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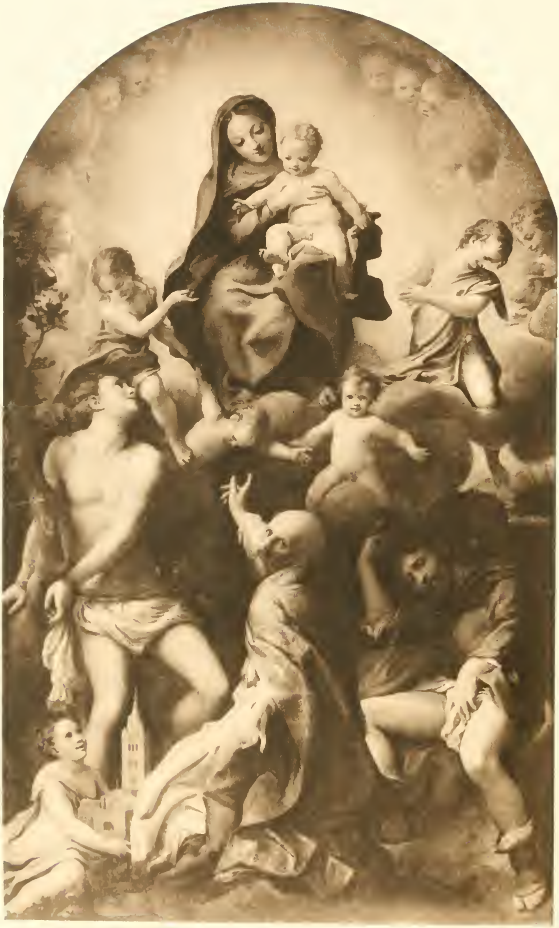
ANTONIO ALLEGRI
DA CORREGGIO



The Madonna and St. Sebastian.

ANTONIO ALLEGRI DA CORREGGIO

His Life, his Friends, and his Time

BY

CORRADO RICCI

DIRECTOR OF THE ROYAL GALLERY, PARMA

FROM THE ITALIAN BY
FLORENCE SIMMONDS

WITH 37 FULL-PAGE PLATES
& 190 TEXT ILLUSTRATIONS

UNIV. OF
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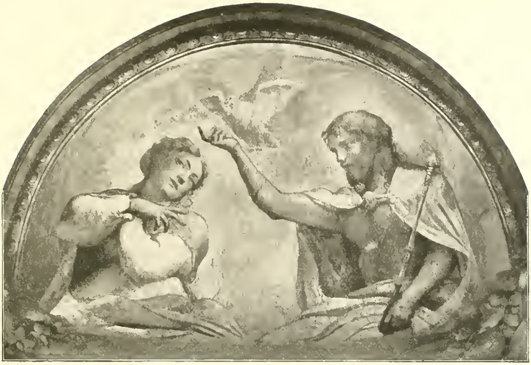
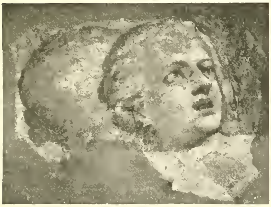


THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN, BY CORREGGIO.
(Fresco, now in the Palatine Library at Parma.)

PREFACE



FRAGMENT OF A FRESCO, BY CORREGGIO
Mr. L. Mond, London

THE earliest biography of Correggio is that in Vasari's *Lives*, a valuable record, in spite of the admixture of fable with its more sober details. No contemporary of the master's left any account of him; his name, indeed, was never mentioned by any writer of his day, not even by Ariosto, who was the friend and intimate of the Lords of Correggio, and who enumerates the most famous painters of the period in a well-known passage of his great poem. When Vasari collected his material, he found it already overlaid with legends and improbabilities; and those who are familiar with the critical methods of his age will not be inclined to blame him too severely for having occasionally bound up

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tares with his wheat. Whatever the defects of his biography, it was undoubtedly the means of preserving many valuable facts.

After Vasari, no biographer devoted himself to any exhaustive study of Correggio until the eighteenth century. The steady growth of an appreciative admiration of his work expressed itself in an interest that was technical and artistic, rather than personal. Painters lauded him and copied his pictures; writers of treatises upon art, such as Borghini, Armenini, Scannelli, and many others, expatiated on his style and his works, but were content with what Vasari had told them of his life.

Baldinucci, indeed, makes a casual allusion to his history, but could not produce any further materials towards his biography when it was proposed to complete and correct Vasari's work. It is somewhat misleading, however, to put this forward as an evidence of indifference to Correggio's fame. Baldinucci's admiration for the master is attested by the following passage in a letter of 1681: "I myself knew an artist who in his youth had made copies from many of Correggio's marvellous works in Parma and elsewhere, with which drawings he covered the walls of his room, that they might be a perpetual reminder to him of the unique style of that great man, and open his mind to grand and novel conceptions."

Like Baldinucci, other writers of artistic syntheses, catalogues, biographical dictionaries, and encyclopædias throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries contented themselves with Vasari's account of the master. Even Mengs, whose dissertations upon Correggio's work are so copious and appreciative, made no attempt to resolve the numerous chronological difficulties that beset him by the help of contemporary documents, and only lingers over the painter's biography when he finds in it some support for a theory or preconception of his own. Ratti follows him obsequiously, at times all but reproducing his very words.

The first biography of Correggio marked by any sound critical knowledge and evidence of original research, was Tiraboschi's life in the *Biblioteca Modenese*. He examined and published various unknown documents, harmonising them, and drawing conclusions from them with admirable simplicity and good sense. His work was not complete, because conditions forbade such completeness. Many documents now accessible were then buried in public or private archives; many others were jealously guarded by those erudite dogs in the manger who propose to themselves a task they never accomplish, and put obstacles in the way of their more practical and energetic rivals. Correggio's works were scattered in all directions; of many there were no reproductions at all, while others could be studied only in defective engravings, which at best gave an imperfect idea of the design and composition.

Tiraboschi's study served as a guide to all who wrote of Correggio until the appearance of Padre Luigi Pungileoni's three volumes, which showed an important advance in research, and contained many fresh details of great interest. Its usefulness is much discounted, however, by its confused and chaotic arrangement, a result of the author's bewildering method of separating his narrative from the documents he quotes or transcribes. This system led to constant repetitions. His style is another stumbling-block. It is unimaginably prolix, slovenly, and artificial—so artificial as to become unintelligible where there is nothing to prevent the most absolute clarity.

The work, however, does not deserve all the abuse that has been heaped on it by some who have made free use of the vast amount of material it contains.

A considerable space of time was allowed for the fructification of Pungileoni's researches, during which fresh material accumulated in the shape of minor critical publications, and reproductions of the master's works, notably those of Paolo Toschi and his pupils, who reproduced the whole of his frescoes. A most important contribution to the literature of the subject then appeared. This was Julius Meyer's biography of the Emilian painter, published at Leipzig in 1871. Meyer had carefully studied all the works of his predecessors ; he had examined the master's works, and collected copies, engravings, and photographs. He wrote incisively, courageously denying Correggio's authorship of many works falsely ascribed to him for centuries, and re-establishing his claim to others of which he had been deprived. He is, perhaps, occasionally over-discursive, lingering unduly over matters of slight importance. The plan of his book, too, is open to criticism ; his numerous subdivisions lead to redundancies. In his historical catalogue of the master's *œuvre*, for instance, he is obliged to repeat many statements already made in the first part of his work. The treasury of facts and deductions brought together by this accomplished critic did not deter Quirino Bigi, Margherita Albana Mignaty, and others, from a return to the old fables. With these they embellished their studies to such an extent that the new and valuable material at their command is lost in a maze of sentimental rhetoric. While these writers amused themselves by blowing a series of brilliant literary soap-bubbles, others were engaged in the more serious task of examining types and technical elements, and establishing Correggio's affiliation to the school of Ferrara, in contradiction to the hitherto accepted theory of his Lombard training. That these fresh and accurate observers were further inclined to deny the presence of the Mantegnesque elements so apparent in the master's work, is one of those vagaries only to be accounted for by the exclusive spirit which seems to animate all new departures. Criticism was, nevertheless, on the right track ; recognising, as we must of necessity, that Mantegna's works furnished Correggio with various motives and peculiarities of type, we may at the same time unreservedly accept the fact that he grew up and developed under Ferrarese influences. Giovanni Morelli was the first to formulate this theory, and to him we also owe the discovery of several of the master's juvenile works. His researches have been followed up and extended by students such as

Richter, Frizzoni, Venturi, Bode, Hugo von Tschudi, and many others.

We believe that a new book on Correggio is likely to be of use at the stage of inquiry now reached, and the thanks of all students of the master are due to the English Publisher, whose enterprise and artistic enthusiasm have given us the means of supplying this want.

It is time to assign to the painter his true position in the school to which he belongs; to undertake a methodical examination of his *œuvre*, correcting its chronology, adding to it those works which recent research has restored to the master, and rejecting those which modern criticism is unable to accept.

This book, which epitomises the results of recent studies, may claim to have undertaken more than this. The author hopes that the unpublished documents he has examined have thrown light on some obscure pages of history; that others, erroneously transcribed by former writers, and now carefully compared with the originals, may have suggested new deductions and observations.

In conclusion, we may be allowed to dwell for a moment on the plan of the present work. Each age has its individual literary methods. The old system of biography, which divorced its heroes almost completely from their surroundings, caring nothing or little for contemporary persons and events, the prevailing sentiments of their times, the moral atmosphere in which they lived and worked, is completely exploded. The intellectual development of the Emilia during the Renaissance has hitherto been studied almost exclusively in those feverish manifestations of activity which characterised her great social centres. It was necessary in the present instance to explore ground less familiar to the student, to examine into the life of the minor courts of that wide territory, where the art which reached its highest expression in Correggio was born and developed; to learn something of its artists, its *savants*, its princes, its clergy, its people, and to study the spirit by which they were animated. This scrutiny of a society, always essential to the comprehension of a personality which has flourished in its midst, was more than ever necessary in the present case, because of the lack of all the direct elements of a psychological estimate. Correggio's life was a singularly uneventful one. It was marked by no violent passions, no dramatic episodes, but ran its appointed course silently and peacefully, in a round of family duties and artistic labours.

A special importance is given to the present work by the illustrations, which reproduce the places where the artist lived and painted, the portraits of some of those with whom he came in contact, all the works by him of which we have any knowledge, and several examples of those of his scholars. This is the first work on Allegri completely illustrated by photographs from originals, including his great frescoes, hitherto known only by engravings.

On these grounds we claim a certain consideration for our book, in the preparation of which we have been helped by the valuable suggestions of many friends. Our thanks are especially due to Dr. Gustavo Frizzoni, Professor G. Piancastelli, Director of the Borghese Gallery, Professors Giulio and Giuseppe Ferrari, and N. Campanini of Reggio, Dr. Vittorio Cottafavi, Professors Emilio Meuli and Enrico Cattini of Correggio, the Abate Luigi Barbieri, Dr. Giovanni Mariotti, Signor Paolo Baratta, Prof. Franc. Brandileone, and Signora Giulia Caputo of Parma, Professor Adolfo Albertazzi of Mantua, Count G. B. Gandini, Signor Paolo Maestri and Cavaliere Paolo Fabrizi of Modena, Dr. H. Weizsäcken of Frankfort-on-the-Main, Mr. Sidney Colvin, etc., etc.

In our critical estimates we have endeavoured to avoid the pitfalls of fetichism. If the more fanatical worshippers of Correggio find us lacking in enthusiasm, and his detractors blame us for our leniency, we must content ourselves with the knowledge of having sought the golden mean.

CORRADO RICCI.

PARMA, *October*, 1895.

THE ANNUNCIATION, BY CORREGGIO (*From the Engraving*)

(Fresco, now in the Parma Gallery)

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ERRATA

Page 48, line 30, *for* "Pier della Francesco," *read* "Piero della Francesca."
,, 73, ,, 4, ,, "which formerly filled the spaces above the presses or wardrobes," *read* "flanking the heads of the old presses or bookcases."
,, 73, ,, 15, ,, "the great toe much longer than the rest," *read* "the great toe raised above the rest."
,, 73, ,, 18, ,, "foreground," *read* "Eastern compartment."
,, 101, ,, 22, ,, "less interesting," *read* "more interesting."
,, 103, ,, 28, ,, "his arms folded on his breast," *read* "his arms outstretched."
,, 266, ,, 13 from top, *for* "produces," *read* "produce."
,, 331, ,, 2 from top, the sentence beginning "We" should read as follows:—"We may, however, call attention to one little known example which has, perhaps, a better claim to authenticity than the rest, though it has never been reproduced before."
,, 331, ,, 11 from top, last sentence of paragraph to read: "Slight as it is it is thoroughly artistic and full of animation and intelligence."
,, 300, ,, 3, *insert after* "creature," "Termine fisso d'eterno consiglio." Paradiso xxxiii., v. 3.

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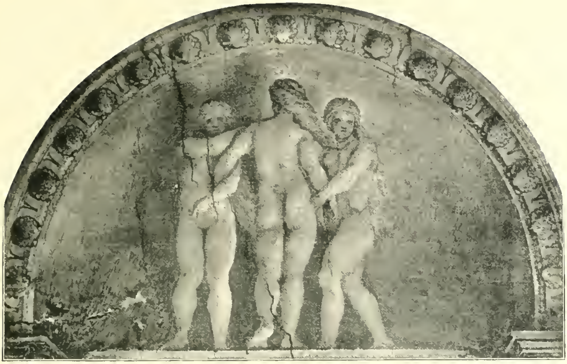
I

CORREGGIO IN HIS NATIVE CITY

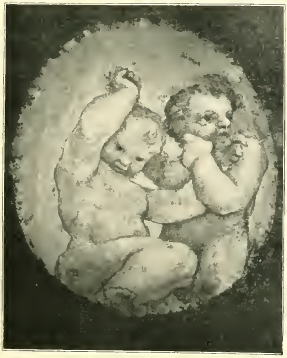


THE THREE GRACES. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma

CHAPTER I

THE RENAISSANCE IN THE EMILIA

THE REVIVAL OF CULTURE—THE HORRORS OF THE MIDDLE AGES—THE BENTIVOGLI AT BOLOGNA—THE BOIARDI AT SCANDIANO—THE PICO FAMILY AT MIRANDOLA—THE PIO FAMILY AT CARPI—THE GONZAGHI AT NOVELLARA—THE TORELLI AT GUASTALLA AND AT MONTECHIARUGOLO—THE PALLAVICINI AT CORTEMAGGIORE—THE ROSSI AT PARMA—LOVE OF ART IN ITALY.



[illegible] (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

I WELL remember a certain chilly April morning I once spent on the summit of Cimone, the highest point of the Emilian Apennines. The pale light of dawn had scarcely pierced the mass of floating cloud about the peak, which the wind drove before it at intervals, tearing it capriciously into shreds, now of dense, now of diaphanous vapour. From every twig and shoot silvered by the mist, leaves and drops of moisture fell slowly to the ground. The melancholy of earth and sky, still shuddering under the touch of winter, entered into the soul, till the sweet tranquillity of spring seemed at most but a faraway possibility.

Suddenly, the disc of the sun shone through the gray veil of cloud, but so shrouded that it was possible to gaze at it unflinchingly for a time. Then the mist began to disperse above, and to roll along the valleys below, in long strips and banderoles, which furled their floating streamers, and disappeared like a swarm of flying ghosts. In a few minutes the blue of the sky and the gold of the sun shed a glow of youthful joy over the landscape, and the vast valley of the Po lay clear and luminous below, from the Euganæan hills to the mountains of Verona.

Watercourses and marshes sparkled in the distance; dim clusters of buildings revealed the sites of cities and villages, round which ancient fortresses, villas, and churches rose sharp and radiant among the neighbouring mountains; and a joyful sound of bells, mingling with the songs of innumerable birds, seemed to hail the return of spring.

Thus, when the dark mists of mediævalism rolled away, and the Italian spirit rose again from the dead, a spiritual resurrection closely allied to the natural phenomena I have described took place on this self-same territory, when Bologna, Ferrara, Mantua, and Parma suddenly shone forth as radiating centres of the arts and sciences, the greater stars of constellations which numbered among their lesser lights Scandiano, Reggio, Modena, Carpi, Mirandola, Correggio, and Novellara.

Throughout the period of the Renaissance each of these cities could boast of great ladies, princes, and soldiers of the utmost splendour and refinement, and of famous artists and men of letters, whose prestige entitled their parent towns to vie not unsuccessfully with the greater Italian courts, where all was refined and magnificent, polished and sumptuous, from personal adornment to architectural decoration, from domestic habits to social usage, from tournament to actual warfare, from pastimes to funerals. Each civic festival, each religious function, was a spectacle animated by the living flame of art. Every detail was so designed as to gratify eyes athirst for beauty; and this æsthetic instinct, this passion for the beautiful, informed every action of men, even such as sprang from a perverted moral sense, or were the outcome of suffering and anguish. Thus, every creation of genius was secure of a sympathy that took small account of propriety or of virtue. The sinister elegance of Pietro Aretino's scurrilous invective attracted universal admiration; at once the terror and the favourite of popes, cardinals, and princes, he was acclaimed by the title of "the divine." Machiavelli wrote admiringly of the consummate atrocity of Cæsar Borgia, in luring the various leaders who had conspired against him to their doom at Sinigaglia. Scholars of the University of Perugia ran in crowds to see the dead body of Astorre Baglione, because its composed yet tragic grandeur of attitude was said to suggest that of some antique Roman famous for his heroic end.[1] And some few hours earlier, perhaps, the youthful Raphael, conquering his natural timidity, had hastened into the street to watch the same Baglione dashing into Perugia on horseback, the torchlight gleaming on his armour, like some divinely menacing Archangel Michael.[2]

The fever of art inflamed the blood of all sorts and conditions of men. The nobles and the clergy competed against each other to secure the services of artists and acquire their works; the very populace discussed and admired them. Antimaco relates that the crowd which flocked to see Mantegna's *S. Maria della Vittoria* "was something incredible, and that the people could not tire of gazing upon this noble work." [3]

The discovery of the Laocoon caused such enthusiasm that the crowd besieged the Termæ day and night. A contemporary writes: "All Rome flocked thither *die noctuque*, as if to a jubilee." [4] When Benvenuto Cellini's *Perseus* was set up in the Piazza della Signoria in Florence, "such a concourse of persons assembled to see it that it would be impossible to give any idea of their number."[1]

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[1] Franc. Matarazzo, *Cronaca di Perugia* (*Archiv. storico italiano*, xvi. 122).

[2] Burckhardt, *Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien*, chap. iv. (Leipzig, 1869).

[3] Attilio Portioli, *La vera storia di un dipinto celebre* (*Giornale di erudizione artistica*), ii. 157. Perugia, 1873.

[4] *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, xi. 210.

This joyous enthusiasm seems all the more vital and vigorous when we consider the life of Italy in the Middle Ages, throughout which the cities lay stifled, as it were, under a funeral pall of dense superstition. Pictures of skeletons and cross-bones piled at the foot of a crucifix were common ornaments of the street-corners. In little niches above the doors of the monasteries, ghastly skulls seemed to glare at the spectator from livid and hollow sockets. The spaces around churches and sanctuaries were white with funeral urns and head-stones; within, and in the cloisters, were other tombs; and underground, gloomy crypts, into which the obscurer corpses were lowered indiscriminately. He who offered up a prayer knelt on the marble that closed a sepulchre. The air became putrid, the black shafts of cypresses rose on every side, images of death and its terrors held undisputed sway. In times of pestilence, corpses accumulated up to the very walls in the streets and squares. In the depths of night, the sinister howling and trampling of famished beasts, the groans of the dying, the despairing sobs of the superstitious, inspired the grim and sarcastic conceits of the so-called *Dances of Death*: sarcastic, because Death, in his ruthless impartiality, smote even the great and powerful with the same fatal vertigo and delirium. The poor and wretched recognised Heaven's vengeance on the oppressor, and derided him, exulting in the knowledge that here at least the mighty were powerless, for all their weapons, and the rich, for all their abundance. The *danse macabre* they daily witnessed worked like a madness upon the agitated fancy of the populace. The emperor and the beggar, the pope and the arch-heretic, the high-born lady and the brazen courtesan, the noble clothed in purple and gold, and the tattered vagabond—all joined hands in the giddy round; and Death, laughing hideously the while, rushed upon the slothful, overthrew the rebellious, and crushed the proud. Meanwhile priestly orators poured forth threats and denunciations from the pulpit; monks prophesied disasters in the piazzas; popes hurled their excommunicatory thunderbolts, and the minds of writers sank exhausted under the incubus of strange and terrible visions.

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[1] Cellini, *Autobiografia*, chap. xiii.

The general squalor was most apparent in the cities. After the ringing of the angelus there were few passengers on the muddy or dusty highways. At night the darkness was only broken here and there by lamps burning dimly before sacred effigies, while mortals slept or suffered within the houses.

Life had become one long terror and peril. Interminable domestic broils, repeated foreign invasions, the fratricidal wars of city with city, commune with commune, brought in their train fire, sack, and carnage, the overthrow of buildings, the destruction of harvests, and their necessary complements, dearth, famine, and pestilence.

But after the crusades a gentle breath of new-born gaiety seemed to make itself felt through the sufferings and dangers of the times, and to show its workings alike in life and art. It was the convalescence of the Italian spirit, returning to the joyous energy of classic times with all the sweet and smiling calm of renewed health. Crises, struggles, and despair still convulsed the land at times; but such visitations were less prolonged and crushing, and all the joy of healthy life asserted itself in the intervals. The famous fresco of the Campo Santo at Pisa, the *Triumph of Death*, represents a joyous band diverting themselves with music and song in the close vicinity of a mass of festering corpses, and, in a like spirit, contemporary chronicles pass from the records of war and pestilence to accounts of banquets and tournaments. The fresco, indeed, might serve as illustration to the chronicle of Fra Salimbene. Describing the apparition of certain sinister stars in 1239, he goes on to relate how, being in Pisa at the time, he entered a certain shady and verdurous court of the city in quest of alms for his convent, and there lighted upon an assembly of youths and maidens, who, in the midst of the general stupor, were singing to the sound of viols, guitars, and other instruments, and accompanying their music by a rhythmic dance.[1]

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[1] Fr. Salimbene, *Chronica*. Parma, 1857.

Thus did minds satiated and exhausted by horrors turn with eager zest to the jests of Basso della Penna, Messer Dolcibene, Ribi, and Gonnella, and to the painted comedies of the artist Buffalmaco.

At the return of May, a springtide ramble became a sweet and pleasant pastime, an occasion for joy and love to those who had been so long confined in gloom and solitude.

The Sienese chronicler, Agnolo di Tura, tells us that after the terrible pestilence of 1348, those who had escaped the contagion plunged into dissipations of all sorts, and thought of nothing but spending and feasting: "Every poor man appeared to be rich, from the mere fact of his having escaped so great a plague; and all who had survived or escaped became as it were brethren; each man recognised his neighbour, and jested with him as with a kinsman, and all were alike absorbed in the pursuit of pleasure."[1]

From amidst such contrasts as these the spirit of art rose into being, frank, virginal, immediate; for one of the principal stimulants of art is variety, and of variety, wonder. Fair palaces and churches populous with sculptured and painted figures sprang up on every side; the music of Dante and of Petrarch sounded through the land, and the mirth and wit of the age flashed out in the novels of Boccaccio and of Franco Sacchetti.

As the definition and consolidation of the Italian States progressed, and the consequent growth of their aristocracies was assured, art and culture in their turn were established on a more stable basis. Not only did Rome, Milan, Venice, and Florence rise to fame, but Perugia, Urbino, Rimini, Ferrara, Mantua, and other cities. The Gonzaghi, the Lords of Montefeltro, the Estensi, the Malatesti vied with each other, and even more emulously with the popes, the Medici, the Bentivogli, and the Sforzi in attracting artists and men of letters to their respective courts, and showering honours upon them; in collecting works of art, both modern and ancient, and in transforming their palaces into museums of pictures, marbles, bronzes, tapestries, china, furniture, musical instruments, illuminated books, medals, and engravings.

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[1] Ap. Muratori, *Rer. ital. script.* xv. 124.

Political intrigue and military broils were alike powerless to distract men's minds from their artistic preoccupations. The man of the Renaissance was above all things eclectic and versatile. His activity manifested itself in forms the most diverse. Savage in war and sentimental in love, he laid aside the sword for the pen, writing sonnets and love-lyrics, just as, upon occasion, his mistress would turn from book and harpsichord to the government or defence of the state. He superintended the execution of works of art, suggested motives for the decoration of his buildings, drew the plans of his castles. Returning from fields on which he had fought with courage and distinction, he retired to his court or his castle to discuss history and poetry. As, in joust or tournament, he could deal unerring thrust and blow, so could he offer gallant homage in prose, or verse, or sumptuous monument.

Sigismondo Malatesta commemorated his lawless passion for Isotta in the decorations of the church at San Francesco at Rimini, heedless of the wrathful anathemas of Pius II. Pier Maria Rossi built two fortresses in honour of his mistress, Bianca Pellegrini, to one of which he gave her name, calling it Roccabianca. Occasionally a lover would dedicate some splendid chamber to the memory of his passion. Thus the Rossi above named caused the various phases of his love to be illustrated by paintings and by decorative symbols and allusions in the *Golden Chamber* of the fortress of Torchiara. Caterina Sforza, the widow successively of Count Girolamo Riario and of Giacomo Feo, built a luxurious nest for her third love, Giovanni dei Medici.[1] These erotic monuments, the great interest and importance of which as illustrations of contemporary manners have been somewhat overlooked hitherto, were in the nature of votive offerings, shrines constructed in honour of some adored person, which the devotee sought to make resplendent as gems.

Such alternations of passion and endeavour, of strife and peace, of love and hate, of hard fighting and pious exercises, were peculiarly favourable to the development of art, which has invariably reached its highest development in times of great moral agitation. The supreme vigour of the Renaissance was indeed attained at one of the most fatal and perilous epochs of Italian history. From the battle of Fornovo to the downfall of Florence, "the fair land" was harassed by incessant warfare. Youthful leaders passed away like meteors in a fiery sky; Gaston de Foix, the Connétable de Bourbon, Giovanni delle Bande Nere, and the Prince of Orange, all fell before the age of thirty, at the very moment when victory and military glory smiled upon each. While every family had its tragedy, every city its experience of sack and pillage, pestilence and carnage, Art, gentle and consoling, went steadily on its predestined way.

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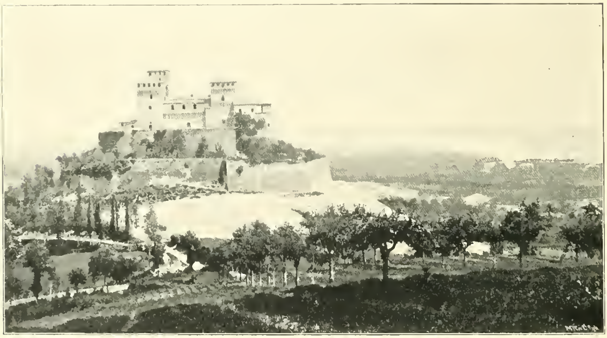
[1] Leone Cobelli, *Cronache forlivesi*, p. 413. Bologna, 1877.



TORCHIARA.
Fortress built by Pier Maria Rossi

In no region of Italy did the artistic activity of the Renaissance find more ubiquitous local expression than in the territory which comprises the cities of Bologna, Ferrara, Mantua, and Parma. Whereas Rome, Milan, Venice, and Florence focused and concentrated the intellectual life of a wide radius, leaving the minor cities beyond in a languid penumbra, in the Emilia every little centre had a dignified court, of no small political and artistic importance.

Leaving out of account such famous names as those of Este and

Gonzaga, because both families are well known to all students of history, and further, because they flourished on the confines of the Emilia, we shall find in the Emilia itself perpetual traces of personalities only less famous than these, such as the Bentivogli of Bologna, a branch of the Gonzaghi at Novellara, the Torelli at Guastalla and at Montechiarugolo, the Pio family at Carpi, the Lords of Correggio, the Pico family at Mirandola, the Boiardi of Scandiano, the Rossi of Parma, and the Pallavicini of Busseto and of Cortemaggiore.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the Renaissance in Bologna failed to manifest itself with all the splendour which might have been looked for in that rich and populous city. This fact, however, was by no means due to any lack of initiative or of intelligence among her citizens or rulers. It must rather be attributed to that lack of internal unity, and those frequent changes of government, which jeopardised liberty, induced perpetual surrender and compromise, and emasculated independence. So soon as Bologna found herself flourishing under the stable rule of a single family (the Bentivoglio), art, culture, and social magnificence developed steadily and amply. Sante and Giovanni II. surrounded themselves with artists and men of letters summoned from all parts of Italy, and threw themselves heart and soul into the task of beautifying the city, extending streets and squares, building palaces, decorating churches.

In Ginevra Sforza, the wife first of Sante and afterwards of Giovanni Bentivoglio, the love of art and perhaps some other virtues were choked by pride and superstition. Whilst youth still smiled upon her, and the star of her house was in the ascendant, she was satisfied with the treasure wrung from the Bolognese to deck her dwelling and prepare her regal feasts. But when she perceived the discontent that was simmering among the people, and began to dread the conspiracies of her enemies, she gave way to the natural ferocity of her disposition, and incited her own sons to deeds of the most atrocious treachery.

It was, nevertheless, at her instigation that Sante began, and Giovanni completed, the palace which all contemporaries agreed to be the most magnificent specimen of domestic architecture in Italy.

"Truly," exclaimed the historian Alberti, "this palace was a marvel, and all were agreed that it could not have cost less in the execution than a hundred and fifty thousand ducats," a sum equal in value to about six and a half million *lire*.

Old writers assure us that the palace contained, besides the five great halls or saloons, two hundred and forty-four vaulted rooms, gorgeous with tapestries, furniture, and pictures by famous artists.

The *loggia*, which led from the third court to the garden, was decorated by Lorenzo Costa with frescoes of the burning of Troy, and Francesco Francia adorned Giovanni's own room with pictures "which it was no over-praise to call sublime." And it may be imagined how magnificent was the fresco of *Judith and Holofernes*, when we learn that Raphael esteemed it so highly that he sought diligently for the original cartoon. The building was, in short, a royal palace, replete with every luxury and beauty; gardens full of statues, busts, and terms, refreshed by fountains, the limpid waters of which were brought from the hills around the city; stately staircases, cool cloisters, and graceful peristyles; armouries, vast granaries, and lodgings for innumerable retainers, guards, and falconers.[1]

Compared with this lordly palace, the castle of the Boiardi at Scandiano must have seemed modest, and even poor, but that Matteo Maria was able to glorify it with splendid visions.[2] This great poet has a peculiar interest for us in the various points of contact to be found, both as artist and man, between him and Correggio. He, like the painter, was gentle, quiet, and modest, absorbed in his favourite studies, a creator and luminous painter of novel types and marvellous effects. Tranquillity of soul and of surroundings left full liberty to the soaring flights of that fancy which now hovered about Antonietta Caprara, now followed Orlando and Rinaldo, Angelica and Fiordelisa throughout the mazes of extravagant love scenes and chivalrous encounters. The healthful air and celebrated wine of the hills gave strength to both mind and body; the former he exercised by study, the latter in riding and hunting among the mountains of Fanano and of Riolunato, or in the enchanting ravine from which the Tresinaro emerges.

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[1] Alberti, *Storia di Bologna*, MS. iv. 163. Giov. Gozzadini, *Memorie della vita di Giovanni II. Bentivoglio*. Bologna, 1839.

[2] *Studi su Matteo Maria Boiardo*. Bologna, 1894.

In his art he was not only poet but enthusiast. It is recorded of him, that having long racked his brains in vain for a name for one of the characters in his *Orlando Innamorato*, he ordered all the bells to be rung in his delight when the sonorous syllables of *Rodamonte* suggested themselves.

His solitary life did not make him a misanthrope, nor did constant meditation transform him into a stoic philosopher. He never lost his joyous love of art, and his pleasure in splendid pageantry. He appreciated and enjoyed the varied and vigorous life of that age, among whose worthiest sons we now reckon him.

CASTLE OF THE BOIARDI AT SCANDIANO.

He would often, indeed, descend from Scandiano, and repair to neighbouring Reggio, or to Ferrara, to the court of the Estensi. Reggio was the domicile of Antonietta Caprara, the lady he so deeply loved; she came thither during the reign of Sigismondo d'Este. Approaching the city, he would gaze earnestly through the trees to catch the first glimpse of its towers, his heart beating wildly when he fancied he discerned her on her balcony, "among the white marbles and brightly-coloured flowers." We know not how this romance ended. It is not unlikely that Antonietta was removed from Reggio.

Our poet was perhaps not entirely heart-whole when he offered his hand to Taddea dei Gonzaghi, of Novellara. But the time came when he could forget everything for his wife She is described as having "eyes that were small, but sweet and gentle," and seems to have been more admired for the dignity and distinction of her person and bearing than for actual beauty. It is certain that he loved her with a tenderness only to be equalled by his affection for the children she bore him. What a wealth of sympathy underlies the following brief words: "My powers of invention have been a good deal affected of late, by reason of my wife's ill-health."

Yet this just and "humane man" (*uomo umano*), the friend and companion of princes, barely escaped death by poison, prepared for his destruction by his kinsmen, and others upon whom he had heaped benefits. And we may well believe that Boiardo's nobility of soul was recognised by his contemporaries, when we learn that the would-be perpetrators of the crime threw themselves on his generosity, and that he exerted himself, first to obtain commutation of their sentence, and, finally, a full pardon.

In 1481 he was appointed ducal captain of Modena; six years later the Estes made him governor of Reggio. His fame, not alone as a poet, but as a man rich in prudence and honesty, procured him a warm reception in the latter territory, where, though he had little opportunity for the display of statecraft, he won universal respect by his noble integrity of character, and approved himself a wise and patriotic guardian of the city entrusted to him. He gave notable proofs of his sagacity at the time of Charles VIII.'s descent into Italy, when he had to deal with the double problem of at once treating the troops with indulgence and preserving his country from violence and rapine.

The melancholy caused by physical suffering was aggravated in his last days by the misfortunes of the Italy he so deeply loved. Long before, greatly distressed by the Venetian war, he had exclaimed, towards the close of the second part of his *Orlando Innamorato* :—

> Sentendo Italia di lamenti piena
> Non che ora canti, ma respiro appena.[1]

He died in the same year as Giovanni Pico, the son of his aunt Giulia, and the splendid ornament of another little Emilian city, Mirandola. Giovanni Pico was no less remarkable for his cultivated mind and prodigious memory than for the independence of thought which led him, even in those days, when such an attitude incurred dangers and difficulties innumerable, to combat the follies of astrology, and to deliver philosophy from the futilities of the schoolmen. It is specially to be noted that he challenged a public disputation in Rome on four hundred theses and five hundred opinions of his own, but the discussion was prohibited on the ground that several of his theses were rankly heretical. He, however, was none the less eager to ventilate them, showing in the pursuit of philosophy all that zeal which was wanting in his administrative policy. It was, no doubt, the sense of his own unfitness which led him to renounce that place which belonged to him by right in the State, thus escaping the fury of the perfidious Galeotto, which vented itself in double measure on his brother Antonio, the father of that Violante who married Giberto da Correggio.

MEDALLION OF GIOVANNI PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA

A strain of originality, bordering on the fantastic, distinguished all the members of this cultured family. Lucrezia Pico, wife of Count Claudio Rangoni of Modena (another patron of learning, eulogised by Bernardo Tasso, Bandello, and Aretino), was a passionate admirer of sacred oratory, and like the Countess of Guastalla, had dreams of the perfectibility of the human race. She is remarkable as the authoress of a letter in defence of her sex, which gives her a place among the pioneers of those who uphold the rights of women. Culture of the most serious and solid quality distinguished Gian Francesco, who was permitted to govern in consideration of having sworn fealty to Julius II., assailant and conqueror of Mirandola. He was gentle, honest, and pious, wrote a number of Latin theses on a variety of questions, and frequently attacked the doctrines of Aristotle, defending the memory of Savonarola, and, like his famous uncle, ridiculing the contemporary belief in witchcraft and kindred superstitions. To be brief, it may be said of him that his nobility of soul equalled the loftiness of his genius ; but such qualities did not avail to save him from the ferocity of one of his nephews, who murdered him at the foot of a crucifix. He left a son, Gian Tommaso, who in his turn sought consolation for his misfortunes in the pursuit of letters. Lilio Gregorio Giraldi was long a sojourner at his Court.

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[1] Hearing the lamentations of Italy, how should I sing, who can scarcely breathe?

The neighbouring city of Carpi, close to Correggio, was distinguished by no less magnificence. Its splendour was mainly due to the Pio family, who reigned there from 1319 onwards, ornamenting it with churches and palaces, and encircling it with walls. Its prosperity was at its zenith during the youth of our painter, under the sway of Alberto Pio, whose mother was sister to the famous Giovanni Pico, of whom we have spoken.[1] Left an orphan in his infancy, his cousin Marco acted as regent during his minority, eventually attempting to oust him altogether from the government of the State, and secure it to himself. All Marco's energies were therefore directed to the philosophic, literary, and artistic culture of his young kinsman. Among the tutors he gave him was Aldo Manuzio the elder.

But Alberto's practical talents soon manifested themselves, even amidst the preoccupations of humanistic studies. He speedily rose to eminence, and found himself sought out by statesmen, and concerned in grave political questions. Marco's schemes proved abortive. This, however, is certain—that Alberto's delight in art and letters fully compensated him for his political troubles. It does not come within the scope of the present work to recount the vicissitudes of his career as a ruler. Our object being merely to show the degree of culture attained in the Emilia at the time of Correggio, we may pass over his attempts to conciliate Louis XII. and the Emperor Maximilian, and dwell only on that part of his policy which had for its object the prosperity of his city.

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[1] H. Semper, F. O. Schulze and W. Barth. *Carpi. Ein Fürstensitz der Renaissance* (Dresden, 1882).

He raised many remarkable buildings, among others the Church of St. Nicolò, from the designs of Baldassare Peruzzi of Siena, who also furnished the plans of the cathedral which Alberto began. In 1504 he beautified his gigantic palace by the addition of a splendid inner court, adorned with sculptures. Two years later he introduced the art of printing into Carpi, placing it under the management of a famous typographer, Benedetto Dolcibelli, after having first invited Aldo, who was desirous of forming a literary centre for the production of new editions of the classics. Meanwhile he added a library to San Nicolò, and formed another for himself, mainly by the acquisition of Giorgio Valla's collection. In 1509 he obtained a concession from the Emperor Maximilian, empowering him to coin gold, silver, and copper money. He rebuilt the church of S. Maria della Rosa, restored the walls of Carpi, and strengthened them with bastions. As may be supposed, he sought out and favoured men of letters, among the latter Sigismondo Santi, Barigazzi, Carlini, Francesco Coccapani, and that Trifone Bisanti so much esteemed by Ariosto.

But though Marco's care for Albert's education had been directed mainly to unfitting him for the guidance of the State, he did not neglect that of his own children. His daughter Emilia, in particular, who went to Urbino as the wife of Antonio da Montefeltro, was eulogised by Bernardo Castiglione in his *Cortigiano* as a model of culture and refinement. The valiant and unfortunate Gian Marsiglio Pio also found solace in letters, and himself related the story of his woes in verse.

Near Carpi, and therefore near Correggio, with which we shall deal more particularly further on, two other small cities rose to fame, and may claim their share of glory in the intellectual movement of the day. These were Guastalla and Novellara.

At Novellara we find the wise, humane, and pious Francesco Gonzaga, the friend of Saint Bernardino of Siena, who visited him at his Court. Francesco busied himself with improvements of all kinds, and added many fine buildings to his city. A man of wide and tolerant mind, he permitted Jews to settle in his dominions. Among the more brilliant members of his house were his wife, Costanza Strozzi, the granddaughter of a famous poet, and his fair daughter Camilla, beautiful in person as in mind, who herself wrote graceful verses, and fascinated Molza and Casio, who both wrote enthusiastically in her praise. She went shortly afterwards to Vicenza as the wife of Count Alessandro da Porto.

PALACE OF THE PIO FAMILY AT CARPI.

The Torelli were meanwhile ruling in Guastalla. Achille certainly did not shine as a beneficent prince. Even his wife, the sweet and gentle Veronica Pallavicino, had no softening influence on his violent, vicious, and despicable character. Yet even he was desirous of emulating the princely munificence of his neighbours, and began the building of a splendid palace, which was completed by the Gonzaghi. His daughter Ludovica is a strange and interesting figure in the history of the times, a curious mixture of vices and virtues. Rich, generous, enterprising, licentious, capricious, she was famous for her masculine intellect and superb beauty, her virulent hatreds, and no less violent affections. Upheld by the Guastallese, she crushed the innumerable plots hatched against her power, finally selling her state to Ferrante Gonzaga, the highest bidder.[1]

CASTLE OF THE GONZAGA FAMILY AT NOVELLARA

The ill-disposed declared that the good and evil in her were alike disastrous in their results. Lodovico Castelvetro gives a curious account of her fantastic interpretation of the platonic philosophy in its bearing on the relations of the sexes. He may perhaps have exaggerated. It is certain, however, that while, on the one hand, she was occupied with schemes for the perfection of the race, on the other, she had her rooms decorated with unseemly pictures, delighted in licentious literature, and was greatly addicted to hunting, dancing, and "every kind of worldliness."

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[1] G. B. Benamati, *Istoria della Città di Guastalla.* (Parma, 1674.)

Later we find her suddenly converted, as so often happens in the case of women whose youth has been stormy. All her eccentric energy now found an outlet in religious exercises. She burnt her books of romance and poetry, destroyed her obscene pictures, renounced balls, concerts, and everything in which she had once delighted, and gave herself up to the most rigorous manifestations of penitence. She had her hair cut into the form of a cross, and clothed herself in strange garments that provoked the mirth and gibes of spectators. But the spirit of the Renaissance was still throbbing within her. She built the fine church of S. Paolo in Milan, was lavish alike in works of mercy and donations of art treasures, and founded an institution for noble maidens reduced to poverty.

Other Torelli are to be met with higher up the Enza, among the turreted buildings of Montechiarugolo, whence issued Barbara, the flower of beauty and culture, and whither came, about 1500,

> . . . . . la nutrita
> Damigella Trivulzio al sacro speco.[1]

In this passage Ariosto compliments the wife of Francesco Torelli on her training in the sacred retreat of the Muses; Jacopo Caviceo further declares her to have been learned in Greek and Latin, and Nicola Pacediano tells us she excelled as a singer. Her absorption in such studies did not, however, prevent her from dealing very competently with affairs of state in her husband's absence, nor from giving due attention to those of her family.[2]

On the banks of the Arda, in the valley of Piacenza, on a spot where a cluster of poor hovels had grouped themselves together and adopted the name Cortemaggiore, Gian Lodovico Pallavicino settled in 1479 with a few families from Busseto, and erected a fortress, the nucleus of this territory, in which afterwards rose the magnificent churches of the Annunziata and of Santa Maria della Natività delle Grazie. Gian Lodovico's son Orlando, called "The Hunchback"—"illustrious for his learning and his saintly manners"—carried on the paternal tradition, extending and beautifying his domain by the erection of buildings with *loggie*, and the laying out of open spaces. He finished the church his father's piety had begun, founded the confraternity of the Misericordia, installed the Minorites in the Annunziata, and presented it with a library. He further added a chapel to their temple, which was afterwards decorated by Pordenone, and in 1502 he summoned Benedetto Dolcibelli from Carpi to set up a printing-press for books.[1]

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[1] *Orlando Furioso*, xlvi. 4.

[2] Amadio Ronchini, *Damigella Trivulzio Torelli.* (*Atti e memorie delle R. R. Deputazioni di storia patria dell' Emilia.*) New series, vol. vii., Part 2, p. 229. (Modena, 1882.)

MONTECHIARUGOLO, CASTLE OF THE TORELLI.

Such, to say nothing of many others, were the persons who flourished in the Emilia shortly before the birth of Correggio and throughout his life. To-day, alas! the wanderer who passes through the little cities we have described is oppressed by a sense of deep melancholy. Their streets are silent and deserted; every memorial of glory, every trace of splendour has vanished. Mournfully he calls up visions of the past, dwelling on the days when so many princes, poets, and artists thought and laboured in the cause of culture, and when the most gifted flocked thither to admire and be admired, forming such ideal consistories as those pictured by Dante in his description of *Limbo*, or by Raphael in his *School of Athens*.

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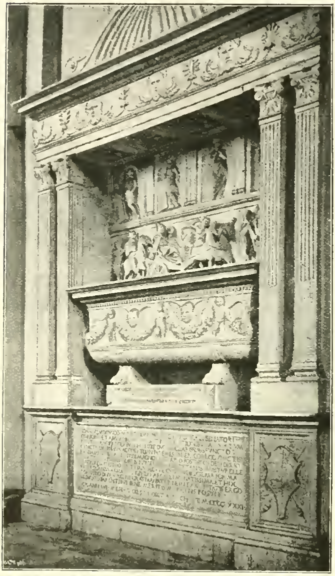
[1] Ireneo Affò, *Memorie degli scrittori parmigiani*, vol. iii., p. 72. (Parma, 1791.)

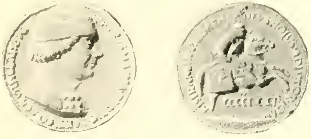


TOMB OF THE PALLAVICINI AT CORTEMAGGIORE.

How glorious was that spiritual spring-time! While, on the one hand, Francia and his scholars were multiplying their sweet conceptions of the Virgin Mother in the city of the Bentivogli, its University harboured the subtle and learned Erasmus of Rotterdam, and Copernicus discussed the new astronomical lore with Novara within its walls. From his professorial chair, Pomponaccio suggested those experimental essays which gave such "a mighty impetus to natural science." At Ferrara, Lodovico Ariosto gave rein to that noble and prolific fancy which created the Homeric conflicts of Rinaldo and Ruggero, and the terrific frenzy of Orlando, weaving into his marvellous poem the figures to which Boiardo had already given life. Antonio Tebaldeo trained the intelligent scions of the house of Este in all the refinements of literary knowledge, the most brilliant of his pupils being, perhaps, that Isabella, whose versatile genius and fascinating grace became the glory of the Mantuan Court, where Mantegna, Lorenzo Costa, and Giulio Romano shone successively, where Bernardo Tasso found poetic inspiration, and Baldassarre Castiglione his perfect type of the high-born lady.

It was an age marked by a magnificent outburst of thought and fancy; by a long series of victories in the domain of art and science; by a superb efflorescence of positive truths, and poetic creations hardly less real and vital; by a sumptuous gallantry of manners never before imagined; by a scrupulous care of the person, which manifested itself in the wearing of rich and beautiful apparel, and in the study of a decorous and classic fitness of bearing, appropriate to every kind of pageantry, to pastimes, tournaments, and martial conflicts. Hundreds of artists laboured for the satisfaction of this refined elegance. Everywhere were to be found architects, painters, sculptors, medallists, goldsmiths, weavers of silk and arras, armourers, potters, musicians, men of letters, jesters, and buffoons.

The universal passion for art became so strong and all-powerful that it permeated every action, and found expression even in the most dramatic moments of life. Fieravante worked in Bologna at the palace of the Anziani while besiegers were bombarding the city and bringing down great blocks of stone in the piazza. Forgetful of his own danger, his one fear was the destruction of the building he was labouring to adorn.[1]


MEDAL OF PIER MARIA ROSSI.

In the ruthless war waged upon him by his more powerful neighbours, the Sforzi, Pier Maria Rossi lost castle after castle and territory after territory. Old, feeble, and broken, he became hopelessly infirm at San Secondo. In his fallen state he asked to be carried thirty kilometres in a litter, to that fortress of Torchiara he had built from his own designs, and to be placed in the *Golden Chamber*, where he had lived and loved with Bianca Pellegrini, and where her image looked down upon him from walls and ceilings. There, lulled by those images of love and beauty, he closed his eyes upon the world.[1]

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[1] *Archivio storico dell' arte*, vol. iv., pp. 104–105. (Rome, 1891.)

Reviled and anathematised by his citizens, and hunted down by Julius II., a pope who had more faith in the temporal than in the spiritual sword, Giovanni Bentivoglio fled from Bologna, with his wife and children. The former took refuge at Busseto, near Parma; the others dispersed in various directions.

The unhappy couple bore up heroically under their misfortunes, the ruin of their power, and the downfall of their dynasty. But a final calamity was reserved for them.

Ercole Marescotti, inflamed with a ferocious joy in that hour of vengeance, led the mob upon the palace of the Bentivogli, his uplifted sword in one hand, a bundle of wood in the other, inciting them to the destruction of the splendid building. His rallying cry was this: "To prevent the vulture's return, we must destroy his nest." Eager for pillage, the crowd followed him gladly, and the work of destruction was continued for an entire month, until the whole was reduced to a smouldering heap of ruins. When Giovanni, who was then seventy years old, heard the news, he bowed the proud head which nothing else had bent. The tears dimmed his eyes. All was over for him, since his enemies had plucked away from him even his dream of artistic glory, leaving nothing to bear witness to the splendour of his house. He wrote to his wife, upbraiding her for his ruin, and causing her such anguish that she died of the shock, if, indeed, she did not strangle herself, as some writers have asserted.[2]

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[1] A. Pezzana, *Storia di Parma*, vol. iv., p. 291. (Parma, 1852.) At p. 300: *The writer who continued the Chronicle of Giovanni del Giudice relates that Pier Maria's body was embalmed, and placed in a sitting posture in the Golden Chamber of the fortress of Torchiara, attired in a habit of golden brocade, and that it remained there for a long time.*

[2] Giov. Gozzadini, *op. cit.*, and *Di alcuni avvenimenti in Bologna e nell' Emilia dal* 1506 *al* 1511, Part i. Bologna, 1886.

Parmigianino, another Archimedes, worked quietly away while the sack of Rome was raging round him. The astonished Lanzknechts surprised him in his studio painting a group of smiling children.[1]

Even in the most impassioned moments, when men are naturally prone to forget all adventitious things, the love of the beautiful manifested itself side by side with the more tender emotions. Federico Catanei relates that when Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, went to Mantua to meet Eleanor Gonzaga, the bride who had been married to him by proxy, he put his arm about her neck, and kissed her in the presence of the whole Court, then conducted her to a seat, and "discoursed with her of painting."[2]

But this spiritual flame, which blazed in so many hearts and so many cities, was not destined to burn for long. By the middle of the sixteenth century it had died down on many altars, and on many others had begun to flicker and languish. Thus, upon the hills that rise along the Emilian highway may be seen, on the evening of some festival, a thousand lights sparkling amidst thousands of joyful acclamations. At first they burn in close and vivid clusters ; gradually they become more scattered and less brilliant ; presently, only an occasional glimmer strikes the eye ; and finally night sinks upon darkness and silence.

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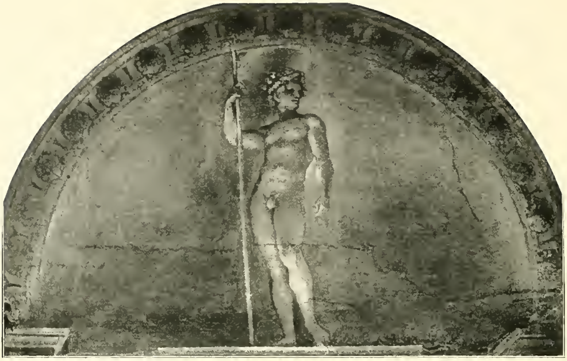
[1] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architetti ; a cura di Gaetano Milanesi*, vol. v., p. 225. (Florence, 1880.)

[2] A. Luzio and R. Renier, *Mantova e Urbino : Isabella d'Este e Elisabetta Gonzaga*, p. 187. (Turin, 1893.)

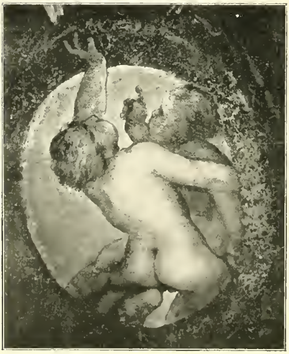


ADONIS. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER II

THE BIRTH OF CORREGGIO

THE LORDS OF CORREGGIO—THE ALLEGRI FAMILY AND THEIR SOCIAL STATUS.



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

ANTONIO ALLEGRI, commonly known as Correggio, was worthy of the fortune which decreed his birth in the fair region we have described, at the most brilliant period of the Renaissance. To understand the nature of his genius and his character we must endeavour to re-create his environment, and recompose that "historic atmosphere" in which his birth and development took place, and in which his life-work was accomplished.

By some he has been most unjustly represented as an isolated phenomenon in art, and a melancholy misanthrope by nature. This misconception was due, not only to imperfect knowledge, but perhaps in a still greater degree to the old biographical methods, which loved to represent those whose mental stature was above that of the herd as living in a world apart, and divorced from all participation in the life around them. Falling into an opposite extreme to that of the classic writers who imputed human weaknesses to their gods, they insisted on treating their heroes as privileged beings, unaffected by those passions which governed the actions of their fellow-mortals. Biographers, poets, and romancers in fact treated them much as did the sculptors who reproduced their forms and features in marble. They placed them on isolated pedestals, almost as if they alone had lived at a given time and place; and only when impelled by the hard necessities of narrative, did they record that certain persons moved in the same orbit as their heroes, and participated to some extent, if not in their lofty genius, at least in their habits and sentiments.

VIEW OF CORREGGIO.

At the best, exceptions have been made to this method of treatment in the case of women beloved by great men; but even here it has been thought essential to improve upon realities. Thus, many a petulant damsel, and many a humble maiden, perhaps all unconscious of their mission as inspiring Muses, have been converted into ideal figures, symbolic types of virtue and intellect, modelled on the pattern of a Beatrice or a Laura. If the great artists of the Renaissance could make themselves heard in exposition of their own life-romances, who can say what they might reveal to us of the perplexities and vexations in which their womenkind had involved them, or how many romantic inventions would melt into air! Raphael would assure us, no doubt, that his love for the Fornarina was a sentimental fable, and Andrea del Sarto would sigh forth his conviction that the lovely Lucrezia del Fede was a termagant!

The isolating process has been perhaps more severely applied to Correggio than to any other Italian artist. He has hitherto been described as a genius whose spontaneous development was accomplished without the aid of masters, the encouragement of friends, the support of patrons; lonely as Adam before he was given the companion who lost him his Paradise, or as Saladin in Dante's Limbo!

Some indeed have gone so far as to assert that "Correggio belonged to a humble peasant family of a lonely and remote district in Lombardy, and grew up without any instruction in his art." A lady whose imposing volume on Correggio has received the honours of translation states that the artist first saw the light, "far from the brilliant and multiform world of his day, in an obscure village of the Emilia."[1]

The city of Correggio was certainly no such humble and poverty-stricken hamlet in the days of Antonio Allegri, even to judge from the accounts of Tiraboschi,[2] Pungileoni,[3] and other biographers down to Meyer, whose work on Correggio is the most valuable of the series.[4] And we may venture to say that these writers, in spite of the abundant sources of information at their disposal, were unwilling or unable to profit by their advantages so far as to establish the importance of the Court of Correggio, and the intellectual activity of its territory, factors in themselves amply sufficient to promote and foster the growth of genius.

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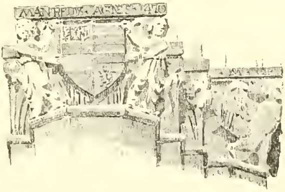
[1] Margherita Albana Mignaty, *La vita e le opere del Correggio*, chap. xi. Paris, 1881, and Florence, 1888.

[2] Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Biblioteca Modenese*, vol. vi. Modena, 1786. Biographical sketch of Correggio, pp. 234-302.

[3] Luigi Pungileoni, *Memorie istoriche di Antonio Allegri, detto il Correggio*. Three vols. Parma, 1817-1821.

[4] Julius Meyer, *Correggio*. Leipzig, 1871.

A house such as that of the Correggeschi, who had been established in the city from about A.D. 1000, who, after consolidating their power internally, had extended it into the neighbouring territory, and whose political sagacity and military prowess had made them for a time the masters of Parma and Guastalla, is not likely to have been sunk in poverty and obscurity at the period of greatest intellectual vigour the state had known, nor to have suffered itself to be completely eclipsed by other families flourishing at the various Italian courts in its immediate vicinity. We find, in fact, that while the daughters of the Correggeschi were sought in marriage by the Scaligeri, the Carrari, the Boiardi, etc., their sons found wives among the Visconti, the Gonzaghi, the Estensi, the Rangoni, and many others no less famous.



CAPITAL OF A PILLAR IN S. FRANCESCO AT CORREGGIO WITH ARMS OF THE CORREGGESCHI

Throughout the course of two centuries the power of the Correggeschi had been built up with commendable valour and energy; but it was not until the beginning of the fourteenth century, when Giberto was proclaimed Lord of Parma, that their achievements culminated, and won a place in history. It is true that Giberto did not long retain his grasp on the new state, for that perilous and stormy age was unfavourable to stable and enduring forms of government. That he was not lacking in courage we may gather from the fact that after his expulsion by the Guelfs, he shortly returned to the city, regaining a temporary dominion in the intervals of fierce struggles with the Rossi and Sanvitali. It was during one of these brief spells of victory that he gained the battle of 1341, celebrated by

Petrarch in one of his *Canzoni*. Giberto had made the poet's acquaintance at Avignon, and afterwards bestowed an archdeaconry upon him, in recognition of which favour Petrarch dedicated the treatise *De remediis utriusque fortunæ* to him. His subsequent sale of Parma to the Visconti is certainly a somewhat inglorious passage in the story of his career; but such traffic in cities and subjects was common in those days, and it would be unjust, in this age of higher and purer standards of political morality, to regard it as an indelible stain upon his character. Parma had her compensation two centuries later, when Correggio sent her him the splendour of whose art atoned for ancient bitternesses.

By the close of the fifteenth century the house of the Correggeschi had become powerful, no less by its own prowess than by virtue of the protection it enjoyed from various great princes and sovereigns.

Borso, a man of war and of counsel, who acted as captain for a variety of great nobles, was wounded at Argenta, fighting for the Estensi against the Venetians He then went as envoy from Lodovico il Moro to Matthias King of Hungary, and was his counsellor in 1484.

Giberto, Borso's brother, was in his turn protected by the Venetians, who admitted him into the league they had made with the Duke of Milan, Florence, and Ferrara against the Pope and the King of Naples. He was therefore compelled in 1478 to take arms against Sixtus IV. in Tuscany, on the occasion of the Pazzi conspiracy.

These two illustrious soldiers, Borso and Giberto, ruled the destinies of Correggio in 1494, the supposed birth-year of Antonio Allegri. We have no definite proofs of the authenticity of this date; but the indirect evidences of a number of documents combine to attest it. Almost every biographer of the painter's who has accepted it, from Ratti downwards, relied unhesitatingly upon the mural inscription under the outer portico of the monastery of San Francesco at Correggio. This positively declares that the painter died in 1534 at the age of forty; but we know that the inscription itself dates only from 1647, when it was cut at the expense of one Girolamo Conti, a doctor of laws, living in Rome.[1]

It should be observed that the framer of the inscription states as a fact what Vasari assumes with a certain amount of hesitation. Correggio, says the latter, died "at the age of *about* forty." Various documents bearing on the subject, however, almost certainly point to 1494 as the year of the artist's birth, and hence we may not unreasonably suppose that Vasari had some sufficient grounds for his assumption, which he based perhaps on the statement of some one who had known the painter in Parma, perhaps on its general acceptance in his day. The mere fact that no confirmatory document is now extant cannot be held sufficient to discredit his testimony. Girolamo Gualdo, in a description of the *Garden of Chà Gualdo*, says that Allegri died at the age of forty ; but he evidently repeats the statement of Vasari.[2]

The indirect proofs which incline us to accept what we may call the traditional date are to be found in two documents, one of August 30, 1514, the other of February 1, 1519.[3] In the latter Correggio is described as *egregio et discreto juvene*, a term then generally applied to a man who had not yet passed his twenty-fifth year. The deduction would, of course, be of little value without further support. But in the first of the two documents, a deed engaging Correggio to execute the picture now in the Dresden Gallery for the convent of San Francesco, the youthful painter pledges himself to perform the work "*cum consensu eius patris præsentis.*"[4] He was therefore a minor.

It may be urged that the testimony of these two documents also admits of the further contention that Correggio was born *after* 1494. But, as we shall see, the quality of the very work under discussion precludes such an idea ; it is sufficiently astonishing that the picture should have been painted by a youth of barely twenty.

On the other hand, we learn that he was present on July 14,

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[1] C. G. Ratti, *Notizie storiche e sincere intorno la vita e le opere di Antonio Allegri* (*Finale*, 1781).

[2] Bernardo Morsolin, *Il Museo Gualdo in Vicenza. Descrizione fatta da Girolamo Gualdo nel* 1650. *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, vol. viii., part i. Venice, 1894.

[3] Pungileoni, ii. p. 127.

[4] *Op. cit.* ii. p. 67.

1517, at the reading of Giovanna da Montecorvino's will, and the nature of the act did not admit of minors among the witnesses.[1]

After this it would be superfluous to quote other documents of later date, in which we find the father no longer intervening on his son's behalf in the contracts entered into by the painter. Nor will it be of much interest to note that on January 12, 1511, he stood sponsor to an infant of the Vigarini family, named Antonio, for, as is well known, children were competent to undertake this office from about the age of ten.

Many evidences, however, point to the conclusion that the painter was born in 1494; and if this be indeed the fact, his advent may be looked upon as in some sense a compensation to the Emilia for the heavy loss she sustained in the same year by the deaths of Boiardo, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and Marco Pio.

If there be any who wish to raise a further question as to his birthplace, they may quote the statement of Padre Resta, who asserts that Allegri was born at a short distance from Correggio, in the Castello di San Martino, where his father owned a few acres of land. There is absolutely no foundation for this assertion, opposed as it is not only to the evidences of all contemporary documents, wherein the artist is constantly spoken of as a native of Correggio, but to the very surname he derived from his birthplace. Some writers have therefore conjectured that the Padre confused the painter with one Antonio da Correggio, who was parish priest of San Martino at a much later period.

The father of our painter was called Pellegrino; he named his son, as was usual, after his own father. We do not know the meaning of the additional name *Doman* given to Pellegrino in contemporary records,[2] in reference to which a piece of land belonging to him at San Martino was known as *La Domana*.[3] Some suppose it to have signified *Domani* (to-morrow) and to have been derived from his frequent use of the word. The painter's mother was one Bernardina

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[1] Meyer, p. 110.

[2] Pungileoni, i. p. 5 and ii. p. 251, V. Magnanini, *Condizioni economiche del Correggio*, p. 95 (Correggio, 1886). "Peregrino de Alegris alias dicto Doman."

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 128.

Piazzoli, or degli Aromani, who brought her husband as dowry a hundred *lire* of the Correggese currency. Brunorio, to whom we are indebted for this information, does not give us any hint as to the date of their marriage.[1] Such an indication would have been of great value, as determining in a measure the date of birth of their only son.

The tradition that the Allegri family came originally from a fortified village of Campagnola called Castellazzo rests on a certain historic basis.[2] The mere statement that persons bearing the name of Allegri were known there so early as the first half of the fourteenth century is of little importance, for families of this name were also to be found in other districts. But the probability of the legend is very much increased when we read that Castellazzo was demolished in 1371 for strategic reasons, and that its inhabitants fled to Correggio.[3] It is true that some historians attribute its destruction to Ambrogio Visconti, Bernabò's lieutenant, and others to Guido of Correggio. But they all agree as to the date and the place of migration, and the fact that the suppressed commune came under the jurisdiction of Correggio the following year, together with the further fact that after this period no Allegri are to be traced in Campagnola, whereas they are to be found flourishing in Correggio, forces us to recognise a substratum of truth in the tradition.

We are not inclined to lay much stress on the conjectures of writers, who trace our artist's pedigree back to a certain Allegro, flourishing under the Countess Matilda, or to one Pietro di Allegro of Reggio. The theory which refers the family origin to Campagnola seems to us a much more probable one, and accepting it, we find the earliest notice of Correggio's ancestry in the year 1329. Pungileoni, anxious to prove that they belonged from the first to the city of Correggio, affirmed, without, however, producing any documents, that according to a deed drawn up by one Corradino Corradini, a certain Allegro took the oath of fealty to the Lords of Correggio in 1329. But it must be borne in mind that Brunorio, dealing with the same date, declared that the name of one Allegro d'Antonio occurred in the book, now no longer extant, of the vassals and subjects of the Lords of Correggio, among those inhabitants of Campagnola, who, according to a deed of the same notary, swore allegiance to Giberto. It is evident that the same Allegri is referred to in both cases. The first person, however, to whom we can assign a place in the genealogical tree with any degree of certainty is one Giacomo, who flourished about 1440. All attempts to trace its earlier ramifications will land us in a maze of pure conjecture. For the rest, we have no desire to deal minutely with the painter's kinsfolk and family connections for the mere pleasure of transcribing barren lists of forgotten names.[1] Those of his relatives who came into direct or indirect contact with him will emerge from obscurity in the course of our narrative. We must not, however, omit to refer to a document hitherto ignored by all writers on Correggio, which not only informs us that a branch of the Allegri took root in Bolognese soil, but also adds eight names to the family pedigree. In June, 1479, Cristoforo, son of the Giacomo above-mentioned, and brother of our painter's grandfather, took up his abode in the State of Bologna with his wife Orsolina, and his children, Giberto, Francesco, Elisabetta, Antonio, Giovanni Maria, Clemente, Antonia, and Pellegrina.[2]

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[1] Gherardo Brunorio, *Lettera sull' origine, stato, e condizione del famosissimo pittore A. A. chiamato volgarmente il Correggio* (Bologna, 1716). This work was reproduced by Nicola Tacoli, under the name of Abbot Carlo Talenti. (*Memorie storiche di Reggio di Lombardia.*) Part iii., p. 495, *et seq.* Carpi, 1769.

[2] The tradition was accepted by Brunorio, Antonioli, and Ratti, but afterwards rejected by Tiraboschi, Pungileoni, &c.

[3] Fr. Sansovino. *Dell' origine e dei fatti delle famiglie illustri d' Italia*, p. 274. (Venice, 1582.) Magnanini, p. 92.

The house in which Correggio was born was in the quarter known as the *Borgo Vecchio*, and stood it appears, on land belonging to the *Pia Società dei Verberati di Santa Maria*, to whom pertained the ground-rent of seven *soldi* of the ancient coinage. It was, perhaps, one of those built at the close of the fourteenth century for the accommodation of the fugitive Campagnolese, for the *Borgo Vecchio* was an addition to the city necessitated by their immigration. Brunorio saw in this an additional argument for the theory that the Allegri were originally natives of Campagnola. But the house only came into their hands in May, 1446, being then purchased by Jacopo, who repaired and enlarged it four years later.[1] Even then it remained a very humble dwelling. When in 1514 the emissaries of the convent of San Francesco presented themselves to give the order for their famous picture, they were obliged to carry on their negotiations with the painter in his bed-room *ad terrenum*. It is worthy of remark that he worked and slept in the same room, a room on the ground floor, which in that district is always damp and unhealthy.

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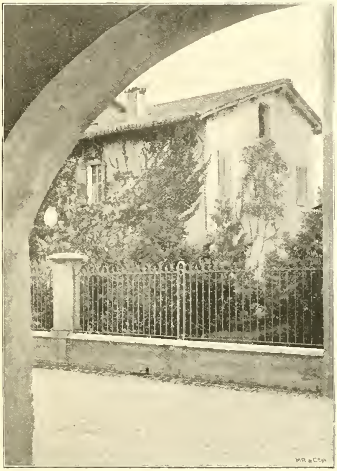
[1] The genealogical tree compiled by Michele Antonioli is given by Magnanini, p. 57.

[2] Archives of the State of Bologna.—Section of the Commune.—Order of Registration and Presentation of Strangers.—Report as to Strangers domiciled in Bologna. *See* vol. of 1475 to 1601. "Eodem millesino (1476) die quartadecima junii Christoforus quondam Jacobi de Alegris de Corigio forensis et laborator terrarum qui ut asseruit de novo venit ad civitatem Bononie, causa habitandi in comitatu aut guardia eiusdem et ibidem opera rusticalia exercendi cum infrascripta sua familia videlicet, Ursolina eius uxore, Giberto, Francischo, Elisabet, Anthonio, Johanne Maria, Clemente, Anthonia, Pellegrina eius filiis. Comparuit coram me Enoch, &c. Actum ut supra presentibus Jacobo quondam Thome de Monteclaro bonon . cive . qui dixit etc. et Ser Francischo de Oleo notario testibus, etc."


HOME OF THE ALLEGRI AT CORREGGIO.

A further enlargement was made by the acquisition of a small adjoining house, bought from one Ippolita Scaltriti for twenty-five ducats in the April of 1529, at which date the painter was making considerable sums by his work, and might well have afforded himself a more comfortable dwelling. But he loved his paternal home, and in his humility he never perhaps thought of quitting it. His grandparents and parents had spent their lives under its roof; there he had himself first seen the light; there the vision of art had first dawned upon him; and there, still a young man, he ended his days. The house so dearly loved by him should have been a sacred and precious heritage to his son. But the thought that he had lived and died and produced his marvellous works within its walls was not sufficient inducement to his heir to preserve it. In December, 1550, it was sold to Gherardino Paris.[1] The enumeration of the different rooms in which Alessandro Paris the notary, son of Gherardino, drew up his acts, according to the season of the year, gives some idea of the limited accommodation of the house. In the winter he worked in the bedchamber or *ab igne*, that is to say, in the kitchen; in warm weather he established himself under the porch at the entrance, on the lobby of the staircase, or on a little upper *loggia* which had existed in the painter's time. In 1572 Paris declared his intention of leaving the house to the College of Notaries at Correggio, on condition of their undertaking certain specified work.[2] But twenty years later, either because he had changed his mind or the notaries had failed to satisfy his demands, he decided, in default of direct heirs, to bequeathe it to the Hospital of Santa Maria, the almoners of which sold it to Ranuccio Sogari for a hundred and seventy *scudi* in 1625.[3] Early in the eighteenth century the front part fell down, causing great damage to several adjoining cottages.

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[1] Pungileoni, ii. p. 274, and Magnanini, pp. 24 and 59.

The history of our painter's home may be said to end here, but to avoid the necessity of further reference thereto, we may add the ground on which it stood, and the portion of the building still intact, were bought by Francesco Contarelli, who cleared away the rubbish from the space in front, and made the little *Piazza delle case bruciate* (*burnt houses*), afterwards known as the Piazzale Allegri. From the Contarelli the Piazzale passed into the possession of the body known as the *Congregazione di Carita*, and thence to a society of gentlemen of Correggio, who bought it to ensure its preservation, and presented it sixteen years later to the municipality.

The meanness of this dwelling has often been adduced to confute

[1] Tiraboschi, p. 240. [2] Magnanini, p. 21. [3] *Op. cit.* p. 28.

the arguments of those who assert Correggio to have lived in easy and comfortable circumstances, and to support the legendary stories of his extreme poverty. We shall have occasion to touch on this point further on in considering the character of our painter. But we may remark in passing that the modest dwelling was by no means poverty-stricken at the time of the artist's birth. In the Allegri household, squalor and luxury were alike unknown. It was therefore easy for critics to go from one extreme to another, and we can readily understand how, after stories had long been current setting forth the semi-starvation endured by the painter and his kinsfolk, the first appearance of documents which proved them to have been the possessors of houses and lands, caused an exaggerated revulsion of opinion. Gherardo Brunorio, relying upon the Allegro mentioned in the Countess Matilda's Charter of 1109, would fain have proved them not only rich, but of noble birth. The fact that one of Correggio's daughters married a Brunorio accounts for this little weakness on the part of the good Gherardo, who seems to have forgotten that greater lustre was shed on the family by the painter's glory than by problematical descent from a vassal of the Countess Matilda.

Cristoforo Allegri, that brother of Correggio's grandfather who, as we have seen, settled on Bolognese territory in 1476, is called, in the archivial document above quoted, a tiller of the soil, and a person occupied in rustic labours. This shows the Allegri to have been originally peasants, whose industry enabled them to acquire small plots of land and work them on their own account. The branch which settled in Correggio succeeded in exchanging their old calling of agriculturists for one less arduous, and greatly improved their social condition.

In his will, dated 1485, Correggio's grandfather left a considerable addition to the property of his father Jacopo, and altogether raised the position of the family. His son Lorenzo was a painter, and thus to the products of the land at Ponte Sanguineto he was able to add the fruits of his art.

Correggio's father, Pellegrino, appears from contemporary evidences to have been a man of unusual resource and energy. Whilst busily engaged in his own trade as a victualler and petty manufacturer, he was also buying land, and watching over the interests of the son whose labours were of such a different nature.

We do not propose to give a detailed account of the various small purchases made by Pellegrino, or of the lands he rented from different owners, several other writers having made a special study of these details. It may be briefly stated that Pellegrino's property, swelled by the earnings of his son, and the dowry of his son's wife, Girolama Merlini, consisted towards 1534 of some hundred and twenty Reggian acres scattered over the commune of Fabrico, and the districts of Mandrio, Mandriolo, Fosdondo, S. Prospero, S. Biagio, and S. Martino, the whole forming an inheritance by no means to be despised in those days. When Pellegrino made his will in 1538, he was in a position to give his grandchild, the daughter of our painter—then fourteen years old—a dowry of two hundred and forty gold *scudi*, a very considerable portion at that period. He also made various other bequests of some value, among them one of twenty gold *scudi* to a female servant.[1]

A governor of Parma, Alessandro Caccia, wrote to the Duke of Mantua five months after the death of Correggio: "I hear he has made comfortable provision for his heirs."

In these two words, "comfortable provision," the worthy governor defines the social status of the Allegri family better than all the biographers who exaggerated its wealth on the one hand, or its poverty on the other.

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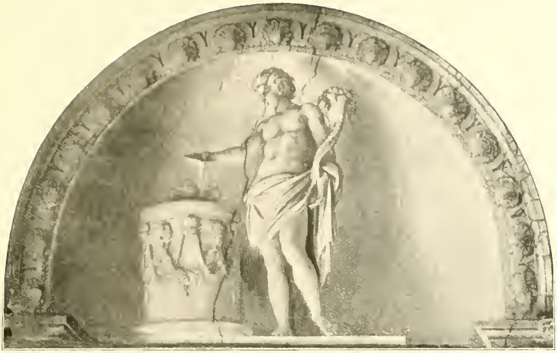
[1] Tiraboschi, p. 239. Pungileoni, i. pp. 5, 6, 74, 152: ii. pp. 210, 227, 231, &c. Magnanini, pp. 15, 70, 95, 119 *et seq.* Tiraboschi quotes a letter written from Correggio, signed with the assumed name of Pieter Rans, of Berne, dealing with the true origin and condition of the painter (*Op. cit.* p. 235). Pellegrino's will was published by Domenico Manni in his *Osservazioni circa i sigilli antichi*, xxix. p. 91; Florence, 1784.

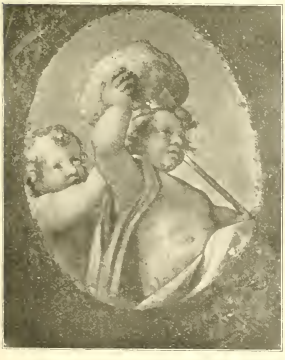


BONUS EVENTUS. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER III

CORREGGIO'S MASTERS

ARTISTS IN CORREGGIO—FRANCESCA OF BRANDENBURG'S PALACE—LORENZO ALLEGRI AND FRANCESCO BIANCHI-FERRARI—THE FERRARESE SCHOOL OF PAINTING.



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

ALL that biographers have written concerning the literary education of the youthful Antonio is purely imaginary. The good handwriting and excellent spelling of his autograph letters are sufficient evidence that his father had early entrusted him to some careful master. But here our knowledge ceases. Pungileoni was simply drawing on his powers of invention when he said: "Giovanni Berni of Piacenza was the first person to instruct him in the elements of letters and Battista Marastoni of Modena was his guide to the retreats of the Muses and of eloquence." The discovery that these two masters were living at Correggio about the year 1500 was sufficient ground for the fabrication of this statement, which rests on no better foundation than the kindred assertion that at a later date our painter "sought to enrich his mind by the study of philosophy, his instructor being the physician, Gian Battista Lombardi."[1] If we further accept the statement of some that Correggio was also a student of mathematical science, we must believe our painter to have been a striking example of universal aptitudes! But, unluckily, there are others who declare that he had no inclination for such studies, and that feeling himself strongly drawn towards art, he allowed his parents to grumble as they pleased at his neglect of other learning.[2]

During his boyhood Correggio had many opportunities of meeting artists in his native place, and witnessed the completion of many famous works.

The names of two painters only, Jacopo di Jodo and Giovanni Balducci, occur in Correggese records of the middle of the fifteenth century; but immediately afterwards, throughout the latter part of the century, and the first twenty years of the succeeding one, we note the presence of a perfect phalanx of masters, whose activity shows most evidently how the spirit of the Renaissance had manifested itself at Correggio, what the importance of the city must have been, and how great the zeal of its princes for art and for the dignity of their court; what, in short, was the atmosphere in which Correggio grew up and developed. Not only were painters busily at work there, but, as documents and the surviving evidences of their industry alike tell us, weavers of tapestries and carpets, goldsmiths, sculptors, and architects. In the spacious lateral chapels of San Francesco, built by Manfredo and Agnese in 1470, there are capitals ornamented with sculptured angels and coats of arms, executed with admirable breadth and sincerity. In law documents of the years 1460 and 1498 we read the names of Rinaldo Duro, of Flanders, a noted weaver of tapestries, who worked both for the Estensi and the Gonzaghi; of master Conto della Zinella of Trent, embroiderer, of Enrico of Lodi, designer, of Giacomo Piemontesio, *magister rasorum*.[1] These, with others, formed a school of experts, whose services were in request at many Italian Courts. In 1498 a certain Giovanni Cucchiari, *magister pannorum rasse*, working at Ferrara, though really a native of Flanders, was there described as "of Correggio," because he came from that city, and had passed through its school.[2] Artists flocked thither from various States, in some cases from considerable distances. Among the painters were Bartolomeo di Giovanni and Francesco Angeli, both of Milan; Giovanni Battista of Lodi, Giovanni of Rubiera, Antonio Mangoni of Caravaggio, Bartolomeo, called *Brason*, the Ferrarese, Battista di Carlino di Bagnolo, Giovanni di Pietro, called *Il Rosso* of Carbonara, and his son Sebastiano, and Alessandrino di Giovanni d'Arceto, whose labours brought them into frequent contact with native painters such as Antonio Bartolotti, Lorenzo and Quirino Allegri, Baldassarre Lusenti, Giovanni di Pietro di Giovanni, Giberto Trombetta, Giberto di Ubicino, *optimus pictor*, Master Latino, and Bernardo di Luchino, if indeed these last may be called Correggese artists. Two goldsmiths, father and son, Giovanni Antonio and Alessandro dei Cavallari, had come from Bologna.[3] Among so many artists, some, no doubt, were good, many mediocre, and the majority bad. Nevertheless, the fact that they should have assembled in this little city within such a short time is in itself sufficiently remarkable.

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[1] *Op. cit.* i. pp. 7 and 19. Other writers give the name as *Muratori* instead of *Marastoni*.

[2] Quirino Bigi, *Della vita e delle opere certe ed incerte di Antonio Allegri detto il Correggio*, p. 4. Modena, 1880.

Of some among them, indeed, we find favourable notices. Bernardo di Luchino must certainly be that Bernardo of Correggio who was painting the Anziani rooms at Reggio between 1501 and 1504,[1] and it is not improbable that Bartolomeo di Giovanni of Milan was that *Bartolomeo de Coreza* who worked for the Counts of Novellara in 1498. The fact of his being described as *de Coreza* by no means tells against the hypothesis; it was the custom for writers to distinguish an artist by the name of the place in which he generally lived, and from whence he came, as we have seen was actually done at Ferrara in a document of the same date referring to Giovanni of Flanders.

