Nor did Raffaello fail to do as well in the figure of S. Francis, who, kneeling on the ground, with one arm outstretched, and with his head upraised, is gazing up at the Madonna, glowing with a love in tone with the feeling of the picture, which, both by the lineaments and by the colouring, shows him melting with affection, and taking comfort and life from the gracious sight of her beauty and of the vivacity and beauty of her Son. In the middle of the panel, below the Madonna, Raffaello made a little boy standing, who is raising his head towards her and holding an inscription: than whom none better or more graceful could be painted, what with the beauty of his features and the proportionate loveliness of his person. And in addition there is a landscape, which is singularly beautiful in its absolute perfection.



THE MASS OF BOLSENA
(After the fresco by Raffaello da Urbino.
Rome: The Vatican)
Anderson

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Afterwards, going on with the apartments of the Palace, he painted a scene of the Miracle of the Sacramental Corporal of Orvieto, or of Bolsena, whichever it may be called. In this scene there may be perceived in the face of the priest who is saying Mass, which is glowing with a blush, the shame that he felt on seeing the Host turned into blood on the Corporal on account of his unbelief. With terror in his eyes, dumbfounded and beside himself in the presence of his hearers, he seems like one who knows not what to do; and in the gesture of his hands may almost be seen the fear and trembling that a man would feel in such a case. Round him Raffaello made many figures, all varied and different, some serving the Mass, others kneeling on a flight of steps; and all, bewildered by the strangeness of the event, are making various most beautiful movements and gestures, while in many, both men and women, there is revealed a belief that they are to blame. Among the women is one who is seated on the ground at the foot of the scene, holding a child in her arms; and she, hearing the account that another appears to be giving her of the thing that has happened to the priest, turns in a marvellous manner as she listens to this, with a womanly grace that is very natural and lifelike. On the other side he painted Pope Julius hearing that Mass, a most marvellous work, wherein he made a portrait of Cardinal di San Giorgio, with innumerable others; and the window-opening he turned to advantage by making a flight of steps, in such a way that all the painting seems to be one whole: nay, it appears as if, were that window-space not there, the work would in nowise have been complete. Wherefore it may be truly credited to him that in the invention and composition of every kind of painted story, no one has ever been more dexterous, facile, and able than Raffaello.

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This he also proved in another scene in the same place, opposite to the last-named, of S. Peter in the hands of Herod, and guarded in prison by men-at-arms; wherein he showed such a grasp of architecture, and such judgment in the buildings of the prison, that in truth the others after him seem to have more confusion than he has beauty. For he was ever seeking to represent stories just as they are written, and to paint in them things gracious and excellent; as is proved in this one by the horror of the prison, wherein that old man is seen bound in chains of iron between the two men-at-arms, by the deep slumber of the guards, and by the dazzling splendour of the Angel, which, in the thick darkness of the night, reveals with its light every detail of the prison, and makes the arms of the soldiers shine resplendent, in such a way that their burnished lustre seems more lifelike than if they were real, although they are only painted. No less art and genius are there in the action of S. Peter, when, freed from his chains, he goes forth from the prison, accompanied by the Angel, wherein one sees in the face of the Saint a belief that it is rather a dream than a reality; and so, also, terror and dismay are shown in some other armed guards without the prison, who hear the noise of the iron door, while a sentinel with a torch in his hand rouses the others, and, as he gives them light with it, the blaze of the torch is reflected in all their armour; and all that its glow does not reach is illumined by the light of the moon. This composition Raffaello painted over the window, where the wall is darkest; and thus, when you look at the picture, the light strikes you in the face, and the real light conflicts so well with the different lights of the night in the painting, that the smoke of the torch, the splendour of the Angel, and the thick darkness of the night seem to you to be wholly real and natural, and you would never say that it was all painted, so vividly did he express this difficult conception. In it are seen shadows playing on the armour, other shadows projected, reflections, and a vaporous glare from the lights, all executed with darkest shade, and so well, that it may be truly said that he was the master of every other master; and as an effect of night, among all those that painting has ever produced, this is the most real and most divine, and is held by all the world to be the rarest.

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On one of the unbroken walls, also, he painted the Divine Worship and the Ark of the Hebrews, with the Candlestick; and likewise Pope Julius driving Avarice out of the Temple, a scene as beautiful and as excellent as the Night described above. Here, in some bearers who are carrying Pope Julius, a most lifelike figure, in his chair, are portraits of men who were living at that time.

And while the people, some women among them, are making way for the Pope, so that he may pass, one sees the furious onset of an armed man on horseback, who, accompanied by two on foot, and in an attitude of the greatest fierceness, is smiting and riding down the proud Heliodorus, who is seeking, at the command of Antiochus, to rob the Temple of all the wealth stored for the widows and orphans. Already the riches and treasures could be seen being removed and taken away, when, on account of the terror of the strange misfortune of Heliodorus, so rudely struck down and smitten by the three figures mentioned above (although, this being a vision, they are seen and heard by him alone), behold, they are all dropped and upset on the ground, those who were carrying them falling down through the sudden terror and panic that had come upon all the following of Heliodorus. Apart from these may be seen the holy Onias, the High Priest, dressed in his robes of office, with his eyes and hands raised to Heaven, and praying most fervently, being seized with pity for the poor innocents who were thus nearly losing their possessions, and rejoicing at the help that he feels has come down from on high. Besides this, through a beautiful fancy of Raffaello's, one sees many who have climbed on to the socles of the column-bases, and, clasping the shafts, stand looking in most uncomfortable attitudes; with a throng of people showing their amazement in many various ways, and awaiting the result of this event.

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This work is in every part so stupendous, that even the cartoons are held in the greatest veneration; wherefore Messer Francesco Masini, a gentleman of Cesena—who, without the help of any master, but giving his attention by himself from his earliest childhood, guided by an extraordinary instinct of nature, to drawing and painting, has painted pictures that have been much extolled by good judges of art—possesses, among his many drawings and some ancient reliefs in marble, certain pieces of the cartoon which Raffaello made for this story of Heliodorus, and he holds them in the estimation that they truly deserve. Nor will I refrain from saying that Messer Niccolò Masini, who has given me information about these matters, is as much a true lover of our arts as he is a man of real culture in all other things.

But to return to Raffaello; on the ceiling above these works, he then executed four scenes, God appearing to Abraham and promising him the multiplication of his seed, the Sacrifice of Isaac, Jacob's Ladder, and the Burning Bush of Moses: wherein may be recognized no less art, invention, draughtsmanship, and grace, than in the other works that he painted.

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While the happy genius of this craftsman was producing such marvels, the envy of fortune cut short the life of Julius II, who had fostered such abilities, and had been a lover of every excellent work. Whereupon a new Pope was elected in Leo X, who desired that the work begun should be carried on; and Raffaello thereby soared with his genius into the heavens, and received endless favours from him, fortunate in having come upon a Prince so great, who had by the inheritance of blood a strong inclination for such an art. Raffaello, therefore, thus encouraged to pursue the work, painted on the other wall the Coming of Attila to Rome, and his encounter at the foot of Monte Mario with Leo III, who drove him away with his mere benediction. In this scene Raffaello made S. Peter and S. Paul in the air, with swords in their hands, coming to defend the Church; and while the story of Leo III says nothing of this, nevertheless it was thus that he chose to represent it, perchance out of fancy, for it often happens that painters, like poets, go straying from their subject in order to make their work the more ornate, although their digressions are not such as to be out of harmony with their first intention. In those Apostles may be seen that celestial wrath and ardour which the Divine Justice is wont often to impart to the features of its ministers, charged with defending the most holy Faith; and of this we have proof in Attila, who is to be seen riding a black horse with white feet and a star on its forehead, as beautiful as it could be, for in an attitude of the utmost terror he throws up his head and turns his body in flight. There are other most beautiful horses, particularly a dappled jennet, which is ridden by a figure that has all the body covered with scales after the manner of a fish; which is copied from the Column of Trajan, wherein the figures have armour of that kind; and it is thought that such armour is made from the skins of crocodiles. There is Monte Mario, all aflame, showing that when soldiers march away, their quarters are always left a prey to fire. He made portraits from nature, also, in some mace-bearers accompanying the Pope, who are marvellously lifelike, as are the horses on which they are riding; and the same is true of the retinue of Cardinals, and of some grooms who are holding the palfrey on which rides the Pope in full pontificals (a portrait of Leo X, no less lifelike than those of the others), with many courtiers; the whole being a most pleasing spectacle and well in keeping with such a work, and also very useful to our art, particularly for those who have no such objects at their command.

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At this same time he painted a panel containing Our Lady, S. Jerome robed as a Cardinal, and an Angel Raphael accompanying Tobias, which was placed in S. Domenico at Naples, in that chapel wherein is the Crucifix that spoke to S. Thomas Aquinas. For Signor Leonello da Carpi, Lord of Meldola, who is still alive, although more than ninety years old, he executed a picture that was most marvellous in colouring, and of a singular beauty, for it is painted with such force, and also with a delicacy so pleasing, that I do not think it is possible to do better. In the countenance of the Madonna may be seen such a divine air, and in her attitude such a dignity, that no one would be able to improve her; and he made her with the hands clasped, adoring her Son, who is seated on her knees, caressing a S. John, a little boy, who is adoring Him, in company with S. Elizabeth and Joseph. This picture was once in the possession of the very reverend Cardinal da Carpi, the son of the said Signor Leonello, and a great lover of our arts; and it should be at the present day in the hands of his heirs.

Afterwards, Lorenzo Pucci, Cardinal of Santi Quattro, having been created Grand Penitentiary,

Raffaello was favoured by him with a commission to paint a panel for S. Giovanni in Monte at Bologna, which is now set up in the chapel wherein lies the body of the Blessed Elena dall' Olio: in which work it is evident how much grace, in company with art, could accomplish by means of the delicate hands of Raffaello. In it is a S. Cecilia, who, entranced by a choir of angels on high, stands listening to the sound, wholly absorbed in the harmony; and in her countenance is seen that abstraction which is found in the faces of those who are in ecstasy. Scattered about the ground, moreover, are musical instruments, which have the appearance of being, not painted, but real and true; and such, also, are some veils that she is wearing, with vestments woven in silk and gold, and, below these, a marvellous hair-shirt. And in a S. Paul, who has the right arm leaning on his naked sword, and the head resting on the hand, one sees his profound air of knowledge, no less well expressed than the transformation of his pride of aspect into dignity. He is clothed in a simple red garment by way of mantle, below which is a green tunic, after the manner of the Apostles, and his feet are bare. There is also S. Mary Magdalene, who is holding in her hands a most delicate vase of stone, in an attitude of marvellous grace; turning her head, she seems full of joy at her conversion; and indeed, in that kind of painting, I do not think that anything better could be done. Very beautiful, likewise, are the heads of S. Augustine and S. John the Evangelist. Of a truth, other pictures may be said to be pictures, but those of Raffaello life itself, for in his figures the flesh quivers, the very breath may be perceived, the pulse beats, and the true presentment of life is seen in them; on which account this picture gave him, in addition to the fame that he had already, an even greater name. Wherefore many verses were written in his honour, both Latin and in the vulgar tongue, of which, in order not to make my story longer than I have set out to do, I will cite only the following:

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Pingant sola alii referantque coloribus ora;
Cæciliæ os Raphael atque animum explicuit.

After this he also painted a little picture with small figures, which is likewise at Bologna, in the house of Count Vincenzo Ercolano, containing a Christ after the manner of Jove in Heaven, surrounded by the four Evangelists as Ezekiel describes them, one in the form of a man, another as a lion, the third an eagle, and the fourth an ox, with a little landscape below to represent the earth: which work, in its small proportions, is no less rare and beautiful than his others in their greatness.



POPE LEO X WITH TWO CARDINALS
(After the panel by Raffaello da Urbino.
Florence: Pitti, 40)
M.S.

[View larger image](#)

To the Counts of Canossa in Verona he sent a large picture of equal excellence, in which is a very beautiful Nativity of Our Lord, with a daybreak that is much extolled, as is also the S. Anne, and, indeed, the whole work, which cannot be more highly praised than by saying that it is by the hand of Raffaello da Urbino. Wherefore those Counts rightly hold it in supreme veneration, nor have they ever consented, for all the vast prices that have been offered to them by many Princes, to sell it to anyone.

