

Fra Bartolommeo

Leader Scott (Re-Edited By Horace Shipp And Flora Kendrick)

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by Leader Scott (Re-Edited By Horace Shipp And Flora Kendrick)

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By
Leader Scott

Author Of "A Nook In The Apennines"

Re-Edited By
Horace Shipp And Flora Kendrick, A.R.B.S.

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FOREWORD

Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael: the three great names of the noblest period of the Renaissance take our minds from the host of fine artists who worked alongside them. Nevertheless beside these giants a whole host of exquisite artists have place, and not least among them the three painters with whom Mr. Leader Scott has dealt in these pages. Fra Bartolommeo linking up with the religious art of the preceding period, with that of Masaccio, of Piero de Cosimo, his senior student in the studio of Cosimo Roselli, and at last with that of the definitely "modern" painters of the Renaissance, Raphael, Leonardo and Michelangelo himself, is a transition painter in this supreme period. Technique and the work of hand and brain are rapidly taking the place of inspiration and the desire to convey a message. The aesthetic sensation is becoming an end in itself. The scientific painters, perfecting their studies of anatomy and of perspective, having a conscious mastery over their tools and their mediums, are taking the place of such men as Fra Angelico.

As a painter at this end of a period of transition--a painter whose spiritual leanings would undoubtedly have been with the earlier men, but whose period was too strong for him--Fra Bartolommeo is of particular interest; and Albertinelli, for all the fiery surface difference of his outlook is too closely bound by the ties of his friendship for the Frate to have any other viewpoint.

Andrea del Sarto presents yet another phenomenon: that of the artist endowed with all the powers of craftsmanship yet serving an end neither basically spiritual nor basically aesthetic, but definitely professional. We have George Vasari's word for it; and Vasari's blame upon the extravagant and too-well-beloved Lucrezia. To-day we are so accustomed to the idea of the professional attitude to art that we can accept it in Andrea without concern. Not that other and earlier artists were unconcerned with the aspect of payments. The history of Italian art is full of quarrels and bickerings about prices, the calling in of referees to decide between patron and painter, demands and refusals of payment. Even the unworldly Fra Bartolommeo was the centre of such

quarrels, and although his vow of poverty forbade him to receive money for his work, the order to which he belonged stood out firmly for the _scudi_ which the Frate's pictures brought them. In justice to Andrea it must be added that this was not the only motive for his activities; it was not without cause that the men of his time called him "_senza errori_," the faultless painter; and the production of a vast quantity of his work rather than good prices for individual pictures made his art pay to the extent it did. A pot-boiler in masterpieces, his works have place in every gallery of importance, and he himself stands very close to the three greatest; men of the Renaissance.

Both Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli are little known in this country. Practically nothing has been written about them and very few of their works are in either public galleries or private collections. It is in Italy, of course, that one must study their originals, although the great collections usually include one or two. Most interesting from the viewpoint of the study of art is the evolution of the work of the artist-monk as he came under the influence of the more dramatic modern and frankly sensational work of Raphael, of the Venetians and of Michelangelo. In this case (many will say in that of the art of the world) this tendency detracted rather than helped the work. The draperies, the dramatic poses, the artistic sensation arrests the mind at the surface of the picture. It is indeed strange that this devout churchman should have succumbed to the temptation, and there are moments when one suspects that his somewhat spectacular pietism disguised the spirit of one whose mind had little to do with the mysticism of the mediaeval church. Or perhaps it was that the strange friendship between him and Albertinelli, the man of the cloister and the man of the world, effected some alchemy in the mind of each. The story of that lifelong friendship, strong enough to overcome the difficulties of a definite partnership between the strict life of the monastery and the busy life of the _bottega_, is one of the most fascinating in art history.

Mr. Leader Scott has in all three lives the opportunity for fascinating studies, and his book presents them to us with much of the flavour of the period in which they lived. Perhaps to-day we should incline to modify his acceptance of the Vasari attitude to Lucrezia, especially since he himself tends to withdraw the charges against her, but leaves her as the villainess of the piece upon very little evidence. The inclusion of a chapter upon Ghirlandajo, treated merely as a follower of Fra Bartolommeo, scarcely does justice in modern eyes to this fine artist, whose own day and generation did him such honour and paid him so well. But the author's general conclusions as to the place in art and the significance of the lives of the three painters with whom he is chiefly concerned remains unchallenged, and we have in the volume a necessary study to place alongside those of Leonardo, of Michelangelo and of Raphael for an understanding of the culmination of the Renaissance in Italy.

HORACE SHIPP.

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FRA BARTOLOMMEO.

CHAPTER I.

THOUGHTS ON THE RENAISSANCE.

It seems to be a law of nature that progress, as well as time, should be marked by periods of alternate light and darkness--day and night.

This law is nowhere more apparent than in the history of Art. Three times has the world been illuminated by the full brilliance of Art, and three times has a corresponding period of darkness ensued.

The first day dawned in Egypt and Assyria, and its works lie buried in the tombs of prehistoric Pharaohs and Ninevite kings. The second day the sun rose on the shores of many-isled Greece, and shed its rays over Etruria and Rome, and ere it set, temples and palaces were flooded with beauty. The gods had taken human form, and were come to dwell with men.

The third day arising in Italy, lit up the whole western world with the glow of colour and fervour, and its fading rays light us yet.

The first period was that of mythic art; the world like a child wondering at all around tried to express in myths the truths it could not comprehend.

The second was pagan art which satisfies itself that in expressing the perfection of humanity, it unfolds divinity. The third era of Christian art, conscious that the divine lies beyond the human, fails in aspiring to express infinitude.

Tracing one of these periods from its rise, how truly this similitude of the dawn of day is carried out. See at the first streak of light how dim, stiff, and soulless all things appear! Trees and objects bear precisely the relation to their own appearance in broad daylight as the wooden Madonnas of the Byzantine school do to those of Raphael.

Next, when the sun--the true light--first appears, how it bathes the sea and the hills in an ethereal glory not their own! What fair liquid tints of blue, and rose, and glorious gold! This period which, in art, began with Giotto and ended with Botticelli, culminated in Fra Angelico, who flooded the world of painting with a heavenly spiritualism not material, and gave his dreams of heaven the colours of the first pure rays of sunshine.

But as the sun rises, nature takes her real tints gradually. We see every thing in its own colour; the gold and the rose has faded away with the truer light, and a stern realism takes its place. The human form must be expressed, in all its solidity and truth, not only in its outward semblance, but the hidden soul must be seen through the veil of flesh. And in this lies the reason of the decline; only to a few great masters it was given to reveal spirituality in humanity--the others could only emulate form and colour, and failed.

It is impossible to contemplate art apart from religion; as truly as the celestial sun is the revealer of form, so surely is the heavenly light of religion the first inspirer of art.

Where would the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Etruscan paintings and sculptures have been but for the veneration of the mystic gods of the dead, which both prompted and preserved them?

What would Greek sculpture have been without the deified personifications of the mysterious powers of nature which inspired it? and it is the fact of the pagan religion being both sensuous and realistic which explains the perfection of Greek art. The highest ideal being so low as not to soar beyond the greatest perfection of humanity,

was thus within the grasp of the artist to express. Given a manly figure with the fullest development of strength; a female one showing the greatest perfection of form; and a noble man whose features express dignity and mental power;--the ideal of a Hercules, a Venus, and a Jupiter is fully expressed, and the pagan mind satisfied. The spirit of admirers was moved more by beauty of form than by its hidden significance. In the great Venus, one recognises the woman before feeling the goddess.

As with their sculpture, without doubt it was also with painting. Mr. Symonds, in his *“Renaissance of the Fine Arts”*, speaks of the Greek revival as entirely an age of sculpture; but the solitary glance into the more perishable art of painting among the Greeks, to be seen at Cortona, reveals the exquisite perfection to which this branch was also brought. It is a painting in encaustic, and has been used as a door for his oven by the contadino who dug it up--yet it remains a marvel of genius. The subject is a female head--a muse, or perhaps only a portrait; the delicacy and mellowness of the flesh tints equal those of Raphael or Leonardo, and a lock of hair lying across her breast is so exquisitely painted that it seems to move with her breath. The features are of the large-eyed regular Greek type, womanly dignity is in every line, but it is an essentially pagan face--the Christian soul has never dawned in those eyes! With this before us, we cannot doubt that Greek art found its expression as much in colour as in form and that the same religion inspired both.

In an equal degree Renaissance Art has its roots in Christianity; but the religion is deeper and greater, and has left art behind.

The early Christians must have felt this when they expressed everything in symbols, for these are merely suggestive, and allow the imagination full play around and beyond them; they are mere stepping-stones to the ideal which exists but is as yet inexpressible.

"Myths and symbols always mark the dawn of a religion, incarnation and realism its full growth." So after a time when the first vague wonder and ecstasy are over, symbols no longer content people; they want to bring religion home to them in a more tangible form, to humanize it, in fact. From this want it arises that nature next to religion inspires art, and finally takes its place. For it follows as a matter of course that as art is a realistic interpreter of the spiritual, so it is more easy to follow nature than spirituality, nature being the outward or realistic expression of the mind of God.

It was a saying of Buffalmacco, who was *“not”* one of the most devout painters of the fourteenth century, "Do not let us think of anything but to cover our walls with saints, and out of disrespect to the demons to make men more devout." And Savonarola, though he has been accused of being one of the causes of the decline, thus upheld the sacred influences of art; when he exclaimed in one of his fervent bursts of eloquence, "You see that Saint there in the Church and say, 'I will live a good life and be like him.'" If these were the feelings of the least devout and the religious fanatic, how hallowed must the influences of Christian painting have been to the intermediate ranks. Mr. Symonds beautifully expresses the tendency of that time: "The eyes of the worshipper should no longer have a mere stock or stone to contemplate; his imagination should be helped by the dogmatic presentation of the scenes of sacred history, and his devotion quickened by lively images of the passion of our Lord.... The body and

soul moreover should be reconciled, and God's likeness should be once more acknowledged in the features and limbs of men." [Footnote: Symonds' *Renaissance of the Fine Arts* , chap. i. p. 11.]

The school of Giotto was the first to feel this need of the soul. He, taking his ideas from nature, clothed the soul in a thin veil; the Italians call his school that of poetic art; it reached sentiment and poetry, but did not pass them. Yet the thirteenth century was sublime for the expression of the idea; one only has to study the intense meaning in the works of Giotto, and Orcagna, Duccio, and the Lorenzetti of Siena to perceive this. The fourteenth century, on the contrary, rendered itself glorious for manifestation of form. "Artists thought the veil of ideality a poor thing, and wished to give the solidity of the body to the soul; they stole every secret from nature; the senses were content, but not sentiment." [Footnote: *Purismo nell' Arte* , da Cesare Guasti.]

The artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, of whom we have to speak, blended the two schools, and became perfection as far as they went. Michelangelo drew more from the vigorous thirteenth-century masters, and Raphael from the more sensuous followers of Masaccio and Lippi. The former tried to put the Christian soul into his works, but its infinite depth was unattainable. As his many unfinished works prove, he always felt some great overwhelming meaning in his inmost soul, which all his passionate artistic yearnings were inadequate to express. Raphael tried to bring realism into religion through painting, and to give us the scenes of our Lord's and the Apostles' lives in such a humanized aspect, that we should feel ourselves of his nature. But the incarnation of religion in art defeated its own ends; sensuousness was introduced in place of the calm, unearthly spirituality of the earlier masters. Compare the cartoon of S. Paul preaching at Athens, in which he has all the majesty of a Casar in the Forum, with the lowly spirit of the Apostle's life! In truth, Raphael failed to approach nearer to sublimity than Fra Angelico, with all his faulty drawing but pure spirit.

After him, artists loved form and colour for themselves rather than for the spiritual meaning. Miss Owen [Footnote: *Art Schools of Medieval Christendom* , edited by Ruskin.] accuses Raphael of having rendered Art pagan, but this seems blaming him for the weakness of his followers, who took for their type his works rather than his ideal. The causes of the decline were many, and are not centred in one man. As long as Religion slumbered in monasticism and dogma, Art seizing on the human parts, such as the maternity of the Madonna, the personifications of saints who had lived in the world, was its adequate exponent. The religion awakened by the aesthetic S. Francis, who loved all kinds of beauty, was of the kind to be fed by pictures. But when Savonarola had aroused the fervour of the nation to its highest point, when beauty was nothing, the world nothing, in comparison to the infinity of God;--then art, finding itself powerless to express this overwhelming infinity, fell back on more earthly founts of inspiration, the classics and the poets.

Lorenzo de' Medici and Pope Nicholas V. had fully as much to do with the decline as Savonarola. The Pope in Rome, and Lorenzo in Florence, led art to the verge of paganism; Savonarola would have kept it on the confines of purism; it was divided and fell, passing through the various steps of decadence, the mannerists and the eclectics, to rise again in this nineteenth century with what is after all its true aim,

the interpretation of nature, and the illustration of the poetry of a nation.

But with the decadence we have happily nothing to do; the artists of whom we speak first, Fra Bartolommeo and Albertinelli, belong to the culmination of art on its rising side, while Andrea del Sarto stands as near to the greatest artists on the other side, and is the last of the group before the decline. On Fra Bartolommeo the spirituality of Fra Angelico still lingered, while the perfection of Raphael illumined him. Andrea del Sarto, on the other side, had gathered into his hands the gleams of genius from all the great artists who were his elder contemporaries, and so blending them as to form seemingly a style of his own, distinct from any, has left on our walls and in our galleries hundreds of masterpieces of colour, as gay and varied as the tints the orientals weave into their wondrous fabrics.

It might be said with truth that Fra Bartolommeo painted for the soul, and Andrea del Sarto for the eye.

CHAPTER II.

THE "BOTTEGA" OF COSIMO ROSELLI. A.D. 1475-1486.

Amongst the thousand arteries in which the life blood of the Renaissance coursed in all its fulness, none were so busy or so important as the "botteghe" of the artists. In these the genius of the great masters, the Pleiades of stars at the culmination of art in Florence, was either tenderly nursed, or sharply pruned into vigour by struggling against discouragement and envy. In these the spirit of awakened devotion found an outlet, in altarpieces and designs for church frescoes which were to influence thousands. Here the spirit of poetry, brooding in the mysterious lines of Dante, or echoing from past ages in the myths of the Greeks, took form and glowed on the walls in mighty cartoons to be made imperishable in fresco. Here the spirit of luxury was satisfied by beautiful designs for ornaments, dress stuffs, tapestries, vases and "cassoni," &c., which brought beauty into every life, and made each house a poem. The soul, the mind, and the body, could alike be supplied at those fountains of the beautiful, the artshops or schools.

Whilst Michelangelo as a youth was drawing from the cartoons of the Sassetti chapel in the school of Domenico Ghirlandajo, Cosimo Roselli was just receiving as a pupil a boy only a little behind him in genius. A small, delicate-faced, spiritual-eyed boy of nine years, known as Baccio della Porta, who came with a roll of drawings under his arm and high hopes in his soul, no doubt trotting along manfully beside Cosimo's old friend, Benedetto da Majano, the sculptor, who had recommended his being placed in the studio.

By the table given in the note [Footnote: Pietro, a Genoese, came in 1400 to the parish of S. Michele, at Montecucciolli in Mugello; he was a peasant, and had a son Jacopo, who was father of Paolo, the muleteer; and three other sons, Bartolo, Giusto, and Jacopo, who had a _podere_ at Soffignano, near Prato. Paolo married first Bartolommea,

daughter of Zanobi di Gallone, by whom he had a son, Bartolommeo, known as Baccio della Porta, born 1475. The first wife dying, Paolo married Andrea di Michaelè di Cenni, who had four sons, Piero, Domenico, Michele, and Francesco; only Piero lived to grow up, and he became a priest. [_Favoured by Sig. Milanese._] it will be seen that Baccio was the son of Paolo, a muleteer, which no doubt was a profitable trade in those days when the country roads were mere mule-tracks, and the traffic between different towns was carried on almost entirely by horses and mulepacks. There is some doubt as to the place of Baccio's birth, which occurred in 1475. Vasari gives it as Savignano near Prato; Crowe and Cavalcaselle [Footnote: Vol. iii. chap. xiii. p. 427.] assert it was Suffignano, near Florence, where they say Paolo's brothers, Jacopo and Giusto, were contadini or peasants.

But on consulting the post-office authorities we find no place called Suffignano near Florence; it must therefore have been a village near Prato called Soffignano, which from similarity of sound Vasari confused with the larger place, Savignano. This is the more probable, for Rosini asserts that "Benedetto da Majano, _who had bought a podere near Prato_, knew him and took him into his affections, and by his means placed him with Cosimo." [Footnote: Rosini, _Storia della Pittura_, chap. xvii. p. 47.]

It is certainly probable that Paolo's wife lived with his family during his wanderings, because it is the true Italian custom, and Baccio was in that case born in his uncle's house; for it is not till 1480 that we find Paolo retired from trade and set up in a house of his own in Florence at the gate of S. Pier Gattolini, now the Porta Romana.

The friendship begun at Prato must have been continued in Florence, for in 1480 Paolo not only owned that house at the gate of S. Pier Gattolini, but was the proud possessor of a podere at Brozzi, which yielded six barrels of wine. He is a merciful man too, for among his possessions are two mules _disutili e vecchi_ (old and useless). At this time Baccio was six years old, and his three stepbrothers quite babies. [Footnote: Archives of Florence, Portate al Castato, 1480-1.] Paolo, as well as his mules, had earned his repose, being certainly old, if not useless, and was anxious for his little sons to be placed out in the world as early as possible. Thus it came that in 1484 Baccio was taken away from his brothers, who played under the shadow of the old gateway, and was put to do the drudgery of the apprenticeship to art. He had to grind colours for Cosimo--who, as we know, used a great deal of colour, having dazzled the eyes of the Pope with the brilliancy of his blue and gold in the Sistine Chapel some years before--he had to sweep out the studio, no doubt assisted by Mariotto Albertinelli, a boy of his own age, and to run errands, carrying designs for inspection to expectant brides who wanted the chests painted to hold their wedding clothes, or doing the messenger between his master and the nuns of S. Ambrogio, who paid Cosimo their gold florins by the hand of the boy in 1484 and 1485. [Footnote: Note to Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. iii. chap. xiii. p. 429.]

Whether his age made him a more acceptable means of communication with the nuns, or whether Pier di Cosimo, the elder pupil, already displayed his hatred of womankind, I know not; perhaps the boy already showed that innate devotion and especial fitness for sanctity which marks his entire art career. Truly everything in his youthful life combined to lead his thoughts to higher things. The first fresco at which he assisted was in this solemn cloister of St. Ambrogio, and the subject

the Miracle of the Sacrament; the saintly air of the place, the calm faces of the white-hooded nuns, must all have had an influence in inspiring his youthful mind with the spirit of devotion.

Baccio's fellow-students were not many, but they formed an interesting group. Pier di Cosimo was the head man, and eldest of all; with such ties was he bound to his master and godfather, that he was known better as Cosimo's Peter than by his own patronymic of Chimenti. He was at this time twenty-two years of age, his registry in the Florentine Guild proves his birth in 1462, as the son of Lorenzo, son of Piero, son of Antonio, Chimenti.

Being the eldest of five brothers, it is difficult to conceive how a member of a large family grew up developing such eccentricities as are usually the fruit of isolation.

In the studio Piero was industrious and steady, working earnestly, whether he was assisting his master's designs or carrying out his own fancies of monsters, old myths, and classic fairy stories. No doubt the two boys, Mariotto and Baccio, found little companionship in this abstracted young man always dreaming over his own ideas. If they told him an anecdote, he would look up vacantly at the end not having heard a word; at other times every little noise or burst of laughter would annoy him, and he would be immoderately angry with the flies and mosquitos.

Piero had already been to Rome, and had assisted Cosimo in his fresco of Christ preaching on Lake Tiberias; indeed most judges thought his landscape the best part of that work, and the talent he showed obtained him several commissions. He took the portraits of Virginio Orsini, Ruberto Sanseverino and Duke Valentino, son of Pope Alessandro VI. He was much esteemed as a portrait painter also in Florence, and from his love of classical subjects, and extreme finish of execution, he ranked as one of the best painters of "cassoni," or bridal-linen chests.

This fashion excited the indignation of Savonarola, who in one of his sermons exclaimed, "Do not let your daughters prepare their 'corredo' (trousseau) in a chest with pagan paintings; is it right for a Christian spouse to be familiar with Venus before the Virgin, or Mars before the saints?"

Thus Piero being a finished painter, was often Cosimo Roselli's substitute in the instruction of the two boys, for Cosimo having come home from Rome with some money, lived at his ease; but still continued to paint frescoes in company with Piero.

Another pupil was Andrea di Cosimo, whose peculiar branch of art was that of the grotesque. He no doubt drew designs for friezes and fountains, for architraves and door mouldings, in which distorted faces look out from all kinds of writhing scrolls; and lizards, dragons, snakes, and creeping plants, mingle according to the artist's fancy. Andrea was however often employed in more serious work, as the records of the Servite Convent prove, for they contain the note of payment to him, in 1510, for the curtains of the altarpiece which Filippino Lippi had painted. These curtains were till lately attributed to Andrea del Sarto, or Francia Bigio.

This is the Andrea Feltrini mentioned by Crowe and Cavalcaselle as

working in the cloister of the Servi with Andrea del Sarto and Francia Bigio between 1509 and 1514.[Footnote: *History of Painting*, vol. iii. chap. xvii. p. 546.]

But Baccio's dearest friend in the studio was a boy nearly his own age, Mariotto Albertinelli, son of Biagio di Bindo, born October 13, 1474. He had experienced the common lot of young artists in those days, and had been apprenticed to a gold-beater, but preferred the profession of painter. From the first these two lads, being thrown almost entirely together in the work of the studio, formed one of those pure, lasting friendships, of which so many exist in the annals of art, and so few in the material world. They helped each other in the drudgery, and enjoyed their higher studies together; but they did not draw all their inspirations from the over-coloured works of Cosimo--although Mariotto once reproduced his red-winged cherubim in after life [Footnote: In the 'Trinity' in the Belle Arti, Florence.]--nor from the hard and laboured myths of Piero.

They went to higher founts, for scarcely a trace of these early influences are to be found in their paintings. Vasari says they studied the *Cose di Leonardo*. The great artist had at this time left the studio of Verocchio, and was fast rising into fame in Florence, so it is most probable that two youths with strong artistic tendencies would study, not only the sketches, but also the precepts, of the great man. Besides this there were two national art-schools open to students in Florence: these were the frescoes of Masaccio and Lippi in the Carmine, and the Medicean garden in the Via Cavours, then called Via Larga.

CHAPTER III.

THE GARDEN AND THE CLOISTER. A.D. 1487-1495.