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[1] Pungileoni, ii. pp. 6–7. Quirino Bigi, *Degli arazzieri e ricamatori di Correggio*. Correggio, 1878. Bigi believed certain tapestries now in the Town Hall to be works of the fifteenth century, and indulges in dissertations based on this belief. They date, as a fact, from the end of the sixteenth, if not from the beginning of the seventeenth, century.

[2] Pierre Gentili, *Sur l'Art de Tapis*, p. 30. Rome, 1878.

[3] Pungileoni, ii. pp. 4–6; iii. pp. 1–2. Bigi, *Notizie di Ant. Allegri, di Ant. Bartolotti*, ecc., pp. 6–17. Modena, 1873.

"The prudent master, Bartolomeo de Ferrara, known as *Maestro Brason*" was probably an artist of some merit. By his will, dated 1509, he left his wife all his effects both at Ferrara and Correggio, charging her, however, to pay to the Church of San Domenico one gold ducat, in compensation for a crucifix he had failed to paint for them as agreed, and to give a certain stone for grinding colours to his assistant, together with the greater part of his wardrobe. He recovered, however, from the illness which prompted the drawing up of this will, in which he disposed of everything he possessed, down to his cap and slippers. We find that in 1514 he was commissioned by the confraternity of Santa Maria to paint another crucifix, and to restore an image of St. Peter Martyr.[2]

Baldassarre Lusenti painted a chapel of St. Ursula in fresco, for a noble and cultured nun of the convent of Corpus Domini, Isotta, daughter of the famous Nicolò da Correggio, a poetess of some talent. When Caterina Torelli, widow of Gian Pietro Gonzaga, determined to decorate and beautify some of the rooms in her castle at Novellara, and, in particular, to prepare a private cabinet for Costanza, daughter of Giberto da Correggio, who went to Novellara as the bride of Alessandro Gonzaga, she employed several Correggese painters, among them Master Antonio and Master Latino.

The accounts of expenses incurred by the Gonzaghi for the lodging of the "painters of Correza and their company" fix the date of their sojourn at 1515 to 1518. It is much to be regretted that nothing remains of the paintings executed by these masters in the Dominican monastery, the church and hospital of S. Antonio, the monastery of Corpus Domini, and the convent of the Capuchins. The one sample of their work still extant is a *St. Lucy* of much grace and sweetness, near the entrance door of the north aisle, in the Capuchin Church of S. Francesco.

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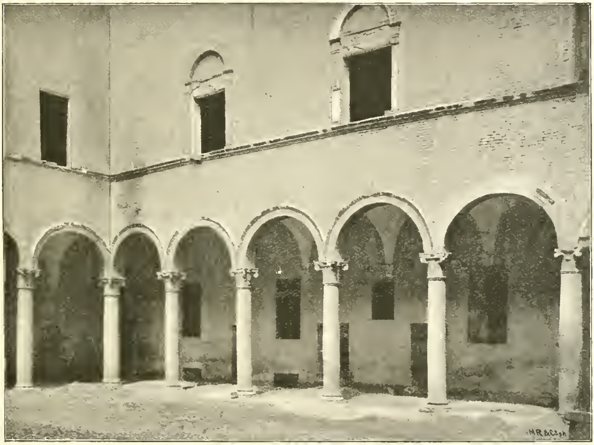
[1] Franc. Malaguzzi-Valeri, *Notizie di artisti reggiani*, p. 35. Reggio, 1892.

[2] G. Campori, *Gli artisti italiani e stranieri negli stati estensi*, p. 96. Modena, 1855.

In 1507, Francesca of Brandenburg, widow of Giberto da Correggio, built her magnificent palace. Even in its present ruined state, such fragments as the inner *loggia*, and the delicate reliefs of the outer door excite our admiration. In this palace, of which Correggio, in his boyhood witnessed the foundation, watched the gradual progress, and admired the final adornment with pictures and sculpture: here, where in his manhood he so often enjoyed the intellectual society of Veronica Gambara, a room, decorated with a broad frieze and a coffered ceiling, is still preserved. The ornament, a delicate tracery


INNER COURT OF THE PALACE OF THE LORDS OF CORREGGIO.

in chiaroscuro, relieved against a background of dark blue, is composed of figures of Neptune, repeated at intervals, and ingeniously combined with satyrs and sirens playing musical instruments, griffins, shields, and the date 1508. Certain features in the decoration clearly proclaim Mantegnesque influences, though some critics have maintained it to be purely Ferrarese in character. Be this as it may, we here recognise the hand of Cesare da Reggio, who, as soon as he had finished the decoration of this chamber, applied the same system of grotesques and chiaroscuro ornament to the vault and lunettes of the sacristy in the Church of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma.

The first place among all the painters we have mentioned is, however, unanimously accorded to Antonio Bartolotti degli Anceschi, called Tognino, whom many hold to have been Correggio's first master. Born shortly after 1450, he lived till 1527. We find notices of several works executed by him for the Franciscans and the Church of Santa Maria della Misericordia.[1] It is therefore probable that the *Master Antonio* who worked at the Castle of Novellara from 1514 to 1518 was Bartolotti rather than Correggio. Their identity of names, however, makes it impossible to clear up this point, failing the evidence of further documents. A fresco, originally at Correggio, representing the Virgin and Child with SS. Francis and Quirinus and an angel, is now in the Estense Gallery at Modena, where it is tentatively ascribed to Bartolotti. During its various journeys from one church to another in Correggio, and thence in 1787 to Modena, the work suffered severely, although treated with every respect, and was already a ruin when in 1845 it was transferred to canvas.[2] It is therefore impossible to judge of its artistic character in relation to Correggio's early works, or to determine by its help how far the hypothesis that the youthful Allegri learnt the elements of painting from Bartolotti is tenable.

No one, on the other hand, will be inclined to dispute the extreme probability of the assumption that as a child, Antonio, bent on becoming a painter, may have made his first attempts to handle a brush in the family atelier, that in which his uncle Lorenzo and his cousin Quirino were working. The contemplation of an art practised by those immediately surrounding them has often determined the early inclinations of children, and we constantly find the sons or nephews of painters and musicians becoming in their turn painters and musicians. Traditional talents manifest themselves not only in races, but in cities and families, and he who overlooks this fact robs his researches of a very useful aid to criticism. Even in the Emilia itself, we might illustrate the theory by native instances, such as those of the Loschi and the Mazzoli at Parma, the Francia family and the Carracci at Bologna, the Erri at Modena, the Dossi at Ferrara, the Longhi at Ravenna!

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[1] Pungileoni, i. p. 188; ii. p. 27. Bigi, *Notizie di Antonio Allegri e di Antonio Bartolotti*, p. 6 *et seq.*

[2] Adolfo Venturi, *La R. Galleria estense in Modena*, p. 342 *et seq.* Modena, 1883

In considering the early training of Correggio, we must give due weight to the important fact that Lorenzo Allegri, his father's brother, was a painter. And it is natural to suppose that the two little cousins, Quirino and Antonio, playmates from infancy, made their first emulous essays with brush and pencil side by side.

Rinaldo Corso's playful assertion that Lorenzo Allegri "wishing to depict a lion, drew a goat, and wrote the title above it"[1] has been held sufficient proof that he could not possibly have taught the rudiments of his art to the little nephew who showed so precocious a passion for painting. Tiraboschi, relying on that common-sense criticism which is always the most persuasive, demands with great simplicity: "Now since he had an uncle, who was a painter, though perhaps a mediocre one, is it not probable that he learnt the rudiments of his art from him?'[2]

Though it must be admitted that among the many works carried out at this period, contemporary documents credit Lorenzo only with the humblest, we find by way of compensation, that in 1503 (when Correggio was nine years old), he painted the Cappella delle Indulgenze and a picture for the Church of S. Francesco, the favourite place of worship of the lords of the city.[1] In the palace built by Count Giberto, a room was preserved till about the middle of the eighteenth century, in which was to be seen the coat of arms of the prince, together with that of the Lords of Mirandola, and a variety of frescoes and mythological subjects, one of which was signed *Laurentius P.* Pungileoni, after confessing that scarcely a vestige of these paintings remained in his time, hastens to add that he could not accept the piece in question as the work of Lorenzo! Such a method of reasoning naturally leads to a somewhat lame conclusion!

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[1] *Dichiarazione fatta sopra la seconda parte delle Rime della divina Colonna, Marchesa di Pescara, alla Molto Ill. Mad. Veronica Gambara da Correggio e alle donne gentili dedicata.* Bologna, 1542–1543.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 245.

Whether this was the work of Lorenzo or not, we may be permitted to ask if serious criticism is justified in dismissing an artist as incompetent on the evidence, not of any sample of his work, but on that of a contemporary's *bon mot.* Following such a precedent as this, we might, had the *Divine Comedy* perished, be now judging that great work by the dictum of Cecco d'Ascoli, who accused Alighieri of "croaking like the frogs." If none of Francia's sweet creations survived in churches and galleries for our delight, what idea should we have formed of his art, knowing nothing of him but that Michelangelo called him a blockhead, and said to one of his sons: "The living figures your father produces are better than those he paints!" And, not to multiply instances, what opinion should we have of our Allegri himself, if all that remained to us of him were the traditional criticism of the Canon, who pronounced the paintings of the cupola of the Cathedral at Parma "a hash of frogs"?

Lorenzo was certainly no great artist, but Rinaldo Corso's jest (which is almost a repetition of one of Vasari's), by no means forbids the assumption that he may have been the first to observe his nephew's aptitude, and to teach him to hold a pencil. Final results are due above all to personal gifts, and when great men recall their first masters, many among them may well smile as they think of the naïve ignorance of those to whom, nevertheless, they owe their initiation into art, or letters or science. Lorenzo died in December, 1527. He therefore lived long enough to witness the full development of his nephew's genius.

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[1] Pungileoni, i. pp. 14–15; ii. pp. 4 and 23.

Vasari does not so much as allude to Correggio's masters, and it was not until the beginning of the seventeenth century that a passage interpolated by Gian Battista Spaccini in the Modenese Chronicle of Tommasino de' Bianchi, called de' Lancellotti, pronounced him the pupil of Francesco Bianchi-Ferrari. The statement, which was repeated by Vedriani in his History of Modena,[1] gradually gained credence, and though contested by Tiraboschi,[2] Pungileoni,[3] and others, had, and continues to have, supporters. A well-known art-critic writes as follows: "This tradition rests on a firmer basis than is generally supposed, for if the statement was in the original Chronicle by Lancellotti which Spaccini copied, its evidence is indisputable; and if it was interpolated by Spaccini at the close of the sixteenth century, the tradition must have gained ground early, and is in itself probable enough. It has been objected that Francesco Bianchi-Ferrari died in 1510, when Correggio was only sixteen, and that the Modenese painter could only have taught him the rudiments of his art. To this argument we may reply that the precocious development of the artists of our Renaissance is a matter of general knowledge, and further, that we are by no means certain that Correggio was only sixteen at this date, since, as Tiraboschi tells us, the year 1494 is given as the date of his birth solely on the authority of the comparatively modern inscription at Correggio, which states that he died in 1534 at the age of forty."[4] Here criticism somewhat enlarges the boundaries in its own favour, instead of keeping strictly to fact. That Lancellotti never mentioned Bianchi-Ferrari as Correggio's master is easily proved by examination of the codex of his Chronicle. In the absence of any tittle of evidence for such an argument it cannot plausibly be urged that there may have been other editions which have perished, especially when we bear in mind that Spaccini himself admitted having added notices both of facts and persons to the text.[5] His own testimony is of little weight, seeing that he flourished some two-thirds of a century after Bianchi-Ferrari. It now only remains to be seen whether, having regard to time, it was possible for Correggio to have been the pupil of the latter. The assumption that our artist was born *about* 1494 is based not merely on the inscription, but on the statement of Vasari, and, more important still, on the indirect confirmation of contemporary documents. The fixing of Correggio's birth at a date anterior to this might indeed give pleasure to those who are determined to make him the pupil of Bianchi-Ferrari, but certainly not to those whose aim is the elucidation of historical fact. Dates will already have been forced to their utmost limits if we concede that Correggio studied under the Modenese master at the age of sixteen.

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[1] Lod. Vedriani, *Historia dell' antichissima città di Modena*, Part ii. p. 479. Modena, 1667.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 243 and 331.

[3] *Op. cit.* i. p. 12, and ii. p. 10.

[4] Adolfo Venturi, *Il pittor delle grazie*, *Nuova Antologia*, xxx. p. 239. Rome, 1890.

[5] Tiraboschi, *op. cit.* v. p. 136.

Lancellotti writes as follows: "On February 8, 1510, Master Francesco di Biancho Frare, an accomplished painter and excellent man, died of an incurable malady, from which he had suffered for three months."[1] The fact of this long illness still further shortens the possible term of Correggio's pupilage. It is obvious that Correggio cannot have studied with him at Modena during his illness, and we must therefore suppose that he entered Bianchi's *atelier* some time before, as early, indeed, as 1508, when he was not sixteen, but only fourteen years old. Now with all due respect for modern criticism, and the precocity of the painters of the Renaissance, we cannot believe that Pellegrino Allegri and Bernardina Aromani would have sent this young boy, their only son, to Modena, to study the elements of drawing and painting when, as we have seen, they might have found plenty of masters for him in Correggio. The difficulty is greatly increased if we accept Morelli's theory that our painter went to Modena when he was about twelve, and that a year, or two years later, he entered the school of Francia at Bologna. He says: "Bianchi was the close friend of Francesco Francia and Lorenzo Costa, and must have painted frescoes with them in the Bentivoglio Palace at Bologna. Therefore we may presume that his gifted pupil from Correggio, who may well have spent his thirteenth year (1507 or 1508) under Bianchi's guidance, was sent by the latter to perfect himself in the studio of Francia."[1] If we have very little ground for belief in the instruction of Correggio by Bianchi, there is still less reason to suppose that he was ever directly taught by Francia. We can even adduce a very strong argument against the assumption that Allegri worked in Francia's studio. The latter, as we know, entered the names of his two hundred scholars in his household account book, which Malvasia saw repeatedly, and from which he made copious extracts. And is it credible that Malvasia, who, to attest the importance of Francia's school, transcribed some thirty names of its most obscure members, should have omitted the glorious name of Correggio?[2]

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[1] Tommasino de' Bianchi, called de' Lancellotti, *Cronaca Modenese*, vol. i. p. 77. Parma, 1862. The further hypothesis that among the masters of Correggio should be included Pellegrino Munari is not worth discussing. *See* R. Mengs, *Opere*, vol. ii. p. 139 *et seq.* Bassano, 1780. Tiraboschi, vi. p. 244, and Pungileoni, ii. p. 9, point out the error which gave rise to the inclusion of Michele and Pier Ilario Mazzola among

But, when all is said, it matters little who gave the rudiments of an art or a science to a future genius. Of what historical importance would it be to know who taught the alphabet to Dante and to Shakespeare, or who instructed Copernicus and Galileo in the elements of arithmetic? Such knowledge is only valuable when the master's art has affected that of his disciple and determined its course, when there has been in some sort a fusion of sentiment, a continuity of formulæ, a progressive development of individual methods, when, in fact, the tradition of his teacher has been the pupil's incentive, spurring him on in the path of glory.

The most authoritative modern critics are all agreed that Correggio's art marks the highest development of the Emilian style, or rather, perhaps, of the Ferrarese, which then predominated in the Emilia.[3]

Each school aimed at perfection of form and colour from a special standpoint. The achievement of typical beauty was the work of heroic efforts and patient labours, of many years and many artists. Giorgione and Titian gave its crowning splendour to Venetian art, Leonardo and Andrea del Sarto to that of Tuscany, Raphael to that of Umbria. It was Correggio's task to assimilate all the elements of Ferrarese art, to invigorate and amplify them by study, to vivify them by his genius. In spite of the great admiration he felt for Mantegna, tradition, surroundings, and his own noble and refined nature, all combined to preserve, both in the style and sentiment of his creations, the expressive simplicity of the painters who shed lustre on the cities of the Estensi and the Bentivogli; therefore he remained faithful to the art of the Ferrarese, and more especially to that of Lorenzo Costa and Dosso.

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[1] *Le opere dei maestri italiani nelle gallerie di Monaco, Dresda e Berlino*, p. 122. Bologna, 1886.

[2] C. C. Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, i. p. 56. Bologna, 1844.

[3] The credit of having first given attention to this point belongs to Giovanni Morelli, *op. cit.* p. 121 *et seq.*, and *Italian Painters*, p. 223 *et seq.* London, 1892. His conclusions were confirmed by Gustavo Frizzoni, *Arte italiana del Rinascimento*, p. 354 *et seq.* Milan, 1891. Ad. Venturi, *Il pittor delle grazie*. J. P. Richter, *Correggio*, in *Kunst und Künstler des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, edited by Dr. R. Dohme. Leipzig, 1879.

The city of Correggio lay in the midst of Reggio, Modena, Carpi, Bologna, Ferrara, and Mantua. Throughout this region, when Allegri was a boy, the spirit of Ferrarese art had been disseminated, either by teaching or by the works of the school. Venturi says: "At some historic moments desires and tendencies manifest themselves in given districts, a new ideal takes shape, dispositions are revealed, which determine in a general way the forms that the new artist must receive and perfect. He can no more resist these forces than he can help adopting the dialect of those among whom he first learns to speak." And he continues thus: "About the year 1510, when Correggio was a youth, Ferrara still sheltered within her walls the descendants of those artists whose development was mainly due to Lionello d'Este, the cultured prince who scattered the seed of art over his territory with so lavish a hand. Among those who had obeyed the summons of the Lord of Ferrara were Pisanello, greeted by the lays of the Veronese Guarino, and a chorus of other poets; Jacopo Bellini, father of the founders of the Venetian school; Mantegna and Pier della Francesco, the one bringing with him the first-fruits of his art, the other the science of perspective. And others again: Roger van der Weyden, who came from Flanders with his triptych, and the secret of painting in oils; Alfonso of Spain, who adorned the studio of Belfiore, where Lionello d'Este loved to retire with learned men and books; and

Angelo of Siena, called Parrhasius, the painter of the Muses described by Ciriaco of Ancona, who declared that bees might be deceived by the flowers that shone in the grass at the feet of Melpomene. These and many other artists from all quarters who flocked to Ferrara laid the foundations of a school of painting remarkable for its robust Northern character. Cosmè Tura arose, a restless seeker after truth, whose brush surprised all the secrets of flesh-tints, who carried expressive power to the verge of grimace, and movement to the verge of violence and exaggeration. Almost at the same time appeared Francesco della Cossa, who peopled the great hall of the Schifanoia Palace with his high-cheeked divinities, and the altars of Bologna with his austere saints. Chief among the artistic heirs of these two masters were Ercole de' Roberti and Lorenzo Costa. The former, full of vigour and dramatic ardour, left a pictorial monument in Bologna which inspired one of Vasari's most powerful pieces of description. His heirs were the disciples of Cossa; Costa meanwhile had shared the kingdom of art with Francia at Bologna. A passion for effects won by foreshortening, great vivacity in composition, and a delicate feeling for landscape, remained the essential characteristics of the next generation in this school. But by the beginning of the sixteenth century its art had become enfeebled; it had lost its way in a maze of formulæ, and was already sinking into decrepitude. Costa himself, who had drawn his first inspiration from Roberti, and had much in common with him, gradually lost the verve that characterised his early works. By the first years of the sixteenth century his youthful robustness had entirely disappeared; his figures seem to have dwindled; their attitudes are constrained and affected, their heads sunk between their shoulders.

Costa had several scholars and imitators, the most gifted of whom was Ercole Grandi, who worked in the Calcagnini Palace at Ferrara, where he depicted the joyous life of the Renaissance, painting around an open gallery, adorned with Oriental carpets, flower-crowned maidens with musical instruments, boys with monkeys, buffoons, courtiers, cavaliers, musicians, and fair-haired women. Grandi's vivacity, his force of colour, the deep poetic feeling of his landscapes, which seem to quiver in azure space, entitle him to the first place in what may be called the Costesque cycle at Ferrara. He was also the most versatile of the many artists who worked there from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the time when Correggio completed his artistic education.[1]

The important and long-sustained influence of these men naturally extended over a wide district beyond Ferrara. Of Bologna it will be unnecessary to speak at length, for it is a matter of common knowledge that the art especially affected by the Bentivogli was that of the Ferrarese masters. Galasso went to Bologna about the middle of the fifteenth century. Not long afterwards, in the year 1470, Francesco Cossa arrived, the fame of his frescoes in the Schifanoia having already preceded him. From 1480 to 1486, Ercole Roberti was living at Bologna, where he was joined by Costa in 1483. Bolognese writers long asserted that Costa was the pupil of Francia, but Francia himself only began to practise painting at about this time, having previously worked as a goldsmith. The derivation of Lorenzo Costa's art from that of Roberti will be evident to every attentive student of the *Triumphs* in the Bentivoglio Chapel at San Giacomo. In course of time Costa, after having inspired Francia, was in his turn inspired by the latter, becoming more delicate in form and more brilliant in colour under his suave influence. Hence it is not unreasonable to suppose with Meyer[2] that the reminiscences of Francia discerned by Morelli in Correggio's youthful works, may have been transmitted to him by Costa.

In Modena, meanwhile, art developed steadily on Ferrarese lines. It is well known that several Modenese artists worked with Francia and Costa.

"The harsh realism and characteristic vigour of the Modenese painters, the Erri, recall the art of Cosmè (Tura) and of Costa; Bartolomeo Bonascia also shows himself a close follower of the latter master in various details of his sculptured reliefs, while in the fleshless angularity of his heads Bianchi Ferrari reflects the mannerism of Tura in the same manner as does Ercole Roberti; Pellegrino

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[1] Ad. Venturi, *Il pittor delle grazie*, pp. 234–37.

[2] *Correggio*, p 69.

Munari, called by Vasari 'the ornament of his century,' was originally a disciple of Bianchi, but gradually approached more and more closely to Lorenzo Costa, the head of the Ferrarese school in his day."[1]

Ferrarese influence, which began to decline in Reggio, died out

DOORWAY OF THE PALACE OF THE LORDS OF CORREGGIO.

almost entirely in Parma, whose artists were turning to Lombardy and Venice for inspiration. But of this we shall have more to say when we deal with the state of art in that city at the time of

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[1] Ad. Venturi, *Il pittor delle grazie*, p. 239. *La pittura modenese nel secolo XV. Archivio storico dell' Arte*, iii. p. 379. Rome, 1890.

Correggio's advent. The Maineri from Bologna and Ferrara, Simone Fornari, and Cesare, whose works betray the influence both of Roberti and of Mantegna, were meanwhile working in Reggio.[1]

In Correggio the Ferrarese tradition likewise prevailed. Among the best of the artists who flourished there in the early years of the sixteenth century we hear of one Bartolomeo da Ferrara, called *Brason*; the *St. Lucy*, already referred to, in the Church of San Francesco, is distinctly Ferrarese in character, and the sculptures of the Palazzo dei Signori recall those of the Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrari, while we learn from a description of certain frescoes that Cesare da Reggio was working there from 1507 to 1508. Our painter thus received his first impressions of Ferrarese art before he quitted his native city. But it is of more importance to note that his acquaintance with Costa's work must have dated from his childhood, for there was a picture by the master in the Church of San Francesco.[2]

Thus, at the most glorious period of the Renaissance, we mark the rise throughout the wide Emilian territory of a very individual art, which, if it cannot compete in ideality and æsthetic charm with that of Florence or of Venice, may yet bear comparison with these by virtue of its masculine vigour and profound sincerity.

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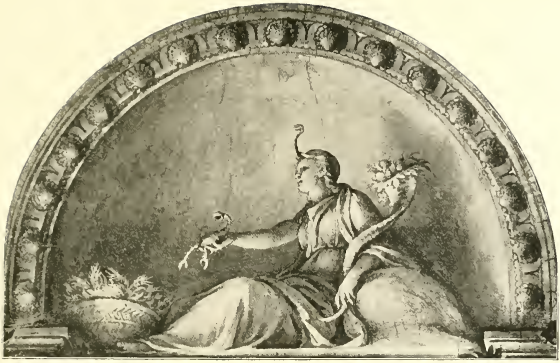
[1] G. Campori, *Gli artisti italiani e stranieri negli stati estensi.* G. B. Venturi, *Notizie di artisti reggiani non ricordati dal Tiraboschi.* Modena, 1883. Fr. Malaguzzi-Valeri, *Notizie di artisti reggiani. cit.*

[2] Pungileoni, ii. p. 43.

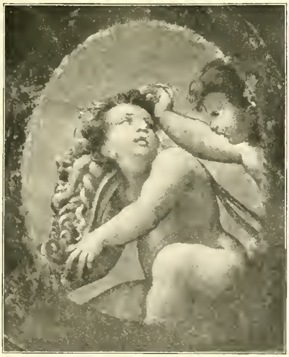


THE EARTH. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER IV

CORREGGIO IN MANTUA

INFLUENCE OF MANTEGNA—IMAGINARY JOURNEYS TO ROME AND MILAN—LORENZO COSTA, DOSSO, AND LIONBRUNO—PICTURES AT MANTUA ATTRIBUTED TO CORREGGIO.



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

THE affinity of Correggio's art to that of Mantegna, and the enlargement of the master's Ferrarese style under the influence of the great Vincenzan's works, have been over-emphasised by some writers; others, again, have entirely ignored this influence; and later critics, in reopening the question, have hardly given it due importance.

It was generally supposed in the seventeenth century that Correggio was the pupil of Mantegna. Francesco Scannelli, in his *Microcosmo della pittura*, printed at Cesena in 1657, remarks: "It is the opinion of all the greatest authorities on painting that this master profited by the solid instruction of the learned Mantegna from his earliest youth."[1] Ratti,[2] Mengs,[3] and others not only received this opinion, but stated it as a positive fact in their own works. When, however, documents were brought to light showing that Mantegna died in 1506, when Correggio was only about twelve (and not in 1517, as had been hitherto believed), some historians, seeing that personal relations between the two painters could not be established, incontinently abandoned all attempts to trace the Mantegnesque elements in Correggio's art as useless and misleading.[4]

The obvious rejoinder was not long withheld. It was urged with much simplicity that though Correggio might not have formed himself in Mantegna's *bottega*, nor shared his direct teaching, he may very well have studied in Mantua, under the influence of the master's works.[5] Meyer, indeed, declares that Mantegna's manner exercised a complete and undeniable influence upon Correggio. We, who hold his *œuvre* to be the logical outcome of Emilian formulæ, cannot accept the famous critic's theory in its entirety. But neither can we agree with those who, in their eager insistence on the Ferrarese elements of Correggio's youthful works, restrict the Mantegnesque to some few motives and reminiscences, the final limit of which they consider to have been reached in the great Franciscan altar-piece, now at Dresden. An art-writer of repute, pointing out the traces of Mantegnesque influence in Cav. Benigno Crespi's fine picture at Milan, "notably in the heads of the floating angels, and the St. Anne,"[6] continues thus: "The head of the Saint is almost a reproduction of a St. Anne in the Chapel of Sant' Andrea at Mantua, who reappears in several of

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[1] P. 275. [2] *Op. cit.* pp. 25 and 27. [3] *Opere*, i. p. 175.

[4] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 244. Note to Vasari, iv. p. 110.

[5] L. Lanzi, *Storia pittorica d' Italia*, vol. iv., chap. iii. C. P. Landon, *Vies et œuvres des peintres les plus célèbres de toutes les écoles—Correggio.* Paris, 1817. Pungileoni, i. p. 32; Blanc, *Histoire des Peintres—École Lombarde, Le Corrège.* Paris, 1876. C. L. Eastlake, *Handbook of Painting. Italian Schools*, ii. 497. London, 1874. Meyer, *op. cit.* p. 62 *et seq.* M. C. Heaton, *Correggio*, p. 5. London, 1890. L. Burckhardt, *Le Cicerone*, ii. p. 713. Paris, 1892. C. Lützow, *I tesori d' arte dell' Italia*, p 182. Milan, 1886.

[6] A mistake for St. Elizabeth.

Mantegna's pictures." He refers to various other motives in a picture in the Uffizi, formerly ascribed to Titian, but now recognised as the work of Correggio, and sums up thus: "These obvious reminiscences disappear entirely in the earliest of Correggio's duly authenticated works, the altar-piece, now at Dresden, painted in 1514-1515 for the Franciscan church at Correggio. They prove nevertheless that Allegri had closely studied the great Mantegna's works, and that the Vincenzan master's forms had modified the traditions of Ferrara." Adolfo Venturi's judgment is, so far, perfectly sound.[1] But he unduly limits the sphere of Mantegnesque influence in the work of Correggio. Far from disappearing altogether in the Franciscan altar-piece, reminiscences of Mantegna are more direct, more obvious, and more indisputable here than in the reputed earlier works.

The Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria at Mantua once owned a famous picture, now in the Louvre, painted by Mantegna for Francesco Gonzaga in 1495, to commemorate the Battle of Fornovo. Under a canopy wreathed with foliage, fruit, and flowers, studded with coral and gems, and gay with birds, the Virgin sits on a splendid throne, the Child standing upon her lap. Serenely smiling, she extends her right hand with a protecting gesture over Francesco Gonzaga, Lord of Mantua, who kneels below. Behind him are seen St. Michael, who lifts the hem of the Virgin's mantle, and St. Andrew; and to the right, St. George, St. Longinus, and St. Elizabeth, prostrating herself before the throne; the little St. John stands on its base, which is ornamented with the figures of Adam and Eve in chiaroscuro.[2]

In the Franciscan altar-piece, Correggio decorates the base of the Virgin's throne in like manner, and with the same subject, the fall of Eve. Under the throne on which Our Lady of Victory is seated, is a footstool ornamented with floriations and spirals, which reappears in Correggio's picture, where the ornaments are repeated on a simulated marble dado. The small lateral columns of the bas-relief in the one picture, support the sides of the throne in the other. We are willing to allow that these coincidences may have been the result less

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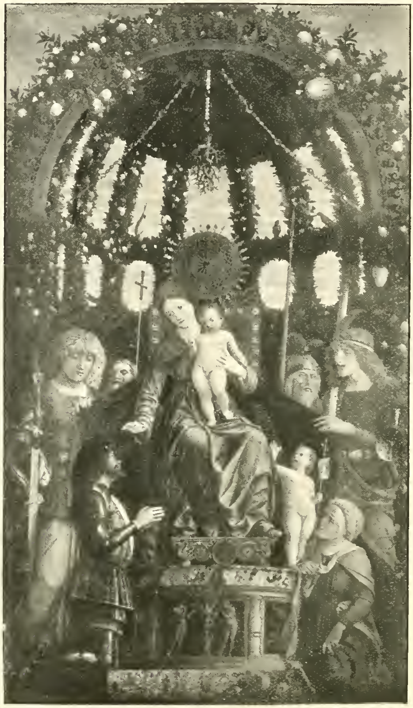
[1] *Il pittor delle grazie*, p. 244.

[2] Attilio Portioli, *La Chiesa e la Madonna della Vittoria di A. Mantegna in Mantova* (*Atti e Memorie dell' Accademia Virgiliana.* Mantua, 1884). See also this writer's article already quoted, *La vera storia di un dipinto celebre.*



OUR LADY OF VICTORY.
Altar-piece by Mantegna, in the Louvre.

of deliberate imitation than of accident; that both masters adopted motives in common use at the time, the "properties," so to speak, of their art. We will even admit that this identity of details was purely accidental and unpremeditated ; but what may be granted as regards the minor resemblances we have quoted, cannot be accepted as applicable to the figure of the Virgin and certain portions of the background. The Madonna of Mantegna's picture is transferred almost unaltered to that of the later master ; her head is inclined in the same direction and at the same angle, her right arm extended over the figure below, the foreshortened right hand outspread in a like gesture of protection ; the left supports the little body of the Child ; the left leg is advanced, with the foot in profile, the right drawn back, the great toe only resting upon the footstool.[1] This obvious imitation has been admitted by every writer on Correggio, from Lanzi to Meyer. But his indebtedness to Mantegna's picture is not confined to this particular instance. Many of its details reappear in his later works ; the canopy and ovals are to be recognised in the *Camera di San Paolo*, where, too, we shall find many reminiscences of Mantegna's exquisite *Camera degli Sposi* at Mantua ; its garlanded arches crown the summit of the tribune in San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma ; and the St. Elizabeth greets us again in the small picture formerly belonging to the Malaspina family, and now in the Communal Museum at Pavia.

Thus we see that the Mantegnesque elements in Correggio's works are certainly not confined to his youthful pictures. They persist, indeed, in the most mature and admirable of his masterpieces.

It will be well, therefore, to note a few more examples of such reminiscences as we have pointed out, beginning with those small early pictures which demonstrate most clearly that Allegri's artistic training was completed in Mantua.

The visitor to the Uffizi may make a most instructive study of this kind within the walls of the Gallery itself. Let him compare the Babe on the Virgin's breast in the *Circumcision* of Mantegna's famous triptych, with the Child who leans from his mother's lap to listen to an angel playing the viol, in Correggio's small panel, No. 1002. He cannot fail to be struck by the likeness, not only in the attitude, but in the proportions, the type, and the sentiment. The children in Correggio's early works are purely Mantegnesque; we need only refer the student to the small picture at Pavia, to the picture in the Municipal Museum at Milan, to Signor Crespi's example, to that at Sigmaringen, and finally, to the San Francesco altar-piece at Dresden.

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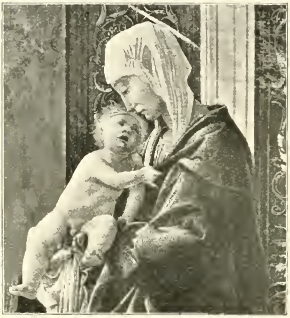
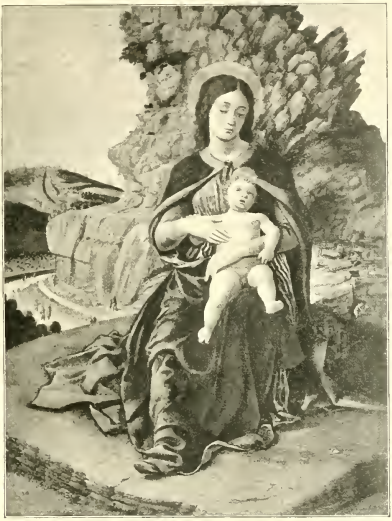
[1] Francesco Verla also plagiarised this Madonna in a picture painted in 1511, now No. 306 in the Brera at Milan.


MADONNA AND CHILD.
From Mantegna's triptych in the Uffizi.

The blooming, joyous children of the Vincenzan and of the youthful Correggio have not only a physical, but a spiritual likeness; they have the same air of astonished inquiry, the look of those who watch and listen. They are not the sweet, angelic babes of other Italian masters, of Bellini, for instance, and Cima; neither are they the sentimental infants of Francia, nor the pensive cherubs of the great Florentines and Umbrians, whose mystic gravity reveals their future holiness; they are very human urchins, whose every look and movement express the unconscious expansion, the unthinking, spontaneous impulses of youthful souls and bodies. In the small *Virgin and Child* in the Uffizi (No. 1025) which the Medici acquired in the sixteenth century, Mantegna paints the Infant Jesus struggling to get down from his mother's lap, impatient of her restraining hands, a motive little in accordance with devotional sentiment.

Mantegna's and Correggio's children have no long locks streaming upon their shoulders, and curling over their brows; their ears and foreheads are nearly always bare; their wide eyes are full of curiosity; their little mouths half opened in wonder. As Meyer justly remarks, the winged genii who hold up the inscription over the doorway in the *Camera degli Sposi* are the true precursors of Correggio's *putti*.[1]

In a chapel of the Church of Sant' Andrea at Mantua there is a canvas by Mantegna, of the Madonna with St. Joseph, St. Elizabeth, the Infant Jesus, the little St. John, and one of the Magi, painted against a background of lemon and orange trees. This work, now blackened and ruined by re-touching, we believe to have been, in its pristine splendour, a typical example of those Mantegnesque creations which most strongly influenced our painter.



MADONNA AND CHILD.
By Mantegna, in the Uffizi.

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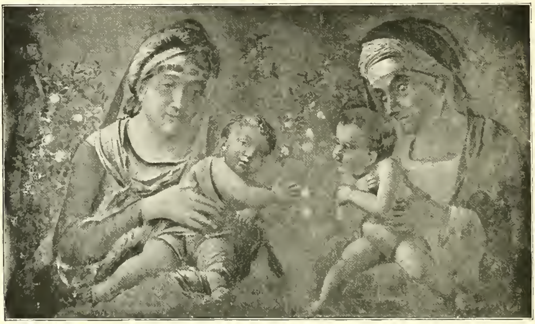
[1] *Op. cit.* p. 67. Other writers besides Meyer have pointed out the affinity between the *Camera degli Sposi* in Mantua and the *Camera di San Paolo* at Parma, among them Eastlake, Burton, Viscount Both de Tauzia, Paul Mantz, &c.

The attitudes of the two seated babes, the extremities, the serene smile of the Virgin, the type of St. Elizabeth, are all to be recognised in the suaver and more gracious conceptions of Correggio's early works. If we examine the figures of the little St. John and the St. Elizabeth, and compare them with those in Cav. Crespi's picture, and if we further compare the older Saint with the Elizabeth in the small picture at Sigmaringen, all doubts as to their affinity must inevitably be resolved.[1]

The field of such investigations might be indefinitely enlarged. One of the flagellants in Mantegna's engraving of Christ at the Column suggested the vigorous pose of the executioner with his back turned to the spectator, who is killing St. Placidus, in Correggio's picture in the Parma Gallery. The head of the Saviour in glory, rising from among the worshipping Apostles, in the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista in the same city, recalls Mantegna's dead Christ in the Brera, which was at Mantua till 1630. Superficial



HOLY FAMILY.

By Mantegna, in the Church of Sant' Andrea, Mantua.

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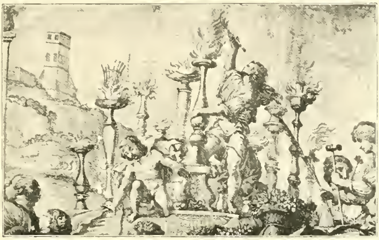
[1] Fritz Harck, *Quadri italiani nelle gallerie private di Germania* (*Archivio storico dell' Arte*, vol. vi., p. 390. Rome, 1893). It may indeed be said that the type of St. Elizabeth in Correggio's early works is one we recognise in many of Mantegna's pictures. See also No. 51 in the Dresden Gallery.

dissimilarity, arising from the splendour of colour and the glowing eyes in Correggio's figure, fails to disguise the identity of type in these two heads; we note the same arrangement of the flowing hair, the same powerful foreshortening. Yet another reminiscence of Mantegna appears in the cupola of the Duomo at Parma, the work which represents the last and loftiest flight of Correggio's genius.

Above the course of windows around the dome a kind of balustrade is painted, supporting a series of high torch-bearing candelabra. Among their shafts are animated groups of boy genii, some seated, some reclining, some standing, some rising from the ground, and gazing upwards with an air of surprise; others converse together, or scatter incense upon the torches, raising clouds of perfumed smoke. The germ of this grandiose conception may be found in the famous cartoons of the *Triumph of Julius Cæsar* executed by Mantegna for the Gonzaghi, and now at Hampton Court. Several engravings of these exist, one by Mantegna himself.[1]



FRAGMENT FROM MANTEGNA'S TRIUMPH OF JULIUS CÆSAR

From the engraving

A procession of elephants advances below, but above these rise the shafts of candelabra, with figures of youths among them. One of these attendant genii is in the act of lighting a torch, another leans forward, resting on his right knee. Not only in its general conception, but in details such as these, does Correggio's decoration echo the Mantegnesque idea.

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[1] Alberto Rondani, *Un centenario in vista*, an article published in the journal *La Sardegna*, year xii. p. 162 (July 6, 1893). See also C. G. Ratti, p. 26, and M. A. Mignaty, *Vita del Correggio*, chap. i.

That the youthful Correggio studied Mantegna's works in Mantua is evident from these various examples of identity in type and execution. But it is proved even more conclusively by his decorative methods, by his manner of foreshortening his figures, by his tendency to consider them in their relation to the spectator, and to give them illusory effects of solidity and of movement in space.[1]

The difficult problem of treatment in perspective was confronted and solved by Correggio in his decorations of the vaulted *Camera di San Paolo* at Parma, and it is hardly credible that at the age of twenty-four, he should have successfully grappled with this problem without the help of some victorious precursor in the same field. His genius and individuality enabled him to give a marvellous development to the special methods he adopted ; but without some pioneer to prepare the ground, he could not so soon have shown that mastery of perspective, and that profound knowledge of the human form which enabled him to produce his vigorous and inexhaustible variety of plastic effects in the rendering of attitude and movement.

It is clearly inadmissible to suppose that he owed this mastery to the Ferrarese or the Florentines. Some persons have contended, and still contend, that he had seen the works of Melozzo da Forli, and it is curious to note the zeal with which this hypothesis has been upheld, in the face of insurmountable historic difficulties, when we know, on the other hand, that he had every facility for acquiring the manner and forms of Mantegna, and that he unquestionably studied the works of the latter in his youth.

It was first suggested that Correggio visited Rome by Father Sebastiano Resta,[2] and by Mengs, the one moved to this assertion by a sort of academic prepossession, the other by personal interest ! The Padre owned some Raphaelesque drawings from the antique, which he was anxious to sell as the work of Correggio. It was necessary therefore to assume that our painter had been to Rome, to study and copy them. Mengs declared his belief in the supposed visit, though it did not occur to him to connect it with the theory of Correggio's familiarity with Melozzo's work; it approved itself to him on other grounds, mainly as bringing Correggio into relation with classic art.[1] Was it possible, he argued, that an artist of genius should have failed to see the Greek and Roman treasures collected in the capital? Was it to be believed that he resisted his desire to see that Rome whose artistic culture had reached its apogee in the activity of Buonarroti and of Sanzio? His theory became an obsession which enabled him to discover reminiscences of antique statues in Allegri's pictures. In the young man fleeing from the Roman soldiers who capture Christ, a figure painted by Correggio in a small picture known only by copies, Mengs discovered an imitation of one of the sons of Laocöon, from the famous group discovered in 1506! Such a comparison shows how even an artist of talent may be misled by academic preventions.

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[1] Meyer, p. 72.

[2] See Tiraboschi, vi. pp. 247–251.

Other arguments, of more artistic weight, were afterwards adduced by critics in support of Resta's practical, and Mengs's classical professions of faith. Briefly stated, they were as follows: Allegri learnt the secrets of foreshortening from Marco Melozzo; Melozzo's principal work was in the Church of the Holy Apostles at Rome; therefore Allegri must have visited Rome. This syllogism was upheld by many writers on art, from Padre dalla Valle to Cavalcaselle and Burckhardt. It was warmly contested by Meyer, but continued to find adherents, though Burckhardt finally abandoned it, if we may judge by his silence on the question in the last edition of the *Cicerone*. Strange to say, it was also patronised by those who insisted on the artistic affinity of Mantegna and Melozzo, and explained it by a certain commerce or connection between the two schools, due to Ansuino da Forlì. Even if we admit that such relations existed between the two masters, it is evident that the example of one of them, Mantegna alone, may very well have sufficed to influence Correggio. The best authorities are now agreed that Melozzo was the artistic offspring of Pier della Francesca, and that his affinities with Mantegna are due to certain analogies of temperament, and, in a still greater degree, to the results of artistic evolution, and the simultaneous appearance or discovery of certain formulæ in different schools.

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[1] *Opere*, ii. p. 142. Ratti, as is well known, follows Mengs closely.

While, on the one hand, all kinds of sophistries have been accepted in support of the hypothesis that our painter visited Rome, on the other there are abundant evidences to prove that he was never in the capital.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a pilgrimage to Rome was thought essential for an artist. Some were attracted by the classic treasures collected there, others by the marvellous development of new forms in the hands of an army of masters patronised by popes, cardinals, and princes. Artists were naturally possessed by a desire, amounting almost to a passion, to visit the Eternal City, and to see the wonders ancient and modern culture had combined to accumulate. To use a phrase of our own day, Rome was looked upon as a "school of perfection," which many entered by dint of privations and hardships innumerable. To the biographer, this event in the life of an artist was always of great interest, and invariably furnished the text for a series of reflections on his style. Vasari does not overlook the point in his appreciation of Correggio, and after lamenting that he never visited Rome, where he might have studied "antiquities, and the best things in modern art," he concludes: "If Antonio, with his genius, had gone from Lombardy to Rome, he would have done wonders, and would have given trouble to many who were esteemed great in his day."[1]

Ortensio Landi was no less impressed by this misfortune. Writing as early as 1552, he asserts that Correggio "died young, without having seen Rome."[2]

Landi's testimony is of no little weight when we remember that he was the guest of Rinaldo Corso at Correggio, and that he may have been acquainted not only with many who had known the painter, but with his son Pomponio.[3]

These two witnesses, who wrote only a few years after the painter's

[1] IV., p. 112.

[2] *Sette libri di cathaloghi a varie cose appartenenti*, p. 493. Venice, 1552.

[3] Pungileoni, ii. p. 103.

death, are corroborated by such indirect evidences as : the total absence of any Roman elements in his manner, the omission of his name in all contemporary records of a circle where he could hardly have passed unnoticed, and the fact that no traces exist of relations between him and any of the artists who flourished in Rome during his lifetime. It is said that a sign-board, upon which was painted a rustic leading a heavily-laden mule, followed by its foal, used to hang over the door of an inn on the Via Flaminia, near Rome. This very mediocre work, which, to judge by an engraving and some copies must have been painted long after the death of Correggio, was traditionally ascribed to him, and served to confirm a popular legend, according to which Allegri came to Rome almost a beggar, seeking inspiration from the sublime works of antiquity, and anxious to admire those of the great moderns who were working in the city. Exhausted by his travels, he halted at a lonely inn by the roadside, and, unable to pay the host for his board and lodging, he painted the sign in discharge of his debt.[1] The pathetic story loses its chief interest, however, when we find it impossible to accept the picture as the master's work.

It is plain that neither internal evidences, legends, nor traditions tend to shake the testimony of Vasari and Landi, which is, indeed, supported by the whole character of the painter's work. Correggio was never at Rome. If further proofs were needed, we have them indirectly in many documents. It will hardly be contended that he visited Rome before the age of eighteen or nineteen ; and the various evidences we have of his presence in Correggio and Parma after the year 1513 all combine to show that there was no interval of unoccupied time sufficiently long to allow of his supposed journey and his sojourn in the city. Padre Resta, however, again with an eye to the sale of his drawings, despatched the artist on various pilgrimages throughout Italy, to Milan among other places, to copy the works of Bramante and of Leonardo.[1] His statement was a godsend to those who place Correggio in the Lombard school, and see in his method of colouring a mere "clarification" of Leonardo's manner. That he knew something of Leonardo's work is beyond a doubt; the finished modelling of his forms, the exquisite gradation of his tones, and, in a still greater degree, the union of these special qualities in his manner, all point to this conclusion. But there is not the slightest evidence that he ever saw the Lombard capital, or worked in the school of the great master.

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[1] We learn from Pungileoni (i. pp. 26–28, ii. p. 39) that the panel passed from the collection of Queen Christina of Sweden to that of Prince Odescalchi, also in Rome ; afterwards to that of the Duke of Orleans in Paris, and finally to the Stafford collection in London. Ratti, in his turn, describes a circular panel, the head of a cask, in fact, on which was painted a "host bringing some muleteers into his inn," and also states it to be in the Odescalchi collection. It was, perhaps, a copy with variations, if not the original sign-board. Q. Bigi relates, we know not on what authority, that Correggio painted it in 1513 for a certain Giulio Farini, and that it was eventually brought to Rome by a servant of Cardinal Uberto Gambara, the brother of Veronica (*Della vita e delle opere di A. A.*, p. 41). See also Pietro Martini, *Studi intorno al Correggio*, pp. 55–56. Parma, 1865.

We may therefore return to Mantua, where Correggio's artistic education was really completed.

Mantegna and Lorenzo Costa are the two masters whose influence, complex and indefinite, yet unmistakable, appears in all his early works. Critics have further noted traits of form and colour peculiar to Dosso Dossi. As my readers know, I do not think it necessary to search for the determining causes of Correggio's early manner outside the sphere of Ferrarese influence, except, of course, in the case of Mantegna. We may also dismiss the theory of Lionbruno's share in his development.

But where, it may be asked, could he have admired the works of Mantegna, and come into contact with Lorenzo Costa and Dosso Dossi?

We have seen that those of the Vicenzan master's works he most evidently studied were all in Mantua. Let us now briefly glance at the careers of the two Ferrarese painters.

Mantegna died September 13, 1506. A few days later the Bentivogli, hard pressed by Julius II.'s soldiery, and by the gathering storm among their own subjects, fled by night from Bologna. Among the many painters who held, as it were, a semi-official position at the Court of Giovanni II., Francia and Costa took the lead. Francia was a native of Bologna; he had a house, a family, a *bottega*, where goldsmith's work and painting were carried on side by side, and a crowd of pupils. He was not therefore disposed to leave the city. But the case was different for the Ferrarese Costa, although he had lived there over twenty years. As one who had worked almost exclusively for the Bentivogli, and had received wealth and honours from them, he must have been deeply affected by their downfall, and the destruction of their palace, with the precious frescoes he had himself designed and executed. He must have felt that the ties which bound him to Bologna were broken, and that he could not stay to serve the enemies of his patron. At the court of the Bentivogli, Costa had been not only the artist, but the friend and counsellor. He was one of the envoys sent to Julius II. upon his accession[1] and we know that he was present at discussions on matters of sport between Alessandro Bentivoglio and Bonaparte Ghisilieri.[2]

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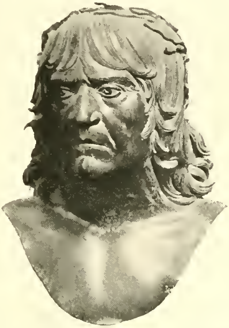
[1] Tiraboschi, vi. 249; Bottari, *Lettere artistiche*, iii. 488.



BUST OF MANTEGNA, IN S. ANDREA AT MANTUA.

When, at this crisis in his fortunes, he was invited by the Gonzaghi to take the vacant place of Mantegna at their court, he must have hailed the summons as providential. We find him established at Mantua in 1507[3], painting the apotheosis of Francesco Gonzaga in the palace of San Sebastiano; his next great work was the famous *Allegory of the Court of Isabella d'Este*, painted for the duchess's private cabinet. The scene is laid on the bank of a river; poets, musicians, ladies and cavaliers disport themselves in the foreground, while Cupid crowns Isabella beyond. Costa also painted a mythological piece, with Apollo, Venus, Cupid, Orpheus and Mercury, for the same room.

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[1] A. Ghiselli, *Memorie di Bologna*, MSS. in the University Library at Bologna, x. p. 296.

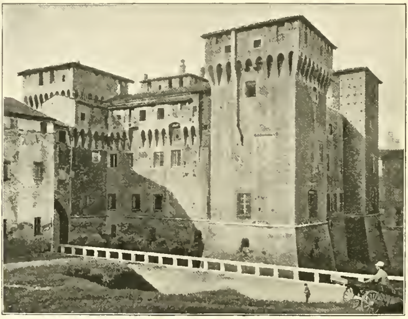
[2] *Archivio storico dell' arte*, v. p. 137.

[3] Ad. Venturi, *Lorenzo Costa* (*Archivio storico dell' arte*, vol. i. p. 251, 1889).

We need not linger here over his other works, his artistic gifts, and the rewards heaped on him by the Gonzaghi. He remained with them until his death on March 10, 1535, just a year after that of Correggio.

As to Dosso, we know from contemporary documents that he was in Mantua in 1512, when he painted a picture "with eleven human figures" for the Palace of San Sebastiano.[1]

The conclusion to which all the facts above stated point is perfectly simple and obvious; it is not to be assailed by any critical prepossession. It is undeniable that in the youthful works painted by Correggio in and about 1512, we trace the influence of pictures by Mantegna at Mantua; Ferrarese inspiration is no less evident in his forms and colour, which are closely allied to those of Costa and Dosso, the two Ferrarese masters working in Mantua at the time. We cannot but conclude from these facts that Mantua was the city to which Antonio Allegri passed, perhaps from his uncle Lorenzo's studio; that it was here he supplemented the modest instruction he had already received, and formed his characteristic style. We may very reasonably presume



CASTLE OF THE GONZAGA FAMILY AT MANTUA.

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[1] Pungileoni, ii. p. 45. C. d'Arco, ii. p. 79.

that his arrival at Mantua and his sojourn in the city took place between 1511 and 1513, when he was from seventeen to nineteen years old, for there is no mention of his presence at Correggio at this time in any contemporary documents. In these we find no reference whatever to him between January 12, 1511, when he acted as sponsor, and the summer of 1514. We cannot doubt that he spent this time in Mantua.

Meyer is of opinion that Correggio had no personal relations with the artists of the city, but that he studied their works.[1] We cannot agree with him. The echoes of Mantegna we note in many of Correggio's pictures are sufficiently explained by his study of the master's works ; but in the case of Costa and Dosso we are inclined to believe in direct influence, that, indeed, of the master on the pupil. From them he seems to have acquired not only form, but his individual use of colour ; and we know that "chromatic tonality," the secret, in short, of colour, is not to be discovered by the most earnest study of finished works, such secrets being always jealously guarded by particular schools and masters. Bandinello is known to have begged Andrea del Sarto to paint his portrait on purpose to observe his method of using colour and mixing tints. Andrea detected the trick ; he took care to baffle Baccio's curiosity, and proclaimed the ill-success of the stratagem, which was universally condemned as a very disgraceful action.[2]

In 1511 Correggio was decimated by the plague. Among the many victims were the painters Giovanni di Pietro and Bernardino di Luchino, and the French General, Charles d'Amboise. Terrified at the violence of the epidemic, many persons sought to escape infection by flight. The Correggesque historians Antonioli, Bulbarini, and Pungileoni tell us that some of the Signori repaired to Mantua, the youthful painter following in their train, while Veronica took refuge with her widowed mother, Alda Pia.[3] Correggio's return to his native city is attributed to a like cause, the appearance of the plague in Mantua in 1513.[4]

No authority is quoted for these statements. They were probably mere reports, which, in the course of transmission from one biographer to another, grew into positive assertions by a very common process. But though history is silent as to the exact time and manner of Allegri's sojourn in the city of the Gonzaghi, and though we may not be inclined to accept the outbreaks of plague at Correggio and Mantua as the determining causes of his travels, his own works prove conclusively that by 1513 he had been in Mantua, had studied the works of Mantegna (who died in 1506) and those of Costa and Dosso, who were then working there.

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[1] *Correggio*, p. 74.

[2] *Il libro dei colori*, p. 6 *et seq.* Bologna, 1887.

[3] Pungileoni, i. p. 30.

[4] *Op. cit.* i. p. 35 ; ii. p. 51.

We see no reason whatever for the opinion of certain critics as to the supposed influence of Lorenzo Lionbruno on the early work of Correggio.[1] At the time of our painter's arrival in Mantua, if this took place, as it almost certainly did, about 1511, Lionbruno was only twenty-two years old. Then, and for some time afterwards, he received orders for work, not directly, but through the medium of Lorenzo Costa, or, as contemporary documents put it, "by relation or commission." He was evidently at the very outset of his career. Some ten years later, indeed (when Correggio had decorated the Camera di San Paolo at Parma and worked at the cupola of San Giovanni), Lionbruno was still looked upon rather as a painter of brilliant promise than as an approved master. On March 10, 1521, Federigo, Marquis of Mantua, wrote thus to Baldassarre Castiglione: "Knowing the excellent talents of our painter, Master Lorenzo Lionbruno, and seeing from his works what a firm foundation he has laid for the art he practises, whence we have good hopes of his success in his calling, we have determined he shall lack no means of attaining to that hoped for perfection which will be an honour alike to us and to our native place. And as we believe a visit to Rome will greatly benefit him, because he will there see many things worthy of imitation, we have persuaded him to go thither and remain for a time and have given him the means so to do."[2] We can hardly suppose, therefore, that the pictures this man was painting some ten years earlier to Costa's orders can have exercised any strong influence on Correggio, an artist but little younger than himself, and of a very different temperament. When Allegri arrived in Mantua, Lionbruno was making his first essays as a painter; he produced nothing of importance until some time after the other had left the city. The points of contact in the works of the two young artists are to be explained by the fact that both were inspired by Mantegna, as both were disciples of Costa.

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[1] Pungileoni, i. p. 33; ii. pp. 46, 47. Charles Yriarte, *Isabelle d'Este et les Artistes de son temps* (*Gazette des Beaux Arts*, xiii. p. 195).

[2] Girolamo Prandi, *Notizie storiche spettanti la vita e le opere di Lorenzo Lionbruno.* Mantua, 1825.

The evidences we have now noted make it unnecessary to insist on those of documents which are said to have existed, and possibly still exist, at Mantua. Lanzi, relying on the statement of Leopoldo Volta, declared that his name occurred in the parish books of Sant' Andrea; but a careful examination of these made by Pasquale Codde at the request of Pungileoni failed to discover the entry.[1] Certain pictures at Mantua have been ascribed to Correggio by various writers, from Donesmondi onward. Donesmondi begins by attributing to him the frescoes in the atrium of the church of Sant' Andrea. He goes on to state with tranquil confidence that he painted a St. Andrew and a St. Longinus there "in his early manner, founded on that of Mantegna; an *Ascension of Christ, the twelve Apostles standing round*, in a broader and mellower style;" and lastly, an *Entombment*, "in a manner differing altogether from that of the preceding, and much more beautiful," so much so, he concludes, that intelligent persons wondered "three such dissimilar works should have come from the same hand." Curbing his very reasonable admiration of this miraculous versatility, Donesmondi proceeds to assign to Correggio the four Evangelists on the pendentives of the small cupola in the north chapel of Sant' Andrea, and some angels in chiaroscuro formerly above the windows. Not content with this, he also makes him the author of a fresco over an archway in the Piazza delle Erbe, representing Francesco Gonzaga kneeling before the Virgin beside the horse which saved his life in the battle of the Taro, and finally of a picture in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria.[2]

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[1] Pungileoni, i. p. 13. C. d'Arco, ii. pp. 240-41.

[2] *Dall' istoria ecclesiastica di Mantova*, part ii. pp. 47, 49, 86, and 119. Mantua, 1615.

Giovanni Cadioli accepted all these attributions, and enriched them by a contribution of his own. He saw in Correggio the painter of the central roundel in the vault of the *Camera degli Sposi*, where a group of women and children hanging over a balustrade look down into the room.[1]

It would be childish to attempt any serious refutation of these naïve assertions, unsupported as they are by any particle of documentary evidence. Contemporary records indeed occasionally contradict them pointedly. The medallion in the *Camera degli Sposi* is one of the most admirable and best authenticated of Mantegna's works. The picture formerly in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria, and now in the museum, has not a single Correggesque trait, and is on very sufficient grounds assigned to the Mantuan painters, Giovanni and Costantino Medici.[2] The other works described, in the atrium of Sant' Andrea, were executed for the most part by Francesco Mantegna, the son of the great Vicenzan.[3]

These felicitous ascriptions, based neither on critical examination of the works in question, nor on the discovery of new documents, and serving no end save that of confusing historic issues, and distorting the true image of the artist, nevertheless continue to be bruited abroad under the imposing title of *discoveries*.

Not long ago certain Germans recognised the hand of Leonardo in some mediocre pictures they hunted out in the castle at Milan; then we have M. Charles Yriarte announcing to his admirers the discovery of a work by Correggio in the decorations of a cabinet in the old castle of Mantua.[4] To Yriarte's question: "When did Correggio paint these frescoes?" we may answer in all confidence: "Never."

The decorations of the small chamber in question are arranged to suit the octagonal shape of the vault. In each compartment are two children supporting a cartel with symbols and mottoes. The central disc simulates a kind of octagonal terrace like that of the *Camera degli Sposi*, with boy genii leaning over a balustrade, and one hovering in the midst. The pendentives are decorated with symbolic representations of the four quarters of the globe, and the lunettes, which formerly filled the spaces above the presses or wardrobes, are painted in monochrome.

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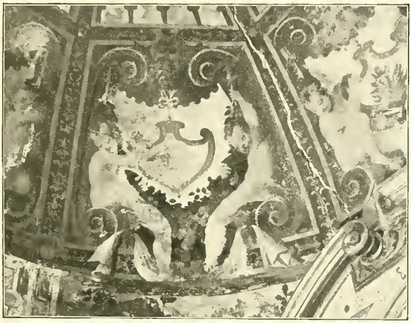
[1] *Descrizione delle pitture, sculture ed architetture di Mantova*, pp. 35, 49, 50, and 54. Mantua, 1763.

[2] Carlo d'Arco, *op. cit.* i. pp. 60–62.

[3] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 244.

[4] See article quoted, the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, and *Correggio's Frescoes in the Castle of Mantua*, a letter to G. B. Intra in the journal *La Perseveranza*, year xxxvii. No. 12,753. Milan, April 10, 1895.

Whatever the date to which these paintings may be assigned, one thing is certain. Neither in proportion, colour, sense of ornament, nor type of figure have they the slightest affinity with the art of Correggio. We should search in vain among his works for any one of the characteristic features of these frescoes, hair painted upon a crude red ground, eyes encircled by dark lines, thin legs with exaggerated curves in outline, long, sinuous figures, an affected grace of attitude, and finally, a very individual type of foot, with slender toes, the great toe much longer than the rest—a type differing essentially from the short, compact foot of Correggio's youthful genii. The foreshortening is very often faulty. One of the two boys in the foreground has an impossibly short arm ; the other, rickety legs. The figure of the console to the left of the window is singularly



FRESCO IN THE CASTLE AT MANTUA.

squat and clumsy in drawing. Not one among the band of children approaches the joyous, robust type of Correggio's *putti.* They display, indeed, all the sedate affectation of court pages.

The trivial ornament, with heads of lions modelled on a dull yellow ground, and leaves sharply and heavily defined, whereas Correggio's are always laid in with a full brush in the centre, and faintly touched in the outlines ; the manner of indicating the lights in monochrome ; the faulty perspective and commonplace form of the central balustrade—all these details, no less than the figures themselves, negative the attribution of these frescoes to the master.

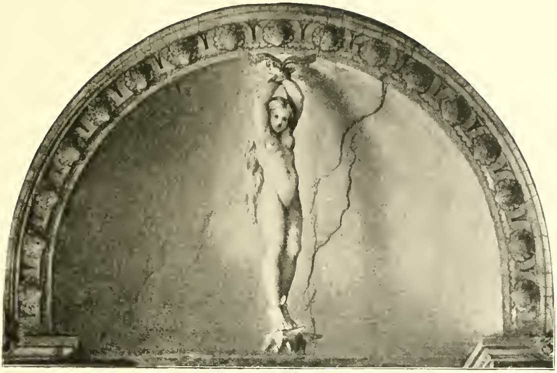
It is true that they have suffered severely from age and from partial re-touching. But the general character of the work is still apparent in parts, and it is possible to appraise it, in spite of decay and restorations. In the small portions that remain intact, we find a predominant pink tinged with violet in the carnations, for which there is absolutely no parallel among Correggio's warm and alabastrine flesh-tints.

Yet Yriarte has the courage to write as follows :

"At the first sight of these little figures with their agile movements, their brilliant yet mellow carnations, and the play of light on their contours, we exclaimed : Correggio was here in his youth, and this bears testimony to his sojourn." In a letter he adds that every expert familiar with the characteristics of the Italian masters must recognise in these frescoes the hand, the grace, the soul, in short, of the great painter !

Blessed are the eyes which can see these things ! We, unhappily, found the hand, the grace, the soul of Correggio conspicuously absent in these paintings !

Correggio undoubtedly worked for the Gonzaghi of Mantua, but at a much later period, and never in fresco.

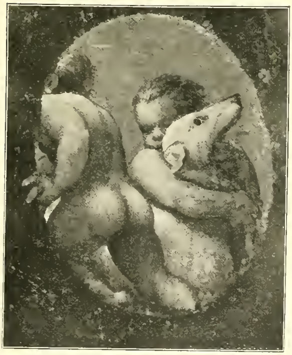


JUNO CHASTISED. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER V

THE TWO PRINCESSES

VERONICA GAMBARA—HER RELATIONS WITH CORREGGIO AND WITH THE COURT OF MANTUA—ISABELLA D'ESTE.



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

As Burckhardt justly observes, we shall form but an imperfect idea of the Renaissance if we ignore the importance it gave to woman, and the rapid development of her individuality under its influences.[1] Her education was the counterpart of that enjoyed by the man. "From the moment that the neo-Latin culture came to be recognised as the chief ornament of life, no reason could be urged against the participation of girls in its advantages." As the wives of rulers, and the leaders of court society, the women of the Renaissance were surrounded by the most eminent men of the day. Antonio Galateo advised Bona Sforza to study men, since she was born to bind them to her chariot wheels. Poets sang of woman thus:

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[1] *La civiltà del secolo del Rinascimento in Italia*, vol. ii. p. 165 *et seq.* Florence, 1876.

> "La farem nostra reina,
> Lei sol merta la corona,
> Perchè Apollo il suo liquore
> Le ha donato d'Elicona."[1]

Poetesses and learned ladies abounded, and Bandello's description of Countess Cecilia Gallerana Bergamini, "the affable and virtuous lady," might have been applied to many among them: "The highest and noblest intellects are of her company. Military men discuss the art of war, musicians sing, architects make drawings, philosophers inquire into the secrets of nature, poets recite their own verses and those of others." Much of the great revival is due to women, not only by virtue of their superior refinement, and the elegance they introduced into their dwellings, but inasmuch as they worthily encouraged and inspired artists and men of letters. The homage so justly due to them in this connection was nobly summed up and expressed in the kiss Michelangelo bent his austere head to lay upon the dead brow of Vittoria Colonna.

Few districts reared and sent forth so many accomplished princesses as the Emilia and the Romagna. Isabella Gonzaga, the typical great lady of the Renaissance, sprang from the tragic house of the Estensi, which had provided innumerable great Italian families with noble and cultured wives.

The splendour of Isabella's court at Mantua was at its zenith when Veronica, daughter of Gian Francesco Gambara and Alda Pio of Carpi, came to Correggio as the wife of Giberto.

Her face, we are told, was neither beautiful nor delicate, though full of kindness, but this plainness of feature was atoned for by a magnificent figure, a sweet voice, a quick wit, and a cultivated mind. She wrote sonnets and Latin verse, and, being sedentary and somewhat lazy in her habits, had become an indefatigable reader. She loved books, and had collected a good library. In her delightful letters, in which there is none of the "tedious and almost conventual severity" of Vittoria Colonna's,[1] we find her bent on the satisfaction of her various tastes, ordering flowers, perfumes, jewellery, carriages, toys for her children, linen, and dresses. "I want some Florentine plush, I am tired of Flemish, French, and English cloths."[2] To ensure the elegance of her *chaussure* she has recourse to her daughter Costanza, who had married one of the Gonzaghi of Novellara. "I send you a little velvet, and pray you to order me two pairs of slippers before the *fêtes*, on account of which I am somewhat beforehand. The others were right as to height and all else, save that they

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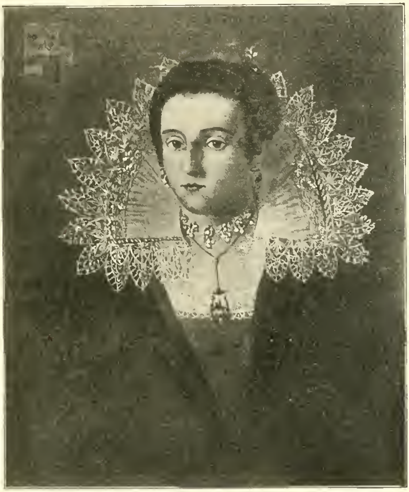
[1] A. Vernarecci, *Ottaviano de' Petrucci*, p. 95. Bologna, 1882.



PORTRAIT OF VERONICA GAMBARA.

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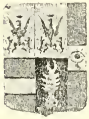
[1] R. Renier, *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, xiv. p. 441. Turin, 1889.

[2] Veronica Gambara, *Rime e lettere raccolte da* Felice Rizzardi, p. 161. Brescia, 1759.

were rather too large in the openings. Tell the shoemaker to make them somewhat narrower, about half a finger's breadth."[1]

She had an inordinate passion for jewels, and wished her daughter-in-law Chiara to possess gems surpassing those of all other ladies in splendour. Having to send her to Mantua on one occasion, she borrowed additional jewels for her, to ensure her appearance in unrivalled magnificence.

Rinaldo Corso contrived to draw a very pleasant portrait of her without suppressing certain unpalatable truths. "If Veronica's face had agreed with the rest of her person, she would have been faultlessly beautiful, and full of grace even in her old age. But her features, though not ugly, lacked delicacy, a defect which was amply compensated by the eloquence which flowed from her lips in the same measure as from her pen, with so much sweetness and frankness that all who conversed with her, no matter on what subject, left her with an ardent desire to return and listen to her again. The excellence of her constitution appeared in this, that although she took very little exercise, she kept in good health and lived long, and to the last read and wrote without the help of spectacles. She avoided the open air, and was careful to protect herself from it. She ate nourishing foods, and never took fresh fruits, nor any such viands. She had no pleasure in games, her sole pastimes being to study and converse on worthy subjects with her friends. Always sober and affable with persons of either sex, and of every age and condition, her manners were at once dignified and pleasing. To children (of whom, as saith the Scripture, is the kingdom of Heaven) she was lavish of caresses. By no means passionate, if she


ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF VERONICA GAMBARA.

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[1] Ferd. Rossi-Foglia, *Cenni biografici intorno a V. G. di Rinaldo Corso, e lettere della stessa*, p. 28. Correggio, 1884. The supposed portrait of Veronica Gambara reproduced above belongs to Signor Federigo Gianotti of Correggio. In a small coat of arms in the corner of the picture, the bearings of the Gambari are quartered with those of the Lords of Correggio. A question has been raised as to the costume, which some have supposed to be of a later date than the time of Veronica. But the collar she wears in the portrait was fashionable between 1520 and 1530. Quinty, in his treatise published in 1527, speaks of the art of embroidering such collars. Count L. A. Gandini, an authority on the subject, confirms this.

occasionally gave way to anger she was easily appeased, and quick to forgive offences against herself. In civil broils she was prompt in her efforts to promote peace and dexterous in bringing it about. In the art of bringing up her children nobly, training them to greatness, and preserving unity among them, she was a marvel, and a true example to all other matrons who govern and have children, and more especially to those in whose households discord is, so to speak, a hereditary disease. She has been accused of showing an excessive affection for her friends and servants, and of being over-zealous in their defence, and further, of lending a willing ear to flatterers, and of being easily deceived. Not that she claimed immunity for her *protégés*, or allowed them to make her favour a screen for their misdeeds; but when they transgressed, she could not abandon them. Her credulity was caused by this, that she judged the souls of others by her own, and accounted all good, as she was herself. Her kindness of heart made her susceptible to flattery, though she was naturally humble. But defects such as these are proofs of purity and sincerity of sentiment rather than otherwise, seeing that none are without fault in this life. Her literary style was clear and agreeable, as we have shown, and of equal excellence in prose and verse."[1]

We easily discern Veronica's character through the laudatory periods of the worthy *cinquecentista*, and recognise in her a woman who loved adulation, and staunchly supported those who skilfully flattered and managed her.

He shows us, too, that her temper was not always under perfect control. But these touches rather increase than detract from our interest in her personality, to which they give an air of historic *vraisemblance*. The biographer's insistence on the virtues of his hero too often makes us distrustful of his guidance. The placid gentleness proper to the model housewife was hardly to be looked for in the lady of a house like that of the Correggeschi, who not unfrequently passed from the cares of a family to those of a state, and had to play the dangerous game of politics in such an age as the sixteenth century.

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[1] Rinaldo Corso, *Vita di Giberto III. di Correggio, colla vita di Veronica Gambara*, Ancona, 1566.

Occasional flashes of indignation became her perfectly, and illuminate her figure for the student.

Her susceptibility to flattery may be pardoned her in virtue of her double quality of princess and bluestocking. A certain share of vanity has always been a weakness of cultured and powerful women. Veronica, who united so many of their virtues, was not exempt from some of their failings.

It is evident, however, that she had that greatest of virtues, sincerity. The very stubbornness with which she defended her friends, even when in fault, proves the uprightness of her heart and the loyalty of her affections. We must not forget that in those days it was usual to sacrifice everything to personal or political exigences, even the lives of friends and brethren!

Veronica was undoubtedly one of the most accomplished among the literary women of the sixteenth century. Her verses are, of course, modelled on the poems of Petrarch, but they are not without a certain expansive quality, and have a distinctly personal note. Her letters, scattered throughout a number of pamphlets, have been highly praised for their gaiety and ease, for their display of that alertness, refinement, and witty malice that characterised the great lady of the Renaissance, and for the interesting details they contain of contemporary life and manners.[1]

Her passion for discussions on art and learning, her pleasure in the society of intelligent persons, with whom she exchanged ideas, and from whom she received the homage and adulation she loved, and her natural desire that her own court should equal those of neighbouring princes in dignity and elegance, alike induced Veronica to gather round her a number of artists and men of letters, and to form them into a sort of academy. Pre-eminent among them was the famous Gian Battista Lombardi, or Marchesini, physician and philosopher. Professor of logic at Bologna in 1486, and of medicine at Ferrara in 1490, he was invited to their city by the Lords of Correggio, who employed him in various important affairs of state, and treated him with the most affectionate consideration until his death in September, 1526.[1] Other frequenters of Veronica's *salon* were the learned Ippolito Merlo, the jurisconsult Sigismondo Augustoni, Rinaldo Corso, who afterwards wrote her life, and the physician Annibale Camilli. When in Bologna in 1515, Veronica had requested the latter to send her some sample of his learning, and the following year he dedicated to her a series of philosophical pamphlets, in which he eulogises her learning and virtues, and declares that he owes everything to her protection.

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[1] Besides the works already quoted, see Quirino Bigi, *Sopra la celebre Contessa Matilde e Veronica Gambara* (Mantua, 1859), Emilio Costa, *Sonetti amorosi di V. G.* (Parma, 1890), and *Una lettera inedita di Veronica Gambara* (*Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, ix.); A. E. Mortara, *Epistole edite per nozze Fadigati-Visioli* (Casalmaggiore, 1852); Vittorio Cian, *Primizie epistolari di V. G.* (in *L'Intermezzo*, review, No. 12). Turin, 1890.

To this learned company, among whom she habitually lived, we must add the names of those famous friends and admirers who visited her from time to time, such as Ariosto, Bembo, Molza, Cappello, Mauro, Antonio Bernardi di Mirandola, and (on two occasions, in 1530 and 1532) the Emperor Charles V.

Nothing, in fact, was wanting which could gratify her taste for lofty and cultured intercourse, and her just pretensions to literary talent.

Among the friends of her own sex who were often with her were Ginevra Rangoni, the widow of Gian Galeazzo, who married Luigi Gonzaga some time after 1517, and Cassandra, daughter of the great captain, Bartolomeo Colleoni. On the death of her husband, Nicolò da Correggio, in 1508, Cassandra had retired to a convent founded by him, taking with her her daughter Isotta. She was afterwards joined by her other daughter, Beatrice, who returned from Parma on the death of her husband, Nicolò Sanvitale. Both Beatrice (whom Ariosto sang under the name of *Mamma*) and her sister enlivened the solitude of the cloistral cell with poetry and song. Well might it be said, in the words of Messer Lodovico:

"Oh! di che belle e sagge donne veggio,
Oh! di che cavalieri il lito adorno!
Oh! di che amici, a chi in eterno deggio
Per la letizia ch' 'an del mio ritorno!

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[1] Pungileoni, ii. pp. 34 and 199.

> Mamma e Ginevra, e l' altre da Correggio
> Veggo del molo in su l'estremo corno;
> Veronica da Gambara è con loro
> Sì grata a Febo e al santo aonio coro."

Many others sang her praises besides the great Ferrarese poet. Among the most famous of her eulogists were Vittoria Colonna, Casio, Sannazaro, Trissino, Ruscelli, Lilio Giraldi, Bernardo Tasso, who spoke of her as "the glory of the feminine sex," Bandello, Varchi, who lauded her "fluent and agreeable" speech, Dolci, Bembo, Molza, and Giovanni della Casa. Later, Possevino called her the "Italian Sappho." Charles V. told her she was dear to him for many reasons, but chiefly for "her virtue and renown."

Neither cares of state, nor the desire to play a brilliant part in society, were suffered to interfere with her duties to her children, to whom she showed a truly ideal devotion. Her son Ippolito followed a military career, and fought under Charles V. at the fall of Florence. To him her constant theme was the fame of his ancestors, one of whom had written a treatise on the heroic greatness of the ancient Romans. To her son Girolamo, who had entered the Church, she spoke of Azzo of Correggio, and how he had been esteemed by Petrarch, whom he had made archdeacon of the Parmesan church. Veronica never saw this cherished son in the crimson robes of the cardinalate, with which he was invested some time after her death. He had his mother's talents, and a character of much the same cast—honest and good on the whole, but hasty and choleric upon occasion. He acted as plenipotentiary for the Farnese family at the Congress of Ghent, and at one time seemed a not unlikely candidate for the papacy after Pius V. But his understanding with the Court of Spain was the true cause of his rejection, though his *amour* with Claudia Rangoni had already brought him into discredit.

This, however, was some time after Veronica's death, which took place on June 13, 1550. "On the following day," says Rinaldo Corso, "she was borne to the church of San Domenico, outside the walls of Correggio (where nearly all the lords of the city were buried), with a sprig of olive and one of laurel, her worthy emblems, in her mouth."

My readers, who have seen in a former chapter how many artists were working in Correggio, and to whom I have now attempted to give some idea of the intellectual life of the court, can judge whether our painter actually grew up in a remote hamlet, or in a place peculiarly favourable to the development of his genius.

When Veronica, a bride of twenty-four, arrived in Correggio in 1508, Antonio was but fourteen, though he had already shown signs of his exceptional gifts. Many who were interested in the development of his precocious genius brought him under the princess' notice. She conceived the most lively hopes of his future, and had him constantly about her. Had we not the fear of positive criticism before our eyes, with its insistence on documents, and its legitimate scorn for mere hypothesis, however natural and obvious, we might indulge in one of those flights of fancy to which the art-historian of a less scientific age was prone. The Virgin in Correggio's *Madonna and Child with the Infant St. John*, painted about 1512-1515, is of a peculiar type, by no means beautiful, though her smiling sweetness of expression redeems her homeliness of feature. Is this happy mother a portrait of the good Veronica herself, whose two little sons were born, the one in January, 1510, the other in February, 1511? But we turn resolutely from such conjectures to questions of sober fact.

Among such we may certainly class the kindly and intimate relations which subsisted between the painter and the reigning house to the last days of his life.

In 1521 he had an audience of Manfredo in the palace in connection with a deed of gift, by which his maternal uncle, Francesco Aromani, made over to him all his effects. The prince's intervention may have come about merely as a matter of administrative routine, and we by no means rely upon this alone as a proof of his intimacy with the painter. But we have other evidence of a less ambiguous kind. In 1532 Correggio assisted at the drawing up of the act whereby Manfredo appointed Paolo Brunorio his proxy, and empowered him to receive reinvestiture on his behalf, for all feoffs held by the Lords of Correggio under the Emperor Charles V. It is evident, therefore, that he was associated with matters of great interest and importance to the ruling family. But the crowning proof of the cordial relations existing between them is to be found in the fact that on January 24, 1534, he acted as one of the witnesses to the settlement of twenty thousand gold *scudi* on Chiara, daughter of Gianfrancesco of Correggio, on the occasion of her betrothal to Ippolito, son of Giberto and Veronica Gambara.[1] Thus, on the most joyful and solemn event in her life, the betrothal of her first-born to his cousin, the great lady chose the famous painter for her witness, preferring him before princes and captains of her own caste. Never can she have more deeply felt the charms of a friendship founded not only on kindness, but on a mutual love and worship of art. The Muse and the painter joined hands to promote the happiness of two youthful lovers.