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For Bindo Altoviti, he made a portrait of him when he was a young man, which is held to be extraordinary; and likewise a picture of Our Lady, which he sent to Florence, and which is now in the Palace of Duke Cosimo, in the chapel of the new apartments, which were built and painted by me, where it serves as altar-piece. In it is painted a very old S. Anne, seated, and holding out to Our Lady her Son, the features of whose countenance, as well as the whole of His nude form, are so beautiful that with His smile He rejoices whoever beholds Him; besides which, Raffaello depicted, in painting the Madonna, all the beauty that can be imparted to the aspect of a Virgin, with the complement of chaste humility in the eyes, honour in the brow, grace in the nose, and virtue in the mouth; not to mention that her raiment is such as to reveal infinite simplicity and dignity. And, indeed, I do not think that there is anything better to be seen than this whole work. There is a nude S. John, seated, with a female saint, who is likewise very beautiful; and for background there is a building, in which he painted a linen-covered window that gives light to the room wherein are the figures.

In Rome he made a picture of good size, in which he portrayed Pope Leo, Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, and Cardinal de' Rossi. In this the figures appear to be not painted, but in full relief; there is the pile of the velvet, with the damask of the Pope's vestments shining and rustling, the fur of the linings soft and natural, and the gold and silk so counterfeited that they do not seem to be in colour, but real gold and silk. There is an illuminated book of parchment, which appears more real than the reality; and a little bell of wrought silver, which is more beautiful than words can tell. Among other things, also, is a ball of burnished gold on the Pope's chair, wherein are reflected, as if it were a mirror (such is its brightness), the light from the windows, the shoulders of the Pope, and the walls round the room. And all these things are executed with such diligence, that one may believe without any manner of doubt that no master is able, or is ever likely to be able, to do better. For this work the Pope was pleased to reward him very richly; and the picture is still to be seen in Florence, in the guardaroba of the Duke. In like manner he executed portraits of Duke Lorenzo and Duke Giuliano, with a perfect grace of colouring not achieved by any other than himself, which are in the possession of the heirs of Ottaviano de' Medici at Florence.

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Thereupon there came to Raffaello a great increase of glory, and likewise of rewards; and for this reason, in order to leave some memorial of himself, he caused a palace to be built in the Borgo Nuovo at Rome, which Bramante executed with castings. Now, the fame of this most noble craftsman, by reason of the aforesaid works and many others, having passed into France and Flanders, Albrecht Dürer, a most marvellous German painter, and an engraver of very beautiful copperplates, rendered tribute to Raffaello out of his own works, and sent to him a portrait of himself, a head, executed by him in gouache on a cloth of fine linen, which showed the same on either side, the lights being transparent and obtained without lead-white, while the only grounding and colouring was done with water-colours, the white of the cloth serving for the ground of the bright parts. This work seemed to Raffaello to be marvellous, and he sent him, therefore, many drawings executed by his own hand, which were received very gladly by Albrecht. That head was among the possessions of Giulio Romano, the heir of Raffaello, in Mantua.

Raffaello, having thus seen the manner of the engravings of Albrecht Dürer, and desiring on his own behalf to show what could be done with his work by such an art, caused Marc' Antonio Bolognese to make a very thorough study of the method; and that master became so excellent, that Raffaello commissioned him to make prints of his first works, such as the drawing of the Innocents, a Last Supper, the Neptune, and the S. Cecilia being boiled in oil. Marc' Antonio afterwards made for Raffaello a number of other engravings, which Raffaello finally gave to Baviera, his assistant, who had charge of a mistress whom Raffaello loved to the day of his death. Of her he made a very beautiful portrait, wherein she seemed wholly alive: and this is now in Florence, in the possession of that most gentle of men, Matteo Botti, a Florentine merchant, and an intimate friend of every able person, and particularly of painters, who treasures it as a relic, on account of the love that he bears to art, and above all to Raffaello. And no less esteem is shown to the works of our arts and to the craftsmen by his brother, Simon Botti, who, besides being held by us all to be one of the most loving spirits that show favour to the men of our professions, is held in estimation by me in particular as the best and greatest friend that ever man loved after a long experience; not to mention the good judgment that he has and shows in matters of art.

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But to return to the engravings; the favour shown by Raffaello to Baviera was the reason that there afterwards sprang up Marco da Ravenna and a host of others, insomuch that the dearth of copper engravings was changed into that abundance that we see at the present day. Thereupon Ugo da Carpi, having a brain inclined to ingenious and fanciful things, and showing beautiful invention, discovered the method of wood-engraving, whereby, with three blocks, giving the middle values, the lights, and the shadows, it is possible to imitate drawings in chiaroscuro, which was certainly a thing of beautiful and fanciful invention; and from this, also, there afterwards came an abundance of prints, as will be related with greater detail in the Life of Marc' Antonio Bolognese.

Raffaello then painted for the Monastery of the Monks of Monte Oliveto, called S. Maria dello Spasmo, at Palermo, a panel-picture of Christ bearing the Cross, which is held to be a marvellous work. In this may be seen the impious ministers of the Crucifixion, leading Him with wrath and fury to His death on Mount Calvary; and Christ, broken with agony at the near approach of death, has fallen to the ground under the weight of the Tree of the Cross, and, bathed with sweat and blood, turns towards the Maries, who are in a storm of weeping. Moreover, there is seen among

them Veronica, who stretches out her arms and offers Him a cloth, with an expression of the tenderest love, not to mention that the work is full of men-at-arms both on horseback and on foot, who are pouring forth from the gate of Jerusalem with the standards of justice in their hands, in various most beautiful attitudes. This panel, when completely finished, but not yet brought to its resting-place, was very near coming to an evil end, for the story goes that after it had been put on shipboard, in order that it might be carried to Palermo, a terrible storm dashed against a rock the ship that was carrying it, in such a manner that the timbers broke asunder, and all the men were lost, together with the merchandise, save only the panel, which, safely packed in its case, was washed by the sea on to the shore of Genoa. There, having been fished up and drawn to land, it was found to be a thing divine, and was put into safe keeping; for it had remained undamaged and without any hurt or blemish, since even the fury of the winds and the waves of the sea had respect for the beauty of such a work. The news of this being then bruited abroad, the monks took measures to recover it, and no sooner had it been restored to them, by the favour of the Pope, than they gave satisfaction, and that liberally, to those who had rescued it. Thereupon it was once more put on board ship and brought at last to Sicily, where they set it up in Palermo; in which place it has more fame and reputation than the Mount of Vulcan itself.

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While Raffaello was engaged on these works, which, having to gratify great and distinguished persons, he could not refuse to undertake—not to mention that his own private interests prevented him from saying them nay—yet for all this he never ceased to carry on the series of pictures that he had begun in the Papal apartments and halls; wherein he always kept men who pursued the work from his own designs, while he himself, continually supervising everything, lent to so vast an enterprise the aid of the best efforts of which he was capable. No long time passed, therefore, before he threw open that apartment of the Borgia Tower in which he had painted a scene on every wall, two above the windows, and two others on the unbroken walls. In one was the Burning of the Borgo Vecchio of Rome, when, all other methods having failed to put out the fire, S. Leo IV presents himself at the Loggia of his Palace and extinguishes it completely with his benediction. In this scene are represented various perils. On one side are women who are bearing vessels filled with water in their hands and on their heads, whereby to extinguish the flames; and their hair and draperies are blown about by the terrible fury of a tempestuous wind. Others, who are seeking to throw water on the fire, are blinded by the smoke and wholly bewildered. On the other side, after the manner of Virgil's story of Anchises being carried by Æneas, is shown an old sick man, overcome by his infirmity and the flames of the fire; and in the figure of the young man are seen courage and strength, and great effort in all his limbs under the weight of the old man, who lies helpless on the young man's back. He is followed by an old woman with bare feet and disordered garments, who is flying from the fire; and a little naked boy runs before them. On the top of some ruins, likewise, may be seen a naked woman, with hair all dishevelled, who has her child in her hands and is throwing him to a man of her house, who, having escaped from the flames, is standing in the street on tiptoe, with arms outstretched to receive the child wrapped in swathing-bands; wherein the eager anxiety of the woman to save her son may be recognized no less clearly than her torment in the peril of the fierce flames, which are already licking around her. And no less suffering is evident in him who is receiving the child, both for its sake and on account of his own fear of death. Nor is it possible to describe the imagination that this most ingenious and most marvellous craftsman showed in a mother with her feet bare, her garments in disorder, her girdle unbound, and her hair dishevelled, who has gathered her children before her and is driving them on, holding part of her clothing in one hand, that they may escape from the ruins and from that blazing furnace; not to mention that there are also some women who, kneeling before the Pope, appear to be praying to his Holiness that he should make the fire cease.

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The next scene is from the life of the same S. Leo IV, wherein Raffaello depicted the port of Ostia occupied by the fleet of the Turks, who had come to take the Pope prisoner. The Christians may be seen fighting against that fleet on the sea; and already there has come to the harbour an endless number of prisoners, who are disembarking from a boat and being dragged by the beard by some soldiers, who are very beautiful in features and most spirited in their attitudes. The prisoners, dressed in the motley garb of galley-slaves, are being led before S. Leo, whose figure is a portrait of Pope Leo X. Here Raffaello painted his Holiness in pontificals, between Cardinal Santa Maria in Portico, who was Bernardo Divizio of Bibbiena, and Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, who afterwards became Pope Clement. Nor is it possible to describe in detail the beautiful conceptions that this most ingenious craftsman showed in the expressions of the prisoners, wherein one can recognize, without speech, their grief and the fear of death.

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In the first of the other two scenes is Pope Leo X consecrating the most Christian King, Francis I of France, chanting the Mass in his pontificals, and blessing the oil for the anointing of the King, and likewise the royal crown. There, besides the great number of Cardinals and Bishops in their robes, who are assisting, he portrayed from life many Ambassadors and other persons, and also some figures dressed in the French fashion, according to the style of that time. In the other scene he painted the Crowning of the same King, wherein are portraits from life of the Pope and of Francis, one in armour and the other in his pontificals; besides which, all the Cardinals, Bishops, Chamberlains, Esquires, and Grooms of the Chamber are seated in due order in their places, as is the custom in the chapel, all in their robes and portrayed from life, among them being Giannozzo Pandolfini, Bishop of Troia, a close friend of Raffaello, with many others who were distinguished at that time. Near the King is a little boy kneeling, who is holding the royal crown—a portrait of Ippolito de' Medici, who afterwards became Cardinal and Vice-Chancellor, a man of great repute, and much the friend not only of this art, but of all others, to whose blessed memory I acknowledge a vast obligation, seeing that my first steps, such as they were, were taken under

his auspices.

It is not possible to write of every detail in the works of this craftsman, wherein every least thing, although dumb, appears to have speech: save only of the bases executed below these pictures, with various figures of defenders and benefactors of the Church, and various terminal figures on either side of them, the whole being wrought in such a manner that everything reveals spirit, feeling, and thought, and with such a harmony and unity of colouring that nothing better can be conceived. And since the ceiling of that apartment had been painted by Pietro Perugino, his master, Raffaello would not destroy it, moved by respect for his memory and by the love that he bore to the man who had been the origin of the rank that he held in his art.

Such was the greatness of this master, that he kept designers all over Italy, at Pozzuolo, and even in Greece; and he was for ever searching out everything of the good that might help his art.

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Now, continuing his work, he also painted a hall, wherein were some figures of the Apostles and other saints in tabernacles, executed in terretta; and there he caused to be made by Giovanni da Udine, his disciple, who has no equal in the painting of animals, all the animals that Pope Leo possessed, such as the chameleon, the civet-cats, the apes, the parrots, the lions, the elephants, and other beasts even more strange. And besides embellishing the Palace greatly with grotesques and varied pavements, he also gave the designs for the Papal staircases, as well as for the loggie begun by the architect Bramante, but left unfinished on account of his death, and afterwards carried out with the new design and architecture of Raffaello, who made for this a model of wood with better proportion and adornment than had been accomplished by Bramante. The Pope wishing to demonstrate the greatness and magnificence of his generous ambition, Raffaello made the designs for the ornaments in stucco and for the scenes that were painted there, and likewise for the compartments; and as for the stucco and the grotesques, he placed at the head of that work Giovanni da Udine, and the figures he entrusted to Giulio Romano, although that master worked but little at them; and he also employed Giovanni Francesco, Il Bologna, Perino del Vaga, Pellegrino da Modena, Vincenzo da San Gimignano, and Polidoro da Caravaggio, with many other painters, who executed scenes and figures and other things that were required throughout that work, which Raffaello caused to be completed with such perfection, that he even sent to Florence for pavements by the hand of Luca della Robbia. Wherefore it is certain that with regard to the paintings, the stucco-ornaments, the arrangement, or any of the beautiful inventions, no one would be able to execute or even to imagine a more marvellous work; and its beauty was the reason that Raffaello received the charge of all the works of painting and architecture that were in progress in the Palace.