The two boys left the studio of Cosimo Roselli at an early age. There had been trouble in the house of Paolo the ex-muleteer, and Baccio's already serious mind had been awed by the sight of death. His little brother, Domenico, died in 1486 at seven years of age. His father, Paolo, died in 1487; thus Baccio, at the age of twelve or thirteen, was left the head of the family, and the supporter of his stepmother and her babes. This may account for his leaving Cosimo so young, and setting up his studio with Mariotto as his companion, in his own house at the gate of S. Pier Gattolini; this partnership began presumably about the year 1490.

Conscious that they were not perfected by Cosimo's teaching, they both

set themselves to undergo a strict discipline in art, and, friends as they were, their paths began to diverge from this point. Their natural tastes led them to opposite schools--Baccio to the sacred shrine of art in the shadowed church, Mariotto to the greenery and sunshine of the Medici garden, where beauty of nature and classic treasures were heaped in profusion; whose loggie [Footnote: Arched colonnades.] glowed with the finest forms of Greek sculpture, resuscitated from the tombs of ages to inspire newer artists to perfection, but alas! also to debase the aim of purely Christian art.

Baccio's calm devotional mind no doubt disliked the turmoil of this garden, crowded with spirited youths; the tone of pagan art was not in accordance with his ideal, and so he learned from Masaccio and Lippi that love of true form and harmonious composition, which he perfected afterwards by a close study of Leonardo da Vinci, whose principles of chiaroscuro he seems to have completely carried out. With this training he rose to such great celebrity even in his early manhood, that Rosini [Footnote: Rosini, Storia della Pittura, chap. xvii. p. 48.] calls him "the star of the Florentine school in Leonardo and Michelangelo's absence," and he attained a grandeur almost equal to the latter, in the S. Mark and SS. Peter and Paul of his later years.

Meanwhile Mariotto was revelling in the Eden of art, drawing daily beneath the Loggie--where the orange-trees grew close to the pillars--from the exquisite statues and "torsi," peopling the shades with white forms, or copying cartoons by the older masters, which hung against the walls.

The custode of all these treasures was Bertoldo, an old sculptor, who boasted of having been the scholar of Donatello, and also heir to his art possessions. He could also point to the bronze pulpits of San Lorenzo, which he finished, as proof of his having inherited a portion of his master's spirit. Bertoldo, having doubtless rendered to Duke Cosimo's keeping his designs by Donatello, which were preserved in the garden, obtained the post of instructor there; but his age may have prevented his keeping perfect order, and the younger spirits overpowered him. There were Michelangelo, with all the youthful power of passion and force which he afterwards imparted to his works, and the audacious Torrigiano, with his fierce voice, huge bulk, and knitted brows, who was himself a discord like the serpent in Eden. Easily offended, he was prompt in offering outrage. Did any other young man show talent or surpass him, revenge deep and mean as that of Bandinelli to Michelangelo was sure to follow, the envied work being spoiled in his rage. Then there were the fun-loving Francesco Granacci, and the witty Rustici, as full of boyish pranks as they were of genius--what could one old man do among so many?--and now comes the impetuous Mariotto to add one more unruly member to his class.

How well one can imagine the young men--in loose blouses confined at the waist, or in buff jerkins and close-fitting hose, with jaunty cloaks or doublets, and little red or black caps, set on flowing locks cut square in front--passing beneath the shadows of the arches among the dim statues, or crossing the garden in the sunshine amid the orange-trees, under the splendid blue Italian skies.

We can see them painting, modelling, or drawing large cartoons in charcoal, while old Bertoldo passes from easel to easel, criticising and fault-finding, detailing for the hundredth time Donatello's maxims, and moving on, heedless or deaf to the irreverent jokes of his ungrateful pupils.

Then, like a vision of power and grandeur, Lorenzo il Magnifico enters with a group of his classic friends. Politian and the brothers Pulci admire again the ancient sculptures which are to them as illustrations of their readings, and Lorenzo notes the works of all the students who were destined to contribute to the glory of the many Medicean palaces. How the burly Torrigiano's heart burns within him when the Duke praises his compeer's works!

Sometimes Madonna Alfonsina, the mother of Lorenzo, and widow of Piero, walked here, and she also took an interest in the studies of the youths. Mariotto especially attracted her by his talent and zeal. She commissioned him to paint some pictures for her to send as a present to her own family, the Orsini of Rome. These works, of which the subjects are not known, passed afterwards into the possession of Casar Borgia. She also sat to Mariotto for her own portrait. It is easily imagined how elated the excitable youth became at this notice from the mother of the magnificent Lorenzo. He had dreams of making a greater name than even his master, Cosimo, whose handiwork was in the Sistine; of excelling Michelangelo, of whose genius the world was beginning to talk; and, as adhering to a party was the only way to success in those days, he became a strong Pallesco, [Footnote: The Palleschi were the partizans of the Medici, so called because they took as their standard the Palle, or Balls, the arms of that family.] trusting wholly in the favour of Madonna Alfonsina.

He even absented himself almost constantly from the studio, which Baccio shared with him, and worked at the Medici palace, [Footnote: This break is signified by Baldinucci, *_Opere_*, vol. iv. p. 84, and by Vasari, who says that after the exile of Piero he returned to Baccio.] but, alas! in 1494 this brilliant aspect of his fortunes changed.

Lorenzo being dead, Piero de' Medici was banished, the great palace fell into the hands of the republican Signoria, and all the painters were left without patronage.

Mariotto, very much cast down, bethought himself of a friend who never failed him, and whose love was not affected by party; and, returning to the house of Baccio, he set to work, most likely in a renewed spirit of confidence in the comrade who stood by him when the princes in whom he trusted failed him. Whatever his frame of mind, he began now to study earnestly the works of Baccio, who, while he was seeking patronage in the palace, had been purifying his genius in the Church. Mariotto imbibed more and more of Baccio's style, till their works so much resembled one another that indifferent judges could scarcely distinguish them apart. It would be interesting if we could see those early pictures done for Madonna Alfonsina, and compare them with the style formed after this second adherence to Fra Bartolommeo. What his manner afterwards became we have a proof in the *_Salutation_* (1503), in which there is grand simplicity of motive combined with the most extreme richness of execution and fullest harmony of colour.

This second union between the friends could not have been so satisfactory to either as the first pure boyish love, when they had been full of youthful hopes, and felt their hearts expand with the dreams and visions of genius. Now instead of the mere differences between two styles of art, there were differences which much more seriously affected their characters; they were daily sundering, one going slowly towards the cloister, the other to the world. Albertinelli had gained a greater love of worldly success and luxury.

Baccio's mind, always attuned to devotion, was now intensified by family sorrows, which no doubt brought him nearer to heaven. Thus softened, he had the more readily received the seeds of faith which Savonarola scattered broadcast.

Yet though every word of the one was a wound to the other, this strangely assorted pair of friends did not part. Rosini well defined their union as "a knot which binds more strongly by pulling contrary ways." [Footnote: *Storia della Pittura*, chap. xvii. p. 48]

So when Albertinelli, while colouring with zeal a design of Baccio's, would inveigh against all monks, the Dominicans in particular, and Savonarola especially, his friend would argue that the inspired prophet was not an enemy, but a purifier and reformer of art. Probably Baccio was at the Duomo on that Sunday in Lent, 1495, and reported to Mariotto those wondrous words of Savonarola, that "Beauty ought never to be taken apart from the true and good," and how, after quoting the same sentiments from Socrates and Plato, the preacher went on to say, "True beauty is neither in form nor colour, but in light. God is light, and His creatures are the more lovely as they approach the nearer to Him in beauty. And the body is the more beautiful according to the purity of the soul within it." Certain it is that this divine light lived ever after in the paintings of Fra Bartolommeo.

He frequented the cloisters of San Marco, where even Lorenzo de' Medici used to go and hear the prior expound Christianity near the rose tree. There were Lorenzo di Credi and Sandro Botticelli, both middle-aged men, of a high standing as artists; there were the Delia Robbias, father and son, and several others. Sandro, while listening, must have taken in the inspired words with the scent and beauty of the roses, whose spirit he gives in so many of his paintings.

Young Baccio, on the contrary, feasted his eyes on the speaker's face, till the very soul within it was imprinted on his mind, from whence he reproduced it in that marvellous likeness, the year after the martyrdom of Savonarola.

This is the earliest known work of Fra Bartolommeo, and is a faithful portrait; the deep-sunk eye-socket, and eye like an internal fire, showing the preacher's powerful mind; the prominent aquiline nose and dilating vehement nostril bespeaking his earnestness and decision; the large full mouth alone shows the timorousness which none but himself knew of, so overpowered was it by his excitable spirit. The handling is Baccio's own able style, but Sig. Cavalcaselle thinks the influences of Cosimo Roselli are apparent in the low tone and clouded translucent colour; he signed it "Hieronymi Ferrariensis, a Deo missi propheta effigies," a legend which expresses the more than reverence which Baccio cherished for the preacher. This portrait has only lately been identified by its present possessor, Sig. Ermolao Rubieri, who discovered the legend under a coat of paint. Its vicissitudes are traceable from the time when Sig. Averardo (or, as Vasari calls him, Alamanno) Salviati brought it back from Ferrara, where no doubt it had been in the possession of Savonarola's family. Salviati gave it to the convent of San Vincenzo at Prato, from which place Sig. Rubieri purchased it in 1810. The likeness of the reformer in the Belle Arti of Florence has been supposed to be this one, but it is more likely to be the one done by Fra Bartolommeo at Pian di Mugnone in after years, when he drew the friar as S. Peter Martyr, with the wound on his head.

SAN MARCO.
A.D. 1496-1500.

Padre Marchese, himself a Dominican, speaks thus of his convent:--"San Marco has within its walls the Renaissance, a compendium in two artists. Fra Angelico, the painter of the ideal, Fra Bartolommeo, of form. The first closes the antique Tuscan school. He who has seen Fra Angelico, has seen also Giotto, Cimabue, &c. The second represents the modern school. In him are almost comprised Masaccio, Lorenzo di Credi, Leonardo, Buonarroti, and Andrea del Sarto."

The first, Fra Angelico, "sets himself to contemplate in God the fount and architype of the beautiful, and, as much as is possible to mortal hands, reproduces and stamps it in those works which a sensual mind cannot understand, but which to the heavenly soul speak an eloquent language. Fra Bartolommeo, with more analysis, works thoughtfully ... he ascends from the effect to the cause, and in created things contemplates a reflection of spiritual beauty."

It is true the Dominican order has been as great a patron of arts as the Franciscan of literature. It united with Niccolo Pisano to give form to national architecture. It had sculptors, miniaturists, and glass painters. As a building San Marco has been a shrine of art; since the time that Michelozzi, with the assistance of the Medici, built the convent for Sant' Antonino, and Fra Angelico left the impress of his soul on the walls, a long line of artist monks has lived within its cloisters. With San Marco our story has now to deal, for it is impossible to write Fra Bartolommeo's life without touching on the well-known history of Savonarola. The great preacher's influence in these years, from 1492 to 1497, entered into almost every individual in Florence, either to draw them to devotion, or to stir them up to the greatest opposition.

The artists, whose minds were probably the most impressional, were his fervent adherents. He has been accused of being the ruin of art, but "this cry has only arisen in our time; the silence of contemporaries, although not friendly to him, proves that he was not in that century so accused." [Footnote: Gino Capponi, *Storia della Repubblica di Firenze*, lib. vi. chap. ii.] The only mention of anything of artistic value is a "tavoliere" [Footnote: A chess or draught board.] of rich work, spoken of by Burlamacchi and Benivieni, in a "Canzone di un Piagnone sul bruciamento delle Vanita." Savonarola himself was an artist and musician in early life, the love of the beautiful was strong within him, only he would have it go hand in hand with the good and true. His dominant spirit was that of reform; as he tried to regenerate mind, morals, literature, and state government, so he would reform art, and fling over it the spiritual light which illumed his own soul.

It was natural that such a mind should act on the devotional character of Baccio. What could he do but join when every church was full of worshippers, each shrine at the street corners had a crowd of devout women on their knees before it--when thousands of faces were uplifted in the vast expanse of the Duomo, and every face burned with fervour as the divine flame from the preacher lit the lamp of each soul--when in the streets he met long processions of men, women, and children, the echoes of whose hymns (Laudi) filled the narrow streets, and went up to the clear air above them?

Then came that strange carnival when there were no maskers in the city, but white-robed boys went from house to house to collect the vanities for the burning--when the flames of the fires, hitherto saturnalian, were the flames of a holocaust, wherein each one cast the sins and temptations, even the pretty things which, though dear to himself, withdrew him from God. And when the white-robed boys came to the studio of the friends at the gate of S. Pier Gattolini, with what sighs and self-immolation Baccio looked for the last time at some of his studies which he judged to come under the head of *_anathemata_*, and handed them over to the acolytes. How Mariotto's soul, warm to Pagan art, burned within him at this sacrifice! And how he would talk more than ever against the monks, and hang up his own cartoons and studies of the Greek Venus in the studio for Baccio's behoof!

In these years we have no notice of authentic works done by the youthful partners, though biographers talk of their having commissions for madonnas, and other works of art.

In 1497 Francesco Valori, the grand-featured, earnest admirer of Savonarola, became Gonfaloniere in the time of Piero de' Medici's exile, [Footnote: Gino Capponi, *_Storia della Repubblica di Firenze_*, lib. vi. chap. xi. p. 233.] and the friar's party was in the ascendent. Rosini [Footnote: *_Storia della Pittura_*, chap. xvii. p. 48.] says that belonging to a faction was a means of fame, and that the Savonarola party was powerful, giving this as a reason for Baccio's partisanship; but this we can hardly believe, his whole life proved his earnestness. He was much beloved in Florence for his calm upright nature and good qualities. He delighted in the society of pious and learned men, spent much time in the convent, where he had many friends among the monks; yet with all he kept still faithful to his early friend Mariotto, whose life was cast so differently. Savonarola's faction was powerful, but the Medici had still adherents who stirred up a strong party against him.

His spirit of reform at length aroused the ire of the Pope, who forbade him to preach. He disobeyed, and the sermons on Ezekiel were scenes of tumult; no longer a group of rapt faces dwelling on his words, but frowns, murmurs, and anathemas from a crowd only kept off him by a circle of armed adherents round his pulpit.

At length, on June 22nd, the excommunication by Pope Alessandro VI. (Borgia) fell like a thunderclap, and the Medicean youths marched in triumphant procession with torches and secular music to burlesque the *Laudi*; no doubt Albertinelli was one of these, while Baccio grieved among the awestruck friars in the convent.

In 1498 Savonarola again lifted up his voice; the church was not large enough, so he preached beneath the blue sky on the Piazza San Marco; and Fra Domenico Buonvicini da Pescia, in the eagerness of partisanship, said that his master's words would stand the ordeal of fire. Then came that tumultuous day of April 7th, the "Sunday of the Olives," when the Franciscans and Dominicans argued while the fire burnt out before them, when Savonarola's great spirit quailed within him, and the ordeal failed; a merciful rain quenching the flames which none dared to brave save the undaunted Fra Domenico himself.

There was no painting done in the studio on that day we may be sure. Baccio was one of the surging, conflicting crowd gathered beneath the mingling shadows of Orcagna's arches and Arnolfo's great palace, and at

eventide he was one of the armed partisans who protected the friar back to his convent, menaced not only by rains from heaven, but by the stormy wrath of an angry populace, defrauded of the sight they came to see.

The next day was the one which determined the painter's future life.

There was in the city a curious process of crystallisation of all the particles held in solution round the fire the previous day. The Palazzo Vecchio attracted about its doors the "Arrabiati." The "Compagnacci" assembled, armed, by the Duomo. The streets were full of detached parties of Piagnoni, treading ways of peril to their centre, San Marco.

Passions raged and seethed all day, till at the hour of vespers a cry arose, "_a San Marco_," and thither the multitude--500 Compagnacci, and 300 Palleschi--rushed, armed with picks and arquebusses, &c. They killed some stray Piagnoni whom they found praying by a shrine, and placed guards at the streets which led to the convent; then the assault began.

The church was dimly lighted. Savonarola and Fra Domenico knelt on the steps of the altar, with many worshippers around them, singing tremulous hymns; amongst these were Francesco Valori, Ridolfi, and Baccio della Porta, but all armed, as Cronaca tells us. They still sang hymns when the doors were attacked with stones; then leaving the priests and women to pray for them the men rushed to the defence.

Old Valori, with a few brave friends, guarded the door; others made loop-holes of the windows and fired out; some went up the campanile, and some on the roof. Baccio fought bravely among the rest. The Palleschi were almost repulsed, but at length succeeded in setting fire to the doors. The church was filled with smoke; a turbulent crowd rushed wildly in. Savonarola saw his people fall dead beside him on the altar steps, and, taking up the Sacrament, he fled to the Greek library, where the messengers of the Signoria came and arrested both himself and Fra Domenico. It was in the fierce fight that ensued when the enemies poured in, laying hands sacrilegiously on every thing sacred, that Baccio made the vow that if he were saved this peril, he would take the habit--a vow which certainly was not made in a cowardly spirit, he fighting to the death, and then espousing the losing cause. [Footnote: Gino Capponi, lib. vi. chaps. i. and ii., and Padre Marchese, _San Marco_, p. 147 _et seq._]

Then came that sad 23rd of May, the eve of the Ascension, when three martyrs went calmly to their death beneath the shadow of the old palace, amidst the insults of an infuriated crowd, and Arno's yellow waters received their ashes. [Footnote: Capponi, chap. ii. p. 253.]

[Illustration: SAVONAROLO AS PETER MARTYR. BY FRA BARTOLOMMEO. _In the Accademia delle Belle Arti, Florence_.]

After the death of Savonarola the party had many defaulters; but Baccio, the Delia Robbias, Credi, Cronaca, and many other artists, were faithful, and even showed their grief by abandoning for a time the arts they loved. "It almost seemed as if with him they had lost the sacred flame from which their fervid imagination drew life and aliment." [Footnote: Marchese, _San Marco_, lib. iii. p. 261.]

While all these events had been taking place, Baccio had worked as often as his perturbed spirit would allow, at a great fresco of the

Last Judgment, in a chapel of the cemetery of S. Maria Nuova. A certain Gerozzi, di Monna Venna Dini, gave him the commission, and as far as he had gone, the painter had given entire satisfaction. This fresco, his first as far as is known, shows Baccio's style as fully as his later ones. We have here his great harmony of form, and intense suggestiveness in composition. The infinity of heaven is emblematised in circles of saints and cherubim around the enthroned Christ. The cross, a link between heaven and earth, is borne by a trinity of angels; S. Michael, as the avenging spirit, stands a powerful figure in the foreground dividing the saved from the lost; the whole composition forming a heavenward cross on an earthly foundation. There are no caves and holes of torture with muscular bodies writhing within them; but in the despairing figures passing away on the right, some with heads bowed on clasped hands, others lifting up faces and arms in a vain cry for mercy, what suggestions there are of infinite remorse!--more dignified far than the distorted sufferers in the torture pits of previous masters. These are just indicated by two demons, and a subterranean fire behind the unblest souls. Miss Owen, [Footnote: _Art Schools of Christendom_, edited by Prof. Ruskin.] speaking Mr. Ruskin's sentiments, calls this a great falling off from Giotto and Orcagna's conceptions; but though theirs may be more powerful and terrible, a greater suggestion of Christian religion is here.

They, and later, Michelangelo, flung Dante's great struggling soul in tangible forms upon the walls, and embodied his poem, awful, grand, and earnest, with all the human passion intensified into human suffering. Fra Bartolommeo shows the Christian spirit; his faces look beyond the present judgment, and, instead of wrath, mercy is the predominating idea. It is like the difference in spirit between the Old Testament and the New.

The painter's reverence of Fra Angelico, and estimation of the divinity of art, is shown by Fra Angelico being placed among the saints of heaven on the right of the Saviour.

Leonardo's instructions for shading off a light sky will occur to any one who studies the finely gradated tints mingling with the clouds around the celestial group. But grand as the fresco is, and interesting as it must have been to the artist at this time, when thoughts of Savonarola mingled with every stroke, he felt he was not fulfilling his true mission in the world. Drawn more and more to the convent, hallowed to him by the memory of the martyr-friar, he was also more attuned to thoughts of retirement by family bereavements--one young brother, Piero, only being left to him out of the whole circle. The reluctance to leave this youth alone may have deferred for a time his taking the monastic vows; but having placed him under the guardianship of Santi Pagnini, a Dominican, he consigned the _Last Judgment_ to Mariotto to finish, and leaving his worldly goods to his brother, took the habit in the convent of S. Domenico, at Prato, on July 26th, 1500, two years after first making the resolution. His year of probation over, he took the final vows and became Fra Bartolommeo.

A document in S. Marco proves that he was possessed of worldly goods when he entered, [Footnote: Rosini, _Storia della Pittura_, chap xxvii.] among which were the house of his father in S. Pier Gattolini, and the podere at Brozzi. Having once given himself up to monasticism, Fra Bartolommeo would offer no half-service, his brushes were left behind with all other worldly things, and here closes Baccio della Porta's first artistic career.

His sun was set only to rise again to greater brilliance in the future as Fra Bartolommeo, a name famous for ever in the annals of art.

CHAPTER V.

FRA BARTOLOMMEO IN THE CONVENT.

A.D. 1504-1509.

Four years had passed, and the monk had never touched a pencil, but his mission in art was not fulfilled, and events were working towards that end, for the spirit of art once awakened could not die either in that convent or in that age.

His friend, Mariotto, kept him *_au courant_* in all the gossip of art, and told him of the great cartoons of Leonardo and Michelangelo, which he too went to see. They might have inspired him afresh, or perhaps in advising Albertinelli he himself felt impelled to paint, or possibly the visits of Raphael in 1504 influenced him.

Padre Marchese takes the conventional view, and says that Santi Pagnini, the oriental scholar and lover of art, came back to S. Marco in 1504 as prior, and used not only his entreaties, but his authority, to induce Fra Bartolommeo to recommence painting. However this may be, it is certain that when Bernardo del Bianco, who had built a beautiful chapel in the Badia from Rovezzano's designs, wished for an altar-piece worthy of its beauty, which he felt no hand could execute so well as that of the Frate--he yielded to persuasion, and the *_Vision of S. Bernard_* was begun. The contract is dated 18th November, 1504; a part payment of sixty florins in gold was made 16th of June, 1507. [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *_Memorie_*, iii. vol. ii. p. 594.]

This picture, now in the Belle Arti of Florence, is so much injured by re-painting that some parts seem even crude. The saint is on his knees writing, while the vision of the Virgin and Child stands poised in air before him; she inspires his pen, and the infant Christ gives His blessing on the work. There is great spirituality and ecstasy in St. Bernard's face, his white robe contrasts well with two saints behind him, which carry out Fra Bartolommeo's favourite triangular grouping, and with a rich harmony of colour balance his white robe.