It is supposed that Correggio accompanied Veronica on various occasions to Bologna, where she had many friends. She visited the city several times, and is known to have gone thither in 1515, to be present at the meeting of Francis I. and Leo X.

It is on this occasion that Correggio is supposed to have uttered the historic exclamation: "I too am a painter!" before Raphael's *St. Cecilia*. But the story will not bear examination, for Sanzio's famous picture was not at Bologna in 1515. The utterance must be referred to some later visit, and it is, indeed, far more likely to have escaped the painter at a mature age, when he also had produced his masterpieces, than in his youthful days. It is highly improbable that he, whose home was so near to Bologna, should never have visited the city to see the famous works of art collected there. Nor can we suppose that he never went from Correggio to Ferrara, the *fons et origo* of his own art, nor from Parma to the neighbouring Piacenza, where Raphael's most sublime work crowned the altar of San Sisto.[2]

Veronica was at Bologna again, it seems, in 1527; she certainly went there in 1529 to visit her brother Uberto, governor of the city at that date;[1] and again a few months later for the coronation of Charles V. Other visits are also referred to.

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[1] Pungileoni, i. pp. 239 and 247; ii. pp. 127, 192–3, and 251.

[2] The *Madonna di San Sisto*, now at Dresden.

But though Correggio possibly accompanied Veronica to Bologna, and undoubtedly saw some of Raphael's works, moral and historic probability are alike set at nought by this story, which must be relegated to the region of romance. Such a boast was entirely out of keeping with Correggio's modest and reticent character. If there be any, however, who want further proof of the dubious nature of the legend, be it known to them that it was first related by Father Resta.[2] Much uncertainty exists in connection with the works executed by the painter for the rulers of Correggio, and, more especially, for Veronica. It appears, as we shall see later, that one of these was a *Herodias*. The chronicler, Lucio Zuccardi, who flourished in the first half of the seventeenth century, says that he decorated portions of the palace outside the walls of the city, in which Charles V. was lodged. The statement was repeated and embellished by Tiraboschi, who says that Correggio worked there in his youth by command of Veronica.[3] Pungileoni, with more respect, perhaps, for his authority, assigns the work to Correggio's last years. The painter undoubtedly decorated certain rooms in the castle, but his work was done in preparation for the visit of Charles V., which fixes its date approximately. He must have worked there shortly before the first visit, in March 1530, or before the Emperor's return in 1532.[4] The castle, however, which stood to the east of the city, was demolished for strategic reasons in 1557, during the war with Paul IV.[5] Every trace therefore of such internal evidence as might have guided modern criticism to a decision of the question had perished many years before Zuccardi made the statement so confidently relied on by later writers.

It is further recorded that Correggio worked in Francesca of Brandenburg's palace, portions of which still exist in the city. We are of opinion, however, that if he had really painted any frescoes of importance there, they would have been preserved, or at least some definite mention of them would be found in the pages of contemporary historians. Certain fragments of decoration are still decipherable in the ruined palace, but there are no grounds whatever for their ascription to Correggio. The frescoes in the upper room, already described, were painted in 1508, and are in all probability the work of Cesare di Reggio. Those in a room on the ground-floor, immediately to the left of the entrance, are perhaps later. They have been barbarously repainted in oils, and completely destroyed. But there is nothing to suggest that they were ever of such merit as to warrant their attribution to the master. Though of no great artistic importance, they must originally have been gay and effective as decorations. A frieze of Amorini at play runs round the vault, the centre of which, enclosed by the usual balustrade, simulates the blue of a southern sky, producing a pleasant sense of space and atmosphere. Pungileoni mentions other paintings which have now perished, dismissing them, however, as of little interest. Our knowledge of works possibly executed by Correggio for the ruling house is bounded by a few vague references and still vaguer conjectures. We may therefore conclude that if he received any such commission from his patrons, it was of slight importance.

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[1] Veronica Gambara, *Rime e lettere*, p. 166.

[2] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 252; Pungileoni, i. p. 61; Bottari, *Raccolta di lettere*, vi. p. 381, etc.

[3] *Op. cit.* ii. p. 123, and vi. pp. 252-3.

[4] *Op. cit.* i. p. 245; ii. p. 232.

[5] Tiraboschi, ii. p. 123; Magnanini, p. 21.

The court with which the Correggeschi kept up the most cordial relations was that of the Gonzaghi. Isabella d'Este was the lady to whom Veronica paid the most assiduous attention. The earliest of Veronica's extant letters is a note to Isabella, dated February 1, 1503, when the writer was barely eighteen. It betrays evident emotion, a natural timidity in addressing the great lady who had honoured her with a letter. She modestly confesses herself "unequal to the lofty undertaking" of thanking Isabella adequately for her goodness, but gratefully acknowledges her favour, and subscribes herself her "servant eternally."[1]

In time, as the intimacy between these two kindred spirits increased, the formality of the early letters is considerably abated, and Veronica's tone becomes less submissive. Renier says: "The correspondence between the two women must have been frequent, and there is reason to believe that the few letters which have come down to us are very insufficient samples of the whole."

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[1] Renier, *op. cit.* p. 442.

When Isabella, idolised and acclaimed from her infancy, entered Mantua, a bride of sixteen, she was received with the utmost enthusiasm, not only by the citizens, but by some seventeen thousand strangers who had assembled to greet her.[1] She was accounted the most cultured maiden in Italy, and "the most perfect specimen of that exquisite blossom, the woman of the Renaissance."[2] When she visited Ferrara to assist at the wedding of Lucrezia Borgia, she outshone all the assembled princesses. A devotee of the arts, she engaged in long and tedious litigation with an antiquary who sold her two counterfeit statues as antiques, writing meanwhile letter after letter containing orders for pictures by the great masters, pottery from Casteldurante, jewels, etc. She lived surrounded by an army of painters, sculptors, architects, makers of musical instruments, and musicians, among the latter the famous Jacopo da San Secondo, who is said to have been Raphael's model for the Apollo in his *Parnassus*. When Duke Valentino presented Michelangelo's *Cupid* to her, she immediately procured a Greek Cupid to place beside it for comparison. She corresponded with Giovanni Bellini, Leonardo da Vinci, and Buonarroti himself, and it was at her suggestion that Baldassarre Castiglione brought Giulio Romano to Mantua.

A glamour of art and poetry surrounded her stately figure. With what emotion must artists and men of letters have entered her presence-chamber! How intoxicating must have been their homage! We see in fancy the little rooms, with their gilded and coffered ceilings, rich with traceries delicate as that of some masterpiece of the goldsmith's art, interspersed with shields bearing musical notes and the device *Nec spe, nec metu*. Above, the walls are covered with tapestries and pictures by famous masters, the subjects and dimensions suggested by herself; below, they are panelled with intarsias, either in perspective, or representing groups of musical instruments. On every side, tables and stools are loaded with bronzes, medals, marbles, pottery, brocades, books, viols, lutes, and, among them all, sheaves of freshly gathered flowers. Etiquettes were waived in favour of those who could discourse to her of art or science, or show her some beautiful thing. Her eye was athirst for loveliness, her brain greedy of knowledge! The artists and learned men who surrounded her, and felt the magic of her fascination, hailed her as one of the Pierides, sent by Jove for the consummation of the new culture. In her hours of solitude she read the ancient poets and historians, and the books her admirers had sent her and she herself had collected. Or she would pass her treasures in review, or write commissioning her friends to find her others; or seek relaxation at her harpsichord, while eye and mind found rest in contemplation of the wide and tranquil landscape beyond her palace walls.

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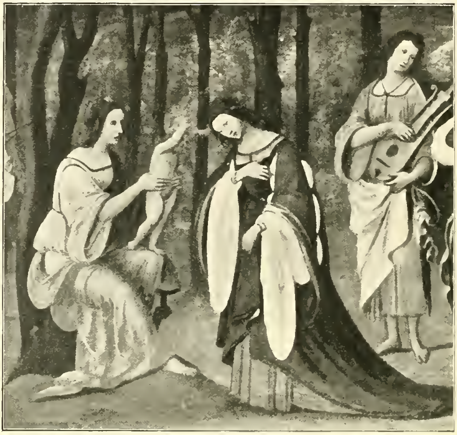
[1] A. Luzio and R. Renier, *Mantova e Urbino. Isabella d'Este e Elisabetta Gonzaga.* Turin, 1893.

[2] Pio Raina, *L'Orlando Innamorato del Boiardo*, in *La vita italiana nel Rinascimento*, p. 325. Milan, 1893.

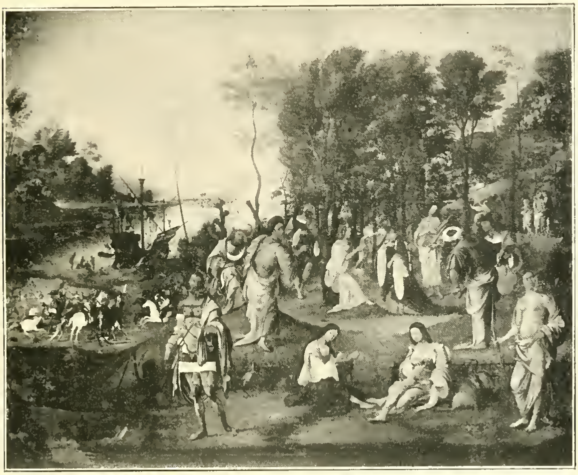


CUPID CROWNING ISABELLA D'ESTE. FROM LORENZO COSTA'S "ALLEGORY" OF HER COURT.

In the Louvre.

The social relations between the courts of Mantua and Correggio soon ripened into friendship. Borso da Correggio was the mediator in a dispute between Isabella and her husband, and the former acted as sponsor to Veronica's first-born son.

A frequent visitor at the court of Mantua from 1508 onwards was the gallant Nicolò da Correggio, a prince "who was an accomplished cavalier and gentleman, a subtle diplomatist, a lover of the arts, and addicted to a lordly magnificence and luxury. Ladies loved him for the easy grace of his manners, princes for his intelligence, dexterity, and valour, the public for his munificence, and the martial displays with which he indulged them."[1] He chose songs for Isabella and sent



ALLEGORY OF THE COURT OF ISABELLA D'ESTE, BY LORENZO COSTA.

In the Louvre.

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[1] A. Luzio and R. Renier, *Nicolò da Correggio* (*Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, vols. xxi. and xxii.).

her his own, made suggestions for eclogues, triolets, sonnets, and translations from Virgil, furnished her with mottoes for medals, and lent her tragedies. He himself played a lyre sent him by the famous musician, Atalante Migliorotti.

This deep and intense enjoyment of life in its æsthetic manifestations he had drawn from the same source as Isabella. It had been instilled into him at the court of Ferrara, in familiar intercourse with Decembrio, Teofilo Calcagnini, Boiardo, and other philosophers and poets. Hence his entire sympathy with all the ideals and aspirations of his kinswoman. His mother was a member of the house of Este, and shared his passion for luxury and gallantry. Renowned for her grace, her magnificence, her gaiety and her social talents, she was called the *Queen of Festivals*. A distich of the period commemorates her gifts in these magniloquent lines:

> "Chi vuol vedere il paradiso in terra
> Vegga Donna Beatrice in una festa."
> (He who would see paradise on earth
> Should see Donna Beatrice at a festival.)

One of Nicolò's most remarkable compeers at the court of the Gonzaghi was a monk from Correggio, whose speciality was a knowledge of literary and artistic matters. He kept Isabella informed of all that came under his notice in this connection, spicing his reports, it was said, with a good deal of gossip.

Nicolò and this priest were succeeded in the friendship of the Gonzaghi by Brachino Croce, also of Correggio, renowned for his administrative talents and his eloquence.[1]

The intercourse between Mantua and Correggio from frequent soon became constant and affectionate, facilities for communication being afforded by the excellent road uniting them. It is natural to suppose that Veronica gratified Isabella's taste for artistic novelties by tales of the youthful Allegri and the precocious promise of his first essays. Veronica, as we learn from Rinaldo Corso, was passionately fond of children. She was greatly interested in art, and the intimate friend of the Marchesa of Mantua, to whom she frequently sent her own children, and at whose court several natives of Correggio had sojourned, or were actually settled. What more probable than that Allegri's first introduction to Mantua should have been effected through one of these various channels of communication ?

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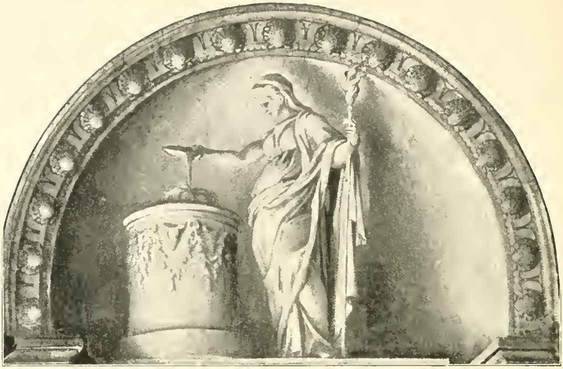
[1] D'Arco, *op. cit.* ii. p. 97.

His intimacy with the ruling family of his native city is fully attested by documents. Correggese historians have preserved an old tradition, which affirms that the princes sought refuge in Mantua during the outbreak of plague in their own city, taking with them the youthful artist. Writing to Isabella about Correggio and one of his pictures, Veronica makes use of a very significant pronoun, which leaves no doubt as to the affectionate interest felt by the two ladies in the painter. She calls Correggio "*our* Antonio."

At the beginning of the sixteenth century Italian style was as yet free from the hyperbolic sentimentality afterwards introduced from Spain. Even among persons of the same family, especially those of noble birth, the use of endearing adjectives and possessive pronouns was by no means frequent. It was accounted a graceful and cordial act of recognition on the part of Isabella herself to speak of Eleonora of Correggio as " our Eleonora."

When therefore Veronica and Isabella spoke of Correggio as " our Antonio," they claimed a certain share in his glory which is undoubtedly theirs by right. Women have a keener and more delicate perception of genius than men. They have the same skill in developing the nascent soul as in handling the infant body. Those whose light touch alleviates the wounds of the tortured body can best pour the balm of healing upon moral suffering. Sister Celeste's figure is the most beautiful in Galileo's history. The more sheltered life of women preserves their capacity for belief. In the heat of the daily struggle men become sceptical and intolerant. They are impatient of persons and things they consider unimportant, though these may sometimes contain the germs of a glorious future. Who shall say that the radiant grace of " our Antonio's " works did not owe its first impulse to the smiles and encouragement with which two noble and cultured women rewarded his early efforts ?

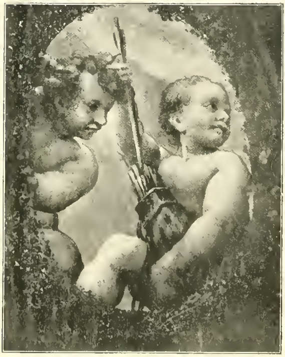


A VESTAL. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.

CHAPTER VI

CORREGGIO'S EARLY WORKS

THE FRANCISCAN ALTAR-PIECE AT DRESDEN—JUVENILE PICTURES BY CORREGGIO AT MILAN, PAVIA, MODENA, FLORENCE, MUNICH, SIGMARINGEN, AND LONDON.



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

THE first of Correggio's works mentioned in existing records is the so-called *Madonna of San Francesco.* In his will, dated July 4, 1514, a certain Quirino Zuccardi left a house to the Franciscan monastery at Correggio. This legacy he directed should be used to cover the cost of a picture for the high altar of the church. Zuccardi's heir, Nicola Selli of Parma, a citizen of Correggio, elected to keep the house. He offered to compound for its possession with a sum of ninety-five ducats, sixty-four *soldi,* to be paid to Girolamo Catanei, the Franciscan bursar and procurator, the money to be spent on the proposed picture. The offer was readily accepted by the reverend bursar, who duly fixed a limit of time for the settlement. About six weeks later (August 30), Catanei, Antonio Zuccardi, Tommaso Affarosi, syndic of the monastery, and a notary, presented themselves at the house of Correggio, then a youth of barely twenty years old, and commissioned him to paint the altar-piece. The agreement drawn up on this occasion gives a minor detail of some interest. The preliminaries were discussed and the contract made in the painter's modest bed-room on the ground-floor. Why, it may be asked, was not some more suitable place chosen—the monastery itself, the notary's house, the palace of the city? The answer is obvious. We are convinced that Allegri had already painted the *St. Martha* (of which we shall have more to say presently) for the Church of the Misericordia, and that this picture had, in fact, determined the choice of an artist for the new commission. But in a matter of such importance, the syndics naturally wished to satisfy themselves in person concerning the young man's proposed treatment of the theme. It was therefore necessary that he should show them his sketches and drawings. We can picture the whole scene: the worthy commissioners seated, absorbed in their scrutiny of the smiling Saints and Madonnas; Correggio arranging them in the most favourable light, and noting the impression produced in the attentive faces of his critics; lastly, Pellegrino Allegri in the back-ground, delighted at the fresh honour bestowed on his youthful son. The deed, in fact, declares him to have been present, acting on behalf of Antonio, a minor. There is no mention, however, of another person, Bernardina Aromani, the painter's mother, who was probably close at hand, peering through the open door, her heart swelling with emotion.

That the syndics duly admired his works is evident from the sum they agreed to pay—a hundred gold ducats. This was a very considerable price to offer even to a mature artist, much more so to a youth whose career was scarcely begun. The notary formally concluded the bargain. Fifty ducats were paid down on account, the rest to be handed over on completion of the work. Antonio's patrons were no less exact in the matter of materials. The panel on which the picture was to be painted was contracted for in another deed of October 4, whereby Master Pietro Landini agreed to deliver it within the month.

Meanwhile Correggio was to prepare his cartoon, and be ready to begin the picture early in November.

On March 24, 1515, two payments are recorded, one to Luca Ferrari for certain irons for the frame, and one, of ten ducats, to the painter for a *miara* of gold to be placed on the altar-piece.

The picture was almost finished. A few more days of toil, and the task would be at an end. On April 4, Master Antonio Allegri received the "last payment," in the presence of Messer Tommaso Farosi, syndic of the monastery, Messer Gian Ludovico Montesino, the Padre Predicatore (*Preaching Father*), Friar Giacomo da Ceva, and the Vicar of the monastery.

This entry is followed by various others for expenses connected with the altar-piece, as: whitewashing the chapel, constructing a scaffolding, providing a curtain for the picture. Then come certain payments made to Landini, who had prepared the panel, and to the painter himself for "blue on the frame," no doubt the ground-work of the gold ornaments.[1]

It is therefore certain that this extraordinary work was completed by the young man in five months!

It was carefully preserved in its original place until 1638. Towards the end of March in this year, the French painter, Jean Boulanger, arrived at Correggio, having entered the service of the Duke of Modena a few days before. He installed himself on a scaffold behind the high altar, made a hasty copy of the picture, and departed. On April 12 it was rumoured in Correggio that the original had been carried off, and replaced by Boulanger's copy. The whole country-side was in an uproar. The church was besieged by an angry crowd, calling down vengeance on the thieves. The great bell of the commune was rung, and the Anziani, followed by a throng

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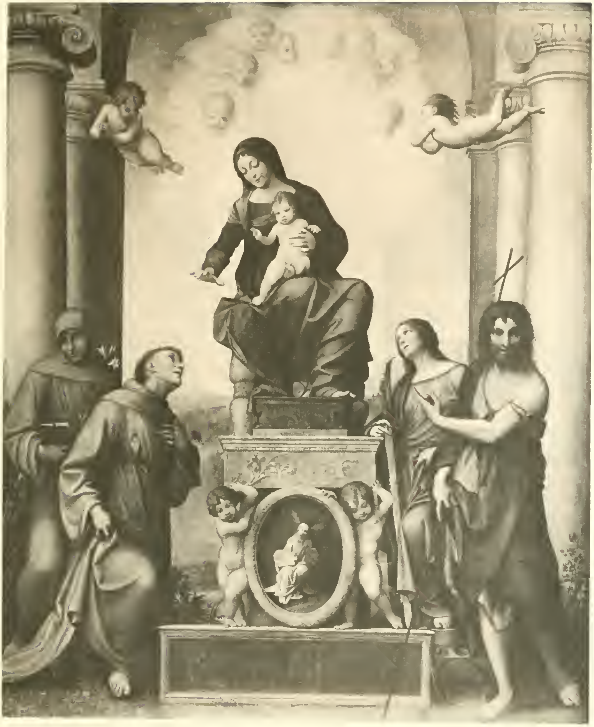
[1] Tiraboschi, vi. pp. 253 and 258; Pungileoni, ii. pp. 65–69. Tiraboschi erroneously supposes this picture to have been painted for the Minorites of Carpi.



of persons of all classes, assembled in the ante-room of Signor Annibale Molza, the Duke of Modena's representative at Correggio. None of those present, with the one exception of Molza, had any suspicion as to the real author of the theft, as they roundly called it. The leaders stated their case as follows, in the presence of all: "The robbery was probably carried out by the painter aforesaid, with the consent or connivance of some of the fathers of the monastery. And therefore the people, discovering the theft of a picture so greatly prized and valued by the whole community at all times, and recognising its loss as a special grief to the Council General, brings the matter before the illustrious Governor of the city, begging for his help and favour in inducing his Serene Highness, the gracious and beneficent father of his people, to exert his authority for the discovery of the delinquent." The poor Correggese, had, as a fact, cast themselves bodily into the mouth of the wolf! Boulanger and the monks had but obeyed the mandate of the Duke, who must have laughed in his sleeve at these humble appeals for help! Molza wrote to the Duke, setting forth what had happened, and concluded his promised mediation by remarking that he could not understand why the people were making such a commotion![1] It was not long before the picture appeared in the Estense collection, where it remained for over a century, until the sale made by Francesco III. to Augustus III., King of Poland, and Elector of Saxony. In the summer of 1746 it was taken to Dresden, with other works by Correggio, of which we shall speak in their place. "Duke Francesco was overwhelmed with debts, partly a heritage from Rinaldo, who had been greatly embarrassed by the acquisition of Mirandola and Concordia, and whose resources had been drained by incessant wars, partly the result of his own maladministration, and the expenses of fresh campaigns. But the sale of the gems of his gallery, which, while it robbed Modena and Italy of their artistic patrimony, remedied no crying evil, and healed no single wound in the body politic, was a disgraceful action. Francesco had little claim indeed to the popularity he seems to have enjoyed, to judge by the bronze equestrian statue erected in his honour by the citizens during his lifetime. Yet there were some, perhaps, who remembered the Dresden sale, when the mutilated statue rolled along the streets of Modena at the time of the French Revolution."[1]

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[1] Tiraboschi, vi. pp. 253–54; Magnanini, p. 23.

Let us return to the picture.

The figures are assembled under a wide open loggia, on either side of which are two columns with Ionic capitals and a pilaster. The lofty throne on which the Virgin is seated rises in the midst against a background of sunny landscape and distant hills in delicate perspective. The base of the throne is decorated in chiaroscuro on a red ground with the episodes of the Fall, Adam and Eve appearing in three distinct groups among the tree-trunks of the earthly Paradise. From this base rises a massive circular column, surmounted by a marble dado, adorned with narrow fillets and a fine tracery. The greater part of the surface of the column is occupied by an oval medallion, surrounded by a garland, in the centre of which is a seated figure of Moses holding the tables of the law. The medallion is supported by two cherubs, whose uplifted left arms rest against the dado, a device by which they

CHURCH OF SAN FRANCESCO, AT CORREGGIO.

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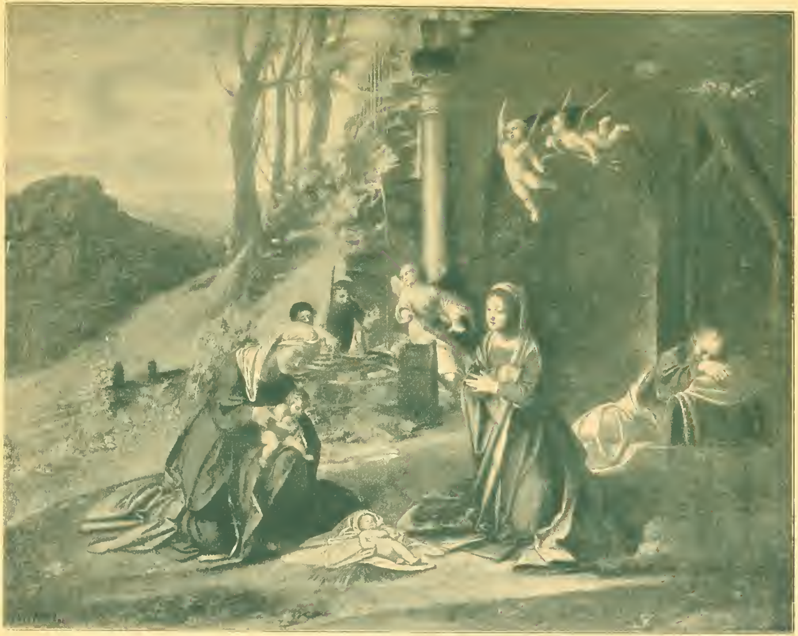
[1] A. Venturi, *La R. Galleria estense in Modena*, p. 320. Modena, 1883.



are welded into the architectural scheme in the shape of living caryatids. Little is seen of the upper part of the throne save the double shafts of the supporting lateral columns, the rest being hidden by the figure of the Virgin and her flowing draperies. Her knees are slightly inclined to the left, her feet rest on a stool, and her face and the upper part of her figure are turned to the right. With a gentle smile she extends one hand, motioning St. Francis of Assisi to kneel and adore the Infant whom she holds on her lap with the other. The Saint stoops to obey her, slightly raising his robe, but keeping his eyes rapturously fixed on the Child, to whom he raises his face with a look of adoring tenderness, laying his left hand on his breast, where an opening in the tunic reveals the wound in his side. In the penumbra beyond, St. Anthony of Padua, with book and lily, looks out at the spectator. On the opposite side, close to the throne, on the base of which she leans her right arm, St. Catherine gazes in holy ecstasy at the Child. With her right hand she clasps the hilt of a great sword, and the palm of martyrdom; with the left she draws up her robe, displaying her foot, which rests on the nave of the wheel. Beside it lies her crown. In the foreground stands St. John the Baptist, a lofty and commanding figure, holding in one hand the long reed cross, and the folds of the mantle which falls over his goatskin tunic, and with the other directing the gaze of the spectator to the Lamb of God. Ten cherub heads appear in a circle among the radiant clouds above, and two angels, joining hands, hover under the *loggia* on a level with the capitals. Only one of these figures is winged; his face is turned almost full on the spectator, while his companion, flying in the opposite direction, is seen in profile. On the circle of St. Catherine's wheel is the inscription: "ANTONIVS DE ALEGRIS. P."

Beautiful as the picture is intrinsically, it appears almost miraculous when we consider it as the work of a youth of twenty. It has defects, of course, and reveals the impressions gleaned in various studios here and there. But the defects are so unimportant, the impressions from without so neutralised by strong personal elements, that the work fully merits its great reputation.

As Meyer very justly remarks: "To appreciate the wonderful originality of Correggio at this early age, we need but compare his picture with the *Marriage of the Virgin* (now in the Brera at Milan) painted by Raphael when he was somewhat older. Here the influence of Perugino almost effaces the painter's own individuality."[1]

In Correggio's picture, reminiscences of Mantegna are clearly apparent in the figure of the Virgin, and the influence of Costa shows itself in the chiaroscuro medallion on the throne. Beyond this, we can find no indubitable traces of alien inspiration. Mengs[2] indeed, and Meyer[3] thought they discerned the Leonardesque type, not only in the St. John (where, perhaps, they were right), but also in the Virgin, whose characteristics are derived from a very different source. The utmost diversity of opinions has been based on the sentiment of the various heads. Criticism, refining on the subtleties proper to a metaphysical treatise, has discovered in these, echoes of the Umbrian School, and of Francia, transmitted perhaps by Ferrari-Bianchi.[4] One critic declares the head of St. Catherine to be derived from Francia;[5] another sees in it the influence of Perugino.[6]

There is certainly a Peruginesque air about the head; but this hardly justifies the writer in sending Correggio to study at Bologna (a hypothesis we have already dismissed) in order to account for his supposed familiarity with a famous picture by the Umbrian master, still in that city. It is well known that after long importunity, Isabella d'Este obtained certain pictures by Perugino, which were brought to Mantua during the first years of the sixteenth century.[7] The most notable defect of the picture is perhaps the exaggerated length of the Virgin's body from waist to feet. Our great admiration for the work notwithstanding, we must admit that standing upright, the figure would be gigantic. Some of the foreshortenings too, are hard and awkward. But we may point out innumerable beauties by way of compensation. The simplicity of the composition, which is of the traditional fifteenth century character, is enriched by the great variety of attitudes, at once reticent and animated. This variety is much enhanced by the supple and expressive play of the hands and feet. The chiaroscuro and colour, though of course far behind those of his later works, is already remarkable for its agreeable vigour and transparency. The air circulates freely about the finely modelled figures. The light is diffused above them in a masterly fashion, and breaks gaily over the wide and simple landscape, where again Meyer recognised a Leonardesque breadth of treatment, though he might have sought his parallel more opportunely among Ferrarese examples. But if these excellences, and the scrupulous accuracy of the technique are sufficiently remarkable in the work of an artist of twenty, we must give a yet greater meed of admiration to the expression and sentiment of the heads, in the rendering of which the young master showed himself equal, if not superior, to the greatest artists of his day.

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[1] *Correggio*, p. 98.

[2] II., p. 161.

[3] *Correggio*, p. 94.

[4] *Op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

[5] Morelli, *Le opere dei maestri italiani*, p. 122.

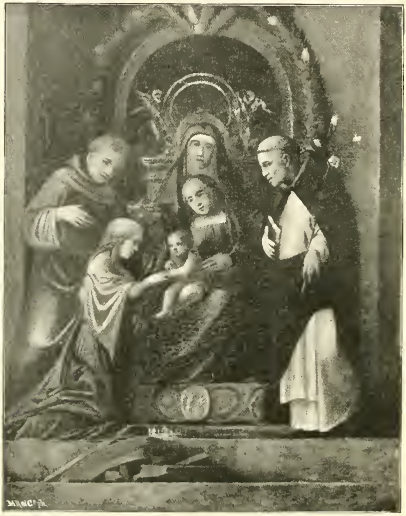
[6] Alberto Rondani, *Come visse il Correggio*, in the *Nuova Antologia*, lii. p. 45 (Rome, 1894), and *Il Correggio*, a study published at intervals in the *Gazzetta di Parma*, 1890.

[7] *Giornale di erudizione artistica*, ii. pp. 144 and 159. Perugia, 1873.

We may now inquire what other works exist, painted by Correggio before, or at about the same date as his first great altar-piece.

To determine this question, it was of course necessary to make a careful study of this, his first authenticated work. Such a study was undertaken of late years, by Giovanni Morelli, who made several additions to the scanty list of Correggio's juvenile works. But we cannot follow him in assigning some of these to so early a date as 1511. The utmost we are inclined to concede is that they may have been painted in the following year, or, more probably, in 1513, either while he was in Mantua, or immediately after his return from that city. In each of the little pictures in question, some Mantegnesque motive appears among the Emilian elements.

My friend, Dr. Gustavo Frizzoni, of Milan, owns a small and much injured panel, formerly in the Costabili Gallery at Ferrara, representing the Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine. The enthroned Madonna bends slightly to the right, holding on her lap the Infant Jesus, who, taking the Saint's fingers in one little hand, offers the ring with the other. St. Catherine kneels modestly before them; the crown, the sword, and the broken wheel lie on the steps of the throne. On one side of the group stands St. Francis, his eyes fixed on the Infant Bridegroom, on the other St. Dominic, holding a book and a lily. St. Anne, seated behind the Virgin, extends her right hand in benediction over the head of St. Catherine. Behind the group is a sculptured recess. "The modelling of the hands," says Morelli, "is still that of Lorenzo Costa, the vivacity of the colour recalls Mazzolino, but in the expression and attitude of St. Francis the future Correggio stands revealed. In shape and ornament the throne is very like that in the Dresden picture."[1] This resemblance, however, is limited to the footstool below, the central ornament of which is an oval medallion of *Abraham's Sacrifice.* Morelli does not notice that on the back of the throne, above, there is a roundel, as in Mantegna's *S. Maria della Vittoria*; and that the niche behind is wreathed with



MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE, BY CORREGGIO

Dr. G. Frizzoni, Milan.

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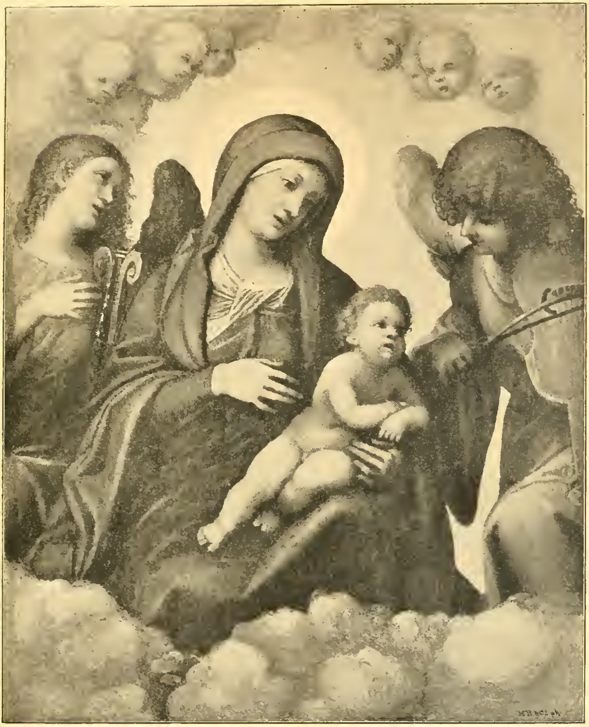
[1] *Le opere dei maestri italiani*, p. 123. See also Morelli's two volumes, *Italian Painters*, i. p. 255, and ii. p. 148. Camillo Laderchi (*Descrizione della Quadreria Costabili*, part iii. p. 60. Ferrara, 1841) attributes this picture to Fra Bartolommeo, and says that other persons had ascribed it to Raphael. He adds, however, "T. Geyser,



MADONNA AND CHILD WITH ANGELS.

In the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

one of the garlands of fruit and flowers so often introduced by the Vicenzan master. The long, scanty folds of St. Catherine's robe are also very Mantegnesque in treatment.

In the Uffizi[1] there is another small picture by Correggio, attributed to Titian in the old catalogues, but declared by several writers to be a Ferrarese work. Morelli restored it to its rightful author. Its value is much enhanced by its unusually fine state of preservation.

The Virgin, enthroned in a mass of snowy clouds, supports the Child upon her lap. Both are turned to the left, entranced by the music of a youthful winged angel, who plays the viol beside them. Another angel behind them sings to the accompaniment of a lyre. Around the shining aureole above is a cluster of rosy cherub heads, as in the San Francesco altar-piece. The colour is rich and glowing, and especially brilliant in the Virgin's crimson robe, and her blue mantle with its green lining. The sentiment is well sustained. The attention of all is fixed on the angelic music as if there were but one mind between them. Even in these early works we find certain characteristic peculiarities of the painter.[2] But the folds of the veil on the Virgin's breast, and, as we have already pointed out, the type of the Infant Jesus, recall Mantegna.

A less interesting work of this period is the *Nativity*, now in the possession of Cav. Benigno Crespi of Milan. It was in London some few years ago, and was there described as of the "School of Dosso."[3] We have already had occasion to mention it in dealing with Mantegna's influence upon Correggio. We will now examine it somewhat more closely. The stillness and subdued radiance of early morning are diffused over a landscape marvellous in its poetry, its sentiment, and its delicate elaboration. To the right rise the ruins of an antique temple—a marble column, with fragments of shattered walls and arches. The rough beams of the stable roof and the manger-cradle rest against them. Immediately behind is a hilly slope, dotted with lofty

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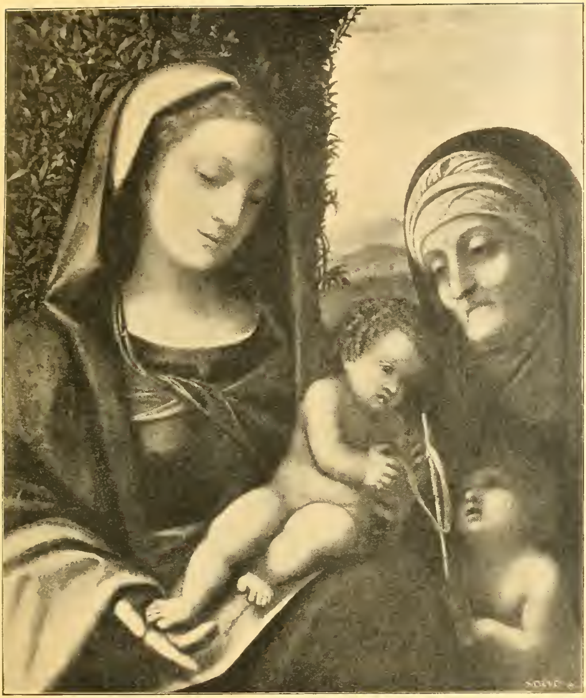
of Leipzig, an artist and connoisseur of the first rank, maintained it to be a work of Correggio, painted in his early manner, certain rare examples of which are to be found in other galleries, where they are accounted gems of the greatest value."

[1] No. 1,002. [2] Morelli, *Italian Painters*, ii. p. 149. [3] *Op. cit.* 150.

trees, their scanty leaves bending under the morning breeze, and dappling the white-flecked radiance of the luminous sky beyond. Two little figures of sleeping shepherds lie on either side of the first and largest trunk. To the left of the valley rises another hill, dusky and wooded, and stretching thence, a vast plain, like the valley of the Po, as seen from the Emilian hills. The figures are disposed in a little meadow, gay with plants and shrubs, which suggests the treatment of Dosso. The Infant Jesus slumbers in the midst on a linen cloth spread over a truss of straw ; the Virgin and St. Elizabeth kneel on either side in adoration. The Virgin's arms are crossed upon her breast ; St. Elizabeth, bending forward admiringly, supports the little St. John on her right knee. He, too, hangs lovingly over the sleeping Child. St. Joseph leans on a cask behind the Virgin, and in the middle distance, between her and St. Elizabeth, a youthful angel, winged, and robed in white, points out the Divine Babe to two shepherds, who, leaning over a hedge of interwoven boughs, gaze in astonishment at the Child. Rays of golden light fall on him from above. Two cherubs, hovering over the head of the Virgin, stand out in relief against the dark mass of the ruins. Correggio's characteristic sentiment and technique are displayed to greater perfection in this than in the other small pictures described, though it has not escaped injury. What may be called studio reminiscences are apparent in the flying angels, in the group of St. Elizabeth and St. John (the latter undoubtedly inspired by Mantegna's picture in the Church of Sant' Andrea at Mantua), in the broad Costesque cast of the draperies as they fall about the feet. But the painter's brilliant personality dominates the whole. The angel who addresses the shepherds beams with a mild and heavenly radiance ; in the Virgin's rapt expression we read her holy joy at having brought forth such a son. There are certain obvious blemishes, such as a hardness in some of the foreshortenings (the right hand of the angel, for instance), and trifling defects of treatment in the draperies ; but the picture is a little gem as a whole. The colour-harmony, brilliant as the plumage of a humming-bird, is Ferrarese, as in Frizzoni's picture. The enamelled reds and azures of the Virgin's robes are effulgent as those of Costa after he had come under the sway of Francia. St. Elizabeth's



MADONNA WITH TWO CHILDREN AND ST. ELIZABETH

In the Palace at Sigmaringen.

draperies are in a lower key; and it is curious to note the Mantegnesque influence proclaiming itself, not only in the conception, but to a certain extent in the colouring of this figure.

Judging by the oval types of the heads, the flow of the draperies about the feet, and their scanty, perpendicular folds, the sombre tones of the landscape and of the colour generally, we are inclined to think the so-called *Christ taking leave of his Mother before the Passion*, now the property of Mr. R. H. Benson, a work of about the same date as Signor Crespi's picture. Here we agree with Morelli rather than with Dr. J. P. Richter, who supposes it to have been painted about 1517, two years, consequently, after the Madonna of San Francesco, and about two years before the frescoes in the Camera di San Paolo, which we think quite impossible. We shall presently see what types and colours he affected at that period.

Attention was first drawn to this picture towards the end of the eighteenth century, when the Abbé Carlo Bianconi wrote thus to Tiraboschi: "It has a very decided look of Correggio. . . . There is all the grandeur and simplicity of the painter, together with something of the dryness usual in his early works." [1]

It was then at Milan, in the possession of one Rossi, whence it passed to the Parlatore family, of Florence. To the right is a portion of a temple, with a recess, and a column with an Ionic capital. Beyond lies a peaceful valley traversed by a river, the waters of which flow into the Sea of Galilee. The quiet waters of the lake are dotted with little islands. Streaks of pale light illumine the sky. This part of the picture bears a strong resemblance to the Crespi example, both in the landscape and the architecture.

On his knees, his arms folded on his breast, Jesus leans forward to the Virgin, who falls into the Magdalen's arms, overcome with emotion. St. John watches the painful scene from behind the group, his hands devoutly clasped. The sentiment of the episode is vividly and touchingly rendered, notably in the resigned humility of the Saviour's attitude, in the anguished face of the Virgin, and in the expressive action of her long, thin hands. The left falls helplessly beside her, but the right is raised in a gesture that seems to say: "Arise and go."

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[1] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 287. Lanzi, *op. cit.* Morelli, ii. p. 150. Frizzoni, *Arte italiana del Rinascimento*, p. 356. *Illustrated Catalogue of works of the School of Ferrara—Bologna*, pp. 16–17. London, 1894.

The pictorial elements are Ferrarese, but the soul that animates the conception is the soul of Correggio. The same may be said of the *Saint Martha*, also in London, in Lord Ashburton's collection.

The figures in this picture are very simply disposed. St. Peter and St. Leonard stand on either side, in the foreground. Between them, but a little further back, are St. Martha and St. Mary Magdalen. The background represents the heart of a wood, a mass of close-growing foliage and tree-trunks, on one of which a woodpecker is perched. St. Martha, whose face expresses a gentle melancholy, leads a little dragon by a string. St. Peter, whose attention she seems to invoke, looks at the creature with knitted brows. A gentle smile hovers on the lips of the Magdalen. St. Leonard, on the other hand, gazes heavenward in devout ecstasy, holding in his right hand his prison-fetters. Morelli was the first to include this picture among Correggio's juvenile works, that is to say, among those painted before the *Madonna of San Francesco*.[1]

All other biographers, as far as we know, assign it to the year 1518.[2]

We have no hesitation in saying that we agree most absolutely with Morelli. The traditional arrangement of the figures, the long, scanty folds of the drapery, many of them perfectly straight, the modelling of the slender hands, the fantastic *naïveté* displayed in the treatment of the dragon, the facial types, the attitudes, the very defects, insist on the affiliation of this work to the Frizzoni and Crespi examples. The St. Martha is true sister to the St. Francis in Frizzoni's *Marriage of St. Catherine*. To assign a later date than that of the Dresden altar-piece to this picture would be to upset the entire system of evolution as applied to Correggio's *œuvre*. Meyer, in fact, who dated it 1518, was much perplexed by the consequent necessity of reconciling its traditional simplicity of conception and forms with the free treatment of the *Repose in Egypt* in the Uffizi.

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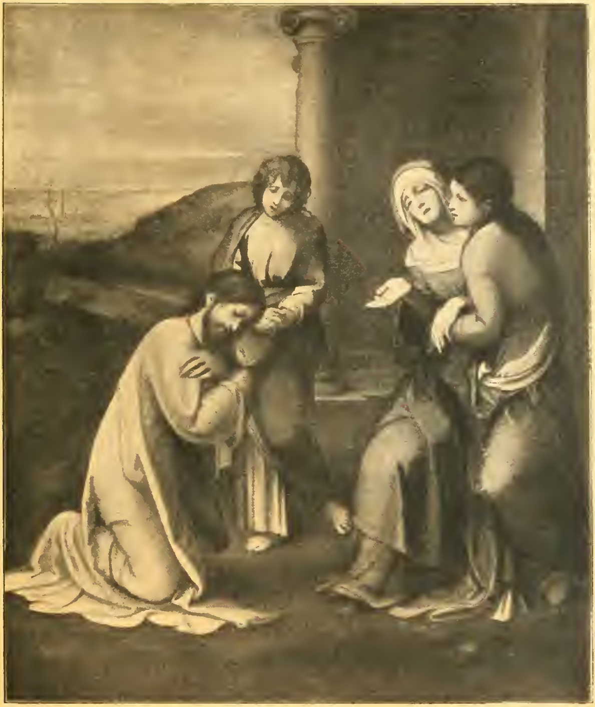
[1] *Le opere dei maestri italiani*, p. 124. *Italian Painters*, ii. p. 152.

[2] Pungileoni, i. p. 59 *et seq.* Bigi, *Della vita e delle opere di A. A.*, p. 52. Meyer, pp. 101–104, 365, 458. Richter, *Correggio*, in *Kunst und Künstler*, p. 10.



CHRIST TAKING LEAVE OF HIS MOTHER,

Mr. R. H Benson, London.

Of this work he possessed a copy, and, according to him, it was painted *before* the *St. Martha.*

This chronological confusion, however, was based on a historical error, or rather, on the misinterpretation of certain documents, which we will briefly examine.

In a will dated December 16, 1517, a certain Melchiorre Fassi bequeathed his estate to the church of San Quirino at Correggio, on condition that the church authorities should forthwith build a chapel with an altar, and provide it with an altar-piece, representing St. Peter, St. Leonard, St. Martha, and St. Mary Magdalen. The church, which had fallen down some three years before, was in course of reconstruction, but the work must have gone on very slowly, for it was not finished till 1550. Having waited some time for the carrying out of his conditions, Fassi made another will on August 29, 1528, renewing his bequest to the church of San Quirino, but associating the church of San Domenico in the benefit. He reiterated his former stipulation as to building the chapel, and providing the picture, adding further that the figure of the Madonna should be introduced in the latter, as well as the four saints already mentioned. Dissatisfied after a time, he changed his mind altogether, making a third will, by which he left everything to the church and hospital of Santa Maria della Misericordia, where a mass was to be said in perpetuity for the repose of his soul at *his own altar* of St. Martha. A picture of the saint must therefore have already existed here, and there is no reason to doubt the testimony of various writers, among them the chronicler Zuccardi, that this was the work of Correggio.

It has, nevertheless been suggested that Fassi actually succeeded in getting his picture painted by Correggio in 1517, and that, not being able to put it in the church of San Quirino, he placed it in Santa Maria della Misericordia instead, ordering another in 1528, with the same saints, and the additional figure of the Virgin. His insistence on the subject of the picture is to be explained by his special devotion to these four saints, under whose protection he must have supposed himself to be.

There is absolutely no foundation for the conjecture that the picture was ordered in 1517, and painted early in 1518. None of the documents quoted justify such a conclusion, either directly or indirectly. Neither do they mention the name of any artist in connection with the work.

All we know with any certainty is, that in 1528 Fassi confirmed the bequest of 1517, repeating his conditions as to the picture.

But how, it may be asked, are we to explain the fact that there was a picture in the Misericordia of the four saints mentioned in the documents? In the most natural and simple manner possible. Fassi, who was familiar with Correggio, as we know from a deed of July 14, 1517, to which they acted as joint witnesses, had commissioned him to paint a picture for his altar in the Misericordia some years before. When the church of San Quirino was restored, his devotion to the four saints again found expression in a desire to see them figure on another altar. The slow progress made by the builders caused the successive alterations in his will. We have now seen that none of the documents in question support the theory that the picture was painted immediately after the drawing up of the first will. On the other hand, the character of the work itself clearly points to the conclusion that it belongs to a much earlier date than 1518, when Correggio had shown his mastery of a broader and more confident style in several examples of his art. The picture remained in its place for a long time. There is a legend that it was disfigured by a coat of dark varnish, to prevent it from being carried off like the *Madonna of San Francesco* and the *Repose in Egypt*.[1] If so, we can only pity those who adopted an absurd expedient without obtaining the desired result! The picture crossed the seas, the varnish, if it ever existed, was removed, and its original beauties are now displayed to alien eyes.

These early works, the dense and vigorous tones of which recall Costa in his second period, and Francia, are followed by a little series, of less importance as compositions, but lighter, more transparent, and more limpid in colour.

We may take the *Young Faun*, or *Piping Shepherd*, in the Munich Gallery as the first of this series. Seated on a knoll at the foot of a clump of trees, he holds the pipe to his lips, and plays. To his

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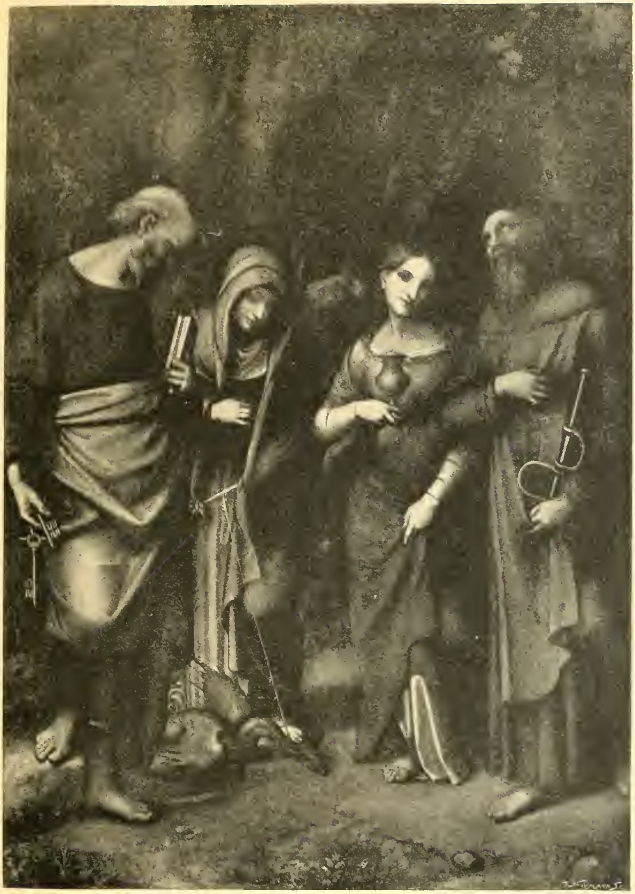
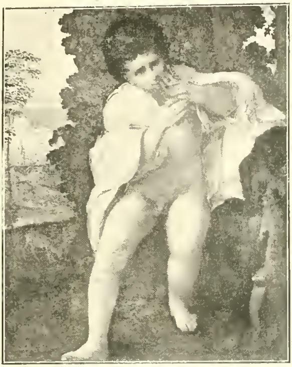
[1] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 256. Pungileoni, ii. p. 93; iii. pp. 201 and 275. Martini, *Studi intorno al Correggio*, p. 72 etc.



SS. PETER. MARY MAGDALEN, MARTHA, AND S. LEONARD.

In the Collection of Lord Ashburton.

right lies a kind of lute; on the opposite side, beyond the clustering foliage, opens a little valley with a browsing animal. The discordant tones of the sky and mountains are remarkable, and the treatment of the leaves is very curious, especially in the solitary tree to the left, but this peculiarity is readily explained if we remember in what school Correggio received his first training. These, however, together with one or two other unusual traits, convinced Otto Mündler that the picture was the work of Palma Vecchio. Even Morelli supposed it to be Venetian for some time, and suggested Lorenzo Lotto as the author. There are, in fact, certain affinities between Correggio and the latter, especially in the illumination of certain pictures, which we consider purely accidental. Morelli afterwards corrected his first impression, recognising certain characteristics of Correggio, such as the curved shin, the peculiar crispness of the hair, and the straight folds of the drapery.[1]



THE PIPING FAUN, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Munich Gallery.

Pungileoni tells us that "in the Casa Ravizzi at Correggio there was a picture of a shepherd adjusting a pipe to his lips."[2] This would seem at the first blush to indicate the Munich *Faun;* but the statement is taken from Brunorio, who goes on to say that the picture in question was a half-length figure of a shepherd playing the bagpipes, a description which excludes all possibility of identity.

Two small pictures closely resembling each other are to be found, one in the Communal Museum at Pavia, the other in the Municipal Museum at Milan. The former has been much injured by unskilful restoration and varnishing; the latter, though transferred to canvas, is still in fair condition. In both, the delicate type of the smiling Madonna is closely allied to that of the Virgin in the Franciscan altar-piece. The little panel at Pavia originally belonged to the Malaspina family. On a slip of cardboard fastened to the back the name and arms of Luigi Malaspina of Sannazaro are still to be deciphered. The Virgin lays one hand under the arm of the Infant Jesus, who leans from her lap towards the little St. John. St. Joseph stands to the left, and to the right a St. Elizabeth of a pronounced Mantegnesque type.

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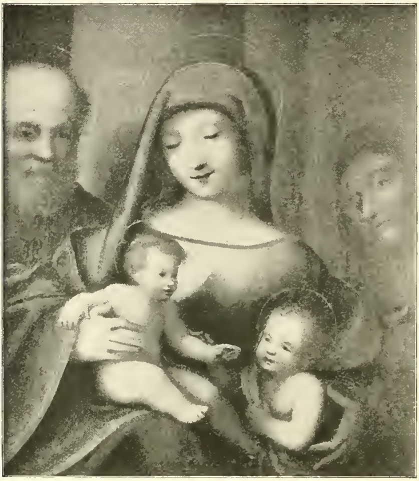
[1] Morelli, *Italian Painters*, ii. p. 198.

[2] *Op. cit.* i. p. 73; ii. p. 114.



MALASPINA MADONNA, BY CORREGGIO

In the Communal Gallery, Pavia.

The old ascription of this panel to Francia, and of the small picture in the Uffizi to a Ferrarese master, attracted the attention of Morelli, who wrote as follows: "It is strange that Correggio's early works at Florence and at Pavia should have been attributed, the one to the school of Ferrara, the other to Francia, but that neither should ever have been ascribed to Mantegna."[1] The distinguished critic insinuates that this is an argument against the theory of Mantegna's influence on Correggio. The little panel in the Uffizi was, as a fact, more persistently ascribed to Titian than to a Ferrarese source. But setting this point aside, we can attach no importance whatever to the attribution of the Pavia picture to Francia; its author must have lacked the most elementary knowledge of the Bolognese master. Ferrarese elements, especially noticeable in the softness of contours and colours, do not, and could not fail to appear in Correggio's juvenile works. His own temperament, the atmosphere in which he was reared, and the influence of the masters he studied under in his native city or in Mantua, all combined to produce such a result. But we have already fully discussed this question. The presence of these Ferrarese elements in his works sufficiently explains why they were never attributed to Mantegna, an artist of the strongest individuality, whose robust power of expression verged at times on

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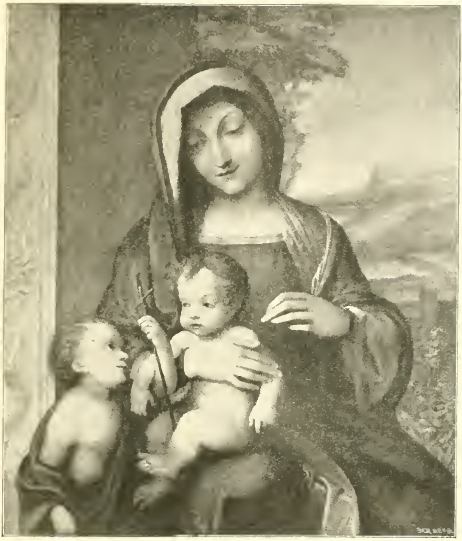
[1] *Le opere dei maestri italiani*, p. 124, note 1.



BOLOGNINI MADONNA, BY CORREGGIO

In the Municipal Gallery, Milan.

the harsh and violent. But though we admit his influence on Correggio's *style* to have been slight, we cannot minimise its importance in relation to the latter's conceptions, and his enthusiastic experiments in the foreshortening of the human body.

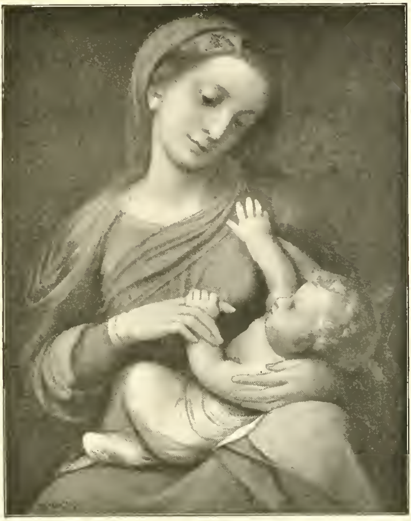
The somewhat larger picture at Milan, formerly in the Ambrosiana, represents the Virgin seated. The beautiful Babe on her lap rests his right arm on the little St. John's left, and gazes in astonishment at the cross the latter shows him. The painter has relieved the high tones of the figures by the introduction of a pilaster, one side of which is in deep shadow; the other is enriched with ornaments. The dark portion must have been repainted at some time, for it is impossible that Correggio could have laid on the crude, strong tint which makes the shadow look like a hole in the picture. Some branches of foliage appear in the middle, and beyond these stretches a valley, watered by a river which breaks into a little cascade. As in the Pavia picture, the Virgin's mantle is drawn over her head and falls across her right cheek, throwing it into shadow. Her eyes are half-closed, the eyelids widely distended. This picture, which formerly belonged to the Counts Bolognini, has been transferred from panel to canvas, and slightly cleaned.

The type of the Madonna having enabled us to class these two pictures together, may further help us in the case of two others, one in Prince Leopold von Hohenzollern's gallery at Sigmaringen, the other a bequest from the Campori family to the Estense gallery at Modena. The forms are less meagre. The Virgin's face is more softly rounded, her nose is shorter and less sharply defined. The hands, though still long and slender, are slightly thicker in the fingers. The children, too, are sturdier and plumper.

The Madonna of the Campori picture bends over the Child, who lies on her lap, a linen cloth drawn round his legs. He catches at her forefinger with his left hand, and stretches out his right, as if begging to be lifted. The action of the two little hands is a wonderful study of infant-life, in the rendering of which Correggio is unsurpassed.

This picture was at one time in the castle of Soliera (some seven miles from Correggio), which was stormed and taken by Duke Cesare in 1599, after the slaughter of Marco Pio, its owner. In 1636, when Cardinal Campori bought the feoff for his nephew Pietro, the picture was found in the chapel of the castle. It was first recognised as a work of Correggio by the painter, Vincenzo Rasori.[1]

The Sigmaringen picture is a finer and more elaborate work. The pensive Madonna sits in front of a bower of leafy verdure. The Child upon her lap plays with the scroll of the little St. John's cross, at which he looks with astonished eyes. St. Elizabeth, a figure of the usual Mantegnesque type, watches the group complacently.[2]



CAMPORI MADONNA, BY CORREGGIO

In the Estense Gallery, Modena

This closes the list of pictures hitherto discovered, which in all probability preceded the *Madonna of San Francesco*.

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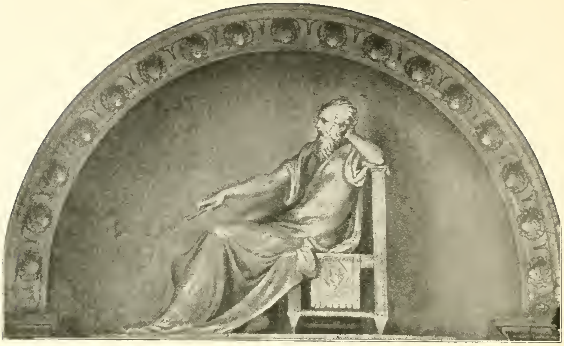
[1] *Monitore Toscano* of December 24, 1852. *La Ghirlandina di Modena*, No. i. Modena, 1853. Meyer, p. 379, etc. The picture has suffered somewhat. Among other blemishes, note the repainting of the Virgin's hand.

[2] Morelli, *Italian Painters*, ii. p. 151. Fritz Harck, *Quadri italiani nelle gallerie private di Germania*. (*Archiv. storico dell' arte*, vi. p. 390. Rome, 1893.) There is also a picture at Strasburg said to be a juvenile work by Correggio.

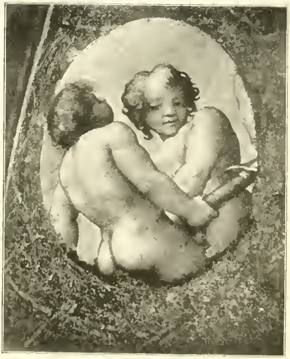


THE PHILOSOPHER (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER VII

A PAINFUL INTERLUDE

TRANSITION PERIOD—THE "REPOSE IN EGYPT" IN THE UFFIZI—"LA ZINGARELLA"—THE "MADONNA WITH THE TWO CHILDREN" IN THE PRADO AT MADRID—THE "HOLY FAMILY WITH ST. JAMES" AT HAMPTON COURT—"THE MADONNA OF CASALMAGGIORE"—LOST PICTURES—THE "HERODIAS"—THE "TRIPTYCH OF THE REDEEMER"—CORREGGIO'S SUPPOSED JOURNEYS TO CARPI AND NOVELLARA—THE ALBINEA PICTURE AND "THE YOUNG MAN FLEEING FROM THE CAPTORS OF CHRIST."



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

IN the life of every man there is a transition period, a terrible interlude of depression and unrest from which there is no escape. He enters upon it when he ceases to be a boy, but is as yet hardly a man. An ill-defined craving for happiness keeps him in a state of perpetual tension. The blood seems to rush, hot and tumultuous, through his veins. In strange contrast to the still childish cast of his thoughts in general, visions of art and poetry dawn within his soul. He begins to love the solitude of the country and of the sea; in the floating clouds above him he discerns figures of monstrous beasts, or rivers and snow-clad mountains. The world spreads out her beauties and pleasures before him; but he is sad, tormented by an inexplicable melancholy, an unreasonable resentment. Now this strange phase of transition in the physical and moral being frequently has its spiritual counterpart in the æsthetic development of a great artist. It corresponds to that painful period when, from imitation, he passes to individual mastery.

The workings of this transition betray themselves in Correggio's *œuvre* between 1515 and 1518, that is to say, between the painting of the *Madonna of San Francesco* and the frescoes in the *Camera di San Paolo*, the period in which he produced the least memorable of his works. He was gradually discarding the strong and vigorous colour, the traditional simplicity of arrangement, the sobriety of drapery, all the characteristics, in short, of the masters he had admired and studied, for more personal methods of expression. But these were not to be won in a moment. Striving after mellower, more transparent, and warmer colour, he only achieved the red tones of Dosso; attempting to touch the calm tranquillity of figures and draperies with greater life and animation, he was not always equal to the difficulties he evoked, and is often confused and embarrassed; and desiring to substitute a genial humanity for the contemplative mysticism of the older masters, he sometimes failed to add vivacity of expression to poetry of conception. Careful on the one hand, to avoid mere panegyric, we need not fear to say that Correggio's art was at its nadir at this period. Had he never painted better, either before or after, we should have known him only as one of the band of Emilian artists who flourished early in the sixteenth century.

We may illustrate our opinion by a striking case in point. The poor quality of the *Repose in Egypt* in the Uffizi, notably in colour, long caused it to be considered a copy, which was variously assigned to Barocci, to Francesco Vanni, and even, strange to say, to Alessandro Tiarini![1] The picture is perfectly authentic, and *pace* Meyer, its history is straightforward enough. Our conviction as to its authenticity is strengthened not only by a daily familiarity of many years with Correggio's greater works, but by the concurrence of several eminent critics, Morelli and Frizzoni among the number. The treatment of the hair and hands, the pale violet tint of St. Joseph's robe, the manner in which the colour is carried, as it were, into the folds of his white girdle, the vagueness of some of the contours (a quality beyond the power of a copyist to reproduce), the spontaneity of expression, which, again, no copy can render, modified, as it necessarily must be, by the personality of the reproducer—all combine to convince us that this picture is by the hand of Correggio. If any lingering doubts remained in our mind, they were dispelled by a careful study of the technique of *La Zingarella*, a work Meyer erroneously supposes to have been painted about 1520.

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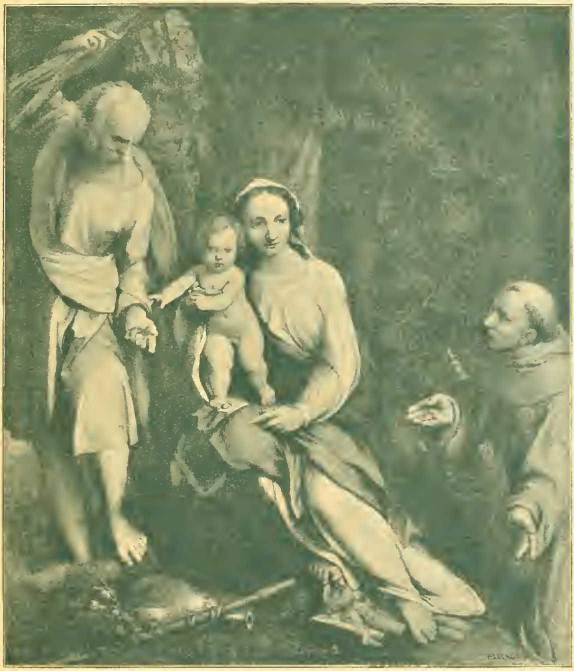
[1] Lanzi, *op. et loc. cit.* Meyer, p. 99.

It is curious to note how the traits peculiar to this stage of the painter's development appear in each one of the works painted at the time. Not only do we find the same hot tone of colour, the same haziness in the landscape, the same treatment of foliage, the same somewhat puffy extremities, but in every case we recognise the same facial type and the same idea of drapery.

The oval-faced Virgin, with a large mouth and rather long nose, and the Infant with the tripartite arrangement of the hair, a long central lock overhanging the middle of the forehead, are to be found in the *Repose in Egypt* of the Uffizi, in the *Madonna with the two Children*, at Madrid, in the *Virgin and Child with St. Joseph and St. James*, at Hampton Court; they also, as we learn from surviving copies, appeared in the lost Albinea picture. The inclination of the Virgin's head is another characteristic shared by the three latter. Indeed, the Virgin and Child of the Prado may be described as identical with the same group in the Hampton Court picture, where the St. Joseph of the *Repose in Egypt* re-appears as St. James. The hang of the draperies is still very sculpturesque, and, though less severe than in the pictures which precede the San Francesco Madonna, it is as yet unbroken by that play of flowing mantles and fluttering veils which distinguishes the *Diana* of the *Camera di San Paolo*, and succeeding works. The



THE HOLY FAMILY IN EGYPT

In the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

robes are little more than ample shirts, which the painter allows to fall in vertical folds over the breasts and arms of his figures, a mannerism he afterwards entirely repudiated, recognising the value of greater freedom and animation. The *Zingarella*, the St. Lucy of the Albinea picture, and the Madonna of the *Repose in Egypt* have another distinguishing peculiarity in the curious fold of the sleeve, the upper part of which is doubled over the fore-arm, wrapping it round like a bandage.

These singularities of colour, type, attitude, and drapery mark a stage in the painter's development hitherto neglected by the critic. We have described it as a *painful* interlude, for such, we are well assured, it was to the painter himself. He was struggling desperately to express his own personality, despairing at times of reaching the longed-for goal, determined never to return to the trammels of earlier formulæ, yet oppressed by his inability to give life to the ideas that were stirring within him, eager for flight and liberty as a flock of caged doves.

In the *Repose in Egypt*, an episode taken from one of the apocryphal gospels, we have the germ of the future *Madonna della Scodella* (the Virgin with the Cup). This identity of motive will be of great help to my readers in comparing the reproductions of these two examples. Such a comparison will show the difference between Correggio, as yet hesitating and embarrassed, and Correggio in full possession of his powers, more forcibly than any words of mine could do.

The Virgin is seated on a knoll, near a palm-tree, one branch of which St. Joseph has drawn down to pluck a handful of dates, which he offers to the Infant Jesus. The Child, standing on his mother's knee, stretches out his hand to take them, looking another way, as if but slightly interested in the matter. St. Francis of Assisi kneels on the opposite side ; the ecstatic rapture of his face and attitude in the famous altar-piece at Dresden seems entirely quenched, and the other figures have none of the joyous, radiant air that is to distinguish them in the *Madonna della Scodella*. The saint's hands are somewhat hard and angular, and the Virgin's left arm is ugly. The picture is not without beauty, notably in the composition, which is broadly conceived, and instinct with a sweet familiarity of sentiment, but, as a whole, it leaves the spectator cold.

This work was also originally in the church of San Francesco at Correggio, in the chapel of the Munari family. It was removed by Boulanger, at the Duke of Modena's command, the monks agreeing to the transfer, and a copy was substituted, which is now in the church of San Sebastiano in the same city. Pungileoni has described how it afterwards went to Florence, and Venturi confirms him. In 1649 Geminiano Poggi took it thither and exchanged it for an *Abraham's Sacrifice* by Andrea del Sarto, now at Dresden.[1]

The picture in the Naples Museum known as *La Zingarella* (The Gipsy), or the *Madonna with the Rabbit*, is well composed, and most poetically conceived, but in execution it is inferior to most of the master's works. Allowances must be made, however, for a certain amount of deterioration. The panel is covered with cracks, many of which have been stopped; the colour has suffered, and the work has been retouched here and there.

The Virgin is seated on the ground in a forest glade, among low-growing shrubs and bushes. Her hair is bound turban-wise with a white handkerchief. Over her white dress she wears a bright blue mantle. The Child lies on her lap, supported by her left hand, on which he lays his little fingers caressingly. With her right hand she holds one of his feet, as in the Sigmaringen picture. The Babe is sleeping, and the mother, bending tenderly over him, seems weary. As in the *Repose in Egypt*, the two figures are somewhat crudely illuminated by a warm twilight glow. The forest round them is full of life; a rabbit peers at them curiously from the left, and among the palms above their heads hovers a band of angels, which some strange fancy of the artist's has caused him to paint in the greenish tones of antique bronzes, a peculiarity copied by some of his disciples,

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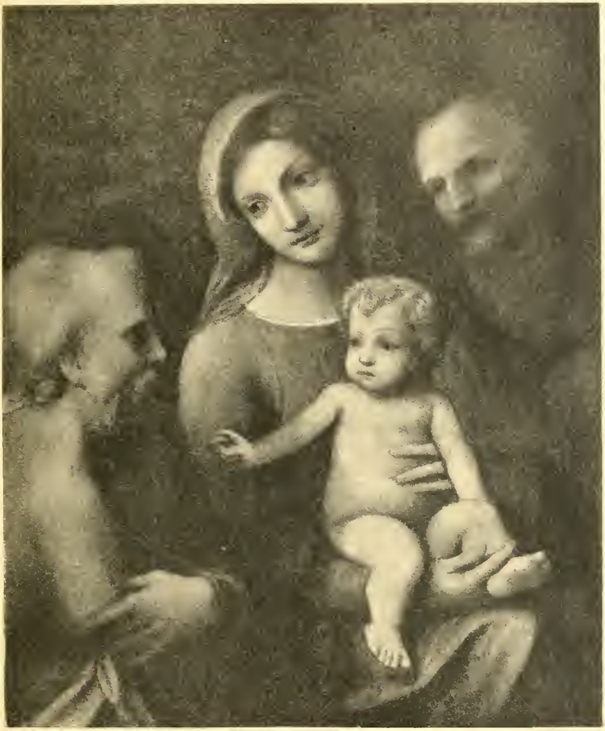
[1] Pungileoni, i. pp. 46, 47, 71, 72, 73; ii. p. 74. Ad. Venturi, *Galleria estense*, p. 242 *et seq.* There was a good copy of the picture at the exhibition of Correggio's works held at Parma in 1894. See *Catalogo della mostra Correggesca in Parma*, No. 82 p. 6. Parma, 1894.

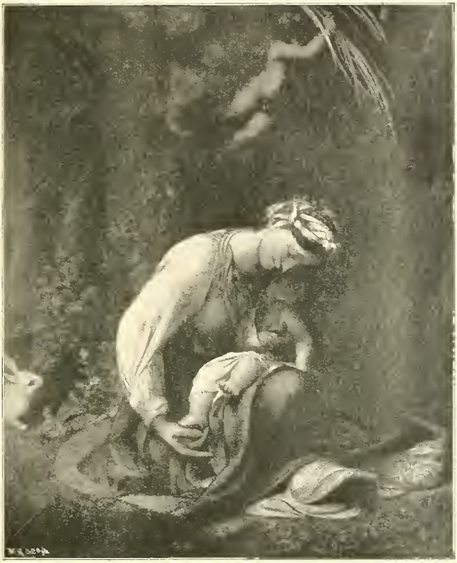


THE HOLY FAMILY.

Hampton Court Palace

notably Francesco Maria Rondani. A small bird, perched on a twig over the Virgin's shoulder, seems to have been roused by the flutter of the angels, and looks alertly round.

An *Inventory of the Wardrobe of Ranuccio Farnese*, drawn up in 1587, shows that the *Zingarella* was the property of that prince.



THE MADONNA WITH THE RABBIT, KNOWN AS "LA ZINGARELLA," BY CORREGGIO

In the Naples Museum.

By his will, dated July 23, 1607, he left it to his sister Margherita, known as Sister Maura Lucenia, a nun of the convent of San Paolo of Parma, to which her husband, Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Modena, consigned her in 1583, because of her sterility. "To the most serene lady, my sister, I bequeathe, as a token of the love I have always borne, and still bear her, the small panel, commonly called a *quadretto* (little picture), of the Blessed Virgin Mary, painted by the famous painter, Antonio of Correggio, and known as *La Cingarina*, the which, with all my remaining movable goods, is now under the charge of the Cavaliere Flaminio Zunti."[1]

On the death of Sister Maura, the picture did not remain in the convent, but went back to the Farnese family. It was still in their possession a century later, and was removed to Naples with the rest of their collection in 1734, when King Charles I. de Bourbon took possession of the two Sicilies, and made the city his capital.[2]

We have classed the picture in the Prado at Madrid with that at Hampton Court, on the strength of the close affinity between them.

The first represents the Virgin seated on the ground at the mouth of a cave, and watching the meeting between her son and the little St John with evident pleasure. The Infant Jesus, seated on her left knee, holds out his arms to the other child, who advances with his arms crossed, walking on the hem of the Virgin's robe, and encouraged by her supporting hand. The execution of this picture is somewhat harsh, and the colour a little hot; the left arm of the Infant Jesus and the Virgin's right hand and arm are poorly modelled. The pose of her legs is not over-graceful, and her feet are undeniably clumsy. But though the mastery of form is as yet incomplete, there is infinite charm and poetry in the familiar little scene.

The companion picture at Hampton Court, which was in Charles I.'s collection, is more delicate and refined in treatment, and shows the influence of Dosso. The Infant Jesus differs little either in type or pose from the Child in the Madrid picture. There is more grace, however, in the mother's attitude. She supports him with her left hand under his arm, and holds one of his little feet in her right. Her face, which is turned towards St. James, is quietly contemplative. St. Joseph, a handsome old man, leans forward to the right, apparently in deep thought.[1]

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[1] Martini, *Studi intorno al Correggio*, p. 128. C. Ricci, *Di alcuni quadri di scuola parmigiana conservati nel R. Museo Nazionale di Napoli*, p. 4 *et seq.* Trani, 1894.

[2] Giuseppe Campori, *Raccolta di cataloghi ed inventari di quadri*, pp. 52 and 225. Modena, 1870. There are innumerable copies of this picture, which was the subject of a sonnet by the famous Cavaliere Marino. We might fill three or four pages with a list of these various repetitions. One in the Casa Boscoli was attributed to Parmigianino, and is said to have been copied most minutely, with the idea of counterfeiting Correggio's work. There is a very pleasing replica by Girolamo Mazzola-Bedoli in the Poldi-Pezzoli collection at Milan. Barocci imitated the picture in his *Hagar*, now in the Dresden Gallery. For many others, see Pungileoni, Zani (*Enciclopedia artistica*, part ii. v. vi. p. 20), Meyer, etc.

Another picture which belongs to this group as to period is the small *Madonna with the two Children*, dated 1517, discovered by Dr. Henry Thode at Milan, and now in the public gallery at Frankfort-on-the-Main. It represents the Virgin, seated, with the Child, who is trying to attract the attention of the little St. John. The latter looks out at the spectator, pointing to the Infant Jesus. Thode believes this to be the picture known as the *Casalmaggiore Madonna*, which was in the ducal gallery at Modena, having been carried off from Casalmaggiore when Francesco I. occupied the district in 1646. It is said to have passed from Modena into France towards the close of the eighteenth century, and thence into England, returning once more to Italy in the possession of an English lady, and finally finding a home again among strangers.[2]

The larger and more important works executed by our painter at this period have, unhappily, all disappeared. No one, we believe, will now be found to uphold the authenticity of the so-called *Portrait of a Physician* in the Dresden Gallery, which was at one time supposed to represent the distinguished Correggese Lombardi, of whom we have already spoken, at another, the Modenese doctor, Grillenzoni.[3] Meyer declared he could find no traces of Correggio in this portrait.

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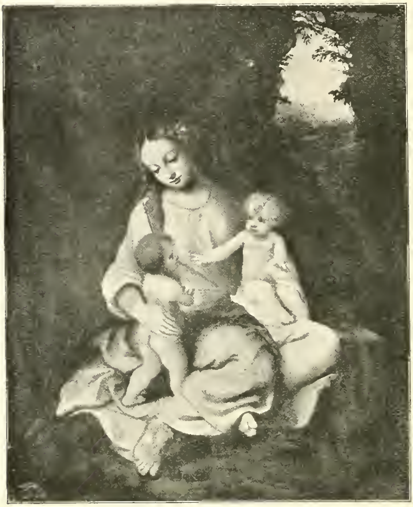
[1] Mary Logan, *Guide to the Italian Pictures at Hampton Court*, p. 41. London, 1894.

[2] H. Thode, *Correggio's Madonna von Casalmaggiore* (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, No. 151, 1890, and *Jahrbuch der königl. preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, xii. p. 104 *et seq.*, 1891). Venturi, *Galleria estense*, pp. 245 and 312.

[3] Scannelli, p. 285; Ratti, p. 109; Mengs, ii. p. 162; Tiraboschi, vi. p. 277; Venturi, *Galleria estense*, pp. 136 and 226; Pungileoni (*op. cit.* i, p. 36; ii. pp. 51 and 199) supports the attribution by relating that Lombardi gave Correggio a codex in acknowledgment of the portrait, and seems to accept a tradition which assigned it to the year 1518.

He pronounced it a mediocre work, wanting in animation, poor in modelling, and heavy in colour. Morelli was pleased to suggest Dosso as its author[1] and Lübke gave it to Lorenzo Lotto.[2] As, in any case, it has no pretensions to be included in Correggio's *œuvre,* we need not linger over its history.

In addition to the *Madonna of San Francesco,* at Dresden, the *Repose in Egypt,* at Florence, and the *St. Martha* in London, the city of Correggio once owned other early works by Allegri, among them a *Herodias,* a triptych, and, if we accept the testimony of witnesses already quoted, certain frescoes in the palace and villa of the *Signori.* All such memorials of her great master have, however, disappeared from the city. Like Urbino, she retains nothing of her famous son but his name



THE MADONNA WITH THE TWO CHILDREN, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Prado, Madrid.

No trace whatever remains of the *Herodias receiving the Head of John the Baptist from the Executioner.* In 1783 Antonioli wrote as follows to Girolamo Tiraboschi : "It must certainly have been ordered by the Countess Veronica after her return from Brescia, and after the terrible catastrophe of the capture of that city by the French under the haughty Gaston de Foix."[1] The potential form of this statement, which lacks the confirmation of other documents, makes it of little value as evidence.

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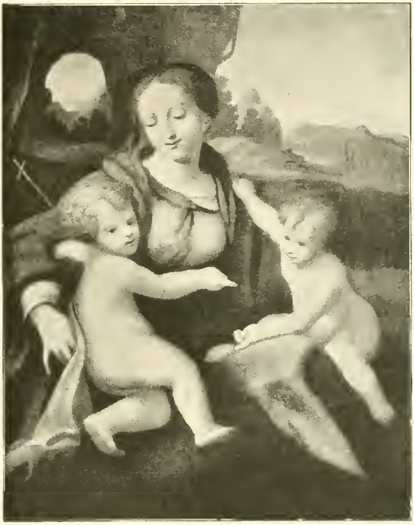
[1] *Italian Painters,* ii. p. 158.