It is said that the courtesy of Raffaello was such that he prevailed upon the masons, in order that he might accommodate his friends, not to build the walls absolutely solid and unbroken, but to leave, above the old rooms below, various openings and spaces for the storage of barrels, flasks, and wood; which holes and spaces so weakened the lower part of the masonry, that afterwards they had to be filled in, because the whole was beginning to show cracks. He commissioned Gian Barile to adorn all the doors and ceilings of woodwork with a good number of carvings, which he executed and finished with beautiful grace.

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He gave architectural designs for the Vigna^[26] of the Pope, and for many houses in the Borgo; in particular, for the Palace of Messer Giovanni Battista dall' Aquila, which was a very beautiful work. He also designed one for the Bishop of Troia, who had it built in the Via di S. Gallo at Florence. For the Black Friars of S. Sisto in Piacenza, he painted the picture for their high-altar, containing the Madonna with S. Sisto and S. Barbara, a truly rare and extraordinary work. He executed many pictures to be sent into France, and in particular, for the King, a S. Michael fighting with the Devil, which was held to be a marvellous thing. In this work he painted a fire-scarred rock, to represent the centre of the earth, from the fissures of which were issuing sulphurous flames; and in Lucifer, whose scorched and burned limbs are painted with various tints of flesh-colour, could be seen all the shades of anger that his venomous and swollen pride calls up against Him who overbears the greatness of him who is deprived of any kingdom where there might be peace, and doomed to suffer perpetual punishment. The opposite may be perceived in the S. Michael, clad in armour of iron and gold, who, although he is painted with a celestial air, yet has valour, force, and terror in his aspect, and has already thrown Lucifer down and hurled him backwards with his spear. In a word, this work was of such a kind that he won for it, and rightly, a most honourable reward from that King. He made portraits of Beatrice of Ferrara and other ladies, and in particular that of his own mistress, with an endless number of others.

Raffaello was a very amorous person, delighting much in women, and ever ready to serve them; which was the reason that, in the pursuit of his carnal pleasures, he found his friends more complacent and indulgent towards him than perchance was right. Wherefore, when his dear friend Agostino Chigi commissioned him to paint the first loggia in his palace, Raffaello was not able to give much attention to his work, on account of the love that he had for his mistress; at which Agostino fell into such despair, that he so contrived by means of others, by himself, and in other ways, as to bring it about, although only with difficulty, that this lady should come to live continually with Raffaello in that part of the house where he was working; and in this manner the work was brought to completion. For this work he made all the cartoons, and he coloured many of the figures in fresco with his own hand. And on the ceiling he made the Council of the Gods in Heaven, wherein, in the forms of the Gods, are seen many vestments and lineaments copied from the antique, and executed with very beautiful grace and draughtsmanship. In like manner he made the Marriage of Psyche, with ministers serving Jove, and the Graces scattering flowers over

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the table. In the spandrels of the vaulting he executed many scenes, in one of which is Mercury with his flute, who, as he flies, has all the appearance of descending from Heaven; and in another is Jove with an air of celestial dignity, kissing Ganymede; and in another, likewise, lower down, is the Car of Venus, and the Graces, with Mercury, drawing Psyche up to Heaven; with many other scenes from the poets in the other spandrels. And in the spherical triangles of the vaulting above the arches, between the spandrels, are many most beautiful little boys in foreshortening, hovering in the air and carrying all the instruments of the gods; Jove's lightnings and thunderbolts, the helmet, sword, and shield of Mars, Vulcan's hammers, the club and lion-skin of Hercules, the caduceus of Mercury, Pan's pipes, and the agricultural rakes of Vertumnus. All are accompanied by animals appropriate to their character; and the whole work, both as picture and as poem, is truly beautiful. Round these scenes he caused Giovanni da Udine to make a border of all kinds of flowers, foliage, and fruits, in festoons, which are as beautiful as they could be.

Raffaello made the designs for the architecture of the stables of the Chigi, and the design for the chapel of the aforesaid Agostino in S. Maria del Popolo, wherein, besides painting it, he made arrangements for the erection of a marvellous tomb, causing Lorenzetto, a sculptor of Florence, to execute two figures, which are still in his house in the Macello de' Corbi at Rome; but the death of Raffaello, followed by that of Agostino, brought it about that this work was given to Sebastiano Viniziano.

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Meanwhile Raffaello had risen to such greatness, that Leo X ordained that he should set to work on the Great Hall on the upper floor, wherein are the Victories of Constantine; and with this he made a beginning. A fancy likewise took the Pope to have some very rich tapestries made in gold and floss-silk; whereupon Raffaello drew and coloured with his own hand, of the exact form and size, all the cartoons, which were sent to Flanders to be woven; and the tapestries, when finished, were brought to Rome. This work was executed so marvellously, that it arouses astonishment in whoever beholds it, wondering how it could have been possible to weave the hair and beards in such detail, and to give softness to the flesh with mere threads; and it is truly rather a miracle than the work of human art, seeing that in these tapestries are animals, water, and buildings, all made in such a way that they seem to be not woven, but really wrought with the brush. The work cost 70,000 crowns, and it is still preserved in the Papal Chapel.

For Cardinal Colonna he painted a S. John on canvas, for which, on account of its beauty, that Cardinal had an extraordinary love; but happening to be attacked by illness, he was asked by Messer Jacopo da Carpi, the physician who cured him, to give it to him as a present; and because of this desire of Messer Jacopo, to whom he felt himself very deeply indebted, he gave it up. It is now in the possession of Francesco Benintendi, in Florence.



THE TRANSFIGURATION
(After the panel by Raffaello da Urbino.
Rome: The Vatican)
Anderson

For Giulio de' Medici, Cardinal and Vice-Chancellor, he painted a panel-picture, to be sent into France, of the Transfiguration of Christ, at which he laboured without ceasing, and brought it to the highest perfection with his own hand. In this scene he represented Christ Transfigured on Mount Tabor, at the foot of which are the eleven Disciples awaiting Him. There may be seen a young man possessed by a spirit, who has been brought thither in order that Christ, after descending from the mountain, may deliver him; which young man stretches himself out in a distorted attitude, crying and rolling his eyes, and reveals his suffering in his flesh, his veins, and the beat of his pulse, all infected by that malignant spirit; and the colour of his flesh, as he makes those violent and fearsome gestures, is very pale. This figure is supported by an old man, who, having embraced him and taken heart, with his eyes wide open and the light shining in them, is raising his brows and wrinkling his forehead, showing at one and the same time both strength and fear; gazing intently, however, at the Apostles, he appears to be encouraging himself by trusting in them. Among many women is one, the principal figure in that panel, who, having knelt down before the Apostles, and turning her head towards them, stretches her arms in the direction of the maniac and points out his misery; besides which the Apostles, some standing, some seated, and others kneeling, show that they are moved to very great compassion by such misfortune. And, indeed, he made therein figures and heads so fine in their novelty and variety, to say nothing of their extraordinary beauty, that it is the common opinion of all craftsmen that this work, among the vast number that he painted, is the most glorious, the most lovely, and the most divine. For whoever wishes to know how Christ Transfigured and made Divine should be represented in painting, must look at this work, wherein Raffaello made Him in perspective over that mount, in a sky of exceeding brightness, with Moses and Elias, who, illumined by a dazzling splendour, burst into life in His light. Prostrate on the ground, in attitudes of great beauty and variety, are Peter, James, and John; one has his head to the earth, and another, shading his eyes with his hands, is defending himself from the rays and intense light of the splendour of Christ. He, clothed in snow-white raiment, with His arms outstretched and His head raised, appears to reveal the Divine essence and nature of all the Three Persons united and concentrated in Himself by the perfect art of Raffaello, who seems to have summoned up all his powers in such a manner, in order to show the supreme force of his art in the countenance of Christ, that, after finishing this, the last work that he was to do, he never again touched a brush, being overtaken by death.

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RAFFAELLO DA URBINO: THE THREE GRACES
(Chantilly, 38. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

Now, having described the works of this most excellent craftsman, before I come to relate other particulars of his life and death, I do not wish to grudge the labour of saying something, for the benefit of the men of our arts, about the various manners of Raffaello. He, then, after having imitated in his boyhood the manner of his master, Pietro Perugino, which he made much better in draughtsmanship, colouring, and invention, believed that he had done enough; but he recognized, when he had reached a riper age, that he was still too far from the truth. For, after seeing the works of Leonardo da Vinci, who had no peer in the expressions of heads both of men and of women, and surpassed all other painters in giving grace and movement to his figures, he was left marvelling and amazed; and in a word, the manner of Leonardo pleasing him more than any other that he had ever seen, he set himself to study it, and abandoning little by little, although with great difficulty, the manner of Pietro, he sought to the best of his power and knowledge to imitate that of Leonardo. But for all his diligence and study, in certain difficulties he was never able to surpass Leonardo; and although it appears to many that he did surpass him in sweetness and in a kind of natural facility, nevertheless he was by no means superior to him in that sublime groundwork of conceptions and that grandeur of art in which few have been the peers of

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Leonardo. Yet Raffaello came very near to him, more than any other painter, and above all in grace of colouring. But to return to Raffaello himself; in time he found himself very much hindered and impeded by the manner that he had adopted from Pietro when he was quite young, which he acquired with ease, since it was over-precise, dry, and feeble in draughtsmanship. His being unable to forget it was the reason that he had great difficulty in learning the beauties of the nude and the methods of difficult foreshortenings from the cartoon that Michelagnolo Buonarroti made for the Council Hall in Florence; and another might have lost heart, believing that he had been previously wasting his time, and would never have achieved, however lofty his genius, what Raffaello accomplished. But he, having purged himself of Pietro's manner, and having thoroughly freed himself of it, in order to learn the manner of Michelagnolo, so full of difficulties in every part, was changed, as it were, from a master once again into a disciple; and he forced himself with incredible study, when already a man, to do in a few months what might have called for the tender age at which all things are best acquired, and for a space of many years. For in truth he who does not learn in good time right principles and the manner that he wishes to follow, and does not proceed little by little to solve the difficulties of the arts by means of experience, seeking to understand every part, and to put it into practice, can scarcely ever become perfect; and even if he does, that can only be after a longer space of time and much greater labour.

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When Raffaello resolved to set himself to change and improve his manner, he had never given his attention to nudes with that zealous study which is necessary, and had only drawn them from life in the manner that he had seen practised by his master Pietro, imparting to them the grace that he had from nature. He then devoted himself to studying the nude and to comparing the muscles of anatomical subjects and of flayed human bodies with those of the living, which, being covered with skin, are not clearly defined, as they are when the skin has been removed; and going on to observe in what way they acquire the softness of flesh in the proper places, and how certain graceful flexures are produced by changing the point of view, and also the effect of inflating, lowering, or raising either a limb or the whole person, and likewise the concatenation of the bones, nerves, and veins, he became excellent in all the points that are looked for in a painter of eminence. Knowing, however, that in this respect he could never attain to the perfection of Michelagnolo, he reflected, like a man of supreme judgment, that painting does not consist only in representing the nude human form, but has a wider field; that one can enumerate among the perfect painters those who express historical inventions well and with facility, and who show fine judgment in their fancies; and that he who, in the composition of scenes, can make them neither confused with too much detail nor poor with too little, but distributed with beautiful invention and order, may also be called an able and judicious craftsman. To this, as Raffaello was well aware, may be added the enriching those scenes with a bizarre variety of perspectives, buildings, and landscapes, the method of clothing figures gracefully, the making them fade away sometimes in the shadows, and sometimes come forward into the light, the imparting of life and beauty to the heads of women, children, young men and old, and the giving them movement and boldness, according to necessity. He considered, also, how important is the furious flight of horses in battles, fierceness in soldiers, the knowledge how to depict all the sorts of animals, and above all the power to give such resemblance to portraits that they seem to be alive, and that it is known whom they represent; with an endless number of other things, such as the adornment of draperies, foot-wear, helmets, armour, women's head-dresses, hair, beards, vases, trees, grottoes, rocks, fires, skies turbid or serene, clouds, rain, lightning, clear weather, night, the light of the moon, the splendour of the sun, and innumerable other things, which are called for every moment by the requirements of the art of painting. Pondering over these things, I say, Raffaello resolved, since he could not approach Michelagnolo in that branch of art to which he had set his hand, to seek to equal, and perchance to surpass him, in these others; and he devoted himself, therefore, not to imitating the manner of that master, but to the attainment of a catholic excellence in the other fields of art that have been described. And if the same had been done by many craftsmen of our own age, who, having determined to pursue the study of Michelagnolo's works alone, have failed to imitate him and have not been able to reach his extraordinary perfection, they would not have laboured in vain nor acquired a manner so hard, so full of difficulty, wanting in beauty and colouring, and poor in invention, but would have been able, by aiming at catholicity and at imitation in the other fields of art, to render service both to themselves and to the world.