The Virgin is drawn with great nobility and grace, her drapery admirably majestic, yet airy, and a sweet, infantile playfulness renders the Child charming. The angels beneath the Virgin's feet are lovely, but the group of seraphs behind are the least pleasing of all. They are of the earth, earthy, and seem reminiscences of the Florentine maidens the artist met in the streets. Possibly this is the part most injured by the restorer's hand. The colouring of the two saints behind S. Bernard--one in a green robe with bronze-gold shades, and the other blue and orange--is very suggestive of Andrea del Sarto, and seems to render probable Rosini's assertion that the Frate "taught the first steps of this difficult career to that artist who alone was called 'senz' errori.'"

Having once retaken the brush, Fra Bartolommeo recovered his former

skill and fame; a beautiful specimen of this period is the *Meeting of Christ with the Disciples of Emmaus* (1506), a fresco in a lunette over the door of the refectory at S. Marco; in which he combines a richness of colouring rarely obtained in fresco, with a drawing which is almost perfect. Fra Niccolo della Magna, who was prior in that year, and left in 1507 to become Archbishop of Capua, sat for one of the saints. Contemporory with this may be dated also the figure of the *Virgin*, painted for Agnolo Doni, now in the Corsini gallery in Rome. Giovanni de' Medici also gave him a commission.

Meanwhile the *S. Bernard* was not paid for. Fra Bartolommeo priced it at 200 ducats, and the convent being the gainer by his works, took his own valuation. Bernardo offered only eighty ducats; the Frati were indignant, and called in the Abbot of the Badia as umpire; he being unable to move Bernardo, retired from office; then a council of friends was resolved on, in which Mariotto was for the painter, and Lorenzo de Credi for the purchaser; but this also failed.

It was next proposed to submit the question to the Guild of Druggists (*arte degli speciali*), which included at that time also doctors and painters; but the convent, refusing lay judgment, took the offer of Francesco Magalotti, a relative of Bernardo, who priced it at 100 ducats, and the monks had to be satisfied. The dispute ended July 17th, 1507. [Footnote: Rosini, *Storia della Pittura*, chap. xxvii. p. 245, and Padre Marchese, *Memorie*, &c., vol. ii. pp. 42 to 45.]

All writers agree as to the fact of Fra Bartolommeo's friendship with Raphael, but very few are decided as to its date. Raphael was in Florence in 1504, but then Fra Bartolommeo had not re-commenced painting, and would have no works in the convent to excite his admiration of the colouring. Padre Marchese, following Rosini and Padre Luigi Pungeleoni, asserts that this intimacy was during Raphael's second visit in 1506, when he might have seen the newly-finished fresco of *The Disciples at Emmaus*. It is undoubted that their intercourse was beneficial to both. Raphael studied anew Leonardo's principles of colour under Fra Bartolommeo's interpretation of them, and the Frate improved his knowledge of perspective and harmony of composition. It is said they worked together at some pictures, of which one is in France, and another at Milan; but there is not sufficient evidence to prove this.

It is also thought that Fra Bartolommeo helped in the composition of Raphael's famous *Madonna del Baldacchino*, which is truly very much in his style.

The year 1508 marks the Frate's first acquaintance with the Venetian school, which was not without its influence upon him. Frequent interchange of visits took place between the Dominicans in the different parts of Italy; and Fra Bartolommeo took the opportunity then offered him of going to visit his brethren at Venice.

His namesake, Baccio di Monte Lupo, a sculptor who had fled from Florence after the death of Savonarola, and who had fought side by side with Baccio in the siege of S. Mark's church, was in Venice at that time, working on the tomb of Benedetto da Pesaro in the church of the Frati, and he was only too delighted to show the beauties of the Queen of the Adriatic to an artistic mind. Tintoretto was not yet born; Titian was only just rising into fame, though his style had not yet become what it was after Giorgione's influence; but Fra Bartolommeo must have found much that was sympathetic in the exquisite works of

Giovanni Bellini and his school, and much to admire in the glorious colouring of Giorgione.

Father Dalzano, the vicar of the monastery of S. Peter Martyr at Murano, gave the Florentine monk a commission for a picture of the value of seventy or 100 ducats. Not having time to paint this during his stay, he promised to execute it on his return to Florence, and the vicar paid him in advance twenty-eight ducats in money and colours; the rest was to be raised by the sale of some MS. letters from S. Catherine of Siena, which a friend of Father Dalzano near Florence held in possession.

Fra Bartolommeo, having brought home from the Venetian school a new impulse for painting, and wishing to diffuse the religious influence of art more widely, desired to enlarge his atelier and school at San Marco. His only assistants in the convent were Fra Paolino of Pistoja, and one or two miniaturists, who were only good at missals. Fra Paolino (born 1490) took the vows at a very early age, and was removed to Florence from Prato with Fra Bartolommeo. He was the son of a painter, Bernardino di Antonio, but though he learned the first principles from him, his real art was imbibed from the Frate, under whom, together with Mariotto, he worked for years.

But this youthful scholar was not enough for Fra Bartolommeo's new energies. He pined for his old friend, Mariotto, who could follow out his designs in his own style so closely, that an unpractised eye could not see the difference of hand; and such was his influence on the rulers of the order, that they allowed a most unique partnership to be entered into.

The parties were, Albertinelli on one side, and the convent and Fra Bartolommeo on the other. The partners to provide the expenses, and the profits to be divided between the convent and Mariotto; the vow of poverty not allowing Fra Bartolommeo as an individual any personal share. This began in 1509 and lasted till 1512. The inventory of the profits and the division made when the partnership was dissolved, given entire by Padre Marchese, [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *Memorie*, &c., vol. ii.] are very interesting. The two artists had separate monograms to distinguish the pictures which were specially their own, besides which the monk signed his with the touching petition, "*orate pro pictore*," his friend merely Latinising his name; the works painted together were signed by the combined monograms. Before setting a hand to anything else, the Frate fulfilled his engagement to the Venetian prior, for whom he painted the *Eternal in Heaven*, surrounded by saints and angels; but of this we will speak later.

CHAPTER VI.

ALBERTINELLI IN THE WORLD.

A.D. 1501-1510.

During the interval between the second and third partnership of this incongruous pair of friends, the life of Albertinelli had been very different from that of the Frate. So distressed was he at losing Baccio that he was quite wild for a time. His passions being unrul'd, that of

grief took entire possession of him. In his despair he vowed to give up painting; he declared that he would also become a monk, if it were not that he now hated them more than ever; besides, he was a Pallesco, and could not desert his party.

After a time, however, he calmed down, and, looking on his friend's unfinished fresco of the *_Last Judgment_* as a legacy from him, began to work at it as a kind of obligation till the occupation wove its own charm, and he steadily devoted himself to art again, much to the satisfaction of good Gerozzi Dini, who was in great perturbation, and declared there was not another hand but his in Florence which could finish it; and also to the relief of Fra Bartolommeo himself, who, having received money on account, was troubled in conscience lest it should remain unfinished. There remained only some figures to put in the terrestrial group, all the celestial portions having been finished by the Frate; but they are very well drawn figures, with a good deal of expression in them. Several are likenesses, amongst whom are Dini and his wife, Bugiardini, the painter's pupil, and himself. Most of these are now destroyed by the effects of damp.

Mariotto left Fra Bartolommeo's house in S. Pier Gattolini, and took a room in Gualfonda--now Via Val Fonda--a street leading towards the fortress, built by the Grand Duke Cosimo on the north of the city; and here in time quite a school grew up under his tuition. Giuliano Bugiardini was his head assistant rather than pupil; Francia Bigio, then a boy, Visino, who afterwards went to Hungary, and Innocenzio da Nicola, besides Piero, Baccio's brother, were all scholars. Albertinelli's Bottega in Val Fonda gave some noble paintings to the world, works independently his own, though Fra Bartolommeo's influence is traceable in most of them. The finest of these is the *_Salutation_*, dated 1503--ordered for the Church of S. Martino, and now the gem of the hall of the Old Masters in the Uffizi Gallery--a work which alone has been able to mark him for all time as a great master.

So simple is the subject, and yet so grand the proportions, and in the figures there is such majesty of maternity and dignity of womanhood! A decorated portico, with the heavens behind it, forms the background to the two noble women, in one of whom is expressed the gracious sympathy of an elder matron with the awful, mysterious joy of the younger.

The colouring, perfectly harmonised, is the most masterly blending of a subdued tone with soft yet brilliant and shows a deep study of the method of Leonardo.

The predella has an *_Annunciation_*, *_Nativity_*, and *_Circumcision_*; all showing the same able style, but more injured by time than the picture.

Another charming painting of this period is the *_Nativity_* at the Pitti, a round, on panel. The *_Madonna_* is not quite so noble as that of the *_Salutation_*, but the limbs of the child are beautifully rounded. There is a pretty group of three angels singing in the sky; the landscape is as minute in detail as those his old fellow-pupil Piero used to paint in Cosimo's studio.

In 1504-5 Fra Bartolommeo called upon him for a deed of friendship, which proves that, whatever biographers (building up theories on a word or two in Vasari) may say of his want of steadiness, the friend who

knew him best had supreme trust in him. Santi Pagnini, having been removed to Siena as prior, Fra Bartolommeo made Mariotto guardian and instructor of his young brother Piero, signing a contract that Mariotto was to have the use and management of all estates and possessions of Piero, which included several *_poderi_* in the country, as well as the house at the Porta Romana (S. Pier Gattolini). In return Albertinelli was to keep Piero in his house, teach, clothe, and provide for him, not, however, being obliged to give him more than "sette (seven) soldi" a month. Albertinelli was also to have a mass said yearly in the Church of S. Pier Gattolini for the soul of Paolo the muleteer, and to use two pounds of wax candles thereat. [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *_Memorie_*, vol. ii. pp. 36, 37.] The contract was signed from 1st January, 1505, and was to last till 1st January, 1511. It appears that this brother Piero was a great trouble to the Frate, being of a bizarre disposition, and addicted to squandering money; he sold some possessions for much less than their worth, [Footnote: Private communication from Sig. G. Milanese.] which probably accounts for the singular contract of guardianship. He did not show enough talent to become a painter, and took priests' orders later.

About this time Fra Bartolommeo recommenced work, and while he was painting the triptych for Donatello's *_Madonna_* (the miniature *_Nativity_* and *_Circumcision_* in the Uffizi), Albertinelli was at work in the convent of the Certosa, at a *_Crucifixion_* in fresco. The painting is extant in the chapterhouse, and is a very fair and unrestored specimen of his best style. The Virgin and Magdalen are very purely conceived figures; the idea of the angels gathering the blood falling from the wounded hands of the crucified Saviour is very tender; there is a great brightness of colouring, and a greenish landscape almost Peruginesque in feeling. Some of his pupils worked with him at the Certosa, and nearly brought their master into trouble.

They were not more content with convent fare than was Davide Ghirlandajo, when the only delicacy supplied him at Vallombrosa was cheese; and to revenge themselves, they stole round the cloister after the circular sliding panels by which the rations were sent into the monks' cells were filled, and feasted on the meals made ready for the good brothers. Great confusion ensued in the convent, the monks accusing each other of the theft; but when they found out the real culprits, they made a compromise, promising double rations if the artists would hasten their work and leave them their daily dole in peace.

The fresco is dated 1506. The same year produced the fine picture now in the Louvre, which was painted for the church of S. Trinita on the commission of Zanobio del Maestro.

The *_Madonna_*, stands on a pedestal, with S. Jerome and S. Zenobio in front, while episodes from their lives are brought in like distant echoes in the background. [Footnote: S. Zenobio was the first bishop of Florence, and is the patron saint of that city.]

The nuns of S. Giuliano employed him to paint two pictures, both of which are now in the Belle Arti. One is an altarpiece; the *_Madonna enthroned_*, with the Divine Child in her arms. Fra Bartolommeo's idea of an angel-sustained canopy is here, but the angels hold it up from the outside instead of the inside. Before her are S. John the Baptist, S. Julian, S. Nicholas, and S. Dominic. The S. Julian has a great similarity to the S. Michael of Perugino, and the S. John, by its

good modelling, shows the result of his studies from the antique in the Medici garden.

For the same church he did the curious conventional painting of the Trinity on a gold ground. The subject is inartistic, because unapproachable; the attempt to paint that which is a deep spiritual mystery degrades both the art and the subject; the latter because it lowers it to human grasp, the former because it shows its powerlessness to shadow forth the infinite. There is beautiful painting in the heads of the angels, at the foot of the Cross, but the brilliancy of the gold ground is overpowering to the colours, albeit he has balanced it by reproducing Cosimo Roselli's red-winged cherubs. Nothing but Fra Angelico's delicate tints can bear such a background. No doubt Piero, Baccio's brother, helped to lay on this gold, for one of the stipulations in the contract with Mariotto was that he was to "metter d' oro ed altre cose di mazoneria" (to put on gold and other articles of emblazonment).

It has been a great subject of conjecture at what part of his life Albertinelli took the rash step of throwing up his art and opening a tavern at Porta S. Gallo. Some say it was in his despair at Fra Bartolommeo having taken the vows, but this is disproved by his having at that time finished the Last Judgment, and taken pupils in Val Fonda. Others assert that it was at the breaking up of the last partnership in 1513, but there is no hiatus in his work at that time, existing paintings being dated in 1513 and the following years till his death, three years after.

Vasari, though not to be depended on in regard to dates--chronology not being his forte--is generally right in the gossip and stories of the lives near his own time, and it is by collateral evidence from his pages that we are able to fix with more certainty 1508 or 1509 as the time of this episode in Albertinelli's life. In 1507 we find him as an artist helping to value his friend's picture, and mediating between the convent and Bernardo del Bianco. [Footnote: Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. iii. chap. xvii. p. 544.] Now, in the 'Life of Andrea del Sarto,' we read that Francia Bigio, Albertinelli's pupil, made the acquaintance of Andrea while studying the Cartoons in the Hall of the Council (this was from 1506 to 1508), and as their friendship increased, Andrea confided to Francia Bigio that he could no longer endure the eccentricities of Piero di Cosimo, and determined to seek a home for himself, and that Francia Bigio being also alone--his master Mariotto Albertinelli having abandoned the art of painting--they determined to share a studio and rooms. [Footnote: Vasari, vol. iii. p. 182.] The first works the partners undertook were the frescoes of the Scalzo and the Servi, which were begun in 1509. Thus the date is tolerably certain, especially as a gap occurs in Albertinelli's works at this time.

Sig. Gaetano Milanese's researches in the Archives have thrown a new light on Mariotto's motives, which were not entirely connected with art; it was not that he was discouraged by adverse criticism, nor wholly that, as time divided him from his friend, he felt he could produce no great work away from his influence, but it was partly that he had married a wife named Antonia, whose father kept an inn at S. Gallo. It is possible the tavern came to him by way of dot, and the above reasons making him discontented with art for a time, might have induced him to carry on the business himself. Sig. Milanese says a document exists of a contract in which Mariotto's name is connected

with a tavern, but that he has never been able to retrace it since the first time he found it. It is his opinion that the whole story arose from the fact of the wife's family possessing this wine shop, and his connection with it in that way.

But though Albertinelli passed off his pseudo-hostdom with bravado, talking very wittily about it, the artistic vein was too strong within him to be subdued; he soon gave up the flask and returned to the brush, for in 1509, when his quondam pupil, Francia Bigio, was busy at the Servi, we again find Mariotto's hand in a painting of the Madonna. The Virgin, holding a pomegranate in her hand, supports with the other the Child, who stands on a parapet, and clings to the bosom of his mother's dress for support, in a truly natural way; the infant Baptist stands by. The painting, signed, and dated 1509, is in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, but has been injured by repainting. In spite of this, Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle believe they perceive Bugiardini's hand in it.

In 1510 Albertinelli began one of his masterpieces, the Annunciation for the company of S. Zenobio, now in the Belle Arti. All his zeal for art was reawakened, he flung himself con amore into this work, which, though in oil on panel, was painted on the spot where it was intended to be placed, that the lights might be managed with the best effect. He was imbued with Leonardo da Vinci's principle, that the greatest relief and force are to be combined with softness, and wishing to bring this combination to a perfection which never before had been reached, he depended greatly on the natural light to further his design. [Footnote: Vasari, vol. ii. p. 469.]

The picture, although a great work of art, and the most laboured of all his paintings, failed to satisfy the artist. He tried various experiments, painting in and painting out, but never reaching his own ideal. According to Leonardo, he was proving himself a good artist, one of his principles being, "when his (an artist's) knowledge and light surpass his work so that he is not satisfied with himself or his endeavours, it is a happy omen." [Footnote: Leonardo da Vinci, Treatise on Painting.]

The work as it stands is a noble one, though darkened by time having brought out the black pigments used in the shades. The background is an intricate piece of architecture with vaulted roof, showing that he too had profited by Raphael's instructions in perspective to Fra Bartolommeo.

The Virgin is a tender sweet figure; indeed no artist has given more gracious dignity to womanhood than Albertinelli, although his detractors say his life showed no great respect for it. Above, the Almighty is seen in a yellow light with a circle of angels and seraphs around. It is strange how the realistic painters stopped at nothing, not even the representation of the eternal in a human form. Is not this the reason why art ceased about this time to be the interpreter of religion, and found its true mission in being the interpreter of nature? Who can draw one soul? How much more impossible then to depict the incomprehensible soul in which all others have their being? The utmost we can do is to give the indication of the spirit in the expression of a face, and that so imperfectly that not two beholders read it alike. Study Perugino and Raphael, see how they raise human nature and etherealize it till we see the divinity of soul in the faces of their saints and martyrs. But the moment they try to depict the

Almighty, or even his angels, they fall at once below humanity.

But to return to the *_Annunciation_* of Albertinelli. His impetuous temper betrayed him even here; he fell into a dispute with his patrons, who refused to pay the price he asked. The usual "trial by his peers" was resorted to, Perugino, Granacci, and Ridolfo Ghirlandajo were called into council to value it according to its merits.

On completing this picture the events we have related in the last chapter took place, Fra Bartolommeo returned from Venice with his enterprise renewed, and the convent partnership was commenced.

CHAPTER VII.

CONVENT PARTNERSHIP. A.D. 1510--1513.

We now come to the studio of S. Marco, where the two friends, who had dreamed together as boys, and worked together as youths, now laboured jointly as men, bringing to light some of the finest works of art that remain to us. During these three years Albertinelli's star seems merged in that of his senior, his hand is to be recognised in the lower parts of a few altarpieces; but it is always difficult to distinguish the two styles.

It was a very busy atelier, for they had many patrons. Bugiardini was still Mariotto's head assistant, and Fra Paolino, and one or two other monks, worked under Fra Bartolommeo, besides pupils of both, among whom were Gabriele Rustici and Benedetto Cianfanini.

The studio was on the part of the convent between the cloister and Via del Maglio, [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *_Memorie_*, vol. ii. p. 69.] and we can quite picture its interior. There stands the lay figure on which Fra Bartolommeo draped the garments that take such majestic folds in his works; [Footnote: Fra Bartolommeo was the inventor of the jointed lay figure.] there are several casts and models in different parts of the room; grand cartoons in charcoal hang on the walls, like those we see to this day in the Uffizi and Belle Arti. So many of these masterly sketches are the Frate's and so few are Mariotto's that we may presume the former was in most instances the designer. And to what perfection he carried design! Not a figure was drawn except its lines harmonised with the geometric rhythm in the artist's mind. His groups fall by nature into kaleidoscopic figures of circles, triangles, ellipses, crosses, &c. Not a cartoon was sketched in which the lights and shadows were not as gradated and finished as a painting, although they were merely drawn with charcoal. The following was the method of work in the "bottega." The panels were prepared with a coating of plaster of Paris, over which, when dry, a coat of under colour, ground in oil, was passed. The preparing of the panels fell to the work of one of the monk scholars, Fra Andrea.[Footnote: The books of the convent have a note of payment to Fra Bartolommeo for 20th March, 1512, "per parte di lavoro di Fra Andrea converse per mettere d'oro, et ingessare alle tavole nella bottega in diversi lavori" (Padre Marchese, *_Memorie_*, lib. ii. chap. in. p. 70).] Then the master made his sketch in white, or "sgraffito" (i.e. graven on the plaster), as in the

architectural lines of the pictures of patron saints in the Uffizi, and the Marriage of S. Catherine in the Pitti Palace; he also put in the shadows in monochrome. But the assistants, who were skilled artists, were called to put broad level tints of local colour on the buildings, &c., the master himself finishing the faces. No doubt Albertinelli was often deputed to the study of the lay figure and its drapery. Where he assisted, the monogram, a cross with two rings and the joint names, marked the work, as in a panel of 1510 in Vienna, and another at Geneva.

Fra Bartolommeo only imitated Leonardo in his intense force and soft gradations; the general thinness of colour is opposed to his system. He followed him, however, in his method of painting his shadows with the brush, instead of "hatching" them; he used the same yellowish ground, and "sfumato," [Footnote: Eastlake's Materials for a History of Oil Painting, vol. ii. chap. iv.] i.e. the imperceptible softening of the transition in half-lights and shadows; it was effected by glazes, and is not adapted to a thin substance. The great mistake in Fra Bartolommeo's system was the preparing his paintings like cartoons, and using asphaltum or lamp-black for outlines and shadows; this in process of time destroys the super-colour, and gives a general blackness to the painting.

The same kind of talk went on here as in modern studios. When the frame-maker came, Fra Bartolommeo would be vexed to see how much of his work was hidden beneath the massive cornice, and would vow to dispense with frames altogether, which he did in his S. Sebastian and S. Mark, by painting an architectural niche round the subject like a carving in relief.

The first work begun at the convent studio was the picture for Father Dalgano of Venice, the subject of which is the Eternal Father in Heaven, surrounded by seraphs and angels. Perhaps in this we have the source of the motive of Albertinelli's Annunciation. The colouring is more brilliant than any of the Frate's works before his visit to Venice. Vasari says that in this picture Giorgione himself could not have surpassed him in brilliancy. The saints, although nearly level with the ground, are given celestial rank by the cherubs and clouds below them. Fra Bartolommeo was dissatisfied with his angels, which seemed merely lovely children, and seeking other forms, he thought to picture them better under shapes which at a distance seem only clouds, but nearer are full of angels' faces, as in the S. Bernard. But this idea, not having aesthetic beauty, was also abandoned. [Footnote: Padre Marchese, I Puristi ed Accademici.]

The monks of S. Pietro at Murano did not hasten to claim their picture, but sent two friars to negotiate about the price; they failed to agree, and the work is now in the Church of S. Romano in Lucca.

Lucca has another exquisite picture of the same year in the Cathedral of S. Martino, a Madonna and Child--a lovely ideal of joyful infancy--beneath a veil suspended above her head by two angels. S. John Baptist and S. Stephen support this airy composition like pillars, their figures showing in strong relief against the dark shades; the whole picture is intensely soft, and yet the outlines are perfectly clear. This is valued at sixty ducats in the Libri di San Marco.