[2] *Essai sur l'histoire de l'art,* ii. p. 256.

It has been asserted by some writers that this picture was originally in the oratory of the Misericordia. In a manuscript letter quoted by Tiraboschi and Pungileoni, signed with the pseudonym *Pietro Rans, of Berne*, these words occur: "There were also two other pictures in the said hospital by the same painter, which, although early works, were so greatly prized that certain ignorant officials, fearing they might be carried off, caused them to be covered with a thick varnish, which destroyed all their beauty." One of these two pictures, was, as we know, Lord Ashburton's *St. Martha*; the other is supposed to have been the *Herodias*. But Brunorio's testimony seems to us an insuperable obstacle to this belief. Without re-



THE MADONNA WITH THE TWO CHILDREN, BY CORREGGIO.

At Frankfort on-the-Main.

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[1] Bigi, *Della vita e delle opere*, etc., p. 107.

ferring at all to the hospital, he expressly states that the picture belonged originally to the Lords of Correggio, but that in his time it was said to have passed into the hands of the Venetian noble, Grimani.[1] Now the *Herodias* was, as a fact, in Venice in 1666. It figures in an inventory drawn up in that year, of pictures included in Nicolò Renier's lottery, from which it no doubt passed to the Grimani.[2]

Among the pictures in this inventory we find another attributed to Correggio: "A nude figure of the Saviour seated upon a rainbow, and surrounded by a glory of angels."

This entry raises the question of another lost work of Correggio's.

On the high altar of the oratory of Santa Maria della Misericordia there was once a triptych, the central panel of which represented Christ the Redeemer, the left wing St. John the Baptist, and the right wing St. Bartholomew. On this triptych Siro of Austria, the last prince of Correggio, cast longing eyes in 1612, and he eventually struck a bargain for it with the prior and syndic of the fraternity. In December of the same year it was valued by Giacomo Borboni, an artist of Novellara: "Having diligently examined and considered them to the satisfaction of my conscience, I value the said three figures at one hundred great ducats of eight *lire* each . . . . . a copy of the said three figures to be given into the bargain."

The compact was sealed. The Correggese protested, and opposed the sale, but Siro or the Brotherhood managed to gain the sanction of the Bishop of Reggio, "by ordinance from Rome," and to complete the necessary preliminaries in the autumn of 1613.[3] Borboni also made a copy, which was duly substituted for the original.

Tiraboschi supposed that Don Siro's collection was taken to Mantua, and that his pictures perished during the sack of the city in 1630. But this was not the case. Robbed of his dominion, which was conferred on Francesco I. of Modena by imperial edict, the prince endeavoured to save as much as possible of his personal property. He invoked the aid of the Lords of Novellara, begging them to receive his pictures by Correggio, and take charge of them for him. They were formally handed over in June, 1635. But when Don Siro, who came back to Mantua nine years later, claimed his own again, the Lords of Novellara turned a deaf ear to his demand. A second appeal was no more successful, and the unlucky Siro died at Mantua on October 25, 1645, without having recovered his property.

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[1] Pungileoni, i. p. 58; ii. p. 96, and iii. p. 274. Martini, *Studi intorno al Correggio*, p. 72. Meyer, p. 402.

[2] *Ordini e regole stabilite dagli Ill. Sig. proveditori di comun li* 8 *dicembre*, 1666, *in materia d' un lotto di quadri . . . di Nicolò Ranieri.*

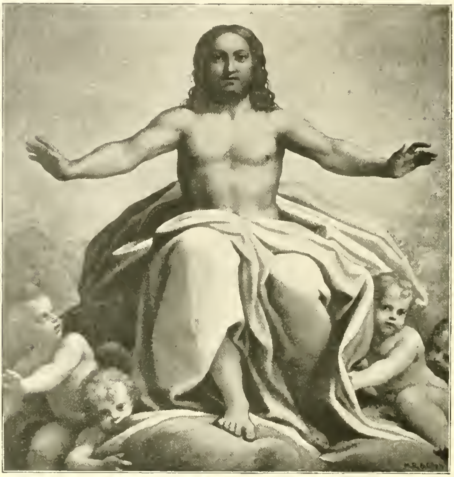
[3] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 255. Pungileoni, i. pp. 50–55; ii. p. 82 *et seq. Intorno a una pittura del Correggio rappresentante San Giovanni esistente in Bologna* (*Memorie originali italiane risguardanti le belle arti, raccolte da M. A. Gualandi*), series ii., p. 163 *et seq.* Bologna, 1841. Bigi, *op. cit.* p. 45. Martini, *Studi*, p. 67. Meyer, pp. 100 and 375.

From this point onward the history of the triptych becomes hopelessly involved. Every attempt to trace it is baffled by a mass of contradictory statements and bewildering inaccuracies. The uncertainty as to the subject of the central panel, which is variously stated to have represented God the Father and Christ the Redeemer, and the numerous copies of the *St. John*, many of which passed as the original, and were entered as such in catalogues, have combined to weave a web of difficulties which it is no longer possible to disentangle, failing the originals which might have served as a clue.

Of the *St. Bartholomew* nearly every trace has disappeared. The central panel was long supposed to be identical with a Christ seated upon the clouds, with extended arms, and surrounded by angels, known as the *Umanità di Cristo*, or *Christ, the Son of Man*, which Count Marescalchi of Bologna, Napoleon I.'s minister, bought from one Giuseppe Armano, a picture-dealer. It appears to have been claimed by the pontifical government, and brought back from France to the Vatican, where it has remained since 1832. It is, however, a late work of the Bolognese school, coarse in execution, heavy and hot in the shadows, with little gradation of tones throughout. Morelli and Meyer correctly assign it to the school of the Carracci, and Mündler suggests Annibale rather than Lodovico as its author, on the grounds that Annibale's colour was brighter and more delicate, and that he is known to have copied many of Correggio's works. It may indeed be a copy of the central figure in Don Siro's triptych, by Annibale Carracci.

Count Marescalchi told Pungileoni in a letter written in 1815 that Armano had bought it from the Gritti family in Venice, who stated that it was originally in the Renier collection. It seems evident, therefore, that this was the *Nude Figure of the Saviour seated on a Rainbow* of the lottery of 1666.

The territory of Novellara remained in the possession of the Gonzaga family till the death of Count Filippo in 1728, when it was declared the property of the Emperor. Charles VI., however, ceded it to Rinaldo, Duke of Modena, in compensation for a large sum of money he owed to the duke. The collection of pictures in the castle passed to Count Filippo's sister, Maria Ricciarda, wife of Alderano Cibo, Duke of Massa. She seems, however, to have cared little for the legacy, perhaps because her home was a long way from Novellara.



COPY OF CORREGGIO'S REDEEMER, BY ONE OF THE CARRACCI
In the Vatican.

The pictures were left in the castle, and the collection was rifled from time to time, notably in 1770, when it was removed on the sale of the castle to the commune by Francesco III.

A few of the pictures still remained in Novellara, however, at the time of the French invasion, and here, in the year 1797, one Panelli bought a figure of St. John the Baptist holding a cross, which eventually passed into the hands of Dr. Giuseppe Bianconi of Bologna.[1] Meyer questions its identity with the St. John Baptist of the triptych for a variety of reasons, but mainly because it appeared among the Novellara pictures without the companion figures of the Saviour, and St. Bartholomew; because the catalogue of the Gonzaga collection in which it figures was compiled, he says, *before* Don Siro of Austria made his deposit, and finally, because this catalogue records the price of the picture, showing that the Gonzaghi bought it, and had not received it in trust. Unfortunately, there is nothing conclusive in these arguments. The price entered in the catalogue is not the sum given for the picture, but the valuation, usual and necessary in every inventory of goods, however acquired. The catalogue, again, was not compiled before 1635, the date of Siro's deposit, but after the death of Filippo in 1728.[2] Lastly, we see no reason why the *St. John* of the triptych should not have been bereft of its companion figures. The triptych, as we gather from various documents, was always in three parts, held together by a frame, which Siro, no doubt, left in the church for Borboni's copy.

But though Meyer's arguments do not convince us that Professor Bianconi's *St. John Baptist* was never part of the lost triptych, we have, on the other hand, no positive proof that it was. All that research has been able to establish with any certainty is, that a picture of the saint was once at Novellara, that there it was bought by a certain Panelli, and that it descended from him to Professor Bianconi.

The disputed work may indeed be a copy from the original, for a great many were made besides the one executed by Borboni at

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[1] *Intorno a una pittura del Correggio*, quoted above.

[2] Gius. Campori, *Inventari e cataloghi*, pp. 638–639.

Siro's command. Our reproduction is from an engraving by Colombini, after a copy which was in the Marchese Alfonso Tacoli Canacci's collection in the eighteenth century. As usual, it claimed to be the original.[1]

Be this as it may, it will at least give us some idea of the lost triptych. The exaggerated length of the figure here reproduced seems to us almost a conclusive proof that it originally formed part of some such composition, for it is impossible to suppose that the painter would have chosen this high, narrow form for a picture, unless it had been one of a series, adapted to architectural exigencies.[2]

In conclusion, we must regretfully acknowledge that it is impossible to evolve any very definite idea from this confusion of evidences. It seems but too probable that no portion of the original triptych has survived.

To the works we have now enumerated as painted by Correggio after his return from Mantua, and before his removal to Parma, historians add certain others, which he is supposed to have executed outside his native city, during brief sojourns at Carpi, at Novellara, and at Albinea, a spot not far from Reggio. The Albinea picture is the only one of which we have any definite history, but, as we shall see, Allegri painted it in Correggio, and must have taken it to Albinea on its completion. Relying on existing records of a picture attributed to Correggio representing the Virgin and Child with Saints, in the church of San Nicolò at Carpi, Tiraboschi, after confusing this picture in a curious manner with the Franciscan altar-piece at Dresden, continues thus: "It seems certain that our Antonio made occasional sojourns at Carpi, for among the attesting witnesses to a deed executed at Carpi, January 19, 1512, we find Antonio Corrigio."[1] The argument he advances is scarcely worth discussion. Who can say how many citizens of Correggio, bearing the very common name, Antonio, may have visited the neighbouring town of Carpi from time to time? As the document makes no mention of the witness' surname, his father's name, nor his profession, it serves no practical purpose whatever.

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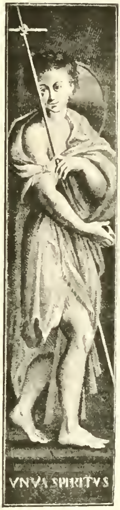
[1] *Catalogue raisonné des tableaux de A. Tacoli Canacci à Florence*, p. 65. Parma, 1796.

[2] Signor Enrico Cattini, of Correggio, owns another *St. John the Baptist*, identical in all respects with the above, which he bought in 1885 from Signor Napoleone Vernizzi. He is of opinion that it is the original, and is supported in this belief by several artists. See Alberto Borciani, *Per un quadro attribuito al Correggio*. Reggio-Emilia, 1890. We have examined the picture most carefully, but it is in such a wretched condition that we found it impossible to form an opinion. A *St. John* at Carzeto di Soragna has also been ascribed to Correggio, but connoisseurs recognise in it the hand of Parmigianino. Pungileoni, i. p. 53.



ST. JOHN BAPTIST
PANEL FROM CORREGGIO'S
LOST TRIPTYCH

Again, there are no direct evidences of Allegri's traditional sojourn in the castle of Novellara, where he is supposed to have worked between 1515 and 1518. We have already touched on this point, which it will be well to examine a little more closely here.

In Vincenzo Davolio's *Memorie storiche di Novellara*, a manuscript preserved in the Casa Fabrici, the following passage occurs: "Within the castle, the munition and the chambers of the great tower were altered and improved, and afterwards adorned with paintings by Master Antonio, Master Latino, and two young men, all of Correggio; this we learn from the account books, and, among others, from the toll-book of the inn at Novellara, where under section AA, No. 3, in an entry referring to the estate of Giovanni Antonio dei Savi di Bagnolo, host of the market-inn at Novellara, for which he paid an annual rent of twenty gold ducats, the following appears on page 171: *Item due according to a list of* 1514, *which was not approved, scudi* 2 . 12 . 0 *for lodging Masters Antonio and Latino, the painters, and their followers.*" This is repeated several times afterwards. These two painters were employed by Caterina Torelli, the widow of Gian Pietro Gonzaga. Among the rooms they painted was a cabinet for Costanza da Correggio, the bride of Alessandro

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[1] *Op. cit.*, vi. p. 257.

Gonzaga.[1] Now the very phraseology of these old documents themselves first caused us to question the assumption that Correggio was one of the painters mentioned. They speak of Master Antonio, Master Latino, and *two young men.* Such a description could hardly have been applied to the latter as distinguishing them from Correggio in 1514, when he himself was only twenty. The inference clearly is that "Master Antonio" was a man of mature age, and what more probable than that the painter in question was Antonio Bartolotti of Correggio, who was then accounted one of the best artists of the neighbourhood, and who had a studio and numerous pupils and assistants?

The various payments made in the course of the next four years, and recorded in the documents examined by Davolio, show that a large portion of the castle was restored and decorated, and that the work was a long and laborious one. But it was just at this time that Correggio was engaged on several important works in his own city, such as the *Madonna of San Francesco*, the *Repose in Egypt*, the triptych of the *Redeemer*, and the *Madonna of Albinea*.

But, it will be objected, how are we to set aside the direct evidence of the *Ganymede* painted by Correggio in a little room of the ground floor—the boudoir, in fact, prepared for Donna Costanza?

Davolio describes the decoration of this cabinet as follows: "It represented a bower or arbour, divided into three sections on each wall by a like number of terms or caryatids; the faces of some of these are still perfectly fresh and mellow; each was the portrait of a youthful person of the day. Around and between these on every side spreads a marvellous trellis of vines, tree-trunks, branches, leaves, and fruit of every sort, fresh, glowing, and life-like, rendered with infinite variety of perspective. In the middle of the vault, the trellis seems to open, showing the sky above, and Jupiter, in mantle, crown, and sceptre, seated upon the eagle, who spreads his wings for flight, bearing with him Ganymede. The youth clings to the eagle's neck with one arm; the rest of his body is entwined between the legs and wings of the bird. In the highest part of the sky appears a goddess in a little car drawn by white doves. The whole is foreshortened in Correggio's well-known manner; the colours are so vivid and natural that the work might have been completed only a few years ago. Some genii, also much foreshortened, are ranged round the edge of the opening, and hang over the head of the spectator, who is tempted to catch them by the legs, so boldly do they stand out from the vault."

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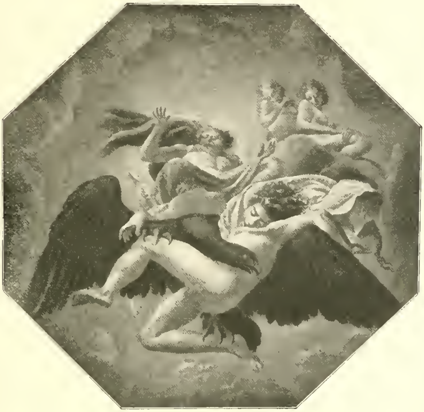
[1] Bigi, *op. cit.* p. 9. Celestino Malagoli, *Memorie storiche su Lelio Orsi*, p. 10. Guastalla, 1892.

It is upon this central medallion, accordingly, that the burden of proof devolves. Here we have the "artistic document" which should convince us that the "Antonio" who painted Costanza's bower between 1515 and 1518 was not Bartolotti, but Allegri. Fortunately, this fragment of the fresco has survived. It was transferred to canvas in 1845 by a certain Giovanni Rizzoli della Pieve di Cento, at Duke Francesco IV.'s command, and is preserved in the gallery at Modena.[1]



GANYMEDE. FRAGMENT OF A FRESCO, IN THE MODENA GALLERY.

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[1] Malagoli, *op. cit.*, p. 10. Ad. Venturi, *Galleria estense*, p. 438.

To say that it is in Correggio's manner seems to us a sufficiently grave critical error; but to class it among the master's juvenile works argues an absolute incapacity for critical appreciation of any sort. Meyer, followed by other writers, saw that it was impossible to make the evidences of the work itself and of the documents relating to it agree. He accordingly assigned it to the year 1530 approximately, believing he recognised in it Correggio's later manner, and a certain affinity with the frescoes in the cupola of Parma Cathedral.[1]

It is unquestionably by a painter who had studied Correggio, but of one who had also studied Giulio Romano, more especially in the works executed by the latter at the Palazzo del Te at Mantua, between 1532 and 1534. In these we note an idiosyncrasy which is exactly reproduced in the Jove and the two goddesses of the Modena roundel. This is a proclivity for effects of foreshortening in figures turned full to the spectator, or sinking, in profile, the head turned over the shoulder. Of such effects (the most facile of all) Giulio made an excessive use, whereas Correggio avoided them as much as possible. The figure of Ganymede, again, is awkward and contorted, reminding us of nothing so much as of the triple legs in the arms of Sicily! This contortion of a figure in profile is simply the device of an artist who was unable to master the difficulties of a real foreshortening. Note, too, the manner in which the head is attached to the torso, and the peculiar character of the hands, not a single one of which throughout the fresco is modelled as are Correggio's hands in his last and greatest frescoes. Compare the masterly treatment of hair in Correggio's authentic works with the shock head of the *Ganymede*, and the general tone of colour with Allegri's transparent, pearly tints.

We are only concerned here to show that the fresco is not by Correggio. But were we called upon to substitute the name of some other artist in place of his, we should confidently suggest that of Lelio Orsi of Novellara, who was born in 1511, and died in 1587. Other works of his have been from time to time ascribed to Correggio, among them the mural frescoes removed from the summer villa of the

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[1] Meyer, pp. 242 and 355. Martini, p. 301. Venturi, *op. et loc. cit.*

Gonzaghi in this same district, and now in the possession of a lady named Gerard, at Wiesbaden.[1]

Not only is Lelio known to have worked industriously in his native district for the Gonzaghi, and to have imitated Correggio : between his best authenticated works and this *Ganymede* there are undeniable affinities, both in sentiment and technique.

We may therefore conclude that among all the wanderings imputed to Correggio by his biographers, the only journey duly attested is that to Albinea.

Let us endeavour to trace the history of the picture he painted for the church of this little settlement, with the help of certain memoirs, and some original documents belonging to the parish.

Albinea[2] lies some few kilometres from Reggio, on the slope of one of the hills which follow the main ridge of the Apennines to the right of the wide valley of the Po. A house of some size, and a little church, which has been rebuilt several times, but which existed in the eleventh century, rise tranquilly in its midst.

The chroniclers tell us that Correggio came here between 1517 and 1518 to paint a picture for the parishioners ; they also repeat a legend noted in one of the papers referred to, that the parish paid the artist thirty *soldi* a day as salary, that the church provided canvas and colours, and that the arch-priest, Giovanni Guidotto di Roncopò, gave the painter food and lodging. A letter recently discovered in the Reggian archives[3] fixes the date at which the picture was begun, but further shows that Correggio painted it in his native city. This letter, dated May 12, 1517, is from the arch-priest to one Alessandro Malaguzzi of Reggio, begging him to write to Correggio, and persuade him to execute the work in the manner already suggested by Malaguzzi, to ensure its durability, always providing the picture were not already so far advanced as to make alterations impossible. He makes a further vague allusion to some picture of the Magdalen, of which we can find no other trace. On October 14, 1519, the priest was in Correggio, when he made a final payment of four ducats to the painter, and obtained from him a receipt in full for all charges connected with the altar-piece.[1]

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[1] Henry Thode, *Lelio Orsi e gli affreschi del "Casino di Sopra" presso Novellara* (*Archiv. storico delle arte*, iii. p. 366 *et seq.* Rome, 1891). Readers will find many points of resemblance between the *Ganymede* medallion and the frescoes reproduced in Thode's study.

[2] Also called Bineia and Benelia.

[3] *Archivio storico dell' arte*, p. 90. Rome, 1888.

The picture remained in the church until 1647, in which year it was taken away "with violence" by the public representatives of the commune of Albinea, and consigned to Duke Francesco I., who had "shown an inclination for it."

The sequel was as follows. The representatives had first signified the Duke's wishes to the priest (one Claudio Ghidini), giving him to understand that they would pay the price of the picture to the church. The priest resisted sturdily, standing on the rights of the commune over the work. Finally, he gave vent to his wrath in round terms, freely expressing his opinion of the Duke's spoliations. His words were repeated by certain "malicious and godless persons" to Francesco, who lodged a complaint with the Bishop of Reggio, a member of the Coccapani family. The supple and obsequious prelate cited the poor priest to appear before him at Reggio, where he kept him in durance for seven long months. The picture was meanwhile carried off *armata manu* to Modena, and a copy, supplied by the serviceable Jean Boulanger, was placed over the altar in its stead.

The Duke, however, with somewhat questionable generosity, insisted that the church should receive compensation for the loss; and ordered that a sum of 7,494 Modenese *lire* he claimed from the commune of Albinea should be devoted to this purpose. It is clear that he waived his own rights to this levy, knowing very well that the commune would never have discharged the debt, and equally clear that the commune, for its part, was most anxious to give him the picture, and free itself by this convenient means from any further pressure on the subject of payments, hoping, perhaps, that when the bargain was once concluded there would be no further trouble on either side.

The affair, however, was not so easily disposed of, and, far from resolving itself thus amicably, the quarrel was prolonged for over a century.

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[1] Pungileoni, ii. p. 109 *et seq.*

In reply to the continued importunities of the priest, the commune declared itself unable to discharge the debt in full, and at last agreed to pay an interest of five per cent. on the sum claimed. Even this compromise it was very slow to carry out, and no payments were in fact made until 1671.

In this year the church was rebuilt, and the new priest (a certain Muzzi) succeeded in making good his claim, and forced the commune to bear part of the expense of the work.

Various documents show that he then proceeded to insist on disgorgement of the capital, intending to invest the money, and thus provide an income for the church, which was entirely without possessions. The commune, protesting and declaring its inability to hand over the lump sum, nevertheless averted law-suits and excommunications, first by finding the money for a silver pyx and monstrance, then by providing a thousand Modenese *lire* for the purchase of a Madonna of the Rosary, and a throne upon which to carry her in processions; finally, in 1687, worn out by the threats and assaults of the stubborn priest, it made up its mind to the heroic measure of levying a tax upon all its agricultural possessions. A sum of 6,460 Modenese *lire* was thus painfully amassed. In 1691, however, a band of German soldiers was billeted upon the district, and to meet this expense, the commune had recourse to their little hoard, after the dissipation of which they made no further attempt to pay either principal or interest.

CHURCH OF ALBINEA.

Again there were wrathful denunciations from the priest, and suddenly the commune was formally excommunicated! In vain they petitioned the Pope for moral and material absolution in 1706. The answer from Rome was that "the Bishop of Reggio would only grant absolution when the debt had been discharged in full"!

This, of course, had greatly increased, each successive priest having added the unpaid interest to the principal. Repugnant as it was to the representatives to continue living under the ban, they could find no means of salvation. In 1732 they at last bethought themselves of a certain claim the community had against the Modenese tribunal for lodging furnished, and payments made on its behalf. A part of this claim they decided to make over to the church, on condition that *full absolution should be assured them.* They thus made a practical retort to the trick Francesco I. had played them after carrying off the picture. The arch-priest accepted the terms "with the approval of his superiors," and Rinaldo d'Este gave orders for the necessary payments. The church, however, was fated to lose on this occasion! The whole negotiation was broken off by a sudden call to arms, and the wars in which Modena was shortly afterwards involved. Once more the arch-priest returned to the charge, demanding from the commune, which still groaned under the Papal ban, a greatly increased sum "forasmuch as they had misapplied church funds."

How was this interminable wrangle at last settled?

Among the papers we have examined we find a petition to the executive of the Modenese tribunal, in which the arch-priest "appeals with all humility to their Christian piety, begging them to give orders that the claims of the church be satisfied without further delay, he, their suppliant, desiring to repair it, and pay various unavoidable debts that had been incurred in its maintenance, the said church being destitute of all property and revenue save such as is derived from charity."

When this appeal also proved fruitless, humility was changed to anger. In a document of 1741, the sum, which has now risen to 15,827 Modenese *lire*, is demanded in such terms as these: "no laws, human nor divine, can annul the rights of the poor church, betrayed and assassinated by her own children." The community (this is the final cry !) " will never receive absolution at the tribunal of God ! " But the great absolver and liberator in this case was the French Revolution !

In some of the papers from which we have quoted, Correggio's picture is described as *The Birth of the Virgin.* This has induced some writers to reject the general testimony as to the subject of the work, which declares it to have been a *Virgin and Child between St. Lucy and the Magdalen.* Meyer, among others, says the picture was known ever since 1647 as a *Birth of the Virgin*, and that not even a copy has survived.[1]

It must now be pointed out that the documents which give this designation to the work also follow the story of the quarrel between the arch-priest, the Duke, and the community down to the year 1647, and that they themselves are of considerably later date. The picture was, in fact, a Madonna and Child between St. Lucy and the Magdalen. The error of the later description arose, no doubt, from the fact that the church was dedicated to the *Birth of the Virgin.* The name of the temple was confused with the subject of the painting.

We think it will be possible to establish this by recent and valuable discoveries. During the war which Ottavio Farnese made upon the Duke of Ferrara in 1557 at the instigation of Philip II. of Spain, he besieged and took many of the Reggian fortresses. Canossa fell on October 11, Borzano on November 15, Scandiano and Dinazzano on the following day. On December 4 he went to the Quattro Castella, whence he threatened Albinea, which he took on December 30, after an obstinate battle, in which over a thousand combatants were left on the field. Every victory was in those days followed up by fire and pillage, and the men of Albinea, knowing they could not hold out much longer, had made a determined effort to save their most precious possessions. Three days before Farnese's entry, they conveyed their picture to Reggio, to be preserved till safer times. "On the twenty-seventh day," says a contemporary chronicle, " the Chapter of San Prospero and the Beatines of San Rocco went to meet the deputation from Albinea, who brought their *Madonna* to San Rocco." [1] Now this description of the picture evidently implies that the Virgin was the dominant figure of the composition, and we cannot suppose her to have played the subordinate part she necessarily does in pictures representing the episode of her birth.

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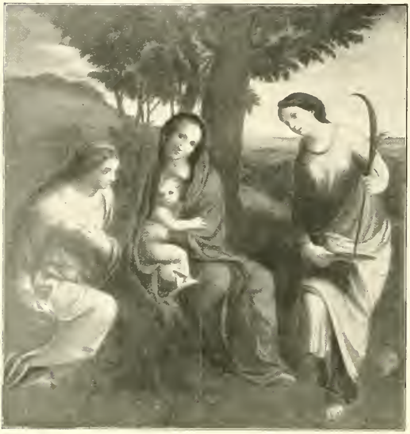
[1] Meyer, pp. 87 and 109. See also Pungileoni, i. pp. 70, 71, and 94 ; ii. pp. 108–113. *Nuovo diario sacro istoriografo reggiano*, p. 106. Reggio, 1825. Paolo Ottavi, *Due quadri del Correggio* (*Atti e memorie delle R. R. Deputazioni di storia patria modenesi e parmensi*, i. p. 112. Modena, 1863). Martini, pp. 62, 70,and Bigi, p. 51, etc.

Subsequent events prove that the Madonna returned in safety to her altar. We know that Francesco I. found her there, and that he removed her, substituting Boulanger's copy. Now this copy was fixed into the florid *baroque* stucco ornament with which the church was decorated at its restoration, and has remained there ever since, as various documents bear witness. It still exists, though in a ruinous condition.



COPY OF THE ALBINEA MADONNA, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Brera, Milan.

The Virgin sits under a clump of trees, supporting the Child in her arms. To the right stands St. Lucy, her eyes on a plate in one hand, in the other the palm of martyrdom. On the opposite side is St. Mary Magdalen, the box of ointment in her right hand, her left hand upon her breast. The background represents a hill, beyond which lies a wide plain.

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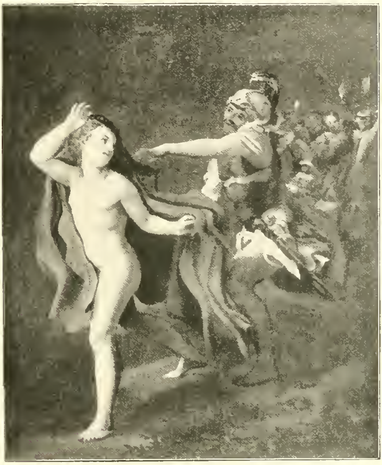
[1] I. Malaguzzi, *Alcune cose tratte dai diari reggiani di Alfonso Visdomini* (Reggio, 1881. *Per nozze Fornaciari, Valentini*). We owe this information to Professor N. Campanini.

The picture is unmistakably a copy after Correggio. Even Meyer was obliged to admit this, though he believed the original altar-piece to have represented the birth of the Virgin. The facial types, the folds of the draperies, the character of the composition, the attitudes, the landscape, all point to a work executed by Correggio at the same period in which he painted the *Repose in Egypt* in the Uffizi, and the *Zingarella* of the Naples Museum. Two other copies of the work are still extant: one in the Campidoglio Gallery at Rome, the other in the Brera at Milan.[1] In the latter, the original signature on a stone at St. Lucy's feet is reproduced: ANTONIVS LAETVS FACIEBAT. That Correggio habitually latinised his name in this fashion we know from documents to which we shall refer later on.



THE YOUNG MAN FLEEING FROM THE CAPTORS OF CHRIST

Copy, after Correggio. In the Parma Gallery.

The reproduction of this signature caused certain writers to uphold the copy as the original. Otto Mündler among others expressed this opinion, though it ran directly counter to the reasonable and unanimous conclusions of Morelli, Frizzoni, and Meyer.[2]

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[1] Ad. Venturi, *La Galleria del Campidoglio*, p. 39. Rome, 1890. G. B. Venturi mentions another copy in his own possession, of which he gives a reproduction. See his *Storia di Scandiano*, pp. 129–130. Modena, 1882.

[2] *Correggio*, p. 87.

The original has disappeared entirely, like the original of the *Young Man fleeing from the Captors of Christ.* The latter was in the Barberini Gallery in the seventeenth century, and went from thence to England, where we lose all trace of its subsequent history.[1]

Several copies of this, as of the Albinea picture, are still extant, however, and more than suffice to exclude it from the list of Correggio's juvenile works.[2]

It is strange that the free and vigorous modelling of the nude in this picture, the type and expression of the young man's face, the broad and flowing treatment of the folds in his crimson mantle, the dramatic animation of the soldier's figure, and the unconventional nature of the whole composition should not have prevented a sound critic like Meyer from describing it as a work of about the year 1512. It cannot have been painted before 1518, and was probably of later date.

St. Mark the Evangelist introduces the following episode in his account of the capture of Christ: "And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked." This episode furnishes the motive of the main group. In the background, Judas approaches the Saviour and kisses him, and St. Peter cuts off Malchus' ear.

The first part of our study may fittingly be brought to a close here. At this point in his career Correggio changed his field of action, and, strong in knowledge and experience, triumphantly asserted his conquest of a purely individual style. His manner of life, however, was unchanged. It was a life dedicated to work and meditation, without dramatic incidents, and free from moral upheavals. He was good and honest, and lived modestly among his kindred, absorbed in his art. No audacious, heroic, or evil enterprises, no violent and unlawful passion, no catastrophes such as we read of in the biographies of Michelangelo and Benvenuto Cellini, for instance, throw a ray of light, though but a sinister one, upon his path.

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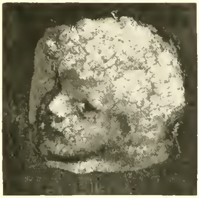
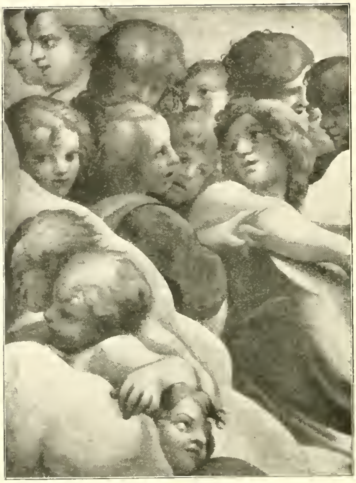
[1] Mengs, ii. p. 175. Tiraboschi, vi. p. 284. Lanzi, *op. et loc. cit.* Pungileoni, i. p. 25; ii. p. 39. Meyer, p. 89.

[2] Some of these are mentioned by Meyer, pp. 394 and 419. There is one in the Parma Gallery (No. 524), which was acquired with the Rosa-Prati Collection. One, attributed to Lelio Orsi, was in the Roumegous Collection. (See the catalogue printed at Parma in 1804.) Another was presented to the Academy of Arts of that city in 1855 as a work of the Bolognese school. *MSS. Minutes of the Academy*, vi. p. 87.

This redounds indeed to Correggio's honour. But his very virtues increase the difficulties of the biographer, who has to weave the web of his history, and inquire into his psychological structure without the help of anecdote and episode.



FRAGMENT OF FRESCO, BY CORREGGIO.
Mr. L. Mond, London.

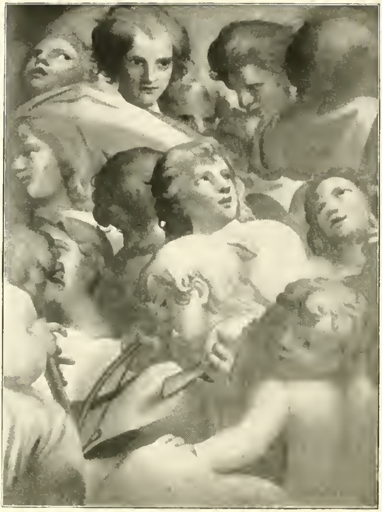


FRESCO IN SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, BY A. CARRACCI, AFTER CORREGGIO.

In the Parma Gallery.

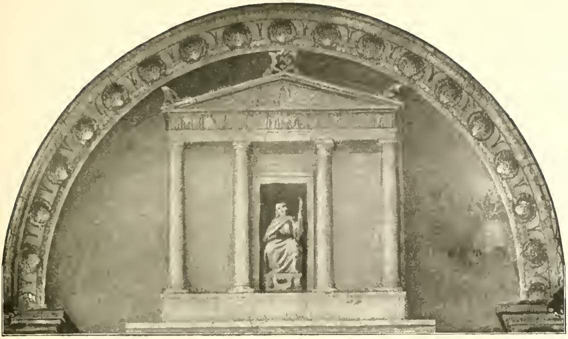
II

CORREGGIO AT PARMA



FRESCO IN SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA BY A. CARRACCI, AFTER CORREGGIO.

In the Parma Gallery

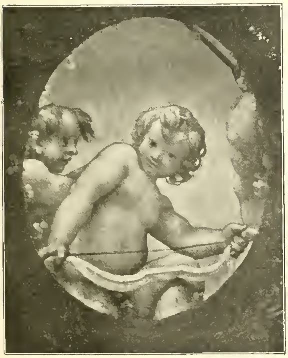


THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER VIII

THE CAMERA DI SAN PAOLO

PARMA—ARTISTS WHO FLOURISHED THERE BEFORE CORREGGIO—CORREGGIO AT PARMA—THE CONVENT OF SAN PAOLO AND THE ROOM DECORATED BY CORREGGIO—GIOVANNI PIACENZA AND SCIPIONE MONTINO—"DIANA"—"THE MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE"—THE "MADONNA SUCKLING THE CHILD" (KNOWN AS THE "MADONNA DEL LATTE"), "THE MADONNA WITH THE BASKET" ("MADONNA DELLA CESTA"), AND THE "VIRGIN ADORING THE INFANT CHRIST."



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

AFTER Bologna, Parma is the largest of the cities which rise along the splendid highway constructed by the Consul Marcus Emilius Lepidus between Rimini and Piacenza.

Traversed by this artery, through which the tide of life has always flowed strongly, the city boasts a varied and animated history, bright with many glorious pages.

When the Italian spirit awoke

from its trance, and shook off the long oppression of the eleventh century, our city was the first to produce an artist, who, thirsting for new ideals, turned away from the meagre forms of the Byzantine tradition, and strove to render the fairer and more genial conceptions of renascent art. This Benedetto Antelami, who still awaits his rightful place in the history of art, was the forerunner of Nicola Pisano, and inaugurated the new era in Italian sculpture.[1]

It was he who built and decorated the wonderful baptistery at Parma, and adorned the façade of the cathedral at Borgo San Donnino with sculptures.

Just as Antelami strove to put new life into the rigid marble, so did Fra Salimbene seek to portray living facts and persons in his chronicles of the times. These he informed with a vivacity unknown to earlier writers, whose records have for the most part to be dug out from a load of barbarous Latin, and tedious philosophical digressions. In Fra Salimbene's pages, we look on a picture of the thirteenth century more complete than any we can reconstruct from official documents of the period. The emergence of the social spirit from the dark dungeon of superstition and horror, and its return to joy and freedom; the rise of the various sodalities, formed at first to counterbalance the tyranny of the nobility, but degenerating after a time into mere associations of boon-companions and swashbucklers; the civil and religious feuds, the mixture of worldly subtlety and extravagant mysticism in the intellectual life of the day—all these things are living realities for us in Fra Salimbene's book, one of the most curious and important in our literature.

Simultaneously with the revival in art and letters, a great scientific development took place in Parma, whose schools produced students like Giovanni Buralli, better known as Fra Giovanni of Parma, the famous professor of the old University of Paris, and Bartolomeo of Parma, the author of various astronomical works, and "one of the clearest and most sagacious intellects of Italy in the thirteenth century."[1]

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[1] G. B. Toschi is the author of an excellent study on B. Antelami's sculptures at Borgo San Donnino, in the *Archivio storico delle arti*, i. p. 14 *et seq.*, but a fuller monograph is much needed.

Painting, too, has a venerable and continuous history in Parma, tracing its origin to one Everardo, who laboured there in 1068. From this time forward, as we know from the wall-paintings in the baptistery the cathedral, and various other churches, to say nothing of contemporary records, Parma boasts a long series of painters. It cannot be said, however, that she owned an individual school before the time of Correggio. Her art was not even distinguished, like that of Bologna, by the predominance of a special type, which in the case of the latter, culminated in the school of Francia. Parma, though she owned many excellent painters, showed an over-eclectic tendency,

CATHEDRAL AND BAPTISTERY, PARMA

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[1] Giovanni Mariotti, *Memorie e documenti per la storia della Università di Parma nel Medioevo.* Parma, 1888.

and this lack of æsthetic concentration delayed the formation of a characteristic style, and prevents her from figuring prominently in the early history of art.

Her geographical position was perhaps not the least among the determining causes of this result. Ferrarese and Bolognese influences reached her in a somewhat languid condition, contending as they did against Lombard activity, and more especially against the mediocre form it had assumed in Cremona; they were further counteracted by the strong and sudden influx of Venetian tendencies.

Whereas, on the one hand, no Ferrarese artist is known to have laboured in Parma during the second half of the fifteenth century, while Modena is represented by one Bartolomeo Roseto, and Reggio by one Giacomo Antonio, the names of many Lombards are recorded in her annals, among them Francesco Boltraffio, painter, Lorenzo, engineer, Antonio d'Agrate, sculptor, all of Milan; Antonio Fasolo, engineer, of Piacenza; Giacomo Rovazzi, of Borgo San Donnino, and Giovanni of Pavia, both painters.

But, as we have said, the influence which predominated in Parma until 1490 was that of the Cremonese school. The Parmesans had an evident predilection for works executed in Cremona, or by artists they summoned from Cremona to their own city. So early as April, 1358, one Francesco Frigeri of Parma ordered an *Entombment* from Cremona, with figures carved in wood. This work was long preserved in the crypt of Parma Cathedral. After 1450 we find Francesco Tacconi[1] and Benedetto Bembo, the painters, Aguccio and Maffeo Bagarotti, the engineers, Tommaso Sacchi, the carver, all of Cremona, established in the city.[2] Cremonese, too, were the artists who decorated the castles of Parma. Many notable evidences of their activity still remain to us, notably in the fortresses of Torchiara and Roccabianca, built by Pier Maria Rossi.

A few natives of Parma belonged indeed to the Ferraro-Bolognese school, but these are either of much later date, like that Lodovico who was one of Francia's scholars, or flourished in alien cities, like Gian Francesco Maineri of Ferrara.[1]

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[1] There is a signed picture by Tacconi in the National Gallery.

[2] E. Scarabelli Zunti, *Documenti e memorie di belle arti parmigiane.* MSS. in the Parma Museum of Antiquities.

Jacopo Loschi, who, although a mediocre artist, flourished in Parma for many years at the head of a large studio, had been trained in the school of Cremona. From him, and perhaps from Tacconi, the elder Mazzoli received their first teaching, although, after the return of Temperelli from Venice, they improved upon the forms and colour thus acquired.

Cristoforo Caselli, called Temperelli, was undoubtedly the best artist who flourished in Parma before the advent of Correggio, and among the best, indeed, of the whole territory. Born about the middle of the fifteenth century, he went to Venice before 1488, to study under Gian Bellini, and remained there for some time after his powers had fully matured. He must have enjoyed a considerable reputation in Venice, for the Signoria invited him to collaborate with Alvise Vivarini, Lattanzio da Rimini, Vincenzo da Treviso, and Francesco Bissolo, in the decorations of the Hall of the Great Council. In 1494 he was still engaged on the frescoes of the Ducal Palace which perished in the fire of 1577, and on other works which added considerably to his fame, so much so, that he was eulogised in his native city by Francesco Maria Grapaldo in his work, *De partibus Aedium*. The deed by which he undertook to paint the *Assembly of the Quick and the Dead* shows him to have been in Parma in the spring of 1496. We do not, however, believe that he settled there at this date. He returned to Venice, where he remained some time longer, probably till late in 1498. It is not until the following year that we find him working in Parma, where he remained until his death in 1521.

Two other artists of Parma whose style was formed in the school of Venice were Giovanni Pietro Zarotti, known only by a single picture of the year 1496, and Josafat Araldi, whose name occurs in two or three documents before 1520, and who is further represented by a most curious picture.

Temperelli, returning from Venice fresh from the study of Bellini and his school, no doubt exercised some influence upon Alessandro

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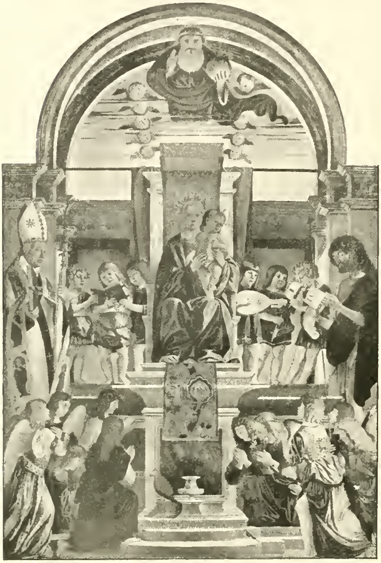
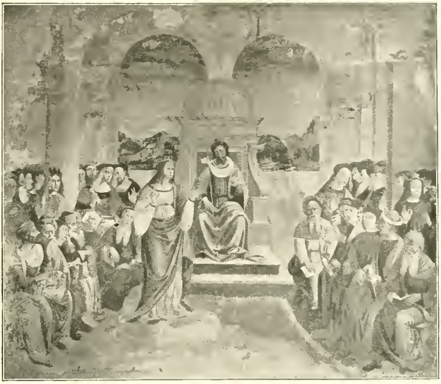
[1] Ad. Venturi, *G. F. de' Maineri* (*Archiv. storic. dell' arte*, i. p. 88.)

Araldi. The latter, who flourished at Parma till 1528, had, indeed, gleaned something from nearly all the famous masters of his day. In the ceiling he painted in the convent of San Paolo, he reproduced compositions by Raphael, Francia, Costa, and others, with very slight variations, and in the chapel of St. Catherine he imitated Pinturicchio. The Parma Gallery possesses a large copy of Leonardo's *Last Supper* by him. He sought inspiration from many sources, endeavouring, with all possible zeal and good-will, to assimilate the new discoveries of art, and keep in touch with the spirit of the times.



VIRGIN ENTHRONED, BY CASELLI-TEMPERELLI.
Formerly in the Consorzio at Parma.

Yet, although these artists and others of less importance did all in their power to maintain the dignity of Parma, the city was dissatisfied. Her sense of humiliation was keen when she saw herself reduced to the practice of forms already obsolete. Stimulated by the consciousness of her mediocre position in this respect, she had an ardent desire for a loftier artistic ideal, and longed to find herself on the same level as the neighbouring cities, Bologna, Ferrara, and Mantua. Parma's attitude at the beginning of the sixteenth century was one of appeal and invocation. Eager for some new development, she stretched out inviting hands, summoning artists within her walls or demanding their works. Francia and Gian Battista Cima responded to her call from Bologna and Venice respectively, bringing her master-pieces of grace and beauty. Cesare da Reggio and Francesco da Cotignola also answered the summons in person; but the two former returned at once to their own cities and workshops, and the two latter she herself had no desire to keep, finding them little superior to her own masters. A brief visit of Leonardo's is recorded in 1514, but he never worked in the city, and historians, Jansen and Milanesi among the number, are mistaken in supposing Sodoma to have been there in 1518.[1]



ST. CATHERINE BEFORE THE DOCTORS, BY ARALDI.

Fresco at Parma.

It is greatly to the credit of Parma that her efforts to win an honourable place for herself in the history of the Renaissance emanated entirely from her citizens. Her dignity was not derived from a powerful family like the Bentivogli, the Estensi, or the Gonzaghi, who sought an added lustre for their famous houses in the patronage of art and letters, but from her commune, her clergy, her religious bodies, and her burghers. This is the more remarkable in view of the frequent changes in her internal polity, and the absence of sustained and equable rule. Forced to rely on her own resources, she was at the height of artistic glory when it had begun to wane in all the neighbouring states.

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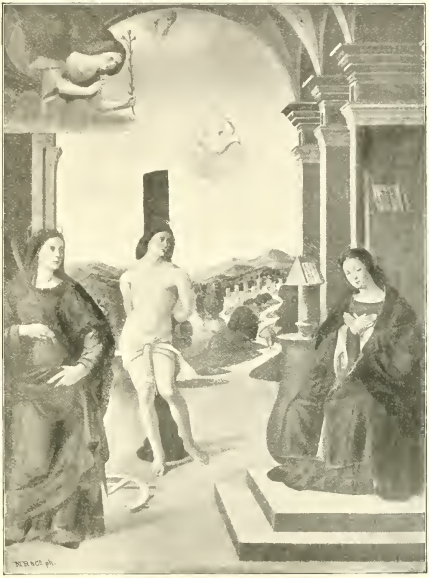
[1] The error arose from a confusion between the famous Vercellian and a humble Parmesan artist of the same name, Giovanni Antonio Bazzi, who is mentioned in contemporary documents as a citizen of Parma, where he was living in 1511 and in 1521, whereas Sodoma is known to have been elsewhere at those dates. See G. Frizzoni, *Arte italiana del Rinascimento*, p. 151. G. Campori, *Gli artisti italiani e stranieri negli stati estensi*, p. 58. E. Scarabelli Zunti, MSS. already quoted.

In 1499 Parma fell into the hands of Louis XII.; it passed, however, to Julius II. in consequence of the league between the Pope and the Emperor Maximilian. On the death of Julius the city became subject to Milan, and afterwards (1513) to Leo X., from whom it was wrested by Francis I. The Pope, assisted by the Emperor Charles V., recovered it in 1521, and appointed Francesco Guicciardini governor. After an interval of some six years, the Connétable de Bourbon swooped down upon it with his ferocious soldiery. The occupation was happily a brief one. Clement VII. reconquered it, and it remained a papal appanage until Pope Paul III. (Farnese) made it a feoff of his own family.

No stable form of government was established, however, until 1545, and Machiavelli tells us that its provisional rulers, uncertain of their tenure, were rather inclined to despoil than to enrich the city. Her citizens, however, faithful to their birthplace, endeavoured to beautify it even in the thick of political reverses. They built the two splendid churches of San Giovanni Evangelista and Santa Maria della Steccata, the architects of which were Bernardino and his son Giovanni Francesco, of Torchiara; they restored the façade of San Sepolcro, rebuilt the Oratory of the Conception in the Franciscan church, enlarged the convents of San Giovanni and San Paolo, and raised a forest of scaffolding around the walls and under the domes of the growing structures to enable painters and sculptors to adorn the whole with ornament and figures.

It was at the moment when the æsthetic enthusiasm was at its height that Correggio came, like some beneficent spirit, to Parma. Little reason indeed is there to lament the fact that he never visited Rome or any other great city! Parma, rising in smiling tranquillity upon her fertile plains, girdled by castles and villages, and looking out upon the vaporous line of hills from which the streams which give her water descend into the champaign, offered our painter not only the serenity that suited his temperament, but a vaster field of activity than had ever been allotted to any artist. There were altar-pieces to be painted, rooms to be decorated; the joyous fancies of his genius were to be allowed ample scope in the decoration of two stately cupolas. What greater opportunities had Michelangelo and Raphael at Rome, Leonardo at Milan, or Titian at Venice?



THE ANNUNCIATION, WITH ST. CATHERINE AND ST. SEBASTIAN, ASCRIBED TO LODOVICO DA PARMA OR TO ARALDI.

In the Parma Gallery.

Biographers differ as to the exact date when Correggio was summoned to Parma. Some say 1518, others 1519. Some, again, declare that the invitation came from the Benedictines of San Giovanni Evangelista, others that it was given by Giovanna Piacenza, the abbess of San Paolo.[1]

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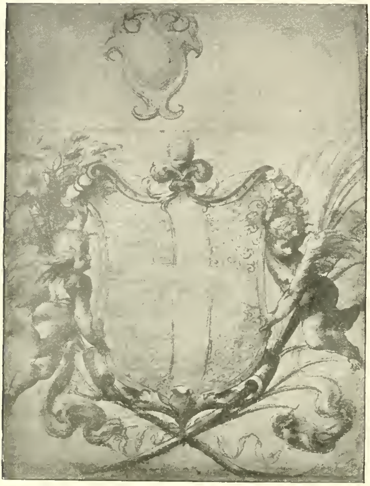
[1] Pungileoni, i. p. 76 *et seq.* Meyer, p. 111. Martini, p. 73. Richter, p. 15 *et seq.* Rondani, *Come visse il Correggio*, p. 45, etc.

We have no positive evidence on either point; but history and a critical examination of the master's work seem alike to lead to the conclusion that Correggio came to Parma in 1518, to work in the convent of San Paolo.

He was in his native city in the spring of 1518. He appears as witness to a deed in January of that year, and acted as sponsor to an infant girl on March 17.[1] Throughout the remaining months we find no mention of him.



COAT OF ARMS OF THE CITY OF PARMA

In the Lille Museum.

Where was he? What was he doing at this time?

The first payments received by Correggio for his frescoes in the church and monastery of San Giovanni Evangelista were made in 1520; they continued at intervals till 1524. Now a comparison of the facial types, the chords of colour, the details of form, and, above all, the technical treatment, in the surviving frescoes of San Giovanni and of San Paolo, prove most conclusively that the latter were executed first. We know that Allegri had many interests in 1519 in his native place, where he certainly spent the greater part of the year; we are therefore inclined to think that he painted the frescoes in the Camera di San Paolo between April and December, 1518; that he returned to

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[1] Pungileoni, ii. pp. 115–116.

Correggio after completing the work, and remained there for a whole year, and that in 1520 he came back to Parma at the invitation of the Benedictines. We know indeed that he was at Correggio on January 18, 1519, where he acted as witness to the deed of settlement by which the dowry of Oliva Chierici was conveyed to Francesco Aromani, his maternal uncle; a fortnight later he received a donation from the same uncle of a house and furniture, in the Borgo Vecchio, with a few acres of land; in September he was present at the drawing up of two deeds by the notary Francesco Alfonso Bottoni; finally, he was at Correggio, as we know, in October, when the archpriest took his receipt for payment of all charges connected with the altar-piece he had painted for the church of Albinea.[1] These various evidences all favour the conjecture that Allegri spent the greater part of the year 1518 at Parma, painting in the convent of San Paolo, and all the following year in Correggio, awaiting fresh commissions. Father Affò and Martini are of opinion that the frescoes were painted in 1518, because the Abbess Giovanna's health gave way in 1519, and she was never able to leave her bedroom, where all convocations of the sisterhood were held, instead of in the choir, or other parts of the convent. "It is therefore highly probable," says Affò, "that the frescoes were completed before this."[2]

CLOISTER OF THE CONVENT OF SAN PAOLO, PARMA

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[1] Pungileoni, ii. pp. 109, 110, 127, and 146.

[2] Ireneo Affò, *Ragionamenti sopra una stanza dipinta da Antonio Allegri da Correggio nel monastero di San Paolo in Parma*, pp. 56–57. Parma, 1794. Martini, p. 76.

The argument is far from conclusive, for the abbess may very well have been lodged in another part of the convent, or she may have kept her bed in the adjoining room, which Araldi had decorated in 1514. The facts we have pointed out are more convincing.

That Allegri was first summoned to Parma for the purpose of painting these frescoes seems to us highly probable in view of the relations subsisting between the city of Correggio and the Cavaliere Scipione Montino della Rosa. This personage, "a very gallant gentleman and lover of the arts," was the abbess's brother-in-law, and the administrator of her affairs. She herself also had acquaintances in Correggio.

Donna Giovanna Piacenza, the daughter of one Marco, a nobleman of Parma, and of Agnese Bergonzi, was appointed abbess of the convent upon the death of her aunt, Orsina Bergonzi, April 25, 1507. She inaugurated her reign by depriving the Garimberti of the administration of the possessions Orsina had confided to their charge, and placing it in the hands of the Cavaliere Scipione. Her action in this matter gave rise to the most atrocious contest, soon taking the form of bloody personal encounters, in one of which a member of the Garimberti family was slain by Scipione. The convent suffered many indignities in consequence of these scandalous proceedings. The ministers of justice, believing Scipione to be in hiding there, insisted on a rigorous search of the building. Nor was this the last of the matter. A contemporary chronicler describes another domiciliary visit in 1516, when the governor of the city, Francesco Torelli, forced the convent gates in the dead of the night, to the great terror and confusion of the startled nuns.

Now this Scipione, the kinsman and *protégé* of Giovanna Piacenza, was, of all the citizens of Parma, the one whose relations with Correggio were then and afterwards most intimate and constant. He, as administrator of the abbess's affairs, commissioned the painter to decorate her room, and, as one of the wardens of the cathedral, entrusted him with the frescoes of the dome and apse. When the painter died, leaving some drawings he was engaged on for the Duke of Mantua unfinished, the duke gave orders that they should be inquired for at Scipione's house, a significant proof of the intimacy between the two.

Pungileoni discovered that in 1502 Nicolò da Correggio appointed his procurator, Bartolomeo Montino, apostolic prothonotary, and one of the witnesses to the renunciation of patronage made by the house of Correggio in the church of Sant' Antonio at Parma. From the baptismal registers of the city we learn that several of the Correggeschi and Montini, Scipione among the number, acted as sponsors to children of the house of Fontanelli, to one of whom the Abbess Giovanna Piacenza appears as godmother on September 16, 1511.[1] The intimate relations maintained by Scipione and the abbess with persons in Correggio, and their frequent visits to the city just at the time when Allegri's youthful genius was manifesting its power, make it more than probable that to them the artist owed his summons to Parma. The Benedictines, again, no doubt invited him to decorate their church after seeing the frescoes in the Camera di San Paolo.

Throughout the first two thirds of the sixteenth century, life in an Italian convent had none of that austerity afterwards enforced by the Council of Trent, nor of the stern asceticism of later times. The frequency with which the blooming daughters of great houses were consigned to these retreats had resulted in the bringing together of clamorous bands of young women, more disposed for the pleasures of life than for mortification and mystic reverie. Their cells, far from being silent and squalid, were adorned with the thousand objects furnished by Renaissance art, and gay with flowers, sunshine, and the sounds of music and song. Love, no unknown visitant among them, was the cause of much sentimental depression and many lively feuds. The sisters lingered at the gratings, diverting themselves with gossip and chatter, receiving surreptitious gifts and messages from without; returning to their rooms to indulge their emotion, as they scanned some amorous sonnet, furtively hidden in their bosoms. But such moments of solitary meditation were brief! Presently the pensive fair one would be summoned to take part in some fresh conversation. Visitors came and went perpetually: fashionable ladies, elegant *abbés*, the music-master, a band of foreign nobles making an inspection of the works of art in all the religious houses of the city. The dull and rigorous silence of the ascetic was unknown. From the various cells came the sounds of the harpsichord, or the lilt of gay madrigals. In the cloisters there was a perpetual buzz of argument, scandal, and laughter provoked by some outburst of jealousy, some affront, some piquant anecdote.

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[1] *Op. cit.* i. p. 75; ii. p. 115. It must also be borne in mind that Oliva Chierici, wife of Francesco Aromani, Correggio's maternal uncle, was a native of Parma.

The world they left did not forget them. Relatives, friends, and admirers loaded them with presents, costly stuffs, perfumed gloves, trinkets, sweetmeats, the works of the poets most in vogue. Lovers as fervent as any who praised the ladies of the outside world lauded their charms. And when passion agitated their hearts, it was whispered that they did not always prove severe.

The reader who supposes the above sketch to be overdrawn is referred to various documents which have come to light dealing with monastic life in Italy during the sixteenth century.[1] The nature and scope of the present work forbid us to dwell on the frivolous or scandalous proceedings which necessitated the intervention of the ecclesiastical and political authorities from time to time, with certain stereotyped results. An inquiry was held, commissioners of surveillance were appointed, the most disorderly and contumacious of the nuns were punished, the whole convent was laid under severe discipline for a month. Then there was a relaxation of the severity, and the culprits returned with new zest to their life of riotous merriment.

The convent of San Paolo at Parma was a typical community of the class we have described, devoted to the arts, accessible to all the pagan seductions of the Renaissance, eager to participate in all the varied life of the day.

We have seen that the nuns were on two occasions surprised by a search-party, on suspicion of harbouring a gallant cavalier!

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[1] *Vita della Madre Felice Rasponi.* Bologna, 1883. A. Borgognoni, *Studi di letteratura storica*, p. 263 *et seq.* Bologna, 1891. Arvède Barine, *Portraits de femmes.* Paris, 1894.

Among the petitions addressed to Julius II. and Leo X. while Parma was under Papal rule, was one praying that the nuns of the city should be compelled to observe their vows of seclusion, and to amend their lax and disorderly manner of life. Discipline was accordingly enforced in the case of some of the convents, but San Paolo remained exempt; and in 1524 the community again petitioned Clement VII. for a decree ordering the claustration of nuns. The sisters of San Paolo resisted and were far from amenable; Monsignor Guidiccioni and other persons of importance were obliged to exert themselves to the utmost to persuade them into at least a semblance of obedience, and thus avoid a public scandal. They would not, however, abate anything of the privileges enjoyed by their abbess, Donna Giovanna Piacenza. It was agreed that future abbesses should be elected and re-elected year by year, but nothing was to be altered as far as she was concerned. Her income, private apartments, and other advantages were retained. The contests, threats, and discussions that resulted from this business must have weighed heavily on the poor abbess, already in bad health, and no doubt hastened her end. She died a few days after August 28, 1524, the date on which the decree enforcing the strict claustration of nuns was solemnly proclaimed.

Knowing what was the manner of life, and what the prevailing tone in this convent, we shall feel no surprise at the abbess's choice of a theme from pagan mythology for the decoration of her private room.

A tesselated pavement laid in another room of the monastery by Maria Benedetti (abbess from 1471 to 1486) was ornamented, not only with figures of gay ladies and cavaliers, but with pierced and flaming hearts and sentimental mottoes such as: *Solo in te spero*, *Rosa*, and *Caro il mio tesoro*.

We can picture to ourselves the arrival of Correggio, a young man of barely twenty-four, at Parma; his entry into the convent, his colloquy with the abbess. She explains that she does not want a decoration of a severely devotional character. Age and infirmities are creeping upon her, and she wishes the evils of these last years to be mitigated as far as possible. Let her see a troop of merry children smiling at her through the woven trellis of her bower! Show her the jocund huntress Diana, and Apollo, Minerva, and the Graces! The work goes on. The sisters gather round the windows in the cloister beyond, anxious to see the frescoes, and perhaps not altogether indifferent to the painter! Ah! if those fair children, sporting so joyously above, could descend, and seek maternal caresses in their arms! The young artist, already encircled by the glamour of fame, looks up, and smiles! The gentle watchers move thoughtfully away.

When the reforming agitation broke out, the Council of Trent, alarmed for the safety of the Church, proceeded to stringent measures for the enforcement of discipline and of religious observances. It became at first difficult, and finally almost impossible, to obtain entrance to the convent, and when communication with the outer world was thus cut off, Correggio's work was almost forgotten. It is strange that the ostentatious asceticism of the seventeenth century should have spared it, and that no stern abbess among the many who succeeded Giovanna should have insisted on obliterating the nudities and divinities of her chamber. Their pride in the possession of such a treasure perhaps prevailed over conscientious scruples.

Brief mentions of its existence were made from time to time, but in a vague and dubious manner. Padre Affò gleaned some scanty notices of the work from writers of the last century, the earliest of these being Padre Maurizio Zappata, the next the anonymous author of the *Nota delle più famose pitture delle chiese di Parma*, printed in 1725,[1] the next Tiraboschi (who relied on a description given him by the painter, Antonio Bresciani), and so on, to Ratti, and later biographers of Correggio.

It is our good fortune to be the first to reproduce the precious testimony of a contemporary witness. In the unpublished *Diario parmigiano* of Smeraldo Smeraldi, a distinguished engineer and mathematician, there is a description of a "Visit to the convent of San

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[1] *Ragionamento*, etc., p. 8 *et seq.* Several monographs have been written on these frescoes. See *Pitture di Antonio Allegri esistenti nel monastero di San Paolo.* Thirty plates, with descriptive text. Parma, 1800. *Descrizione di una pittura di A. A., detto il Correggio.* Bertoluzzi, MS. in the Parma Library, chaps. A.A. ii. 3703.

Paolo," in company with Signor Cesare of Ferrara and others, on August 1, 1598. He writes as follows of Correggio's decorations: "We then went to see the rooms inhabited by the princess, and I was shown the chamber decorated by Master Antonio da Correggio. The vault is painted with a trellis of vines and fruit, interspersed with ovals, containing many lovely children in a great variety of attitudes; the lunettes are decorated with compositions in chiaroscuro; below these is a cornice with a simulated drapery, against which are disposed cups, flagons, and other vessels of silver, all beautifully rendered." [1]

The room is almost square in shape. It is not known how the walls were originally decorated, but they were very probably hung with the so-called "verdure" tapestry. The stone ornament of the three doorways is very elegantly sculptured; the abbess's arms (three crescent moons diagonally disposed) and her initials IO. PL. appear in each of the three friezes, and in one the motto *Omnia virtuti pervia*, a legend, says Affò, by which the abbess entered her protest against the proposed exclusion of strangers from the convent and from her apartments. These doors have been displaced more than once, first about 1560, when a refectory was built next to the room, making it very dark,[2] and again in 1856, when the large columned entrance on the west was opened to give more light in the room.

The fireplace, however, is in its original place; and the ornaments of its corbels and frieze are in perfect preservation. On the latter is carved the device: *Ignem gladio ne fodias* (Stir not the fire with the sword).

From the cornice above the walls sixteen ribs rise to the centre of the vault, forming a like number of lunettes. Correggio covered the whole with frescoes, adapting his scheme of decoration to the structure of the vault. The design is a bower of foliage supported on a trellis of canes, with sixteen oval openings, through which a joyous band of naked Amorini, moving apparently along an outside gallery, are seen at play.

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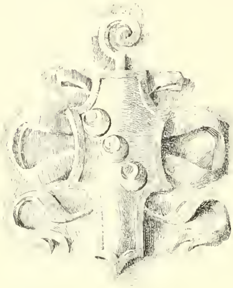
[1] MS. in the Palatine Library at Parma, No. 535, fol. 81. Communicated by the learned Luigi Barbieri.

[2] Baistrocchi, *Notizie di pittori*. MSS. in the Royal Library, Parma, No. 1106.

Along each rib of the vault run two shafts of the simulated trellis, terminating above in a disc, containing the gilded arms of the abbess, below, in a cluster of gilded leaves in relief. The central disc is surrounded by a star-like frame of intertwined pink scarves, from which bunches of fruit hang into the sectors above the ovals.

Each lunette is enclosed in a semicircular framework of seashells, springing from capitals formed of two rams' heads, from the spiral horns of which hang strings of precious stones, amber, and pearls. The foliated finials of the ribs above form part of these capitals. Finally, between the capitals, on the cornice under the lunettes, a festooned drapery supports trophies of vases, platters, *amphoræ*, a small flask, and an axe.



COAT OF ARMS OF THE ABBESS GIOVANNA PIACENZA.

The children who appear through the ovals are all occupied in various fashions; a common aim and sentiment, however, governs their playful activity. Some little episode occasionally connects the *putti* of one oval with those of the next. Let us try to follow the thread of interest throughout, beginning with those beside the fireplace. (i) One of them seems about to climb into the interior of the bower. He has already thrust his right leg through the opening, and pulls away from the detaining grasp of his more timid companion, who holds him back with a vigorous, but most graceful movement of his whole little body. The desire of the other to mount the trellis within is explained by the action of the group in the next oval, (ii) where one Cupid grasps eagerly at the bunch of fruit suspended above, while the other points out the most desirable apple. Let us now follow the two who are carrying a great stone (iii). One, who wears a mantle slung across his shoulder, and carries a wand in his left hand, bears the stone on his head; his comrade helps him to steady it. Those in the next oval are not such good friends; (iv) one has possessed himself of a

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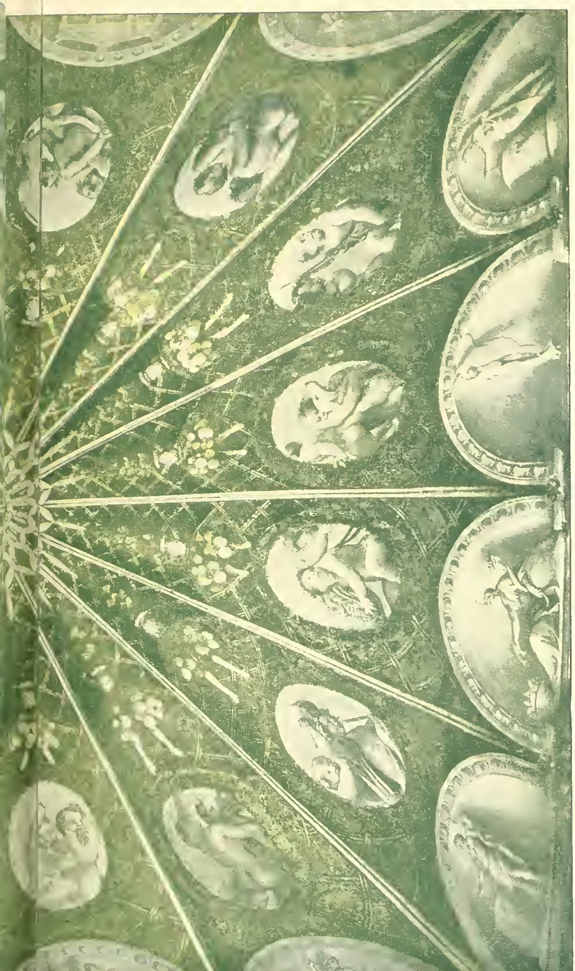

DI SAN PAOLO (PARMA).

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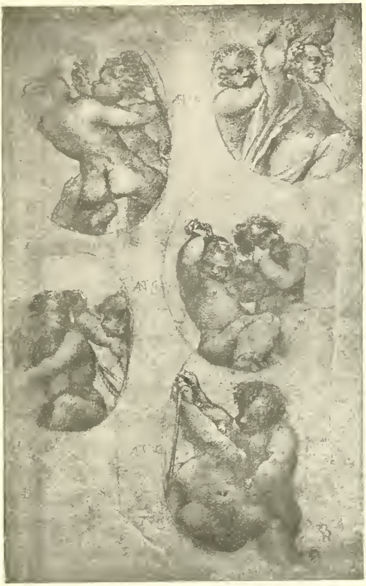
mask, which the fascinating little rogue behind him attempts to snatch from him. The quarrel attracts the attention of one *putto* in the neighbouring group (v), the other is busily engaged in caressing a beautiful white dog, which looks up with eyes full of gentle intelligence.



BOY GENII FROM THE CAMERA DI SAN PAOLO, AFTER CORREGGIO.
In the Weimar Museum.

We now come to a group of little belligerents (vi). One baby draws a dart from the quiver, while his friend instructs him where to aim it. Others make a valiant effort to raise a long and heavy lance (vii); their neighbours string a bow (viii). The next have a more troublesome business on hand (ix); several of them cluster round a great mastiff, which they endeavour to prevent from falling on the trembling dog two *putti* in the next oval are doing their best to protect (x). But it is time to start for the chase; a Cupid lifts the horn slung across his neighbour's shoulder, and raises it to his lips; the latter stands on his rights, however, and tries to snatch it away. Meanwhile, another blows such a terrific blast that two of his comrades stop their ears (xi and xii). One beautiful boy triumphantly holds up the head of the stag (xiii), which others are about to crown (xiv). A Cupid in the penultimate oval (xv) hastens to assist at this solemn ceremony, but his companion draws him away towards the last pair, who are fighting for the possession of a pole, with which they propose to attack the fruit above (xvi).[1]

This unity of argument, this sequence of infantile episodes, has passed almost unnoticed hitherto ; we shall see, however, that it was a very characteristic trait of Correggio's compositions. The *putti* of the *Camera di San Paolo* are robust and vigorously modelled urchins ; they are foreshortened in a masterly manner ; but in some of the little figures there is an undeniable clumsiness, which is greatly modified in the genii of San Giovanni Evangelista, and disappears entirely from those of the Duomo. Even among these earlier groups there are individual figures of ideal beauty ; but all are somewhat too rubicund, and their laughter has not the gleeful *abandon* that charms in their successors.

As a whole, however, the composition is marked by a delightful vivacity and extraordinary ease and spirit.

The lunettes in chiaroscuro are undoubtedly the most marvellous part of the composition. We can recall nothing of the same period and genre which surpasses them, either in form or execution.

The painter has represented them as niches, containing statues : either isolated figures, or groups. We will briefly describe these, following the order observed in dealing with the ovals. (i) *The Graces.* The motive is that of the classic group, but the spirited treatment is entirely novel. Here we have no longer the graceful feminine forms and serene composure of attitude characteristic of antique art, but three robust and finely modelled figures, their movements full of ease and vigour, their loose hair floating in the wind. It is by no means certain that Correggio drew his inspiration from some piece of classic sculpture. The motive was a common one in his time ;

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[1] There is a drawing in the Weimar Museum of five of these ovals, in red chalk, on which the signature ANT. C. appears no less than three times. This insistence on the monogram is very suspicious in connection with Correggio, only two of whose juvenile works are signed, and by no means persuades us of the authenticity of the drawing. It agrees in every detail with the paintings, but is very coarsely executed, and bears traces of numerous corrections. The Cupid who carries the stone, and the one who is seated with the pole in his hand, are especially faulty.

it was frequently used in emblems and on medals ; we have seen that it figured on the medal of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. (ii) *Adonis*, holding a staff in his uplifted right hand. (iii) *Bonus Eventus.* A young man with a mantle drawn round his loins ; in his left hand he holds a cornucopia, and with his right he pours a libation on an altar adorned with bas-reliefs. (iv) *The Earth.* A seated figure, of calm and solemn aspect, her left elbow leaning on a rock. She is draped in an ample robe, falling in graceful folds about her form. In one hand she holds a cornucopia, in the other a scorpion. A serpent rears its crest above her forehead. At her feet lies a basket filled with ears of corn.[1]

We may, perhaps, read the allegory as follows :—The Earth in her multiform fecundity, animal and vegetable, brings forth good and necessary things, such as corn and fruit, and also venomous creatures, such as the asp and the scorpion. (v) *Juno Chastised.* She is suspended from the sky, her hands bound together, and a golden anvil fastened to her feet to make the punishment more severe. In Book XV. of the *Iliad*, Jupiter, threatening Juno, reminds her of having already inflicted this punishment upon her. The modelling of this lithe figure is superb, and the curved shadow it casts into the niche gives it a strangely illusory effect of high relief. (vi) *A Vestal.* The ample draperies of a long, full robe fall about her figure. She holds a torch in her left hand, and a patera in her right, from which she pours a libation on a circular altar. (vii) This figure of an old man reclining on a couch has been supposed by some to symbolize *Repose*, by others *Meditation* ; others again see in it merely a *Philosopher.* He holds an ear of corn in his right hand. (viii) *A Doric Temple of Jupiter.* The statue of the god is seen through the open door. The architecture is indicated in a masterly fashion by a few simple lines. (ix) The Fates, seated on a wooded hill. Clotho holds the distaff, Lachesis draws out the thread, and Atropos cuts it with her scissors, and twists the short threads round the spindle. It is a peculiar feature of this composition that the Fates are represented as young women, winged. How did the painter, or the person who suggested the subject to him, intend this allegory to be read? Perhaps the idea he seeks to convey is that life, like all other gifts of the gods to man, is beautiful always, beautiful in its birth, in its development, and in its close. (x) A woman, who walks along with stately grace, her draperies fluttering in the breeze. She holds an infant in her arms. Called by some, *Vesta with the Infant Jupiter*; by others, *Ino Leucothoe, the nurse of Bacchus.* (xi) Ceres with the torch and apple. (xii) A satyr leaning against the stump of a tree, to which his pipe is slung. He is seen in profile, and is blowing into a shell. (xiii) *Chastity.* She holds up a dove in her right hand, and with her left she slightly raises the gauzy robe through which the contours of her blooming form are visible. It is difficult to imagine a more graceful outline, or a more delicate effect of transparency in drapery. (xiv) *Virginity*, with a lily in her hand. (xv) *Fortune*, a cornucopia in her left hand, and in her right a rudder, resting on a globe. (xvi) *Minerva*, a helmet on her head, a torch and an axe in her hands. All these exquisite *chiaroscuri*, illuminated from below, throw shadows which are diffused in the upper part and the background of the niches, and are so lightly and artfully disposed that the figures seem to hover in space. In form they follow antique models; but each conception is transformed, and moulded afresh, so to speak, by a new and very personal sentiment, as we have already pointed out in describing the *Fates* and the *Graces*. Various antique coins and medals have been suggested as the originals from which the painter drew his inspiration, but in no case do these agree exactly with the *chiaroscuri*. The *Fortune*, says Gherardo de Rossi,[1] whose suggestion is adopted by Meyer, was probably derived from a medal of Vespasian, with the motto *Fortunæ Reduci*; the *Bonus Eventus* bears some likeness to a medal of Nero, with the legend *Genio Augusti*; the *Vestal* recalls a medal struck by Domitian, inscribed *Divi Cæsaris mater*; according to Martini, the *Ceres* is closely akin to a figure of the goddess on several antique coins. None of these suggestions, however, are very confidently maintained by their authors, though it is, of course, evident that the painter was inspired by antique models. Affò, influenced by his own archæological learnings, sought to prove that there were several collectors of coins and cameos in Parma in Correggio's time; he mentions Taddeo Ugoleto, Bernardo Bergonzi, Giorgio Anselmi, the Prati, and the Baiardi.[1] But his demonstration is of little value, taking into account the fact that every house of any importance during the Renaissance owned collections of antiques, and that Allegri had seen all the treasures of the Lords of Correggio, and of Isabella d'Este.

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[1] Meyer makes some curious mistakes in his description of this lunette (p. 119). He calls the scorpion an apple, and the basket of corn a basket of fruit. Others suppose the figure to represent Summer, seeing in the serpent on her head a proboscis, and in the scorpion a zodiacal sign, regardless of the fact that, as such, it symbolises October.

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[1] *Descrizione di una pittura*, etc., pp 33, 37 and 39.

We are somewhat at a loss to understand Martini's assertion that the artist was governed in his choice of these subjects by the place they were to adorn. If this were so, how are we to explain the presence of the Satyr, the Graces, the Adonis, the nurse of the infant Bacchus, etc.? The biographer was misled, no doubt, by the Vestal, the Chastity, and the Virginity, which may be allowed to have had at least a theoretic bearing on the lives of the nuns.

The scheme of decoration was governed by no very strict ideas of relation, as a whole. But the motive which may be said to strike the keynote of the composition is the *Diana* painted on the wall over the fireplace. This figure was probably chosen, not as the symbol of purity, but as the personification of the moon in the Abbess's coat of arms. The goddess is surrounded by a jocund band of Cupids armed with hunting implements, and by a cohort of her Olympian comrades. The crescent moon, repeated over the doors and in the centre of the vault, shines again in the fair hair of Diana, who, waving her azure veil, sits on the edge of a car drawn by two stags, her bow slung across her shoulders. The facial type of the *Diana* is that of the Madonna in the *Repose in Egypt* of the Uffizi, and of the contemporary pictures in the Prado and at Hampton Court. The colour is hot, especially in the flesh tints of the Cupids, who have not the delicate pearly contours of the Amorini in later works. The folds of the draperies, though less severe than those of the artist's first pictures, are still long, scanty, and soberly disposed, and have none of the daring convolutions he afterwards affected. These characteristics seem to us sufficient to fix the approximate date of this work, even setting aside a technical peculiarity, unnoticed as far as I know by any former critic of Correggio, which fully establishes the priority of the San Paolo frescoes to all existing decorations by the master, and settles the question as to what was his first undertaking in Parma.

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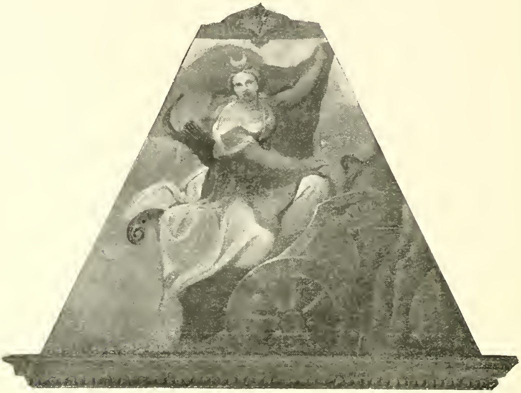
[1] *Ragionamento*, etc., p. 45.



DIANA.

Fresco by Correggio in the Camera di San Paolo.

Following the example of Mantegna, from whose *Camera degli Sposi* he no doubt took the general idea of his composition, he painted his frescoes with short, close strokes, and, instead of putting in the lights upon the surfaces in shadow, he glazed over in the shadows the light ground. In treating the flesh-tints, he gradually built up the more opaque tones, one upon another. In all the frescoes he subsequently painted, even in those executed very soon afterwards, at San Giovanni, he abandoned this method almost entirely, blending his tints on the palette and on the walls themselves. The lunettes have changed a good deal in tone. The yellowish touches with which the master brought the shells of the framework and the heads of the rams into relief have become merged in the ground of the same tint, and have assumed a dull, putty-coloured hue.

The work we have described has suffered in various other ways. The foliage of the bower, more especially in the garlands round the ovals, has been coarsely restored, shapeless blotches of colour doing duty for leaves. The sky against which the Cupids are relieved, originally of a soft greenish-blue, is now, save in a few isolated patches, covered with a heavy ashen coating, which ought to be removed. Finally, all that part of the fresco adjoining the old chimney has been greatly injured by the snow and rain which penetrated through this channel.

But what a glory of colour must have burst on the spectator who entered this vaulted chamber in its first freshness! With what delighted wonder must the abbess, the nuns, Iorio da Erba, the architect of this and the adjoining room, and Francesco d'Agrate, the sculptor of the stone reliefs, have gazed on the newly-finished work! With what satisfaction must Scipione Montino have contemplated its beauties!