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Raffaello, then, having made this resolution, and having recognized that Fra Bartolommeo di San Marco had a passing good method of painting, well-grounded draughtsmanship, and a pleasing manner of colouring, although at times, in order to obtain stronger relief, he made too much use of darks, took from him what appeared to him to suit his need and his fancy—namely, a middle course, both in drawing and in colouring; and mingling with that method certain others selected from the best work of other masters, out of many manners he made one, which was looked upon ever afterwards as his own, and which was and always will be vastly esteemed by all craftsmen. This was then seen perfected in the Sibyls and Prophets of the work that he executed, as has been related, in S. Maria della Pace; in the carrying out of which work he was greatly assisted by having seen the paintings of Michelagnolo in the Chapel of the Pope. And if Raffaello had remained content with this same manner, and had not sought to give it more grandeur and variety in order to prove that he had as good a knowledge of the nude as Michelagnolo, he would not have lost a part of the good name that he had acquired; but the nudes that he made in that apartment of the Borgia Tower where there is the Burning of the Borgo, although they are fine, are not in every way excellent. In like manner, those that were painted likewise by him on the ceiling of the Palace of Agostino Chigi in the Trastevere did not give complete satisfaction, for

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they are wanting in that grace and sweetness which were peculiar to Raffaello; the reason of which, in great part, was the circumstance that he had them coloured by others after his design. However, repenting of this error, like a man of judgment, he resolved afterwards to execute by himself, without assistance from others, the panel-picture of the Transfiguration of Christ that is in S. Pietro a Montorio, wherein are all those qualities which, as has already been described, are looked for and required in a good picture. And if he had not employed in this work, as it were from caprice, printer's smoke-black, the nature of which, as has been remarked many times, is to become ever darker with time, to the injury of the other colours with which it is mixed, I believe that the picture would still be as fresh as when he painted it; whereas it now appears to be rather a mass of shadows than aught else.

I have thought fit, almost at the close of this Life, to make this discourse, in order to show with what labour, study, and diligence this honoured craftsman always pursued his art; and even more for the sake of other painters, to the end that they may learn how to avoid those hindrances from which the wisdom and genius of Raffaello were able to deliver him. I must add this as well, that every man should be satisfied and contented with doing that work to which he feels himself drawn by a natural inclination, and should not seek, out of emulation, to put his hand to that for which nature has not adapted him; for otherwise he will labour in vain, and often to his own shame and loss. Moreover, where striving is enough, no man should aim at super-striving,^[27] merely in order to surpass those who, by some great gift of nature, or by some special grace bestowed on them by God, have performed or are performing miracles in art; for the reason that he who is not suited to any particular work, can never reach, let him labour as he may, the goal to which another, with the assistance of nature, has attained with ease. Of this, among the old craftsmen, we may see an example in Paolo Uccello, who, striving against the limitations of his powers, in order to advance, did nothing but go backwards. The same has been done in our own day, no long time since, by Jacopo da Pontormo, and it has been proved by the experience of many others, as we have shown before and will point out yet again. And this, perchance, happens because Heaven always distributes its favours, to the end that every man may rest content with that which falls to him.

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But now, having discoursed on these matters of art, perchance at greater length than was needful, let us return to the life and death of Raffaello. He had a strait friendship with Cardinal Bernardo Divizio of Bibbiena, who had importuned him for many years to take a wife of his choosing; and Raffaello, while not directly refusing to obey the wishes of the Cardinal, had yet put the matter off, saying that he would rather wait till three or four years had passed. This term came upon Raffaello when he was not expecting it, and he was reminded by the Cardinal of his promise; whereupon, seeing himself bound, like the courteous man that he was, he would not break his word, and thus accepted as his wife a niece of that Cardinal. And because he was always very ill content with this entanglement, he continued to delay the matter in such a way that many months passed without the marriage being brought to pass. But it was with no dishonourable motive that he did this, for, having been so many years in the service of the Court, and being the creditor of Leo for a good sum, it had been hinted to him that when the hall on which he was engaged was finished, the Pope proposed to reward him for his labours and abilities by giving him a red hat, of which he had already determined to distribute a good number, and some of them to men of less merit than Raffaello.

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Meanwhile, pursuing his amours in secret, Raffaello continued to divert himself beyond measure with the pleasures of love; whence it happened that, having on one occasion indulged in more than his usual excess, he returned to his house in a violent fever. The physicians, therefore, believing that he had overheated himself, and receiving from him no confession of the excess of which he had been guilty, imprudently bled him, insomuch that he was weakened and felt himself sinking; for he was in need rather of restoratives. Thereupon he made his will: and first, like a good Christian, he sent his mistress out of the house, leaving her the means to live honourably. Next, he divided his possessions among his disciples, Giulio Romano, whom he had always loved dearly, and the Florentine Giovanni Francesco, called Il Fattore, with a priest of Urbino, his kinsman, whose name I do not know. Then he gave orders that some of his wealth should be used for restoring with new masonry one of the ancient tabernacles in S. Maria Ritonda, and for making an altar, with a marble statue of Our Lady, in that church, which he chose as his place of repose and burial after death; and he left all the rest to Giulio and Giovanni Francesco, appointing as executor of his will Messer Baldassarre da Pescia, then Datary to the Pope. Finally, he confessed and was penitent, and ended the course of his life at the age of thirty-seven, on the same day that he was born, which was Good Friday. And even as he embellished the world with his talents, so, it may be believed, does his soul adorn Heaven by its presence.

As he lay dead in the hall where he had been working, there was placed at his head the picture of the Transfiguration, which he had executed for Cardinal de' Medici; and the sight of that living picture, in contrast with the dead body, caused the hearts of all who beheld it to burst with sorrow. That work, in memory of the loss of Raffaello, was placed by the Cardinal on the high-altar of S. Pietro a Montorio; and on account of the nobility of his every action, it was held ever afterwards in great estimation. His body received that honourable burial which his noble spirit had deserved, for there was no craftsman who did not weep with sorrow and follow him to the grave. His death was also a great grief to the whole Court of the Pope, first because he had held in his lifetime the office of Groom of the Chamber, and likewise because he had been so dear to the Pope that his loss caused him to weep bitterly.

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RAFAELLO SANZIO: BALDASSARE CASTIGLIONE
(Paris: Louvre, 1505. Canvas)

[View larger image](#)

O happy and blessed spirit, in that every man is glad to speak of thee, to celebrate thy actions, and to admire every drawing that thou didst leave to us! When this noble craftsman died, the art of painting might well have died also, seeing that when he closed his eyes, she was left as it were blind. And now for us who have survived him, it remains to imitate the good, nay, the supremely excellent method bequeathed to us by him as a pattern, and, as is called for by his merit and our obligations, to hold a most grateful remembrance of this in our minds, and to pay the highest honour to his memory with our lips. For in truth we have from him art, colouring, and invention harmonized and brought to such a pitch of perfection as could scarcely be hoped for; nor may any intellect ever think to surpass him. And in addition to this benefit that he conferred on art, like a true friend to her, as long as he lived he never ceased to show how one should deal with great men, with those of middle station, and with the lowest. And, indeed, among his extraordinary gifts, I perceive one of such value that I for my part am amazed at it, in that Heaven gave him the power to produce in our art an effect wholly contrary to the nature of us painters, which was that our craftsmen—I do not mean only the lesser, but also those whose humour it was to be great persons; and of this humour art creates a vast number—while working in company with Raffaello, felt themselves naturally united and in such accord, that all evil humours vanished at the sight of him, and every vile and base thought fell away from their minds. Such unity was never greater at any other time than his; and this happened because they were overcome both by his courtesy and by his art, and even more by the good disposition of his nature, which was so full of gentleness and so overflowing with loving-kindness, that it was seen that the very animals, not to speak of men, honoured him. It is said that if any painter who knew him, and even any who did not know him, asked him for some drawing that he needed, Raffaello would leave his own work in order to assist him. And he always kept a vast number of them employed, aiding them and teaching them with such a love as might have been the due rather of his own children than of fellow-craftsmen; for which reason he was never seen to go to Court without having with him, as he left his house, some fifty painters, all able and excellent, who kept him company in order to do him honour. In short, he lived not like a painter, but like a prince. Wherefore, O art of painting, thou couldst then esteem thyself indeed most blessed, in possessing a craftsman who, both with his genius and his virtues, exalted thee higher than Heaven! Truly happy mightest thou call thyself, in that thy disciples, following in the footsteps of so great a man, have seen how life should be lived, and how important is the union of art and virtue, which, wedded in Raffaello, had strength to prevail on the magnificent Julius II and the magnanimous Leo X, exalted as they were in rank and dignity, to make him their most intimate friend and show him all possible generosity, insomuch that by their favour and by the wealth that they bestowed upon him, he was enabled to do vast honour both to himself and to art. Blessed, also, may be called all those who, employed in his service, worked under him, since whoever imitated him found that he had reached an honourable haven; and in like manner all those who imitate his labours in art will be honoured by the world, even as, by resembling him in uprightness of life, they will win rewards from Heaven.

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Raffaello received from Bembo the following epitaph:

D. O. M.
RAPHAELLI SANCTIO JOAN. F. URBINAT.

PICTORI EMINENTISS. VETERUMQUE ÆMULO,
CUJUS SPIRANTEIS PROPE IMAGINEIS
SI CONTEMPLERE,
NATURÆ ATQUE ARTIS FŒDUS
FACILE INSPEXERIS.
JULII II ET LEONIS X PONTT. MAXX.
PICTURÆ ET ARCHITECT. OPERIBUS
GLORIAM AUXIT.
VIXIT AN. XXXVII, INTEGER, INTEGROS.
QUO DIE NATUS EST, EO ESSE DESIIT,
VIII ID. APRIL. MDXX.

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ILLE HIC EST RAPHAEL, TIMUIT QUO SOSPITE VINCI
RERUM MAGNA PARENS, ET MORIENTE MORI.

And Count Baldassarre Castiglione wrote of his death in the following manner:

Quod lacerum corpus medica sanaverit arte,
Hyppolitum Stygiis et revocarit aquis,
Ad Stygias ipse est raptus Epidaurius undas;
Sic precium vitæ mors fuit artifici.
Tu quoque dum toto laniatam corpore Romam
Componis miro, Raphael, ingenio,
Atque urbis lacerum ferro, igni, annisque cadaver,
Ad vitam antiquum jam revocasque decus,
Movisti superum invidiam, indignataque mors est
Te dudum extinctis reddere posse animam,
Et quod longa dies paulatim aboleverat, hoc te
Mortali spreta lege parare iterum.
Sic, miser, heu, prima cadis intercepte juventa,
Deberi et morti nostrarque nosque mones.

GUGLIELMO DA MARCILLA

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LIFE OF GUGLIELMO DA MARCILLA

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[GUILLAUME DE MARCILLAC, OR THE FRENCH PRIOR]

FRENCH PAINTER AND MASTER OF GLASS WINDOWS

At this same time, wherein our arts were endowed by God with the greatest felicity that they could possibly enjoy, there flourished one Guglielmo da Marcilla, a Frenchman, who, from his constant residence in Arezzo, and from the affection that he bore to that city, may be said to have chosen it for his country, insomuch that all men considered and called him an Aretine. And, in truth, among the benefits that are derived from ability, one is that from whatever strange and distant region and from however barbarous and unknown a race a man may come, be he who he may, if only he has a mind adorned with ability and practises some ingenious craft with his hands, no sooner does he make his first appearance in each city to which he turns his steps, demonstrating his worth, than the skill of his hand works so powerfully, that his name, passing from lip to lip, in a short time waxes great, and his qualities become very highly prized and honoured. And it happens often to a great number of men, who have left their country far behind them, that they chance upon nations that are lovers of ability and of foreigners, where, by reason of their upright walk of life, they find themselves recognized and cherished in such a manner, that they forget the country of their birth and choose a new one for their last resting-place.