Next followed the Virgin and Child with four Saints, in S. Marco, which is so fine that it has been taken for a Raphael, although, owing to the use of lamp-black, it has now become very much darkened.

The *Holy Family*, which he painted for Filippo di Averardo Salviati, and which is now in Earl Cowper's collection at Panshanger, is an almost Raphaelesque work, and attains the greatest excellence in art. The composition is his favourite triangle, touched in with the flowing lines of the mother seated on the ground with the two children before her. S. Joseph is in the background. The greatest softness of flesh tints must have been perceptible when new, for, "in spite of the abrasions produced by time, the delicate tones brought out by transparent glazes fused one over another are apparent." The landscape with an echo subject of the flight into Egypt is thought by Crowe and Cavalcaselle to be by Albertinelli.

In 1510 the partners had a large order from Giuliano da Gagliano, who, on the 2nd November, 1510, and 14th January, 1511, paid, in two rates, the sum of 154 ducats. The picture, which is Fra Bartolommeo's own painting, unfortunately cannot be traced.

In 1511 a long list of works are enumerated--a *Nativity*, valued two ducats, a *Christ bearing the Cross*, and an *Annunciation*, sold to the Gonfaloniere for six ducats--pictures which are dispersed in England, Pavia, &c.; but the masterpiece of the time is the *Marriage of S. Catherine*, now in the Louvre. The Florentine government bought it for 300 ducats in 1512, to present to Jacques Hurault, Bishop of Autun, who came to Florence as envoy of Louis XII. He left it to his cathedral at Autun, from whence, at the Revolution, it passed to the Louvre. [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *Memorie*, lib. iii. ch. iv. p. 77. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *History of Painting*, vol. iii. chap. xiii. p. 452.] Before it was sent away, Fra Bartolommeo made a replica of it, which is now in the Pitti Palace. There is his favourite canopy supported by angels; in this case they are beautifully foreshortened. The Virgin is seated on a pedestal, holding by one arm an exquisitely moulded child Jesus of about four years old, who is espousing S. Catherine of Siena, kneeling at His feet on the left. A semicircle of saints group on each side of the Virgin, and two angels, with musical instruments, are at her feet; the upturned face of one is exquisitely foreshortened. The S. George in armour is a powerful figure; and in S. Bartholomew, on the left, is the same grand feeling which he afterwards brought to perfection in S. Mark. The grace of the Virgin's figure is not to be surpassed; if Raphael's Madonnas have more sentiment, this has more dignified grace. He has remembered Leonardo's precept, "that the two figures of a group should not look the same way"; the contrast of the flowing lines in these two forms is very lovely. The same contrast of lines, and yet balance of form, is carried out in the two S. Catherines who form the pyramid on each side of her, and in the varied characters of the encircling group of saints. The deleterious use of lampblack has spoiled the colouring; it, moreover, hangs in a bad light at the Pitti Palace.

The original subject at the Louvre differs only in a few particulars from this--the Virgin's hand is on the child's head instead of his arm, and there are trifling differences in the grouping of the saints, the semicircle being more rigidly kept. In this the flesh is thin and uncracked, seeming imbedded in the surrounding colours; the lake draperies are laid so thinly on the light ground, that the sketch can be seen through the colour. [Footnote: Eastlake, *Materials for a History of Oil Painting*, vol. ii. chap. iv. Crowe and Cavalcaselle speak of the two paintings as unconnected with each other, and mention the Pitti one as having unaccountably returned there after having been

given to some bishop. Is it not possible that the gift to a bishop refers to the painting in the Louvre, and that the other is the replica spoken of by Vasari, vol. ii. p. 452?]

There is a fine painting in the church of S. Caterina of Pisa, in the chapel of the Mastiani family, Michele Mastiani having given the commission, and paid thirty ducats, in October, 1511. It represents the Madonna and Child seated on a base; the action is quiet and yet vivacious; she is supported on each side by S. Peter and S. Paul, figures as large as life, and even more noble than the ones in Rome. The colouring has been much injured by a fire in the seventeenth century, but is robust and harmonious. It is dated 1511.

On the 26th of November, 1510, Fra Bartolommeo had a commission from Pier Soderini, then Gonfaloniere, to paint a picture for the Council Hall. This was an unfortunate order; for Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci had both been commissioned, neither of them finishing the works. Fra Bartolommeo's forms the third uncompleted painting; it exists still in the form of a half prepared picture, the design being only shadowed in monochrome, and this in spite of the payment on account of 100 gold ducats in October, 1513. [Footnote: See Padre Marchese, Memorie, documenti 5 and 6, vol ii. p. 603.] The reason of this is difficult to assign, but it might lie in the fact that in 1512 Pier Soderini was deposed and exiled by Giuliano de' Medici, who assumed the government. Another reason may have been the failure of Fra Bartolommeo's health after his journey to Rome.

In 1512 Santi Pagnini came back from Siena as prior of S. Marco, and he having no love for Albertinelli, and perhaps a too jealous affection for the artist Monk, caused the partnership to be dissolved, much to Mariotto's sorrow. The stock, of which a full list is given by Padre Marchese, was divided, each taking the pictures in which they had most to do. The properties--amongst which were the lay figures, easels, casts, sketches, blocks of porphyry to grind colours on, &c. [Footnote: Padre Marchese, vol. ii. pp. 184, 185.]--were to be left for Fra Bartolommeo's use till his death, when they were to be divided between his heirs and Albertinelli.

Mariotto returned disheartened to paint in his solitary studio. A specimen of this period is the Adam and Eve, now at Castle Howard, which is said to have been sketched in by Fra Bartolommeo. Eve stands beneath the serpent-entwined tree, hesitating between the demon's temptations and Adam's persuasions; the feeling and action are perfectly expressed, the landscape is minute, but has plenty of atmosphere and good colouring. In the same collection is a Sacrifice of Abraham, in his best style. The drawing of the father, reluctantly holding his knife to the throat of the boy, is extremely true. Munich possesses a fine Annunciation. Characteristic saints support the composition on each side, the nude S. Sebastian being a markworthy study; an angel at his side presents the palm of martyrdom. The picture has suffered much from bad cleaning.

In March, 1513, Albertinelli was commissioned by the Medici to paint their arms, in honour of Leo X.'s elevation to the papacy. He made a fine allegorical circular picture, in which the arms were supported by the figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

CHAPTER VIII.

CLOSE OF LIFE.

A.D. 1514--1517.

It is probable that the dissolution of partnership marked the time of Fra Bartolommeo's visit to Rome. Fra Mariano Fetti, once a lay brother of S. Marco, who had gone over to the Medici after Savonarola's death, and had kept so much in favour with Pope Leo X. as to obtain the office of the Seals (del Piombo), [Footnote: An office for appending seals to papal documents. Fra Mariano Fetti was elected to it in 1514, after Bramante, the architect; Sebastiano del Piombo succeeded him.] was pleased to be considered a patron of art; and welcoming Fra Bartolommeo to Rome, he gave him a commission for two large figures of S. Peter and S. Paul for his church of S. Silvestro. The cartoons of these pictures are now in the Belle Arti of Florence; they are grand and majestic figures, admirably draped. S. Peter holds his keys and a book; S. Paul rests on his sword. In executing them in colour, he made some improvements, especially in the head and hand of S. Peter, but he did not remain long enough in Rome to finish them. "The colour of the first (S. Peter) is reddish and rather opaque, the shadows of the head being taken up afresh, and the extremities being by another painter. The head of the second (S. Paul) is corrected ... but the tone is transparent, and the execution exclusively that of Fra Bartolommeo. Whoever may have been employed on the S. Peter, we do not fancy Raphael to have been that person." This is the opinion of Crowe and Cavalcaselle, [Footnote: *History of Painting*, vol. iii. chap. xiii. p. 460.] who, however, seem to have little faith in any works of the Frate at Rome. Against this we have the chronicles of quaint old Vasari and Rosini; besides Baldinucci (ch. iv. p. 83), who says, "Raphael gave great testimony of his esteem when, in after years, he employed his own brush in Rome to finish a work begun by Fra Bartolommeo in that city and left imperfect."

His reason for leaving it imperfect was that of ill-health, the air of Rome not agreeing with him. It seems he brought home *malaria*, which never entirely left his system, the low fever returning every year, and being only mitigated by a change to mountain air. He was well enough at times to resume painting, but never in full health again. That very summer he was sent to the Hospice of Sta. Maria Maddalena in Pian di Mugnone, "dove pure non stette in ozio," [Footnote: Rosini, *Storia della Pittura*, chap. xxvii. p. 245.] where he did not remain idle. The Hospice stands on a high hill, just the place for Roman fever to disappear as if by magic for a time, and the patient, relieved of his lassitude, set to work with energy, aided by Fra Paolino and Fra Agostino. Many of his frescoes still remain, one of which is a beautiful *Madonna*, on the wall of the infirmary, which has since been sawn away from the wall and placed in the students' chapel in San Marco, Florence. [Footnote: A document of the Hospice records these paintings, and dates them 10th of July, 1514. Padre Marchese, *Memorie*, &c., vol. ii. p. 610.]

He returned to Florence for the winter, and with renewed vigour produced his *San Sebastian*, a splendid study from the nude, which shows the influence upon him of Michelangelo's paintings in Rome. The picture was hung in San Marco, but its influence not proving elevating to the sensuous minds of the Florentines, it was removed to

the chapter-house, and Gio Battista della Palla, the dealer who bought so many of the best pictures of the time, purchased it to send to the King of France. Its subsequent fate is not known, although Monsieur Alaffre, of Toulouse, boasts of its possession. He says his father bought three paintings which, in the time of the Revolution, had been taken from the chapel of a royal villa near Paris [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *Memorie*, &c., vol. ii. note p. 119.], one of which is the *S. Sebastian*. In design and attitude it corresponds to the one described by Vasari, the saint being in a niche, surrounded by a double cornice. The left arm is bound; the right, with its cord hanging, is upraised in attitude of the faith, so fully expressed in the beautiful face. Three arrows are fixed in the body, which is nude except a slight veil across the loins; an angel, also nude, holds the palm to him. Connoisseurs do not think this painting equal in merit to the other works of Fra Bartolommeo. It is true it may have been overrated at the time, for the Frate's chief excellence lay in the grandeur of his drapery; the test of authenticity for a nude study from him would lie more in the colouring and handling than in form.

In the early part of 1515 Fra Bartolommeo went to pay his old friend Santi Pagnini, the Oriental scholar, a visit at the convent of San Romano, in Lucca, of which he was now prior, passing by Pistoja on February 17th to sign a contract for an altar-piece to be placed in the church of San Domenico--a commission from Messer Jacopo Panciatichi. The price was fixed at 100 gold ducats, and the subject to be the Madonna and Child, with SS. Paul, John Baptist, and Sebastian. On his arrival at Lucca he was soon busy with his great work, the *Madonna della Misericordia*, for the church of San Romano. The composition of this is full and harmonious. A populace of all ages and conditions, grouped around the throne of the Madonna, beg her prayers; she, standing up, seems to gather all their supplications in her hands and offer them up to heaven, from which, as a vision, Christ appears from a mass of clouds in act of benediction. Amongst the crowd of supplicants are some exquisite groups. Sublime inspiration and powerful expression are shown in the whole work. On his return he stayed again at Pistoja, where he painted a fresco of a *Madonna* on a wall of the convent of San Domenico; this, which has since been sawn from the wall, is at present in the church of the same convent, and though much injured, is a very light and tender bit of colouring and expression. It would seem that the altar-piece for the same church, spoken of above, was never finished, as no traces of it are to be found.

In October, 1515, we again find him at Pian di Mugnone; no doubt the summer heats had induced a return of his fever. Here, again improving in health, he painted a charming *Annunciation* in fresco, full of life and eagerness on the part of the angel, and joy on the Virgin. He did not remain long, for before the end of the autumn he returned to visit the home of his youth and see his paternal uncle, Giusto, at Lastruccio, near Prato. We can imagine the meeting between him and his relatives, and how the little Paolo, son of Vito, being told to guess who he was, said, "Bis Zio Bartolommeo," [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *Memorie*, &c., vol. ii. chap. vii. pp. 139, 140.] for which he was much applauded. And when all the country relatives hoped to see him again soon, how the Frate said that would be uncertain, because the King of France had sent for him, and with what awe and family pride they would have looked at him! But instead of going to France for the glory of art, he was returning to Florence to sorrow. His life-long friend, Mariotto Albertinelli, had been brought home on a litter from La Quercia, near Viterbo, and now lay on his death-bed; and what his

life had lacked in religion, the prayers of his friend would go far to atone for at his death.

While Fra Bartolommeo had been ailing, Albertinelli had also paid his visit to the great city, and seen the two great rivals there. He went from Viterbo, where he had been to finish colouring a work of the Frate's left unfinished, and also to paint some frescoes in the convent of La Quercia, near that town. Being so near Borne, he was seized with a great desire to see it, and left his picture for that purpose. Probably Fra Bartolommeo had given him an introduction to his friend and patron, for Fra Mariano Fetti gave Albertinelli a commission to paint a Marriage of S. Catherine for his church, which he completed, and then left Rome at once. Nothing is known of the impressions made on him by the works of the two great masters, and unfortunately his death occurred too soon after for his own style to have given any evidence of their influence.

A Giostra, at Viterbo, proved a very strong attraction to his pleasure-loving mind. This "Giostra," which the translators of Vasari seem to find so "obscure," [Footnote: Vasari's Lives, vol. ii. p. 470.] was no doubt one of those festivals revived by the Medici, in which mounted cavaliers ride with a lance at a suspended Saracen's head, striking it at full gallop. Desirous of appearing to advantage before the eyes of her whom he had elected his queen, he forgot his mature age, and rushed into the jousts with all the energies of a youth, but alas! fell ill from over-exertion. Fearing the malarious air was not good for him, he had a litter made, and was taken to Florence, where Fra Bartolommeo placed himself at his bedside, soothing his last moments, and leading him as far heavenward as he could. When Albertinelli died, on the 5th of November, 1515, his friend followed him to an honourable interment in S. Piero Maggiore.

After Albertinelli's death, the Frate soared to greater heights of genius than before.

The year 1516 marks the birth of his grandest masterpieces, first the picture in the Pitti Palace called by Cavalcaselle a Resurrection, but which is more truly an allegorical impersonation of the Saviour. It was ordered by a rich merchant, Salvadore Billi, to place in a chapel which Pietro Roselli had adorned with marbles in the church of the "Annunciata." He paid 100 ducats in gold for it.

In its original state the picture was a complete allegory of Christ as the centre of Religion, between two prophets in heaven, and four apostles, two at each side--beneath him two angels support the world. The prophets have been removed, and are placed in the Tribune of the Uffizi; thus the picture as it stands loses half its meaning. The Christ is a fine nude figure standing in a niche, and in it Fra Bartolommeo has solved the problem of obtaining complete relief almost in monochrome, so little do the lights of the flesh tints, and the warm yellowish tinge of the background differ from each other. All the positive colour is in the drapery of the saints, one in red and green, and another in red and blue. The two angels are exquisitely drawn, and contrast well in their natural innocence with the sentimental pair in Raphael's Madonna of the Baldacchino on the same wall of the Pitti Palace.

San Marco was rich in frescoes of the Madonna and Child, two of which are still in the chapel of the convent, and two in the Belle

Arti. Some of these are charming in expression, the children clinging round the mother's neck in a true childish _abandon_ of affection. What a tender feeling these monk artists had for the spirit of maternity! Perhaps by being debarred from the contemplation of maternal love in its humanity, they more clearly comprehended its divinity. Look at the little round-backed nestling child in Fra Angelico's _Madonna della Stella_, imperfect as it is in form, the whole spirit of love is in it. He does not give only the mother-love for the child, but the child-love for the mother, which is more divine, and the same feeling is seen in the _Madonna_ of Fra Bartolommeo.

This year, 1516, also marks a journey to a hermitage of his order at Lecceto, between Florence and Pisa. Here he painted a _Deposition from the Cross_ on the wall of the Hospice, and two heads of Christ on two tiles above the doors.

A great many of his works are in private collections in Florence; one of the most lovely is the _Pieta_, painted for Agnolo Doni, and now in the Corsini Gallery at Rome.

All this time the great painting of the _Enthronement of the Virgin_, ordered by Pier Soderini, before his exile, was still unfinished. He seems to have taken it in hand again about this time, but being attacked with another access of fever, again left it, and the painting, shadowed in with black, remains in the Uffizi. Lanzi writes of it that, imperfect as it is, it may be regarded as a true lesson in art, and bears the same relation to painting as the clay model to the finished statue, the genius of the inventor being impressed upon it. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle [Footnote: _History of Painting_, vol. iii. chap. xiii. p. 455.] call this a _Conception_, but Vasari's old name of the _Patron Saints of Florence_ seems to fit it best. S. John the Baptist, S. Reparata, S. Zenobio, &c., stand in an adoring group around the heavenly powers, S. Anna above the Virgin and infant Christ forming a charming pyramidal group in the midst. The whole thing is one of Fra Bartolommeo's richest compositions. The centre of the three monks on the left is said to be a portrait of Fra Bartolommeo himself, and to be the original from which the only known portrait of him is taken (_see Frontispiece_). Fra Bartolommeo left another work also unfinished, an apotheosis of a saint, which is now at Panshanger. This is supposed to have been a small ideal prepared for a picture to celebrate the canonisation of S. Antonino, which Leo X. had almost promised the brethren of S. Marco on his triumphant entry in 1515. The work, if it had been painted in the larger form, would have been a perfect masterpiece of composition, "a very Beethoven symphony in colour," if we may judge from the sketch at Panshanger, where a living crowd groups round the bier of the archbishop, and life, earnestness, harmony, and richness, are all intense.

So ill was Fra Bartolommeo in 1517 that he was ordered to take the baths at San Filippo, thence he went for the last time to Pian di Mugnone, where he painted a _Vision of the Saviour to Mary Magdalen_, above the door of the chapel. The two figures, nearly life-size, are at the door of the cave sepulchre. Mary has just recognised her Lord, and in her ecstasy flings herself forward on her knees before him. The Saviour is a dignified figure semi-nude, with a white veil wrapped around him.

In the Pitti Palace, a charming _Pieta_ of Fra Bartolommeo's occupies a place near the _Pieta_ of Andrea del Sarto, the two

pictures forming a most interesting contrast of style. The kneeling Virgin and S. John support the head of the prostrate Saviour, S. Catherine and Mary Magdalen weep at his feet, the latter in an agony of grief crouches prone on the ground hiding her face. The colouring is extremely rich, broad masses of full-tone melting softly into deep shadows. The handling in the flesh-tones of the dead Saviour, as well as the modelling of form, are most masterly. It is generally supposed that this was the picture which Bugiardini is said to have coloured after the master's death; but there is much divergence among Italian authors both as to whether this was the painting spoken of, and also as to the meaning of Vasari's words, he using the phrase "finished" in one place, and "coloured" in another. For charm of colouring and depth of expression, the *Pieta* is the most lovely of all the Frate's works; therefore Bugiardini who was *mediocre*, could not have outdone his great master. It was not *coloured* by him. Bocchi [Footnote: Bocchi, *Bellezze di Firenze*, p. 304.] says there were two other figures, S. Peter and S. Paul, in the picture, where a meaningless black shadow stretches across the background; but they were erased by the antique restorer because they were "troppo deboli." Is it not likely that if Bugiardini had any hand in the work, it was to finish these figures?

Returning in the autumn to Florence, Fra Bartolommeo caught a severe cold, the effects of which were heightened by eating fruit, and after four days' extreme illness he died on October 8th, 1517, aged 42.

The monks felt his death intensely, and buried him with great honour in San Marco.

He left to art the most valuable legacy possible--a long list of masterpieces in which religious feeling is expressed in the very highest language. In all his works there is not a line or tint which transgresses against either the sentiment of devotion, or the rules of art. He stands for ever, almost on a level with the great trio of the culmination, "possessing Leonardo's grace of colour and more than his industry, Michelangelo's force with more softness, and Raphael's sentiment with more devotion;" yet with just the inexpressible want of that supernatural genius which would have placed him above them all. His legacy to the world is a series of lessons from the very first setting of his ideal on paper to its finished development. The germ exists in the charcoal sketches at the Belle Arti and Uffizi; the under-shadowing of the subject is seen in the *Patron Saints* at the Uffizi.

Many of his drawings are not to be traced. Some were used by Fra Paolino, his pupil, who at his death passed them to Suor Plautilla Nelli, a nun in Sta. Caterina, Florence (born 1523, died 1587). When Baldinucci wrote his work, he said 500 of these were in the possession of Cavaliere Gaburri.

CHAPTER IX.

PART I.

SCHOLARS OF FRA BARTOLOMMEO.

Of these, little more than the names have come down to us. Vasari speaks of Benedetto Cianfanini, Gabriele Rustici, and Fra Paolo Pistoiese; Padre Marchese mentions two monks, Fra Andrea and Fra Agostino. Of these, the two first never became proficient, and have left no works behind them. Fra Andrea seems to have been more a journeyman than scholar, being employed to prepare the panels and lay on the gilding. Fra Agostino assisted his master, and Fra Paolo in the subordinate parts of a few frescoes, especially at Luco in the Mugnone. Fra Paolo is the most known, but chiefly as a far-off imitator of Fra Bartolommeo, without his mellowness of execution. His pictures are mostly from his master's designs, which were left him as a legacy, and this ensures a good composition.

He was born at Pistoja in 1490; his father, Bernardino d' Antonio del Signoraccio, a second-rate artist, taught him the first principles of art. His knowledge of drawing caused him to be noticed by Fra Bartolommeo, when at a very early age he entered the order. He was removed from Prato to San Marco, Florence, in 1503; and here he found another friend who assisted his artistic tendencies. This was Fra Ambrogio della Robbia, [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *Memorie, &c.*, lib. in. chap. ii. p. 246.] who taught him to model in clay; a specimen of his work exists in the Church of Sta. Maddalena in Pian di Mugnone, where are two statues of S. Domenico and Mary Magdalen by his hand.

His best work is a Crucifixion at Siena, dated 1516, which has been thought to be Fra Bartolommeo's; but though that master was asked to go and paint it as a memorial of a certain Messer Cherubino Ridolfo, his many occupations prevented his accepting the commission, and his disciples, Fra Paolo and Fra Agostino, went in his place. [Footnote: Padre Marchese, *Memorie, &c.*, lib. in. chap. ii. p. 251.] Possibly the master supplied the design, which is very harmonious. The Virgin and S. John stand on each side of the cross, and Saint Catherine of Siena and Mary Magdalen are prostrate before it. One or two of the female saints are pleasing, but the nude figure of Christ is hard, exaggerated, and faulty in drawing.