There were some, however, whose admiration was probably not of so jubilant a nature. The painters of the city, more especially Temperelli and Araldi, suddenly saw their art condemned and their labours stultified. The blow must have fallen with peculiar heaviness on Araldi, who, as painter to the convent of San Paolo, had decorated the choir of the church[1] and the room adjoining that painted by Correggio only a few years before (1510 and 1514), covering the whole with a patient net-work of ornaments, grotesques, small historical compositions, and obscure allegories.

Vasari tells how Francia, seeing Raphael's *Saint Cecilia* "not painted, but living . . . ." was so overcome with grief and envy at the beauty of the picture, that he shortly afterwards took to his bed, and was commonly reported to have died of sorrow.[2]

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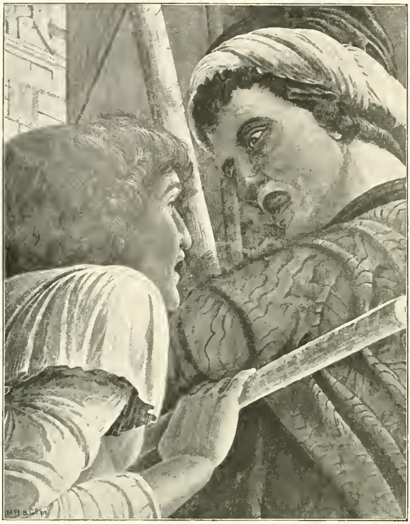
[1] Leone Smagliati, *Cronache*, MSS. Baistrocchi, *Notizie di pittori*, MSS. in the Royal Palatine Library at Parma.

[2] *Vite dei più eccellenti pittori*, iii. p. 546.

This story is disproved by an examination of dates, but, like a Scriptural parable, it remains to testify to the emotion of the old artists who flourished towards the close of the fifteenth century on seeing the works of the new generation.[1]



FRAGMENT FROM THE HISTORY OF ST. JAMES, BY MANTEGNA.
In the Cappella degli Eremitani, Padua.

After finishing the decorations of the Camera di San Paolo, Correggio, as we have shown, probably returned to his native city, and spent the year 1519 there, coming back to Parma in 1520 to work in the church of San Giovanni Evangelista. Meyer supposes the painter to have done but little work at this period, his time being taken up by frequent journeys between Correggio and Parma.[2] But as a fact, various documents show him to have been constantly in Correggio between January and October, 1519, whereas no records exist of his presence in Parma. The communication made by the Abbé Mazza to Tiraboschi touching a sum of money paid to Correggio by the Benedictines, omits all mention of the day or month, and as no entry of any such payment is to be found in the accounts of the monastery, there is reason to believe that the statement was based on a misconception.[1]

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[1] The rooms decorated by Correggio and Araldi, and others adjoining them, were handed over to the Accademia di Belle Arti by the municipality of Parma, November 16, 1810. In 1834, a scheme for the isolation of these rooms from the body of the building was discussed. Eleven years later, when the new entrance and the west porch were finished, the red velvet hangings obtained from Marie Louise de Bourbon were placed on the walls. See the MS. minutes of the R. Accademia di Belle Arti, vol. ii. p. 105; iii. pp. 108 and 193. Documents in the archives of the Parma Gallery (M. 1), under the heading *Camere di San Paolo.*

[2] *Correggio*, p. 133.

On the other hand, it seems certain that he was painting various small works during this interval. Vasari says that he executed pictures and other paintings for patrons in Lombardy, and Armenini declares that he himself saw several of these, which were "held in the highest honour" (*onoratissimi*).[2]

It is not improbable, however, that works painted by his scholars and imitators were ascribed to this period.

Even now, indeed, such a number of apocryphal works are attributed to the master, and more especially to this particular stage of his career, that we might exhaust the patience of our readers, and increase our volume to an inordinate size by discussion and description of them in detail.[3]

Turning over the minutes of the Accademia di belle Arti of Parma, we find entries referring to an almost incredible number of works offered to the gallery, and rejected as spurious. I myself have pictures submitted to me almost daily as the work of Correggio. Productions of his scholars are confidently assigned to the master, to say nothing of copies, *pasticci*, and even forgeries. Mengs describes how Sebastiano Ricci attempted to sell one of his own pictures as the work of Correggio.[1]

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[1] As we shall see presently, the expenses connected with Correggio's paintings were entered by the monks in a book, from 1519 to 1528, which accounts, perhaps, for the mistake.

[2] G. B. Armenini, *Dei veri precetti della pittura*, p. 188. Ravenna, 1587.

[3] Meyer (*op. cit* p. 132 *et seq.*) includes in this category the picture of the Madonna and Child, with the patron saints of Parma and several angels, formerly belonging to the Duca Melzi, and now in the Casa Scotti at Milan, the authenticity of which was accepted by the Accademia of Parma and by Pungileoni (i. pp. 92–93; ii. p. 135). We may add that it is undoubtedly by Giorgio Gandino del Grano. The history of the *Apollo and Marsyas* in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg is given by Meyer, who quotes Mündler's ascription of the work to Il Rosso Fiorentino. There was a time when Parmigianino's well-known *Cupid forging the Bow* (see Pungileoni, i. p. 114, and ii. p. 159) was ascribed to Correggio, and also the *Procession to Calvary* in the Parma Gallery, once attributed to M. A. Anselmi, but certainly neither by the latter nor his master.

These facile and confident attributions are by no means confined to private owners. Pictures in many public galleries are labelled with names to which they can lay no possible claim.

We may now consider the works Antonio must have painted immediately after 1518. A small *Marriage of St. Catherine*, in which the kneeling saint, the palm in her right hand, and the sword beside her, receives the ring from the Infant on the Virgin's lap, has been reproduced in several copies or replicas. No very authoritative pronouncement has been made as to the authenticity of these various examples, but the majority of votes has been cast for the picture in the National Museum of Naples, that in Signor Paolo Fabrizi's collection at Rome, and Dr. Theodor Schall's example at Berlin.[2] Our own conclusion is directly opposed to that of Meyer. The little picture at Naples strikes us as an obvious copy by one of the Carracci.

Allegri's pure tints, his transparent carnations, his delicate shadows, are alike wanting in this work. The brushing is broad and almost coarse; the colour is laid on with a heavy hand, and the drawing shows a want of refinement impossible to Correggio, even in his large pictures, or the colossal figures of his frescoes. Those who have carefully examined Annibale Carracci's smaller works, notably the picture numbered 1,007 in the Uffizi, will be easily convinced that the *Marriage of St. Catherine* at Naples is one of his numerous copies after Correggio. In the *Inventory* of the Farnese collection

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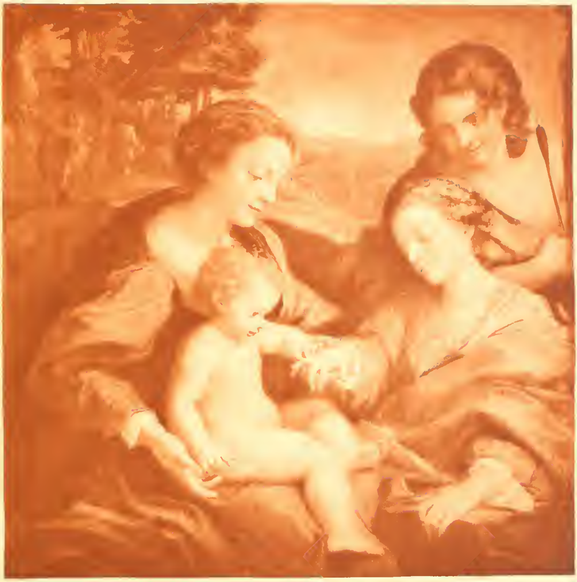
[1] *Opere*, ii. p. 171. Tiraboschi, p. 258. Five pictures in the National Museum of Naples are described as by Correggio, the *Zingarella* being the only authentic example (C. Ricci, *Di alcuni quadri di scuola parmigiana*, etc., pp. 7–10). In the Uffizi, again, a decapitated head of John the Baptist is attributed to him, which is not even a work of the school of Parma, also a copy of one of the cherubs in the cathedral of Parma. Another cherub, in the Pitti Gallery, is a copy from the *Madonna with St. Sebastian* at Dresden. We will spare the reader a further enumeration.

[2] In the Royal Library at Turin there is a drawing of the *Marriage of St. Catherine*, which even Morelli ascribed to Correggio (*Italian Painters*, ii. p. 148). It has certain characteristics of the master, but these are discounted by many curious defects.

Marriage of S. Catherine

[illegible]



at Parma, both an authentic example and a copy are mentioned, and the latter is in all probability the picture now at Naples.[1]

The sentiment of the composition is altogether delightful in its naïve simplicity. St. Catherine's gentle emotion is no less engaging than the ingenuous action of the Babe, who, holding her finger in his little hand, turns to his mother, as if demanding: "Is this the finger on which I am to put the ring?" The Virgin smiles assent. In the arrangement of the figures, and the daring interlacement of the hands (the Virgin lays hers on those of the mystic bride and bridegroom), we trace the germ of the exquisite *Marriage of St. Catherine* in the Louvre, a work we judge from indications such as the types, the execution, the treatment of the hair, the folds of the draperies, the tapering fingers, and, above all, the glowing and transparent carnations, to have been painted after 1522, and certainly not between 1517 and 1519, as Meyer and nearly all later biographers suppose.[2]

The subject of the picture makes it convenient, however, to speak of it here, introducing it with a quotation from Théophile Gautier's graceful description: "The Infant Jesus is seated on the lap of his mother, who helps him to place the ring on St. Catherine's finger. The action produces the most exquisite group of hands ever brought into the centre of a picture. They seem to be fashioned of lilies, so pure, delicate, and aristocratic are the taper fingers with their uplifted tips. The tender ecstasy of the saint, who takes the unconscious Babe for her spouse throughout all eternity, is admirably rendered. Behind St. Catherine stands a St. Sebastian of ideal beauty; the arrows of his martyrdom, which he holds in his hand, give him the appearance of a Cupid. In the background are scenes from the martyrdom of the two saints; but these episodes, the introduction of which was still sanctioned by custom, are slightly indicated, and of small dimensions. They are immersed in shadow, and so arranged as not to distract attention from the principal subject. . . Beneath the light amber veil which time has drawn over the picture, we discern the cool and silvery colour, the azure reflections, the opalescent glint, as of mother-of-pearl, and the whole gamut of delicate gradations that lurks in the mysterious chiaroscuro."[1]

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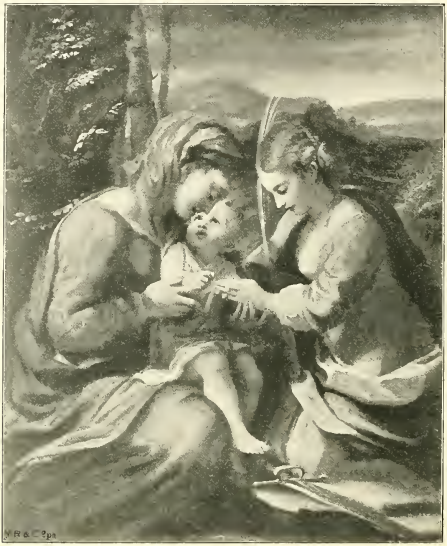
[1] There is another *Marriage of St. Catherine*, which has long been attributed to Correggio, in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg. It passed into the collection from the gallery of Count Brüll, minister of Augustus III. of Poland. On the back of the picture is written, *Laus Deo: per Donna Matilde d'Este Antonio Lieto da Correggio fece il presente quadro per sua divozione, anno* 1517. The inscription is not genuine. No Matilda of Este flourished at the date mentioned. Even Mengs (ii. p. 170) and Tiraboschi (vi. p. 258) questioned its authenticity. Waagen pronounced unhesitatingly against Correggio's authorship of the work, which is no longer ascribed to the master. (Meyer p. 106. Venturi, *La R. Galleria estense*, p. 322.)

[2] *Correggio*, p. 322.



MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE, BY CORREGGIO.

Signor Paolo Fabrizi, Rome.

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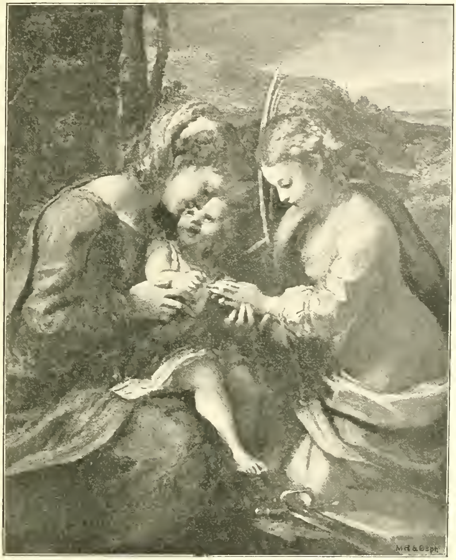
[1] *Guide de l'Amateur au Musée du Louvre.* Paris, 1882. G. Lafenestre and E. Richtenberger, *Le Musée National du Louvre*, p. 45. Paris, 1893.

Though the less fully developed types of the *Saint Catherine* are conclusive as to its priority, there are certain close affinities between this picture and the so-called *Saint Jerome Madonna*, of which we shall speak further on. These are most evident in the modelling of the Infant's little body, in the attentive expression of his face, and, above all, in the tones of the landscape, the small kneeling figures of which are almost identical in the two pictures. The widespread celebrity of the *Saint Catherine* dates from a very early period. Vasari relates how Girolamo da Carpi, when he went to Modena to see some of Correggio's works, "was not only filled with wonder as he looked at them, but



MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE, ASCRIBED TO CORREGGIO
In the Naples Museum.

perfectly stupefied by one in particular. This was a large picture, a most divine work, in which our Lady holds the Child, who espouses St. Catherine; they are attended by St. Sebastian and others; the heads are of such extraordinary beauty, that they seem to have been modelled in Paradise. It would be impossible to see a rendering of hair and hands more beautiful, or colour more delicate and natural. The owner of the picture, Messer Francesco Grillenzoni, who was one of Correggio's closest friends, gave Girolamo leave to copy it, and he reproduced it with a diligence that it could hardly be possible to surpass."[1]

A legend afterwards grew up in connection with this picture.

Tiraboschi[2] and some others believed, on the statement of Sandrart, that Correggio painted it for one Catherine, a compassionate woman, who had nursed him tenderly during a serious illness. The subject of the picture, or perhaps the name of the saint, suggested this touching story to Sandrart, or to those who communicated it to him. But as St. Sebastian also figures in the composition, Ratti, anxious to complete the onomastic allusions of the picture, improved the legend by adding that this Catherine was the wife of a gentleman named Sebastian. He says nothing, however, of Allegri's illness, or the good offices of the lady, but declares the picture to have been given to the couple in recognition of their having procured him the order for the picture he painted for the Confraternity of St. Peter Martyr at Modena.[3] Pungileoni thought it incumbent on him to produce a new version. Finding that Correggio had a sister Catherine, married to one Vincenzo Mariani, he concluded that the picture was a wedding gift to Caterina Allegri. It is a pity the husband was not called Sebastian! Pungileoni was unable to give the date of this marriage, but he was wonderfully well informed as to the sentiments of all the persons concerned! "Antonio's grief at the loss of his sister," he writes, "may be conceived from the extreme sensibility of his disposition. A heart like his must have longed to show its gratitude by the best means in his power, namely, in the painting of a picture which should speak to her continually of her absent brother. Those who know a woman's heart, and more especially the heart of a woman sorrowing over her separation from her family, may imagine Caterina's delight in this memorial."[1] But with all his eagerness to explain the workings of Correggio's mind to the world, the worthy Pungileoni was but ill-informed as compared with Bigi, who gives the whole history of the wedding in most moving detail, describing, *inter alia*, the apparition of the maiden Correggio afterwards married, and the sudden passion he inspired at her first sight of him in the church.[2]

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[1] *Vite*, vi. p. 470.

[2] *Op. cit.* vi. pp. 277–278.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 49.

Even Bigi, however, was outdone by Madame Mignaty, who tells us that six other maidens, "bewitched by the same sweet enchantment, desired to take the veil!"[3]

This is no solitary instance of the absurd sentimentalities biographers have woven round the works of Correggio, but we take it as a typical illustration of such romances, of which there is no need to multiply examples. The true history of the picture has been gleaned from contemporary documents by Adolfo Venturi: "It was painted for the Grillenzoni, a family of the first importance in Modena during the sixteenth century, rich not only in material wealth, but in culture and honourable tradition. Giovanni Grillenzoni, brother of the Messer Francesco mentioned by Vasari, was one of the heads of the famous *Accademia*, the chief centre of the controversies set in motion by the reforming spirit of the age, and did much to diffuse the love of culture and of letters in Modena. He was known as an ardent lover of the arts, and Castelvetro dedicated a poem to him, entitled *Pictura*, in which he described the paintings he was anxious Grillenzoni should have executed for a room in his house, as a record of the rare and admirable harmony that obtained among the members of his large family. The picture remained in the possession of the Grillenzoni till 1582, in which year it was obtained for Caterina Nobili Sforza, Contessa di Santa Fiora, by the intermediary of Cardinal Luigi d'Este. Bottari and Meyer both believed it to have belonged to the cardinal himself, but documents which have lately come to light prove that he merely negotiated the transfer with the Grillenzoni on behalf of Pope Julius III.'s great-niece, in whose possession Coradusz, the Emperor Rudolph II.'s Chancellor, saw it in 1595.[1] After passing through a variety of hands, it appeared in Cardinal Antonio Barberini's collection in 1650, and was presented by him to Cardinal Mazarin,[2] from whose heirs it was acquired for Louis XIV.'s museum.

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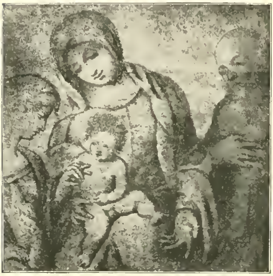
[1] *Op. cit.* i. p. 98; ii. pp. 136, 138, and 141. Pungileoni also supposed the *Zingarella* to be a portrait of Correggio's wife.

[2] *Della vita e delle opere*, etc., p. 15.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 294–295.



DRAWING ASCRIBED TO CORREGGIO OF THE MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE.

In the Royal Library, Turin.

We will now return to the three pictures we believe to have preceded the *Marriage of St. Catherine*. These are the *Madonna suckling the Child*, known as the *Madonna del Latte*, the *Virgin and Child with the Basket*, known as the *Madonna della Cesta*, and the *Virgin adoring the Infant Christ*.

Great uncertainty prevails as to the first of these, owing to the many old copies that exist, and the contradictory statements of different writers.

The Virgin, smiling placidly, offers her left breast to the Infant Jesus; he, however, laying one little hand on her shoulder, turns away to take the fruit offered him by a winged angel, in the version at Budapest, by the little St. John, in the example at the Hermitage. Domenico Ottonelli described a similar picture in 1652, in his *Trattato della pittura*,[3] but it has not been possible to trace its subsequent history, and we have therefore no means of identifying it with any of the existing examples. When Ottonelli saw it, it was in the possession of a certain Gottifredo Periberti, having previously passed through the hands of the Aldobrandini family, of the Princess Rossano, one of their heirs, and of Cardinal di San Giorgio. Padre Resta, in his *Indice del Parnaso dei pittori*,[1] boasting of having once owned the original drawing, says that the picture, formerly in the possession of Muzio Orsini, had been acquired by the Marchese del Carpio, and that there was also a replica in "an ancient Roman house." His statement as to the Marchese del Carpio's possession of such a picture is borne out by an engraving by Teresa del Po.[2] No authentic information has come down to us as to the fate of the replica, unless indeed it is to be identified with the picture Mündler saw in Rome in 1844 in the possession of a certain Count Cabral, who dealt in pictures with the help of Prince Torlonia.[3] As we are anxious not to increase the confusion that already prevails, we will only add that the two most famous examples which lay claim to authenticity are the

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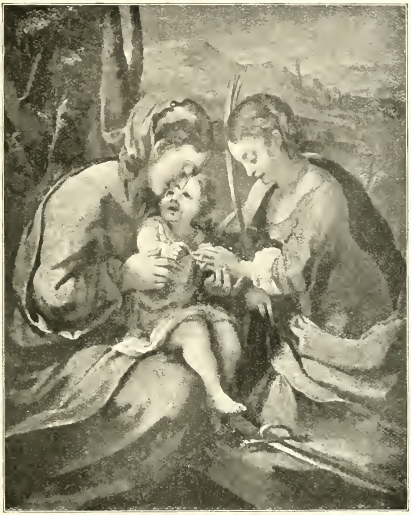
[1] *Il pittor delle grazie*, quoted above. Venturi has treated this picture most exhaustively in his study, *Un quadro del Correggio* (Modena, 1882), reprinted in the periodical, *Arte e Storia*, year iii. no. 3. Florence, 1894.

[2] Mengs, *Opere*, ii. p. 150.

[3] Odomenigico Lelonotti (an anagram of his name), *Trattato della pittura e scultura uso e abuso loro, composto da un teologo e da un pittore*, p. 155. Florence, 1652. Pungileoni, ii. p. 128.



MARRIAGE OF ST CATHERINE, ASCRIBED TO CORREGGIO

Dr Th. Schall, Berlin.

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[1] P. 63. Perugia, 1787.

[2] Pungileoni, ii. p. 128. It is said to have passed into Spain and afterwards to England.

[3] Meyer, pp. 142 *et seq.* and 329 *et seq.*

version on panel in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg,[1] and that on canvas in the Esterhazy collection, now in the Public Gallery at Budapest.[2] The former, according to Nagler, belonged to a King of Spain, whose name he omits to mention. The king presented it to his confessor, who in his turn handed it on to the Jesuits. It came to Rome through the medium of its new owners, and was bought by one Cavaceppi (here we enter into the domain of fact), who sold it again to the painter Giovanni Casanova, brother to the famous adventurer, for a very small price, the picture being in a terribly dirty state, covered with dust and varnish. Casanova cleaned it skilfully, and exhibited it as a discovery. The matter attracted a good deal of attention in the art-world. Mengs mentioned it, among others,[3] and Winckelmann, who wrote thus in his journal of July 16, 1764: "Casanova has discovered a picture by Correggio at Rome, which no one had recognised, as it was covered with dirt. He bought it and cleaned it, thus becoming the owner of one of the most beautiful pictures in the world. He goes to Dresden next month."[4] This, in fact, he did, having been appointed Director of the Academy of Fine Arts. Nagler further says that Mengs bought the picture from him for Catherine II. of Russia.

Meyer considered the whole of this story apocryphal, especially as Mengs was no longer in Dresden after 1760; he admits, of course, that the bargain might have been concluded by letter or by the intermediary of other persons, but thinks it more likely, on the whole, that the picture discovered by Casanova was the example now in the Budapest Gallery, as the presence of the angel in the place of the little St. John seems to indicate. In which case, the history formerly ascribed to the Budapest picture would really be that of the St. Petersburg example, and it would be the latter which passed to the Duca Crivelli with other property inherited from his uncle, the cardinal, who had received it as a gift from Charles IV. of Spain. Waagen, indeed, asserts that the St. Petersburg picture came from Charles IV.'s collection. It is impossible, however, to come to any very decided conclusion in the matter, owing to the peregrinations of both these pictures, the absence of any authentic records of their history, and, above all, to the multiplication of copies, the existence of which is attested by a large number of engravings, many of them showing considerable variations. In the matter of their authenticity opinions are pretty equally divided. We have seen that at Budapest twice. It has suffered a little, but we are certainly inclined to ascribe it to the master, relying on such evidences as the fine drawing, the delicate diffusion of the light, the soft blending of light and shadow, the facial types, and the calm, yet joyful, sentiment that pervades the composition. On the other hand, we have not found the study of a large and magnificent photograph by Braun of the St. Petersburg picture altogether convincing. In the nude contours of the Infant Jesus there is a somewhat painful contortion of lines; his left foot is preternaturally small, and the chiaroscuro of the legs is very laboured. The type of the Madonna is not altogether Correggesque; her nose is too broad above, at the junction of the eyebrows, and the nostril is too much arched. Her smile is almost a grimace. Not having seen the original, we refrain from any decisive pronouncement on the merits of this picture, and will be content to say that Meyer did not venture to vouch for its authenticity.

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[1] Waagen, *Die Gemälde-Sammlung in der Ermitage zu St. Petersburg*. Munich, 1864.

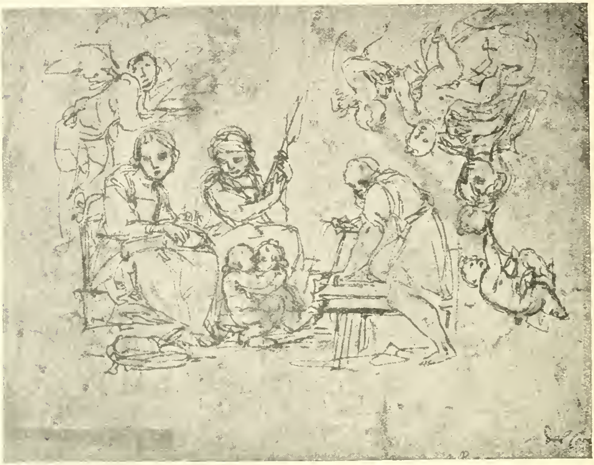
[2] Karoly Pulszky, *A Kepgyüjtemény leirò lajstroma*, p. 7. Budapest, 1888.

[3] *Opere*, ii. p. 176.

[4] *Figurine Casanoviane. Nuova Rassegna*, year i. no. 7. Rome.

A fact hitherto unnoticed must, however, be admitted to have an important bearing on the case. The pen sketch in which Correggio jotted down his first thought for this picture is still in existence, and here the little figure offering the fruit is not the infant St. John, as in the picture at the Hermitage, but a winged angel, as in the canvas at Budapest.

This precious drawing, the property of the Vienna Museum, is on a sheet covered with a variety of figures, all rapidly and freely sketched, and raises another interesting point. Besides a number of groups which the painter either never used, or used in pictures now lost, the sheet contains the germ of the St. Joseph at work in the little picture of the *Madonna della Cesta.* The sketch confirms, to a certain extent, the almost unanimous opinion of critics that this was painted at about the same date as the *Madonna del Latte.* If we take the Budapest example for purposes of comparison, we shall find that here and in the National Gallery picture the types of Virgin and Child, the play of the drapery, which begins to be treated more squarely, the gradations of tone, and the management of the light, are practically identical. The master's pictorial faculty displays itself most characteristically in the very individual sentiment, design, and colour.

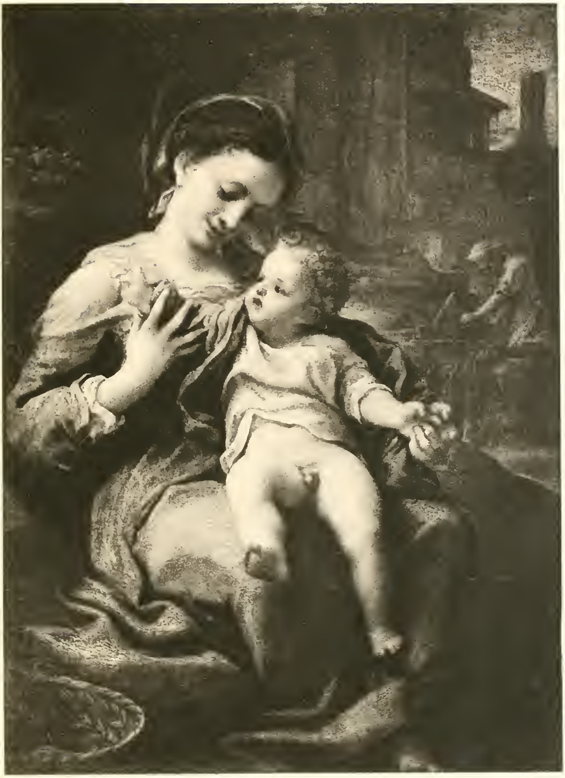


MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS.
Sketch by Correggio.
In the Vienna Museum.

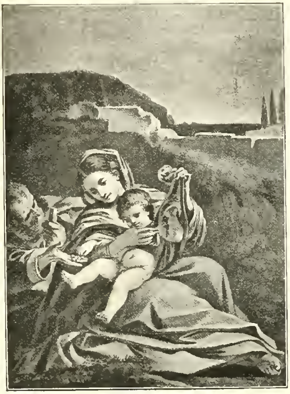
The Madonna, seated with her Child upon her lap, and St. Joseph, planing a piece of wood, appear in a beautiful setting of trees and antique ruins. The Virgin, whose work-basket and other feminine implements lie at her feet, endeavours to draw on the Infant's little dress. She has put one arm through a sleeve, but the Child struggles vigorously under the maternal hands, disarranging his shirt. Mary smiles softly, as if admonishing the Babe with a gentle "My son, let me dress thee!"

Madonna della Cesta

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON



This little gem of extraordinary tenderness, as Mengs calls it,[1] this incomparable marvel of light, of vivacity, of smiling sweetness, to quote Frizzoni,[2] was given by Charles IV. of Spain to his master, Don Emanuele Goday, at whose instance it was subjected to a most rigorous cleaning. During the French invasion of Spain it passed to the English painter Wallace, who vainly attempted to sell it in 1813 for £1,200. It figured, nevertheless, in the Lapeyrière collection in April, 1825, when this was put up for sale, and was bought by the elder Nieuwenhuys, who immediately afterwards sold it to the National Gallery of London. Such is Meyer's account of the picture.[3] Sir Frederick Burton gives its history with certain variations and greater simplicity in his catalogue of the gallery, saying that it was brought to England by Mr. Buchanan in 1813, and bought for the National Gallery by C. F. Nieuwenhuys in 1825.[4]



THE BIANCONI MADONNA
From the Engraving.

This, according to some writers, is the picture which Vasari describes as in the possession of the Cavaliere Baiardi of Parma—"a marvellous and beautiful work by Correggio, in which our Lady puts a little shirt on the Infant Christ."[5] Others, however, suppose this to allude to the little picture of which the Abbé Carlo Bianconi, secretary to the Academy of Fine Arts at Milan, declared he possessed a sketch on paper, which he asserted had once formed part of the Estense Gallery.[1] There are copies and engravings of such a picture, but the original is missing. It represented the Madonna seated on the ground, in the act of drawing on the little shirt, and St. Joseph offering cherries to the Child. The types and composition are very Correggesque, as far as we can judge by the engravings, but it is impossible to give a decisive opinion on such evidence.

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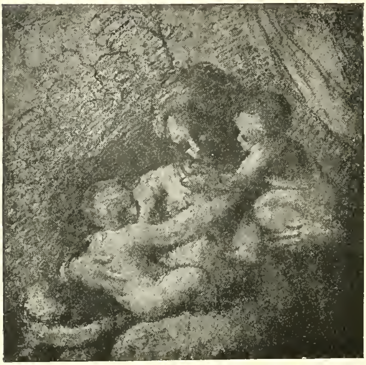
[1] *Opere*, ii. p. 177. Pungileoni, i. p. 111.

[2] *Arte italiana del Rinascimento*, pp. 356–357.

[3] *Correggio*, pp. 138 and 326.

[4] *Descriptive and historical Catalogue of the Pictures in the National Gallery*, p. 6. London, 1892.

[5] *Vite*, vi. p. 477.



CHARITY.
In the Louvre.

In curious contrast to the facility with which the most unlikely works have been assigned to the master, the authenticity of certain pictures unquestionably by his hand has been repeatedly attacked and called in question. The most hotly contested of these examples at one time was the *Virgin adoring the Infant Christ*, which was given by the Duke of Modena to Cosimo II. de' Medici, and has been in the Uffizi since 1617.[2] Mengs, probably without any such intention, seems to have prepared the way for later assailants by pointing out what he considered a deficiency of the power usual in Correggio's works, and a carelessness in the composition, and in the treatment of the draperies.[3] Meyer, in his turn, admitted a certain meticulous and artificial quality in the execution, and an excessive softness in the colour, but recognised the master's hand, notably in the lively action.

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[1] Tiraboschi, vi. pp. 285–286. Pungileoni, ii. p. 155. M. A. Gualandi, *Memorie originali italiane*, series ii. p. 171.

[2] Vasari, *Vite*, iv. p. 18, n. 1.

[3] *Opere*, ii. p. 173.

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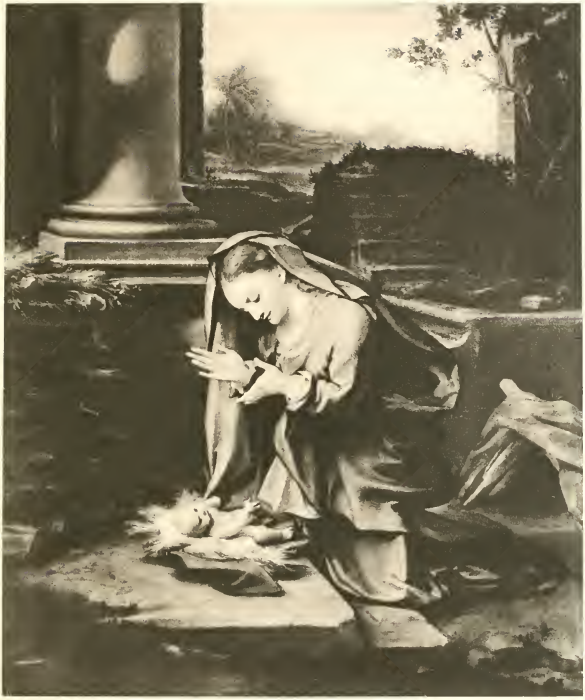
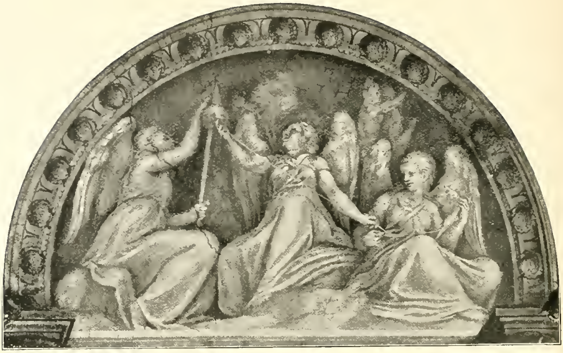


The Virgin, kneeling on a step, raises her hands with a gesture of adoration over the Babe, who lies before her on a linen cloth laid over a bundle of straw. The light is concentrated chiefly on the radiant little body of the naked Child, and the head and hands of the Madonna, but there is a want of fusion and equality in the gradations of her head. The folds of the draperies are broadly treated, but betray a certain amount of effort, and the chord of colour struck by the red robe, the blue mantle, and its pale green lining, does not vibrate in perfect harmony. The colour, indeed, is the weak point in this picture, but, on the other hand, the composition and action are altogether delightful! The Babe (a masterly essay in foreshortening) reveals his instinctive emotion in the agitated gesture of the little arm he stretches out to his mother, while she, hanging over him, unclasps her exquisitely rendered hands, which seem to exclaim even more eloquently than her face: "Is there anything in all the world so beautiful?"

The background, though a little chilly as opposed to the warm tones of the Virgin's figure, is very original in conception. The scene is laid in a ruined temple, with a large column to the left, at the base of which a heap of wood is piled. To the right are the crumbling remains of a flight of steps, between the shattered stones of which grasses and plants have sprung up. Beyond stretches a vaporous background of hills, and trees, among them the flexible stem of a tall palm that sways in the wind. Although the tone of the picture has lowered a good deal in parts, destroying the general harmony to a great extent, it must be admitted that it was one of the master's least pleasing essays in colour from the beginning. He seems to have aimed at rendering a certain effect of morning light which he failed to carry out altogether successfully.

But, as Horace reminds us: "Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus."

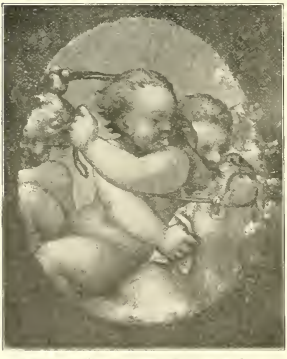


THE FATES. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER IX

THE FRESCOES IN SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA

THE CHURCH AND MONASTERY—CORREGGIO RECEIVES THE COMMISSION—THE SIEGE OF PARMA—THE FRESCOES OF THE DOME AND APSE—DECORATIONS OF THE NAVE—THE LUNETTE OF ST. JOHN—"SS. PLACIDUS AND FLAVIA"—"THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS"



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.

OUR painter returned to Parma in the spring of 1520. It is very probable that, knowing he would have to spend a considerable time in the city, working for the Benedictines, and missing the pleasant intercourse of his home and family, he pressed on the marriage already arranged. His wife was one Girolama Merlini, born early in 1503, and consequently, a girl of barely seventeen when she married Correggio.

She was the daughter of Bartolomeo Merlini *de Braghetis*, who died seven months after her birth, and of Antonia Bellesia, a member of a wealthy country family. Pungileoni was much exercised by the fact that in June, 1518, she made a will, leaving her property to her uncle and aunt, Giovanni and Lucia Merlini.[1] The natural inference seems to be that she was in delicate health, an assumption which is further supported by her early death in 1529. Nothing is known of her beyond these meagre details. We may therefore pass over the romantic flights of those who have expatiated on the beauty of her person and the goodness of her heart. The attractive type of the Madonnas painted by Correggio after 1518 is the sole indication we possess that love had influenced the painter's choice on the one hand, and inspired the ideal sweetness of the face he immortalised on the other.[2]

Why Pungileoni's assertion that the marriage took place in 1520 has been disputed we cannot understand. It is known that on July 26, 1521, Correggio received the dowry of 251 ducats assigned to Girolama, *already his wife*. A more conclusive evidence still (unless we make the perfectly groundless assumption that there had been some misconduct before the marriage, or that the first child was born prematurely) is to be found in the birth-certificate of Correggio's eldest son, Pomponio, who was born September 3, 1521. The parents must therefore have married before the end of 1520.

Besides this son, of whom we shall have more to say later, Correggio's wife bore him three daughters: Francesca Letizia, born December 6, 1524; Caterina Lucrezia, born September 24, 1526; and Anna Geria, born rather more than a year afterwards.[3] The two latter died in infancy; the first became the wife of Pompeo Brunorio, and lived to a fairly advanced age.

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[1] Pungileoni, i. p. 105; ii. pp. 150-151. Magnanini, pp. 58 and 61. The brothers, Bartolomeo and Giovanni Merlini, married two sisters, Antonia and Lucia Bellesia.

[2] The following note occurs in the *Inventory* of the Farnese collection, compiled about 1680: "A woman seated on a Roman chair, in a white dress, with a black over-dress, and yellow and black sleeves; she rests her right hand on the arm of the chair, and holds a book in her left. Said to be a portrait of Correggio's wife, by himself." The statement is quite without foundation. V. G. Campori, *Cataloghi ed inventari*, p. 297.

[3] Register of the Baptistery at Parma.

A clerical error made by the priest who on October 5, 1527, registered the advent of Anna Geria, born two days before, gave rise to the mistaken idea that Correggio had by this time lost his first wife and taken a second. Inscribing the name of the mother, the priest wrote *Jacobina* instead of Girolama. On this Mengs,[1] and his obsequious follower, Carlo Giuseppe Ratti,[2] founded the theory of a second marriage. Ratti, indeed, improved on the original statement. He says that the painter, "having lost his first wife, took a second, seduced by her beauty, which he afterwards learnt to loathe." If we also accept the statements of Father Maurizio Zappata, who created a Girolama, daughter of Pier Ilario Mazzola, to marry her to Correggio,[3] our painter figures almost as a rival of Mahomet II. All these fables were discredited by the discovery of a document dated March 20, 1528, in which Girolama Merlini is mentioned as still living. The document is a deed empowering the painter's father, Pellegrino Allegri, to administer the goods of his son and his daughter-in-law[4] during their absence from Correggio.

Externally, the church and monastery of San Giovanni Evangelista are far from imposing. The façade of the church, which was finished in the early years of the seventeenth century, is unpleasing. The side of the convent, which adjoins it, is covered with *baroque* ornament, and has a heavy, loaded appearance ; the other walls are bare and squalid. But, like a shell of mother-of-pearl just drawn from the sea, this coarse and heavy exterior hides a miracle of line and colour. Within the monastery, cloisters and rooms are covered with a rich embroidery of painted and sculptured decoration. The aisles of the church soar into space from pillars, the fluted columns of which terminate below in carved and painted inscriptions ; the capitals seem to unfold their calices like flowers, in clusters of rich and graceful foliation ; the choir-stalls are magnificently carved and inlaid ; the ribbing of the vaults, the friezes, the chapels, the altars, the cupolas, the tribune, all gleam with gilded and painted reliefs. Not a corner has escaped the decorative ardour of those who planned and those who carried out the work; a glorious band of artists laboured here for half a century to satisfy the devout ambition of the Benedictines.

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[1] *Opere*, ii. p. 137.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 128.

[3] See Tiraboschi, vi. p. 242. Pungileoni, ii. p. 8.

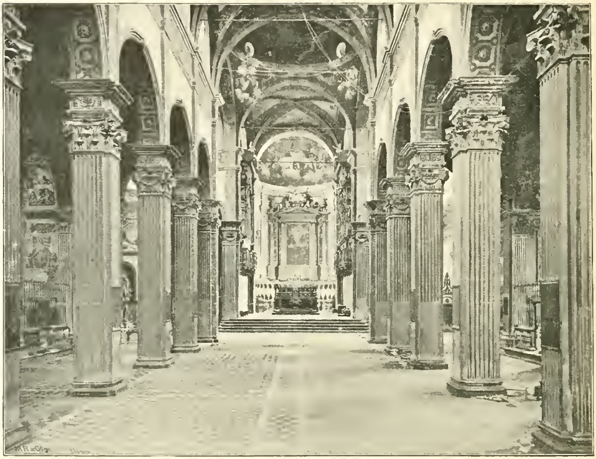
[4] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 242. Pungileoni, i. p. 200 *et seq.*

It appears from documents in the monastic archives which lie before us, that the brethren gave themselves up with almost feverish energy to the reconstruction and embellishment of their buildings during the last twenty years of the fifteenth century. They were evidently bent on making their monastery equal to the most magnificent of such structures. Artists from Como, Reggio, and Pontremoli worked under their direction, while Antonio d' Agrate wove a network of pillars in the cloisters, and covered doors and windows with sculptured ornament. Meanwhile Guglielmo of Tolosa cast new bells, Master Damiano carved chests to contain "the vestments of cloth of gold," Damiano da Moile illuminated and bound the beautiful choir-books, Antonio and Gian Giacomo da Berceto embroidered copes and chasubles, Jacopo Loschi painted banners, and Master Alessio a variety of altar-pieces.

All this activity increased rather than diminished with the dawn of the new century. One Giovanni, a potter, modelled the terra-cotta cornice; Master Guglielmo, a German, painted the glass for the windows; Cesare da Reggio decorated the vault of the sacristy. Meanwhile the plans for enlarging the church were drawn out. Before this undertaking had been entrusted to him (1510), Master Bernardino da Torchiara had proved himself an architect of parts in other works of importance. Scarcely had he and Pietro Cavazzolo begun their task when some of the leading families of the city offered contributions, or bought chapels as yet unfinished. The work went on apace. Antonio d' Agrate continued to carve the more delicate ornament himself, at the same time directing a troop of craftsmen, whose noisy hammers scaled and chipped the rough stone into the form of huge columns, cornices, pilasters, and altars within the church, and well-heads and fountains in the cloisters.

The intense anxiety of the Benedictines to see the work completed showed itself in the rapidity with which the various operations were carried out. While as yet the interior of the church was a perfect forest of beams, scaffoldings, and cords, the decorators began their work. Cesare da Reggio commenced, perhaps, on the frieze of the transept, Pietro Ilario and Michele Mazzola frescoed the chapel of the Zangrandi with compositions which have now disappeared, and finally Marc' Antonio Zucchi, "master of perspective," carved and inlaid the choir stalls.[1]

The monastery has been turned into a barrack, and presents a melancholy spectacle! Rain, hail, and wind have worked their will on the phantom remnants of painting and sculpture, hardly sparing even the marble reliefs of the door and windows of the chapter-house, carved with all the delicacy of antique cameos. The crumbling well is overgrown with moss; a feeble thread of water trickles from the



INTERIOR OF SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, PARMA.

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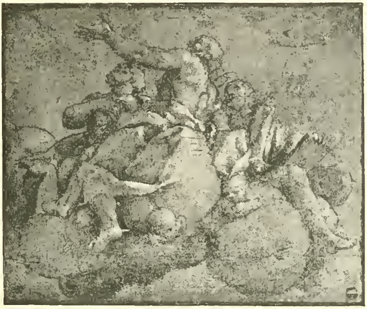
[1] We have carefully examined the books and papers of the archives of San Giovanni Evangelista, now in the Palatine Library at Parma. Many of the artists mentioned in these are also spoken of in Angelo Pezzana's *Storia di Parma*. Parma, 1837–1839.

fountain ; the ruined arches are propped here and there with rough wooden piles. The harsh sound of the bugle, and the loud voices of soldiers ring through the vaulted cloisters which once echoed to the chant of orisons, and the swell of an organ touched by Polidoro or Domenico della Musa. The frescoes of the corridors, cells, and great halls are hidden under a lavish coat of whitewash, and the elegant library, decorated with grotesques by Ercole Pio and Antonio Paganino vainly waits to be delivered from the vile uses of a magazine, and restored to its ancient dignity.

The church has fortunately suffered less severely. Time has dimmed the lustre of the gilded ornaments and paintings ; the chapel altars have been despoiled of many famous works by Correggio and Francia, but the structure has been well preserved by the care of the municipality, the government, and those who worship within its walls, and still arouses the wonder and admiration of visitors who come to see its frescoes by Allegri, Parmigianino, and Rondani, its pictures by Temperelli, Anselmi, and Girolamo Mazzola-Bedoli, and its precious terra-cottas by Antonio Begarelli, formerly in the monastery.



APOSTLES AND CHERUBS.
Study for the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista.
In the Vienna Museum.

The building operations were finished in 1519, and Bernardino da Torchiara then proceeded to plaster the walls of the nave and the cupola.

When did Correggio begin to work in the church ? It appears from the account-books of the monastery still extant, that no payments were made to him before July 6, 1520. On this date thirty gold ducats were handed over to him, "being the first payment for the painting of the cupola."[1] The monks had agreed to give him by instalments a sum amounting altogether to a hundred and thirty gold ducats, the price for which he had stipulated.

The details of further work are indicated in subsequent entries. We find from these that the artist engaged to decorate the tribune of the apse for sixty-five ducats; to gild the frieze and cornices, or cause them to be gilded, for five ducats;[2] to ornament the pillars supporting the cupola, and the candelabra beneath, for six ducats; finally, to paint the frieze running round the *body of the church* (*i.e.*, the nave, with the pillars, the archivolts, and *all other spaces*) for sixty-six ducats, as agreed with Father Basilio on the Feast of All Saints, 1522. The total expense incurred by the Benedictines for the frescoes amounted, therefore, to two hundred and sixty-two ducats.

In the account of payments made from time to time, which appears on the opposite page, we find that Correggio received six ducats, in April, 1521, together with a colt worth eight ducats. Other disbursements follow in 1522, between April 18 and May 19, and between May 28 and July 28. In 1523 he obtained further payments on January 20, March 13, and June 8. Finally, in 1524, he was paid twenty-five ducats on January 4, and the last twenty-seven a few days after, upon which he gave a formal receipt for all sums due to him, as follows: "I, Antonio Lieto of Correggio, painter, have, on this 23rd day of January, 1524, received from Don Giovanni Maria of Parma, monk and cellarer of the monastery of San Giovanni Evangelista of Parma, twenty-seven gold ducats, on behalf of the said monastery, and am hereby fully paid and recompensed for my paintings in the said church, and I therefore declare myself to be contented and satisfied and paid in full, in the presence of Don Onofrio, monk in the said monastery, in token of which I have written the above with my own hand."[1]

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[1] Archives of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma, preserved in the Palatine Library. Book 306, from the year 1519 to 1528; fols. 85 and 86. See also fol. 189 of book 313.

[2] Pungileoni (ii. pp. 173-174), Meyer (p. 460), and others read the words in the document from which we quote *cupola grande*, instead of *capela grande*. The error is a serious one, tending, as it does, to the confusion of the apse with the cupola. The latter is called the *cuba* in the document

Among all the works described we find no mention of the lunette with St. John writing the Apocalypse, nor of the two canvases of the *Descent from the Cross*, and the *Martyrdom of St. Placidus*, to which we shall return presently, nor of certain vanished frescoes attributed to the painter by various writers.

Pungileoni,[2] relying on the assertion of Father Mazza (derived in the first instance from Tiraboschi,[3] and unsupported by any documentary evidence) believed Correggio to have worked in the monastery in 1519, and accepted the opinion of Casapini, who attributed to him the fresco of the small dome in the dormitory, representing the apotheosis of St. Benedict. There was somewhat more plausibility in the ascription to the master of a decoration of children and foliage painted in a niche near the garden of the novices, which Meyer thought might be the work of some scholar of Correggio's.[4] The genii in monochrome on the soffit of the arch are certainly not by the master. They are ill-drawn, and awkwardly posed; but it is not so certain that he did not paint those in the interior of the niche, who are frolicking in a Mantegnesque trellis-work of foliage. The foreshortenings are bold and confident, the little bodies plump and sturdy, the eyes sparkle, the faces beam with smiles. The head of the baby who looks up to the right is very Correggesque. The fresco has been cruelly re-touched, and is now so begrimed with dirt that it would have to be cleaned before it would be possible to give a decisive opinion as to its authorship.

Father Baistrocchi relates that while Allegri was painting at Parma, he and his pupil Rondani were summoned to the wealthy abbey of Torchiara, for which Marc' Antonio Zucchi also made some valuable furniture, now preserved in the Museum of Antiquities. He supports his statement as follows: "In one of the rooms of the abbey, that nearest to the door opening on to the cloister, there is a frieze, very pleasingly decorated, with children leading a goat to the sacrifice; one holds a swallow in his hand."[1] This frieze, which has now disappeared, was afterwards attributed to Rondani,[2] and it is not improbable that Correggio's share in it was limited to preparing the design and giving some few suggestions to his disciple.

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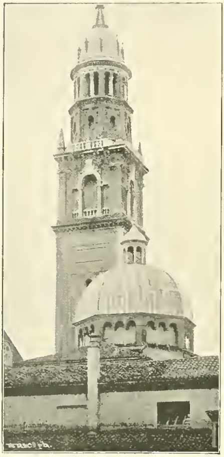
[1] The book containing this receipt, and other references to Correggio's work, has disappeared. Fortunately, however, Pungileoni transcribed the more important items. (Pungileoni, ii. pp. 170, 171.)

[2] *Op. cit.* i. p. 90; ii. p. 126.

[3] *Op. cit.* vi. p. 259.

[4] Meyer, pp. 129 and 130. Ratti's statement that Correggio was at Parma as a lad, living *quasi domestico* with the Benedictines, is purely a fable. (Pungileoni, ii. p. 130.)



CUPOLA AND TOWER OF SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, AT PARMA.

The frescoes in San Giovanni Evangelista were not executed with that despatch and continuity both monks and painter had hoped for. The work was hindered by various domestic troubles which harassed the artist, and was further interrupted by the grave political disasters, which burst on Parma with all the devastating violence of a hurricane.

When, after the famous battle of September 13, 1515, Francis I. annexed the duchy of Milan, Parma and Piacenza also fell into his hands. Leo X. feigned submission at first, but in his heart he was by no means reconciled to the loss of these two important cities. In 1521 he entered into a league with Charles V., the Florentines, and the Duke of Mantua, on the understanding that he was to be allowed to seize the two cities, and take Ferrara from the Estensi. These compacts and intrigues were not so discreetly carried through, but that Lautrec, the French King's Governor-General in Lombardy, got wind of them. He at once increased the garrison of Parma, and occupied Busseto and Cristoforo Pallavicino's territory.

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[1] *Notizie dei pittori*, &c. MS. no. 1106 in the *Miscellanea* in the Palatine Library at Parma. See the biographies of Correggio and of Rondani.

[2] Pungileoni, i. p. 91; ii. pp. 130, 131.

Prospero Colonna, the *Condottiere* of the allies, promptly advanced upon Parma. Towards the end of July he was encamped by the bridge over the Enza. But the French were too much on the alert for him to attempt any decisive attack. They strengthened their position by receiving Federigo Gonzaga, Lord of Bozzolo, into the city, with five thousand Italian foot-soldiers, and Tommaso Fois, Lord of Lescruns, with four hundred lances. Baffled in their attempt upon Parma, the confederates withdrew the bulk of their forces upon Milan. Cremona then revolted in her turn against the French dominion, compelling all the royalists to hasten thither from Parma. Scarcely had they left the city, when Vitello Vitelli, with a small body of pontifical troops, came by on his way from Modena to Piacenza. The citizens hailed him as a heaven-sent liberator, destined to free them from the French tyranny, and called upon him to enter their town. Thus did Parma return to the Papal See. Francesco Guicciardini was appointed governor for the Pope, and sent to receive the oath of allegiance on Leo's behalf.

ABBEY OF TORCHIARA NEAR PARMA

But the troubles were not yet over. Federigo Gonzaga, finding the way closed against his contemplated return, made up his mind to a bold stroke. He appeared suddenly before the walls of Parma on December 20, and began to bombard the city. The Parmese were filled with dismay; but for the courageous exhortations of the governor, they would, no doubt, have surrendered.[1] But the memory of past misery, and the example of the little garrison, who met the assault with the utmost steadiness, inspired them with confidence, and courage followed in its wake. The nobles, the populace, the clergy, the very women flocked to the walls, and fought with such determined heroism that Federigo, beaten back, and dismayed at the havoc wrought among his followers, fled from the field.

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[1] Fr. Guicciardini, *Storia d' Italia*, book xiv. chapters ii.–iv. Buonaventura Angeli, *Storia di Parma*, book v. pp. 482–510. Parma 1591. L. A. Muratori, *Annali d' Italia al* 1521. Amadio Ronchini, *La Steccata di Parma*, and *Diploma di Cittadinanza a danno dei defensori di Parma nel* 1521. (*Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di storia patria per le provincie parmensi*, i. pp. 175–179; viii. p. 405 *et seq.*)

Correggio was not in Parma while these events were taking place. Those who have supposed him to have returned to his native place "to escape the tumult and discomforts of the siege" not only say what is false, but dishonour his memory. Correggio did not flee. A comparison of dates proves that he was in his native place at the outbreak of the war, where he naturally remained until its conclusion.

In April, 1521, he received certain sums of money and a colt from the Benedictines, as we have seen. In the middle of May, the diploma of affiliation to, and spiritual communion with the brotherhood, as a lay member was conferred upon him. In the so-called *gracious* letter, he is called *egregio viro magistro Antonio Laeto de Corigia.*[1] In July, before Prospero Colonna had appeared upon the banks of the Enza, he had returned to his native city, where, as we know, his wife's dowry was formally handed over to him on the 26th day of the month. His son Pomponio was born there on September 3, and there, on September 18, he released Francesco degli Affarosi from his duties as his representative in the action he had brought against Romanello degli Aromani, who disputed his succession to the property left him by his maternal uncle; on November 8 he was one of the witnesses to a deed drawn up by the notary Nicolò Mazzucchi; and finally, on December 10, he was there confirmed in the possession of his uncle's property by sentence of Sigismondo Augustoni, judge of Correggio, a sentence which was set aside by the other judge, Ascanio Merli, who dismissed the suit, and condemned Allegri in costs.[2]

Towards the end of the year, peace reigned once more in Parma, but we do not find that Allegri returned at once to the city. It is, indeed, by no means probable that he would have gone on with his paintings throughout the winter in a dark church like that of San Giovanni, where cold and damp would have proved serious obstacles to the painter of frescoes. We have seen that the payments made by the Benedictines began again on April 18, 1522, and continued all the summer. This year was one of great activity for Correggio. In the autumn he received two important commissions, of which we shall speak more fully in a later chapter. These were the *Nativity* (*La Notte*), which took him to Reggio on October 14, and the frescoes of Parma Cathedral, formally entrusted to him on November 2. It is evident that the work already executed for the Benedictines had excited the liveliest applause and expectation. Family affairs called him back to Correggio early in 1523. On January 26, he was present at the drawing up of the deed, by which certain properties were divided between his wife and her uncle, Giovanni Merlini.[1] He then returned to the tranquil activity of his life at Parma, where he seems to have worked uninterruptedly until 1525.

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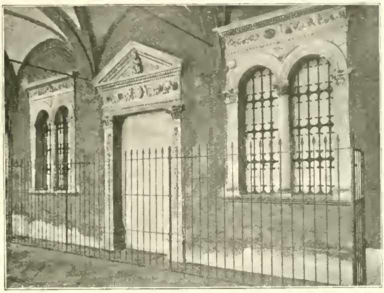
[1] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 263.

[2] Pungileoni, i. p. 128; ii. pp. 150 and 167; iii. p. 60. Notes in the Antonioli MSS. in the archives of Correggio.

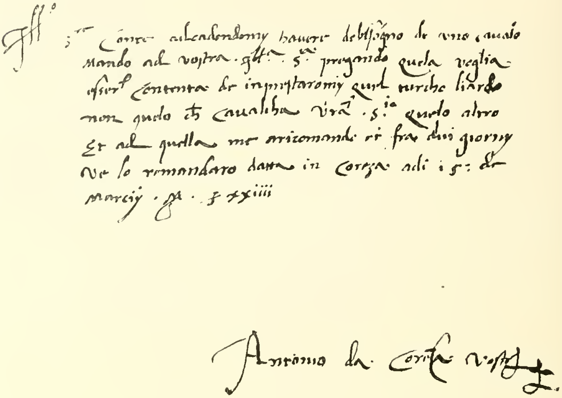


DOOR AND WINDOWS IN THE CHAPTER-HOUSE OF SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, PARMA.

In the communal archives at Novellara there is a letter addressed to Count Alessandro Gonzaga, the writer of which begs for the loan of a horse, promising to return it promptly. The letter is dated "Correggio, March 15, 1524," and signed by a certain Antonio da Correggio. It has hitherto been accepted without question as the painter's autograph, and figured as such at the Correggio Exhibition held at Parma in 1894. We have carefully compared the letter with

[1] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 239. Pungileoni, i. p. 186. Magnanini, pp. 100 and 118.

two authentic autographs, and have come to the conclusion that it was not written by Allegri, but by some namesake of his. We have already pointed out the probability of a like error in connection with a document referring to a certain *Antonio da Correggio* who was at Carpi in 1512. It should be borne in mind that in neither case can the Antonio in question be identified with Antonio Bernieri, the Correggese miniature painter, who was only eight years old in 1524.[1] The fact that the similarity of names nevertheless caused him to be confused with our painter at a later date, shows how easily such a mistake may have arisen in the case of some other Antonio of the same city. Who the person was who borrowed the horse from Gonzaga of Novellara is of very little moment. It is enough for us to know that it was not Correggio. We have now fixed the dates of Allegri's labours at this period, and may pass on to a consideration of the works themselves.



Ill.o S.re Come accadendomi havere debisogno de uno cavalo
mando ad vostra Ill.ma S.a pregando quella voglia
esser contenta de inpristaromi quel suo liardo
non quello ch' cavalcha V.ra S.ia quello altro
Et ad quella me aricomando et fra dui giorni
ve lo remandaro datta in Correza adi 15 de
marcij MDXXIIII

Antonio da Correza vostro S.

AUTOGRAPH SIGNED ANTONIO DA COREZA, MARCH 15, 1524.

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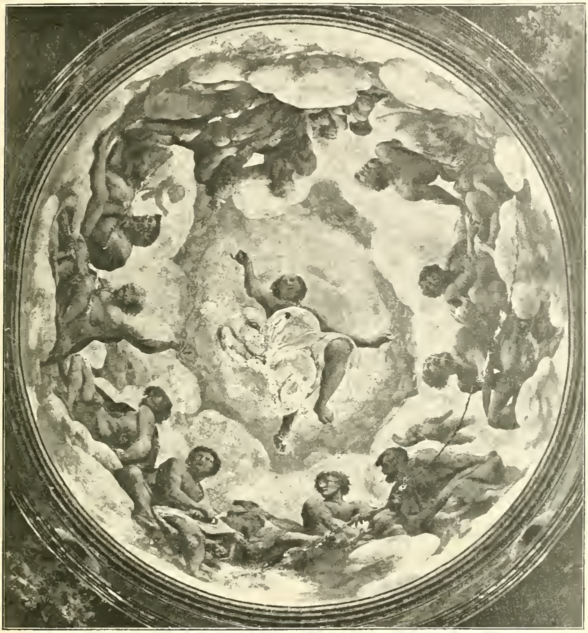
[1] Tiraboschi, vi. pp. 301, 302, and 327. Pungileoni, i. p. 271; ii. pp. 246, 268, and 271. Bigi, *Notizie di A. A.*, &c., pp. 71–78.

Dante, describing the giants of the ninth circle, the upper part of their bodies rising above the brink of the abyss, compares them to the towers flanking the *enceinte* of the ancient Sienese fortress, Montereggione. The divine poet's metaphor suggests itself at once to the mind at the first sight of the cupola of the Benedictine church. The spectator repeats he lines almost unconsciously:



GENERAL VIEW OF THE CUPOLA OF SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, PARMA, BY CORREGGIO

> “Come in sulla cerchia tonda
> Montereggion di torri si corona!”

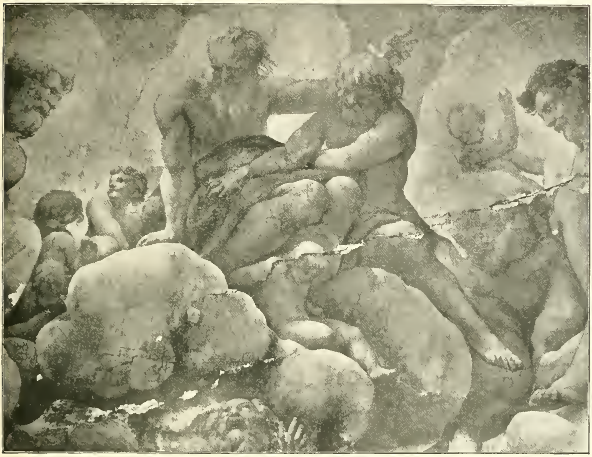
The colossal figures of the eleven Apostles are seated on clouds around the dome, in groups connected by tumultuous bands of youthful angels. The Redeemer soars heavenwards in the centre, encircled by a glory of cherubs, descending in regular gradation from the golden light above. Kneeling in an attitude of awe and adoration, the Evangelist of Patmos gazes upward at the divine vision.

Such is the solemn simplicity of the conception, that the whole scheme of decoration is described in these brief lines. But the various details will occupy us for some time. Strong in his mastery of form and expression, secure in the magic of his colour and the poetry of his sentiment, the young artist of twenty-six cast aside the limitations hitherto imposed on painting, and, for the first time in the history of art, applied a single composition to the decoration of a vast concave surface. Before his time, painters had been content with the spaces assigned them by architect and decorator ; they had, in fact, invoked their aid, dividing vaults and domes into a number of compartments, in each of which they painted a complete picture.

But how could the awe and terror of Correggio's conception have been expressed in the narrow limits thus marked out ? How could he have suggested the ecstatic rapture of the apocalyptic vision in the ascetic calm, the devout immobility, of single figures ranged in a line, each in its own setting ?

The aged St. John, with flashing eyes, and beard and hair "as white as wool," is on the summit of the hill of Patmos, meditating on the book his symbolic eagle bears upon its outspread wings. His thoughts are of the Saviour, and of his brethren the Apostles who have gone before him. He alone survives of the heroes who received the Messiah's words, and carried them throughout the world. Rapt and contemplative, thought turns to vision in his brain. He sees them all in the luminous sky above, and, falling on his knees, clasps his tremulous knotted hands, adoring his ascending Lord. Christ, "like unto a son of man," is clothed in a long white garment, because "he that overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment." "His eyes are as a flame of fire ; his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace ; and his voice as the sound of many waters."

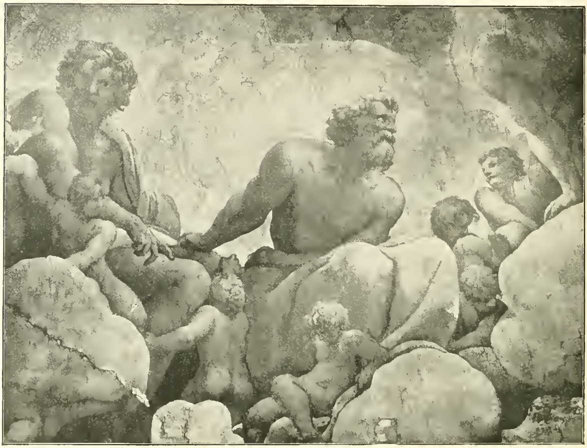
The heads of Christ and of the Evangelist have certain Mantegnesque traits, but they are more broadly conceived and painted than the types of the Vincenzan master. There is a likeness between them, though one is fair and youthful, the other a hoary old man. The one is animated with the serene joy of victory over the world and death, while the other betrays the amazement of him who beholds things unspeakable. The figure of St. John is badly placed, however. It is behind the spectator when he looks upward at the Saviour from the supposed point of sight, and as the feet of the Evangelist rest against the cornice, his figure is almost entirely concealed by the latter. The two aged Apostles seated on the clouds above St. John are brought together, in a sculpturesque group, by the interlacement of their arms, and by the folds of a green mantle thrown across their legs. The youthful angel with uplifted left arm above them forms part of the composition. To the left of the group, seated



APOSTLES AND ANGELS, BY CORREGGIO.
From the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma.

on, or emerging from the clouds, are three robust and joyous cherubs. The whole figure of one of the three appears, a beautiful study, remarkable for the novelty of the pose, and the radiant satisfaction of the face.

The next Apostle leans forward to look at his two companions, but his right arm is bent behind him, and touches the legs of a fourth saint. By this expedient, and the genial intervention of a cherub, seen from behind, who attempts to make his way between them, the painter masks, as it were, the isolation of this grand figure. The Apostles round the dome are eleven in number; representing them in groups of two, the painter was obliged to leave one figure in solitude. The third was the one selected. The yellowish mantle which covers his knees swirls in broad folds among the clouds below, to the great delight of an urchin with long fair curls, who has planted himself upon it, and holds



APOSTLES AND ANGELS, BY CORREGGIO.
From the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma.

on to it with both hands. The dark figure next in order stands out against a light background. His luxuriant hair and beard are of a warm chestnut colour. He looks straight in front of him, pointing with his right hand to St. John. An angel, obeying the sign, gazes earnestly at the Evangelist, and a second, rising to look, lays a little hand upon his shoulder with a gesture of confident affection. The neighbouring Apostle fixes his eager eyes on the Saviour, heedless of the cherub who plucks at his blue mantle. Below the group two angels plunge merrily into the wreaths of floating cloud.

In the open space dividing this group from the next a single angel hovers, bathed in vaporous light. Beyond rise two gigantic figures, forming one of the most beautiful passages in the composition. The first is seen in profile, his face in shadow. His beard and hair are dark and abundant; an ample green mantle is wound about his body. With uplifted hand he addresses the young Apostle beside him, a magnificent nude figure, seated, with all the impressive gravity of an antique god, on the yellow robe which two angels, hovering lightly among the clouds, hold up beneath him. He leans his left elbow on the shoulder of an attendant cherub; the *putto*, feeling the weight, supports himself in his turn on the back of another, whose little body bends beneath the double burden. The Apollo-like head, with its crisp fair hair, the brilliant eyes, the dignified attitude, the perfect modelling of the nude form, admirable in its sobriety and freedom from anatomical display, make up a type of manly beauty which might bear comparison with the finest examples of classic sculpture.[1]

Other angels, seated, or grouped among the large figures, or sporting joyously among the clouds, are carried round the whole circumference of the dome, like the flowers of a garland. Around the feet, between the legs, and under the blue mantle of the next Apostle, a richly coloured figure, with tawny hair and ruddy flesh-tints, several cherubs are clustered, absorbed in their own sports, like the genii that gather round the symbolic statue of the Nile. One of these clings to the Apostle's foot, and gazes upwards. The gentle expression of the saint who permits these innocent gambols is contrasted with the severe features and leonine head of his neighbour, who, seated and seen in profile, one hand resting on his hip, the other extended behind him, leans forward to look at St. John. The last two colossal figures are turned in the same direction. St. Peter, with snowy hair and beard and yellow mantle, which conceals but little of his form, holds the golden keys in his right hand, and raises the left towards heaven, pointing out the ascending Saviour to the Evangelist of Patmos, on whom St. Paul's eyes are likewise fixed. The latter, a perfectly nude figure, supports his chin on one hand. The cherubs approach this group, peering at them through the clouds, but they do not

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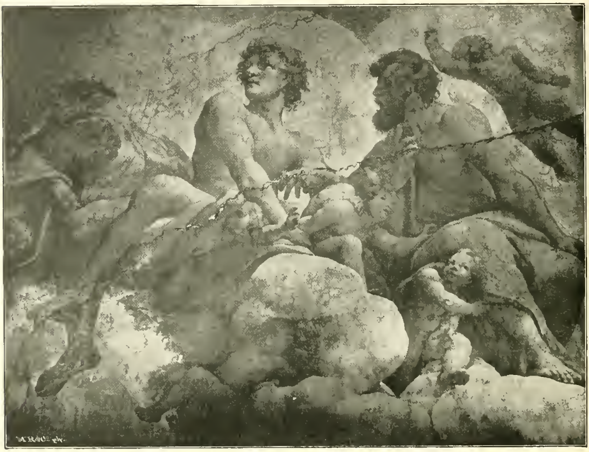
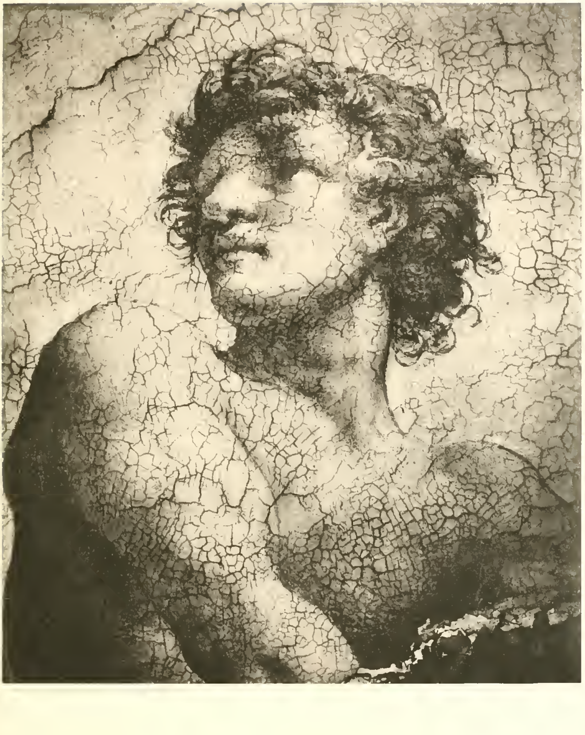
[1] There is a famous sketch by Correggio in red pencil of this Apostle and his attendant angels in the Louvre. In the fresco the painter altered the pose of the head. Another drawing of a group of three Apostles and several angels on clouds is in the Vienna Museum. It is not unlikely that it was a study made for this cupola, but abandoned in favour of some new idea. Herr v. Becherath of Berlin also owns a small drawing of the Apostle Paul with angels.



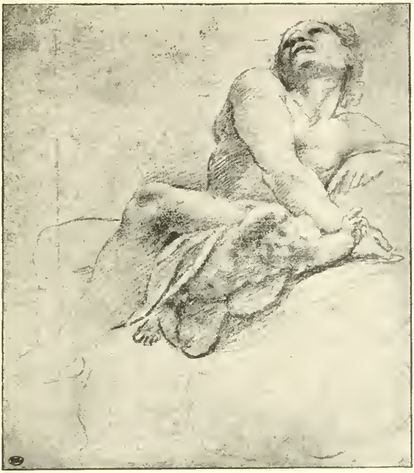
APOSTLES AND ANGELS, BY CORREGGIO.

From the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma.



clamber about them nor interpose between them with their accustomed gay assurance. The austerity of the two chief Apostles seems to hold them in awe.

The darkness which has reigned in this cupola for three and a half centuries, broken only by the scanty light of four small apertures, has prevented a proper appreciation of these frescoes, and indeed, if we may venture to say so, of Correggio himself. The famous Paolo Toschi and his scholars reproduced these, as well as all other frescoes by Correggio, first in water-colour and afterwards in engravings. But much as we admire their work, which is really remarkable, taking into account the fact that certain injured portions had to be translated, rather reproduced, it must be admitted that they very often made their own impressions, their own individuality, and the teachings of their school, do duty for a scrupulous adherence to the sentiment and features of the original. A certain academic air pervades their reproductions, giving a softness and polish to the whole which students have accepted as characteristic of the master, and which have done much to justify the Arcadian title of *the painter of the Graces,* as applied to Correggio. In

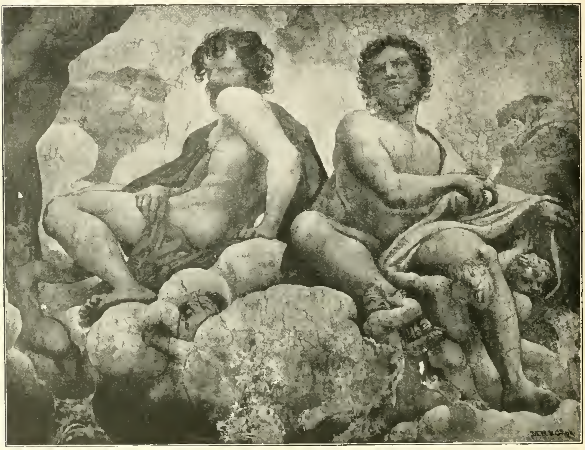


STUDY OF AN APOSTLE FOR THE CUPOLA OF SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, PARMA, BY CORREGGIO

In the Louvre

reality, few works of the Italian Renaissance are more vigorous in conception, expression, and execution than the decorations of this cupola.

The figures of the Apostles and of the Redeemer preserve the just proportions of muscle in the vast scale on which they are designed, and are never weak nor slovenly in treatment. Michelangelo obtained a muscular grandeur and vigour by an ostentatious display of anatomical reliefs, and created a school which ended, as Benvenuto Cellini said of Bandinello, by making *sacks of melons* instead of figures. In Correggio's more sober creations, strength and solemnity join hands with dignity and beauty. There are no exaggerated attitudes, no gestures out of harmony with those great spirits who spread the word of God throughout the nations. Although in the rendering of their nude forms the painter has discarded the timid and austere composure of the

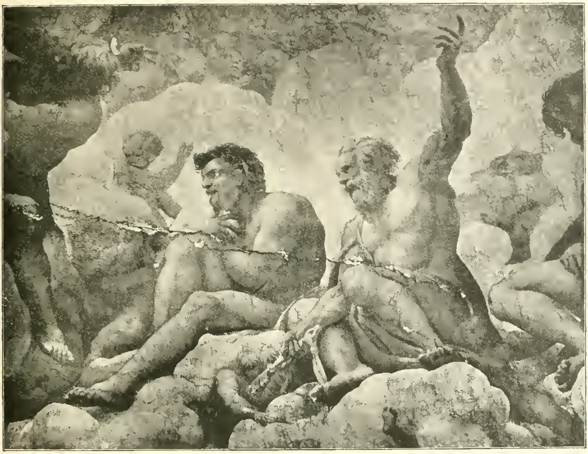


APOSTLES AND ANGELS, BY CORREGGIO

From the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma.

fifteenth-century tradition for the highest development of masculine vigour, his saints lose nothing of the dignity proper to their character.

The riotous band of children, no longer anæmic and contemplative, but brimming over with health and merriment, are in perfect harmony with the colossal forms of the Apostles. The agile movements of their robust little bodies emphasise the power of the saintly giants, because we recognise in the one development the germ of the other, and see in these youthful forms a promise of the vigorous manhood realised in the pioneers of Christianity.

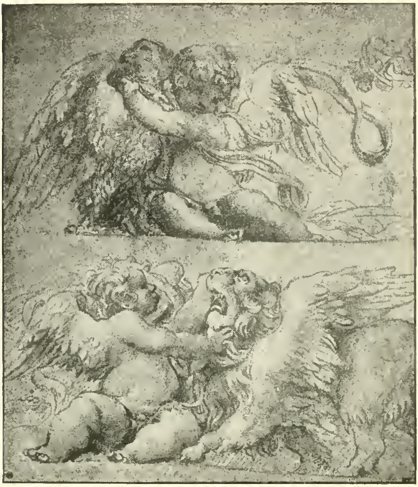


APOSTLES AND ANGELS, BY CORREGGIO

From the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma.

The mellow tones of the carnations, so life-like that the blood seems to be circling beneath the painted epidermis, the lofty gaze of the thoughtful saints, the lively eyes and smiling faces of the vivacious *putti*, the movement of the air that stirs their fair locks, the long hair, beards, and mantles of the Apostles, all combine to kindle the "fire of life" in this miraculous vision.

The full enjoyment of its beauties has been reserved for our own times. For the last three hundred and seventy years the student of these frescoes has had to contend against the difficulties of distinguishing forms and colours in the semi-obscurity of the dome. In 1894 it occurred to us that a circle of some hundred little electric lamps concealed in the cornice would illumine and reveal the masterpiece. The idea was favourably received and warmly supported by Dr. Giovanni Mariotti, to whom the execution of the project and the gratitude of all admirers of Correggio are alike due. The light, as it gradually extends throughout the dome, "gives it the appearance of a fragment of heaven suddenly disclosed in the sacred darkness of the temple," and when "it begins to diminish and die out, it seems as if Christ, the Apostles, St. John, the angels, the clouds, the whole vision in short, were fading away in the azure firmament, whence but now it drew near to fill our souls with wonder and delight."[1]



THE SYMBOLS OF THE EVANGELISTS, BY CORREGGIO.
Study for the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma.
In the Louvre.

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[1] E. Panzacchi, *Il Correggio* (in *Natura ed Arte*, year iii., nos. 18 and 21. Milan, 1894). Another article by this writer appeared in the volume *Al rezzo*, pp. 115–123. Rome, 1882.

In the spaces between the four round windows in the frieze, Correggio painted the symbols of the Evangelists amidst a network of festoons and ornaments. "There were," says the writer of the Apocalypse, "four beasts. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast was like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." These symbols are not represented motionless and isolated as in earlier paintings and sculpture, but are grouped in couples, and show a friendly affection one for the other. St. Matthew's angel tenderly embraces St. John's eagle. In another space, the eagle rests his beak against the muzzle of St. Luke's winged calf, and the latter is seen again with St. Mark's lion, their heads laid lovingly together. Finally, the angel re-appears, in the act of caressing the lion.[1] The spirit of Correggio, who aimed at life and motion in everything he touched, manifests itself even in these symbols, which are almost entirely hidden from spectators below.

We have carefully examined each portion of the fresco here described. The technique is much broader and more confident than in the decorations of the Camera di San Paolo. The high lights are nearly always put in upon the dark ground, and it is only here and there that the shadows are strengthened by additional strokes of the brush on the prepared surface. The carnations, especially those of the faces, are obtained by the perfect fusion of tints on the palette, and are entirely without traces of the successive touches affected by Titian and his followers. There is not a single break, not a single passage where the brushing may be clearly distinguished ; there is the same absolute fusion of tints as in glass or enamel painting. And yet the application of the same methods the painter made use of in his small easel pictures to these Cyclopean heads and bodies has not resulted in any loss of their proper energy. Though a good deal damaged, they are still as vigorous as ever from a distance.