Even so was Arezzo chosen as a final home by Guglielmo, who, as a youth in France, applied himself to the art of design, and together with that gave attention to glass windows, in which he made figures no less harmonious in colouring than if they had been painted with the greatest beauty and harmony in oils. While in his own country, persuaded by the entreaties of certain of his friends, he was present at the slaying of one who was their enemy: on which account he was forced to assume the habit of a monk in the Order of S. Dominic in France, in order to escape the courts and the hand of justice. But although he remained in that Order, yet he never abandoned the study of art; nay, continuing it, he arrived at the highest perfection.

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Now, by order of Pope Julius II, a commission was given to Bramante da Urbino to have a number of glass windows made for the Palace; whereupon he, making inquiries about the most excellent craftsmen, received information of many who were working at that craft, and among them of some who were executing marvellous works in France; and of these he saw a specimen through the French Ambassador who was then at the Court of his Holiness, and who had in the frame of a

window in his study a figure executed on a piece of white glass with a vast number of colours, fixed on the glass by the action of fire. Wherefore, by order of Bramante, a letter was written to France, inviting them to come to Rome, and offering them good payments. Thereupon Maestro Claudio, a Frenchman, the head of that art, having received the intelligence, and knowing the excellence of Guglielmo, so went to work with money and fair promises, that it was no difficult matter to draw him out of the convent, particularly because Guglielmo, on account of the discourtesy shown to him and the jealousies that there always are among monks, was even more eager to leave it than was Maestro Claudio to get him out. They went, therefore, to Rome, where the habit of S. Dominic was changed for that of S. Peter.

Bramante at that time had caused two windows of travertine to be made in the Palace of the Pope, which were in the hall in front of the chapel, now embellished by a vaulted ceiling by Antonio da San Gallo, and by marvellous stucco-work from the hand of Perino del Vaga of Florence. These windows were executed by Maestro Claudio and Guglielmo, although afterwards, during the sack of Rome, they were broken to pieces, in order to extract the lead to make harquebus-balls; and they were truly marvellous. In addition to these, they made an endless number of them for the apartments of the Pope, which met with the same fate as the other two. And even now there is one to be seen in the room containing Raffaello's Burning of the Borgo, in the Borgia Tower; in which are angels who are holding the escutcheon of Leo X. They also made two windows for the chapel behind the Madonna in S. Maria del Popolo, with the stories of her life, which were highly praiseworthy examples of that craft.

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These works brought them no less fame and renown than comfort in life. But Maestro Claudio, being very intemperate in eating and drinking, according to the custom of his race, which is a deadly thing in the air of Rome, fell sick of so violent a fever, that in six days he passed to the other life. Whereupon Guglielmo, left alone, and almost like one lost without his companion, painted by himself a window, likewise of glass, in S. Maria de Anima, the church of the Germans in Rome; which was the reason that Cardinal Silvio of Cortona made him an offer, and made a contract with him that he should execute some windows and other works in his native city of Cortona. Wherefore the Cardinal took him in his company to take up his abode in Cortona; and the first work that he executed was the façade of the Cardinal's house on the side towards the Piazza, which he painted in chiaroscuro, depicting therein Croton and the other original founders of that city. Thereupon the Cardinal, who saw that Guglielmo was no less upright as a man than excellent as a master of that art, caused him to execute, for the Pieve of Cortona, the window of the principal chapel, in which he made the Nativity of Christ and the Magi adoring Him.

Guglielmo was a man of fine spirit and intelligence, and of very great mastery in handling glass, and particularly in so distributing the colours that the brightest should come in the foremost figures, those in the other figures being darker in proportion as they receded; in which point he was a rare and truly excellent master. Moreover, he showed very good judgment in the painting of his figures; whereby he executed them with such unity, that they fell back into the distance little by little, in such a way that they did not cling either to the buildings or to the landscapes, and had the appearance of being painted on panel, or rather in relief. He showed invention and variety in the composition of scenes, making them rich and well grouped; and he rendered easy the process of making such pictures as are put together out of pieces of glass, which was held to be very difficult, as indeed it is for one who has not his skill and dexterity. He designed the pictures for his windows with such good method and order, that the mountings of lead and iron, which cross them in certain places, were so well fitted into the joinings of the figures and the folds of the draperies, that they cannot be seen—nay, they gave the whole such grace, that the brush could not have done more—and thus he was able to make a virtue of necessity.

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Guglielmo used only two kinds of colour for the shading of such glass as he proposed to subject to the action of fire; one was scale of iron, and the other scale of copper. That of iron, which is dark, served to shade draperies, hair, and buildings; and the other, that of copper, which produces a tawny tint, served for flesh colours. He also made much use of a hard stone that comes from Flanders and France, called at the present day hematite, which is red in colour and is much employed for burnishing gold. This, having first been pounded in a bronze mortar, and then ground with an iron brazing instrument on a plate of copper or yellow brass, and tempered with gum, works divinely well on glass.

When Guglielmo first arrived in Rome, he was no great draughtsman, although he was well practised in every other respect. But having recognized the need of this, he applied himself to the study of drawing, in spite of his being well advanced in years; and thus little by little he achieved the improvement that is evident in the windows that he afterwards made for the Palace of the said Cardinal at Cortona, and for the other without the city, in a round window that is in the aforesaid Pieve, over the façade, on the right hand as one enters the church, wherein are the arms of Pope Leo X, and likewise in two little windows that are in the Company of Gesù, in one of which is a Christ, and in the other a S. Onofrio. These are no little different from his early works, and much better.

Now while Guglielmo, as has been related, was living in Cortona, there died at Arezzo one Fabiano di Stagio Sassoli, an Aretine, who had been a very good master of the making of large windows. Thereupon the Wardens of Works for the Vescovado gave the commission for three windows in the principal chapel, each twenty braccia in height, to Stagio, the son of the said Fabiano, and to the painter Domenico Pecori; but when these were finished and fixed in their places, they gave no great satisfaction to the Aretines, although they were passing good and rather worthy of praise than otherwise. It happened at this time that Messer Lodovico Belichini,

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an excellent physician, and one of the first men in the government of the city of Arezzo, went to Cortona to cure the mother of the aforesaid Cardinal; and there he became well acquainted with our Guglielmo, with whom, when he had time, he was very willing to converse. And Guglielmo, who was then called the Prior, from his having received about that time the benefice of a priory, likewise conceived an affection for that physician, who asked him one day whether, with the good will of the Cardinal, he would go to Arezzo to execute some windows; at which Guglielmo promised that he would, and with the permission and good will of the Cardinal he made his way to that city. Now Stagio, of whom we have spoken above, having parted from the company of Domenico, received Guglielmo into his house; and the latter, for his first work, executed for a window of the Chapel of S. Lucia, belonging to the Albergotti, in the Vescovado of Arezzo, that Saint and a S. Sylvester, in so good a manner that the work may truly be said to be made with living figures, and not of coloured and transparent glass, or at least to be a picture worthy of praise and marvellous. For besides the mastery shown in the flesh-colours, the glasses are flashed; that is, in some places the first skin has been removed, and the glass then coloured with another tint; by which is meant, for example, the placing of yellow over red flashed glass, or the application of white and green over blue; which is a difficult and even miraculous thing in this craft. The first or true colour, then, such as red, blue, or green, covers the whole of one side; and the other part, which is as thick as the blade of a knife, or a little more, is white. Many, being afraid that they might break the glasses, on account of their lack of skill in handling them, do not employ a pointed iron for removing that layer, but in place of this, for greater safety, set about grinding the glasses with a copper wheel fixed on the end of an iron instrument; and thus, little by little, by the use of emery, they contrive to leave only a layer of white glass, which turns out very clear. Then, if a yellow colour has to be applied to the piece of glass thus left white, at the moment when it is to be placed into the furnace for firing, it is painted by means of a brush with calcined silver, which is a colour similar to bole, but somewhat thick; and in the fire this melts over the glass, fuses, and takes a firm hold, penetrating into the glass and making a very beautiful yellow. These methods of working no one used better, or with more ingenuity and art, than Prior Guglielmo; and it is in these things that the difficulty consists, for painting the glass with oil-colours or in any other manner is little or nothing, and that it should be diaphanous or transparent is not a matter of much importance, whereas firing it in the furnace and making it such that it will withstand the action of water and remain fresh for ever, is a difficult work and well worthy of praise. Wherefore this excellent master deserves the highest praise, since there is not a man of his profession who has done as much, whether in design, or invention, or colouring, or general excellence.

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He then made the great round-window of the same church, containing the Descent of the Holy Spirit, and likewise the Baptism of Christ by S. John, wherein he represented Christ in the Jordan, awaiting S. John, who has taken a cup of water in order to baptize Him, while a nude old man is taking off his shoes, and some angels are preparing Christ's raiment, and on high is the Father, sending down the Holy Spirit upon His Son. This window is over the baptismal font of that Duomo, for which he also executed the window containing the Resurrection of Lazarus on the fourth day after death; wherein it seems impossible that he could have included in so small a space such a number of figures, in which may be recognized the terror and amazement of the people, with the stench from the body of Lazarus, whose resurrection causes his two sisters to rejoice amid their tears. In this work are innumerable colours, flashed one over the other in the glass, and every least thing truly appears most natural in its own kind.

And whoever wishes to learn how much the hand of the Prior was able to effect in this art, should study the window of S. Matthew over the Chapel of that Apostle, and observe the marvellous invention of that scene, wherein he can see a living figure of Christ calling Matthew from his tables, while Matthew, following Him and stretching out his arms to receive Him, abandons the riches and treasures that he has acquired. And at the same time an Apostle may be seen in a very spirited attitude, awaking another who has fallen asleep on some steps; and in like manner there may also be perceived a S. Peter speaking with S. John, both being so beautiful that they seem truly divine. In this same window are temples in perspective, staircases, and figures so well grouped, and landscapes so natural, that one would never think it was glass, but rather a thing rained down from Heaven for the consolation of mankind. In the same place he made the window of S. Anthony and that of S. Nicholas, both most beautiful, with two others, one containing the scene of Christ driving the traders from the Temple, and the other that of the woman taken in adultery; all these works being held to be truly excellent and marvellous.

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So fully were the labours and abilities of the Prior recognized by the Aretines, what with praises, favours, and rewards, and so satisfied and contented was he by this result, that he resolved to adopt that city as his home, and to change himself from a Frenchman into an Aretine. Afterwards, reflecting in his own mind that the art of glass-painting, on account of the destruction that takes place every moment in such works, was no lasting one, there came to him a desire to devote himself to painting, and he therefore undertook to execute for the Wardens of Works of the Vescovado in that city three very large vaults in fresco, thinking thus to leave a memorial of himself behind him. The Aretines, in return for this, presented to him a farm that belonged to the Confraternity of S. Maria della Misericordia, near their city, with some excellent houses, for his enjoyment during his lifetime. And they ordained that when the work was finished, its value should be estimated by some distinguished craftsman, and that the Wardens should make this good to him in full. Whereupon he made up his mind to show his worth in this undertaking, and he made his figures very large on account of the height, after the manner of the works in Michelagnolo's chapel. And so mightily did his wish to become excellent in such an art avail in him, that although he was fifty years of age, he improved little by little in such a manner, that he

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showed that his knowledge and comprehension of the beautiful were not less than his delight in imitating the good in the execution of his work. He went on to represent the earlier events of the New Testament, even as in the three large works he had depicted the beginning of the Old. For this reason, therefore, I am inclined to believe that any man of genius who has the desire to attain to perfection, is able, if he will but take the pains, to make naught of the limits of any science. At the beginning of those works, indeed, he was alarmed by their size, and because he had never executed any before; which was the reason that he sent to Rome for Maestro Giovanni, a French miniaturist, who, coming to Arezzo, painted over S. Antonio an arch with a Christ in fresco, and for that Company the banner that is carried in processions, which he executed with great diligence, having received the commission for them from the Prior.