The artists got thirty-five lire for the work, though the record in the archives allows that it was worth more. There is an Assumption in the Belle Arti of Florence, of which the design is Fra Bartolommeo's, but the colouring Fra Paolo's. It was painted for the Dominican monks at Santa Maria del Sasso, near Bibbiena. The colouring is hard and weak, the shadows heavy, and not fused well in the half tints. Two monks on the left are tolerably life-like, probably they were drawn from living models; the S. Catherine on the right is very inferior.

The Belle Arti also possesses a Deposition from the Cross, which Fra Bartolommeo had sketched out and left uncoloured at Pian di Mugnone. In 1519 Fra Paolo finished it, and it presents the usual disparity between the composition and colouring, the former being good, the latter weak and crude. His best known works are a Nativity in the Palazzo Borghese, a Madonna and Child with S. John Baptist in the Sciarra Colonna, also in Rome; a Madonna and Child with S. John in the Corsini Gallery, Florence, and another of the same subject in the Antinori Palace. He painted also at San Gimignano, Pian di Mugnone, and Pistoja, and died of sunstroke in 1547.

He had as a follower a Suor Plautilla Nelli, born 1523, daughter of a

noble Florentine, Piero di Luca Nelli. She took the vows at the age of fourteen, in the convent of S. Caterina di Siena, in Via Larga (now Cavour), Florence. Her sister, Suor Petronilla, in the same convent, was a writer, and her life of Savonarola is still extant. Suor Plautilla taught herself to paint. Legend says, that in order to study the nude for a Christ, she drew from the corpse of a nun--which might account for the weak stiffness of her design. Fra Paolo, though there is no record of his having taught her, left her as a legacy the designs and cartoons of Fra Bartolommeo, one of which, the Pieta, she has evidently made use of in the painting in the Belle Arti. The grouping is that of the Pieta of Fra Bartolommeo, now in the Pitti, of which she must have had the original sketch, for she has put in the two saints in the background, which have been painted out in that of the Frate, but we will give her the entire credit of the colouring, which is extremely crude; the contrasting blues and yellows are in inharmonious tones, the shading harsh, and the whole picture wanting in chiaroscuro. The Corsini Gallery, Florence, has a Virgin and Child by her.

PART II.

The scholars of Mariotto Albertinelli were much more important in the annals of art, the principal ones being Bugiardini, Francia Bigio, Visino, and Innocenza d' Imola.

Giuliano Bugiardini should be called the assistant rather than the scholar of Albertinelli, being older than his master. He was born in 1471 in a suburb outside the Via Faenza, Florence, and was placed in the shop of Domenico Ghirlandajo, where his acquaintance with Michelangelo--begun in the Medici Gardens--ripened into intimacy, and he was employed by him in the Sistine Chapel. Giuliano had that happily constructed mind which, with an ineffable content in its own works, will pass through life perfectly happy in the feeling that in reaching mediocrity it has achieved success. Not only wanting talent to produce better works, he lacked also the faculty of perceiving where his own were faulty, and having a great aptitude for copying the works of others, he felt himself as great as the original artists. Michelangelo was always amused with his naive self-conceit, and kept up a friendship with him for many years. He even went so far as to sit to Bugiardini for his likeness, at the request of Ottaviano de' Medici. Giuliano, having painted and talked nonsense for two hours, at last exclaimed, to his sitter's great relief, "Now, Michelangelo, come and look at yourself; I have caught your very expression." But what was Michelangelo's horror to see himself depicted with eyes which were neither straight nor a pair! The worthy artist looked from his work to the original, and declared he could see no difference between them, on which Michelangelo, shrugging his shoulders, said, "It must be a defect of nature," and bade his friend go on with it. This charming portrait was presented to Ottaviano de' Medici, with that of Pope Clement VII., copied from Sebastian del Piombo, and is now in the Louvre. Bugiardini's works always take the style of other masters. There is a Madonna in the Uffizi, and one in the Leipsic Museum, both in Leonardo's style, with his defects exaggerated. The former is a sickly woman in a sentimental attitude, the child rather heavy, the colouring is bright and well fused; he has evidently adopted the method which he

had seen Albertinelli use in his studio.

During a stay in Bologna he painted a *Madonna and Saints* as an altar-piece for the church of S. Francesco, besides a *Marriage of S. Catherine*, now in the Bologna Pinacoteca. The composition of this is not without merit; the child Jesus seated on his mother's knees, gives the ring to S. Catherine, little S. John stands at the Virgin's feet, S. Anthony on her left. The colouring is less pleasing, the flesh tints too red and raw.

A round picture in the Zambeccari Gallery, Bologna, shows him in Michelangelo's style. The Virgin is reading on a wooded bank, but looks up to see the infant Christ greet the approaching S. John Baptist; this is carefully, if rather hardly, painted. The lights in the Saviour's hair have been touched in with gold. The time of his stay in Bologna is uncertain, but in 1525 he was in Florence, and drawing designs for the Ringhiera with Andrea del Sarto. There is a document in the archives, proving that on October 5th, 1526 Bugiardini was paid twenty florins in gold for his share of the work. He obtained some rank as a portrait painter, in spite of his failure in that of Michelangelo; and had commissions from many of the celebrities of Florence. It was in original composition that his powers failed him. Messer Palla Rucellai ordered a picture from him of the *Martyrdom of S. Catherine*, which he began with the intention of making it a very fine work indeed. He spent several years in representing the wheels, the lightnings and fires in a sufficiently terrible aspect, but had to beg Michelangelo's assistance in drawing the men who were to be killed by those heavenly flames; his design was to have a row of soldiers in the foreground, all knocked down in different attitudes. His friend took up the charcoal and sketched in a splendid group of agonised nude figures; but these were beyond his power to shade and colour, and Tribolo made him a set of models in clay, in the attitudes given by Michelangelo, and from these he finished the work; but the great master's hand was never apparent in it. Bugiardini died at the age of seventy-five.

Of Francesco Bigi, commonly called Francia Bigio or Franciabigio, so much is said in the following life of Andrea del Sarto, that a slight sketch will suffice here. He was the son of Cristofano, and was born in 1482. His early studies were made in the Brancacci Chapel, and the Papal Hall--where he drew from the cartoons in 1505-6, and the studio of Mariotto Albertinelli, from which he passed to his partnership with Andrea del Sarto in 1509. Thus it is that his first style was marked by the influence of Mariotto and Fra Bartolommeo, while in his later works he approximated more to Andrea del Sarto.

Two of his early paintings were placed in the church of S. Piero Maggiore, one a *Virgin and Child* of great beauty. The infant clasps its arms round its mother's neck--a charming attitude--which suggests a playful effort to hide from the young S. John, who is running towards him, by nestling closer to the dearer resting place. The picture is now in the Uffizi and has been long known as *Raphael's Madonna del Pozzo*. [Footnote: Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *History of Painting*, vol. iii. chap. xv. p. 501.] No greater testimony to Francia Bigio's excellence can be given than the frequency of his works being mistaken for those of Raphael, but the influence of his contemporaries was always strong upon him. The *Annunciation*, painted for the same church, is also described by Vasari as a carefully designed work, though somewhat feeble in manner. The angel is lightly poised in air, the Virgin kneeling before a foreshortened building. The

picture was lost sight of in the demolition of the church, but Crowe and Cavalcaselle [Footnote: Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *History of Painting*, Vol. iii. p. 500.] believe they have discovered it in a picture at Turin, the authorship of which is avowedly doubtful. They mention, however, a celestial group of the Eternal Father in a cherub-peopled cloud, sending his blessing in the form of a dove, with a ray of glory. Surely if this be the one described by Vasari [Footnote: Vasari, vol. iii. p. 336] so minutely, he would not have omitted a part of the subject so important to the picture.

In 1509 we may presumably date the partnership with Andrea del Sarto, that being about the time when they began to work together in the Scalzo. Francia Bigio painted some frescoes in the church of S. Giobbe, behind the Servite Monastery. A *Visitation* was in a tabernacle at the corner of the church, and subjects from Job's life on a pilaster within it: these have long ago disappeared. The altar-piece of the *Madonna and Job*, which he painted in oil for the same church, has been more fortunate, as it still exists in the Tuscan School in the Uffizi. Though much injured, it shows his earlier style. The *Calumny of Apelles* in the same gallery is a curious picture. It is hard and dull in colouring, the prevailing tone being a heavy drab; there are several nude figures, of doubtful forms as to beauty of drawing, the flesh is painted in a smooth glazed style, without relief or tenderness.

Francia Bigio shines more in fresco than in oil; his hardness is less apparent, and he gains in freedom and brilliance of colouring in the more congenial medium. The finest of his frescoes is, unfortunately, spoiled by his own hand, and remains as a memorial of his genius and hasty temper. I allude to the *Sposalizio* (A.D. 1513) in the courtyard of the Servite church, where Andrea did his series of frescoes from the life of Filippo Benizzi. The composition is grand and carefully thought out, the colouring bright and pleasing; perhaps in emulating Andrea's luxurious style of drapery he has gone a little too far, and crowded the folds. The bridegroom is a noble figure, and shows in his face his gladness in the blossoming rod. A man in the foreground breaks a stick across his knees. The commentators of Vasari have taken this to emblemize the Roman Catholic legend of the Virgin having given rods to each of her suitors, and chosen him whose rod blossomed. Graceful women surround the Virgin, but there is perhaps a too marked sentimentality about these which suggests a striving after Raphael's style. There is, however, a great touch of nature in a mother with a naughty child, who sits crying on the ground, much to the mother's distress. Francia Bigio commenced this in Andrea's absence in France, which so excited his former comrade's emulation that he did his *Visitation* in great haste, to get it uncovered as soon as Francia Bigio's. In fact, Andrea's works were ready by the date of the annual festa of the Servites, and the monks, being anxious to uncover all the new frescoes for that day, took upon them to remove the mattings from that of Francia Bigio as well, without his permission, for he wished to give a few more finishing touches. So angry was he, on arriving in the cloister, to see a crowd of people admiring his work in what he felt to be an imperfect condition, that in an excess of rage he mounted on the scaffolding which still remained, and, seizing a hammer, beat the head of the Madonna to pieces, and ruined the nude figure breaking the rod. The monks hastened to the scene in an uproar of remonstrance, the frantic artist's destructive hand was stayed by the bystanders, but so deep was his displeasure that he refused to restore the picture, and no other hand having touched it, the fresco remains to

this day a fine work mutilated. It shows him artistically in his very best, and morally, at his worst, phase. In 1518, while Andrea was in France, the monks of the Scalzo employed Francia Bigio to fill two compartments in their pretty little cloister, where Andrea had commenced his *Life of S. John Baptist*. These are spoken of more at length in the life of that master, who on his return took the work again in his own hands. In 1521 Bigio competed with Andrea and Pontormo, in the Medici Villa at Poggio a Cajano; Andrea's *Cesar receiving Tribute* occupies one wall of the hall, and Francia Bigio's *Triumph of Cicero* another. The subjects were selected by the historian, Messer Paolo Giovio, Bishop of Nocera; it only remained for the artists to make the most of the chosen themes. Francia Bigio filled his background with a careful architectural perspective, and a crowd of muscular Romans are grouped before it. This also was left unfinished at the Pope's death, and Allori completed it in 1582. Francia Bigio, however, did many of the gilded decorations of the hall.

In the Dresden Gallery is a work, *Scenes from the Life of David*, signed A. S., MDXXIII., and his monogram, a painting very much in the style of Andrea del Sarto's *Life of Joseph*. Reumont [Footnote: *Life of Andrea del Sarto*, p. 138 et seq.] claims it as the joint work of Andrea and Francia Bigio, founding his opinion on the letters A. S. before the date; but the letters mean only *Anno salutis*, and are used in very many of Francia Bigio's signed paintings. He had the commission from Gio Maria Benintendi in 1523. It is one of those curious pictures which have many scenes in one--a style which militates greatly against artistic unity. On the right is David's palace, on the left Uriah's; David is at his door watching Bathsheba and her maidens bathing. In the centre is the siege of Rabbah; another well-draped group represents David receiving Uriah's homage. In the foreground David gives wine to Uriah at a banquet. There is careful painting and ingenious composition, but a less finished manner of colouring than in Andrea's *Joseph*, which was painted about the same time for Pier Borgherini.

Like Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, Francia Bigio fell off in his later style, partly because his ambition failed him, and also because he began to look on art as a means of livelihood--a motive which is certain death to high art.

He was especially celebrated as a portrait painter, several of his works having been attributed to Raphael. Among these are one at the Louvre and one at the Pitti Palace, both portraits of a youth in tunic and black cap, with long hair flowing over his shoulders; one in the National Gallery, formerly in Mr. Fuller Maitland's collection; the portrait of a jeweller, dated A. S., MDXVI. in Lord Yarborough's gallery; that in the Berlin Museum, of a man sitting at a desk, dated 1522; and the likeness of Pier Francesco de Medici at Windsor--all of which bear Francia Bigio's monogram, often with the letters A. S. (*Anno salutis*) before the date. He died on January 14th, 1525.

CHAPTER X.

RIDOLFO GHIRLANDAJO.
A.D. 1483--1560.

RIDOLFO (DI DOMENICO) BIGORDI, called GHIRLANDAJO, &c., was born on the 4th of January, 1483. Although not strictly a scholar, he is one of Fra Bartolommeo's principal followers. When quite a child he lost his father, the famous Domenico, who died of fever, on January 11th, 1494; his mother and uncle Benedetto only lived a few years after; and Ridolfo, with his three sisters and two brothers, was left to the guardianship of his uncle Davide.

Ridolfo was the only one who chose the family profession, and he became the fourth painter of the name of Ghirlandajo.

Davide was not a perfect artist, although a good mosaicist, as his works in the cathedrals of Orvieto, Siena, and Florence show, but he was for many years Ridolfo's only instructor. As the boy grew up Ridolfo frequented those public schools of art before spoken of, the Brancacci Chapel, and the study of the cartoons in the Papal Hall. Here he secured the friendship not only of Granacci and Pier di Cosimo, but of Raphael himself, with whom he visited Fra Bartolommeo in his convent.

Raphael permitted Ridolfo to assist him in a Madonna for Siena, and tried to persuade him to accompany him to Rome; but Ridolfo, like a true Florentine, declined to go "beyond sight of the Duomo."

His first great picture was done in 1504 for the church of San Gallo. The subject was *Christ Seizing His Cross*. His uncle Benedetto had laboured on a similar picture, now in the Louvre, but Ridolfo's is a great improvement on this; the composition is well balanced, full of force and animation, the weeping figures of the Maries and the solicitude of S. Veronica are very lifelike, although he has not entirely abolished his uncle's coarseness in the scowling, low-typed men. The Christ and the Virgin are, on the contrary, so refined as to induce the supposition that this force of contrast was intentional; the landscape is rather hard and crude in tone, the flesh tints smooth, and the handling similar to that of Credi.

The original is now in Palazzo Antinori, Florence, but a replica, in which he was assisted by Michele, his favourite pupil and adopted son, is in Santo Spirito.

Vasari speaks of a *Nativity*, painted for the Cistercian monks of Cestello; a beautiful composition, in which the Madonna adores the holy child, S. Joseph standing near her; S. Francis and S. Jerome kneel in adoration; the landscape was sketched from the hills near "La Vernia," where S. Francis received the stigmata.

Maselli says the picture was lost when the monastery changed hands, but Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle [Footnote: History of painting, vol. in. chap. xvi. pp. 523, 524.] believe they have found it in the Hermitage at S. Petersburg, under Granacci's name. It is possible that the favourite pupil of his father and Ridolfo's own friend may have assisted him. The landscape is Raphaellesque, and might mark the time when that master and Fra Bartolommeo influenced his style. His best manner approached so nearly to that of the Frate, that had he continued he would have very nearly rivalled his excellence.

His two masterpieces are now in the Uffizi; they were painted for the Brotherhood of S. Zenobio, 1510, to stand one on each side of Albertinelli's *Annunciation*. One is *S. Zenobio* (the first

bishop and patron saint of Florence) _restoring a dead child to life_; the other the _Funeral Procession of the Saint passing the Baptistery_, where an elm tree, which had been withered, put forth fresh leaves as the coffin of the bishop touched it. A marble column, with a bronze tree in relief on it, stands on the spot as a memorial of this miracle. In these two works Ridolfo Ghirlandajo proved the power which was in him, but they are the culmination of his art; he never surpassed, or indeed equalled them again. His richness of colouring and deep relief equalled that of the Frate, the animation and expression rivalled Andrea del Sarto. In the first picture, the eagerness of the crowd, the intense feeling of the mother, in whom grief for the dead child seems almost greater than the hope of his resuscitation, the sturdy, solid character of the Florentines of the Republic, are all given with a masterly hand, while a rich blending of colour fuses the animated crowd in a harmonious unison. In the latter, grandeur and dignity mark the group of ecclesiastics which surrounds the archbishop's bier, the full solid falls of their drapery show that he had well studied his father's works.

Ridolfo's brothers became monks, Don Bartolommeo lived in the Camaldoline Monastery of the Angeli, which Ridolfo beautified with many works. Paolo Uccelli had adorned the Loggia with frescoed stories from the life of S. Benedict. Ridolfo added two to the series. In one the Saint is at table with two angels, waiting for S. Romano to send his bread from the grotto, but the devil has cut the cord and taken it.

Another is _S. Benedict investing a youth with the habit of the order_. In the church of the same monastery he painted a beautiful _Madonna and Child, with Angels_, above the holy water vase, and _S. Romualdo with the Camaldolese Hermitage in his Hand_, in a lunette in the cloister. All these were done as a brotherly gift, and after they were finished, the abbot, Don Andrea Dossi, gave him a commission to paint a _Last Supper_ in the refectory, which he did, placing the portrait of the abbot in the corner.

Ridolfo, like his father, regarded art rather as a means of livelihood than with any aesthetic feelings, and this is probably the reason of his never attaining true excellence. His "bottega" was really a shop where any one might order a work of art, or of artisanship, and he gave as much attention to painting a banner for a procession as to composing an altar-piece. He had a great many assistants, whom he called on for help in various undertakings. They assisted him to prepare the Medici Halls for the reception of Pope Leo X., and later for the marriages of Giuliano and Lorenzo, not disdaining to paint scenes for the dramas which were then given. He painted banners, and designed costumes for the processions of the "potenze," a festive company, the origin of which is uncertain, but dating certainly from the Middle Ages. Each quarter of the city had an emperor, lords, and dignitaries, each of whom carried his banner or emblazonment. Grand processions, tournaments, and feasts were held once a year, on S. John's Day, by the potenze.

Having assisted at the triumphs and marriages of the Medici princes, he also furnished the funeral pomp and magnificence on the deaths of the brothers, that of Giuliano occurring in 1516, of Lorenzo 1519.

Lucratively it answered his purpose; the Medici gave him great honour; he was well paid by them, and got the commission to decorate the Chapel of the Palazzo Vecchio--a very good specimen of his fresco painting, in

which he never reached his father's excellence, although in oil he far surpassed him. The chapel is small; the groined roof is covered with emblematical designs on a blue ground, a Trinity in the midst with angels bearing symbols of the passions around. The apostles and evangelists surround this, and the principal wall has a larger fresco of the _Annunciation_--a rather conventional rendering.

Commissions flowed in on him to such a degree, that although he had fifteen children, he lived to amass money and lands, to see his daughters well married, and his sons prosperous merchants trading to distant lands. He died on the 6th of June, 1561, and lies with his forefathers in the church of S. Maria Novella.

ANDREA D'AGNOLO,
CALLED
ANDREA DEL SARTO.

CHAPTER I.

YOUTH AND EARLY WORKS.
A.D. 1487-1511.

Andrea Del Sarto is a curious instance of the vital power of art, which, like a flower forcing its way to the light through walls or rocks, will find expression in spite of obstacles.

Andrea the painter, "senza errori," was an artist in spite of lowering home influences, of want of encouragement in his patrons--for his greatest works only brought the smallest remuneration--and even in spite of his own nature, which was material, wanting in high aims, and deficient in ideality; yet his name lives for ever as a great master, and his works rank close to those of the leaders of the Renaissance.

In looking at them one sighs even in the midst of admiration, thinking that if the hand which produced them had been guided by a spark of divine genius instead of the finest talent, what glorious works they would have been! The truth is that Andrea's was a receptive, rather than an original and productive mind. His art was more imitative than spontaneous, and this forms perhaps the difference between talent and genius. The art of his time sunk into his mind, and was reproduced. He lived precisely at the time of the culmination of art, when all the highest masters were bringing forth their grandest works; therefore he could not do otherwise than to follow the best examples.

He gathered the experience of all--the force of Michelangelo, the handling of Leonardo, the sentiment of Raphael, so blending them as to form a style seemingly his own, and in execution following closely on their excellence.

In Giotto's or Masaccio's case the master created the art; in Andrea's it was the art of the age which made the artist.

The question of Andrea del Sarto's birth is a mooted one. Biadi dates it 1478, but the register he quotes is both vague and doubtful. He also tells a curious story of his Flemish origin. Signor Milanese has deduced, from the archives of Florence, an authentic pedigree from which we learn that his remote ancestors were peasants, first at Buiano, near Fiesole, and later at S. Ilario, near Montereggi. His grandfather, Francesco, being a linen weaver, came to live nearer Florence; his father, Agnolo, son of Francesco, followed the trade of a tailor--hence Andrea's sobriquet, "del Sarto"--he took a house in Via Gualfonda, in Florence, about 1487, with his wife Constanza, and here Andrea was born, he being the eldest of a family of five--three girls and two boys. From the tax papers of a few years later it is proved that Andrea was born in 1487. His full name is Andrea d'Agnolo di Francesco. It is by mistake that he has been called Vannucchi.

His parents were young, his father being only twenty-seven years of age at Andrea's birth. They lived at that time in Val Fonda, where Albertinelli had his shop, but in 1504 they removed to the popolo, or parish, of S. Paolo. Boys were not allowed to be idle in those days, but were apprenticed at an early age; thus Andrea, like most artists of his time, was bound to a goldsmith. It would be interesting to investigate the great influence of the guild of goldsmiths on the art of the Renaissance. The reason why youths who showed a talent for design were entered in that guild is easy to assign--it was one of the "greater" guilds, that of the painters being a lesser one, and merged in the "Arte degli Speciali." At seven years old he left the school where he had learned to read and write, and entered his very youthful apprenticeship; but he showed so much more aptitude for the designing than for the executive part of his profession that _Giovanni Barile_, who frequented the bottega, was induced to counsel his being trained especially as a painter, offering himself as instructor. If Andrea, a contadino by birth, an artisan by education, was not originally of the most refined nature, his artistic training did not go far towards refining him. Giovanni Barile was a coarse painter and a rough man; he had, however, generosity enough to see that the boy was worthy of better teaching, and got him entered in the bottega of Piero di Cosimo, who had attained a good rank as a colourist, his eccentricities possibly adding to his reputation.