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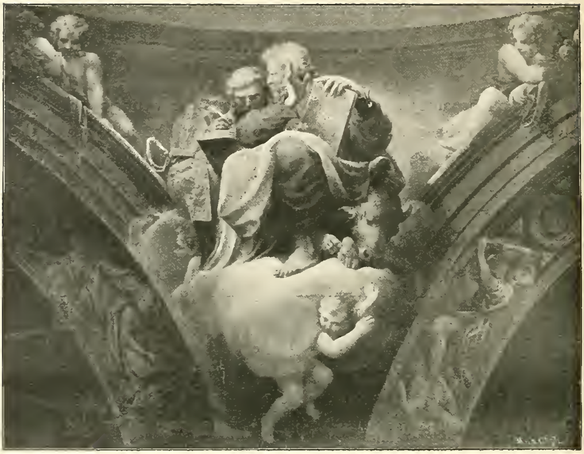
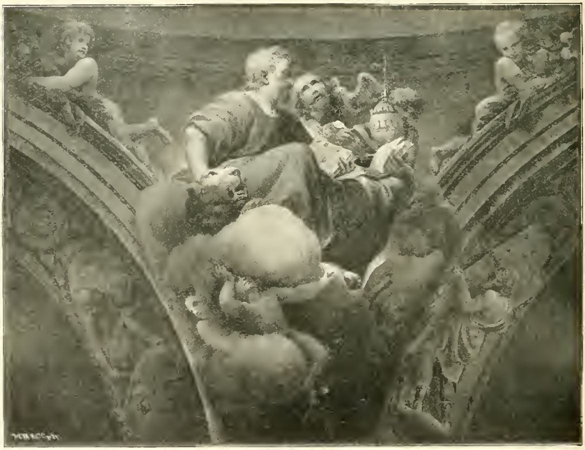
[1] There is a drawing in the Louvre of the two groups in which the angel appears. The *Catalogue sommaire des dessins, cartons, pastels, etc.* (Paris, no date), makes no mention at all of the paintings, nor of the symbolic meaning of the drawings, which are thus described : *Enfant ailé assis, tenant un aigle. Enfant tenant un lion ailé.* Another drawing of an Apostle is described as *Étude d'homme nu porté par un ange.* As the reader may suppose, this catalogue is practically useless.

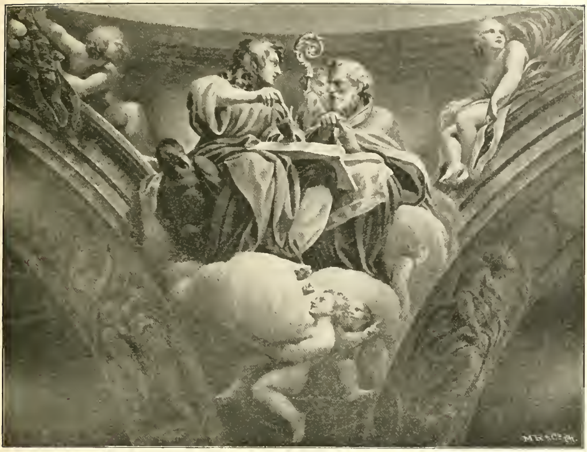


ST. LUKE AND ST. AMBROSE, BY CORREGGIO.

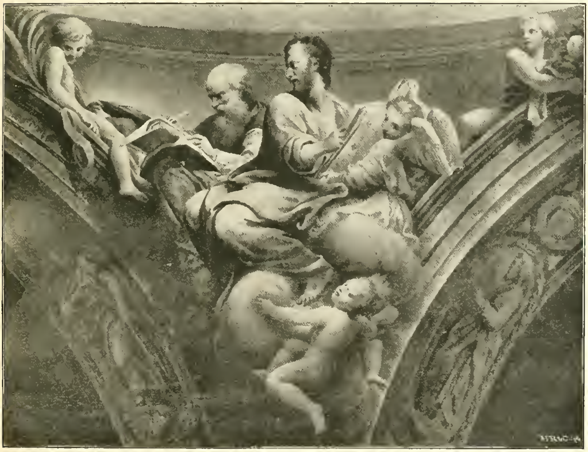


ST. MARK AND ST. GREGORY, BY CORREGGIO.

Pendentives of the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma.



ST. JOHN AND ST. AUGUSTINE, BY CORREGGIO.



ST. MATTHEW AND ST. JEROME, BY CORREGGIO.
Pendentives of the Cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma.

The surface of the dome is disfigured by a long crack, wide enough for the insertion of a man's hand, which runs along about two thirds of the circumference. Portions of the painting have scaled off; others are defaced by a perfect network of small cracks, and in others, again, the ground has crumbled away, leaving the first rough casting of the plaster exposed. To these local injuries another has been added, which has impartially sullied the entire surface. The smoke from incense and flambeaux, especially during the great funeral ceremonies held beneath the dome, many of them lasting several days, and entailing the constant burning of some thousands of candles, has covered the frescoes with a dark greasy coating, blackening the shadows, and quenching the lights. If the hand is passed along the surface, it brings away a thick layer of dirt, and the colours beneath re-appear in all their primitive vivacity.

A thorough and careful cleaning of the whole work (a project already mooted) would be of the greatest advantage to the upper portion of the dome; but, unhappily, it could do little to restore the ruined pendentives. The damp has penetrated to these from the small windows above; they are bleached and mildewed beyond recall, and show large patches where the colour has crumbled away entirely. The fragments that remain intact give some idea of their original grandeur. In the eight angles formed by the junction of the arches with the fillet above, eight cherubs recline along the cornice on palm-branches, or festoons of fruit and foliage. These youthful angels are supremely beautiful. Their faces beam with smiles. I can recall no more exquisite rendering of infant loveliness. In each of the pendentives an Evangelist and a Doctor of the Church converse together, seated upon clouds in which groups of cherubs disport themselves. Standing under the centre of the dome, and facing the nave, we have in the pendentive to the left St. Luke, seated on the calf. He wears a blue underdress and a violet mantle; one hand is laid on the book upon his knee, the other is held behind his ear, to enable him to catch the words of St. Ambrose, who, attired in episcopal robes of white embroidered with gold, reads aloud to him; an angel bears the mitre. In the pendentive to the right, St. Mark, in a tunic of dull reddish brown, and bright blue mantle, leans his right hand on the tawny back of the lion, and holds his book in the left. He is seated side by side with St. Gregory, who, attired in his pontifical robes, gazes heavenwards, pausing in his writing to await the words of the Holy Spirit which the evangelist pours into his ear. The tiara and crozier are carried by a little angel near the group.

The opposite pendentives have suffered less from the damp. In one St. John, a young man with fair hair flowing over his shoulders, dressed in a bright blue robe and red mantle, sits by the eagle, an open book upon his knee. He propounds certain questions to St. Augustine, marking them off upon his fingers. The bishop repeats the gesture, gazing attentively at his interlocutor. He wears a chasuble of golden tissue over his greenish robe, and an attendant cherub bears his mitre and pastoral staff.

An angel, who wears a pale green tunic, and whose wings are blue, holds a great book open before St. Matthew. The saint turns to see what the aged St. Jerome, a bald, white-bearded old man, has written. St. Jerome's cardinal's hat is held by the *putto* on the cornice, and not by the little attendant cherub of the other pendentives, his place being taken here by St. Matthew's symbolic angel. In this group again the colours of the draperies are soft and subdued.

The sobriety we noted in the nudities of the upper cupola displays itself here in the simplicity of the draperies. These Doctors and Evangelists with their thoughtful eyes and brows, worthy exponents of divine mysteries, are no less impressive than the Apostles above. The dignity of their attitudes has no parallel save in certain groups in the *Dispute of the Sacrament*, and Correggio here approaches Raphael very closely both in conception and sentiment.

Finally, at the bases of the soffits of the four great arches are eight oval garlands, encircling figures painted in a monochrome of sepia. These have scarcely ever been carefully studied; they are generally hastily glanced at, and dismissed as the work of pupils. Yet they are undoubtedly by the master's own hand. They represent *St. Joseph*, with the flowering rod; *Moses*, gazing in astonishment at the fire which burns without consuming the bush; *Elijah*, on the fiery chariot; *Daniel*, hovering unharmed among the flames of the furnace to which he was condemned by Nebuchadnezzar; *Jonah*, cast on shore by the whale, of which all we see is the enormous head; *Samson*, carrying away the gates of Gaza; *Abraham's Sacrifice*, and the *Death of Abel.*

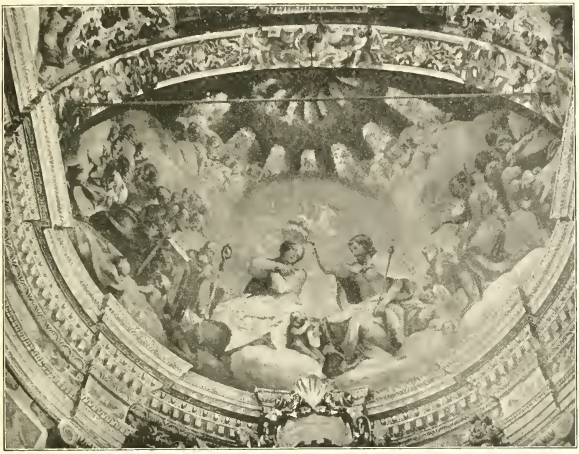
Above these sculpturesque forms of neutral tones and the simulated marble cornices, the more vivid colouring of the pendentives asserts itself in perfect harmony, vigorous, but nowhere crude and excessive. The painter was evidently careful to exclude red as far as possible from his scheme, and it appears only on small portions of the more distant objects; even this sparing use of the tint is further neutralised by deadening its tones. Blues, on the other hand, abound in infinite gradation, and greens, which are akin to the former in chromatic values. This predominance of cool colours gives extraordinary vigour and effect to the flesh-tints of the Apostles and cherubs, and an added radiance and transparency to the luminous clouds and golden sky in which the Saviour rises heavenward.

CHOIR STALLS IN SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, PARMA.

In his frescoes in Parma Cathedral, Correggio showed a greater mastery of technique. He solved the most difficult and intricate problems of foreshortening; he attained to the fullest expression of life, movement, and joyful emotion. But the tumult of figures, the excessive contortions of the bodies, the agitated play of the over-voluminous draperies, produce an impression of unrest, almost of discomfort. The spectator feels that one pair of eyes hardly suffice him for the admiration and comprehension of the whole, and he returns with a sensation of calm enjoyment to the contemplation of the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista.

In the account of money paid to Correggio for his works in the church, we find, immediately after the entries of expenses connected with the decoration of the cupola, a payment made to the artist for painting *the great chapel, i.e.* the tribune. A copy has, however, taken the place of the original fresco, of which only a few small fragments have been preserved.

In 1586 the Benedictines commissioned Cesare Aretusi, a Bolognese painter, born about the middle of the sixteenth century, to make a copy



APSE OF SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA, PARMA, BY CESARE ARETUSI, AFTER CORREGGIO.

of the fresco. In the following year the entire apse was demolished to enlarge the church, and Cesare, assisted by Ercole Pio and Giovanni Antonio Paganino, repainted the new tribune from the copy. Malvasia[1] and Ruta[2] declare that Aretusi, in his turn, had commissioned Agostino and Annibale Carracci to make the first copy from the original, of which Annibale had painted several studies six years before.[1] This was probably true. Certain large canvases by the Carracci, after the frescoes in the apse of San Giovanni, were in the Palazzo del Giardino at Parma until 1734.[2] They are now in the Naples Museum, and it seems probable that they served the purpose indicated by Malvasia and Ruta, for they are not studies of isolated figures or groups, forming pictures in themselves, but reproduce the painting in bands or strips, the figures being occasionally divided into halves at the edges of the canvas. When we further find that Agostino and Annibale were both in Parma in 1586, the chain of evidence is fairly complete.[3] We note with surprise the rapid decline of artistic sympathies. The Benedictines were indeed degenerate successors of those who had immediately preceded them. The vandalism which caused them to destroy a work of so much value rather than suffer any inconvenience in the exercise of their great religious ceremonies has been severely censured, but it has nevertheless found defenders. Among these we even find one of Correggio's biographers! "When," writes Pungileoni, "the people assembled, as was the pious custom of the age, to participate in the holy offices, the monks felt the necessity of throwing the choir further back, and giving up the space occupied by the tribune to the devout crowd." It may be asked why this should have been considered a sufficient reason for the destruction of a masterpiece. Could not some lateral chapel have been built close to the apse, on the ground occupied by the gardens? The arguments of the historian become yet feebler, when he adds, in justification of the offence, that there was every reason to be content with Aretusi's copy, "which several persons had believed to be the work of the master himself."[4] (*See* pp. 140 and 142.)

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[1] *Felsina pittrice*, i. p. 250; ii. p. 80. Bologna, 1884.

[2] *Guida ed esatta notizia ai forestieri delle pitture che sono nelle chiese di Parma*, p. 57. Parma, 1752.

Jesus, enthroned on clouds in a great nimbus of golden light, wrapt

[1] They are preserved in the Parma Gallery. Others are to be found in the Archiepiscopal Palace. See also Bottari, *Lettere artistiche*, ii. pp. 253 and 306; vii. p. 371; and Campori, *Cataloghi e inventari*, pp. 242 and 244.

[2] Malvasia, *op. cit.* i. p. 356.

[3] Malvasia, *op. cit.* i. pp. 268–270. In the Parma Gallery there is a picture painted by Agostino for the nuns of San Paolo, dated 1586. There is also an engraving by him, dated 1587, after Correggio's *Ecce Homo*, which was then in Parma.

[4] *Op. cit.* i. p. 135 *et seq.*; ii. p. 175 *et seq.*

in a white mantle, and bearing in his left hand a sceptre, raises his right hand to place a crown of stars on the Virgin's head. She wears a crimson robe and bright blue mantle, and bends towards the Saviour with an expression of gentle satisfaction, her arms crossed upon her breast. The half-length figures of St. Benedict and St. Maurus emerge from the clouds on either side of the group. Each saint is attended by a little angel, bearing the pastoral staff and mitre. Further to the right is the solemn figure of the kneeling Baptist, the cross in his hands. Near him an angel embraces the mystic lamb. On the opposite side St. John the Evangelist also kneels in adoration, the book and chalice in his hands, his eagle at his feet. Angels in every variety of joyful and animated attitude are scattered throughout the composition, and cluster thickly behind the two kneeling saints, singing and playing with rapturous energy. Above stretches another belt of clouds, from either end of which another band of angels emerges, and against the blue empyrean rise the eight concentric shafts of a Mantegnesque canopy of foliage, held in place by a semicircle of interwoven fruits and leaves. (*See* headpiece to Preface, p. v.)

The praises bestowed on Aretusi for this copy seem to us altogether excessive. The general effect is pleasing, but the work cannot stand the test of detailed examination. Comparing it with the two original figures of the Madonna and the Saviour which were saved from the ruin, and are now in the Palatine Library at Parma, we note at once how inadequately the copyist has rendered the smiling sweetness of the Virgin's face, how he has disfigured the nose of the Saviour, and how hard and angular the modelling of the breast has become under his hand.[1] Several of the heads in the two lateral groups of angels have been altered, and spoilt in the alteration, by Aretusi and his assistants, as we may see by comparing them with the Carracci copies, or better still, with certain other fragments of the original fresco, which, like the group of the two protagonists, have escaped destruction, and are now in Mr. Ludwig Mond's collection in London.

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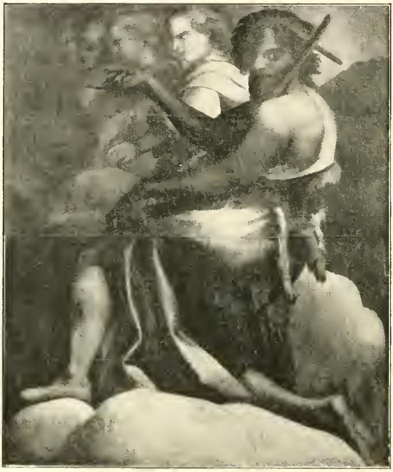
[1] There is a beautiful sketch by Correggio for the figure of the Virgin in the Louvre. It is in red chalk; the attitude differs slightly from that of the painted figure. This drawing may be identical with one which was at Modena in the last century. Tiraboschi, vi. p. 289.

Mengs and Tiraboschi tell us that some of the fragments passed into the hands of private collectors, and that in their time there were three of these in the possession of the Marchese Rondanini at Rome.[1] It is not improbable that these were the very fragments bought by Mr. Mond at the sale of the Dudley collection. (*See* pp. v. and 139.)

Correggio's share in the decorations of the nave, such as the frieze, the candelabra on the pilasters, the vaulting, and the archivolts, was limited to the designs, and perhaps to the execution of a few fragments as samples for his assistants. The fact of his having, in November, 1522, contracted to complete the work for sixty-six ducats, is by no means incompatible with the probability that the less important parts of the undertaking were intrusted to his pupils.



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, FROM A COPY BY THE CARRACCI, AFTER CORREGGIO.
In the Parma Gallery.

Rondani's hand is, in fact, to be recognised in the frieze; that of Anselmi is no less apparent in the arabesques of the vault, and it is futile to appeal to the less conclusive evidence of documents in support of Correggio's authorship, as do Baistrocchi[2] and Tiraboschi.[3] For once we find ourselves in perfect agreement with

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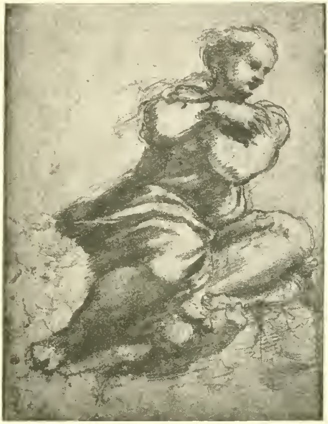
[1] Mengs, ii. p. 153. Tiraboschi, vi. p. 261.

[2] *Vite d'artisti*, MS. no. 1106, in the *Miscellanea*, in the Royal Library at Parma.

[3] *Op. cit.* vi. p. 261.

Father Resta, who says that Correggio designed the frieze, and that Rondani painted it.[1] The composition, with its agreeable diversity of coloured and monochromatic figures, is thoroughly Correggesque. In each of the spaces between the candelabra (on the capitals of which two cherubs hold up cartels with mottoes) a large figure of a prophetess or sibyl is painted in colours on either side. The centre is occupied by one of two designs in monochrome, which are repeated alternately the whole way round. The one represents a group of persons at a tomb; the other, a crowd assembled round an altar on the sacrificial fire of which a lamb is burning.

After a careful examination of the twelve compositions, we came to the conclusion that one among them was executed almost entirely by Correggio himself. This is the fourth on the right. What more likely, indeed, than that Correggio, after preparing the design, should have painted a sample to guide his disciple in the matter of colours and effects? This one compartment is remarkable for its freedom from the coarseness of execution noticeable in all the rest. The sibyls are beautiful and imposing figures, finely drawn, the eyes full of light and animation. One has a rapt expression, the other is calm and smiling. The grisaille shows none of the staccato brush-strokes of the remaining eleven. The tones are softer, more fused, and more equable.



THE CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN. BY CORREGGIO
Study for the Apse of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma
In the Louvre

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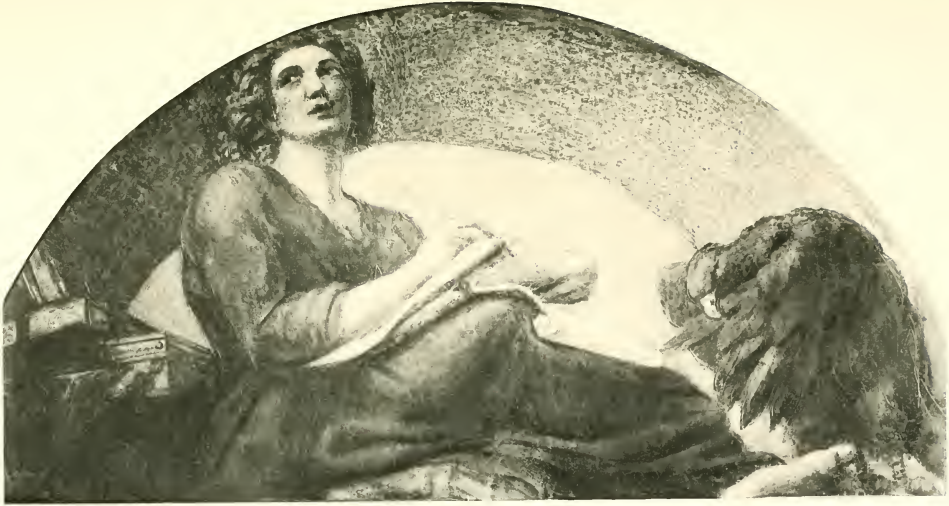
[1] *Indice del Parnasso dei pittori*, p. 68.

The minor ornamentation, on the other hand, we believe to have been left entirely to Anselmi, an artist greatly superior both in taste and culture to Rondani. It consists of a tracery of foliage, arms, and amphoræ, thickly interspersed with little figures of women, tritons, and animals ; the general effect is a little cold, perhaps, but delicate and accurate.

Criticism, constrained to negative the attribution of these frescoes to the master, who was certainly commissioned to paint them, gladly confirms the ascription to him of the magnificent lunette over the small door in the left transept. It represents St. John the Evangelist in his youth, his long hair parted in the middle, and flowing over his shoulders. He wears a robe of pale violet ; a crimson drapery is thrown across his legs. He is seated on the architrave, beside a carved stool, on which are two books, one of which has gilt edges and a binding of red velvet. On his knees is spread a long roll, in which he is about to write ; but he gazes upward, as if lost in mystic reverie, his eyes fixed on space, whence the divine voice addresses him : " I know thy works, and thy charity and thy faith, and thy ministry and thy sufferings." The astonishment of this beautiful upturned face is skilfully expressed in the slightly parted lips, and in the dilated pupils of the brilliant eyes.

The eagle is not represented as a quiescent and purely symbolic attribute of the Apostle. Turning his head, he plucks at one of his large wing feathers with his beak, an action which has caused him to be described by some writers as engaged in pluming and cleaning his feathers. The idea is a prosaic one, and Correggio's conception was, no doubt, of a very different order. He had evidently made careful studies from some living eagle. The accuracy of form, and freedom and variety of attitude displayed in his five renderings of the bird in this one church are conclusive as to this. It is no longer the stiff, heraldic eagle of traditional art, with which every painter, Raphael in his *Saint Cecilia* not excepted, had hitherto been satisfied ; but the bird itself, in all its fierce and terrible grace. Now it is known that the eagle occasionally plucks out a feather from its wings. This St. John's eagle does at the solemn moment when the Evangelist



bears witness to the power of God, and meditates on his glory and dominion throughout the ages. The eagle hastens to pull out the quill, for it is meet that the divine message should be written with the feather that has soared nearest to heaven.

Besides these numerous works in fresco, Correggio painted two pictures for the church, which are now in the Parma Gallery.

They were originally on the side walls of the fifth chapel to the right, where they are now replaced by two wretched copies,[1] and are said to have been painted for the founder of the chapel, Father Placido del Bono, of Parma, a member of the *Confraternità Cassinese*, and confessor to Pope Paul III.[2] They remained in their original place until 1796, in which year they were included in the first consignment of French plunder, and taken to Paris, whence they returned to Parma after the treaty of 1815.[3] Their preservation was in no sense due to the monks, who attempted to carry them off and sell them in the eighteenth century, and were only foiled in their design by the vigilance of the Del Bono family, who petitioned the duke to forbid the proposed removal.[4]

Placidus, son of the patrician Tertullus, moved by the preaching of St. Benedict, gave up home and wealth to follow his teacher. At Messina, whither he repaired to promulgate the ordinances of the saint, he was joined by his sister Flavia, and his brothers, Eutychius and Victorinus. Whilst they thus laboured to the great comfort and benefit of the community, Sicily was overwhelmed by a terrible incursion of barbaric hordes, waging war not only upon the inhabitants, but their creed. The brothers and their sister, animated by a heroic faith, were overawed neither by threats nor by martyrdom, which they suffered with great fortitude, rejoicing that their state of beatitude should be thus hastened.[1]

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[1] Several copies were made from these pictures, two of which are in the Prado at Madrid.

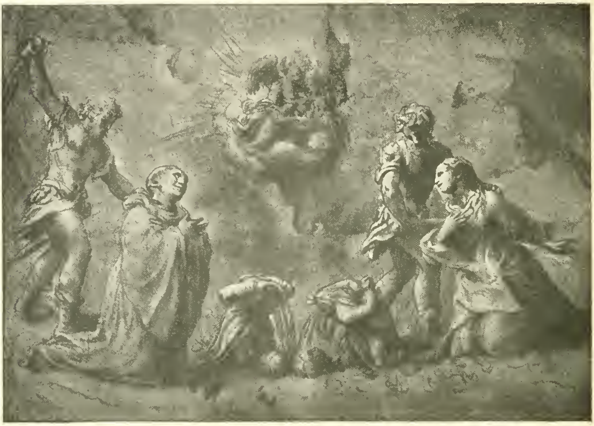
[2] I. Affò, *Il Parmigiano servitore di Piazza*, p. 85. Parma, 1796. Pungileoni, i. p. 149; ii. p. 187, etc.

[3] Both pictures were cleaned and slightly retouched, first in Paris and afterwards in Parma. They are, however, in fairly good condition, the restorations being confined to the less important parts.

[4] E. Scarabelli-Zunti, *Documenti e memorie di belle arti parmigiane.* MSS. in the Museum of Antiquities at Parma.

This episode, which furnished the argument of one picture, was no doubt chosen by Don Placido del Bono with the double object of exalting St. Benedict and glorifying the saint whose name he bore.

Correggio made a preliminary study of the arrangement of these figures, differing considerably from that he afterwards adopted in the picture. The drawing, in red pencil, is now in the Louvre.[2] A comparison of this, the painter's first thought, with the finished work, is of great interest. We see how earnestly he sought to avoid a partly symmetrical arrangement, and give movement and variety to the drama.



STUDY FOR THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. PLACIDUS AND ST. FLAVIA, BY CORREGGIO.

In the Louvre.

In the study, the angel bearing the palm and crown of martyrdom

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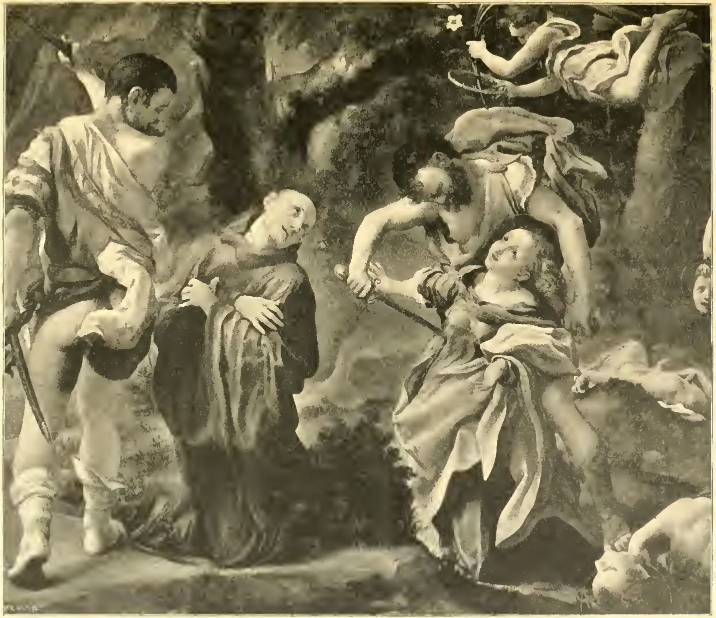
[1] *Acta Sanctorum*, October 5. Giovanni Croiset, *Le Vite dei Santi*, iii. p. 205. Venice, 1728.

[2] This drawing was also at Modena in the eighteenth century. Tiraboschi, vi. p. 288.



MARTYRDOM OF SS. PLACIDUS, FLAVIA, EUTYCHIUS, AND VICTORINUS.

In the Parma Gallery.

is exactly in the middle of the composition. Eutychius and Victorinus, kneeling side by side, their severed heads on the ground before them, form two monotonous lines, uniform as a pair of caryatids, their bodies bent at exactly the same angle, the blood flowing in equal streams from either neck, their arms bound in like fashion behind their backs. We shall see how greatly these two figures and that of the angel have gained by alteration in the picture. One executioner, about to aim a blow at the neck of St. Placidus, has placed himself behind the saint, in the most inconvenient position he could have chosen for the accomplishment of his evil task; another, standing beside St. Flavia, thrusts a sword into her breast.

In the picture all this is altered. On a hill-side studded with oaks and bushes, and brightly illumined by a clear noon-day light, the kneeling saint, his arms folded on his breast, offers his neck, which shows the gash of a previous wound, to the headsman's stroke. The ruffian, whose back is turned to the spectator, raises the sword in his right hand. His sleeve, which he has slipped off to allow freer play to his arm, hangs behind him. On the other side, St. Flavia, who also kneels, gazes joyfully heavenwards, as if welcoming a martyrdom for which she yearns; the executioner stands over her, and seizing her by the hair, plunges the sword under her right breast. The headless bodies of Eutychius and Victorinus lie on the ground, bleeding and ghastly, one close by St. Flavia, the other beyond a knoll adjoining the group. An angel hovers above them to the right, bearing the symbols of martyrdom.

Although there are passages of great beauty in this work, it is not entirely satisfactory. There is something forced and laboured in the figures of the executioners, especially that of the meagre and decrepit wretch who stands over St. Flavia, a something not altogether pleasing in the play of the draperies, and in the distribution of the colour, which is languid and subdued in the group of St. Placidus, brilliant and vivid in that of St. Flavia. The landscape, which to the left is painted almost in a monochrome of blues, loses its vigour in the subdued tones of the foreground. But the master's greatness asserts itself in the head of St. Placidus, with its expression of gentle resignation, and the exquisite fusion of its tones; in his superbly painted hands, one of which is half in shadow, the finger-tips catching the sunlight; in the ecstatic smile of St. Flavia, and finally, in the beauty of the angel.

Burckhardt says that this picture is remarkable for its masterly execution, the splendour of its summer landscape, and the marvellous rendering of the martyr's enthusiasm in the faces of the youthful saints, but that the painter entirely fails to impress us with the horror of the scene.[1] It is true that as a whole the work is not strikingly dramatic, but it must be admitted that it contains passages of an emotional quality by no means common among the artists of the Renaissance. We may instance the wound in the saint's neck, from which we gather that he was not despatched at one stroke, but that his sufferings were prolonged. Again, the foreshortened corpse of one of the brothers, with bare breast, his garments thrown back over his legs, and his left hand spasmodically contracted, as if in his agony he had clutched at the ground, is full of a tragic intensity.

The companion picture, the *Descent from the Cross*, is a much finer work than the above. Burckhardt calls it a masterpiece of superficial harmony.[2] We do not understand, however, why, after recognising the depth of sentiment in the head of Christ, and in the entire figure of the Virgin, he goes on to say that the subject was one rather beyond Correggio's powers. Taking into account the tendencies of art in the last days of the Renaissance, it seems to us that the theme had rarely been more convincingly treated. The superb modelling of the nude body stretched out upon the winding-sheet, and illumined by the pale light of a sky from which the storm is just passing away, compels the spectator's attention on purely æsthetic grounds. But he who lingers over the work, when this first impression has worn off, will see that the dead face is full of the expression stamped on it by the final agony, and that the contraction of intense suffering still endures in the pierced hands and feet. The head is supported against the Virgin's knees, but she falls backwards in a swoon, her eyes half closed, a mortal pallor diffused over her face, her mouth convulsed by a terrible spasm.

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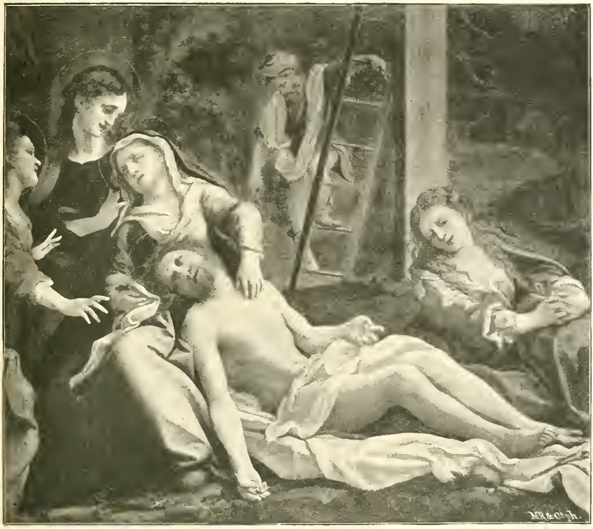
[1] *Le Cicerone*, ii. p. 715. Paris, 1892.

[2] *Op. cit.* ii. p. 714.

Burckhardt admits the truth and power of this figure. The very hang of the left arm, he says, shows that the limits of endurance have been reached.[1]

The remaining figures are less fine, in spite of the admiration they excited in the seventeenth century. The Mary Cleophas, who advances on the left, was repeatedly imitated by the Carracci,[2] and



THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS, BY CORREGGIO

In the Parma Gallery

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[1] The most serious injury sustained by this picture was the damage done to the Virgin's left hand in 1792 by the carelessness of Giuseppe Turchi, when he was replacing it after copying it. See A. Romani, *Caso miserando occorso a un quadro del Correggio*, in the journal, *Per l'Arte*, year vi. no. 19. Parma, 1894.

[2] See Agostino's picture, the so-called *Madonna delle Convertite*, in the Royal Gallery at Bologna, and the picture painted by Annibale for the Capuchins of Parma, now in the gallery of the city (No. 169).

the Magdalen roused the enthusiasm of Guercino and of Scannelli, who said that the most perfect beauty and the most profound sorrow met in this figure, the intensity of the one in no wise detracting from that of the other![1] The sentiment which appealed to the more meretricious taste of these ancient worthies is apt to strike the critic of to-day as somewhat artificial. The richly dressed Magdalen, who sinks to earth with clasped hands, her head thrown back, the fair hair streaming over her shoulders, is certainly a very attractive figure, but the student who looks for something more than this, and scrutinises the emotional elements of the conception, perceives at once that the grief here expressed is a superficial sorrow, scarcely more than skin-deep. We need say nothing of the black-robed Mary who supports the fainting Virgin, and the Joseph of Arimathæa who descends the ladder, the nails and pincers in his hand. They certainly add nothing to the beauty of the picture.

The background, on the other hand, is a beautiful and masterly study of a misty woodland, washed by recent rain, the sunlight breaking over the tree-tops.

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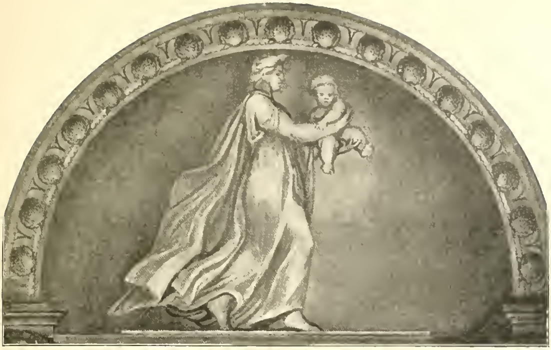
[1] Fr. Scannelli, *Il Microcosmo della pittura*, p. 277. C. G. Ratti, *op. cit.* p. 61.

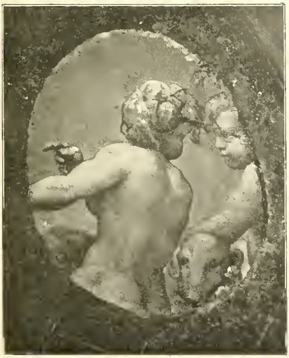


INO LEUCOTHOË. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER X

MINOR WORKS

THE "ECCE HOMO"—"CHRIST IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE"—"NOLI ME TANGERE"—PICTURES OF THE MAGDALEN—"ST. CATHERINE READING"—"ST. JOSEPH" AND "ST. JEROME"



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

AT this point in the life of Correggio it becomes somewhat difficult to fix the exact date of his works without the aid of documents. His style was formed, his sympathies had declared themselves, his individuality stood revealed. As these chronological difficulties increase, there is a proportionate falling off in critical interest, which is naturally at its highest in tracing the evolution of the artist, and languishes when confined to the examination of single works.

We have seen that Allegri laid aside his frescoes in San Giovanni

Evangelista for some months, and that he returned to Correggio in July, 1521, remaining in his native city until the following spring. It is natural to suppose that during these nine months of enforced absence from his great work, and constant expectation of his return to Parma, he occupied himself on certain pictures of secondary importance, such as the *Ecce Homo*, *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane*, and the *Noli me tangere*, works in which we discern affinities both in sentiment and technique, with the two canvases painted for Father Placido del Bono.

Be this as it may, we now propose to deal with these and other minor works, passing on to the frescoes in the cupola of Parma Cathedral, then to the great altar-pieces executed for that city, for Modena, and for Reggio, and finally, to the mythological subjects.

It is generally believed that the original *Ecce Homo*, of which there are several old copies,[1] is the picture now in the National Gallery of London.

To the right of Jesus, whose hands are bound, and on whose head is the crown of thorns, Pilate appears, and shows him to the people. On the opposite side is a soldier. Lower down, in the left corner of the picture, the Magdalen supports the fainting Virgin.

These five persons are brought together in a somewhat small compass. The figure of Christ is rather more than half length, those of Pilate and the Virgin rather less. Only the head and hand of the Magdalen are visible, and all that is seen of the soldier is his face. Yet the picture is by no means wanting in grandeur. The fainting Madonna is less dramatic than the Virgin of the *Descent from the Cross*, but on the other hand, she is more beautiful. Her features are less disfigured by grief, and if we connect the two figures, taking them as illustrating successive phases of the Passion, we shall see in one the mother, overcome with grief, but sustained to some extent by hope and physical energy; in the other, a woman stricken and helpless, with no comfort left her on earth. The artist has expressed this extremity of human wretchedness with the happiest and most unflinching

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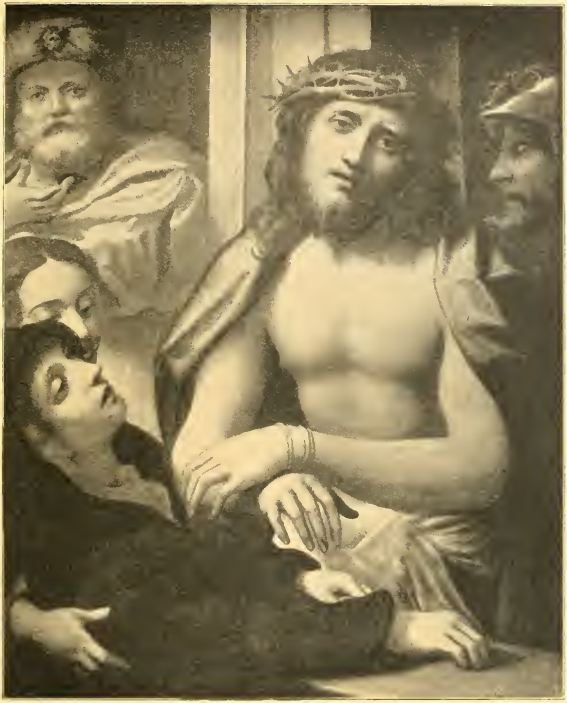
[1] There is one in the Communal Palace at Rimini, another in the Estense Gallery at Modena, and a third in the Parma Gallery.



ECCE HOMO

In the National Gallery, London

æsthetic composure; but though his treatment of the theme appeals to the cultured and philosophic of modern times, it proved a dangerous precedent for his successors. In copying or imitating Correggio's works they were met in this instance by the insuperable difficulty of reproducing the sentiment of the original. The result has been that whereas there are many fairly good copies of the *Ecce Homo*, there is not one of the *Descent from the Cross* which is even tolerable. And further, we find that those artists who most successfully studied and adopted Correggesque forms (Annibale Carracci, for instance, and Lanfranco) accepted the Virgin of the *Ecce Homo* as the type of the *Mater Dolorosa*.

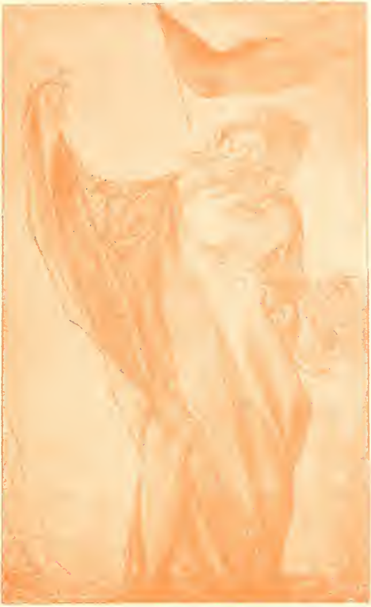
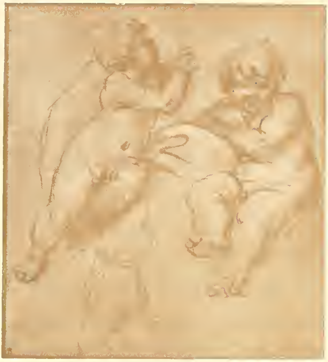


FIGURE OF AN APOSTLE, BY CORREGGIO.
Study for the Cupola of the Cathedral at Parma
In the Vienna Museum.

The emotion expressed by the Saviour is less impressive. His is not the anguish born of a consciousness of human weakness and misery, but the individual agony of one who, suffering acutely, has not sufficient fortitude to repress the external evidences of his pain.

The history of the original, like that of many other pictures by Correggio, is a perfect maze of contradictions and inaccuracies. It seems certain, however, that it belonged in the first instance to the Counts Prati of Parma, in whose possession it was found by Agostino Carracci (who engraved it in 1587), and later, about the middle of the seventeenth century, by Scannelli.[1] When Mengs saw the *Ecce Homo*[2] in the Colonna Gallery at Rome, he declared it to be the picture which had belonged to the Prati,[2] but it does not appear that he had any foundation for his assertion beyond the fact that a similar picture belonged to the family in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.



STUDY OF CHILDREN, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Duke of Devonshire's Collection, Chatsworth.

In the *Inventory* of the Duke of Mantua's collection, compiled in 1627, another *Ecce Homo* appears, claiming to be the original work by Correggio,[3] while Scannelli mentions a third in the Casa Salviati at Florence.[4] Thus we see that there were at least three pictures in Italy about the middle of the seventeenth century claiming to be the original *Ecce Homo* by Correggio. If we could be sure that no subsequent confusion of copies with originals had taken place, it might be possible to trace the history of these three, assuming them all to have been authentic. But the anxiety of collectors to enhance the value of their pictures by labelling them with imposing names has caused, and will continue to cause, the history of several pictures to be concentrated upon a single canvas.

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[1] *Microcosmo*, pp. 276 and 280.

[2] *Opere*, ii. p. 173. See also Ramdohr, *Ueber Malerei und Bildhauerarbeit in Rom*, ii. p. 85.

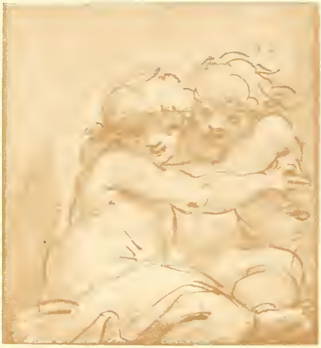
[3] D'Arco, *Artisti mantovani*, ii. p. 160.

[4] *Op. cit.* p. 284.

We give the legend in its accepted form.

Tiraboschi, contradicting Mengs, says that the Prati *Ecce Homo* passed, with all the rest of the family possessions, to the Marchese della Rosa, and that Louis XIV. obtained it from him by a trick unworthy of a man of honour. "The Marchese Pier Luigi della Rosa, to whom Louis XIV. had expressed his desire to see the picture, sent it to France; a copy was returned to Parma in place of the original; therefore the example in the Casa Colonna is a copy or replica."[1] The story is repeated by Affò, who asserts that it was commonly reported in Parma during his time that the Marchese, having sent his picture to France "to gratify a certain great personage, had a copy returned to him instead of the original work."

This fable, constructed on popular rumours collected by Tiraboschi and Affò, was demolished in 1810 by Angelo Mazza, who informed Pungileoni that the Marchese Marcello Prati (as appears from his will, dated 1680) sold the *Ecce Homo* and other pictures for five or six thousand *zecchini*, a step to which he was compelled by the necessity of paying off the debts by which his patrimony was encumbered. The will itself is not forthcoming, but a deed executed by Count Federigo Prati some five years earlier, proves that the *Ecce Homo* was still in the possession of the family when Louis XIV. had been dead some sixty years.



STUDY OF CHILDREN, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Duke of Devonshire's Collection, Chatsworth

All this, however, as Pungileoni noted, though it discredited that part of the story which reflected on the French King, threw no additional light on the subsequent history of the picture. "It remains uncertain whether it passed to the Marchesi della Rosa or to the Baiardi, and whether it is to be identified with the work which was one of the proudest possessions of the Colonna Gallery."[1] Pungileoni's doubts were inspired by the Mazza above mentioned, who had been unable to discover any documents expressly stating that the Marchese Prati had sold this and other pictures to the Colonna family, as was generally believed.

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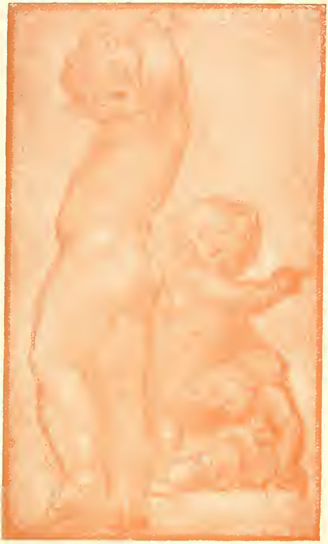
[1] Vol. v. p. 284.

No further proofs have yet come to light, and the doubts expressed by Pungileoni are by no means unreasonable.

It is certain, however, that the *Ecce Homo* of the National Gallery is the picture formerly in the Colonna Gallery. It was sold by the family to Sir Simon Clarke, who, finding it impossible to take it out of Italy, passed it on to Murat, then King of Naples. His widow, Caroline Bonaparte, sold it in 1834 to the Marquis of Londonderry, from whom it was acquired by the National Gallery.[2] The first critic who questioned the authenticity of the picture was Viardot, and he has not lacked supporters.[3] They condemned the colour as insipid and the shadows



STUDY OF CHILDREN, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Duke of Devonshire's Collection, Chatsworth.

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[1] *Op. cit.* i. pp. 118–119; ii. p. 162.

[2] Meyer, p. 357; Richter, p. 27; M. C. Heaton, p. 31; Sir Frederick Burton, *Catalogue*, p. 6.

[3] *Les Musées d'Espagne, d'Angleterre, et de Belgique*, p. 231. Paris, 1843.

as heavy. Others, however, Waagen and Frizzoni[1] among the number, attribute these defects to a loss of tone caused by over-cleaning and restorations.

The *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane* is a little gem.

The Saviour, who is accompanied by Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, begins to be sorrowful and very heavy. "Then saith he unto them: My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me." Withdrawing himself from them about a stone's cast, he kneels down and prays: "Father, all things are possible to thee; take away this cup from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt." Rising, he comes to the disciples, and finding them sleeping, he says to Peter: "What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." He prays again, returning twice to the disciples, and finding them still slumbering. "Sleep on now, and take your rest; it is enough, the hour is come. Behold, the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. He that betrayeth me is at hand."

The Evangelists Matthew and Mark give the episode almost in the same words; St. John barely alludes to it; but St. Luke adds further that an angel appeared to comfort Jesus. "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground."

Correggio's little work depicts the consoling apparition of the angel. He hovers in mid-air with marvellous ease and lightness, but though he bears the healing message of approaching bliss, he cannot restrain his sense of pity. His face is at once radiant and sorrowful, expressing the mingled feelings with which he points on the one hand to heaven, on the other to the cross and crown of thorns. Christ, effulgent in his long straight robe and shining aureole, gazes upward with mournful resignation, the spasm of agony dying out of his face. The twilight landscape is calm and melancholy. The supernatural radiance sheds but a faint light on the grass and bushes, scarcely touching the figures of the sleeping disciples, and dying out completely in the dense foliage beyond. But in the distance a band of soldiers, scarcely visible by the faint glimmer of their torches, draws near, led by Judas, and over the mountains the sky whitens with the first pale streaks of dawn.[1]

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[1] *Arte italiana del Rinascimento*, p. 358.

This masterpiece of poetry and sentiment makes yet further claims on our admiration by its technical qualities; a difficult problem of chiaroscuro is solved with supreme ease and brilliance, and the execution throughout has all the delicate finish of a miniature.

In a letter of March, 1776, Mengs writes thus to Antonio Ponz: "At a first glance, only Christ and the angel, with the brightness surrounding them, are distinguishable; a darkness as of night overspreads all the rest; on closer examination, however, one discerns infinite gradations of light and atmosphere. The approaching captors of Christ are barely perceptible, nor are the forms of the trees indicated by any distinct stroke or touch beyond the spot where the disciples are sleeping; but as the objects approach more closely to the light, we distinguish leaves, plants, a tree-trunk with the crown of thorns and cross below. The radiance of the Saviour's face lights up the picture. But this radiance comes from above, as if from heaven, and is reflected from the Saviour on to the figure of the angel."[2] The picture has a legend, which Lomazzo has recorded. Correggio, he says, "was accustomed always to value his works at a very low price, and having on one occasion to pay a bill of four or five *scudi* to an apothecary in his native city, he painted him a *Christ praying in the Garden*, which he executed with all possible care."[3] This curious anecdote evidently owes its origin rather to the fable of Correggio's poverty, than to that of his supposed depreciation of his own works.

We must also reject the suggestion made by Lodovico Antonio David to Muratori in a letter of April 4, 1705. "I was told," he says, "by a professor who is my friend, that many years ago the Marchese Bonifazio Rangoni showed him an account-book of the end of the sixteenth century, which belonged to

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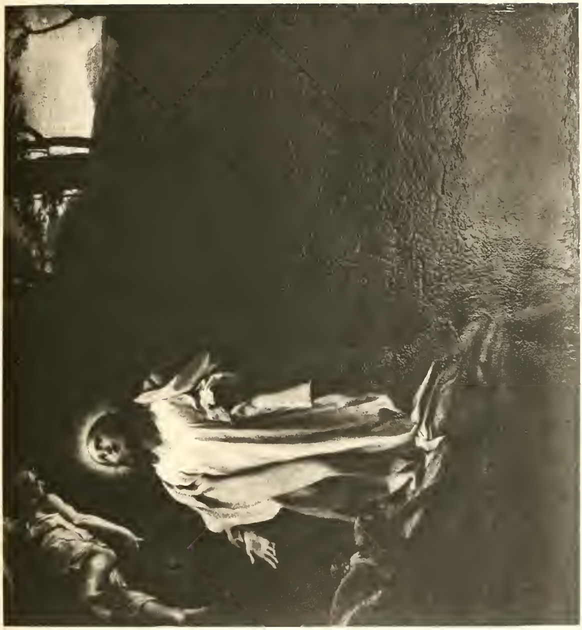
[1] The above description applies to the work in its original state, as shown in old engravings. It has darkened considerably, and much of the detail is now lost.

[2] Bottari, *Raccolta di lettere artistiche*, vi. p. 320. See also Frizzoni, *op. cit.* p. 359.

[3] *Idea del tempio della pittura*, p. 115. Milan, 1590.



Conte Claudio Rangoni, who lived in the time of Correggio. One of the items noted was a sum of forty-five Modenese *lire* for a picture of *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane*, painted by the said Correggio in 1520, and paid for in the month of March."[1]

As Meyer very justly remarks, this entry in an account-book later by some half century than the event is in itself suspicious.[2] But we have more solid grounds for classing the story among the innumerable fables which have grown up round Correggio's works. In the first place, no trace of the book has ever been discovered. Secondly, Count Claudio Rangoni was only twelve years old in 1520, "an age not admissible as that of a Mæcenas or giver of commissions." Finally, in a letter written in 1584 by a member of the Rangoni family (Fulvio), which we have lately examined, this very picture is discussed, but there is not the faintest hint that the work itself, or a replica, or copy was ever in Modena, and in the possession of the Rangoni.

The true history of the picture is given by Vasari, who tells us that it was at Reggio in his time, and calls it "the most excellent and beautiful thing by him that is to be seen."[3]

Fulvio Rangoni's letter of March 16, 1584, confirms and amplifies Vasari's notice of the work. From it we learn that the owner of the picture was one Francesco Maria Signoretti, who is known to have been enrolled among the members of the College of Medicine. It further states that some few years before, the sculptor Pompeo Leoni wished to buy it for the King of Spain, and negotiated all the preliminaries of the purchase, but finally drew back when he found the owner determined not to part with his picture for less than five hundred *scudi*. This information was all addressed to Duke Alfonso II. of Este, who was anxious to make a collection in his castle at Ferrara.[4] Six years later, Lomazzo tells us that the picture had been sold to Piero Visconti for four hundred *scudi*. It cannot therefore have been the example seen by Sandrart at Modena about 1628.[5]

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[1] G. Campori, *Lettere artistiche inedite*, p. 539. Modena, 1866.

[2] *Correggio*, p. 333.

[3] *Vite*, iv. p. 117.

[4] Ad. Venturi, *Della provenienza di due quadri del Correggio*. *Arte et Storia*, year iii. no. 4. Florence, 1884.

[5] Sandrart, no doubt, saw one of the early copies. Among the more notable of these

The original was sold by the Visconti for seven hundred and fifty pistoles to the Marchese di Caracena, Governor of Milan, who bought it on commission for Philip IV. of Spain.[1] After the battle of Vittoria, it was found in Joseph Bonaparte's carriage by one of Wellington's colonels. The Duke, with chivalrous generosity, hastened to restore it to Ferdinand VII., and the King, not to be outdone in courtesy, presented it to the Duke. It is now one of the treasures of Apsley House.

The *Noli me tangere* in the Prado at Madrid is twice mentioned by Vasari, who describes it as the property of the Hercolani, a noble family of Bologna.[2] The statement is confirmed by Pietro Lamo in his *Graticola di Bologna*, written about 1560: "In the house of the Conte Augustino Arcolano there is a *Christ in the Garden*, with the Magdalen at his feet, a most beautiful work by the hand of Master da Coregio."[3]

It afterwards belonged successively to Cardinal Aldobrandini and to Cardinal Ludovisi. It then passed into Spain, and was presented to Philip IV. by Don Ramiro Nuñes de Gusman, Duke of Medina de las Torres. Charles II. placed it in the sacristy of the Escorial.[4] The praises of Vasari, who speaks of it first as "a very beautiful thing," and then as "so fine and mellow in execution, that one could imagine nothing to excel it," caused Meyer to doubt the authenticity of the Madrid example. He suggests that the original may rather have been the picture of the same subject formerly in the Queen of Sweden's collection, which passed into the Orleans Gallery, and so to England.[5]

Meyer's opinion, however, found few supporters. The beautiful

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is one acquired by the National Gallery with the Angerstein collection in 1824, and one in the Uffizi, numbered 1088. It has been suggested that the example in London may be a replica. For other copies see Pungileoni, i. p. 101; Meyer, pp. 335–336; Martini, p. 209, and *Lettera sopra un dipinto del Correggio rappresentante Cristo nell' orto.* Milan, 1801.

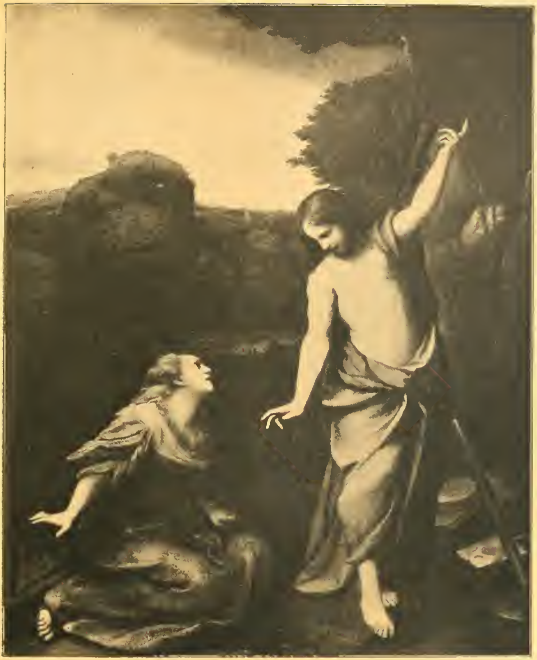
[1] Mengs, ii. p. 177; Ratti, p. 120; Tiraboschi, vi. p. 280; Meyer, pp. 150–153 *et seq.* Richter, p. 26; M. C. Heaton, p. 32, etc.

Vite, iv. p. 116; vi. p. 470.

[3] P. 13. Bologna, 1844.

[4] *Vite*, vi. p. 116, note 2; Mengs, p. 179; Pungileoni, i. pp. 103–104; ii. p. 151.

[5] *Correggio*, p. 135 *et seq.*, and p. 356 *et seq.*



NOLI ME TANGERE.

In the Museo del Prado, Madrid

little canvas with figures half the size of life, in the Prado, is recognised as genuine, although it has suffered considerably, first by the retouching of some early restorer, and latterly, by the severe cleaning to which it was subjected by José Madrazo in order to remove the over-paints. Jesus, with hair flowing upon his shoulders, and a long mantle, which falls from his shoulders to his feet, turns to look at the Magdalen, pointing heavenwards. The latter, a richly dressed figure, throws herself on her knees, and fixes a yearning gaze upon the Saviour's face. A gardener's tools lie scattered on the ground. Trees and cliffs rise in the distance, and beyond, a broad valley with a few buildings.

Gustavo Frizzoni writes thus of the picture: "Although this work must be reckoned among the first of those he painted after his achievement of a perfectly independent and original manner, it already exhibits the utmost intensity of facial expression and of dramatic action, the utmost splendour of illumination. The master seems to have stolen his tints from circumambient air and sunshine. No painter has equalled Correggio in the rendering of the impulsive fervour with which the Magdalen casts herself at the feet of the master, who appears to her serene and glorious, in a landscape which seems to reflect the peace and radiance of the divine figure. With Morelli, we find ourselves at a loss to understand the doubts cast upon the authenticity of the work by Correggio's biographer, the late Dr. Julius Meyer. If there be one of his pictures above all others which has retained the impress of original creation in spite of the havoc worked by a series of vicissitudes, a rigorous cleaning among the number, we should say it was this very *Noli me tangere*."[1]

The art of Correggio, with its deep sense of beauty, and its tender sensibility, was peculiarly fitted to give life and grace to the figure of the Magdalen. He introduced it in many of his large compositions, and made it the subject of several separate studies. But while nearly all of the former have come down to us, not one of his single figures of the gentle penitent has survived. We have seen that he painted one such picture for Giovanni Guidotti of Roncopò, the priest of Albinea, in 1517. Eleven years later, on September 3, 1528, Veronica Gambara wrote to the Marchesa Isabella to tell her of a "masterpiece" just completed by Correggio, representing the Magdalen.[1] "I should account myself greatly wanting in my duty towards your Excellency, if I did not hasten to give you some information concerning the masterpiece just completed by our Master Antonio, knowing how greatly it will please a judge of such things like your Excellency. It represents the Magdalen in the desert, doing penance in a gruesome cave. She kneels to the right, her clasped hands raised to heaven, in the act of imploring pardon for her sins. The graceful attitude, the expression of intense and lofty sorrow, and the exquisite beauty of the face are altogether wonderful, and all who see the work are astounded at it. In this picture he has touched the sublime of that art of which he is so great a master."

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[1] *I capolavori della Pinacoteca del Prado in Madrid.* (*Archivio storico dell' arte*, year vi. p. 313. Rome, 1893.)

Both pictures have been lost for centuries, and, strange to say, no mention of them is to be found anywhere but in the two letters of Guidotti and Veronica.

We must now make a single exception to a rule we proposed to observe throughout this work, which was, to avoid dissertations on pictures falsely attributed to Correggio. The celebrity of the so-called *Reading Magdalen* at Dresden, the inclusion of which among Correggio's works has been authoritatively forbidden by modern criticism, compels a brief examination of its history.[2]

Morelli, attacking the problem boldly, in the teeth of popular enthusiasm and *parti pris*, declared that this *Magdalen* was never heard of before the eighteenth century. He gave it as his opinion that the smooth and affected grace of the creation was due, not to any Italian painter, but to some Fleming of the end of the seventeenth or beginning of the eighteenth century. He further pointed out that no artist had painted upon copper before the end of the sixteenth century, and concluded by saying that a careful examination of the picture inclined him to attribute it to Adrien van der Werff, a master whose every characteristic appeared in the work, notably his *colour*, as in the crude dazzling blue of the drapery, his *treatment of landscape*, as in the minute rendering of every stone and leaf, his peculiarities of *type*, as in the long nails, their edges catching the light. Even the surface cracks, he remarks, agree exactly with those in Adrien van der Werff's pictures.

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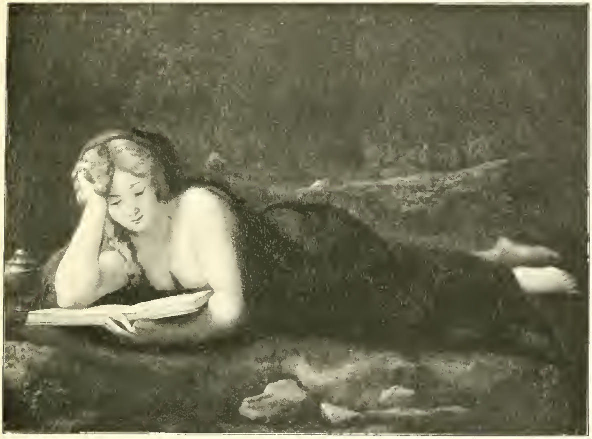
[1] Willelmo Braghirolli, *Dei rapporti di Federigo II., Gonzaga*, con *Antonio Allegri da Correggio*. (*Giornale d'erudizione artistica*, i. p. 325. Perugia, 1874.)

[2] Giov. Morelli, *Italian Painters*, ii. p. 158. Lübke, *Essai d'histoire de l'art*, ii. p. 254. See also Karl Woermann, *Katalog der k. Gemäldegalerie zu Dresden*, p. 81. Dresden, 1887.

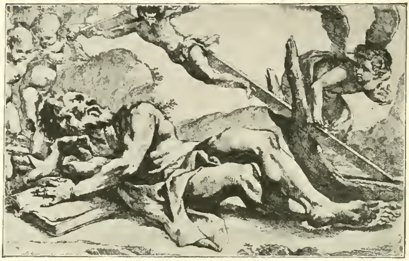


READING MAGDALEN, FORMERLY ASCRIBED TO CORREGGIO.

In the Dresden Gallery.

Deferring, however, to some lingering doubt, he adds the following : "It may be, perhaps, that the picture was not painted by Van der Werff himself, but by some contemporary and fellow-countryman. In no case, however, can it be accepted as the work of an Italian ; much less of an Italian who flourished in the first thirty years of the sixteenth century. It may, however, be a copy by some foreign artist of the seventeenth century, from an original of the school of the Carracci."

Morelli's opinion may be implicitly relied on as far as Correggio's authorship of the work is concerned. But we think he is mistaken in attributing it to Adrien van der Werff.



ST. JEROME.
From an engraving in the Palatine Library, Parma

There is a copy of the picture at Reggio, painted in the first half of the sixteenth century, as the Uffizi copy appears to have been, though probably not by Bronzino, as was formerly supposed. But even admitting that no great weight can be attached to this hypothetical date, we cannot refuse a certain importance to the persistence with which a certain Simon Lelmi, a painter of Città di Castello, asks for leave to copy Correggio's *Magdalen*, in a letter written in 1682, and recently published. "This is the first time," writes Venturi, "that we have succeeded in finding any mention of the famous picture Morelli now ascribes to Adrien van der Werff. The document above quoted throws considerable doubt on the famous critic's conclusions." It is, indeed, not unreasonable to suppose that if there was a picture at Modena in 1682 ascribed to Correggio, it had probably been there for some time. But supposing it to have been in the city only ten years, the Dutch master was a boy of thirteen in 1672, and this picture, even if a copy, was never painted by any boy of thirteen.

If, however, we accept the desperate hypothesis that the picture was bought by the Duke of Modena the same year that Lelmi wished to copy it, we must still remember that Van der Werff "was only twenty-three at the time; and it is hardly credible that a picture by the young Dutchman should already have become famous as the work of Correggio."[1]

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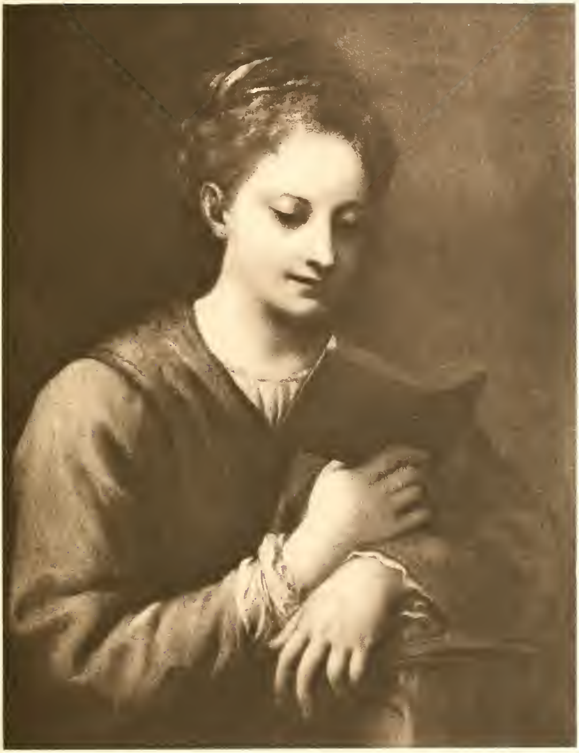
[1] Ad. Venturi, *La R. Galleria estense*, pp. 290. 291, 308, 359

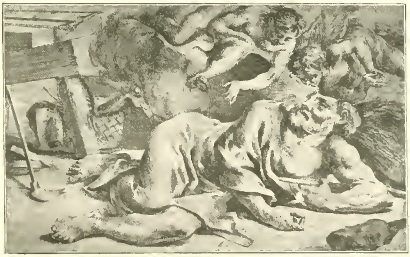


No question has ever been raised as to the authenticity of the *Reading St. Catherine* at Hampton Court. The author of the *Guide to the Italian Pictures* of this collection assigns it to Correggio's last years, pronouncing it a work of the most refined sensibility, and very modern in feeling. No trace of archaism indeed appears in the delicate face or in the technical treatment.[1]

We must not conclude without any mention of two old engravings in a volume in the Palatine Library at Parma, which contains many reproductions, new and old, of Correggio's works. The two in question form a pair, and are indicated in the catalogue as of great value.

One represents St. Joseph, reclining on the ground, his carpenter's tools around him. He raises himself on his left elbow, surprised by the apparition of two angels.[2] The subject of the other is St. Jerome in the desert, gazing at a crucifix supported by an angel in the fork of a tree-trunk. Two cherubs hover above, examining the saint with naïve curiosity.[3]

In both the plates there are strong traces of Correggesque influence, but the somewhat exaggerated and over-insistent modelling of the bodies is calculated to rouse suspicion; though the engraver, evidently a member of the Bolognese school, may, of course, have infused a sentiment of his own into the work. A comparison of many old



ST. JOSEPH.

From an engraving in the Palatine Library, Parma prints with Correggio's originals shows, indeed, how the engravers of the sixteenth century contrived to render the more delicate and graceful portions of his work confused and laboured. The two cherubs of the *St. Jerome*, with their expression of innocent curiosity, the little angel intent on the support of the cross, the type of the saint himself, the admirable foreshortening of the angels who appear to St. Joseph, and the features of the latter, all bear the impress of Correggio's genius in the last years of his activity.

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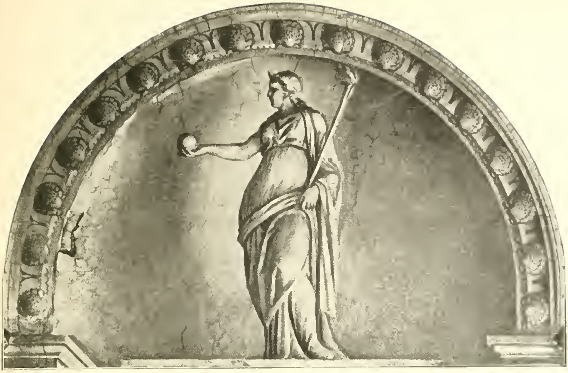
[1] Mary Logan, *Guide*, etc., p. 41.

[2] No. 3,027.

[3] No. 3,110. A *St. Jerome* by Correggio is included in the inventory of the Duke of Mantua's pictures, made in 1627; but it is described as a half-length figure with a skull. (D'Arco, *op. cit.*, ii. p. 161.)

The problem, however, is one we cannot hope to solve without the help of the originals. Many of Correggio's scholars and imitators approached him very closely in their types, and the exaggeration of contours observable in the prints may have been faithfully reproduced from the original pictures. The shape of the plates again, the breadth of which is considerably greater than the height, was one much affected by the Bolognese school.

It is impossible to be too cautious in discriminating between the works of several painters who flourished about 1600. But there is nothing in these two prints to make it improbable that the originals were early works of Giovanni Lanfranco.

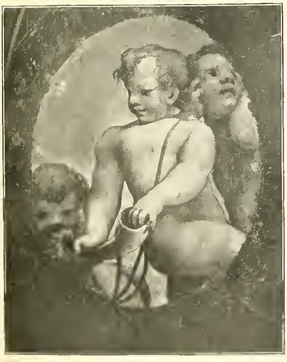


CERES. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER XI

THE FRESCOES IN PARMA CATHEDRAL

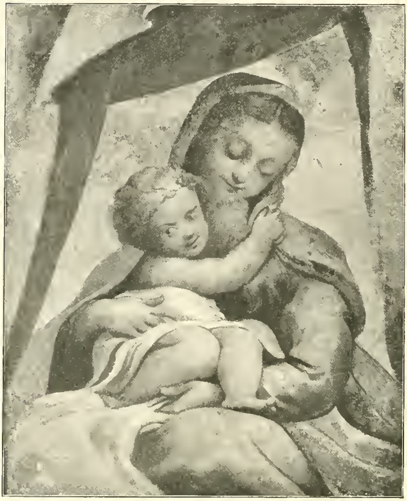
THE "MADONNA DELLA SCALA"—THE "ANNUNCIATION"—THE CUPOLA OF THE CATHEDRAL—THE PENDENTIVES AND THE BALUSTRADE—THE CANON'S JEST—DRAWINGS—THE FAME OF THE WORK



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

BEFORE beginning the frescoes in the cupola of Parma Cathedral, Correggio executed two minor commissions, the *Annunciation* and the *Madonna della Scala*.

Meyer supposed these two frescoes to have been painted probably in 1520, either immediately before, or while the artist was at work on the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista. His ascription of them to this date seems to us a proof that he had not studied their technique very carefully. The blending of the colours, the perfect fusion of the chiaroscuro, in which no trace of brushing is discernible, the form of the hands, with their long fingers, their sinuous lines and curves, and the absence of all angularity in the treatment of the joints, the type of the Virgin, of the angel, and of the slim *putto* who takes the place of his robuster brethren in the Camera di San Paolo, or in the dome of San Giovanni—all proclaim the pictorial, and, as a consequence, the chronological connection between these two works and the frescoes in the cathedral, making it almost certain that they were executed about the year 1524.



THE "MADONNA DELLA SCALA" (MADONNA OF THE STAIRCASE).
Fresco by Correggio, in the Parma Gallery.

There has been a great diversity of opinion as to the place for which the *Madonna della Scala* was originally painted. Some declare it to have been the outer wall over the eastern gate of Parma, whence it is supposed to have been removed and brought inside the city, an oratory being built for its preservation. Some say it was painted by Correggio on the wall of a friend's house, which stood on the ramparts near the church of San Michele, and others, again, that it adorned a room of the gate-house.[1]

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[1] Ruta, *Guida di Parma*, p. 72; Ratti, p. 76. See also Pungileoni, ii. p. 161, and Martini, pp 108 and 113.

Vasari says that Correggio "painted Our Lady, with the Child in her arms, over one of the city gates; the delicate colours of this fresco were a marvel to behold, and gained him infinite praise, even from strangers, who had seen none of his other works."[1] The testimony of Vasari, who, passing through Parma in 1542, entered by this gate, and saw the fresco some twelve years before it was removed to the oratory, seems to us conclusive.[2] The painting was evidently neither on the house of a private person nor in a room of the gate-house. Further proofs are forthcoming if such be needed.

In all plans of the city of Parma before 1812, the little shrine of Santa Maria della Scala appears on the bastion confronting the Via di San Michele, on the spot where the gate used to be before Paul III. strengthened the city walls by the erection of new redoubts. The name, *della Scala* (of the Stairs), was derived from the little flight of steps leading up to the chapel, which rose above the ramparts. One of the measures adopted in Paul III.'s fortifications was the removal of gates commanding the entrances to streets, and the erection of solid bastions in their places. The introduction of artillery had forced upon military architects the necessity of closing, strengthening, and protecting the mouths of the longer and wider streets, and of placing the gates over against houses or walls. When the old gate of San Michele was closed, and another opened on the north, the constructors of the new bastion carefully preserved the wall on which Correggio had painted his Madonna.

If we are to accept the legend that the fresco was on the wall of a private house, we must further suppose this house to have been on the city wall. But it is highly improbable that such an obstacle to the free perambulation of the ramparts would have been permitted, more especially at a point immediately opposite to the wealthy Via Emilia. On the other hand, it is a matter of history that this was the site of the gate until 1545.[3]

There is no reason to suppose that the piece of wall on which the Madonna is painted was removed from some other spot. When it was taken to the Palazzo della Pilotta in 1812, there were no signs of any previous transfer, and it was found necessary to saw through the wall below it, the foundations of which were incorporated with the bastion.

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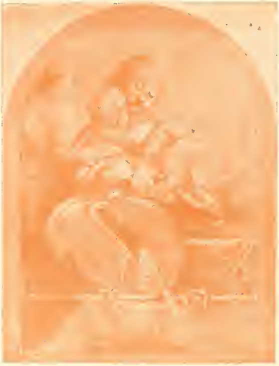
[1] *Vite*, iv. p. 114. [2] *Ibid.* vi. p. 670. [3] B. Angeli, *Storia di Parma*, pp. 13 and 531.

The history of the fresco is therefore a very simple one. It was painted by Correggio on the inner side of the eastern gateway of Parma, that the smiles of Mother and Babe might speed the out-going traveller on his road. When the exigencies of the time and the safety of the city demanded the erection of a bastion in place of the gate, the reverence in which the work was held caused several of the citizens to combine with the confraternity of St. Michael for the preservation of the piece of wall on which the fresco was painted, and to subscribe a sum sufficient for the building of an oratory, in which the fragment might serve as altar-piece. Permission to form an association for this purpose and to carry out the work was not easily obtainable in those days, and one of the subscribers who lived in Rome, and afterwards left a legacy to the chapel, had to exert himself considerably before it was granted. Finally, in the spring of 1555, the notary Cristoforo della Torre drew up the deed empowering the foundation.



MADONNA DELLA SCALA, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Weimar Museum.

The oratory was subsequently decorated by Tinti, and two pictures were painted for the side altars, one by himself, the other by the Cremonese, Malosso. In 1812, however, the chapel was pulled down to make way for the barrier of San Michele. The beauty of the altar-fresco ensured its careful preservation; it was clamped with irons, and transferred to the gallery, where it still remains.[1]

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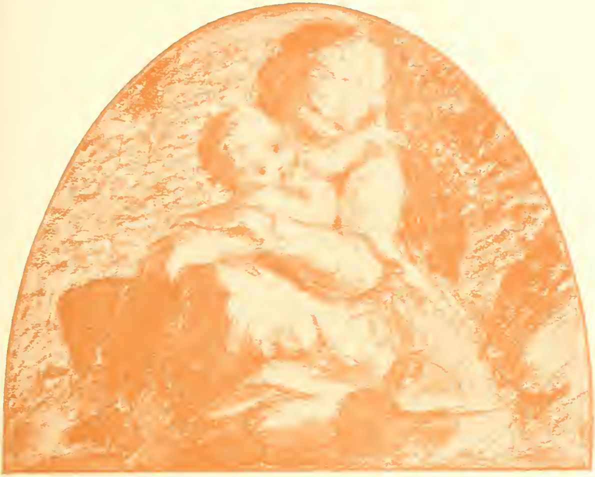
[1] Pietro da Lama, *Atti dell' Accademia e del Museo parmensi.* MSS. in the Museum of Parma, i. pp. 186, 202, 217, and 230. See *Madonna della Scala*, documents in the archives of the Parma Gallery. The transfer was carried out by Pietro Bicchieri.

Who commissioned Correggio to paint the fresco? It does not appear from any existing records that it was ordered by the commune, to whom the gate belonged. It is well known, however, that a private citizen was often permitted to decorate a public monument, or some portion of it.



VIRGIN AND CHILD, BY CORREGGIO.

In the British Museum.

There is a sketch of the *Madonna della Scala* in the Weimar Museum, which, like the copy in the church of Fiorenzuola d' Arda, reproduces the full-length figure.[1] Unhappily, the lower part of the original has disappeared. It was no doubt cut away when the fresco was removed to the gallery, either because the colours had flown, or because it had sustained some damage during the work of transfer, or of clamping.

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[1] There is also a drawing of the Madonna and Child in the British Museum, which is evidently a first sketch for this fresco, though the attitude is different.

In the Weimar drawing, which has every appearance of a genuine sketch by Correggio, a blank heraldic shield, surmounted by a bishop's mitre, lies at the feet of the Virgin, who is seated on the steps of a temple. If the drawing is authentic, as it appears to be, who could the bishop have been who ordered the fresco? The name which naturally suggests itself is that of Alessandro Farnese, Bishop of Parma, afterwards Pope Paul III.;[1] but on reflection it seems unlikely that he, who never lived in the city, where his place was supplied by suffragans, should have given such a commission. On the other hand, it is of interest to note that Nicolò Urbani of Bracciano, of the Order of the Hermits of St. Augustine, Bishop of Lida, and one of Alessandro Farnese's suffragans, lived exactly opposite the church of San Michele, and therefore close to the gate itself.[2]

The Babe, encircled by his mother's arms, and the figure of the Madonna herself, as she bends over him with a smile of infinite tenderness, form a line at once perfectly natural and supremely beautiful.[3] The Child is a perfect realisation of Dante's image of the infant

> "che inver la mamma
> Tende le braccia poi che il latte prese
> Per l'anima che insin di fuor l' infiamma."

It is sad to see how the original brilliance of the fresco has passed away from it, though, indeed, it seems almost a miracle that it has retained so much of its beauty, when we remember that for thirty years it was exposed to all the severity of the weather; that the faithful pierced it with holes, in order to fix silver crowns on the two heads, and hang relics and votive offerings round the group, and that, finally, it was removed from its place, bound together with irons, and brought from the opposite side of the city to the Palazzo della Pilotta.

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[1] Giovanni Allodi, *Serie cronologica dei Vescovi di Parma*, ii. p. 11. Parma, 1856.

[2] Francesco Cherbi, *Le grandi epoche della chiesa vescovile di Parma*, ii. p. 312. Parma, 1835–1839. The house of the Urbani was in the possession of the Bernini family in the eighteenth century, and a marble with the arms of the bishop, with his mitre, and the initials N. E. (Nicolaus Episcopus), was preserved by them.

[3] There is a drawing in red pencil by the master in the Louvre representing *Charity*, with three children, one of whom she raises on her left arm, forming a line almost identical with that of the babe in the *Madonna della Scala*.

The contemporary fresco of the *Annunciation* has suffered far more severely, and is a complete wreck, beyond the power of the restorer. It was a lunette, painted by Correggio for the church of the Fathers of the Annunciation in Parma. The building was demolished in 1546 to make room for the keep or fortalice constructed by Pier Luigi Farnese.[1] In this emergency, says Vasari, the Fathers "battened the surrounding wall with pieces of wood, clamped with iron, and cutting out the fresco by degrees, managed to save it, and fix it into a safer place in the wall of their monastery."[2] When they afterwards built a new church in the quarter of the city known as the *Capo di Ponte*, the fresco was placed to the left of the entrance, "where an altar was raised by the noble family of Aiani."[3]

In 1832 the Academy of Parma bethought itself of the fresco, and took steps to effect its removal, and so save it from final destruction. The necessary concession was not obtained, however, until 1875.[4] But the transfer, which was carried out early in the following year, gave the *coup de grâce* to the work.[5]

The ruined fragment that has survived is in the Parma Gallery. All that can now be distinguished is the meek face of the Virgin, and the fair head of the angel. There are indications of two attendant cherubs, but the forms are almost obliterated. Something of the original composition may be discerned through the blotches and discolorations with the help of old engravings, which show the angel flying over a cloud in which four cherubs are sporting. His right hand is raised to heaven, and with his left he points to the Holy Spirit, hovering with outspread wings over the Virgin's head. Turning from the open book on the desk before her, she listens, with chaste, downcast eyes.[1] (*See* headpiece to contents, p. xi.)