At the same time Guglielmo made the round window for the façade of the Church of S. Francesco, a great work, in which he represented the Pope in Consistory, with the Conclave of Cardinals, and S. Francis going to Rome for the confirmation of his Rule and bearing the roses of January. In this work he proved what a master of composition he was, so that it may be said with truth that he was born for that profession; nor may any craftsman ever think to equal him in beauty, in abundance of figures, or in grace. There are innumerable windows executed by him throughout that city, all most beautiful, such as the great round window in the Madonna delle Lacrime, containing the Assumption of Our Lady and the Apostles, and a very beautiful window with an Annunciation; a round window with the Marriage of the Virgin, and another containing a S. Jerome executed for the Spadari, and likewise three other windows below, in various parts of the church; with a most beautiful round window with the Nativity of Christ in the Church of S. Girolamo, and another in S. Rocco. He sent some, also, to various places, such as Castiglione del Lago, and one to Florence for Lodovico Capponi, to be set up in S. Felicita, where there is the panel by Jacopo da Pontorno, a most excellent painter, and the chapel adorned by him with mural paintings in oils and in fresco and with panel-pictures; which window came into the hands of the Frati Ingesuati in Florence, who worked at that craft, and they took it all to pieces in order to learn how it was made, removing many pieces as specimens and replacing them with new ones, so that in the end they made quite a different window.

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He also conceived the wish to paint in oils, and for the Chapel of the Conception in S. Francesco at Arezzo he executed a panel-picture wherein are some vestments very well painted, and many heads most lifelike, and so beautiful that he was honoured thereby ever afterwards, seeing that this was the first work that he had ever done in oils.

The Prior was a very honourable person, and delighted in agriculture and in making alterations in buildings; wherefore, having bought a most beautiful house, he made in it a vast number of improvements. As a man of religion, he was always most upright in his ways; and the remorse of conscience, on account of his departure from his convent, kept him sorely afflicted. For which reason he made a very beautiful window for the Chapel of the High-altar in S. Domenico, a convent of his Order at Arezzo; wherein he depicted a vine that issues from the body of S. Dominic and embraces a great number of sanctified friars, who constitute the tree of the Order; and at the highest point is Our Lady, with Christ, who is marrying S. Catherine of Siena—a work much extolled and of great mastery, for which he would accept no payment, believing himself to be much indebted to that Order. He sent a very beautiful window to S. Lorenzo in Perugia, and an endless number of others to many places round Arezzo.

And because he took much pleasure in matters of architecture, he made for the citizens of that country a number of designs of buildings and adornments for their city, such as the two doors of S. Rocco in stone, and the ornament of grey-stone that was added to the panel-picture of Maestro Luca in S. Girolamo; and he designed an ornament in the Abbey of Cipriano d' Anghiari, and another for the Company of the Trinità in the Chapel of the Crocifisso, and a very rich lavatory for the sacristy; which were all executed with great perfection by the stone-cutter Santi.

Finally, ever delighting in labour, and continually working both winter and summer at his mural painting, which breaks down the healthiest of men, he became so afflicted by the damp and so swollen with dropsy, that his physicians had to tap him, and in a few days he rendered up his soul to Him who had given it. First, like a good Christian, he partook of the Sacraments of the Church, and made his will. Then, having a particular devotion for the Hermits of Camaldoli, who have their seat on the summit of the Apennines, twenty miles distant from Arezzo, he bequeathed to them his property and his body, and to Pastorino da Siena, his assistant, who had been with him many years, he left his glasses, his working-instruments, and his designs, of which there is one in our book, a scene of the Submersion of Pharaoh in the Red Sea.

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This Pastorino afterwards applied himself to many other fields of art, and also to glass windows, although the works that he produced in that craft were but few. Guglielmo was much imitated, also, by one Maso Porro of Cortona, who was more able in firing and putting together the glass than in painting it. One of the pupils of Guglielmo was Battista Borro of Arezzo, who continues to imitate him greatly in the making of windows; and he also taught the first rudiments to Benedetto Spadari and to Giorgio Vasari of Arezzo.

The Prior lived sixty-two years, and died in the year 1537. He deserves infinite praise, in that by him there was brought into Tuscany the art of working in glass with the greatest mastery and delicacy that could be desired. Wherefore, since he conferred such great benefits upon us, we also will pay him honour, exalting him continually with loving and unceasing praise both for his life and for his works.

LIFE OF SIMONE, CALLED IL CRONACA

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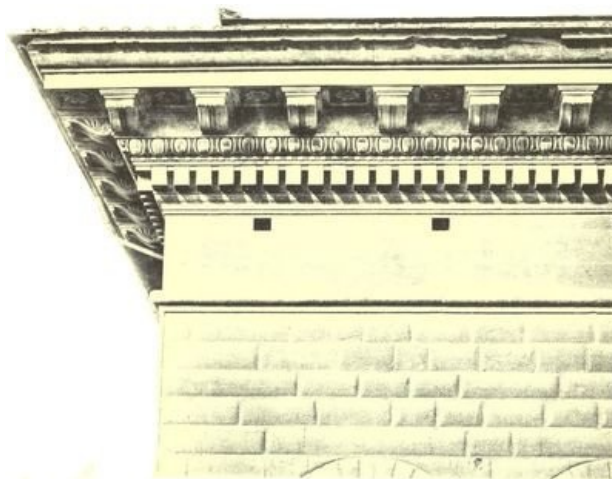
[SIMONE DEL POLLAIUOLO]**ARCHITECT OF FLORENCE**

Many intellects are lost that would make rare and worthy works, if, on coming into the world, they were to hit upon persons able and willing to set them to work on those labours for which they are fitted. But it often happens that he who has the means is neither capable nor willing; and if, indeed, there chances to be one willing to erect some worthy building, he often takes no manner of care to seek out an architect of real merit or of any loftiness of spirit. Nay, he puts his honour and glory into the keeping of certain thievish creatures, who generally disgrace the name and fame of such memorials; and in order to thrust forward into greatness those who depend entirely upon him (so great is the power of ambition), he often rejects the good designs that are offered to him, and puts into execution the very worst; wherefore his own fame is left besmirched by the clumsiness of the work, since it is considered by all men of judgment that the craftsman and the patron who employs him, in that they are conjoined in their works, are of one and the same mind. And on the other hand, how many Princes of little understanding have there been, who, through having chanced upon persons of excellence and judgment, have obtained after death no less fame from the memory of their buildings than they enjoyed when alive from their sovereignty over their people.

Truly fortunate, however, in his day, was Cronaca, in that he not only had the knowledge, but also found those who kept him continually employed, and that always on great and magnificent works. Of him it is related that while Antonio Pollaiuolo was in Rome, working at the tombs of bronze that are in S. Pietro, there came to his house a young lad, his relative, whose proper name was Simone, and who had fled from Florence on account of some brawl. This Simone, having worked with a master in woodwork, and being much inclined to the art of architecture, began to observe the beautiful antiquities of that city, and, delighting in them, went about measuring them with the greatest diligence. And, going on with this, he had not been long in Rome before he showed that he had made much proficience, both in taking measurements and in carrying one or two things into execution.

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Thereupon he conceived the idea of returning to Florence, and departed from Rome; and on arriving in his native city, having become a passing good master of words, he described the marvels of Rome and of other places with such accuracy, that from that time onwards he was called Il Cronaca, every man thinking that he was truly a chronicle of information in his discourse. Now he had become such that he was held to be the most excellent of the modern architects in the city of Florence, seeing that he had good judgment in choosing sites, and showed that he had an intellect more lofty than that of many others who were engaged in that profession; for it was evident from his works how good an imitator he was of antiquities, and how closely he had observed the rules of Vitruvius and the works of Filippo di Ser Brunellesco.



DETAIL OF CORNICE
(After Simone [Il Cronaca],
Florence: Palazzo Strozzi)
Alinari

There was then in Florence that Filippo Strozzi who is now called "the elder," to distinguish him from his son; and he, being very rich, wished to leave to his native city and to his children, among other memorials of himself, one in the form of a beautiful palace. Wherefore Benedetto da Maiano, having been called upon by him for this purpose, made him a model entirely isolated, which was afterwards put into execution, although not in all its extent, as will be related below, for some of his neighbours would not give up their houses to accommodate him. Benedetto began the palace, therefore, in the best way that he could, and brought the outer shell almost to completion before the death of Filippo: which outer shell is in the Rustic Order, with varying degrees of rustication, as may be seen, since the boss-covered part from the first range of windows downwards, together with the doors, is very much Rustic, and the part from the first range of windows to the second is much less Rustic. Now it happened that at the very moment when Benedetto was leaving Florence, Cronaca returned from Rome; whereupon, Simone being presented to Filippo, the latter was so pleased with the model that he made for the courtyard and for the great cornice which goes round the outer side of the palace, that, having recognized the excellence of his intellect, he decided that thenceforward the whole work should pass through his hands, and availed himself of his services ever afterwards. Cronaca, then, in addition to the beautiful exterior in the Tuscan Order, made at the top a very magnificent Corinthian cornice, which serves to complete the roof; and half of it is seen finished at the present day, with such extraordinary grace that nothing could be added to it, nor could anything more beautiful be desired. This cornice was taken by Cronaca, who copied it in Rome with exact measurements, from an ancient one that is to be found at Spoglia Cristo, which is held to be the most beautiful among the many that are in that city; although it is true that it was enlarged by Cronaca to the proportions required by the palace, to the end that it might make a suitable finish, and might also complete the roof of that palace by means of its projection. Thus, then, the genius of Cronaca was able to make use of the works of others and to transform them almost into his own; which does not succeed with many, since the difficulty lies not in merely having drawings and copies of beautiful things, but in accommodating them to the purpose which they have to serve, with grace, true measurement, proportion, and fitness. But just as much as this cornice of Cronaca's was and always will be extolled, so was that one censured which was made for the Palace of the Bartolini in the same city by Baccio d' Agnolo, who, seeking to imitate Cronaca, placed over a small façade, delicate in detail, a great ancient cornice copied with the exact measurements from the frontispiece of Monte Cavallo; which resulted in such ugliness, from his not having known how to adapt it with judgment, that it could not look worse, for it seems like an enormous cap on a small head. It is not enough for craftsmen, when they have executed their works, to excuse themselves, as many do, by saying that they were taken with exact measurements from the antique and copied from good masters, seeing that good judgment and the eye play a greater part in all such matters than measuring with compasses. Cronaca, then, executed half of the said cornice with great art right round that palace, together with dentils and ovoli, and finished it completely on two sides, counterpoising the stones in such a way, in order that they might turn out well bound and balanced, that there is no better masonry to be seen, nor any carried to perfection with more diligence. In like manner, all the other stones are so well put together, and with so high a finish, that the whole does not appear to be of masonry, but rather all of one piece. And to the end that everything might be in keeping, he caused beautiful pieces of iron-work to be made for all parts of the palace, as adornments for it, and the lanterns that are at the corners, which were all executed with supreme diligence by Niccolò Grosso, called Il Caparra, a smith of Florence. In those marvellous lanterns may be seen cornices, columns, capitals, and brackets of iron, fixed together with wonderful craftsmanship; nor has any modern ever executed in iron works so large and so difficult, and with such knowledge and mastery.