Accordingly in 1498, Andrea being then eleven years of age, a life of earnest study began. Piero di Cosimo, odd and misanthropic as he was, had yet a true appreciation of talent, and showed an earnest interest in his pupil, giving him--with plenty of queer treatment--a thorough training. "He was not allowed to make a line which was not perfect" [Footnote: Rosini, *Storia della Pittura*, chap. xvii. p. 40.] while in Piero's school. But excellent as his art teaching may have been, the boy's morale could not have been raised more here than under the rough but good-natured Barile. We have seen Piero di Cosimo in his youth, the serious, absent young man, who never joked with his juniors in Cosimo Roselli's shop; we see him now, with his youthful oddities hardened into eccentricities, and his reserve deepened to misanthropy. No woman's hand softened and refined his house, no cleansing broom was allowed within his door, and no gardener's hand cleared the weeds or pruned the vines in his garden. He so believed in nature unassisted that he took his meals without the intervention of a cook. When the fire was lighted to boil his size or glue he would cook fifty or sixty eggs and set them apart in a basket, to which he had recourse when the pangs of hunger compelled him. All this was morally very bad for a boy

so young. And then woe betide the poor little fellow if he whistled, sneezed, or made any other noise! his nervous master would be out of temper for a day afterwards. On wet days Piero was merrier, for he would watch the drops splashing into the pools, and laugh as if they were fairies. Sometimes he would take Andrea for a walk, and all at once stop and gaze at a heap of rubbish, or mark of damp on a lichened wall, picturing all kinds of monsters and weird scenes in its discolourations.

No doubt he was literally carrying out Leonardo da Vinci's advice, headed, in his treatise, "A new Art of Invention." "Look at some old wall covered with dirt, or the odd appearance of some old streaked stones; you may discover several things like landscapes, battles, clouds, humorous faces, &c., to furnish the mind with new designs." [Footnote: Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*.] Cosimo's mind being fantastic, the pictures he saw were incomparably grotesque. He delighted in drawing sea monsters, dragons, wonderful adventures, and heathen scenes; in fact the boy could have learned neither Christian art nor manners from him. He learned how to use his brush, however, and, leaving Piero to his minotaurs and dragons, went off at every spare hour to study at more congenial shrines. He copied Masaccio at the Brancacci Chapel, and drew so earnestly from the cartoons in the Hall of the Pope that his achievements reached the ears of Piero himself, who was not sorry that his pupil surpassed the rest, and gave him more time for study away from the bottega. Rosini tells us that "Fra Bartolommeo taught him the first steps." [Footnote: *Storia della Pittura*, chap, xxvii. p. 2.] The influence of the Frate may have reached him in two ways. It is not unlikely that Piero di Cosimo kept up an interest in his old fellow-pupil; and then again, as Andrea lived in Val Fonda, it is probable he often visited Albertinelli's studio in that street, and the friendship with Francia Bigio began before the cartoons of Michelangelo ripened there.

The evidence of style goes to show that the works of Albertinelli and Fra Bartolommeo influenced him more than those of Piero. Yet though his sphere was devotional, it was "impelled more by a material sense of beauty than by the deep religious feeling which inspired the Frate."

As time went on the youth in strange old Piero's studio became more famous than his master, and felt that he could do greater things away from the stiff method which cramped him, and the whimsicalities which annoyed him. His friend, Francia Bigio, Mariotto's pupil, having just then lost his master, who was giving more attention to his father-in-law's business of innkeeper than his own, was willing to enter into partnership, and the two youths began life together in 1509 or 1510, in a room near the Piazza del Grano, in the first house in Via del Moro, which still remains in its old state.

The first bit of patronage recorded is the commission for the frescoes in the Scalzo; that they had work before is proved by the words in the contract of the Barefoot Friars, "dettero ad Andrea pittore *_celeberrimo_* il dipingere nel Chiosto." The "celebrated" presupposes works already done.

The Scalzo was a name given to the "Compagnia dei Disciplinati di S. Giovanni Battista," because they went barefoot when they carried the cross in their processions. They lived in a convent in Via Larga (now Cavour), opposite San Marco. A new cloister had been erected there--an elegant little cortile, thirty-eight feet by thirty-two, adorned with

lovely Corinthian pillars--and the Brethren were anxious to fill the lunettes of the arches with frescoes at the least possible expense, wisely judging that a young artist on his way to fame would be the best to employ.

The frescoes, of which there would be twelve large, and four small ones in the upright spaces by the doors, were to be done in "terretta," or brown earth, and to be paid fifty-six lire (eight scudi) for the large, and twenty-one lire (three scudi) each for the lesser frescoes. The small ones were four figures of the Virtues, _Faith_, _Hope_, _Justice_, and _Charity_. _Hope_ is exquisitely expressed, and _Charity_ a charming group, the children most tenderly drawn. The subjects, though not all finished till many years later, stand now in the following order; the second row of figures, with the dates, show the order in which they were painted:--

1. Gabriel appearing to Zacharias Andrea del Sarto 9 1523.
2. Visitation Andrea del Sarto 10 1523.
3. Birth of S. John Andrea del Sarto 4 1514.
4. Zacharias blessing John before going Francia Bigio.
to the desert
5. S. John meets the Virgin and Infant Francia Bigio.
Christ
6. Baptism of Christ Andrea del Sarto 1 1509.
7. Preaching of S. John Andrea del Sarto 2 1514.
8. Baptism of the Gentiles Andrea del Sarto 3 1514.
9. S. John bound in the presence of Herod Andrea del Sarto 5 1522.
10. Dance of Herodias Andrea del Sarto 6 1522.
11. Beheading of S. John Andrea del Sarto 7 1522.
12. Herodias receives the head of S. John Andrea del Sarto 8 1522.

Of these, No. 6 was the first executed, and it is probable that Francia Bigio assisted him, for it has not the finished drawing nor careful handling of any of Andrea's other frescoes. Possibly this is the cause of the partners never working together afterwards, each taking his own subjects and signing his own name. The composition, in the _Baptism of Christ_, is not original, being very similar to that of Verocchio's, especially in the two angels kneeling on the left bank; the landscape and figures, however, are far in advance of that master.

It will be well to speak of the whole set of frescoes in this place, for although they belong to different times and styles, they are a complete work, and might be taken almost as an epitome of Andrea's career; from the one above mentioned in which Piero de Cosimo's influence is apparent, to the Nos. 7 and 8, which very nearly approach Michelangelo's power and freedom.

In No. 1 the expression of muteness about the mouth of Zacharias, as he stands by the altar, is wonderfully given; you feel sure he could not speak if he would. The other figures are superfluous to the motive, though adding grandeur to the work as a whole.

In composition Andrea differs widely from Fra Bartolommeo. The latter delighted in building up a single form, every figure in the whole picture adding its hue and weight to perfect this pyramid or circle. Andrea spreads his figures more widely; he likes a double composition, dividing his pictures into two separate groups, connected by one central figure, or divided entirely. This is seen in Nos. 3, 10 and 12, which are all double groupings, the last completely divided in the

centre by a table and an archway behind it. Nos. 7 and 9 are pyramidal compositions. The *Preaching of S. John* is one of the best works, and shows his most forcible style. S. John on a rock stands like a pillar in the centre, the hearers are dressed in the "lucco" (a Florentine cloak of the 15th century), the grouping following the lines of the landscape. At the back Jesus kneels on a rising ground. Vasari says the figures are from Albrecht Durer, whose works had made a great impression on the southern world of art; but it is more probable that they only show his influence, for the dress and style are Florentine.

No. 8, the *Baptism of the Gentiles*, is another of his best style, and is, in the drawing of the nude figures, almost Michelangelesque in power. This is one of his favourite "echo" subjects, a group in the background of *John answering the Pharisees* forming an echo to the principal subject. The muscular life of the spirited crowd of nude figures is beautifully contrasted by the graceful draped forms in the background. One of the baptized is the same child whom he had modelled in the *Madonna* of S. Francisco.

Nos. 4 and 5 are by Francia Bigio, and were done during Andrea's absence in France, showing that he had so far learned from his friend as almost to rival him in power. The subjects, although not scriptural, are conjecturally true.

In the *Zacharias blessing John before he goes to the Desert*, the sitting figure of S. Elizabeth and the kneeling one of the child are very lovely; the action of Zacharias is not so well defined, the great force in the uplifted arm betokens anger more than blessing. The grouping follows the lines of a flight of steps in the background, and is triangular.

The same form of composition is apparent in the next group (No. 5), only the lines form an angle receding from the one just mentioned. The Virgin is charmingly posed and draped, the children less pleasing.

This elegant little cloister is a true shrine of art, although the frescoes are all in monochrome. So much were they admired at the time, that an order was issued prohibiting artists to copy them without the permission of Duke Cosimo. Cardinal Carlo de' Medici had them covered with curtains, [Footnote: Richa, *Delle Chiese*] but, in spite of care, they are very much injured, the under parts almost lost. The precaution of covering the cloister with a glass roof has only been taken in modern times, and too late.

Andrea's next patrons were the Eremite monks of S. Agostino, at San Gallo, who ordered of him two pictures for their church. In 1511 he painted *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen*, and an *Annunciation* in 1512. The former is said to have had much softness and delicacy, the latter is to be seen in the Hall of Mars at the Pitti, and is a very pleasing picture. The Virgin kneels at her prayer desk, S. Joseph behind her--a rather unusual rendering of the subject--her attitude is graceful and decorous, the angel calm and gentle, floats in mid air, two other angels stand on the left. The colouring is varied in the extreme, and the lights well defined.

These two pictures, and the *Disputa*, painted later, were removed to the church of S. Jacopo tra Fossi, when the convent was demolished in 1529. They were still there in 1677, when Bocchi wrote his *Bellezze di Firenze*, but the *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen* is said to be

now in the church of the Covoni in the Casentino.

CHAPTER II.

THE SERVITE CLOISTER.

A.D. 1511-1512.

The next great works were the frescoes in the Court of S. Annunziata, if indeed they were not carried on simultaneously with those in the Scalzo. This famous series of Andrea's works was obtained by cunning, and painted in emulation. While the two partners, who had differed from the beginning, and had since become rivals, were engaged in the Scalzo, a certain astute Fra Mariano, the keeper of the wax candle stores at the Servite Convent--to which the church of the S. Annunziata belonged--had watched well those two young painters. Fra Mariano understood human nature, as priests often do; he had seen the envious rivalry growing between them, as the friends, who should have worked together, took separate compartments, and cast jealous criticising glances on each other's designs and method of work. Having ambition of his own, he knew how to work on that of others to further his own aspirations, which were, to be considered a patron of art and a benefactor to his convent.

Reading Andrea's heart, he played on all his strongest feelings, placed before him the glory he would win by covering the lunettes of the arches in the court of the fine church with frescoes which would carry his name down to posterity; he said that any other artist would pay much to obtain leave to paint upon historical walls like those, and how they would all envy the man who should obtain the coveted honour! Then, with a half-whispered hint that for one, Francia Bigio was dying to get the commission for nothing, the wily Frate went his way victorious. Andrea, scorning to make any pecuniary bargain, only stipulated that no one else should paint in that courtyard, and forthwith began the Stories from the Life of S. Filippo Benizzi, having only old Alesso Baldovinetti's Nativity, and Cosimo Roselli's Miracle of S. Filippo, as foils to his own. These two works were on the walls on each side of the church door; there were therefore three entire sides of the cloister to cover, excepting only the entrance into the courtyard from the Piazza, and no doubt he felt like Ghirlandajo, when "he wished he had the entire circuit of the city walls to paint."

On the 16th of June, 1511, he began to paint with such vigour that in a few months the first three were uncovered.

1. S. Philip at Viterbo with the Court, dressing a naked leper in his own cloak.

2. S. Philip going from Bologna to Modena. He rebukes some gamblers, telling them the vengeance of God is near. A sudden thunderstorm and lightning destroy them, thus fulfilling the prediction. There is a great deal of fine action in this composition; the horror and disbelief struggling in the faces of the men, and the stormy landscape are all well rendered. A horse leaps away with strong, terrified action, there is a masterly grasp of his vivid subject, and a rugged strength in the execution which gives great life to it.

3. S. Philip exorcises a Girl possessed of a Demon. Here the composition is very tender, the mother and father support the sick girl, and form a very pleasing group; the figures of the spectators are full of life without exaggeration.

These works have suffered much from exposure, but the colouring is still good. The praise that Andrea obtained for them was so great that he followed them up by the two in the next series.

4. A Child brought to life by touching the bier of S. Philip.

This is a kind of double composition, the child being represented in a twofold condition in the foreground, first as dead, and then revived at the touch of the bier. The grouping around the dead saint is very suggestive of Ghirlandajo, and shews a deep study of his frescoes in the Sassetti Chapel. The colouring is peculiarly his own; there is the mingling of a great variety of bright tints of equal intensity, which by some necromancy are made to relieve each other, instead of being relieved by the art of chiaroscuro as in the handling of other masters.

5. Children healed by the garments of S. Philip, which are held by a priest, standing before an altar, the women and their children kneeling in front of him. The grouping is symmetrical, the figures lifelike, but not refined, round-cheeked buxom women, and rough, human men's faces, bespeak Andrea as the painter of reality rather than ideality; there is vivid life in every attitude, but the life is not high caste. A fine old man, leaning on his staff, is a portrait of Andrea della Robbia, whose son Luca stands near.

For all these Fra Mariano paid only ten scudi each, and Andrea, feeling the remuneration not equal to the merit of the work, would have left off here, but the Frate held him to his bond. Two more lunettes yet remained to finish, but as these were of a later date, we will reserve them for a future chapter. He also painted in the orto, or garden, of the convent, the now perished fresco of the Parable of the Vineyard.

Meanwhile, the rival friends had changed lodgings; they left the Piazza del Grano, and took rooms in the Sapienza, a street between the Piazza San Marco and the S. Annunziata. Andrea chose this because it was near his work, and also because his great friends, Sansovino and Rustici, already lived there. Commissions began to pour in on him, which he fulfilled, while still at work at the Servi. Judging from the style of his early manner, we may date at this time a Virgin and Child, with S. John and S. Joseph, now in the Pitti. It is painted "alla prima," i.e. a quick method of giving the effect in the first painting,--and is probably the one spoken of by Vasari as painted for Andrea Santini; it formerly belonged to Francesco Troschi. [Footnote: Life of Andrea del Sarto, vol iii, p. 193.]

A S. Agnes, in the palace of the Prince Palatine, at Dusseldorf, is in this early style. He also painted some frescoes at San Salvi, SS. Giovanni Gualberto and Benedict resting on clouds; they ornamented the recess where the Last Supper was placed at a later period.

In a narrow alley, behind the church of Or San Michele, is a tabernacle on the wall beneath an ancient balcony. Here the architect, Baccio d'Agnolo, commissioned Andrea del Sarto to paint an Annunciation. It

is so much injured as to be almost indistinguishable now, but was much admired at the time, though some say it was too laboured, and so wanting in ease and grace. [Footnote: Biadi, 26; Vasari, vol. iii, p 189.] It is more likely that it was one of his early works, and should be classed before the frescoes of the Scalzo, for it is said that he was living at the time with his father, whose shop was over the archway, and that he had adorned the inner walls of the house with two frescoed angels. [Footnote: *_Firenze antica e moderna_* Ed. Flor. 1794, vol. vi, p. 216.] These have perished completely.

CHAPTER III.

SOCIAL LIFE AND MARRIAGE. A.D. 1511-1516.

This chapter will speak of the *_man_*, and not of the *_artist_*. As it is now understood that history is not a dry record of battles and laws, but the story of the inner life of a people, so the biography of a painter ought not to consist wholly in a list and description of his works, but a picture of his life and inner mind, that we may know the character which prompted the works.

First, as to personal appearance. There are two portraits of Andrea del Sarto in his youth; one in the Duke of Northumberland's collection represents him as a young man with long hair, and a black cap, writing at a table. It is painted in a soft, harmonious style, but not masterly as regards chiaroscuro. It might be by Francia Bigio, as it has something of the manner of his master, Albertinelli.

Another now in the Uffizi is a most life-like portrait of sombre colouring, but not highly finished. Here we have the same black cap and long hair; the dress is a painter's blouse of a blue-grey, which well brings out the flesh tints. The face is intelligent, but not refined; the clear dark eyes bespeak the artist spirit, but the full mobile mouth tells the material nature of the man. In looking at this one can solve the riddle of the dissonance between his art and his life. As a young man Andrea was full of spirit; he loved lively society, and knew almost all the young artists who lived very much as students now. They met each other in the art schools, and dined and feasted together in the wine shops. Sometimes they formed private clubs, meeting in certain rooms for purposes of youthful merriment.

Of this kind was the "Society of the Cauldron" ("*Societa del Paiuolo*"), held at the apartment of the eccentric sculptor, Rustici, which was in the same street as that of Andrea himself.

Sansovino, who also lived near, was not a member of this rollicking club; he was one of Andrea's more serious friends, and served as companion when his most exalted moods were upon him. Perhaps Rustici's rooms did not please Sansovino, for strange inmates were there--a hedgehog, an eagle, a talking raven, snakes and reptiles, in a kind of aquarium; besides all these gruesome familiar spirits, Rustici was addicted to necromancy. The Society of the Cauldron seems only a natural outgrowth from such a character. It consisted of twelve members, all artists, goldsmiths, or musicians, each of whom was

allowed to bring four friends to the supper, and bound to provide a dish. Any two members bringing similar dishes were fined, but the droll part of it was that the suppers were eaten in a huge cauldron large enough to put table and chairs into; the handle served as an arched chandelier, the table was on a lift, and when one course was finished it disappeared from their midst, and descended to be replenished. As for the viands, the sculptors displayed their talents in moulding classical subjects in pastry, and turning boiled fowls into figures of Ulysses and Laertes. The architects built up temples and palaces of jellies, cakes, and sausages; the goldsmith, Robetta, produced an anvil and accoutrements made of a calf's head, the painters treated roast pig to represent a scullery-maid spinning.

Andrea del Sarto built up the model of the Baptistery with all kinds of eatables, with a reading desk of veal, and book with letters inlaid with truffles, at which the choristers were roast thrushes with open beaks, while the canons were pigeons in red mantles of beetroot--an idea more droll than reverential.

After this, in 1512, another club, called that of the "Trowel," was instituted, of which Andrea was not a member, but was chosen as an associate. The first supper was arranged by Giuliano Bugiardini, and was held on the _aja_ or threshing floor of S. Maria Nuova, where the bronze gates of the Baptistery had been cast.

In this no two members were allowed to wear the same style of dress under penalty of a fine. The members were in two ranks, the "lesser" and the "greater," a parody on the guilds of the city. They were shown the plan of a building, and the "greater" members, furnished with trowels, were obliged to build it in edibles, the "lesser" acting as hodmen, and bringing materials. Pails of ricotta or goat's milk cheese served for mortar, grated cheese for sand, sugar plums for gravel, cakes and pastry for bricks, the basement was of meats, the pillars fowls or sausages.

Some suppers were classical scenes, others allegorical representations, always in the same edible form. We can imagine the wit which sparkled round these strange tables, the jokes of the artists, the songs of the musicians. Andrea del Sarto is said to have recited an heroi-comic poem in six cantos called the "Battle of the frogs and mice." Biadi gives it entire; it seems a kind of satire on Rustici's tastes, with perhaps a hit at the government, and shows no lack of wit of rather unrefined style; but the authorship is not proved. Some say Ottaviano de Medici assisted Andrea in it.

It would have been well for Andrea if this innocent jollity had sufficed for him, but unfortunately he admired a woman whose beauty was greater than her merits. Probably he began by mere artistic appreciation of her personal charms, for she sat to him for the _Madonna of the Visitation_, which was painted in 1514, two years before their marriage. This Lucrezia della Fede was the wife of a hatter who lived in Via San Gallo. Her husband dying after a short illness, Andrea del Sarto married her, and whatever were her faults, she retained his life-long love. Biadi and Reumont give the date 26th of December, 1512, as that of the death of her husband, but Signor Milanese, from more authentic sources, proves it to have been in 1516.

A great deal has been said and written of the evil influence this woman had on him, and his very house bears an inscription recording his fame

together with "affanni domestici," but it would seem that posterity has taken for truth more than the facts of the time imply. That she was proud, haughty, exacting, and not of a high moral nature, that she was selfish, and begrudged his helping his own family, her every action proves. That her manners were not conciliating to the pupils is possible, perhaps their manners savoured too much of familiarity for a woman who believed in her own charms; but that she was faithless, which her biographers assert on the strength of Vasari's phrase, "that Andrea was tormented by jealousy," there is literally nothing to show.

In the first place Vasari--who was one of the scholars she offended and put down--gives vent to his private pique in his first edition, and in the second, which only contains a slight mention of her, omits almost all he had previously said. Now, if the first assertions were true why should he retract them? Secondly, the sixteenth century was an age of license in writing and speaking, and had any immoralities been laid to her charge, not a biographer would have scrupled to particularize them; but no! her name is never mentioned, except with her husband's, even by her greatest enemies, who say she was as haughty as she was beautiful. Thirdly, a faithless woman could never have kept her husband's devoted love, and had she been so, would that affectionate though exaggerated letter of hers, recalling him from France, have been written? That a man who thinks his wife the most lovely creature living may be tormented with jealousy without wrong doing on her part is more than possible.

Let us then place Lucrezia's character where it ought to stand in Andrea del Sarto's life--as a powerful influence, lowering his moral nature, weaning him from his duties as a son and brother, by fixing all his care and affection on herself; she, however, not allowing her own family to be losers by her marriage, although causing him to slight his own. Even this much-spoken-of neglect of his own family seems disproved by his will, which, after a very little more than her own dot left to his wife, makes his brother and niece heirs of all his estate.

Except that she cared more for her own pleasure than his true advancement, she was not any great hindrance to his artistic career; he painted an incredible number of pictures, and she was willing to sit for him over and over again. Indeed if she were his model for all the Madonnas in which her features are recognisable, she must have had either inexhaustible patience or great love for the artist.

In fact she was thoroughly selfish; as long as she reaped the benefit of his work she furthered his art; where she was left out of his consideration he must be brought back to her side at any sacrifice to him. This is not the stuff of which an artist's wife ought to be made; the influence of a strong-willed selfish nature on his weak and material one was not good, and his morale became lowered.

He felt this deterioration less than his friends felt it for him; even Vasari says that "though he lived in torment, he yet accounted it a high pleasure." It was one of those unions in which the man gives everything, and the woman receives and allows every sacrifice. Her family were kept at his expense, her daughter loved as his own, and if she were haughty or exacting, he suffered with a Socratic patience, thinking life with her a privilege.

It is to be supposed that a member of the societies of the Cauldron and the Trowel would appreciate good living. He was so devoted to the

pleasures of the table that he went to market himself early every morning and came home laden with delicacies. [Footnote: Biadi, *Notizie inedite*, &c., chap. xix. p. 62.] A curious confirmation of this is to be found in his house, the dining-room of which is beautifully frescoed, the arched roof in Raphaellesque scrolls and grotesques; while the lunettes of one wall have two large pictures, one of a woman roasting birds over a fire, the other of a servant preparing the table for dinner. This love of good living, however, in the end shortened his life, according to Biadi.