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[1] Aless. Sanseverino, on p. 23 of his *Notizie storiche artistiche*, MSS. in the Museum of Parma, says of this fresco, "It belongs by right to the Casa Scutellari."

[2] *Vite*, iv. p. 114.

[3] Fra Giovanni Francesco Malazappi da Carpi, *Croniche della provincia di Bologna dei Frati Minori Osservanti composte nel* 1580. MS. in the archives of the province of Bologna, fol. 170. Baistrocchi, *Notizie dei pittori*, MS. no. 1106, in the *Miscellanea*, in the Royal Library of Parma. Ruta, *Guida*, p. 19.

[4] MS. Minutes of the Academy, iii. p. 131.

[5] *La Madonna Annunciata*, papers in the archives of the picture gallery of Parma. A. Rondani wrote of this work in the French journal *L'Art*, vi. p. 73 (Paris, 1876), and in the *Gazzetta d'Italia*, no. 84 (Venice, 1876).

We may now pass on to Correggio's greatest work.

Down to the last years of the fifteenth century the interior of Parma Cathedral was characterised by all the bare austerity usual in Romanesque churches. There were, of course, pictures and triptychs over the altars; a few frescoes, the offerings of certain devout persons, adorned the walls of some of the chapels. The greater part of the transept was decorated;[2] but the vast main building, that is to say, the vaults of the three aisles, the walls of the nave, the cupola,

PARMA CATHEDRAL.

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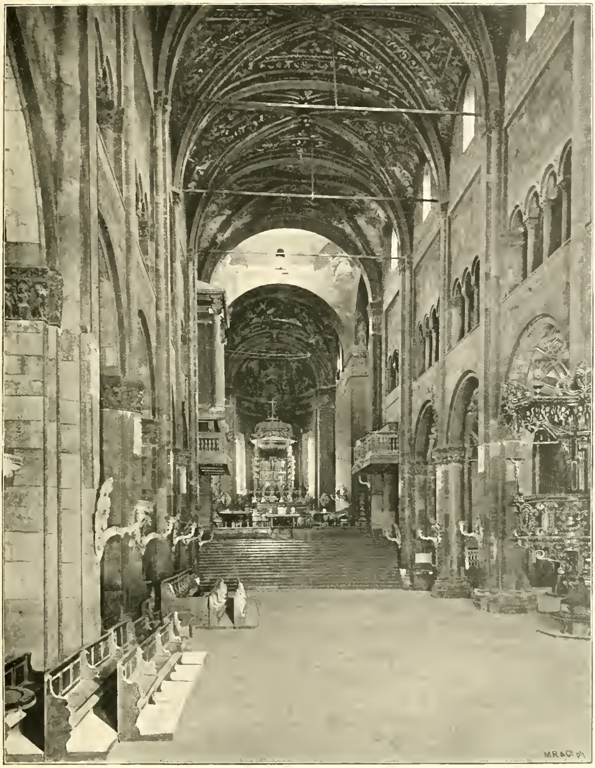
[1] A Correggesque drawing in sanguine in the Louvre, squared out for enlarging seems to represent an Annunciation. It does not, however, correspond with the lunette described, which agrees more closely with a drawing in the Ambrosiana at Milan, ascribed to Correggio, but more probably by some pupil or imitator (see page 270).

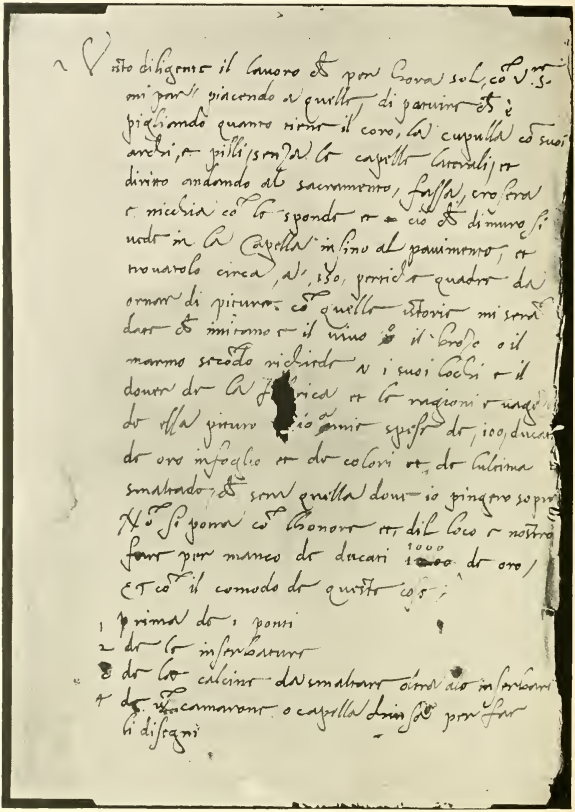
[2] In the deed of 1522, assigning the decoration of a certain part of the transept to Parmigianino and Anselmi, the following words occur: *Removendo illas picturas quae sunt de praesenti*, or *de praesenti existentes.*

and the presbytery were all subdued and colourless, displaying the architectural lines in severe simplicity.



INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PARMA.

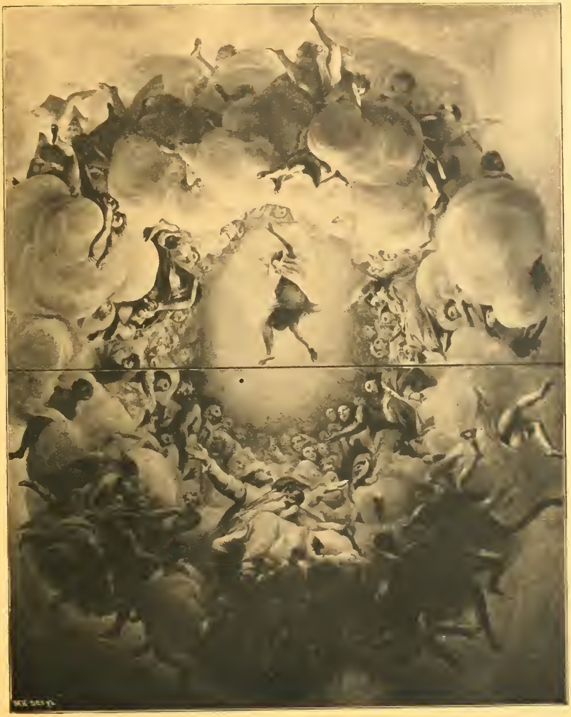
No trace remained of the paintings which had once adorned the façade, and of which Fra Salimbene tells us, describing the wrath of of the paintings themselves; and having calculated that my outlay for



Visto diligente il lauoro che per lhora sol, con V. S.
mi pare piacendo a quelle di pararui che è
pigliando quanto tiene il coro, la cupulla con suoi
archi, e pillistri sino a le capelle laterali, e
diritto andando al sacramento, fassa, cornisera
e nicchia con le sponde e ciò che di muro si
vede in la capella insino al pauimento, e
trouarolo circa a 150 pertiche quadre da
ornare di pitura con quelle istorie mi serano
date che intorno e il uiuo o il bronzo o il
marmo secondo richiede a i suoi lochi e il
douere de la fabrica e le ragioni e uaghezza
de essa pitura ciò computate spese de 100 ducati
de oro in foglio e de colori e de lultima
smaltadura che sarà quella doue io pingerò sopra
Non si poria con lhonore e del loco e nostra
fare per manco de ducati ~~1000~~ 1000 de oro /
Et con il comodo de queste cose;
1 prima de i ponti
2 de le inferratture
3 de le calcine da smaltare [illegible]
4 de un camarone o capella dun sol per far
li disegni

CORREGGIO'S AUTOGRAPH AGREEMENT TO PAINT THE FRESCOES IN THE CATHEDRAL

gold-leaf, colours, and the final coat of cement on which I shall paint will be 100 ducats, I cannot, having regard to our own honour and



CENTRE OF THE CUPOLA OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PARMA.

that of the place, undertake the work for less than 1,000 gold ducats, and the following appliances: 1, scaffoldings; 2, the mortar preparation of the walls; 3, cement for the plastering; 4, a large room, or enclosed chapel, in which to prepare the cartoons."[1]

Correggio's words are full of dignity: "I cannot, having regard to our own honour and that of the place, undertake the work for less than 1,000 gold ducats." Far from depreciating his work, as a foolish tradition would persuade us he did, he recognises and respects his own powers. And this intimate consciousness of worth, and simplicity in expressing it, are as admirable, on the one hand, as on the other the studied humility of the "charlatans of modesty," or the boasts of self-satisfied incompetence are wearisome and repulsive.

We note that the figures 1,000 are inserted above an erasure of the original entry, which was 1,200 ducats. This gives an additional interest to the autograph. It points to a discussion as to the price between the painter and the wardens of the cathedral. Correggio speaks of the magnitude and the difficulties of his task, and the time it will take him to accomplish it; the others explain that the finances of the Chapter will not permit them to offer more. How was the gentle artist to resist the entreaties of Scipione della Rosa, and the vision of the bands of saints and angels with which he might people the luminous dome? He meditates for a while; then confesses himself persuaded; the eyes of all present are fixed anxiously upon him, as, seizing the pen, he draws two strokes through the 1,200 and writes 1,000 above it!

As we have seen, however, he was still employed on the decorations of San Giovanni Evangelista. There was no occasion for the wardens to hasten the preliminary work of repairing the cupola. It was not, indeed, till a year later, November 23, 1523, that they commissioned Messer Iorio da Erba to restore it inside and out, including the small columns and pilasters of the external gallery, and to scrape and cement it internally. The agreement for this work was drawn up by Galeazzo Piazza, in the presence of Scipione Montino della Rosa and of Alessandro Araldi.[1]

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[1] *Archivio notarile di Parma.* Deeds drawn up by Stefano Dodi. Affò, *Vita del Parmigianino*, p. 30; Tiraboschi, vi. p. 264; Pungileoni, ii. p. 182; Martini, p. 170; Meyer, p. 462, etc. We have examined the original documents, and have therefore avoided certain serious errors of transcription perpetuated by Pungileoni, Martini, and Meyer, such as the substitution of the word *calcina* where Correggio writes *l'ultima*, and of the name *Arria* where he writes *Anianus*, etc.

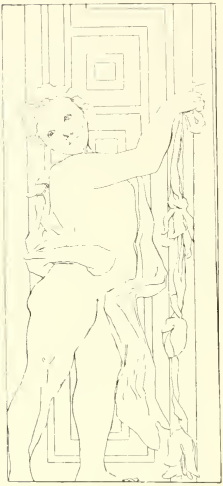

FIGURE FROM SOFFITS OF THE ARCHES IN THE CUPOLA OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PARMA, BY CORREGGIO.

The first notice of a payment made to Correggio occurs November 29, 1526. He acknowledges having received on account seventy-six gold ducats, thirteen imperial *soldi*, part of the first instalment of 275 ducats, for his work in the cupola, in the presence of Don Nicolò dei Gotti, son of Rolando, syndic and procurator to the Chapter of the great church of Parma.[2]

Another document shows that on November 17, 1530, he received another 175 gold ducats, the balance of the first instalment. But enough of this.[3]

The disappearance of many of the books and documents of the cathedral archives make it impossible to give the history of Correggio's frescoes in minute detail. In addition to the few entries already quoted, we find another in the debtor and creditor account-book of the church, from which we learn that Correggio's heirs were called upon to refund 140 imperial *lire*, paid to the painter for work in the cupola which he had died before completing.[1]

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[1] Archives of Parma Cathedral, case i. no. 11.

[2] Legal archives of Parma. Deeds drawn by Galeazzo Piazza, under above date. The street where Correggio lived in Parma is mentioned in this document. *Dominus Antonius Alegris fil. Domini Pelegrini de Corigia pictor vicinie S. Johannis Evangelistæ pro burgo anteriori seu Pischario.* There is also a *précis* of the deed in the archives of the cathedral, case i. no. 13.

[3] Archives of Parma Cathedral, case i. no. 17. Pungileoni (ii. p. 233), followed by many others, adds that in the books of the cathedral there is an entry referring to Antonio in February, 1531, but he neither specifies the book nor quotes the passage, and probably made a mistake.

We will now take a rapid general survey of the cupola.

In the pendentives, four saints are seated on clouds amidst a concourse of youthful angels. The twelve colossal figures of the Apostles stand along the octagonal cornice above, between the oblong windows, in front of a simulated balustrade, and gaze in astonishment at the Assumption of the Virgin. From the balustrade rise eight tall candelabra, one at each angle, between which are some twenty-nine boy genii, some seated, some reclining, others rising or standing upright. They converse together, or gaze upwards, carrying vases or boughs of foliage; others are kindling the flames of the candelabra, or sprinkling incense on those already burning. Above them is a broad belt of clouds, and then a huge garland of figures, a vast glory of saints and angels, crowding round the ascending Virgin, who soars upwards towards the radiant sky, whence a youthful angel descends in rapid flight to greet her.

Let us now examine the work in detail.

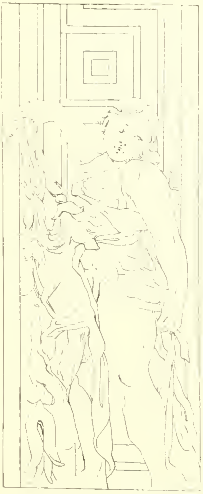

FIGURE FROM SOFFITS OF THE ARCHES IN THE CUPOLA OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PARMA, BY CORREGGIO.

Above the capitals of the great pillars supporting the cupola, in the thickness of the arches, which are decorated with a Greek key pattern, are painted single figures in monochrome. Those on the soffit of the arch nearest to the presbytery are by Girolamo Mazzola-Bedoli, all the rest are by Correggio. They are carried out in pale yellow tones, shaded with a kind of bistre-colour, and represent six slightly draped genii supporting festoons of foliage. This part of the decoration is perfectly preserved, and shows the mellow richness and fusion of Correggio's technique in its full perfection. The soft, delicate tints of these *chiaroscuri*, which are cooler than those in San Giovanni, reveal the painter's harmonious chromatic sense, for the general tone of colour is less intense here than in the other cupola. The folds of the draperies have lost something of their severity, and the attitudes have a touch of affectation; but the nude figures are modelled with great beauty and dignity and are full of vivacity. To the concave pendentives Correggio gave the form of scallop shells, surrounding their edges with other shells, which form a framework very similar to that of the lunettes in the Camera di San Paolo.

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[1] *Liber debitorum et creditorum*, already quoted, fol. 1.

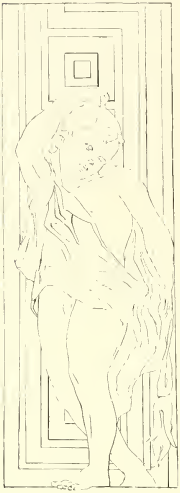
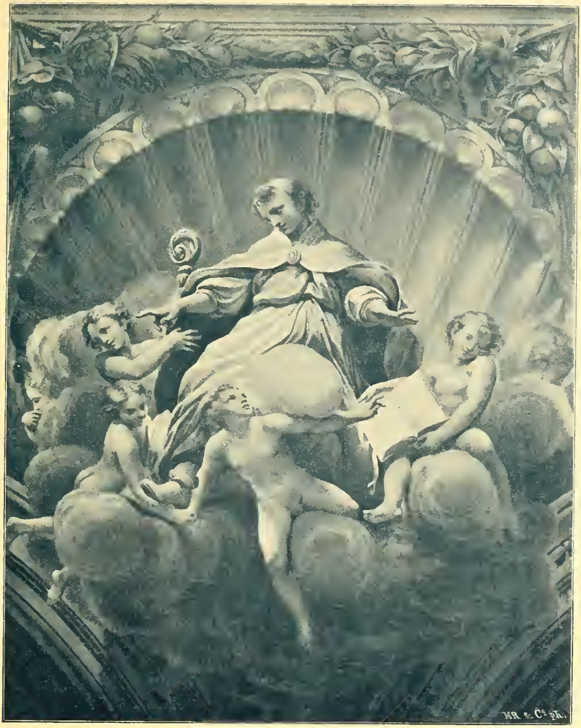


FIGURE FROM SOFFITS OF THE ARCHES IN THE CUPOLA OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PARMA, BY CORREGGIO.

In the lower part of these pendentives, or niches, as we may call them, billowy masses of clouds rise like the smoke of incense, white and luminous in the upper stratum, but gradually shading down through pale violet to a dense gray at the junction of the arches. The patron saints of Parma are enthroned on the clouds, and around them flutter joyous bands of cherubs and youthful angels.

In the pendentive to the right of the spectator as he faces the apse, the Bishop Hilary is seated; he wears a white surplice and yellow chasuble; with outstretched arms he gazes below and points to the high altar. One of the seven attendant genii flying downwards, turns his head to look at the saint, pulling at his companion's hand. Others bear the bishop's pastoral staff, his mitre, and his book.

Six angels, partly concealed among the clouds, appear in the other niche. One, who is seated astride on a vaporous globe, looks down into the church; a second prays with hands devoutly joined, and two



SAINT HILARY.

Pendentive of the Cupola in the Cathedral at Parma.

others stoop to point at the fair-haired, youthful Baptist, who clasps his lamb in his arms under his short red mantle.

Beneath the austere figure of St. Bernard degli Uberti, who is seen in profile, his right hand on his breast, an open book upon his knees, are two nude maidens in the first bloom of youth. One appears to be seated, her legs hanging in space, the clouds caressing her slender form. The other, her golden hair fastened into a braid, floats in the air, her limbs stretched out with the action of one who swims. Between them an angel descends with arms extended, his little green mantle fluttering in the wind, his head turned over his left shoulder towards the spectator. Of him we shall have more to say by and by, for we shall find him reappearing as a Ganymede. But what is causing the mirth of the exquisite cherub who plunges into the clouds by the side of the seated maiden? Who is he looking at, what does he see? He has an understanding with the angel of the opposite pendentive, who bears St. Hilary's chasuble and pastoral staff, and whose face, like his own, is wreathed with smiles. Oh, roguish elves! can you not bear yourselves gravely, even in the mystic silence of the temple?

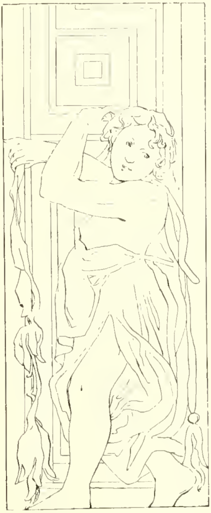


FIGURE FROM SOFFITS OF THE ARCHES IN THE CUPOLA OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PARMA, BY CORREGGIO.

Seven other angels surround the Apostle St. Thomas, a serene old man, with white hair and beard, wrapped in a long yellow mantle, and carrying in his left hand the fragment of a lance. The angels bear the flagon, the lily, the palm branch, and other emblems. A rapt solemnity seems to have fallen on this group, which is less smiling and joyous than the others.

In the angles formed by the curves of the four niches, twisted scarves support rich festoons of foliage and of fruit, grapes, apples, pears, pomegranates, medlars, pines, and roots, painted with infinite variety of form and colour. In the compartments of the octagon between the pendentives, and round the small windows of the drum, *chiaroscuri* of different tones are painted. The ornament of the four windows, which consists of a sphinx looking upwards, and foliage, is a little cold, while that of the side spaces is warm and mellow. The design of the latter is a band of *putti* riding on dolphins, who either carry twisted cornucopias, or, like the infant Hercules, strangle a serpent.[1] Although the composition consists of only two designs, repeated alternately, the free and decisive use of the brush, the variety of the faces, and certain trifling differences in the curve of an arm, a leg, or a head, give an individual sentiment to each of these *putti*. The monochrome in which they are painted has not given them a sculpturesque character. They are, indeed, as animated and life-like as those which are coloured.

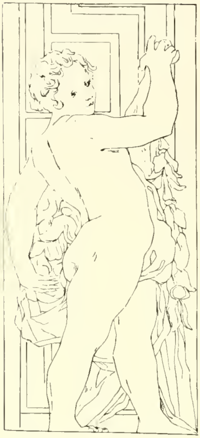


FIGURE FROM SOFFITS OF THE ARCHES IN THE CUPOLA OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PARMA, BY CORREGGIO.

Above the narrow cornice of gilded stone, Correggio has painted another and much deeper one, of simulated marble, in such bold and cunning relief as to deceive the most practised eye. It is, in fact, only by ascending into the cupola and examining it closely that one discovers it to be a simulacrum. A device of which the painter made use adds greatly to the illusory effect. This was the carrying of the upper line of his cornice slightly over the circular frames of the small windows, in such a manner that looking up at them from below they seem to lie behind it. The figures have gained more by this device than any other part of the composition. By concealing the feet and

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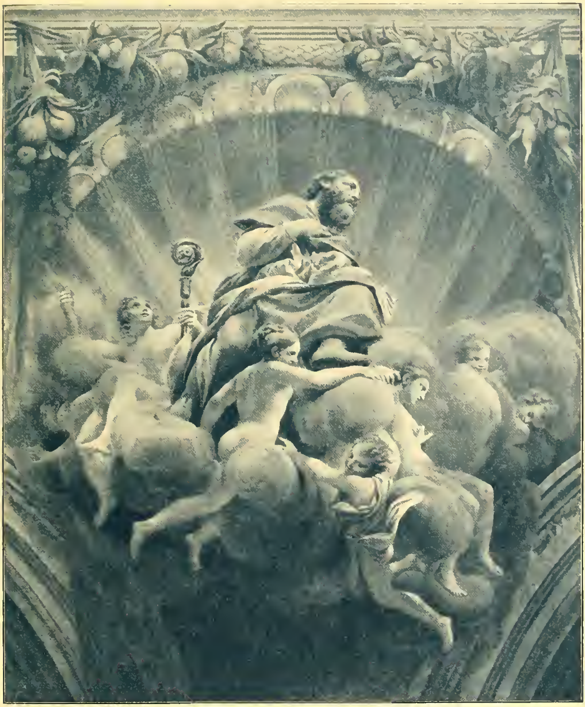
[1] The head of one of these genii in the south compartment has been repainted in the most barbarous manner.



ST. BERNARD

Pendentive of the Cupola in the Cathedral at Parma

legs of the several Apostles more or less behind his cornice, the artist has obtained a most illusory effect of movement among these figures, making them appear to be at various distances from the verge of the abyss below. True, he might have expressed the same idea by placing them in similar attitudes behind a real cornice, but it is clear that the illusion would no longer have been complete for the spectator below, who, on changing his point of view, would have seen either more or less of the figures in proportion to the interference of the projection with his line of sight. The painter, no doubt, realised this after painting his aged St. John in the Benedictine church, and at once perceived that this obstacle to the illusion he desired to produce might be entirely obviated by painting a cornice, instead of making use of the actual one.

We are bound to confess that we cannot give that unqualified praise to the figures themselves which many of Correggio's admirers have expressed. They are not all equally fine and equally impressive. They seem to us the least successful part of the whole work, and we recall the vision of the Apostles in San Giovanni Evangelista with a feeling of regret.

The most singular feature of the work is that the nude forms are modelled with the master's accustomed sobriety, whereas the attitudes and draperies have become confused and extravagant.

In some passages, indeed, repose and dignity are set at nought. The nude contours appear through the involved and tumultuous lines of the abundant draperies in portions too small to enable the eye of the spectator to grasp the attitude, which is further obscured by the exigencies of foreshortening. This defect is more

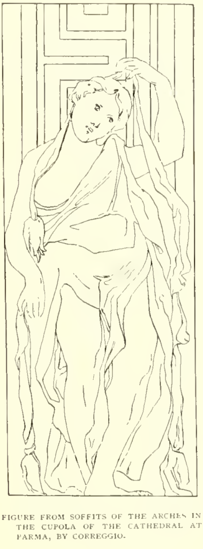
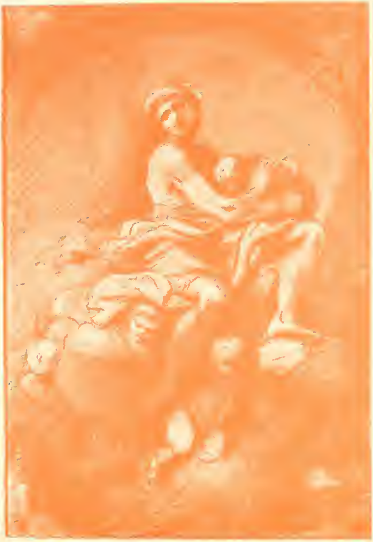


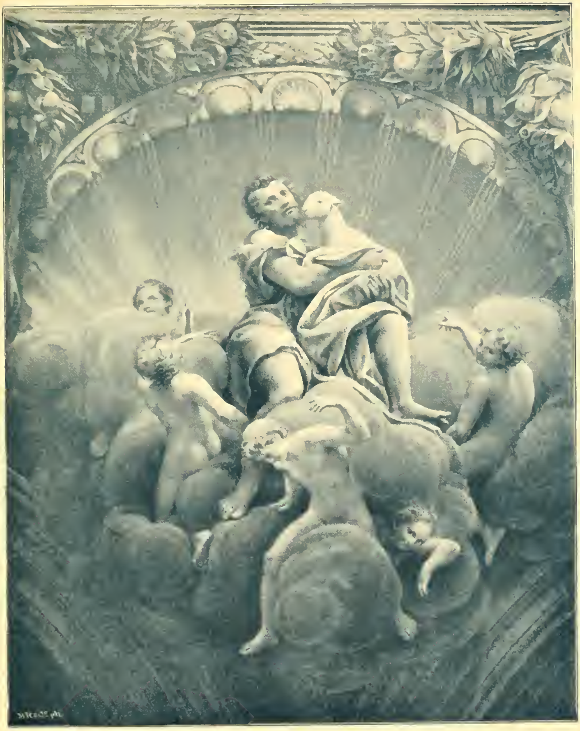
FIGURE FROM SOFFITS OF THE ARCHES IN THE CUPOLA OF THE CATHEDRAL AT PARMA, BY CORREGGIO.

especially noticeable in the single figures. Distributing the twelve figures in eight compartments, the painter was compelled to place eight in groups of two, leaving the remaining four to appear separately; and this, indeed, explains the more confused and involved treatment of the latter: the space they occupy being filled in the former case by two figures, the artist had less scope for energetic movement, and a certain reticence in pose and drapery was enforced by this limitation of the field. Among the groups, therefore, we shall find much to admire; for instance, the two Apostles who look upward, holding each other by the hand, and the Apostle who is seen in profile, advancing in a dignified attitude, his right hand extended, followed by an old companion, with arms outstretched.


STUDY FOR THE PENDENTIVE, WITH ST JOHN, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Louvre

But though, while admitting their impetuous grandeur, both of type and technique, we cannot give unqualified praise to these figures, we have nothing but the most enthusiastic admiration for the nude genii set against the blue of the sky and the gray of the clouds on the balustrade above.

They are represented in copious variety of attitude—prostrate, seated, reclining, rising, upright, bearing great metal bowls, or holding



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

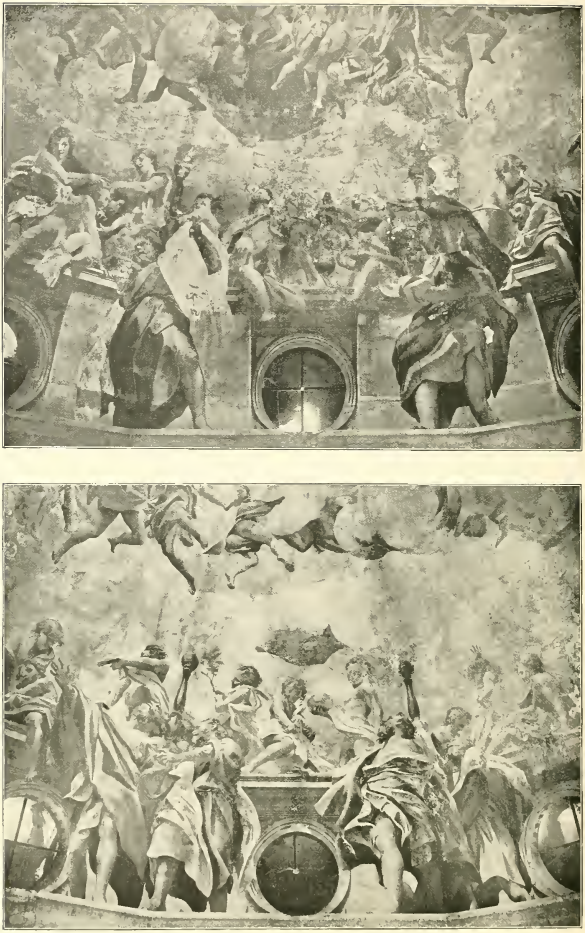
Pendentive of the Cupola in the Cathedral at Parma

out cups and small vessels for the incense they pour upon the flaming candelabra, stirring up the perfume of the censers, smelling their hands, still fragrant with the dust of the incense, casting sprigs of juniper into the blaze, conversing softly as they gaze into the church, or turning their faces heavenward—all supremely beautiful, and full of joyful satisfaction as they tend the festal fires, and raise vast volumes of fragrant smoke to the glory of the ascending Virgin.

From the quiet movement of the figures in the pendentives and the joyful activity of the genii on the gallery, we pass in an instant to the swift and rapturous flight of the innumerable host encircling the Virgin, who, in a red robe and flowing blue mantle, a yellow veil streaming across her breast, rises with outstretched arms, and eyes upturned to the golden radiance of the sky above. Angels and cherubs accompany her, dancing in ecstatic rapture about her. Some play mandolins, lutes, cymbals, flutes, and flageolets; others chant joyful hosannas; others, intoxicated with triumph, embrace each other, greet each other with kisses, and cluster above, below, and around her. They form into groups, revolve, plunge head foremost into the clouds, or issue thence radiant, with outstretched arms, in a frenzy of rapture. Some of the figures are of incomparable grace and beauty. Their eyes sparkle, their lips smile, the tresses of their fair hair sway with the air and motion, their bodies quiver and palpitate. On that side of the zone of cloud which is opposite to the Virgin, the angels are more scattered, and every figure is foreshortened. They appear to rise and cleave the clouds in a vertical flight, as if hastening to precede her arrival in the empyrean, and greet her before the throne of the One in Three.

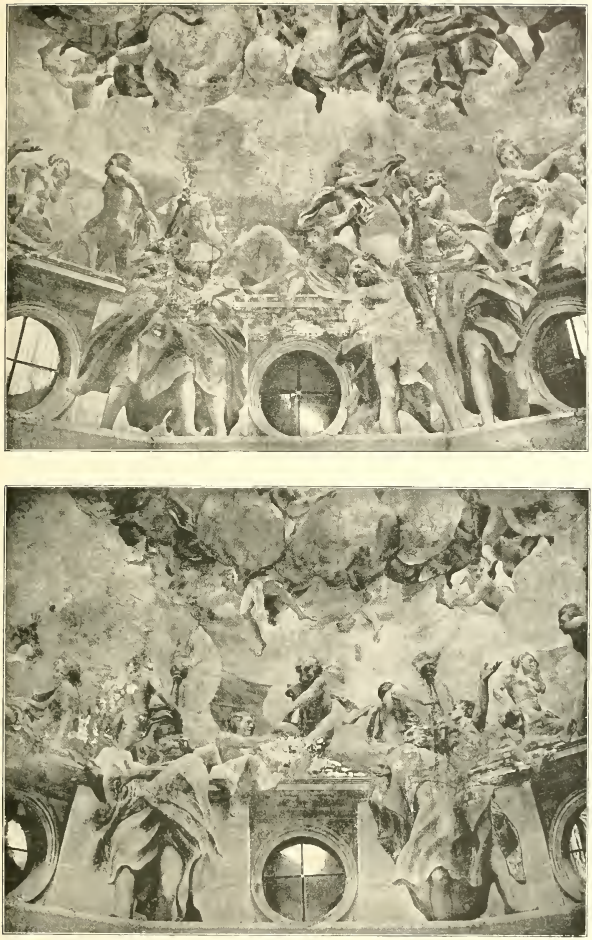
Above, a great multitude of the blessed are seated in a circle watching the Assumption of the Virgin and the angelic throng attending her. In the midst of the universal joy we are reminded of the great tragedy of the Old Testament. Eve holds out the apple in her right hand, with a gesture that seems to say, "Soar up to God, O mystic Dove! Thou hast atoned for me! Thou hast made reparation for the first sin!"

And among the crowd we see Abraham with Isaac, and Judith, carrying the bloody head of Holofernes.



APOSTLES AND ANGELS, BY CORREGGIO.

Frescoes of the Cupola in the Cathedral at Parma.



APOSTLES AND ANGELS, BY CORREGGIO.

Frescoes of the Cupola in the Cathedral at Parma

Abraham symbolises the obedience due from man to God, even to the death. Judith bears witness that even a deed of violence may be sanctified by faith. David, holding Goliath's hideous head by the hair, reminds us that no human power can resist the arm of the Lord.

The crowd of figures becomes denser and denser as they descend into the golden vapour. There are old men with white hair, warriors in armour, veiled maidens, and naked boys. Some clasp their hands in prayer, others raise them to heaven, some point with outstretched finger, some converse with their neighbours, some gaze in ecstasy at the divine Mother, others bend forward to greet her as she ascends.

From the midst of the circle a messenger of God flings himself forward to meet her, gazing down at her and raising his arms in affectionate adoration.[1]

He who gazes long at the spectacle feels himself gradually carried away by the marvel of the vision. He can almost fancy that he hears the echo of joyous cries beneath the vault, and that, were the summit of the dome to open, the whole legion of saints and angels would flutter through like a flight of doves and soar heavenwards.

In execution, this colossal fresco is even more refined and delicate than that of the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista. There is no trace of the brush strokes in any of the figures, and even those which have been laid on the shadows to strengthen them are barely apparent.

The carnations have lost much of their reddish tint in the fuller development, or more equal diffusion, of the alabastrine tones, which in some lights appear almost white. The shadows are obtained without any excess of gradations, and are therefore exquisitely transparent, with a play of reflections, through which the modelling is as perceptible as in the illuminated portions. The air seems to circulate freely between the figures. In the rendering of such effects Correggio had no superiors, and his supremacy is fully attested by these frescoes

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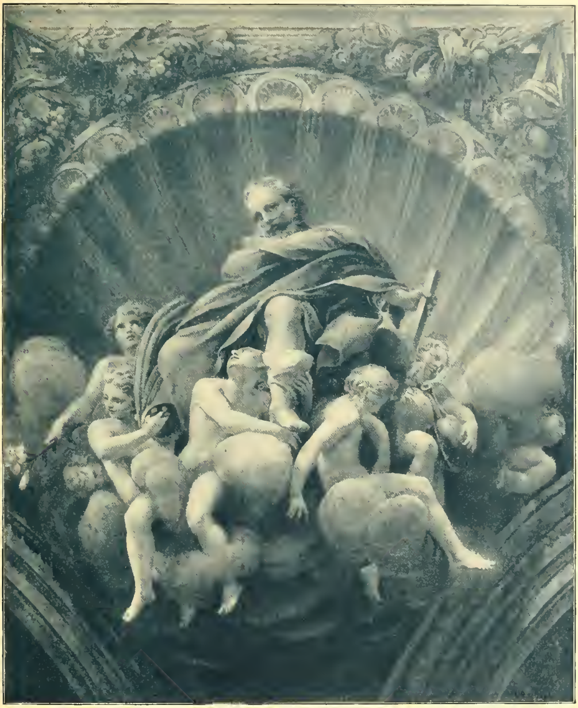
[1] Some writers have described this angel as ascending, instead of descending, not observing that, as his draperies cling round his body, or flutter over his head in an upward direction, he must be rushing downward through the air.



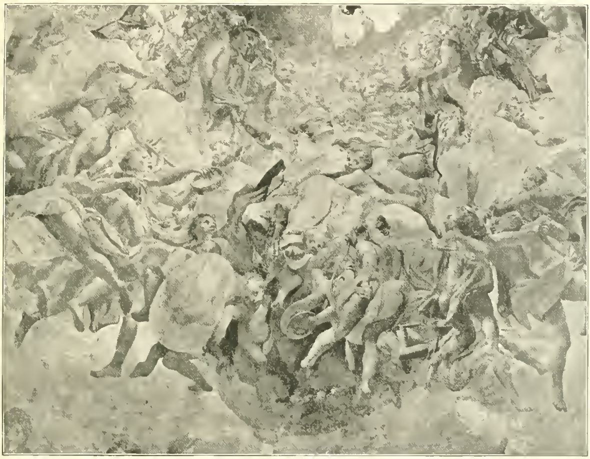
ST. THOMAS.

Pendentive of the Cupola in the Cathedral at Parma

even now, although the cupola is sullied with dust and smoke, and in many parts defaced and reduced to ruin.

This process of decay has no doubt robbed the figures of much of their original clearness of outline, but we cannot think that the composition was ever a perfectly coherent and comprehensible one, even in its first freshness.

The genius of Correggio, with its great facility in resolving all problems of perspective in the rendering of the human form, with its faculty for the expression of life and emotion, with all the resources of its brilliant technique, its gifts of draughtsmanship and colour, failed to keep within due bounds in the execution of this work, and allowed the exuberance of his fancy and the mastery of his hand too unrestrained a license. It is true, of course, that such excesses are only possible to superior minds ; to a Dante, plunging deep into the mysterious



GROUP SURROUNDING THE ASCENDING VIRGIN.

Fresco in the Cupola of the Cathedral at Parma

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subtleties of theology and metaphysics, as in his *Paradiso*, or to a Wagner, seeking too vast a significance in the world of harmony, as in his later works. Nevertheless, when an artist no longer limits himself to the spontaneous expression of his conception by the exercise of his exceptional gifts, but takes pleasure in the creation of difficulties to overcome, he may arouse admiration and amazement in the souls of others, but not that intimate enjoyment, that quiet satisfaction, we derive from works more soberly conceived. We have already pointed out that such considerations as these lead us to account the frescoes in San Giovanni Evangelista Correggio's masterpiece. It is the perfect harmony between subject and treatment, the simplicity of the form, at once severe and expressive, the glad obedience to the eternal laws of art, which delight us in the smaller work. Considered in the light of the difficulties that have been overcome, the marvellous beauty of many of the figures, the rapture of expression, the brilliance of the illumination, the frescoes in the cathedral are no doubt far superior to the earlier work; but the multitudinous figures and the interlacement of so many human limbs in violent motion produces confusion. We are obliged to *decipher* rather than to contemplate, and are oppressed by the effort of disengaging the lines of any single body from those of others crowded about it. In this exercise, the wondering admiration roused by a first sight of the whirling concourse of forms gives way to an examination of the various details, and we end by dwelling on these, rather than on the conception as a whole.

It is said that when the fresco was first displayed, one of the canons of the cathedral remarked that it looked to him like a "hash of frogs." Tiraboschi denounces this story as a "ridiculous fable."[1] But the singularity of the idea, coupled with a sentence in a letter written by Bernardino Gatti, called *Il Soiaro*, convinces us of its truth. Gatti, who decorated the cupola of Santa Maria della Steccata, refers in this letter, written only twenty-five years after the death of Correggio, to the adverse criticism of his master's great work in these words, "And you know what was said to Correggio in the cathedral."[2]

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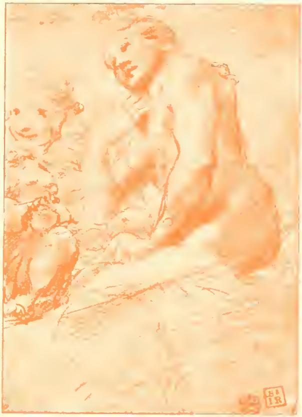
[1] *Op. cit.* vi. p. 265.

[2] Affò, *Il Parmigiano servitore di Piazza*, p. 25.

In this contemptuous phrase our painter only received the usual measure meted out to those whose genius is in advance of their times. The crowd is never willing to confess itself unable to understand an exceptional work. The mediocre cavil at those who cannot descend to their level, though they are ready enough to exalt them after they are dead, when the artist's conception, surviving his body, triumphs at last over ignorance and misapprehension. Correggio, conscious of the greatness of his work, must have been keenly wounded, less by the criticism itself than by the ludicrous form in which it was expressed. The name of the canon who hailed the completion of an immortal work with this phrase has not come down to us, fortunately for him; it would have acquired a fame by no means enviable. But if it be true that every poetical work lends itself to parody, and that the most beautiful face may afford a subject for good-natured caricature, may we not accept this "hash of frogs" as a quip not altogether infelicitous, from one who, bewildered by a complicated interlacement of limbs, recalled what was no doubt a favourite dish of his own?



EVE, BY CORREGGIO.
Study for the Fresco in the Cathedral at Parma
In the British Museum.

We do not know if the other canons were of the same mind. But it is certain that the ignorant jest of one gave rise to a traditional prejudice against the whole body; hence the absurd story that "before Correggio had finished his work, they formed the design of effacing it altogether."[1] From this intention they were supposed to have been dissuaded by Titian, on his arrival at Parma with Charles V. "After contemplating the dome for some time in silence, he exclaimed: 'Turn it upside down, and fill it with gold; even so, you will not have paid its just price.'" The legends that grew up in connection with the work are innumerable. One fable (of which we shall speak again) declared that Correggio made use of little figures modelled in clay by Begarelli for the foreshortening of his numerous figures; another, that Christina of Sweden declined to believe that the upper cornice was only painted, and insisted on having a scaffold erected that she might convince herself by touching the surface with her hand.[1]

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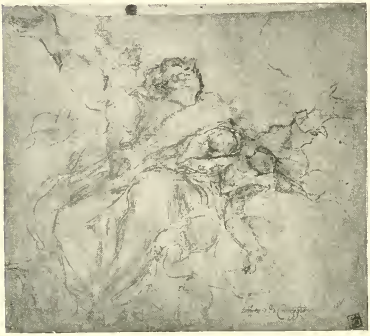
[1] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 265. Pungileoni, i. pp. 211, 212.



THE ASSUMPTION, BY CORREGGIO.
Study for the Cupola of Parma Cathedral.
In the Dresden Museum.

The anxiety of the wardens of the cathedral to protect and strengthen the cupola sufficiently proves that if the beauty of the frescoes was not fully appreciated at first, they at least received a fair share of admiration. In 1533 the authorities began to cover the exterior of the dome with sheets of copper and lead, and the work of repair went on till 1539.[2]

We may now pass in review some of the studies and cartoons made by Correggio for his work. Vasari, in the sixteenth century, asserted that he had in his possession certain figures "drawn in red pencil by his hand, with portions of a frieze of most beautiful children, and other friezes designed for the work, with various conceits of antique sacrifices."[3]

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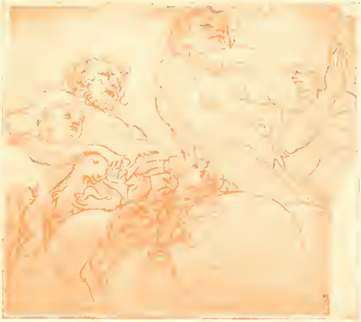
[1] *Scorta della pittura di Francesco Tasini*, MS. quoted by Pungileoni, ii. p. 228.

[2] Archives of the wardens of the cathedral, case i. nos. 22, 41.

[3] *Vite*, iv. p. 113.

The confusion first made by this writer between the frescoes in San Giovanni Evangelista and those in the cathedral seems to have extended to the drawings. The "antique sacrifices" to which Vasari alludes appear in the frieze of the nave in San Giovanni Evangelista. Three sketches of a frieze of children ascribed to Correggio are preserved in the Louvre, but the design was not made use of in any of the works that have survived.[1] Pungileoni,[2] Meyer,[3] Venturi,[4] etc., mention many other drawings, the greater number of which are no longer to be traced.

In the Louvre there is a drawing of the pendentive with the figure of St. John the Baptist; at Vienna, a study for one of the Apostles (*see* illustration on p. 227);[5] at Dresden, a first sketch of the ascending Virgin with two angels; in the Royal Library at Windsor, a magnificent and carefully finished drawing of the group of Adam, Abraham, and Isaac; in the British Museum, a drawing of Eve. In the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth there are various drawings of *putti*, but it is impossible to identify them with those of the fresco, many of them having undergone modifications (*see* illustrations on pp. 228, 229, and 230).[6]



ADAM, ABRAHAM, AND ISAAC, BY CORREGGIO.
Study for the Cupola of Parma Cathedral.
In the Royal Library, Windsor Castle.

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[1] In the Uffizi in Florence there is a pen drawing of a frieze of children, ascribed to Correggio (No. 1947 F.). It is probably by Lorenzo Sabbatini.

[2] *Op. cit.* ii. p. 201 *et seq.*

[3] *Correggio*, p. 416 *et seq.*

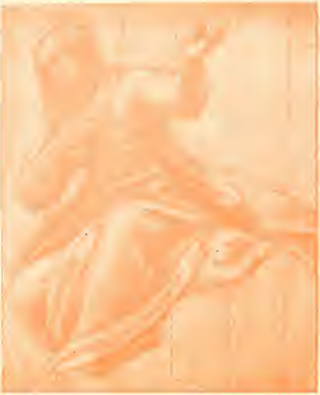
[4] *La R. Galleria estense*, p. 377.

[5] Franz Wickhoff, *Die italienischen Handzeichnungen der Albertina*, Part i. *Die venezianische, die lombardische, und die bolognesische Schule.* (*Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerh. Kaiserhauses*, vol. xii. 1891.)

[6] The drawing in red chalk of the ascending Virgin with angels in the Chatsworth collection is a late and ugly copy. There are several other drawings at Chatsworth attributed to Correggio, but certainly not by his hand. *The Martyrdom of a Saint*, for

With regard to the large cartoons, fifteen of which are said to have been recently discovered in Paris, and to have been bought in 1754 by a lady called Basseporte for 8,000 *lire*,[1] we are inclined to be sceptical. During the restoration and cleaning of the cupola a great many artists, from the Carracci onwards, made drawings of entire zones of the fresco on the original scale; while others, such as Girolamo da Carpi, Barocci, Sabbatini, Passerotti, etc., copied certain portions in oil, or made studies of single figures or motives, after the manner of the six sketches which passed from the Marchese Aldrovandi to a certain Carlo Zanichelli,[2] and the colossal head of a boy in the Uffizi at Florence.

These numerous copies in various mediums show how rapidly the fame of Correggio's great work had established itself. Vasari was the first to write of it. "It seems incredible, not only that the hand should have executed, but that the brain should have conceived such a work, so wonderful is the airy motion of the draperies and of the atmosphere." He adds that Girolamo da Carpi expressed his ad-



STUDY (FOR AN ANNUNCIATION), ATTRIBUTED TO CORREGGIO.
In the Louvre.

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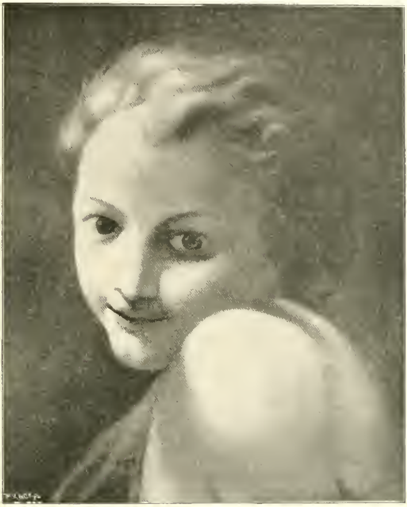
instance, has many of the characteristics of Giorgio Gandino del Grano. The figure of the Apostle in profile, looking up, is a study made by Bernardino Gatti for the cupola of the Steccata. Several of the drawings ascribed to Correggio at Windsor are by Parmigianino and Girolamo Mazzola. A drawing of a semi-nude female figure with three children, in the Louvre, ascribed to Correggio, is a study by Parmigianino for his *Saint Agatha*. We need not mention the hundreds of other drawings to which his name has been affixed with bewildering levity.

[1] *Archiv. storico dell' arte*, iii. p. 413. Rome, 1890.

[2] G. Giordani, *Sopra sei dipinti ad olio del Correggio*. Letter to Cav. Pietro Martini. Bologna, 1865. MS. letter of Signor Carlo Zanichelli in the archives of the Parma Gallery.

miration of "the marvellous foreshortening of the figure of the Virgin, who ascends to heaven, surrounded by a multitude of angels."

The Carracci were even more fervent in their admiration. On April 18, 1580, Annibale wrote to Agostino: "I lost no time in going to see the great cupola, which you have so often praised to me, and I, too, was amazed to see so vast a composition so perfectly carried out, so excellently foreshortened from beneath to above, executed with so much vigour, and yet with such grace and judgment, and with a glow of colour that seems to be that of flesh itself. Truly, neither Tibaldo, nor Nicolino,[1] nor even Raphael himself, has equalled it!"



HEAD OF A BOY, A COPY AFTER CORREGGIO

In the Uffizi, Florence.

From thenceforth Parma became a place of pilgrimage for all the numerous artists of the Bolognese school, and the cupola of the Duomo the greatest and most perfect example of Italian art, and the ideal that every painter of discrimination sought to follow. Scannelli declared that it was "a complete epitome of all the excellencies scattered abroad in the works of other masters."[2] Nor did the enthusiasm abate in the following centuries. Gianbattista Tiepolo, contemplating it, almost felt his faith in Titian and Paolo Veronese shaken ; and Mengs summed up the chorus of praise in these words : " It is the most beautiful of all the cupolas painted either before or since." [1]

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[1] Pellegrino Tibaldi and Nicolò dell' Abate.

[2] *Il Microcosmo della pittura*, p. 18.

Ludwig Tieck, the famous German poet, sang thus of Correggio : " What genius disclosed all these wonders to thee ? All the fair images in the world seem to have sprung forward to meet thee, and to throw themselves lovingly into thine arms. How joyous was the gathering when smiling angels held thy palette, and sublime spirits stood before thee in all their splendour as models. Let no one say he has seen Italy, let no one think he has learnt the lofty secrets of art, till he has seen thee and thy cathedral, O Parma ! "

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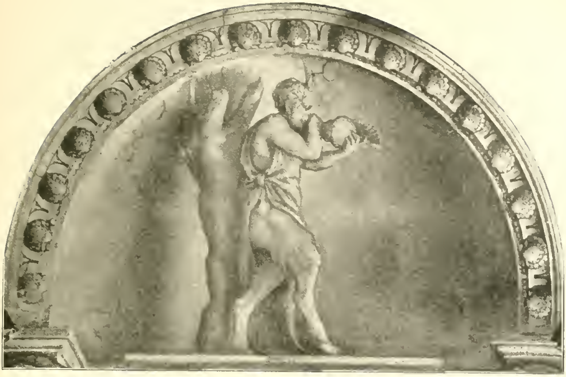
[1] *Opere*, ii. p. 158.

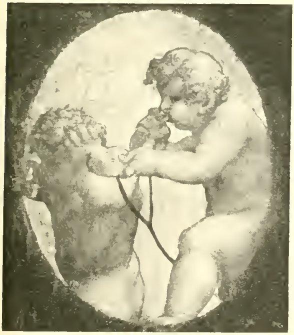


A SATYR. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER XII

CORREGGIO'S GREAT ALTAR-PIECES

"THE MADONNA WITH ST. SEBASTIAN"—"THE MADONNA WITH ST. JEROME"—"THE MADONNA DELLA SCODELLA"—"THE NATIVITY, KNOWN AS 'LA NOTTE'"—"THE MADONNA WITH ST. GEORGE"



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

BETWEEN 1524 and 1530, the years in which he was working in the cathedral, Correggio also produced some of the great altar-pieces now in the Dresden and Parma Galleries. It was, indeed, a period no less prolific than glorious in his *œuvre*, when he seems to have had but few distractions from his work. Personal details are consequently somewhat scanty throughout these years. In February, 1525, he was in Correggio, where he appeared as witness to several legal documents, and where he also addressed an appeal to the Podestà, soliciting the examination of certain witnesses in his law-suit against the Aromani.[1] In August of the same year he figures as one of the artists who made an examination of the church of Santa Maria della Steccata, a subsidence of the building having taken place, which had caused some alarm for its safety.[2] In 1527, the year when his uncle, Lorenzo Allegri, died, he returned to his native city, and at the instance of Manfredo, Lord of Correggio, finally brought his litigation against the Aromani to an end; he also empowered his father, Pellegrino, to act for him in another law-suit relating to the property of his wife, Girolama Merlini. In the summer of 1528 he was again in Correggio, as we know from Veronica Gambara's letter of that date to Isabella Gonzaga, describing the *Magdalen in the Desert* he had just painted. His wife's death took place shortly afterwards, and this sad event necessitated his return to his home, where he spent nearly the whole of the four remaining years of his life.

We have seen that he happened to be absent from Parma during the siege. He was less fortunate six years later, when the hordes which the Connétable de Bourbon had at first led became in their turn his leaders, sweeping him on with them to the sack of Rome. In February, 1527, they skirted the walls of Parma in their march, to the infinite terror of the citizens, who expected nothing short of siege and pillage.[3] Never did swarm of barbarians descend into Italy dealing havoc and destruction with such fury as these. The Lanzknechte took men and children prisoners for the sake of ransom, offered violence to women, desecrated convents, invaded houses, and, after robbing them of all they could lay hands on, set fire to them. They burst into the churches, tore down the pictures, shattered the statues, broke up the consecrated wafers, and poured out the holy oil upon the ground. Their leader was threatened with violence himself when he attempted to curb their worst excesses. Peasants were hunted and murdered; merchants were despoiled of all they possessed; envoys who attempted to treat with the invaders were repulsed with savage shouts and menaces. Some unpublished letters in the archives of Bologna give a brief but terrible account of that memorable progress. The passer-by, says one, "may easily follow their route from any elevated spot, for they mark their track in fire, burning all the houses and buildings they pass, so that there is darkness over all the plain, through which fire and smoke are visible, proclaiming the advent of the barbarians, who have come to destroy and devastate this province of Italy as they did before in times gone by." And in another letter: "Nothing is to be seen but clouds of smoke by day, and flames of fire by night." Correggio, gazing through the narrow windows of the cathedral dome, must have seen these sinister columns of smoke rising along the wide valley of the Po, and melting away towards Ferrara and Bologna.

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[1] Pungileoni, ii. p. 193.

[2] A. Ronchini, *La Steccata di Parma* (*Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di storia patria per Modena e Parma*, vol. i. p. 182. Modena, 1863). Among these artists were Alessandro and Battistone Chierici, Marc' Antonio Zucchi, G. F. Agrate, and Bernardino da Erba, the architects, Jacopo Filippo Gonzate, caster of statues, G. F. Bonzagni, the medallist, Araldi and Anselmi, the painters. Correggio's name heads the list.

[3] Angeli, *Storia di Parma*, p. 514 *et seq.* Ant. Francesco da Villa, *Cronaca di Piacenza*, p. 106 *et seq.* Parma, 1862. Pietro Balan, *Monumenta sæculi xvi. historiam illustrantia*, vol. i. Innsbrück, 1885. Unpublished letters of Vianesio Albergati to the Senate of Bologna. State archives of Bologna, 1526–1527, etc., etc.

The pictures we are now about to describe were distributed among the three Emilian cities, Modena, Reggio, and Parma. Parma is the only one of the three which still retains her treasures.

The *Madonna with St. Sebastian* was painted in 1525 for the Confraternity of St. Sebastian at Modena. In 1659 Duke Alfonso IV. obtained it for his gallery, in exchange presenting a copy by Boulanger, and causing the vault of the choir in the chapel of the brotherhood to be painted by the Bolognese artists, Colonna and Mitelli.[1] It was included among the pictures sold by Francesco III. to Augustus III., King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, and passed into the Dresden Gallery in 1746.

The Virgin, in a crimson robe and blue mantle, is enthroned on clouds in an aureole of light, surrounded by a semicircle of seraphheads; she gently supports the Infant, who is seated across her left knee. Youthful angels are grouped on each side of her. One of those nearest to her bends forward to gaze at the sleeping St. Roch, another to call St. Sebastian's attention to the Child. Others at her feet support the clouds, caryatid-wise, or mount sportively upon them. The line formed by the three saints descends in a peculiar manner from left to right. St. Sebastian, "whose expression and attitude are of most strange beauty,"[1] stands to the left. His hands are bound to the trunk of a tree, but he turns to gaze with a happy smile at the Infant Jesus, who extends his little hand in benediction. St. Geminianus, in a white surplice, a gold cope, and crimson hose, kneels, facing the spectator, to whom he points out the Virgin and Child above. St. Roch, in a blue tunic and orange mantle, sleeps peacefully on a rising knoll, relieved from his sufferings. A glimpse of landscape is seen behind him. The light falls on his legs only; the rest of his body is in the shadow of the clouds. The light is therefore diffused more especially on the figures of St. Sebastian and of the patron saint of Modena, and dies away upon the third saint in a manner very restful to the eye. Seated on the ground to the left, a beautiful and smiling girl observes St. Geminianus, anxious to invoke his protection for the city of Modena, which is indicated by the model of a group of buildings, among them the cathedral, with its tower and doorway.[2]

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[1] Vasari, vi. p. 471. Tiraboschi, p. 276. Pungileoni, i. p. 159, and ii. p. 193. Venturi, *Galleria estense*, p. 309, etc. For the four pictures by Correggio in the Dresden Gallery, see Hermann Lücke, *Die königliche Gemäldegalerie zu Dresden*. Munich, 1894.

The picture has lost much of its original brilliance. Unlike most of the master's works, the history of its migrations is very simple, though the tale of its misadventures is a long and painful one. Gian Battista Spaccini relates that so early as 1611 Ercole Abba obtained leave to repair the damage done to the picture by Ercole dell' Abate, who exposed it to the sun, "to make the colours blend." The double injury inflicted by these two artists was slight, however, when compared with the havoc wrought shortly afterwards by the Bolognese, Flaminio Torri, who repainted it almost entirely. Mengs also speaks of certain scratches made in the process of its transport, and repaired at Dresden.[3]

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[1] Scannelli, *Microcosmo della pittura*, p. 289.

[2] There is a copy of this child's head, perhaps by Federigo Barocci, in the Pitti Gallery at Florence.

[3] *Opere*, ii. p. 166.

The state to which it had been reduced may be imagined from the fact that when Palmaroli was commissioned to remove the over-paints, he brought to light several cherub heads which had been completely hidden. Such a succession of outrages resulted, as may be supposed, in the destruction of the original harmonies; the shadows have been robbed of their richness and delicacy, and the figures have become harsh and rough in parts, especially the St. Sebastian and the St. Geminianus.[1]

VIEW OF MODENA.

The so-called *St. Jerome Madonna*, now one of the chief ornaments of the Parma Gallery, is in a very different state.[2] There are no original documents now extant which show in what year it was

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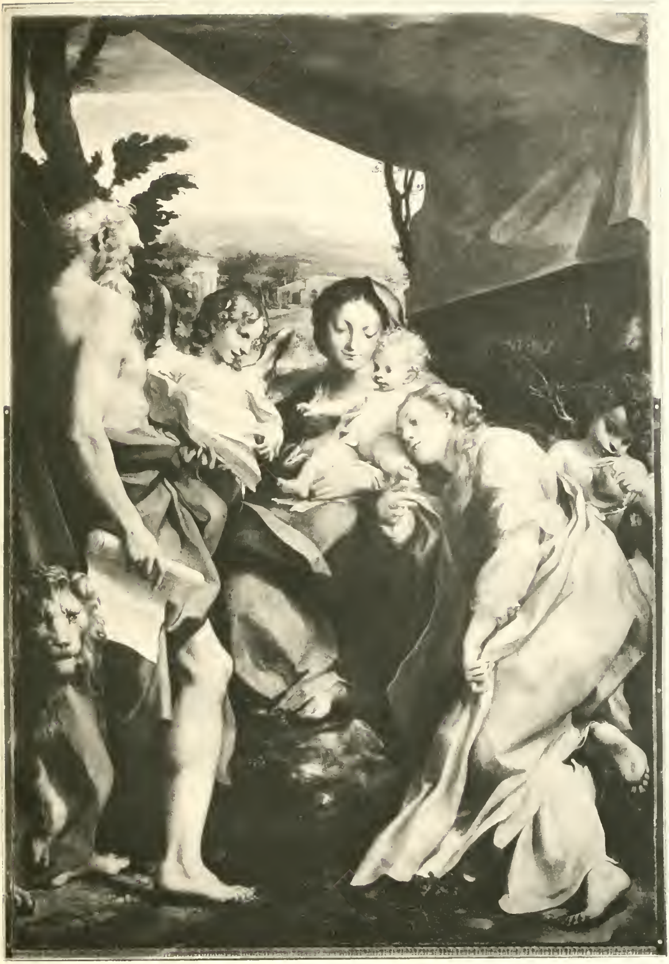
[1] The legs and hands of the St. Sebastian are entirely ruined; the hands of the St. Geminianus have been partly repainted; St. Roch's face has been retouched, etc. In fact, this is one of the most severely handled of all Correggio's works.

[2] Some writers have attempted to christen this picture *Il Giorno* (Day), in contrast to *La Notte* (Night), in the Dresden Gallery.



interested waited patiently till it should be forgotten to return to the charge. Meanwhile the prince died.

Several years passed, when suddenly a rumour gained ground that negotiations for the sale of the picture had been opened afresh between the Conte Anguissola, Preceptor of Sant' Antonio, and a foreign potentate. Some said the King of Portugal had offered to buy it for 40,000 ducats; others, that the proposed purchaser was the King of Poland, and the price agreed upon 14,000 sequins. The second version was no doubt the true one. We know, in fact, that Augustus III., King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, had bought about a hundred famous pictures from the Duke of Modena three years before, among which were several by Correggio, and that he continued to collect others for his gallery at Dresden. In the unpublished chronicle of a contemporary writer we read under the date of December 5, 1749: "The picture in Sant' Antonio by the famous Correggio has been removed from its place, and deposited in the cathedral, that is to say in the Chapter-house; an event which has caused great stupefaction, the picture having been for so many years in the hands of the Preceptors of the said church of Sant' Antonio. The present Preceptor is Count Anguissola, a native of Piacenza. Report says that the matter is approved by supreme authority, and that a contract has been made with the King of Poland, who has offered 14,000 sequins, and 1,000 as a present to the Conte Anguissola, the abbot aforesaid. We shall see what befalls in time. At present all is kept secret."[1]

By peremptory order, the picture was removed at the expense of the community from the sacristy of Sant' Antonio, placed in a room of the Chapter-house with official solemnity,[2] and, for greater safety, at once walled into a kind of niche. The notaries had meanwhile drawn up the deeds relating to it.

About six years later, in the August of 1756, a French painter, who had obtained leave to copy it, proposed to put a glaze upon it, in order to make a drawing from it more easily. The canons refused to allow it; the painter insisted; from argument they came to abuse, and the painter was turned out of doors without ceremony. He appealed to Guillaume Dutillot, prime minister of Don Philip de Bourbon, Duke of Parma, who, when the matter had been explained to him, promptly ordered the picture to be removed to Colorno.[1] The priests dislodged it from the walls with much difficulty; it was put in a new frame, secured with four locks, fastened to bars with the help of twenty-four grenadiers, and, escorted by two deputies of the commune, it left Parma for the prince's villa.

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[1] Sgavetti, *Cronaca*, MSS. in the state archives at Parma, ii. p. 65.

[2] Communal archives of Parma. *Ragioneria*, *Ordinazioni diverse*, 1749–50. No. 403. Book of ordinary and extraordinary expenditure, etc., 1728–51.

It had not long been there, when Don Philip determined to place it in the gallery of the Accademia. There it remained till 1764, when the church of Sant' Antonio was finished, or very nearly so, and the Preceptory petitioned for its "restitution to its original destination." A letter from Cardinal Pietro Francesco Bussi to Clement XIII. says that the Duke declares himself ready to hand over the picture, but at the same time expresses "a desire to purchase it. He proposes to give a sum of 1,500 *zecchini* to the Preceptory in compensation, together with a further sum for the purchase of a picture in place of the original." The Pontiff, in a mandate of November 28, sanctioned the sale of the picture, which was paid for on April 16, 1765, with a draft signed by Dutillot.[2]

Although occasional offers continued to be made from foreign countries for its purchase,[3] the famous picture seemed at last secure in the new gallery, where it was constantly under the public eye. In 1796, however, the French invaders carried it off with many other pictures from Parma to Paris. The unfortunate Francesco Rosaspina, who was just about to begin a series of engravings after Correggio, wrote on May 19 of this year to the Abate Andrea Mazza: "Unhappily, I knew myself to be threatened with the fatal loss of our incomparable

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[1] Ratti, p. 82 *et seq.* Martini, p. 153 *et seq.* Communal archives of Parma. Book of expenditure from 1751 to 1756.

[2] For the details of this sale, see A. G. Tononi, *Corrispondenza tra il P. Paciandi e Mons. Aless. Pisani, vescovo di Piacenza* (*Atti e memorie delle R. Deputazioni di storia patria per le provincie modenesi e parmensi*), series ii. vol. v. p. 378 *et seq.* Modena, 1888.

[3] In 1772 Frederick the Great offered 25,000 sequins for it. Ratti, p. 82.

Correggio's unique works; but I could not credit the rumour, remembering the close and friendly relations existing between the Court of Parma and that of Spain. It seems that the princes have lost all power of guiding us, and that they cannot foresee things which those of low rank would not fail to perceive and prepare against. And *we* have to pay the penalty of their folly. I am so overcome that I seem to have lost my wits and appetite together! What an irreparable loss for Parma! and what ruin for me, whose whole life-work has been overthrown!"[1]

The great political changes of the times pursued their rapid course, and all began to bow down before the meteoric splendour of Napoleon I. Eight years had hardly passed, when all regrets for the lost treasure appeared to be swallowed up in the delight with which a band of sycophants acclaimed the present of a copy of the picture by the Canon Gaetano Tedeschi, offered by Moreau Saint-Méry. The professors of the Academy passed a vote of "most hearty thanks for the valuable gift"; they hailed Saint-Méry as a "beneficent Mæcenas" to whom the liveliest gratitude was due; they sent a deputation to acknowledge the offering, and Count Antonio Bertioli addressed him in such a strain that it might have been supposed Parma had quite as much reason to rejoice over the copy as Paris over the original.[2]

Happily, the copy only usurped the place of the original for a short time. The treaty of 1815 restored the latter to Italy. At the end of the year it was brought back to Milan, and early in 1816 it was restored to Parma, and placed once more in the gallery.[3]

The Virgin, in a red robe and blue mantle, is seated under a crimson canopy fastened to the branches of trees, and stretched across the upper part of the picture diagonally. She supports the Babe on her left hand, holding him under the arm with her right, a tender smile of quiet happiness just dawning in her face. The

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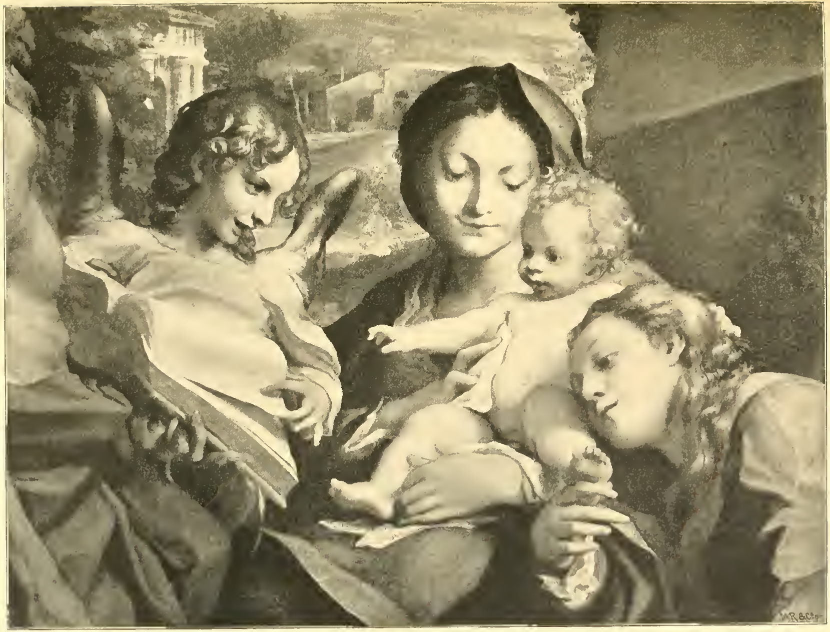
[1] Archives of San Giovanni Evangelista, in the Royal Palatine Library at Parma. Portfolio 228.

[2] Minutes of the Accademia di Belle Arti, ii. pp. 33, 73.

[3] State archives of Parma, *Atti del Dicastero delle finanze parmensi*, 1815–16. E. Scarabelli Zunti. *Op. cit.*



[illegible]

In the Parma Gallery

On the opposite side, the Magdalen, kneeling on a piece of rising ground, leans forward to the Infant Jesus, laying her cheek caressingly against his leg, and holding his foot as if about to kiss it. The Babe lays his little hand lightly on the fair hair that falls over the shoulders of the penitent, a lovely and caressing creature, about whom some touch of the coquetry that characterises her moral type is yet apparent in the elegance of her attire, and the graceful action with which the nervous left hand is bent back to hold up the yellow mantle.[1]

While she thus gives herself up to adoring worship of the Babe, a delicious curly-headed urchin behind her, probably the little St. John, has taken her jar of ointment, to peep in and smell it, or perhaps to stir up the contents. Meanwhile, he looks out of the corner of his eye on the saint with a very comic grimace, lest she should turn suddenly and reprove his curiosity.

In the background lies a broad valley, in which some little figures appear, and a group of houses, a water-course, an arch with double columns, and, in the distance, a high mountain, overhung with streaks of dark, vaporous cloud. Its outline is that of Monte Dosso, as seen from Parma. Perhaps the arch to the left may represent one of the city gates, and the water-course its river.

The picture we have now described is justly celebrated as one of the finest productions not only of Correggio, but of Italian art. The whole composition is radiant, palpitating, living; the conception is marked by the most perfect originality and independence. In the foreshortening of the Magdalen's face, and the pose of her feet and hands, the artist makes an absolutely new departure.

The technical result is obtained by a series of glazes, and the superposal of one light tone upon another. The master shortened one of St. Jerome's fingers, and increased the size of the Virgin's great toe, and rather than impair the transparency of the colour, he has allowed these corrections to proclaim themselves without disguise. An infinity of delicate reflections penetrates the shadows, through which the air appears to circulate freely. But for this quality in the execution, the luminous central group, in which the heads and hands of the Virgin and the Magdalen are brought into close contact with the little body of the Child, would have become a mere mass of flesh, without any relief, whereas now everything is distinctly brought out by the diaphanous tones that define the various objects. The Magdalen's right hand and the leg of the Child seem almost to project from the picture. The wonderful variety of colour and motive throughout is so remarkable that it seems as if the painter had been at special pains to emphasise it. The hair, painted in the manner Vasari never tires of praising as marvellous in its minute and careful rendering, varies both in growth and colour on every head. The chestnut locks of the little St. John curl thickly; the Magdalen's long fair hair flows in a rippling stream over her shoulders; the Virgin's brown tresses are parted under a kerchief, while the Child's wave in soft tendrils about his forehead; the angel's blonde curls are darker in tone than the Magdalen's, and St. Jerome's white locks cluster luxuriantly about his noble head.

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[1] There is a drawing of the Magdalen's head in the Vienna Museum, a poor and ugly copy.

Vasari speaks of this altar-piece as "coloured in such a marvellous and stupendous manner, that painters admire its colour as miraculous, and it is scarcely possible to paint better."[1] Francesco Algarotti makes the following admission: "May Raphael's divine genius pardon me, if, when gazing at this picture, I break faith with him, and am tempted to say in secret to Correggio: 'Thou alone canst please me!'"[2] The enthusiasm of past generations, of which we have given some few samples, is shared by many modern critics. Burckhardt, for instance, speaks of this picture as a marvel of colour and of execution, a perfect expression of serene and innocent happiness. He praises the exquisite beauty of the Magdalen, and says that the gesture with which she prostrates herself before the Infant Saviour is unsurpassed in its suggestion of feminine grace.[3]

Another picture, hardly less famous than this, was carried with it to Paris in 1796, and restored to the Royal Gallery of Parma in 1816. This was the Holy Family, known as the *Madonna della Scodella*

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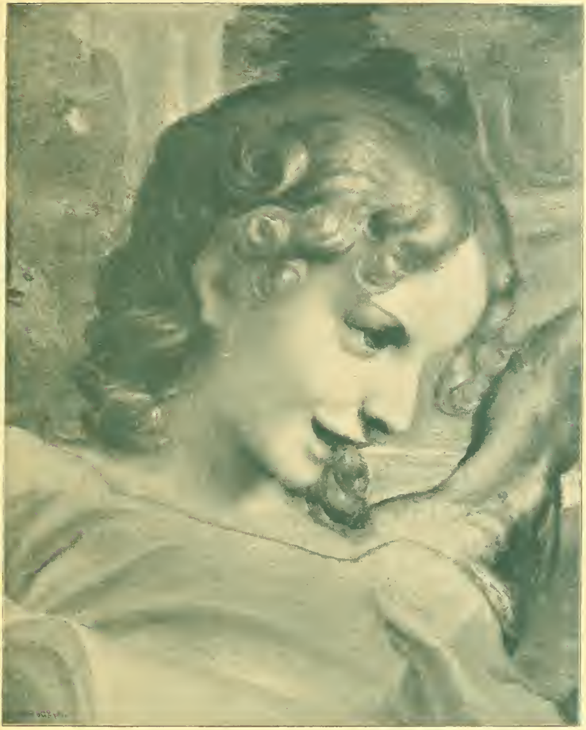
[1] *Vite*, iv. p. 114. [2] Bottari, *Lettere artistiche*, vii. p. 419. [3] *Le Cicerone*, p. 715.



ANGEL FROM THE "ST. JEROME" MADONNA, COMMONLY CALLED "IL GIORNO" (CORREGGIO)

In the Parma Gallery

(The Virgin with the Cup). On the lower part of its wonderful architectonic frame is the following inscription:—

Divo Joseppo deiparae virginis cvstodi
Fidiss. coelitvsq. destinato hvivsce
Arae comvni aere erectores devoti
Alacresq. erexere mdxxx.
Die ii. ivnii.

Strange to say, there are no documents of any sort relating to this picture. The agreement and the receipt for payment have alike disappeared. Pungileoni, relying on a document in the archives of San Salvatore, described it as painted *about* 1527 28.[1] The paper further states: "It is said to have been paid for by the offerings of several contributors." The anonymous chronicler thus advances as a hypothesis what is stated as a fact in the inscription reproduced above. He adds that the tradition was borne out by the will of Cristoforo Bondini, who in 1524 bequeathed a sum of fifteen imperial *lire* towards the purchase, and concludes with the statement that the inscription on the frame "is dated June 19, 1530," whereas, as a fact, the date is June 2.

The writer quoted by Pungileoni, is not only late, but inaccurate; yet nearly all Correggio's biographers have adopted his dates; some, indeed, have fixed one still earlier. Meyer accepts 1527 28;[2] Madame Mignaty pronounces for 1526.[3] In fact this, one of Correggio's most mature works, has almost come to be regarded as a picture of his first period! We do not, on the other hand, agree with Tiraboschi[4] and Baistrocchi,[5] who give 1530 as the date of its execution. It is clear that the picture was installed on June 2 of that year, and as this installation was not deferred until the feast of St. Joseph, or that of the Virgin, we may conclude that it took place directly the picture was completed and fixed into its frame. We are therefore of opinion that Correggio was at work upon it in 1529, and during the first months of 1530.

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[1] *Op. cit.* ii. p. 198.

[2] *Correggio*, p. 311.

[3] *La vita e le opere del Correggio*, p. 311.

[4] *Op. cit.* vi. p. 270.

[5] *Vite d'artisti* in the *Miscellanea* of the Palatine Library, no. 1106, already quoted.

It remained in its original place over the first altar to the left in the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Parma, escaping the various attempts that were made to sell it and carry it off. In 1754, a friar of the Barefooted Carmelites wrote to the sacristan, saying that he knew of a purchaser for the picture. The sacristan replied that the abbot was inclined to sell it, but that the consent of the Infante must first be obtained. Discussing the price, he refers to other offers that had been made; among them one of 30,000 *filippi*, from the General di Braon, one of 600,000 Parmesan *lire* from the Senator Barbieri, and one of 20,000 *zecchini* from the priest Bianconi, rector of a church at Bologna.[1] The Carmelite's negotiations were protracted until the close of 1756; they then seem to have miscarried, and we hear no more of him.[2]

We do not doubt that the frame, from which the picture was removed in 1796, and in which it was replaced in 1893, was designed by Correggio. Such an artist would not have entrusted the ornament that was to enclose his exquisite work to the taste of a carver and gilder. Other artists of lower rank than Correggio were careful to give their own designs for the frames of altar-pieces, and even for the altars they were to adorn. Girolamo Mazzola-Bedoli delighted in work of this kind. On the frame of the *Madonna della Scodella*, especially in the frieze, we find the decorative motives Correggio affected, such as sea-shells, cornucopias, skulls, and cherubs' heads, all of which he introduced in the ornament of his frescoes in the Camera di San Paolo, and in the cathedral.

It is not exactly known who carved it. The style of the execution, and the date, suggest the name of Gian Francesco Zucchi, who carved the frame for the *Conception* at about this time, in the same style, putting the same plaster preparation on the wood, and gilding it in the same manner.

Many writers have supposed, and still suppose, that the picture represents an episode of the Flight into Egypt, whereas it really deals with an incident of the Return from Egypt. The Babe is no

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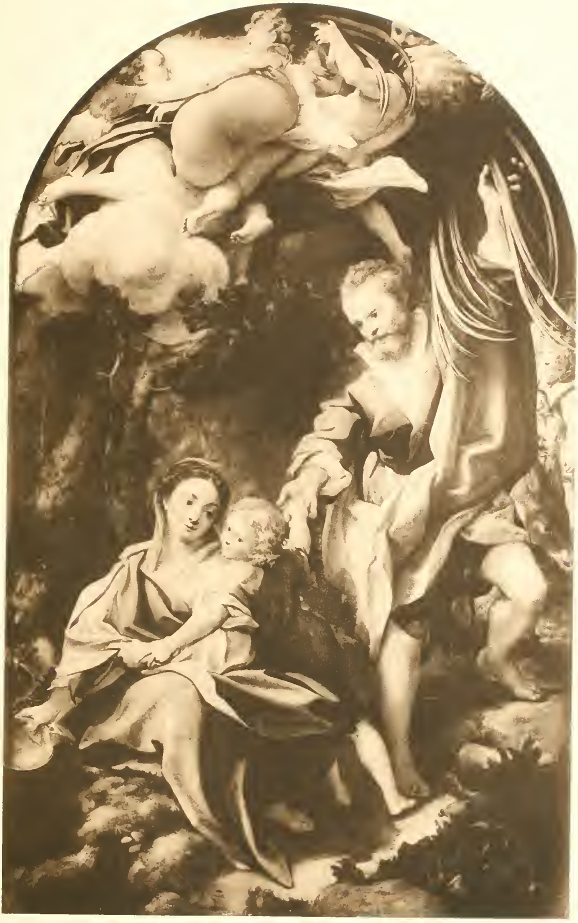
[1] Bianconi also bought pictures for Augustus III.