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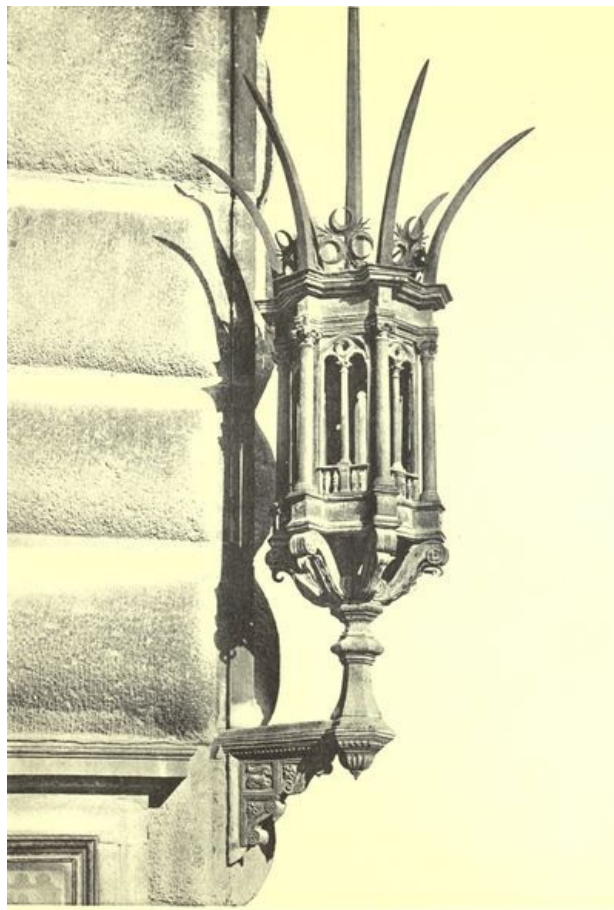
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IRON LINK-HOLDER
(After Niccolò Grosso.
Florence: Palazzo Strozzi)
Alinari

[View larger image](#)

Niccolò Grosso was an eccentric and self-willed person, claiming justice for himself and giving it to others, and never covetous of what was not his own. He would never give anyone credit in the payment of his works, and always insisted on having his earnest-money. For this reason Lorenzo de' Medici called him Il Caparra,^[28] and he was known to many others by that name. He had a sign fixed over his shop, wherein were books burning; wherefore, when one asked for time to make his payment, he would say, "I cannot give it, for my books are burning, and I can enter no more debtors in them." He was commissioned by the honourable Captains of the Guelph party to make a pair of andirons, which, when he had finished them, were sent for several times. But he kept saying, "On this anvil do I sweat and labour, and on it will I have my money paid down." Whereupon they sent to him once more for the work, with a message that he should come for his money, for he would straightway be paid; but he, still obstinate, answered that they must first bring the money. The provveditore, therefore, knowing that the Captains wished to see the work, fell into a rage, and sent to him saying that he had received half the money, and that when he had dispatched the andirons, he would pay him the rest. On which account Caparra, recognizing that this was true, gave one of the andirons to the messenger, saying: "Take them this one, for it is theirs; and if it pleases them, bring me the rest of the money, and I will hand over the other; but at present it is mine." The officials, seeing the marvellous work that he had put into it, sent the money to his shop; and he sent them the other andiron. It is related, also, that Lorenzo de' Medici resolved to have some pieces of iron-work made, to be sent abroad as presents, in order that the excellence of Caparra might be made known. He went, therefore, to his shop, and happened to find him working at some things for certain poor people, from whom he had received part of the price as earnest-money. On Lorenzo making his request, Niccolò would in no way promise to serve him before having satisfied the others, saying that they had come to his shop before Lorenzo, and that he valued their money as much as his. To the same master some young men of the city brought a design, from which he was to make for them an iron instrument for breaking and forcing open other irons by means of a screw, but he absolutely refused to serve them; nay, he upbraided them, and said: "Nothing will induce me to serve you in such a matter; for these things are nothing but thieves' tools, or instruments for abducting and dishonouring young girls. Such things are not for me, I tell you, nor for you, who seem to me to be honest men." And they, perceiving that Caparra would not do their will, asked him who there was in Florence who might serve them; whereupon, flying into a rage, he drove them away with a torrent of abuse. He would never work for Jews, and was wont, indeed, to say that their money was putrid and stinking. He was a good man and a religious, but whimsical in brain and obstinate: and he would never leave Florence, for all the offers that were made to him, but lived and died in that city. Of him I have thought it right to make this record, because he was truly unique in his craft, and has never had and never will have an equal, as may be seen best from the iron-work and the beautiful lanterns of the Palace of the Strozzi.



IRON LANTERN
(After Niccolò Grosso.
Florence: Palazzo Strozzi)
Alinari
[View larger image](#)

This palace was brought to completion by Cronaca, and adorned with a very rich courtyard in the Corinthian and Doric Orders, with ornaments in the form of columns, capitals, cornices, windows, and doors, all most beautiful. And if it should appear to anyone that the interior of this palace is not in keeping with the exterior, he must know that the fault is not Cronaca's, for the reason that he was forced to adapt his interior to an outer shell begun by others, and to follow in great measure what had been laid down by those before him; and it was no small feat for him to have given it such beauty as it displays. The same answer may be made to any who say that the ascent of the stairs is not easy, nor correct in proportion, but too steep and sudden; and likewise, also, to such as say that the rooms and apartments of the interior in general are out of keeping, as has been described, with the grandeur and magnificence of the exterior. Nevertheless this palace will never be held as other than truly magnificent, and equal to any private building whatsoever that has been erected in Italy in our own times; wherefore Cronaca rightly obtained, as he still does, infinite commendation for this work.

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The same master built the Sacristy of S. Spirito in Florence, which is in the form of an octagonal temple, beautiful in proportions, and executed with a high finish; and among other things to be seen in this work are some capitals fashioned by the happy hand of Andrea dal Monte Sansovino, which are wrought with supreme perfection; and such, likewise, is the antechamber of that sacristy, which is held to be very beautiful in invention, although the coffered ceiling, as will be described, is not well distributed over the columns. The same Cronaca also erected the Church of S. Francesco dell' Osservanza on the hill of S. Miniato, without Florence; and likewise the whole of the Convent of the Servite Friars, which is a highly extolled work.



INTERIOR OF SACRISTY
(After Simone [Il Cronaca].
Florence: S. Spirito)
Alinari

[View larger image](#)

At this same time there was about to be built, by the advice of Fra Girolamo Savonarola, a most famous preacher of that day, the Great Council Chamber of the Palace of the Signoria in Florence; and for this opinions were taken from Leonardo da Vinci, Michelagnolo Buonarroti, although he was a mere lad, Giuliano da San Gallo, Baccio d' Agnolo, and Simone del Pollaiuolo, called Il Cronaca, who was the devoted friend and follower of Savonarola. These men, after many disputes, came to an agreement, and decided that the Hall should be made in that form which it retained down to our own times, when, as has been mentioned and will be related yet again in another place, it was almost rebuilt. The charge of the whole work was given to Cronaca, as a man of talent and also as the friend of the aforesaid Fra Girolamo; and he executed it with great promptitude and diligence, showing the beauty of his genius particularly in the making of the roof, since the structure is of vast extent in every direction. He made the tie-beams of the roof-truss, which are thirty-eight braccia in length from wall to wall, of a number of timbers well scarfed and fastened together, since it was not possible to find beams of sufficient size for the purpose; and whereas the tie-beams of other roof-trusses have only one king-post, all those of this Hall have three each, a king-post in the middle, and a queen-post on either side. The rafters are long in proportion, and so are the struts of each king-post and queen-post; nor must I omit to say that the struts of the queen-posts, on the side nearest the wall, thrust against the rafters, and, towards the centre, against the struts of the king-post. I have thought it right to describe how this roof-truss is made, because it was constructed with beautiful design, and I have seen drawings made of it by many for sending to various places. When these tie-beams, thus contrived, had been drawn up and placed at intervals of six braccia, and the roof had been likewise laid down in a very short space of time, Cronaca attended to the fixing of the ceiling, which was then made of plain wood and divided into panels, each of which was four braccia square and surrounded by an ornamental cornice of few members; and a flat moulding was made of the same width as the planks, which enclosed the panels and the whole work, with large bosses at the intersections and the corners of the whole ceiling. And although the end walls of this Hall, one on either side, were eight braccia out of the square, they did not make up their minds, as they might have done, to thicken the walls so as to make it square, but carried them up to the roof just as they were, making three large windows on each of those end walls. But when the whole was finished, the Hall, on account of its extraordinary size, turned out to be too dark, and also stunted and wanting in height in relation to its great length and breadth; in short, almost wholly out of proportion. They sought, therefore, but with little success, to improve it by making two windows in the middle of the eastern side of the Hall, and four on the western side. After this, in order to give it its final completion, they made on the level of the brick floor, with great rapidity, being much pressed by the citizens, a wooden tribune right round the walls of the Hall, three braccia both in breadth and height, with seats after the manner of a theatre, and with a balustrade in front; on which tribune all the magistrates of the city were to sit. In the middle of the eastern side was a more elevated daïs, on which the Signori sat with the Gonfalonier of Justice; and on either side of this more prominent place was a door, one of them leading to the Segreto^[29] and the other to the Specchio.^[30] Opposite to this, on the west side, was an altar at which Mass was read, with a panel by the hand of Fra Bartolommeo, as has been mentioned; and beside the altar was the pulpit for making speeches. In the middle of the Hall, then, were benches in rows laid crossways, for the citizens; while in the centre and at the corners of the tribune were some gangways with six steps, providing a convenient ascent for the ushers in the collection of votes. In this Hall, which was much extolled at that day for its many beautiful features and the rapidity with which it was erected, time has since served to reveal such errors as that it is low, dark, gloomy, and out of the square. Nevertheless Cronaca and the others deserve to be excused, both on account of the haste with which it was executed at the desire of the citizens, who intended in time to have it adorned with pictures and the ceiling overlaid with gold, and because up to that

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day there had been no greater hall built in Italy; although there are others very large, such as that of the Palace of S. Marco in Rome, that of the Vatican, erected by Pius II and Innocent VIII, that of the Castle of Naples, that of the Palace of Milan, and those of Urbino, Venice, and Padua.

After this, to provide an ascent to this Hall, Cronaca, with the advice of the same masters, made a great staircase six braccia wide and curving in two flights, richly adorned with grey-stone, and with Corinthian pilasters and capitals, double cornices, and arches, of the same stone; and with barrel-shaped vaulting, and windows with columns of variegated marble and carved marble capitals. But although this work was much extolled, it would have won even greater praise if the staircase had not turned out inconvenient and too steep; for it is a sure fact that it could have been made more gentle, as has been done in the time of Duke Cosimo, within the same amount of space and no more, in the new staircase made, opposite to that of Cronaca, by Giorgio Vasari, which is so gentle in ascent and so convenient, that going up it is almost like walking on the level. This has been the work of the aforesaid Lord Duke Cosimo, who, being a man of most happy genius and most profound judgment both in the government of his people and in all other things, grudges neither expense nor anything else in his desire to make all the fortifications and other buildings, both public and private, correspond to the greatness of his own mind, and not less beautiful than useful or less useful than beautiful.

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His Excellency, then, reflecting that the body of this Hall is the largest, the most magnificent, and the most beautiful in all Europe, has resolved to have it improved in such parts as are defective, and to have it made in every other part more ornate than any other structure in Italy, by the design and hand of Giorgio Vasari of Arezzo. And thus, the walls having been raised twelve braccia above their former height, in such a manner that the height from the pavement to the ceiling is thirty-two braccia, the roof-truss made by Cronaca to support the roof has been restored and replaced on high after a new arrangement; and the old ceiling, which was simple and commonplace, and by no means worthy of that Hall, has been remodelled with a system of compartments of great variety, rich in mouldings, full of carvings, and all overlaid with gold, together with thirty-nine painted panels, square, round, and octagonal, the greater number of which are each nine braccia in extent, and some even more, and all containing scenes painted in oils, with the largest figures seven or eight braccia high. In these stories, commencing with the very beginning, may be seen the rise, the honours, the victories, and the glorious deeds of the city and state of Florence, and in particular the wars of Pisa and Siena, together with an endless number of other things, which it would take too long to describe. And on each of the side walls there has been left a convenient space of sixty braccia, in each of which are to be painted three scenes in keeping with the ceiling and embracing the space of seven pictures on either side, which represent events from the wars of Pisa and Siena. These compartments on the walls are so large, that no greater spaces for the painting of historical pictures have ever been seen either by the ancients or by the moderns. And the said compartments are adorned by some vast stone ornaments which meet at the ends of the Hall, at one side of which, namely, the northern side, the Lord Duke has caused to be finished a work begun and carried nearly to completion by Baccio Bandinelli, that is, a façade filled with columns and pilasters and with niches containing statues of marble; which space is to serve as a public audience chamber, as will be related in the proper place. On the other side, opposite to this, there is to be, in a similar façade that is being made by the sculptor and architect Ammanati, a fountain to throw up water in the Hall, with a rich and most beautiful adornment of columns and statues of marble and bronze. Nor will I forbear to say that this Hall, in consequence of the roof having been raised twelve braccia, has gained not only height, but also an ample supply of windows, since, in addition to the others that are higher up, in each of those end walls are to be made three large windows, which will be over the level of a corridor that is to form a loggia within the Hall and to extend on one side over the work of Bandinelli, whence there will be revealed a most beautiful view of the whole Piazza. But of this Hall, and of the other improvements that have been or are being made in the Palace, there will be a longer account in another place. This only let me say at present, that if Cronaca and those other ingenious craftsmen who gave the design for the Hall could return to life, in my belief they would not recognize either the Palace, or the Hall, or any other thing that is there. The Hall, namely, that part which is rectangular, without counting the works of Bandinelli and Ammanati, is ninety braccia in length and thirty-eight braccia in breadth.