After his marketing was over he turned his attention to art, going to his fresco painting followed by his scholars, or superintending their work in the "bottega." He was always a kind and thorough master, his manner just and fatherly.

Sometimes he and Sansovino or other friends lounged away an hour in the neighbouring shop of Nanni Unghero, where their mutual friend, Niccolo Tribolo, did all the hard work, fetching and carrying blocks and saws grumblingly. Tribolo often begged Sansovino to take him as his pupil, which he did afterwards, and he became a famous sculptor. One of Andrea's acquaintances was Baccio Bandinelli, who, as he thought he could equal Michelangelo in sculpture, imagined that only a knowledge of Andrea del Sarto's method of colouring was necessary to enable him to surpass him in painting. To gain this knowledge he proposed to sit to Andrea for his portrait. His friend, discovering his motive, succeeded in frustrating it by mixing a quantity of colours in seeming confusion on his palette, and yet getting from this chaos exactly the tints he required. So Baccio never rivalled his friend in colouring after all, not being able to understand his method.

CHAPTER IV.

WORKS IN FLORENCE.

A.D. 1511-1515.

From 1511 to 1514 Andrea was employed on the two last frescoes in the courtyard of the SS. Annunziata the *Epiphany* and the *Nativity of the Virgin*. The sum fixed for these was ninety-eight lire, but the Servite brothers augmented it by forty-two lire more, seeing the work was "veramente maravigliosa"; thus these two were paid at the same rate as the other five of S. Filippo--seventy lire or ten scudi each.

In the *Nativity*, one of the finest of his frescoes, we see his favourite double grouping, the interest in the mother being kept to one side, that of the child and its attendants to the other--a balance of form united by Joachim, a stern, finely moulded figure in the centre. The attitudes are natural, the draperies free and graceful. Old Vasari justly remarks "pajono di carne le figure." The woman standing in the centre of the room is Lucrezia della Fede; this is the first known likeness of her. There is a richness of colour without impasto, a modulation of shade giving full relief without startling contrast, a clear air below and celestial haze in the angel-peopled clouds above.

This might well be classed as on the highest level ever reached in fresco. Nearly fifty years after it was painted, while Jacopo d'Empoli

was copying this fresco, an old woman came through the courtyard to mass, and, stopping to watch the young artist at his work, began to talk of the days of her youth and beauty when she sat for the likeness of that natural figure in the midst, no doubt sighing as she looked at the freshness of the fresco, and thought of her many wrinkles and aged limbs, she being nearly fourscore at the time.

The *Epiphany* is also a remarkable work, more lively than the last; it is also less carefully painted, the graceful feminine element is wanting; there is plenty of activity, a crowded composition, and richness of colour. Three figures are especially interesting as likenesses; that of the musician Francesco Ajolle--a great composer of madrigals, who went to France in 1530, and spent the remainder of his life there; Sansovino, on the right of Ajolle; and near him Andrea himself--the same face as the portrait in the Uffizi already spoken of.

The *Madonna del Sacco*, over the door of the entrance to the church from the cloister, would seem to have been painted in the same year, 1514, judging from Biadi's extract from the MS. account books of the Servite Fathers existing in the archives, where is an entry "Giugno, 1514, ad Andrea del Sarto, per resto della Madonna del Sacco, lire 56." This term *resto* (remainder) would imply a previous payment. The money was a thank-offering from a woman for having been absolved from a vow by one of the Servite priests. Like all his other frescoes of this church, Andrea only gained ten scudi for this masterpiece. The date of MDXXV. and the words "Quem genuit adoravit" on the pilasters of this work have led most writers to suppose it painted in that year; but it is probable they were added by a later hand. Biadi [Footnote: Biadi, *Notizie*, &c., p. 42 note.] says the letters are of the style of nearly two centuries later, that Andrea would have signed it, like all his other works, with his monogram of the crossed A's (i.e. Andrea d' Agnolo). For charming soft harmonies of colour, simplicity, and grace of design, this surpasses all his other frescoes. The Madonna has an imposing grandeur of form, there is a boyish strength and moulding in the limbs of the child which is very expressive, the dignity of Joseph and majesty of the Virgin are not to be surpassed; and yet the whole is given in a space so cramped that all the figures have to be reclining or sitting.

[Illustration of Monogram]

After this Andrea returned to the Scalzo, the Barefoot Brothers offering better pay than the Servites. Here he did the allegory of *Justice* and the *Sermon of S. John* in monochrome. In these he took a fancy to retrograde his style, for they have the rugged force and angular form that recalls the more stern old Italian masters, or that Titan of northern art, Albrecht Durer.

Of his works in oil at this era we may class--

1. The *Story of Joseph*, painted for Zanobi Girolami Bracci, which Borghini judges a beautiful picture. The figures were small, but the painting highly finished. It came afterwards into the possession of the Medici family.
2. A *Madonna*, with decorations and models surrounding it like a frame, was painted for Sansovino's patron, Giovanni Gaddi, afterwards clerk of the chamber to Ferdinand I. It was existing in the collection of the Gaddi Pozzi family in Borghini's time.

3. Annunciation, for Giovanni di Paolo Merciajo, now in the Hall of Saturn in the Pitti Palace. It is a pretty composition, the Virgin sitting, yet half kneeling, the angel on his knees before her. There is a yellowish light in the sky between two looped dark green curtains; the angel's yellow robe takes the light beautifully.

4. Madonna and Child, in the "Hall of the Education of Jupiter" in the Pitti Palace, one of his most pleasing groups. This is supposed by the commentators of Vasari to be the altarpiece painted for Giovanni di Paolo Merciajo, but Biadi traces it through the possession of Antonio, son of Zanobi Bracci, to its present possessors. The mistake arises from Vasari often confusing the names Annunciations and Assumptions with Madonnas.

5. A Holy Family, for Andrea Santini, which awakened great admiration in Florence. It was in the possession of Signer Alessandro Curti Lepri, by whose permission Morghen's print was taken.

6. The Head of our Saviour, over the altar of the SS. Annunziata, ordered by the sacristan of the order. A magnificent head, full of grandeur and expression, and very clear in the flesh tints. Empoli made several copies of it.

7. The Madonna di San Francesco, Andrea's masterpiece among easel pictures. It was a commission from a monk of the order of "Minorites of Santa Croce," who was intendant of the nuns of S. Francesco, and advised them to employ Andrea. In grandiose simplicity this surpasses Albertinelli's Visitation, in soft gradations and rich mellowness of colour it equals Fra Bartolommeo at his best, for tenderness in the attitude of the child it is quite Raphaelesque. The Madonna is standing on a pedestal adorned with sculptured harpies. She holds the Divine Child in one arm; its little hands are twined tenderly round her neck, and it seems to be climbing closer to her. The two children at her feet give a suggestive triangular grouping, while the dignified figures of S. Francis and S. John the Evangelist form supports on each side, and rear up a pyramid of beauty. Rosini's term "soave" just expresses this picture, so fused and soft, rich yet transparent in the colouring. The olive-brown robe of one saint is balanced by the rich red of the other. In the Virgin, a deep blue and mellow orange are combined by a crimson bodice. The price paid to the painter for this was low because he asked little; but a century or two later, Ferdinando de' Medici, son of Cosmo III., spent 20,000 scudi to restore the church, and had a copy of the picture made in return for a gift of the original, which is now the gem of the Tribune in the Uffizi.

8. The Disputa, di S. Agostino is another masterpiece, showing as much power as the last-named work displays of softness. It was painted at the order of the Eremite monks of San Gallo for their church of San Jacopo tra Fossi, where it was injured by a flood in 1557, and removed later to the Hall of Saturn in the Pitti Palace. The composition is level, the four disputing saints standing in a row, the two listeners, S. Sebastian and Mary Magdalen, kneeling in front. S. Agostino, with fierce vehemence, expounds the mystery of the Trinity; S. Stephen turns to S. Francesco interrogatively, S. Domenico (whom Vasari, by the way, calls S. Peter Martyr) has a face full of silent eloquence--he seems only waiting his turn to speak. In S. Sebastian we have a good study from the nude, and in Mary Magdalen's kneeling

figure--a charming portrait of Lucrezia--is concentrated the principal focus of colour.

9. Four Saints, SS. Gio. Battista, Gio. Gualberto, S. Michele, and Bernardo Cardinale, a beautifully-painted picture, once in the Hermitage of Vallombrosa. There were originally two little angels in the midst dividing the saints, as in our illustration. When the picture was transferred to the Gallery of the Belle Arti, where it now is, the angels were taken out and the divided saints brought into a more compact group. The angels are in a frame between two frescoed Madonnas of Fra Bartolommeo.

By this time the fame of Andrea del Sarto, both as a fresco and oil painter, had risen to the highest point. Michelangelo only echoed the opinion of others when he said to Raphael, "There is a little fellow in Florence who will bring the sweat to your brow if ever he is engaged in great works." His style of composition was important, his figures varied and life-like, his draperies dignified. "The main excellence, however, in which Andrea stands unique among his contemporaries rests in the incomparable blending of colour, in the soft flesh tints, in the exquisite chiaroscuro, in the transparent clearness even of his deepest shadows, and in his entirely new manner of perfect modelling."

[Footnote: Lubke History of Art, vol. ii. p. 241.] His method, as shown in an unfinished picture of the Adoration of the Magi in the Guadagni Palace, was to paint on a light ground; the sketch was a black outline, the features and details not defined, but often roughly indicated. He finished first the sky and background. The flesh tints, draperies, &c., were all true in tone from the first laying in.

[Footnote: Eastlake's Materials for History of Oil Painting.] He did not place shades one over the other, and fuse them together glaze by glaze as Leonardo did, but used an opaque dead colouring which allowed of correction; the system was rapid, but deficient in depth and mellowness; "the lights are fused and bright," but "the shadows, owing to their viscous consistency, imperfectly fill the outlines."

[Footnote: Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. in. chap. xvii. p. 670.] In a Holy Family in the Louvre, S. Elizabeth's hand is painted across S. John, and shows the shadow underneath it, being grey at that part. Though more solid, he could not paint light over dark without injuring his brilliance of colour.

Albertinelli, on the contrary, when he painted and repainted his Annunciation, washed out the under layer with essential oil before making his "pentimenti" or corrections, and in this way the thinness was kept.

In Andrea's early style this thinness is apparent, especially in the Joseph series, painted for Pier Francesco Borgherini.

Biadi classes Andrea's works in three styles. The first showing the influence of Piero di Cosimo, the second--to which the best works in the Servi cloisters belong--is a larger and more natural style, after the study of Michelangelo and Leonardo.

The third is the natural development in his own practice of a perfect knowledge of art, and a just appreciation of nature. The Birth of the Baptist and the Cenacolo, of San Salvi, belong to his last and greatest manner. In 1515 the Florentine artists were employed on more perishable works than frescoes. Leo X., the Medici Pope who had been elected in 1513, made his triumphal entry into Florence on the 3rd

of September, 1515, on his way to meet Francis I. of France at Bologna. All the guilds and ranks of Florence vied with each other to make his reception as artistic as possible. He and his suite were obliged to stay three days in the Villa Gianfigliuzzi at Marignolle while the triumphal preparations were being completed. The churches had temporary _facades_ of splendid architecture in fresco; arches were erected at the Porta Romana and Piazza San Felice, covered with historical paintings; Giuliano del Tasso adorned the Ponte Santa Trinita with statues; Antonio San Gallo made a temple on the Piazza della Signoria, and Baccio Bandinelli prepared a colossus in the Loggia dei Lanzi. Various decorations adorned other streets, and Andrea del Sarto surpassed them all with a _facade_ to the Duomo, painted in monochrome on wood. His friend Sansovino designed the architecture, and he painted the sculpture and adornments with such effect that the Pope declared no work in marble could have been finer.

Andrea lent his talent to another kind of decorative art. The guild of merchants were desirous of inaugurating a festa for the day of S. Giovanni, and had ten chariots made from the model of the ancient Roman ones, to institute chariot races in the piazza. Andrea painted several of these with historical subjects, but they have long been lost. The chariot races were revived under the Grand Dukes, but not with any success.

CHAPTER V.

GOING TO FRANCE.

A.D. 1518-1519.

Meanwhile fate was working Andrea del Sarto on to what might have been the culminating point of his fame, had not his weakness rendered it a blot on his honour; i.e. his journey to France. His fame was rising high; a picture of the _Dead Christ surrounded by Angels_, weeping over the body they support, having been sent to France, [Footnote: It was engraved by the Venetian, Agostino, before it went to France; the engraving is signed 1516. It did not please Andrea, who never allowed any others to be engraved.] the king was so pleased with it that he wished another work by the same artist. Andrea painted a very beautiful _Madonna_, for which, however, he only obtained a quarter of the price which the king paid to the merchants. The king was so delighted with it that he sent the artist an invitation to come to Paris in his employ, promising to pay all his expenses. In the Pitti Palace there is a portrait of Andrea and his wife, in which he has commemorated the reception of this letter. He is looking very interested over it, while his wife has the blankest expression possible.

In the summer of 1518 he started with his pupil, Andrea Sguazzella, called Nanoccio. Such a journey was in those days considered as little less than a parting for life. It is plain that Lucrezia's family looked on her as almost a widow, for they made him sign a deed of acknowledgement for the 150 florins of her _dote_. Some authors have taken this document as a proof of their marriage in that year, but it was merely a precaution against loss by her family; the Italian law being that the husband is obliged to render the portion obtained with his wife to her family if she dies without issue, and in case of his

own death, the widow is entitled to it.

He was well received in Paris, and employed immediately on a likeness of the infant Dauphin Henri II., then only a few months old. For this he obtained 300 scudi: and a monthly salary was allowed him. What a mine of gold the French court must have seemed to him after working for years at large frescoes for ten scudi each!

He did no less than fifty works of art while there, most of which have been engraved by the best French artists.[Footnote: See *Catalogue of Royal Pictures in France*, by M. Lepiscie.] The *Carita* is signed 1518, and is in Andrea's best style--perhaps with a leaning towards Michelangelo. The *S. Jerome in Penitence*, which he painted for the king's mother, and obtained a large price for, cannot be traced. His life in Paris was a new revelation, and not without its effect on his character, always alive to substantial pleasure.

The king and his courtiers frequented his atelier, and delighted to watch him paint, vieing with each other in the richness of their gifts, among which were splendid brocade dresses and beautiful ornaments and jewels, in which he longed to adorn his wife. While he was engaged in painting the *S. Jerome* for the queen-mother, a letter from Lucrezia aroused his longings for home to the uttermost; she--the wife who has been branded by the name of faithless--wrote that she was disconsolate in his absence, and that if he did not soon return he would find her dead with grief.

Vasari, quoting this exaggerated letter, says in his first edition that she only wanted money to give her friends, but this also he retracts in the second. Whether it expressed her feelings truly or not, the letter had such an effect on Andrea's mind that he decided to return home at any cost.

During Andrea's absence the house in Via S. Sebastiano, behind the Annunziata, was being prepared under her superintendence and with his sanction. His scholars had decorated the walls and ceilings with frescoes, and no doubt Lucrezia was as anxious for him to see the new house as he was to adorn her with Parisian brocades and jewellery.

Being able to satisfy her ambitious soul, Andrea too readily flung away all his brilliant prospects to return, and willingly take again the yoke of the burden of his wife and her family. He made promises that he would bring her back to Paris with him, and the king in all faith allowed him to depart, confiding to him large sums of money for the purchase of works of art to be sent to France.

Squazzella, wiser than his master, preferred to stay in Paris under the patronage of Cardinal de Tournon. He painted a great many works, much in the style of Andrea, but with less excellence. It is possible that some of M. Lepiscie's long list are, in fact, the work of the pupil rather than the master. When Benvenuto Cellini went to France in 1537 he lodged in Squazzella's house, with his three servants and three horses, at a weekly rate of payment (*una tanto la settimana*).

But to return to Andrea: this is an episode in his life which we would gladly pass over if it were possible, for it forms the moral blot on a great artistic career.

Returning home he fell once more under the strong will of his wife, but

with his principles weakened by the effect of a luxury and prosperity which has always a greater deteriorating effect on a nature such as his than on a finer mind. Bringing grand ideas from the palaces of the French nobles, he not only fell in with Lucrezia's plans for beautifying the new house, but even surpassed her wildest schemes. The staircase was embellished with rich oaken balustrades, the rooms were all frescoed. Cupids hide in the Raphaelesque scrolls on the arches, classic divinities rest on the ceilings, but in the dining room the homely nature of the man who did his own marketing, creeps out. It is a charming room, the windows opening on a garden courtyard, where a vine trellis leads round to what used to be the side door of his studio which has its entrance in another street.

The roof is vaulted and covered with exquisite decorative frescoes, but in the lunettes of the two largest arches are the domestic scenes of cooking and laying the cloth, spoken of at page 90. Two or three of the up stairs rooms are very fine, especially the one in which Andrea is said to have died. [Footnote: This description is due to the kindness of the present resident in the house, who kindly showed it to the writer, pointing out all the unrestored portions.] It is probable the furniture matched the style of the rooms, and that much money was spent on carved chairs and *cassoni*. Certain it is that the King of France's commissions were unfulfilled, and his money misappropriated.

Andrea would have returned to France, but his wife, who had an Italian woman's dread of leaving her own country, put every obstacle in his way, adding entreaties to tears which the uxorious Andrea could not resist. As usual he tried to please her, and she only cared to please herself.

He fell greatly in the estimation of the King, who was justly angry; albeit the artist salved his own too easy conscience by sending a few of his own paintings to Francis I., one of which, the *Sacrifice of Abraham*, still remains in France, and another a half length figure of *S. John the Baptist*. The place of this picture is much disputed; it is said to be at present in the Pitti Palace. Argenville speaks of it among the French pictures as if it had returned subsequently to Florence, while Vasari asserts that it never went there, but was sold to Ottaviano de' Medici. [Footnote: *Life of Andrea, del Sarto*, vol. in. p. 212.] As Andrea painted no less than five pictures of this subject, of which Argenville mentions that there were two in France, one of which was sold to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, it is probable that the Pitti one is not that painted for Francis I.

CHAPTER VI.

ANDREA AND OTTAVIANO DE' MEDICI. A.D. 1521-1523.

The Medici, always patrons of art, did not neglect to enrich their palaces with the works of Andrea del Sarto. Ottaviano de' Medici, a cousin of the reigning branch, was an especial friend of his, from the time that Andrea began the fresco of *Caesar receiving tribute of animals* in the Hall of Poggio a Cajano. The commission came really from Pope Leo X., who deputed Cardinal Giulio, his cousin, to have the

hall of the favourite family villa adorned with frescoes. He in turn handed over the direction to Ottaviano, who was a great amateur of art. It was designed that Andrea del Sarto should cover a third of the Hall, the other two-thirds being given to Pontorno and Francia Bigio. The payment of thirty scudi a month was arranged. In this Andrea has shown his genius in a style entirely new, the composition being crowded, the perspective intricate, the background a building adorned with statues. The subject being allegorical, he has given the reins to his fancy and produced a wonderful assemblage of strange beasts and stranger human beings, Moors, Indians, and dwarfs. There are giraffes, lions, and all kinds of animals, which he had an opportunity of studying in the Serraglio of Florence. The drawing is true and free, the figures and animals full of life, the colouring as usual well harmonised and bright. The Pope died about this time in 1522, and the picture was left to be finished by Allori in 1580.

Ottaviano de' Medici, being a great lover of art, was often a patron on his own account; for him Andrea painted the Holy Family now in the Pitti Palace. It is a most charmingly natural group: the Virgin seated on the ground dances the divine child astride on her knee, he is turning his head to the infant S. John who struggles to escape from his mother's arms to get to him. The fresh youth of the Virgin and the saintly age of S. Elizabeth are well contrasted. By the time this picture was finished the siege of Florence had begun, and when the painter took it to Ottaviano, he, having other claims on his means, excused himself from buying it, and recommended Andrea to offer it elsewhere. But the artist replied, "I have laboured for you, and the work shall be always yours." "Sell it and get what you can for it," again replied Ottaviano. Andrea carried the painting home again and would never sell it to any one. A few years after, the siege being over, and the Medici re-instated, he again took the Holy Family to Ottaviano, who was so delighted that he paid him double the price for it.

Ottaviano also bought from Carlo Ginori a Madonna and S. Job, a nude half figure, which were by Andrea's hand. He it was who commissioned him to paint the portrait of Cardinal Giulio, afterwards Pope Clement VII., and it was also at his instance that the imitation Raphael was painted for the Duke of Mantua. The Duke had set his heart on obtaining the picture painted by Raphael representing Leo X. between the Cardinals Giulio and Rossi, and got a promise of it as a gift from Pope Clement. His Holiness wrote to Ottaviano desiring him to have it sent to Mantua. But Ottaviano, appreciating the treasure as much as the Duke of Mantua, determined to secure it to the house of Medici. Under the pretence of having a new frame made he gained time, and meanwhile employing Andrea del Sarto secretly to make an exact copy of it, he sent that to the Duke instead of the original. So well had Andrea imitated the great master's style that every one in Mantua, even Giulio Romano, Raphael's own scholar, was deceived, and it was only some years later that George Vasari divulged the secret and showed Andrea's monogram on the side of the panel beneath the frame. This copy is now at Naples.

The fresco at Poggio a Cajano abandoned, Andrea returned to the Scalzo, where he painted the Dance of Herodias, Martyrdom of S. John Baptist, Presentation of the Head, Allegory of Hope, and the Apparition of the Angel to Zacharias. The last was paid for August 22nd, 1523.

About this time there was a great wedding in Florence. Pier Francesco Borgherini espoused Margherita Accajuoli, and Salvi, the bridegroom's father, determined to prepare for his son's bride a wedding chamber which should be famous in all ages.

Baccio d' Agnolo had carved wonderful coffers, chairs, and bedsteads in walnut wood. Pontormo painted beautiful cabinets and cassoni, and Granacci, Francesco d' Ubertini Verdi, called Bacchiacca, and Andrea were all employed on the walls. Andrea furnished two pictures; the one tells the story of Joseph in Canaan, the other gives his life in Egypt. The style is that of Piero di Cosimo, but with greater excellence and more dignified figures. The landscape is highly finished and minute, and has a part of the story in every nook of it.

The centre group, where Joseph leaves his father and mother to go to his brethren, is very dignified, although fine enough to be a miniature. In the second Pharaoh's palace is [Footnote: Reumont (Life of Andrea del Sarto, p. 134) dates these works 1523; the style, which is very much that of Piero di Cosimo, would seem to place them earlier.] represented as a medieval Italian castle, the dresses are all Italian, and as an instance of Andrea's versatility of talent they are very interesting paintings.