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But returning to Cronaca: in the last years of his life there entered into his head such a frenzy for the cause of Fra Girolamo Savonarola, that he would talk of nothing else but that. Living thus, in the end he died after a passing long illness, at the age of fifty-five, and was buried honourably in the Church of S. Ambrogio at Florence, in the year 1509; and after no long space of time the following epitaph was written for him by Messer Giovan Battista Strozzi:

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CRONACA
VIVO, E MILLE E MILLE ANNI E MILLE ANCORA,
MERCÈ DE' VIVI MIEI PALAZZI E TEMPI,
BELLA ROMA, VIVRÀ L' ALMA MIA FLORA.

Cronaca had a brother called Matteo, who gave himself to sculpture and worked under the sculptor Antonio Rossellino; but although he was a man of good and beautiful intelligence, a fine draughtsman, and well practised in working marble, he left no finished work, because, being snatched from the world by death at the age of nineteen, he was not able to accomplish that which was expected from him by all who knew him.

LIFE OF DOMENICO PULIGO

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PAINTER OF FLORENCE

It is a marvellous and almost incredible thing, that many followers of the art of painting, through continual practice and handling of colours, either by an instinct of nature or by the trick of a good manner, acquired without any draughtsmanship or grounding, carry their works to such thorough completion, and very often contrive to make them so good, that, although the craftsmen themselves may be none of the rarest, their pictures force the world to extol them and to hold them in supreme veneration. And it has been perceived in the past from many examples, and in many of our painters, that the most vivacious and perfect works are produced by those who have a beautiful manner from nature, although they must exercise it with continual study and labour; while this gift of nature has such power, that even if they neglect or abandon the studies of art, and pay attention to nothing save the mere practice of painting and of handling colours with a grace infused in them by nature, at the first glance their works have the appearance of displaying all the excellent and marvellous qualities that are wont to appear after a close inspection in the works of those masters whom we hold to be the best. And that this is true, is demonstrated to us in our own day by experience, from the works of Domenico Puligo, a painter of Florence; wherein what has been said above may be clearly recognized by one who has knowledge of the matters of art.



MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH SAINTS
(After the panel by Domenico Puligo ?).
Florence: S. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi)

Alinari

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While Ridolfo, the son of Domenico Ghirlandajo, was executing a number of works in painting at Florence, as will be related, he followed his father's habit of always keeping many young men painting in his workshop: which was the reason that not a few of them, through competing one with another, became very good masters, some at making portraits from life, some at working in fresco, others in distemper, and others at painting readily on cloth. Making these lads execute pictures, panels, and canvases, in the course of a few years Ridolfo, with great profit for himself, sent an endless number of these to England, to Germany, and to Spain. Baccio Gotti and Toto del Nunziata, disciples of Ridolfo, were summoned, one to France by King Francis, and the other to England by the King of that country, each of whom invited them after having seen some of their work. Two other disciples of the same master remained with him, working under him for many years, because, although they had many invitations into Spain and Hungary from merchants and others, they were never induced either by promises or by money to tear themselves away from the delights of their country, in which they had more work to do than they were able to execute. One of these two was Antonio del Ceraiuolo, a Florentine, who, having been many years with

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Lorenzo di Credi, had learnt from him, above all, to draw so well from nature, that with supreme facility he gave his portraits an extraordinary likeness to the life, although otherwise he was no great draughtsman. And I have seen some heads portrayed from life by his hand, which, although they have, for example, the nose crooked, one lip small and the other large, and other suchlike deformities, nevertheless resemble the life, through his having well caught the expression of the subject; whereas, on the other hand, many excellent masters have made pictures and portraits of absolute perfection with regard to art, but with no resemblance whatever to those that they are supposed to represent. And to tell the truth, he who executes portraits must contrive, without thinking of what is looked for in a perfect figure, to make them like those for whom they are intended. When portraits are like and also beautiful, then may they be called rare works, and their authors truly excellent craftsmen. This Antonio, then, besides many portraits, executed a number of panel-pictures in Florence; but for the sake of brevity I will make mention only of two. One of these, wherein he painted a Crucifixion, with S. Mary Magdalene and S. Francis, is in S. Jacopo tra Fossi, on the Canto degli Alberti; and in the other, which is in the Nunziata, is a S. Michael who is weighing souls.

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The other of the two aforesaid disciples was Domenico Puligo, who was more excellent in draughtsmanship and more pleasing and gracious in colouring than any of the others mentioned above. He, considering that his method of painting with softness, without overloading his works with colour or making them hard, but causing the distances to recede little by little as though veiled with a kind of mist, gave his pictures both relief and grace, and that although the outlines of the figures that he made were lost in such a way that his errors were concealed and hidden from view in the dark grounds into which the figures merged, nevertheless his colouring and the beautiful expressions of his heads made his works pleasing, always kept to the same method of working and to the same manner, which caused him to be held in esteem as long as he lived. But omitting to give an account of the pictures and portraits that he made while in the workshop of Ridolfo, some of which were sent abroad and some remained in the city, I shall speak only of those which he painted when he was rather the friend and rival of Ridolfo than his disciple, and of those that he executed when he was so much the friend of Andrea del Sarto, that nothing was more dear to him than to see that master in his workshop, in order to learn from him, showing him his works and asking his opinion of them, so as to avoid such errors and defects as those men often fall into who do not show their work to any other craftsman, but trust so much in their own judgment that they would rather incur the censure of all the world when those works are finished, than correct them by means of the suggestions of loving friends.

One of the first things that Domenico executed was a very beautiful picture of Our Lady for Messer Agnolo della Stufa, who has it in his Abbey of Capalona in the district of Arezzo, and holds it very dear for the great diligence of its execution and the beauty of its colouring. He painted another picture of Our Lady, no less beautiful than that one, for Messer Agnolo Niccolini, now Archbishop of Pisa and a Cardinal, who keeps it in his house on the Canto de' Pazzi in Florence; and likewise another, of equal size and excellence, which is now in the possession of Filippo dell' Antella, at Florence. In another, which is about three braccia in height, Domenico made a full-length Madonna with the Child between her knees, a little S. John, and another head; and this picture, which is held to be one of the best works that he executed, since there is no sweeter colouring to be seen, is at the present day in the possession of Messer Filippo Spini, Treasurer to the most Illustrious Prince of Florence, and a gentleman of magnificent spirit, who takes much delight in works of painting.

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Among other portraits that Domenico made from the life, which are all beautiful and also good likenesses, the most beautiful is the one which he painted of Monsignore Messer Piero Carnesecchi, at that time a marvellously handsome youth, for whom he also made some other pictures, all very beautiful and executed with much diligence. In like manner, he portrayed in a picture the Florentine Barbara, a famous and most lovely courtesan of that day, much beloved by many no less for her fine culture than for her beauty, and particularly because she was an excellent musician and sang divinely. But the best work that Domenico ever executed was a large picture wherein he made a life-size Madonna, with some angels and little boys, and a S. Bernard who is writing; which picture is now in the hands of Giovanni Gualberto del Giocondo, and of his brother Messer Niccolò, a Canon of S. Lorenzo in Florence.

The same master made many other pictures, which are dispersed among the houses of citizens, and in particular some wherein may be seen a half-length figure of Cleopatra, causing an asp to bite her on the breast, and others wherein is the Roman Lucretia killing herself with a dagger. There are also some very beautiful portraits from life and pictures by the same hand at the Porta a Pinti, in the house of Giulio Scali, a man whose judgment is as fine in the matters of our arts as it is in those of every other most noble and most honourable profession. Domenico executed for Francesco del Giocondo, in a panel for his chapel in the great tribune of the Church of the Servi at Florence, a S. Francis who is receiving the Stigmata; which work is very sweet and soft in colouring, and wrought with much diligence. In the Church of Cestello, round the Tabernacle of the Sacrament, he painted two angels in fresco, and on the panel of a chapel in the same church he made a Madonna with her Son in her arms, S. John the Baptist, S. Bernard, and other saints. And since it appeared to the monks of that place that he had acquitted himself very well in those works, they caused him to paint in a cloister of their Abbey of Settimo, without Florence, the Visions of Count Ugo, who built seven abbeys. And no long time after, Puligo painted, in a shrine at the corner of the Via Mozza da S. Catarina, a Madonna standing, with her Son in her arms marrying S. Catherine, and a figure of S. Peter Martyr. For a Company in the township of Anghiari he executed a Deposition from the Cross, which may be numbered among his best

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works.

But since it was his profession to attend rather to pictures of Our Lady, portraits, and other heads, than to great works, he gave up almost all his time to such things. Now if he had devoted himself not so much to the pleasures of the world, as he did, and more to the labours of art, there is no doubt that he would have made great proficiencie in painting, and especially as Andrea del Sarto, who was much his friend, assisted him on many occasions both with advice and with drawings; for which reason many of his works reveal a draughtsmanship as fine as the good and beautiful manner of the colouring. But the circumstance that Domenico was unwilling to endure much fatigue, and accustomed to labour rather in order to get through work and make money than for the sake of fame, prevented him from reaching a greater height. And thus, associating with gay spirits and lovers of good cheer, and with musicians and women, he died at the age of fifty-two, in the year 1527, in the pursuit of a love-affair, having caught the plague at the house of his mistress.

Colour was handled by him in so good and harmonious a manner, that it is for that reason, rather than for any other, that he deserves praise. Among his disciples was Domenico Beceri of Florence, who, giving a high finish to his colouring, executed his works in an excellent manner.

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FOOTNOTES:

- [1] Pietro Perugino.
- [2] This seems to be an error for Calistus III.
- [3] The text says "Messer Bart...."
- [4] Exchange or Bank.
- [5] It is now generally accepted that these two men are one, under the name of Lazzaro Bastiani.
- [6] This master has been identified with Il Bassiti, under the name of Basaiti.
- [7] See note on p. 57, Vol. I.
- [8] See note on p. 57, Vol. I.
- [9] A judicial court, the members of which sat in rotation.
- [10] Two accurate literal translations of the same original must often coincide; and in dealing with this beautiful Life, the translator has had to take the risk either of seeming to copy the almost perfect rendering of Mr. H. P. Horne, or of introducing unsatisfactory variants for mere variety's sake. Having rejected the latter course, he feels doubly bound to record once more his deep obligation to Mr. Horne's example.
- [11] This name is missing in the text.
- [12] Signet-office, for the sealing of Papal Bulls and other papers of the Papal Court.
- [13] See note on p. 57, Vol. I.
- [14] The word "calavano" has been substituted here for the "cavavano" of the text, which gives no sense.
- [15] These numbers are missing from the text.
- [16] The word "utilmente" is substituted here for the "ultimamente" of the text, which makes no sense.
- [17] The words of the text, "un quadro d' una spera," are a little obscure; but the translator has been strengthened in his belief that his rendering is correct by seeing a little picture, painted on a mirror, and numbered 7697, in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The subject of this picture, which the translator was enabled to see by the courtesy of Mr. B. S. Long, of the Department of Paintings, is the same as that of the work mentioned by Vasari, and it may be a copy.
- [18] Florentine puff-pastry.
- [19] Don Vincenzo Borghini.
- [20] Filippo Brunelleschi.
- [21] The name given in the text is Domenico.
- [22] A friable volcanic tufa.
- [23] In the Life of Pinturicchio, Vasari says that this commission was given to Pinturicchio by Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini, who afterwards became Pope Pius III.
- [24] The text reads Palazzo, which is obviously an error for Papa.
- [25] This seems to be an error for Bartolommeo.
- [26] Villa Madama.
- [27] The use of this word, though perhaps too modern, seems to the translator to be the only way to preserve the play of words in the text.
- [28] Earnest-money.
- [29] Room in which the beans used in voting for the election of magistrates were counted.
- [30] Office of those who had charge of the Specchio, the book in which were inscribed the names of such citizens as were in arrears with their taxes.

Transcriber's note: Bold text is marked with =."

Obvious printer's errors have been corrected, all other inconsistencies are as in the original. The author's spelling has been maintained.

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