During the siege of Florence, Borgherini was absent, and the picture dealer, Giovanni Battista della Palla, who prowled like a harpy to carry off treasures for the King of France, made an effort to obtain these paintings by inducing the government to confiscate them and sell them to him. But Margherita was equal to the occasion, and meeting the despoiler at her door, she poured out such a torrent of indignation, exhortation, and defiance as drove the broker away crestfallen.

On the Medici's return della Palla was imprisoned as a traitor, and beheaded at Pisa. The paintings passed into the possession of the Medici, by purchase, during Andrea's life. [Footnote: Biadi, Notizie, &c., p. 146, note 2.]

CHAPTER VII.

THE PLAGUE AND THE SIEGE. A.D. 1525-1531.

From 1524 to 1528 the plague desolated Italy, never entirely leaving it. During this time Andrea obtained a commission through Antonio Brancacci, to paint some pictures in the convent of S. Piero at Luco in Mugello, where he retired with his wife and her relations, and his pupil Raffaello. They spent a very pleasant summer: the nuns made much of his wife and her sisters, and he passed his time in earnest painting. The fruits of his labour are a Pieta, a Visitation, and a Head of Christ--almost a replica of the one in the SS. Annunziata.

The Pieta is full of expression and feeling, but more realistic and less dignified than that of Fra Bartolommeo, which now hangs on the same wall of the Hall of Apollo at the Pitti.

In colouring also there is a great contrast between the two, that of

Fra Bartolommeo being deep, rich, and mellow, while Andrea's is more profuse, diffused, and wanting in depth of shadow.

S. John and the Virgin raise the dead Saviour, the Magdalen and S. Catherine weep at his feet; S. Peter and S. Paul at the back express their grief in the manner natural to their characters. S. Peter, in his vehemence, flings up his arms in a madness of sorrow. S. Paul, with more dignity, is half stupefied with the intensity of woe.

If those saints had been left in Fra Bartolommeo's *Pieta*, the two pictures would have had the very same figures, in each: but how different the composition, feeling, and expression! The Frate's group is a compact triangle; that of Andrea a scattered arrangement. The Magdalen of the Frate is overwhelmed with the very excess of love and grief, all of which is expressed intensely, yet her face is hidden; that of Andrea is a mere woman dressed in flying scarf and flowing garments, but with very little soul in her face.

The characteristics of the two painters can be well studied in these works, so near together, so similar, and yet so different.

For the three works painted at Luco Andrea was paid ninety florins in gold. The *Pieta*, was bought in later years by the Grand Duke Leopold, and now adorns the Pitti Palace.

The *Visitation* was placed in the church of the convent over a presepio. [Footnote: In 1818 it was restored by Luigi Scotti and sold.] Biadi gives the following document:--"Io Andrea d'Angiolo del Sarto, a di 11 Ottobre 1528 ho ricevuto fiorini 80 d' oro di quei larghi [*i.e.* of two scudi each] della Tavola dell' Altar grande e di una mezza tavola della Visitazione, da Donna Caterina della Casa Fiorentina, Badessa di Luco." [Footnote: 2 Vol. in. p, 571, note.]

Andrea was paid ten florins for the *Head of the Saviour*, through his assistant, Raffaello. This receipt would prove either that he went to Luco later than 1524, or that he returned there to finish the works in the year 1528.

On their return to Florence in the autumn Andrea painted a fine work for his friend, Beccuccio da Gambassi, a glass-worker. It is an apotheosis of the *Madonna*, with four figures beneath--S. John Baptist, Mary Magdalen, S. Sebastian, and S. Rocco; not S. *Onofrio*, as Bottari has named it. The predella, now lost, had portraits of the patron and his wife. Crowe and Cavalcaselle speak of six saints in this picture, four standing and two kneeling.

This description seems to point more certainly to the Sarzana *Madonna*, which is now in the Hall of Apollo, in the Pitti Palace. That for Beccuccio is described, with the four above-mentioned saints only, by all the Italian authors.

The tabernacle, at the corner of the convent, outside the Porta Pinti, Florence, was painted about this time. It is now quite destroyed by age and weather; a good copy by Empoli, exists, however, in the western corridor of the Uffizi. It is a charming *Holy Family*, with the infant S. John,--a sweet laughing face. The Madonna is a portrait of Lucrezia.

In the siege when the convent of the Ingesuate--at the corner of which

it stood--was razed to the ground, this fresco, although loosened from the wall, was spared by the soldiers, who had not courage to injure it. The Grand Duke Cosimo was anxious to have it brought to Florence, and often came with engineers and architects, but they never hazarded its removal. [Footnote: Bocchi, *Bellezze di Firenze*, p. 482.]

The Duomo of Pisa has five saints painted by Andrea; they originally formed one large picture in five compartments, and were painted for the church of the now suppressed convent of S. Agnes; but in 1618 they were divided into five pictures, and removed to the Duomo, where *S. Catherine Martyr*, *S. Margaret*, *S. Peter*, and *S. John the Baptist* hang on each side of the altar. *S. Agnes*, with her lamb by her side, is placed on a pilaster towards the southern door. This and *S. Margaret* are especially graceful and expressive. There is much of the feeling of Correggio, but with more natural grace and less voluptuousness. The cutting and retouching had injured them greatly, but in 1835 Antonio Garzalli took off the repainting and restored them more delicately.

In 1525 Andrea had a commission to draw cartoons for painting the balustrade of the Ringhiera--a kind of wide terrace in front of the Palazzo della Signoria, from which speeches were made to the populace. His designs were very beautiful and appropriate, the compartments being emblematical of the different quarters of the city; besides which were allegories of mountains, rivers, and virtues. The designs were left unfinished at his death, and the Ringhiera was never painted.

In 1526-7 he worked at the fresco of the *Last Supper*, at S. Salvi, which was intended to have been done when he began the four saints there, in 1510, had not some misunderstanding between the rulers of the order prevented their continuation. [Footnote: Vasari's *Lives*, vol. iii. p. 224.] Even now he worked in a desultory manner, doing it bit by bit, but in the end producing a marvellous work.

The refectory is a long vaulted hall, and the frescoed table, with its life-size figures, fills the whole arch of the wall opposite the door. One's natural impulse on entering it is to exclaim, "How life-like!" There is a great and living animation in the figures; the characters of the Apostles are written on their expressive faces. Judas is not placed away alone, as in many renderings of the subject, but is next to Christ, the contrast of the two faces being thus emphasized by proximity. S. Peter, though old, has all the vehemence and intensity of his character. Add to the feeling a brilliancy of colour of which Andrea alone had the secret, for without deep shadows, and keeping up the same intensity of tone throughout, he yet obtained great harmony and full relief where others would have produced a clash and flatness. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle say with justice, "From the contemplation of the *Cena*, at Milan, we should say that the painter is high bred; looking at that of S. Salvi, that he is accustomed to lowly company." [Footnote: *Hist. of Painting*, vol. iii. chap. xvii. p. 574.] But in some subjects a rugged strength is more important than a high refinement, and in the group of humble fishermen who formed the first church this is not out of place. If he could only have spiritualised Christ, nothing would be left to be desired.

Andrea del Sarto was a member of a sacred company called the "Fraternita del Nicchio," for which he painted a standard to be carried in their processions. It is now in the Hall of the Old Masters in the

Uffizi, and is a charming group of _S. James, with two children dressed in white surplices_--the habit of the company. The saint is caressing one, who kneels at his feet; the other has an open book in his hand. The draperies are especially graceful, and the expressions soft and pleasing.

After finishing a portrait of the Intendant of the monks at Vallombrosa, which the said monk afterwards placed in an arbour covered with vines, regardless of the injuries of wind and rain--Andrea, having some colours still left on his palette, took up a tile and called his wife to sit for her portrait, that all might see how well she had kept her good looks from her youth; but Lucrezia not being inclined to sit, he got a mirror and painted _his own portrait_ on the tile instead. It was one of his later works, and Lucrezia kept it till her death. It is now in the room of portraits in the Uffizi, but much blackened by time; probably also from the tile not having been properly prepared. [Footnote: This portrait is given as a frontispiece.]

The next year or two were taken up in producing a number of large altar-pieces, and in painting pictures for the dealer, Giovanni Battista della Palla, who was still intent on supplying the King of France with Italian works of art. For him he painted a _Sacrifice of Abraham_, which Vasari thinks one of his most excellent works. The face of the patriarch is full of faith, and yet self-sacrifice; the nude figure of Isaac, bronzed in the parts which have been exposed to the sun, most tenderly expresses a trembling dread, mingled with trust in his father; the landscape is also very airy and beautiful, and a characteristic group of a servant and the browsing ass is very effective in the background.

He also painted a lovely picture of _Charity with three Children_ for Della Palla. Both these works were done with great care, for he hoped by their means to regain the lost favour of the King of France. It was too late for this, however; and, as it happened, neither of these works reached its destination. The siege of Florence took place about this time (1529); the dealer, Battista della Palla, had his head cut off in his dungeon at Pisa, and all hope of his mediation with Francis I. was at an end. The _Charity_ was sold to Domenico Conti, the painter, after Andrea's death, and thence passed into the hands of the Antinori family. The _Sacrifice of Abraham_ has had more vicissitudes. Filippo Strozzi purchased and gave it to the Marchese del Vasto, who had it in his castle at Ischia many years. Later it was sent from Florence to Modena in exchange for a Correggio, and Augustus II. of Saxony becoming its purchaser, placed it in the Dresden Gallery.

This seems to have been a favourite subject with Andrea del Sarto, who repeated it five times.

1. The one done by himself for the King of France.
2. Also in France, having been purchased from the Grand Duke of Tuscany. (See Argenville.)
3. The one mentioned above, done for G. B. della Palla.
4. A smaller one, painted for Paolo da Terra Rossa; a fine painting, for which the artist asked so small a price that the purchaser was ashamed to pay it. Paolo sent it to Naples.

5. An unfinished painting of Abraham holding Isaac by the Hand, now in the possession of the Zonadari family, who obtained it from the Peruzzi.

During the siege, work was found for artists, but of an unpleasant nature. Andrea was commissioned, in 1530, to paint the effigies of some traitors on the palace of the Signoria. He dared not refuse, but remembering that his namesake, Andrea del Castagno, who had been similarly employed, gained the name of "Andrea degli Impiccati," he was anxious that the same name should not attach to himself. Accordingly he had an enclosed platform made, and giving out that his pupil, Bernardino del Buda, was going to paint the effigies, he worked at them himself secretly, till, on being uncovered, they seemed to be real persons writhing on the gibbet.

No trace of them remains now, but the studies are in the collection of drawings in the Uffizi.

A fine half-length figure of S. Sebastian, for the brotherhood of that name, which had its head-quarters in the street in which Andrea lived, was almost his last work in Florence.

The siege was now over, but the influx of soldiers from the camp brought a return of the plague, which awakened great terror in the city. Andrea's mode of life and love of good living did not conduce to his safety; he was taken ill suddenly, and gave himself up for lost. Neither Vasari nor Biadi says he was entirely deserted by his wife; they only hint that she came to his room as little as she could, having a great fear of the plague.

It is more than probable that Andrea himself kept her away from him, for his love was always unselfish, and he thought only of her good. However this be, he died, aged forty-two, on the 22nd of January, 1531, and was buried very quietly by the "Brethren of the Scalzo" in the church of the S. Annunziata. His tomb is beneath the pavement of the presbytery, on the left hand. His older biographers seem to think this unostentatious funeral a great slight to his merits, but if there were any doubts as to his illness being the plague, it would only have been a natural precaution to avoid spreading contagion by making his interment quite private.

That Andrea had not wholly neglected his own family is proved by his will, which left his property (after paying back Lucrezia's dot of 100 scudi, and the money for the improvement of the new house in Via Crocetta for her and her daughter) to his brother Domenico, with the proviso that after his death half the bequest should be given to Domenico's daughter as dot, the rest to accrue to the hospital of the Innocenti (Foundlings). [Footnote: Ricordanze nel Archivio del E. Spedate degli Innocenti di Firenze. Biadi, Notizie, p. 127.]

Lucrezia lived to a good old age, being nearly ninety when she died; she seems to have lived a very quiet life, and to have kept Andrea's paintings with great care, except a few only which she sold. The house in Via Crocetta passed many years afterwards into the possession of another painter, Zuccheri, who embellished the studio front with reliefs in stone, representing the paraphernalia of an atelier; but it is Andrea's name which lives in the house, as his memory does in the hearts of the Florentine people, and his works in the cloisters of the

Florentine churches. The people of the city always seem to claim Del Sarto as especially their own. He is always *_nostro pittore_*, or *_nostro maestro_* -and indeed as a master of fresco he never was surpassed. In colouring he was in his way unique; in modelling, original and graceful; while the transparent clearness of his shadows and brilliant blending of tints in the lights render his handling incomparable. A little more refinement and aesthetic feeling would have placed him on a level with the great leaders of the Renaissance.

CHAPTER VIII.

SCHOLARS OF ANDREA DEL SARTO.

Andrea's scholars were numerous, though only a few rose to any great eminence. Of these, JACOPO CARRUCCI, "da Pontormo" (born 1494, died 1557), was by far the most talented. Left an orphan at an early age, the charge of his sister devolved on him, and he placed her with a relation while he was pursuing his art training. He studied under a diversity of masters, including Leonardo da Vinci, Albertinelli, Piero di Cosimo; and finally, in 1512, he entered Andrea del Sarto's school, but did not stay long there either. Some say Andrea was jealous of his success; he, however, had generosity enough to praise and acknowledge his talent, and to show his appreciation by giving him important work to do in his own studio.

Pontormo did the predella to Andrea's altar-piece of the *_Annunciation_* for the convent of S. Gallo. His hand is to be seen also in several of his master's works. He drew public attention first by painting two figures of *_Faith_* and *_Charity_* on the escutcheon of the Medici for Andrea di Cosimo, who had obtained the commission, but did not feel equal to executing it. Michelangelo, on seeing these figures, prophesied great things for the youth, who was at that time only nineteen years of age.

The people of Pontormo, his native town, were so proud of him, that they sent for him to emblazon the arms of Pope Leo over the gate of their city.

He was next employed by one of the festal companies of the age, called the Company of the Diamond, to design cars, banners, and costumes for a triumphal procession in honour of Leo X.'s elevation to the papal chair; and he organised a very suggestive array of the ages of man, illustrated historically. He decorated the Papal Hall for Leo X.'s entrance, and later began to be employed on more serious and lasting works.

Some good frescoes of his existed in the convent of Santa Caterina, but were destroyed when the building was reconstructed in 1688.

A very charming fresco of the *_Visitation_* still exists in the court of the SS. Annunziata. It shows him as a good pure colourist, the flesh tints being especially tender; the composition is lively, full, and effective.

In 1518 he painted a fine altar-piece for the church of S. Michele

Visdomini, Florence, by commission of Francesco Pucci. The *Madonna*, seated, is showing the Child Jesus to S. Joseph, whose face is most expressive and full of smiling admiration. S. John Baptist stands near, at the sides are S. John Evangelist, S. James, and S. Francis, the latter kneeling in ecstatic admiration.

In some cases he was placed in direct competition with his master, Andrea del Sarto, being employed by Borgherini to paint the coffers and cabinets in the same room for which Andrea did the *History of Joseph*; and again later at Poggio a Cajano, where the ends of the great hall were assigned to him to paint, Andrea and Francia Bigio taking the larger walls at the sides. On one end he designed an allegory of *Vertumnus*, with his husbandmen around him busy with their labours, and on the other *Pomona, Diana, &c.* Perhaps in these last he has carried his imitation of Andrea del Sarto rather too far in the matter of draperies, which are too profuse and studied. Indeed the whole works are overdone; he was so anxious to rival his master that he forced his invention, altering and labouring till all spontaneity was taken out of his work. Some of his frescoes were in the cloister of the Certosa, but they are not fair specimens of his best style, as they were done when the Florentine artists were smitten with the mania of imitating Albrecht Durer, and in these he has entirely followed the harder manner of that artist without obtaining his strength. The frescoes are all scenes from the *Life of Christ*, and he spent several years over them; after which he painted an altar-piece.

Giovanni Battista della Palla commissioned him to paint a picture to be sent to the King of France, and Pontorno returning wisely to his natural style, painted one of his masterpieces, the *Resurrection of Lazarus*. The Pitti Palace possesses a curious specimen of his work, the 11,000 martyrs crucified in a wood in the persecution under the Emperor Diocletian.

He rose to renown as a portrait painter, but lost patronage in later years by his capricious behaviour, refusing to work except for whom and when he pleased. In company with his favourite pupil, Bronzino, he did the frescoes in the Loggia of the Medici villa at Careggi; one Loggia was soon completed, to the great delight of the Duke, but Jacopo shut himself up in the second and allowed no one to see what he was doing for five years; when at length he uncovered the frescoes general disappointment was the result. He pursued much the same line of conduct in the frescoes of the roof of the Medici Chapel in San Lorenzo. He kept the chapel closed with walls and planks for eleven years, no one seeing his progress except some young men who removed one of the rosettes from the ceiling to peep in on him, but he discovered their plan, and closed the holes more assiduously than ever. The composition is as confused as it is diffusive; he tried to embody the whole teaching of the Bible, but becoming overwhelmed with the vastness of his subject, fell short even of the excellence of his own previous works. He died before this work was completed, of hydrophy, and was buried in the Servite Church.

GIORGIO VASARI, better known as the chronicler of the works of other artists than for the excellence of his own, was born at Arezzo, 1512--died at Florence, 1574. His father was a painter, and the family was connected by ties of relationship with Luca Signorelli of Cortona. Among the many masters under whom he studied was Andrea del Sarto. He did not remain long under his tuition, having contrived to offend

Lucrezia in some way. He painted a great many frescoes at Arezzo, where he lived in his youth with his paternal uncle Don Antonio. Don Miniato Pitti, prior of the convent of Monte Oliveti, near Siena, next employed him to adorn the portico of his church. He had the good fortune to attract the notice of Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, who took him to Rome in his suite, where he gained much advantage by the study of the works of the great masters there. The Medici family, especially Andrea del Sarto's patron, Ottaviano, were his constant friends: and their palaces are profusely decorated by him. The Riccardi Palace has a room with fresco scenes from the life of Casar. While painting these Duke Alessandro gave him a salary of six crowns a month with a place at his table, and board for his servant, &c. The palace has several oil paintings by Vasari, amongst which are portraits of the Duke and his sister. After the death of Duke Alessandro and Ottaviano he wandered from city to city, painting so energetically that there are few of the principal towns which do not possess some of his works, especially Naples, Pisa, Bologna, and Arezzo. The Palazzo San Giorgio of the Farnese family, in Rome, has a large hall richly frescoed by Vasari, but the best of his works are to be seen on the walls of the great hall of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, where he has illustrated the battles of the Florentines, and in several other rooms of the same palace; he having continued all the later years of his life in the service of Duke Cosimo, by whom the palace was restored and decorated. His works are too numerous and not sufficiently important to catalogue or describe, his composition is overcrowded and wanting in perspective. There is generally a superabundance of flesh; muscular limbs in all attitudes form a great part of his pictures, but as the flesh tints he used were wanting in mellowness and shadow, and have turned pink with age, they compare disadvantageously with those of the more solid masters who preceded him. After all, Vasari's name and fame rest principally on the labours of his pen, not those of his brush. His "Lives of the Painters," although not a model of precision in facts or chronology, is nevertheless the mine from which all subsequent art historians quarry to obtain their information.

One of the most valuable books of the day is probably the new edition of Vasari with corrections and notes taken from the archives by Signer Gaetano Milanese.

FRANCESCO ROSSI, DE' SALVIATI (born at Florence, 1510--died at Borne, 1563) was a great friend of Vasari; his real name was Rossi, his father being a weaver of velvets, but he obtained the name of Salviati from being the protege of the Cardinal of that name. His first master was Raffaello del Brescia, but in 1529 he, with his friend Nannoccio, entered the school of Andrea del Sarto, with whom they stayed during the siege. Becoming known by some paintings done for the friars of the Badia, Cardinal Salviati took him into his house, gave him a stipend of four crowns a month, and an apartment at the Borgo Vecchio, he painting any works the Cardinal wished. Francesco was not idle, a great number of frescoes, altar-pieces, and portraits, &c., &c., testifying to his industry. In his later years he was employed with his friend Vasari in the Palazzo Vecchio, where he painted the frescoes in the smaller Hall of Audience. These are principally scenes from the Life of Camillus. The story of the schoolmaster of Falerii is very spirited, and the Triumph of Camillus varied and pleasing in colouring. Although melancholy and suspicious, often making enemies and losing patronage by misunderstandings, Rossi and Vasari were always faithful to their first boyish friendship, often working together, but never with any spirit of rivalry. Salviati's style was bold and

spirited; he was rich in invention, but perhaps a little wild in the matter of draperies and bizarre costumes. His colouring is more pleasing than that of Vasari, but is diffusive and wanting in depth.

DOMENICO CONTI never became famous, but in spite of want of genius, he was Andrea's favourite pupil. All his master's designs and cartoons came into his possession at Andrea's death, but he was unfortunately robbed of them soon afterwards. The inscription to Andrea del Sarto which once existed in the church of SS. Annunziata was put up by Conti.

JACOPO DEL CONTE (1510-1598), who in Vasari's time lived in Rome, is chiefly noted for his likenesses of several pontiffs and personages of the Papal Court. There are a few altar-pieces by him in Rome, and a Deposition in the church of the Misericordia in Florence, but he was almost exclusively a portrait painter.

ANDREA SGUAZZELLA, called NANNOCCIO, remained in France after having accompanied Andrea del Sarto thither. Cardinal Tournon took him under his patronage, and he painted a large number of works in the style of Andrea.

JACOPO, called JACONE, was another of Andrea's favourite disciples. His frescoes, of which some existed till of late years on the facade of the Palazzo Buondelmonte, in Florence, were much in Del Sarto's manner. He assisted his master in a great many of his works, while of his independent paintings many were sent to France; no doubt some of these, as well as Squazzella's, figure under the master's name in that list of fifty works given by Argenville. He was too idle and fond of pleasure to rise to eminence, though he did some good frescoes in the Palazzo Capponi at Florence, and in the Capponi Villa at Montici, and assisted Jacopo da Pontormo in the Hall of the Medici villa at Careggi. He died in 1553, in great poverty.

PIER FRANCESCO DI JACOPO DI SANDRO was said to have had some talent. He and Domenico Conti were employed among others in decorating the court of the Palazzo Vecchio on the occasion of Cosimo de' Medici's marriage with Leonora di Toledo. There are some altar-pieces of his in the church of Santo Spirito, Florence.

SOLOSMEO, RAFFAELLO, and BERNARDINO DEL BUDA were three garzoni in Andrea's studio. They were employed in the subordinate work and manual labour, but were not trained as artists.

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