[2] Tiraboschi, vi. pp. 270–271.



longer in his first infancy, and St. Joseph and the mother are calm and cheerful, as if they had no further cause for fear or anxiety. Scannelli was perhaps the first who grasped the real significance of the composition : the picture, he says, "shows how the Blessed Virgin returned with the youthful Jesus and St. Joseph to Nazareth from Egypt, whither they had fled from the persecution of Herod, and how, halting on their way in an open plain, in which was a palm-tree, with dates, the good St. Joseph gathered some of the fruit to satisfy the hunger of the Holy Child."[1]

The subject of this work, which Vasari calls a "divine picture with marvellous figures,"[2] is taken from one of the apocryphal gospels, which relates how, when the Holy Child and his parents were exhausted with their journey, a palm-tree bent down to offer its fruit, while from the parched ground at their feet a limpid fountain gushed forth.[3]

From the pleasing and gracious elements of this legend the painter has evolved one of the sweetest of familiar episodes, giving life and reality to the fanciful scene.

Against the penumbra of a quiet copse, the three figures of the Virgin, St. Joseph, and the Infant Jesus stand out, as if illuminated by the cheerful rays of spring sunshine. The legend says that the palm bowed itself spontaneously, but the painter has represented the branches as bent by a band of cherubs, who flutter down on vaporous clouds, and busy themselves in the upper part of the picture, or press upon the boughs and pull them down. Their fair curls are stirred by the air and movement, their carnations are exquisitely soft and blooming, the parts in shadow relieved by the most delicate reflections. Of one among them, only part of the face is visible, but the sparkling eyes give it extraordinary vivacity. It may be that the cleaning the picture has undergone has robbed it of some of its more delicate tints, for the legs of the two angels whose backs are turned to the spectator are somewhat confused in line. Only after prolonged scrutiny do we discover that the right leg of the blue-winged angel passes under the left leg of his companion, who has thrown himself backwards. The clouds, too, have been stripped of the transparent glazing which gave them their pearly tone, and are now so blue as to be slightly out of harmony.

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[1] *Il Microcosmo*, p. 275.

[2] *Vite*, vi. p. 472.

[3] *De Infantia Salvatoris Codex apocryphus Novi Testamenti collectus a I. A. Fabricio*, Hamburgi, i. p. 183. Meyer, p. 203 *et seq.* G. Frizzoni, *La Madonna della Scodella del Correggio*, in the *Archivio storico dell' arte*, year vii. p. 292 *et seq.* Rome, 1894.

St. Joseph, who holds the sword-like foliage of the palm in his uplifted left hand, advances with a long striding step to the Infant Jesus, offering the Child the dates he has plucked. His expression is one of cheerful satisfaction ; as Meyer happily remarks, he has entirely lost the air of subdued and mournful humility generally ascribed to him ; he seems not only to rejoice in his release from a dubious position, but to have laid aside his *rôle* of passive spectator, and, for the first time, to be associated with the two whose importance as a rule so greatly eclipses his own, and to receive his share of the angelic homage.

From the artistic side this handsome old man recalls the Apostles in the cupola of the cathedral, both in the sobriety with which the nude parts of his body are treated, and in the exaggerated convolutions of his blue robe and orange mantle.

Jesus, a little boy of from four to five years old, tall, slim, and graceful, with soft fair curls waving on his neck, leans against the Virgin's shoulder.[1] Laying his right hand on that of St. Joseph to take the dates—an action which produces a fine effect of contrast in the flesh-tones—he leans back to his mother to ask for water, pointing at the cup she holds out to a flower-crowned boy, the genius of the miraculous spring. She lays her left hand on the yellow veil about her shoulders to prevent it from slipping off, and draws its transparent folds, through which her crimson robe is visible, more closely about her. This instinctive by-play by no means diverts her attention from the Child, at whom she gazes with a gentle inclination of the head and a smile of such infinite sweetness as to awaken the deepest sympathies of the spectator.

In the background, behind St. Joseph, an angel, whose figure is illuminated by the sunshine, ties the ass to the stump of a tree.

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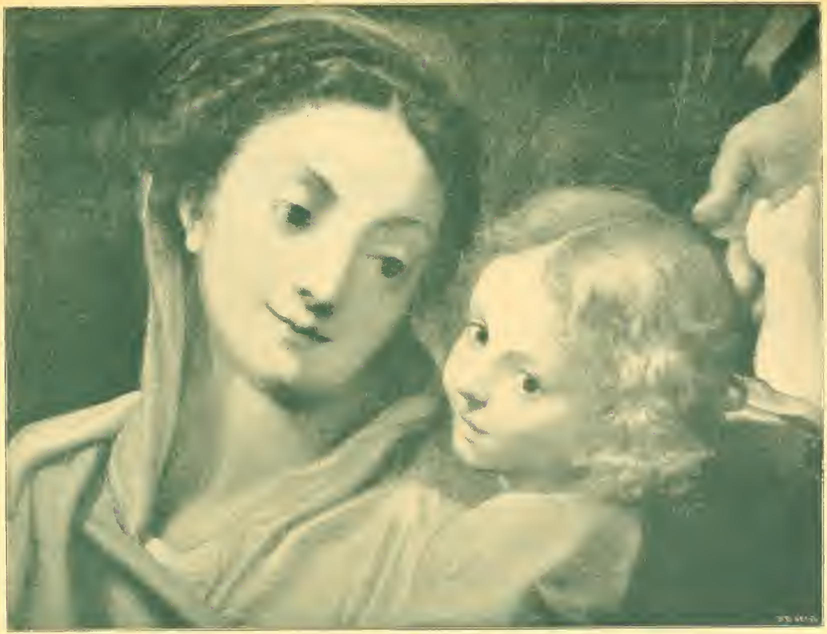
[1] There is an old copy of the head of the Child in the Municipal Gallery at Verona, where it is described as an original picture by Correggio.



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Not only the group of angels above, but the part of the Virgin's face which is in shadow, the back of the Child, and the legs of St. Joseph, bear the traces of over-cleaning. It is perfectly untrue, however, that the picture "was ruined" by a Spanish apprentice, who, having obtained leave to copy it, "washed it in so barbarous a fashion that he left scarcely any paint on the panel."[1] Mengs partially cleaned it, but with the utmost care.[2]

On the whole, indeed, taking into account the vicissitudes undergone by most of Correggio's works, the condition of the picture is unusually satisfactory. The perfect harmony of the tones has been disturbed to a certain extent; but the enamelled colour has still an enchanting splendour and transparence. "The magic effect of the sunshine in the mysterious forest glade," says Burckhardt, "the loveliness of the heads, the magnificent colour, and the indescribable splendour of the whole, make this work one of the painter's masterpieces.[3]

The two great altar-pieces we are now about to describe are in the Dresden Gallery, to which they passed with other pictures sold by the Duke of Modena to Augustus III., as already mentioned.

The *Nativity*, so well known as Correggio's *Notte*, was also suggested by a passage in one of the apocryphal gospels, which relates how St. Joseph, entering the stable at Bethlehem, saw the new-born Child shining with a supernatural radiance, which lighted up the figure of his mother.

All the figures grouped round the Babe are illuminated by the rays from his body, which beams in the midst like a star. Even the angels above reflect this radiance. In his *Nativity*, painted for the Carthusian monastery of San Martino at Naples, Guido Reni, imitating Correggio without perceiving the spiritual and pictorial significance of this concentration, represented the glory of angels as receiving their light from heaven, though he illuminated the worshipping shepherds by the radiance of the Child.

In Correggio's picture, the stable is built among the ruins of some ancient house or temple; the Child lies in a manger roughly made of wood, on a bundle of straw and corn-ears. The foreshortened upper part of his luminous little body is swathed in a white linen cloth.

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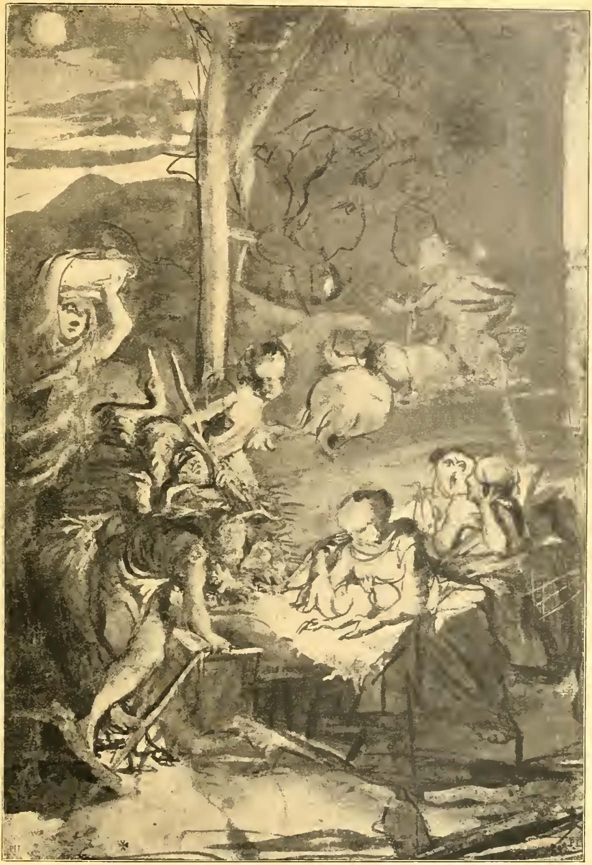
[1] G. N. d'Azara, note to Mengs, ii. p. 155. [2] Ratti, p. 80. [3] *Op. et loc. cit.*

The Virgin kneels beside him, gazing at him with smiling rapture, and gathering him gently into the circle of her arms. Over her soft blue under-dress she wears a crimson robe and deep blue mantle. The Infant God and his mother form the radiant nucleus of the picture, and seem transfigured by a common glory, "as befits their ardent love." Three figures are placed in front of them to the left, and a dog, whose head only is illuminated, looks up from below. The figure nearest to the manger in this group is a youthful shepherdess, who stands against a column. With her right hand she holds a basket, out of which two goslings peer at the Child. Her left hand she raises to shade her eyes from the dazzling light, which forces her to lower her eyelids, and contract the muscles of her face—a realistic action, yet so instinct with grace, that the beauty of her features is by no means impaired. Close beside her a youthful shepherd kneels; he turns, with an impulsive movement which has given the painter an opportunity for a very effective play of lights and shadows, to an old man with unkempt hair and beard, who wears a short tunic of dull red, and is in the act of raising his right hand to take off his cap; in his left he grasps a heavy staff. The three converse together in awe of the glorious event. Among the clouds above hovers a group of five angels, illuminated by the light which reaches them from the Babe, but less brilliantly than the figures below. Mengs and others suppose this to indicate that they are spirits, and not corporeal beings. A painter of the Renaissance is scarcely likely to have been so far imbued with mediæval metaphysics. Correggio's main concern was with the pictorial effect, which demanded a strong chiaroscuro in the figures of the shepherds, that is to say, in the central part of the picture, and not in the angels above. We know that sentimental minds dislike this "materialisation" of impressions; but honest criticism should be proof against the seductions of academic mysticism, more especially in the case of an artist like Correggio, whose greatness needs not the foreign aid of theology and metaphysics.

In boldness of foreshortening and animation of action these angels are closely allied to those in the cupola of the cathedral. Three of them gaze with joyful smiles at the Infant Jesus; the other two, who



SKETCH FOR THE NATIVITY (*La Notte*)

In the British Museum.

seem to invite the shepherds to worship him, are more vivacious. One, who is robed in red, and faces the spectator, advances, clasping his hands in prayer; the other, in a green mantle, who is seen from behind, draws up one leg, and extends the other, opening his arms, and describing a semicircle in his flight, as he looks down on the shepherds behind him.

On the ground there are great blocks of stones, forming steps, and tall plants, all painted in greenish tones, and shrouded in a penumbra full of delicate reflections. An admirable relief is given by the luminous ray, which, passing between the Virgin's arms, glances on her robe and mantle near one knee, and the lights, which follow the outline of the old man's figure, and, striking off towards the ground, define a kind of side scene which marks the distance between the two groups of figures.

Behind the chief group, in the middle distance, St. Joseph endeavours to draw away the ass from the manger to the barrier, beyond which are two other shepherds with an ox. Against the horizon stretches a long line of blue hills, and the sky above brightens with the first faint radiance of dawn.

It cannot be denied that something has been lost of the original brilliance and vivacity of this picture. The shadows have darkened, the azures have suffered, the flesh-tones, robbed of their delicate glazings, have become slightly monotonous. We might point out yet other traces left by the restorer and the cleaner; added to which, the varnish has perished. These various causes detract, of course, from the general effect of a work[1] which so delighted Vasari that he declared the angels seemed rather to have "fallen in a shower from heaven, than to have been fashioned by a painter's hand,"[2] and moved Scannelli to one of the magniloquent flights dear to the rhetorician of the seventeenth century.[3]

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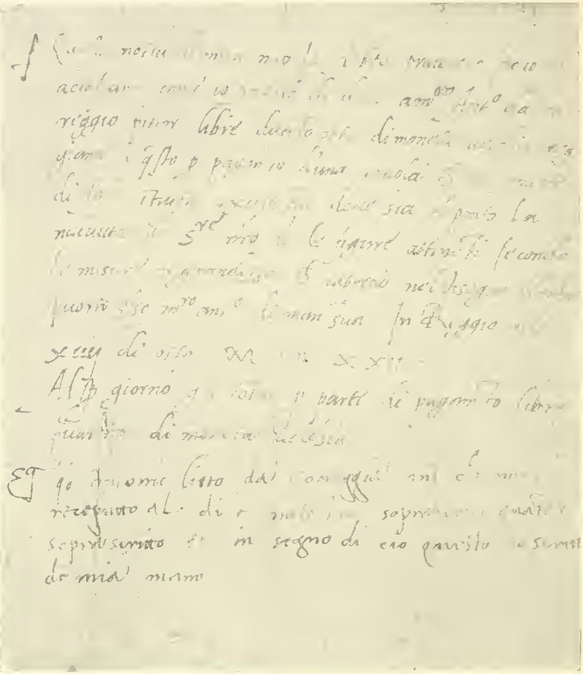
[1] The effect of this picture and of others by Correggio at Dresden is also greatly injured by the crowded state of the Gallery, and the strong red of the wall on which they are hung. The works of this master and his scholars would show to greater advantage in a room by themselves, against a dark gray background.

[2] *Vite*, iv. p. 117.

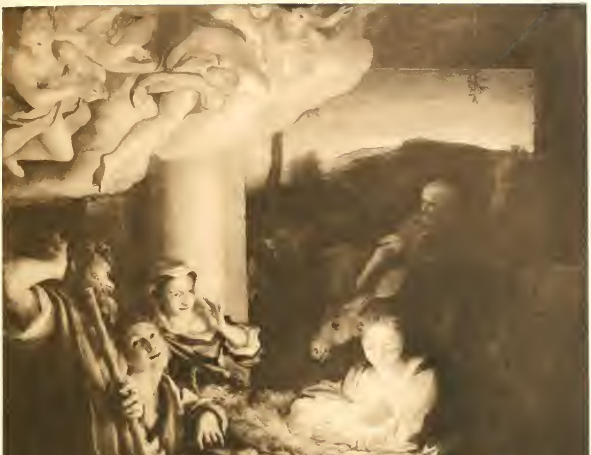
[3] *Op. cit.* p. 295. See also G. von Buquoy, *Worte der Begeisterung vor der Nacht des Correggio*, 1825. For supposed studies for the picture, see Meyer, p. 308 *et seq.* There is an important drawing, freely treated, but with great variety, and very interesting as a study of effect, in the British Museum. The drawing in the Weimar Museum we do

This picture was another to which a tradition was attached. "Correggio," says an old writer, "desiring to produce an effect of night, would not allow his work to be admired save at night-time, or if in the day, in a darkened room, lighted by candles; when thus seen, many additional figures of shepherds, women, and animals became



CORREGGIO'S AUTOGRAPH AGREEMENT FOR ALTAR-PIECE OF "THE NATIVITY."

not believe to be by Correggio. It is a later work of the Bolognese school. There is also a study of an angel's head in this museum, illuminated from below, which some persons maintain to be a study for *La Notte*.'



visible, painted with so much art that they seemed to lack nothing but life."[1]

The history of *La Notte* is a very simple one. Alberto Pratoneri ordered it for the altar of his chapel in the church of San Prospero at Reggio. The correspondence between him and the painter is preserved in the archives of the State of Modena. "Be it known to all that I, Alberto Pratonero, by these words written with my own hand, promise to give to Master Antonio of Correggio, painter, two hundred and eight pounds of the old Reggian currency, and this, in payment of a picture which he promises to paint for me with his utmost skill, wherein he is to represent the Nativity of our Lord, with such figures

CHURCH OF SAN PROSPERO, REGGIO.

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[1] Alfonso Isacchi, *Relazione della Madonna di Reggio*, p. 36. Reggio, 1619. Ratti, p. 103.

as pertain to the subject, according to the size and measurements of the drawing by his own hand submitted to me by the said Master Antonio. At Reggio, on the 14th day of October, MDXXII. On the day aforesaid I handed over to him forty pounds of the ancient currency, in part payment."

Beneath this declaration of Pratoneri's, the painter wrote as follows: "And I, Antonio Lieto of Correggio, declare that I received the sum mentioned on the day and in the year aforesaid, in token of which I have written this with my own hand."[1] The picture, however, was not completed and placed over the altar until eight years later, in 1530, as we learn from the inscription by which Alberto and Gabriele Pratoneri commemorated the event.[2]

Before the sixteenth century had run its course, the Estensi had determined to acquire the picture, and had already prepared the way for seizing it. We find traces of their designs in a letter written by Fulvio Rangoni from Reggio on December 27, 1587, and addressed to Alfonso II.'s secretary: "Some time ago died the Cavaliere Pratoneri, and shortly after him Messer Giulio, which two were the owners of Correggio's *Nativity*, now on their altar in the church of San Prospero. It has become the property of two minors, and I do not think they could agree to its removal, besides which, I do not know how it would please the priests, who one and all account the picture a great treasure. Nevertheless, I will make every effort to overcome these difficulties, and to do your Serene Highness's pleasure, if I see any possible means of obtaining it."[3]

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[1] Gius. Campori, *Relazione di un autografo del Correggio rinvenuto nell' archivio palatino di Modena* (*Atti e memorie delle R. Deputazioni di storia patria per le provincie modenesi e parmensi*, i. p. 34 *et seq.* Modena, 1863). This autograph, which was found in the books of the Pratoneri family, perhaps came into the hands of Duke Francesco I. of Este, together with the picture. See a letter written by Gius. Bigellini to Padre Resta in 1688, in Bottari's *Raccolta di lettere artistiche*, iii. p. 499, and *La scrittura di artisti italiani riprodotta con la fotografia da Carlo Pini, e corredata di notizie da Gaetano Milanesi*, plate 115. Florence, 1876.

[2] *Albertus et Gabriel Pratonerii hæc de Hieronymi parentis optimi sententia fieri voluerunt ann.* MDXXX. This inscription is affixed to the pilaster to the right of the Pratoneri chapel in San Prospero.

[3] Paolo Ottavi, *Due quadri del Correggio*, p. 111. See also B. Catelani's *Relazione*, in the *Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di storia patria per la Romagna*, year i. p. 66. Bologna, 1862.

Rather more than a century later the Estensi accomplished their design, not by the difficult and tedious process of negotiation, but by the more expeditious methods of violence and robbery. A contemporary chronicle written in the *Libro dei defunti* of San Prospero records that in May, 1640, the picture was sacrilegiously carried off by order of Duke Francesco, and taken to Modena, to the inexpressible grief of all the citizens.[1]

The *Madonna with St. George* was originally in the Oratory or *Scuola* of St. Peter Martyr at Modena, which was suppressed in 1880 and incorporated with the municipal hospital.[2]

In the delicate and precious little bistre drawing, heightened with white, now, like the picture, in the Dresden Gallery, the architectonic frame, with its two Doric columns, is introduced. If, as Mengs[3] and Ratti[4] assert, this frame was not of wood, nor of any moulded substance, but was painted by Correggio or one of his pupils on the wall itself, Pungileoni's hypothesis gains greatly in probability. He supposed the picture to have been finished in 1532, having discovered in Lancellotti's chronicle that the oratory was decorated in February of that year. This fact agrees sufficiently with the artistic evidences of the work itself, to justify us in assuming that the picture was painted about 1531.[5]

That the Brotherhood guarded their treasure jealously may be inferred from their refusal to allow a young painter, one Domenico Moni, to copy it. They declared they would not again subject it to the dangers it had undergone when it had been removed from its place to enable Bartolomeo Passarotti and Francesco Madonnina to make copies. But all their care availed them nothing against the arbitrary violence of Francesco I. of Este, who in 1649 removed the picture, promising, in compensation, a handsome donation to the fraternity, and a copy of the work by Guercino, who took upon himself to alter the proportions, in order to allow more ample space for the figures!

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[1] MS. book of the Deputies of the church of San Prospero di Reggio, from 1613 to 1654. Pungileoni (ii. p. 212), transcribing the memorandum, abridges it, out of deference for the Estensi, to one of whom he dedicated his work on Correggio. He suppresses the words *quod sacrilegium Francisci Ducis nostri iussu perpetratum*. For the history of the picture, see also A. Venturi, *R. Galleria estense*, pp. 226, 305, 318, 346.

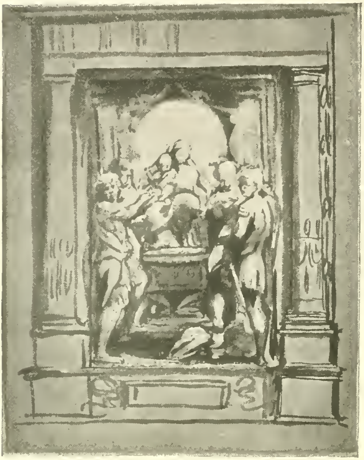
[2] L. F. Valdrighi, *Aggiunta alle appendici e note al Dizionario storico etimologico delle contrade e spazi pubblici di Modena*, pp. 50–51. Modena, 1893.

[3] *Opere*, ii. p. 162.

[4] *Op. cit.* p. 94.

[5] Tommasino de' Bianchi, called de' Lancellotti, *Cronaca modenese*, iii. p. 391. Parma, 1865. "The Brotherhood of the house of God of St. Peter Martyr has had its *scuola* painted, which was rebuilt some few years ago." Pungileoni, i. p. 217 *et seq.*; ii. p. 235 *et seq.* Meyer, pp. 211, 315.

A quarter of a century before the sale of the picture to Augustus III., it was promised by the ambassador of the Estensi at the Court of France to Dubois, in acknowledgment of his services in negotiating a marriage between Prince Francesco d'Este and the Princess Charlotte Agläe of Orleans, and perhaps as a bait for further political favours. But the diplomatist had reckoned without his host. The Duke opposed the gift most energetically, although the poor envoy, thus left in the lurch, hastened to point out to his master that state interests were of greater moment than pigments, canvas, and a painter's fame, and that the safety of Mirandola perhaps depended on the picture![1]



STUDY FOR THE MADONNA WITH ST. GEORGE, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Dresden Museum.

The Virgin, in crimson robe and blue mantle, the Child uplifted in her arms, is seated on a lofty throne in front of an open arch, through which the distant landscape is visible. The Infant turns, with outstretched hands and an eager smile, to the group of turreted

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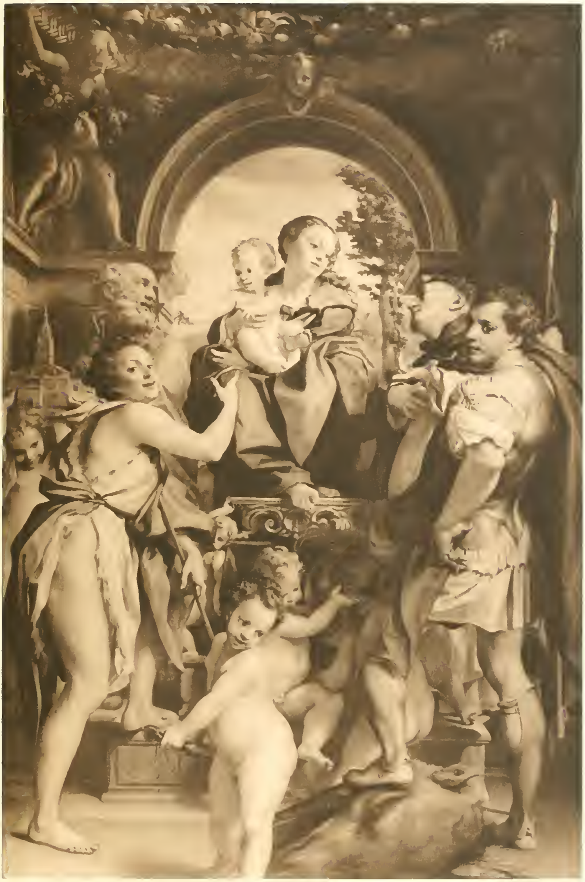
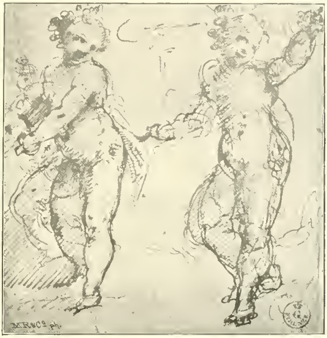
[1] Venturi, *Galleria estense*, p. 298 *et seq.* The picture suffered in its journey to Dresden, and has been restored in places. Of Correggio's four works in the Dresden Gallery it is the best preserved on the whole.

The [illegible]



buildings representing Modena, which St. Geminianus, a commanding figure in episcopal robes, is about to take from the arms of the beautiful angel who carries them, to offer them to Jesus.

The Virgin, a lovely and blooming young matron, whose abundant hair waves over her shoulders, inclines her head towards the opposite side, where St. Peter Martyr, pointing to the church of which he is patron, appears to be interceding for the faithful.[1] In the foreground stand St. George and St. John the Baptist. The first, a knightly figure with silver cuirass and crimson mantle, has his back to the spectator, but turns his head towards him. The saint is a heroic conception; his attitude full of quiescent power, his face of a frank and vigorous cast. The large and thoughtful eyes, the broad brow, the nascent beard, the abundant hair, make up a perfect type of noble and valiant youth. The tranquillity of the pose, with left hand laid on hip, and right on lance, and foot on the dragon's severed head, suggests the dormant strength ready to leap forth in a just quarrel. The painter shows a true artistic judgment in the omission of the dragon's fantastic body, which would either have made a confused and intricate passage where it was least desirable, or else must have been reduced to proportions so insignificant as to destroy all its terrors. By painting only the enormous head, the master perfectly suggests all the vague horror of the slaughtered monster's bulk.



STUDY OF PUTTI FOR THE MADONNA WITH ST. GEORGE.

In the Uffizi, Florence.

St. John the Baptist, his cross in his hand, turns to the spectator, pointing out the Virgin and Child. He is represented as a healthy and comely youth, bending forward in a graceful attitude on his left leg, the foot of which rests on the first step of the throne. His fur underdress, and crimson mantle, girded round his loins with a cord, are loosely draped about his body, leaving his arms and legs almost bare. In the conception of this figure there is no hint of the traditional asceticism of the harbinger of Christ. He is young, jocund, robust; his smile is that of some sportive faun.

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[1] The knife, the instrument of his martyrdom, rests upon his head, but is almost hidden by his hair. The haft of the dagger in his breast is just visible outside his black mantle.

In front of the throne, four little angels are playing with St. George's armour. The one in the centre attempts to draw the sword from its sheath; the two just behind him lift up the helmet to place it on the head of the fourth, who, expectant of the burden, supports himself on his neighbour's leg, bending his little body with irresistibly comic grace. The angel who bears the model of the city of Modena observes this by-play with evident amusement.

Scannelli records a graceful compliment paid by Guido Reni to the beauty of these angels. He was accustomed, whenever he met a citizen of Modena, to ask him if "Correggio's *putti* at San Pietro Martire had grown up, and left their places in the picture where he had last seen them, for so vivid and life-like were they that it was impossible to believe they could remain in their original form."[1]

The distribution of light and shade is so masterly, that every figure in the somewhat intricate arabesque is clearly and coherently defined. This lucidity of general effect in a composition unusually rich in detail is due to the transparent quality of the colour, and the sense of space and atmosphere conveyed by the painter. Guercino, as we have seen, felt it necessary to allow more space for the figures. As may be supposed, the richness of the architectural setting corresponds to that of the figures below. In the angles on either side of the arch, the keystone of which is ornamented with a cherub's head, two figures of youthful genii are painted in a monochrome of yellow, simulating a gold relief. They appear from behind festoons of flowers, and, caryatid-wise, support a border of interwoven canes, with a Mantegnesque garland of leaves and fruit.

Behind the arch stretches an open plain, varied by a few trees, a few buildings, and beyond, the delicate curve of a distant hill.

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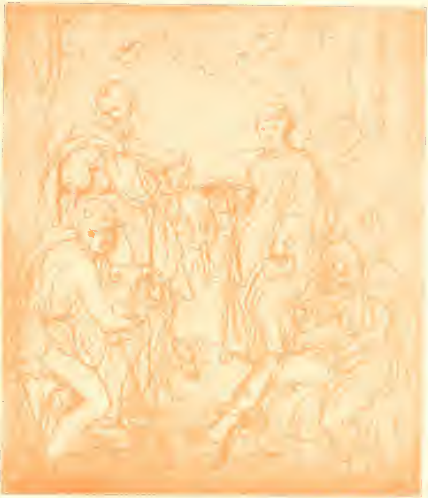
[1] *Microcosmo*, p. 294.

In this picture, which may be considered the last sacred subject painted by Correggio, we note the recurrence of certain motives he made use of in his early works, more especially in the Franciscan altar-piece of 1515. It is as if the soul of the artist paused for a moment, alarmed at the pictorial boldness of his later efforts, with a touch of regretful yearning for traditional simplicity. In all probability he painted the picture in Correggio, whither he retired towards the end of 1530, sorrowing for the loss of his wife, and disgusted with epigrams and criticism. There, in his modest but peaceful home, surrounded by his aged parents, his children, his fellow-citizens, and near his early friend, Veronica Gambara, his mind soothed and tranquillised by contemplation of the broad plains and ample horizons of his native territory, he must have felt a desire to infuse something of the calm of soul and place into his works, and to return to his old ideals.



ST. AGATHA, ST. ANTHONY, ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, AND ST. ROCH, BY CORREGGIO.
Drawing in the Uffizi, Florence.

He could not, indeed, retrograde from that breadth of treatment, that splendour of colour, and that technical mastery he had attained; but it cannot be denied that this *Madonna with St. George* differs from the other pictures described in this chapter in the greater simplicity of its composition, which has something of the old traditional symmetry of arrangement. In the arch which opens in the background, in the regularity with which the figures are disposed, and even in certain details, such as the stool under the Virgin's feet, and the little angel in monochrome who supports it, we discern a far-off echo of youthful conceptions.[1]

There is a drawing by Correggio in the Uffizi which is unquestionably authentic. It represents St. John with the lamb, and St. Roch, seated in the foreground, against a background of woody landscape; and standing behind them, St. Agatha, with her breasts on a plate, and St. Anthony with his pig at his feet.

It is not known whether Correggio ever painted a picture with these saints. Shortly before his death, however, he engaged to paint an altar-piece for Alberto Panciroli of Reggio, and received twenty-five gold *scudi* on account, which his father had to refund on June 15, 1534.[2]

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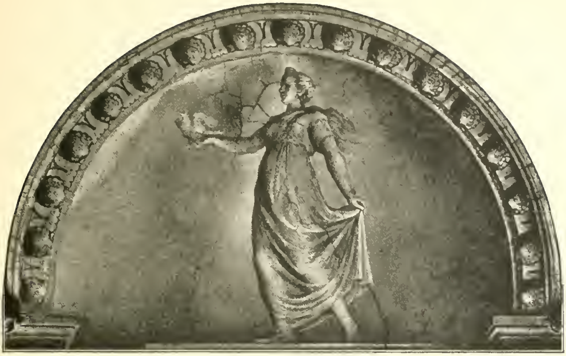
[1] There are several drawings at Dresden and Florence of the children who are sporting in front of the throne, in particular of the one who draws the sword from the sheath. The only one of these drawings which may perhaps be authentic is that in the Uffizi, numbered 1949 F. In the Louvre and at Vienna there are two identical drawings of a Madonna and Child, which are supposed to be studies for the picture. They are studies for a picture of which there is a complete drawing in the Weimar Museum, certainly not by Correggio. In 1847 the Accademia di Belle Arti at Parma pronounced a picture of St. George and St. Peter Martyr, then in the possession of Signor Boucheron, a professor of painting at Turin, to be a replica of the two saints. It now belongs to the Ianetti family of Florence. See Carlo Malaspina, *Di un nuovo dipinto ad olio di A. A. da Correggio*, in the supplement to the *Gazzetta di Parma*, no. 34, April 28, 1847, and M. Leoni, *Belle Arti*, in the *Indicatore parmense*, year i. no. 13, 1847.

[2] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 297. Pungileoni, ii. p. 252.

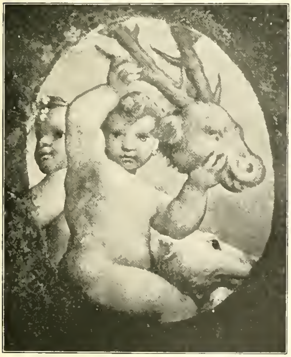


CHASTITY. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER XIII

MYTHOLOGICAL AND ALLEGORICAL PICTURES

"ANTIOPE"—"THE EDUCATION OF CUPID"—EVENTS IN CORREGGIO—WORKS EXECUTED FOR FEDERIGO GONZAGA AND THEIR HISTORY—"IO"—"DANÄE"—"LEDA"—"GANYMEDE"—"VICE" AND "VIRTUE"—"THE LOVES OF JUPITER."



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

THE majority of Correggio's mythological and allegorical pictures were painted in the last years of his life. Two, however, were executed so early as 1521 or 1522. These are the *Education of Cupid* and the *Antiope*, both of which were in the ducal gallery at Mantua until 1630.

In the *Inventory* of this collection compiled in 1627, the *Antiope* is erroneously described as *Venus, a sleeping Cupid, and a Satyr.*[1]

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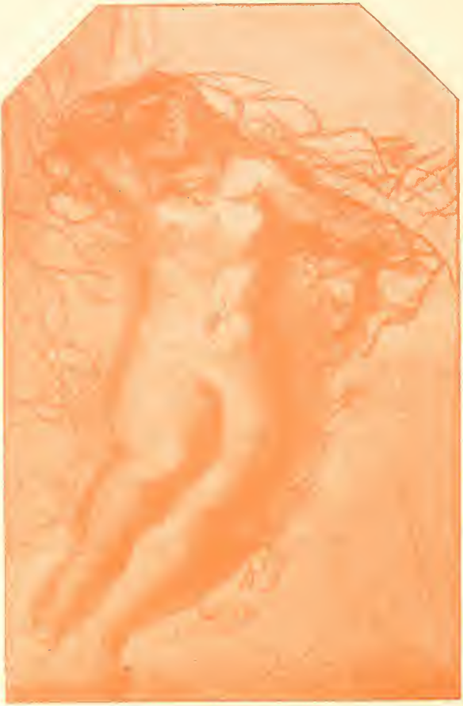
[1] D'Arco, *op. cit.* ii. p. 153.

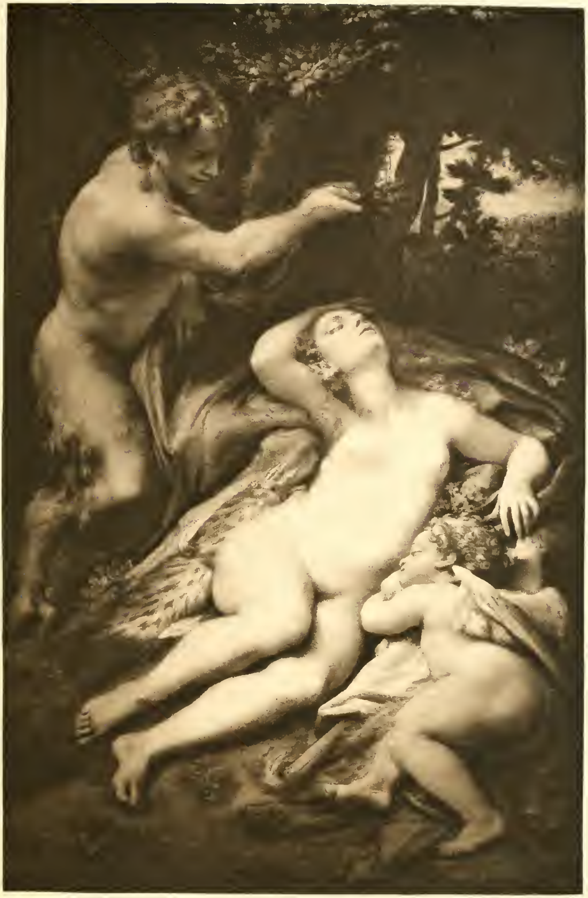
Antiope, a life-size nude figure, lies extended on a linen drapery, spread over a piece of rising ground, beneath a dense thicket of trees.



STUDY FOR ANTIOPE, BY CORREGGIO

In the Royal Library, Windsor.

Her right arm supports her head in such a manner as to show the full curve of the neck, shaded by a few stray locks of her fair hair. The ample development of the bust is in somewhat curious contrast with



the foreshortened legs, which have a slightly shrunken appearance. But the difficulties of the pose have been overcome with such novel ease and vigour as to excite the admiration of artists in successive generations, Rembrandt among the number, and Guercino, who imitated the attitude in his *Susannah*, now in the Pitti Gallery at Florence. The nymph sleeps; but the warm, soft flesh of her superbly modelled body seems to quiver, as if under the influence of some voluptuous dream.[1] Antiope, daughter of Nycteus, King of Thebes, and the nymph Polyxo, was famous throughout Greece for her beauty and her adventures. Jupiter, desiring to possess her, transformed himself into a Satyr.

Correggio, or the friend who furnished him with the argument of his picture, has confused two distinct mythological personalities. The bow under Antiope's left hand, and the large quiver, covered with hide, in the background, show that he supposed the Antiope beloved by Jupiter to have been, not the daughter of Nycteus, but her namesake, the Queen of the Amazons, and daughter of Mars.

Jove is not portrayed as a hideous and repulsive Satyr. His shaggy legs and goat's feet are counterbalanced by the smiling charm of his face and expression. Human comeliness so far predominates in his appearance that he might be termed a beautiful monster. Approaching the nymph, he raises her linen drapery with both hands, and contemplates her fair form with amorous delight. His swarthy skin, dappled with transparent shadows, is exquisitely contrasted with the brilliant and luminous carnations of Antiope, and of the Cupid who slumbers near her, curled up on a lion's skin. The little winged god is a plump and blooming cherub; his sleep, unlike that of his companion, is deep and unconscious. His torch has fallen to the ground beside him.[2]

In 1625, Charles I. of England despatched his music-master, Nicholas Laniere, to Italy, to buy pictures for him. Immediately on his arrival, Laniere put himself into communication with one Daniele Nys, a picture-dealer, and begged him to procure something for the King from the Mantuan collection. Among the letters written by Nys to Laniere, there is one dated April 27, 1628, in which he refers to his purchase of the greater part of this collection from Vincenzo II. Gonzaga, not long before the death of the latter. He adds, that when the transaction became known, the citizens took it very ill, and protested so vigorously that the Duke was alarmed, and would have paid double the money to be rid of the bargain; but the agreement had been made, and it would have been neither safe nor seemly to play a King of England false. The *Antiope* and the *Education of Cupid* were among the pictures which Thomas Brown, captain of the ship *Margaret*, took to London in 1628.[1]

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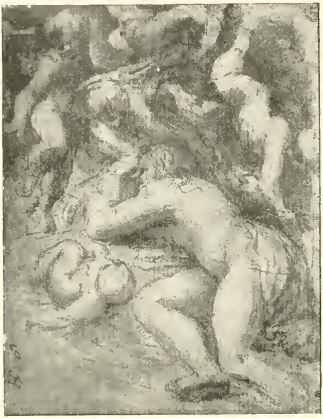
[1] There is a very delicate study of the *Antiope* in the Royal Library at Windsor.

[2] A drawing in the Louvre, ascribed to Correggio, represents a naked woman lying on the ground, surrounded by cupids and children, in an attitude very similar to that of the *Antiope*.



DRAWING OF WOMAN RECLINING, WITH CHILDREN, ASCRIBED TO CORREGGIO.
In the Louvre.

After the execution of Charles I., the Parliament ordered his art treasures to be sold, and this was accordingly done on three several occasions, in 1649, 1650, and 1653. The *Antiope* passed into the possession of the banker Jabach, a resident in Paris, and a great lover of the arts. Cardinal Mazarin bought it from him for twenty-five thousand francs; on the death of the cardinal, it was acquired by Louis XIV., and is now in the Louvre.

The history of the *Education of Cupid* is identical with that of the *Antiope*, down to the time of the dispersal of Charles I.'s collections. It was in the Duke of Mantua's gallery, and figures in the *Inventory* of 1627.[1] It then became the property of the King of England, and at the sale of his pictures, was bought for £40 by the Duke of Alva, and taken to Spain. It afterwards belonged to Godoy, Prince of the Peace, who sold his collection in 1808, during the French occupation of Madrid, and was then acquired by Murat, who brought it back to Italy and placed it in the royal palace at Naples. The travels of the unfortunate picture, which had been bandied about from one collection to another for two centuries, were not yet over. Caroline Bonaparte, ex-Queen of Naples, took it to Vienna, and sold it in 1834 to the Marquis of Londonderry, from whom it was finally purchased by the English Government, together with the *Ecce Homo* already described, and other pictures.[2]

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[1] Noel Saintsbury, *Original unpublished papers illustrative of the life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens as an artist and diplomatist*, p. 288 *et seq.* London, 1859. Meyer, pp. 236 and 337.

The lapse of time, its innumerable journeys, and various restorations of a not very felicitous kind, have robbed the picture of its original brilliance, but the painter's intention is still evident. He aimed at the luminous effect to be won from the juxtaposition of the pearly carnations and the opaque tones of the forest background, a dense grove, through which not the smallest streak of sky is visible. Venus stands upright, her arm resting on a projecting branch, a bow in her hand, and looks straight out of the picture. Her form is finely moulded, but her face has little of the seductive beauty proper to the Queen of Love. The painter's ideal type was not yet attained, and his Venus differs but very slightly from the Madonnas of the Prado and Hampton Court, the Diana of the Camera di San Paolo, and, as far as we can judge by the copies, the Albinea Madonna. The technique, however, shows a higher stage of development, a deeper sensibility, and suggests that the picture was painted at a later date than the above, probably about 1522, as has been generally supposed. A very peculiar feature of the work is the pair of wings with which the painter has endowed his Venus, perhaps to give a touch of divinity to her figure, perhaps in allusion to her fabled origin. The same peculiarity distinguishes his Fates in the Camera di San Paolo.

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[1] D'Arco, *op. cit.* p. 152. At a later date there was a copy of the picture in the gallery of Gonzaga of Novellara, attributed to Parmigianino. This was perhaps one of the pictures confided to Alessandro Gonzaga by the Lords of Correggio in 1636 (see letters of the Prince of Correggio, in the communal archives at Novellara, and G. Campori, *Cataloghi ed inventari*, already quoted, p. 639), and may have been the one which afterwards belonged to the Odescalchi and the Duke of Orleans (Mengs, ii. p. 150; Tiraboschi, vi. p. 279).

[2] Mengs, ii. p. 178; Meyer, pp. 238 and 340; Sir F. W. Burton, *Catalogue*, p. 5; M. Compton Heaton, p. 61; Frizzoni, *Arte italiana*, p. 357, etc.

Mercury, nude but for the little cloak which falls from his shoulders, his winged sandals, and his hat, is seated opposite. He holds a scroll which lies over his knee with his left hand, presenting it to the infant Cupid, who cons his task attentively.

We are present, apparently, at a little domestic incident of that happy interlude when Mercury found favour with the goddess, and made her the mother of Hermaphroditus. Cupid could not have found a better master! But it is not to be supposed that his teacher instructed him in any of the lofty sciences of which he was the inventor. The mischievous god had little time for abstruse studies. At most he may have lingered to read some pleasant fable, for Mercury, as we know, was credited with the invention of the apologue. The arts most skilfully taught by the master, and most aptly learnt by the scholar, were, no doubt, agility, dexterity, and craft.

Mercury is represented as a youth, but, like the Graces in the Camera di San Paolo, he is robust and muscular. He has none of the classic slenderness of mould by which the ancients symbolised his swift and airy flight. Yet this vigour is not incompatible with grace, as is shown by the inclination of his smiling head to the little scholar at his knee.[1]

The Cupid, with his budding wings and fair curls, is the most dainty passage in the composition. The attitude in which he has placed himself to read is delicious. To bring his eyes nearer to the scroll, he bends his knees slightly, and, with comic intentness, follows the letters with the finger of his right hand.

Mengs gracefully describes the work as follows: "The Cupid's curling hair is so marvellously rendered that we seem to be able to see the skin through it, and in spite of this finish, there is no dryness in

[1] There is a small study for the head of Mercury in the Uffizi.

the treatment. His little wings are like those of newly-fledged chickens, which show the growth of the sprouting quills and the skin below. Whenever Correggio painted wings he showed the same mastery in their treatment, placing them immediately behind the shoulders, and incorporating them so naturally with the flesh that they seem to form part of the acromion. The late Duke, who owned the picture, once very justly remarked to me that this Cupid's wings were so skilfully placed, that were it possible for a child to be born with wings, they would grow exactly in such a manner."

The frescoes of the Camera di San Paolo, *Antiope*, and the *Education of Cupid*, are the only surviving mythological subjects painted by Correggio before he undertook the frescoes in the cathedral. All the others were executed after 1530, and consequently at Correggio, after he had quitted Parma for reasons to which we have already alluded.

No traces of his presence in Parma after 1530 are to be found in any documents, whereas there are many which attest his activity in his native city. On November 30, 1530, he signed a deed of purchase, by which he took over a farm from one Lucrezia Pusterla, of Mantua, widow of Giovanni Cattanio, at a price of 195 *scudi*, 10 *soldi*.[1] In the autumn of 1532, and in the first months of 1533, he acted as witness to several law documents. In September of the same year he bought a piece of land.[2] Finally, on January 24, 1534, he witnessed the marriage settlement of Chiara da Correggio, who was about to become the wife of a son of Veronica Gambara.[3] No doubt he was occasionally absent from Correggio in the intervals, either to look after his interests in Parma, or to visit Modena, for which city he was painting the altar-piece of St. Peter Martyr, or on similar errands. All we contend is that Correggio was his home during the last three years of his life, and that there he brought his young children to place them under the care of their grandparents. He had now many ties there, his original possessions having considerably increased. He found solace in the affectionate friendship of the ruling family, and

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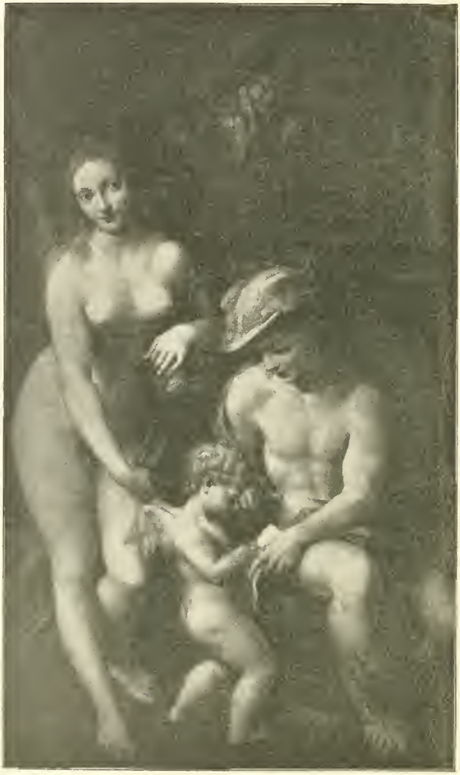
[1] Pungileoni, ii. p. 231.

[2] M. A. Mignaty, p. 393. Pungileoni, ii. pp. 250–251.

[3] Pungileoni, i. p. 247 ; ii. p. 251.



THE EDUCATION OF CUPID, BY CORREGGIO
In the National Gallery

more especially in the kindness of Veronica Gambara, and it seems more than probable that he was also detained by some premonition of coming disaster, in which he would need the care of his family, and the benefit of his native air.

Nearly three years passed away thus, during which he spent many quiet and happy hours, occupied with his work and family affairs. The history of the state, meanwhile, was not so uneventful. Indeed, the vicissitudes through which the little city passed in this short space of time were strangely important and dramatic, taking into account the narrow limits of the stage.[1]

In May, 1531, much excitement was caused in the Allegri family by the strange death of Paolo Brunorio's wife. She had been living quietly in Modena; her husband suddenly brought her to Correggio, and there abandoned her, retiring himself to Roccabianca. A rapid and mysterious malady attacked the poor woman, to which she speedily succumbed. This event had a certain connection with the hasty arrival at Correggio of Don Pietro Zappata, imperial governor of Modena.

A calamity of a more general nature was to befall the city a few days later. On June 27, the Spanish army, commanded by the Marchese del Vasto, arrived in sight of Modena. The general immediately announced his intention of quartering his troops on Correggio and the neighbouring cities. He had with him some fifteen thousand soldiers, or rather brigands, followed by some two thousand women of the lowest class. All Gian Francesco da Correggio's efforts failed to avert the threatened danger, and the majority of the troops with their leaders established themselves in his territory. The imperial governor made various compacts with the Marchese del Vasto in the hope of saving the district; but very soon the supply of wine was exhausted, and the bread began to fail. The bakers of Modena at first refused to send any help; after a time, however, they yielded, partly to promises and partly to intimidation, the soldiers threatening to descend upon their city. As to lodging, the warm weather enabled the marauders to camp under the arcades and porticoes of Correggio. The chronicler describes them as herding together under these shelters "like cattle." They were determined, however, to spend their time as merrily as might be. Sports and feasts, and savage revelry followed in quick succession, to the exhaustion of the city and its dependencies.

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[1] Lancellotti, *Cronaca*, iii. pp. 246, 260, 362; iv. pp. 32, 38, etc.

In July, a terrible and unseemly duel was fought by Ser Gonzales de Villena de Mandria and Ferdinando de Valle de Alba, at San Martino, an outlying village of Correggio. Curiosity and expectation were so widespread before the event, that some thousands of persons assembled on the appointed day, many of them coming from Modena and Bologna. Gonzales was the victor, and was carried in triumph among the soldiery, followed by children bearing green branches, and an applauding crowd. No more repulsive mode of vanquishing a foe could well be imagined. He overthrew his adversary by butting at him with his head, and, getting him on the ground, bit off his nose, and filled his eyes and mouth with dust. The Marchese del Vasto was present, and applauded the victor. Fresh orgies followed the announcement of the birth of a son to the Marchese, to the further injury of the exhausted country and the distraction of Veronica Gambara. The chronicler notes the festivities in these words: "They feast and rejoice, because they are eating our substance; if it were their own, they would not make such great banquets."

Shortly afterwards, the Marchese del Vasto went into the Neapolitan territory to see his wife and his heir. The soldiery, throwing off even the semblance of discipline which had restrained them a little in his presence, began to sack the houses in the city and villages. In September they prepared to celebrate the return of their captain with another duel. Pirro Colonna and the Sforza, who were to take part in it, arrived at Correggio. A multitude assembled from all parts, as before. But the Marchese's return was delayed, everything was put off, and the combatants departed.

He arrived on October 2, and remained some two months longer in the wretched city. On November 23 he departed, amidst general thanksgivings, and proceeded to Borgo San Donnino with the artillery, the rest of the army following the next day.

In July, 1532, Veronica's Court was visited by Cardinal de' Medici, and in December by the Emperor Charles V.[1] The cost of these visitors was by no means trifling; but they were more cheerfully borne, as incurred in maintaining the dignity of the state, and entertaining those who came "with friendly faces."

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[1] *Cronaca*, above quoted, iv. pp. 38 and 125.

But we must return to our painter and his works. The testimony of Vasari, who perhaps owed his information to Giulio Romano, and certain letters recently published by Baghirolli, tend to prove that in his last years he worked almost exclusively for Federigo II. (Gonzaga).

Referring to certain pictures the Duke commissioned Correggio to paint, "to send to the Emperor," Vasari confuses the facts and statements connected with three works, and reduces their number to two.

These are the Aretine biographer's words: "One was a nude *Leda*, the other a *Venus*, the carnations so mellow in colour, and so delicately shaded, that they seemed to be the flesh itself, rather than paint. In one there was a marvellous landscape; never was Lombard who excelled him in such things; besides this, the hair was so beautiful in colour, and so elaborately and delicately treated, that nothing better could be beheld. In the picture were also some Cupids, trying their arrows on a touchstone, to see which were gold and which lead, all very skilfully rendered; and a further charm was given to the *Venus* by a clear and limpid stream of water, flowing among stones and bathing her feet."[1]

Vasari's description applies partly to the *Leda*, partly to the *Io* (he calls her Venus), at whose feet a stream of water flows among stones; it also contains an allusion to the *Danäe*, in the passage which refers to the Cupids testing their arrows.

There is every reason to believe that these three pictures were painted for Gonzaga, and presented by him to Charles V. Vasari was in a position to know the facts; we are not in a position to dispute them. It is also to be noted that we first hear of their existence in Spain.

Lomazzo, in his *Trattato dell' arte della pittura*,[2] says that the *Io* and the *Danäe*, which were in Milan in his time, in the possession of the sculptor, Leone Leoni, had been sent him from Spain by his son Pompeo. He says that "the light in these was so brilliant, that no other painter could have equalled their colour and illumination," and this eulogy he repeated in verse, exaggerating it a little, of course.[1]

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[1] *Vite*, iv. p. 115.

[2] P. 212. Milan, 1584.

While in Spain, Leone Leoni had enjoyed the favour and patronage of Charles V. and Philip II., and had executed several works for them which had been very highly praised. His son Pompeo, following his father's counsel and example, settled there. He in his turn was patronised by Philip, and employed in various important undertakings. He died in Spain in 1610.[2] Meyer says it is uncertain whether he received the two pictures as a gift from the sovereign, or bought them at the sale of the Perez collection, as Urlichs supposed.[3] The question is not of much interest, and moreover, it seems to us to be settled by the dates. Perez, Secretary of State, and favourite of Philip II., fell into disgrace in 1579. Six years later, that is to say in 1585, having a heavy fine to pay, he resigned himself to the sale of his collection, part of which was sequestrated and declared forfeit to the Crown. Now Lomazzo's work, which speaks of the *Io* and the *Danäe* as in Milan, had been published a year before this date, and if we consider how long it took in those days to transport such things as pictures from Madrid to Italy, and further, of the time it must have taken Lomazzo to write, and Paolo Gottardo Ponzio to print the *Trattato della pittura*,[4] it will be evident that Pompeo Leoni must have acquired the two pictures some time before the sale of Perez' collection. The more probable hypothesis seems therefore to be that they were given to the Italian sculptor by Philip II., in graceful recognition of some work executed by the former.

In 1600, Count Khevenhiller, who worked most energetically to increase the collection of pictures acquired by the Emperor Rudolph (a passionate lover of the arts, as of the occult sciences of astrology and alchemy), approached Leoni in the hope of obtaining the two pictures. The negotiation was somewhat prolonged, but at last a bargain was struck, and they were removed to Prague. Up to this point, the history of the *Io* and of the *Danäe* is identical; but their after fortunes differed, as we shall see.

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[1] *Rime*, p. 98. Milan, 1587.

[2] Vasari, vii. p. 535 *et seq.* *Les Arts italiens en Espagne.* Rome, 1825. Two studies on Leoni have been published within the last few years, one by Carlo Casati (Milan, 1884) and another by Carlo dell' Acqua (*Archiv. storico dell' arte*, ii. p. 73). The latter shows that this artist was a native, not of Arezzo, but of Menaggio.

[3] *Correggio*, p. 344 *et seq.* L. Urlichs, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kunstbestrebungen und Sammlungen Kaiser Rudolf's II.* (*Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, p. 83, 1870).

[4] A letter by *D. Sancio de Gebara*, published at the beginning of the *Trattato*, expressly states that it was written in 1582.

When Khevenhiller was at Madrid as Rudolph's ambassador in 1585, he cast a longing eye upon two works in the Perez collection, *Cupid forging the Bow*, by Parmigianino, and a *Ganymede*, which at the time was attributed to the same master. When (1587) his sovereign authorised the purchase of these pictures, however, they had been already seized by the Crown, and he had to content himself with certain copies. One of these, after Correggio's *Io*, is the remarkable work now at Berlin. As may be supposed, he was not content with this modest speculation. Partly by importunities, partly by intrigue, he succeeded in obtaining the coveted pictures, and sent them off to Prague, together with some others, among them the *Leda*, the King first ordering this and the *Ganymede* to be copied by the Spanish painter, Eugenio Caxes.

The pictures thus brought together were not destined to remain very long in Prague.

In the *Inventory* of the imperial treasure and artistic collections of the city, compiled in 1621, neither the *Io* nor the *Ganymede* is mentioned. Both had probably passed to Vienna, where we find them in 1702. Apostolo Zeno seems to make some vague allusion to their presence there in 1724,[1] and they are still preserved in the Belvedere.

The *Danäe*, the *Leda*, and the copy of the *Io*, which had remained in Prague, formed part of the booty carried off by the Swedes to Stockholm after their victory in 1648.

Meyer has already disproved the old story of the discovery of the *Danäe* and the *Leda* in a stable, where they were used to fill up the windows, by Sebastian Bourdon, court painter to Christina of Sweden in 1653–54. He endeavours to trace their further history in certain allusions made by Winckelmann, and in some letters written by Count Tessin to Gustavus, hereditary Prince of Sweden.[2] It is certain, at least, that both pictures were at Stockholm in the middle of the seventeenth century. The inventory of Christina's collections, compiled in 1652, and revised in 1653, is preserved in the Stockholm Library, and the *Danäe* and *Leda* are inscribed as numbers 81 and 82. Their subsequent history presents no difficulties. The eccentric Christina carried the *Danäe*, the *Leda*, and the copy of the *Io* to Rome, with many other pictures, and left them on her death to Cardinal Decio Azzolini. His nephew, Marchese Pompeo, sold them to Don Livio Odescalchi, Duke of Bracciano, from whose heirs they were bought by the Regent Orleans.[1] The narrow bigotry of his son Louis condemned them as obscene; his uneasy scruples were fostered by his confessor, the Abbé of Ste. Geneviève, who persuaded him to destroy them. A knife was driven through that flesh, to which a supreme art had given the very semblance of life, and the fair heads of *Leda* and of *Io* were severed from their bodies.

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[1] *Lettere*, ii. p. 329. Venice, 1752.

[2] *Correggio*, p. 350.

It seems almost miraculous that they should have escaped entire destruction. Charles Coypel, keeper of the gallery, saved the fragments, probably from burning. He either carried them off surreptitiously, or obtained them from the Duke by prayers and protests. It is asserted that after piecing them together as well as he was able, he begged first Vanloo, and then Boucher, to paint in new heads, and upon their refusal, applied to a certain Delyen. Another version declares that he filled them in himself. The point is of little moment, as the heads then painted no longer exist. That of *Io* was repainted by Prudhon, and that of *Leda* by Schlesinger.

The rest of the story may be briefly told. At the public sale of Coypel's collections in 1752, they were bought by the well-known amateur, Pasquier. On his death shortly afterwards, they were acquired for Frederick the Great through the intermediary of the Comte d'Epinailles. In 1806 they were carried off to Paris by Napoleon, but were restored eight years later, and in 1830 they were placed in the Berlin Gallery, where they still remain.[2]

The *Danäe*, which had escaped the ferocious prudery of Louis of Orleans, passed to London with the rest of the family collection, and was there sold to the Duke of Bridgewater. In 1816 it was bought by Henry Hope for £183. In 1823 it returned to Paris, where it found another purchaser, who finally sold it to the Princess Borghese. The Princess took it to Rome, and placed it in her famous gallery, of which it now forms one of the chief ornaments.[1]

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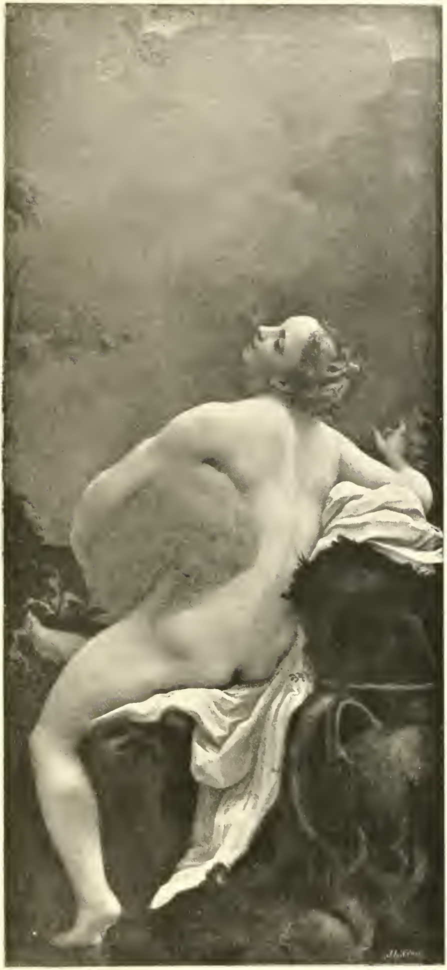
[1] Mengs, ii. p. 146. Tiraboschi, p. 62.

[2] Meyer, p. 347. Bode, *K. Museen zu Berlin. Beschreibendes Verzeichniss der Gemälde*, pp. 3 4. Berlin, 1891.

Thus reduced to a brief narrative of facts gleaned



IO, BY CORREGGIO
In the Belvedere, Vienna

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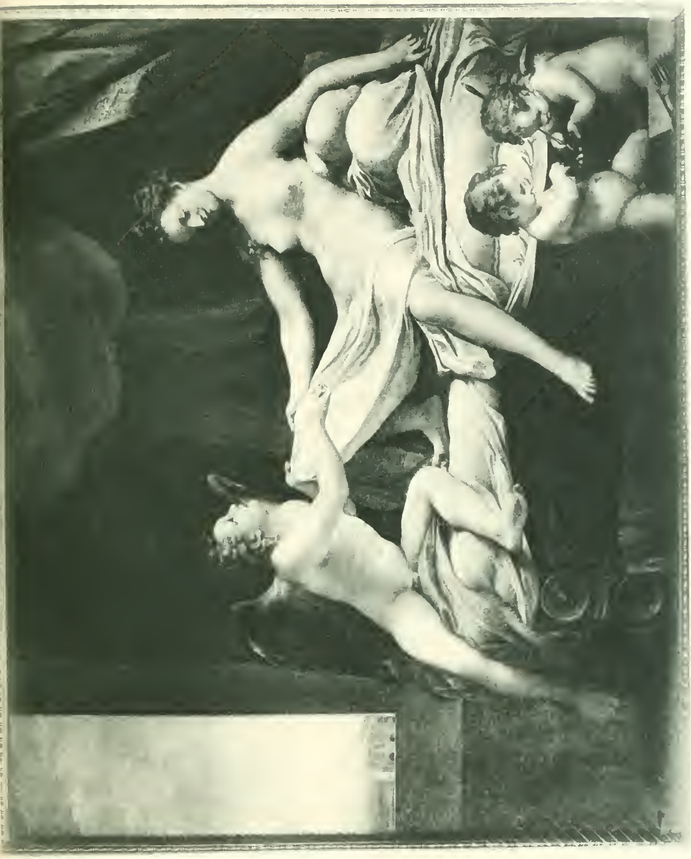
[1] Giovanni Morelli, *The Borghese Gallery, Italian Painters*, ii. p. 226. Ad. Venturi, *Museo e galleria borghese*, p. 94. Rome, 1893.

from various sources, and set forth collectively, the history of Correggio's mythological pictures no longer presents the apparent difficulties and contradictions that confront us in the biographies which attempt to trace the career of each work separately.

Io, a nymph of Thessaly, and priestess of Juno, was returning from visiting her father. Jupiter saw her, and, enamoured of her youth and beauty, made himself known to her as lord of the universe and of thunder, and declared his passion. Alarmed at his overtures, Io fled in terror across the plains of Arcadia; but Jove pursued and overtook her, enveloped her in a dense mist, and, transforming himself into a cloud, or rather concealing himself in one, embraced her. It is this supreme moment of the drama which Correggio has rendered with an art and sentiment of extraordinary force and novelty.

Io, half seated, half reclining on a rising knoll, on which her white drapery is disposed with studied negligence, is seen from behind, but her head with its languishing eyes is thrown back voluptuously, and her mouth offers itself, flower-like, to the kiss of the god, whose face is dimly discerned through the gray vapours. Her fair hair is gathered into a knot at the top of her head, showing her white forehead. The smooth contours of her exquisitely moulded form seem to quiver. Her right foot is raised, the great toe outstretched, the others bent downwards; the left foot, which rests on the ground, is contracted. Her right hand seems to close tremblingly, her left arm is laid round the cloud, as if to draw it to her, and through the mist, the hand of the god is seen appearing from beneath her arm. The foliage of a few little trees pierces the delicate mass of vapour at intervals. Behind Io, close to the mound on which she is seated, is a great amphora, from beneath which a stream of clear water flows over the stones. This is perhaps the river Inachus, to which the adventurous nymph owed her being. To the right, a hind approaches to slake her thirst at the brook. The manner in which the artist has solved the problem of showing nearly the whole of Io's figure, and yet suggesting the envelopment of her form by the cloud, is very remarkable. Her figure, which is little short of life-size, fills nearly all the canvas. The presence of the god is indicated only by the dimly seen face and hand. Yet in this mysterious apparition, and in the slow exhalations of the



clouds that darken the sky, all the vague and solemn poetry of the old myth is realised.[1]

The *Danäe*, now in the Villa Borghese, is the only one of Correggio's mythological pictures remaining in Italy. The fair daughter of Acrisius, a delicately virginal figure, turns her face to Cupid, who, seated on her couch, draws back her white drapery, that the golden rain by which Jove makes her the mother of Perseus may descend upon her. Below, to the right, two beautiful Amorini are intent on sharpening their arrows, a quiver full of which lies near them. A ruined building and the faint outline of distant hills are seen through a high window.

Danäe betrays none of the agitation of Io. There is a spirituality in her emotion, and a classic dignity in the ingenuous composure of her form which gives her a charm impossible to describe in words. The execution adds not a little to the fascination of this picture. The impasto is marvellous, and the fusion of the tints so perfect that "they seem not to have been laid on with the brush, but melted together like wax in the fire." The values, asserting themselves almost insensibly in the chromatic scale, succeed one another in faultless harmony. Approaching the picture closely, the eye is hardly conscious of any colour, so perfectly are the anatomical planes concealed in the exquisite torso, which rivals that of the Venus of Milo herself. They reveal themselves, however, as soon as the spectator looks at the picture from a point whence he commands the whole composition. Then the nude contours, relieved against the whiteness of the linen by touches of a pale golden tone, gradually display the various planes of the modelling. Above the smiling face rises a mass of golden hair, one strand of which falls upon her shoulder. This perfect beauty of form is not so satisfactorily sustained in the arms; the right is over-muscular, and there is an exaggeration in the curve of the left, as it detaches itself from the bust.

Cupid gazes up to the cloud, from which the golden shower descends. He seems to be adoring the god, and at the same time persuading the Argive maiden to receive him gladly, and to account

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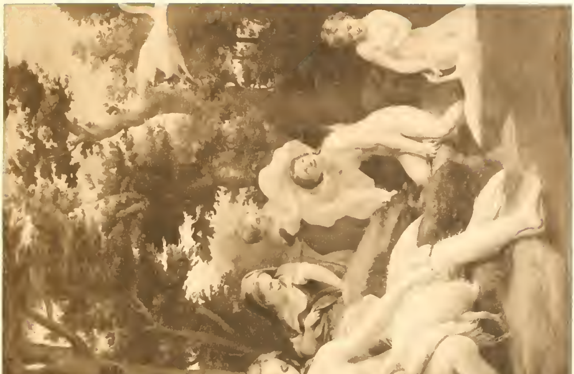
[1] An old painter converted this *Io* into a *Sleeping Diana*, which was attributed to Correggio. G. D. Sornique engraved it.



In Correggio's version, the incident is not confined to Leda. The nymphs who have been her companions in the bath are seen in the background, sporting with other swans who pursue them in the water. Two tiring-women, completely dressed, appear on the bank. One, in a blue robe, leans her hands on the mound, and gazes smilingly at the scene. The other, who is dressed in red, is about to throw a white drapery over a nymph who emerges from the water. The strains of music add to the pleasures of the hour. Cupid has laid aside his quiver to play a lyre, and two *putti* in front of him are blowing rude horns, one seated on the ground, the other erect, in an attitude of infantine self-importance that provokes a smile.

Even in its present state, the richness of the composition, the number and variety of the figures, and the beauty of the landscape make this picture the most remarkable of Correggio's mythological subjects. The feminine forms have the grace of early youth, together with the voluptuous loveliness of full development, and are distinguished by that indescribable spiritualisation of sensual emotion in the rendering of which Correggio stands alone.[1] The last mythological picture with which we have to deal is the *Ganymede*, a work which presents some curious features.

There was a time when it was not ascribed to Correggio; Parmigianino was its reputed author when it passed from Madrid to Prague. The first writer who spoke of a *Ganymede* by Correggio was Ottonelli, about the middle of the seventeenth century. Unfortunately, he gives no description of the picture, nor does he allude in any way to its owner, or domicile.[2] Strange to say, however, this *Ganymede* is an exact reproduction of a youthful angel in the dome of Parma Cathedral, the one in the pendentive immediately below St. Bernard. This fact, which, as far as we know, has never been pointed out before, is an abnormal one in the history of Correggio's *œuvre*. We are bound to admit that the exact reproduction of this figure under the altered conditions is directly opposed both to good sense and good taste. Many traits which are perfectly logical in the angel, cease to have any fitness when adapted to the Ganymede. Thus, to avoid any alteration in the curve of the arm, and to evade the necessity of showing the right hand, we have a Ganymede who has not been seized and carried off by the eagle, but who clings to the bird, and soars upwards with all the serenity of a practised aëronaut. The eagle certainly grasps him in his talons, but only by the clothes, an action which would naturally have drawn them tightly round his body under the arms. No such strain, however, is to be observed. The high lights are distributed in a precisely similar fashion over the bodies of the angel and of the Ganymede. Yet it is evident that the Ganymede's left arm is partly in the shadow of the eagle's head and neck, whereas the light strikes full on that of the angel. A more obvious absurdity is apparent in the arrangement of the drapery. In the downward flight of the angel, his garment naturally flutters behind him, sweeping

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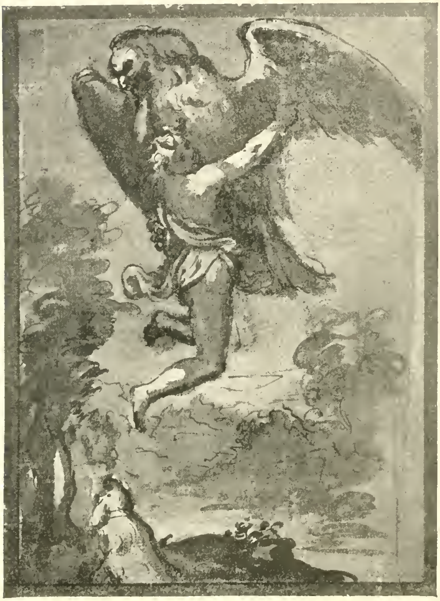
[1] Antonio Coppi wrote a study on the Rospigliosi *Leda*, which was for a long time ascribed to Correggio. See his *Notizie di un quadro del Correggio* (*Dissertazioni della Accad. Romana di Archeologia*), xiii. pp. 129 140. Rome, 1821.

[2] *Trattato della pittura*, p. 155.



STUDY FOR THE GANYMEDE.

In the Weimar Museum.

upwards. The same lines are preserved in the drapery of the Ganymede, in direct contradiction to his supposed ascent through the air. The physical laws of aërial motion could not have escaped Correggio, who in every other case has noted them with the utmost precision. If in addition to all this we remember the old attribution of the picture to Parmigianino, which Meyer noted when he ranked it as among the least important of Correggio's works, we may be permitted to confess our doubts as to its originality. In the Weimar Museum there is a pen drawing in bistre, agreeing in all respects with the picture, save that the group is reversed, and if this is to be accepted as the study preliminary, we have an additional argument against the authenticity of the work, for the drawing is certainly not by Correggio. We are loth to pronounce with the same confidence against the picture, taking into account its many fine qualities.

The eagle who soars towards Olympus, gently licking the arm of the beautiful son of Tros, the slender grace of the Phrygian youth, the novel charm of the landscape, the white dog "who seems to strain after his master, as if eager to follow his flight,"[1] make up a conception at once bold, expressive, and pleasing. The colour, too, is glowing and transparent.

All this, however, will not suffice to remove the doubt suggested by the peculiarities we have noted. We think it highly probable that one of Correggio's more skilful pupils or imitators may have conceived the notion of transforming the angel of the cupola into a Ganymede.

But why, it may be asked, should not the idea have occurred to the master himself? Because a painter like Correggio would not have slavishly repeated himself, when art and common sense alike demanded a modification of his theme.

In the face of the opinion expressed by so many critics, however, we will not venture on a dogmatic pronouncement, in spite of the fact that the work was formerly ascribed to Parmigianino. It *may* be by Correggio; but we are by no means convinced that it is not rather an adaptation of the angel in the cupola by a clever pupil, such as Michelangelo Anselmi.[2]

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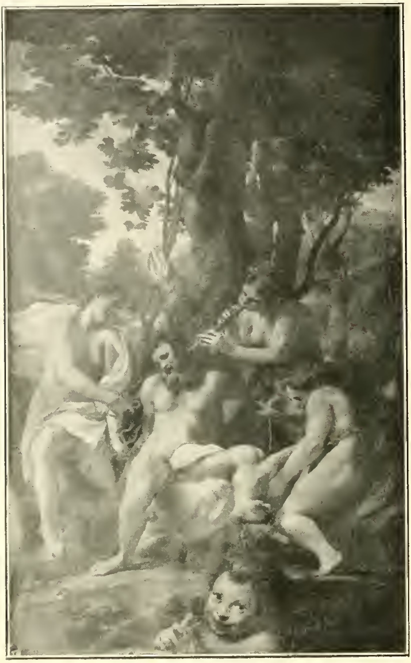
[1] Mengs, ii. p. 150.

[2] It must not be forgotten that many pictures by Parmigianino, Rondani, and in particular by Anselmi, were formerly ascribed to Correggio, and are occasionally still

Among the latest of the works undoubtedly by Correggio's hand are the two canvases painted in tempera, in the Louvre. The types are peculiarly attractive, and the figures are remarkable for their easy and vigorous action.



VICE, AN ALLEGORY, BY CORREGGIO.
In the Louvre.

They were originally included in Isabella d'Este's collection, and are thus loosely described in a notice written about the middle of the sixteenth century: "Two pictures by the late Antonio da Correggio, in one of which is painted the story of Apollo and Marsyas (*sic*), in the other the three Virtues, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude, instructing a child so to spend its time that it may receive from them the crown and palm."[1] Like the *Antiope*, they passed into the possession of Charles I. of England in 1628, and afterwards into that of the Parisian banker, Jabach. The *Virtue* was after-

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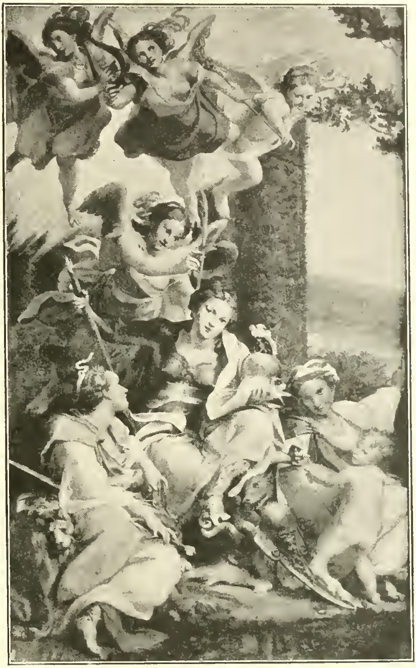
so ascribed. I had already written the above observations on the *Ganymede* when Dr. Hugo von Tschudi introduced me to his study, *Correggio's mythologische Darstellungen*, published in the *Graphischen Künsten*. Vienna, 1880.

[1] Carlo d'Arco, *op. cit.* ii. p. 134. Meyer, p. 354.

wards acquired by Cardinal Mazarin, and finally by Louis XIV. The *Vice* was sold to the French King by Jabach himself in 1671.

Vice is seated at the foot of a group of trees, and struggles to free himself from the cords which bind him to the trunks. Three women, their hair entwined with serpents, stand about him. One of them presents him with some vipers, which rear their crests at him from her hand; the second deafens him with the sound of a pipe, which she blows loudly close by him; the third binds his feet. Mengs explains the first figure to be *Conscience*, who stings him, the third, *Habit*, who enslaves him, the second, *Pleasure*, who flatters his senses with melody. It is certain, however, that none of the three produces such keen discomfort in the sufferer as the *Pleasure*, with her ear-piercing notes! She is, more probably, the representative of *Conscience*, tormenting him with her keen and sibilant reproof; the bearer of the vipers may be *Passion*, and the third figure *Habit* or *Custom*, as suggested. Below is seen the


VIRTUE, AN ALLEGORY, BY CORREGGIO

In the Louvre.

half-length figure of a lively little satyr, with a bunch of grapes in his hand. Three feminine figures also surround *Virtue*, a beautiful woman, who is seated, clad in armour, and trampling on a dragon. *Glory*, a winged figure, hovers over her, about to crown her with laurel. On one side of her is seated a woman, who represents earthly and heavenly knowledge; she points upwards with her left hand, and with her right revolves a compass on a globe. A little genius attends her. A noble and commanding figure on the other side, with a serpent entwined in her hair, and a bit, a sword, and a lion's skin, represents the four cardinal virtues, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. Above, in an aureole of light, three genii wing their flight, singing and playing. In the background is a wall, overgrown with foliage, and beyond it stretches a wide valley.

There is an unfinished picture of the same subject, also in tempera, in the Doria-Pamfili Gallery at Rome. The lower part is fairly advanced, and the colours are laid in; but the three genii above are barely indicated. Its authenticity was never questioned till within the last few years. It was accepted as a replica by Correggio by students such as Mengs and Mündler, and by Meyer, who pronounces it "unquestionably an original work."

Morelli, however, fell foul of this peaceful unanimity, and raised a hornets' nest of doubts and suspicions. He thought the canvas had a very modern appearance; he condemned the draperies as heavy and clumsy, the hair as coarsely treated, the attendant genius of Virtue as affected and ugly, the colour as opaque, and in parts hard and metallic. He further suggested that the picture might be one of those copies of the gems of Jabach's collection which the banker himself had painted, as Mariette tells us, by Jean Baptiste and Michael Corneille, Pesne, Massé, and Rousseau.[1]

Of the various other allegorical and mythological works ascribed to Correggio we think it unnecessary to speak. The time for their profitable discussion has either passed by, or is not yet come.[2]

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[1] P. J. Mariette, *Abecedario publié par* Ph. Chennevières *et* A. de Montaiglon. Paris 1854–56. G. Morelli, *The Doria-Pamfili Gallery* (*Italian Painters*), i. pp. 312–14.

[2] A *Venus stringing the Bow for Cupid* and a *Charity* were formerly ascribed to him. Pungileoni (ii. p. 117) further speaks of a *Circe*. The brothers Minghetti, of Bologna

It seems certain that during the last months of his life, the painter was engaged on some drawings for Gonzaga, illustrating the *Loves of Jupiter*, which may have been cartoons for tapestry. On the death of Correggio, Federigo vainly importuned Alessandro Caccia, Governor of Parma, either to let him take possession of the cartoons, or recover the fifty ducats he had paid for them from the painter's heirs.

The Duke's first letter (September 12, 1534) begins with the statement: "Master Antonio of Correggio, painter, was at work on many things for me," and this confirms the testimony of Vasari, who says that the mythological pictures already described were painted for Gonzaga. He goes on to insist that the works in question should be sought for, seized, and sent to him. "They are mine," he exclaims, "and no one else has any right to them!"

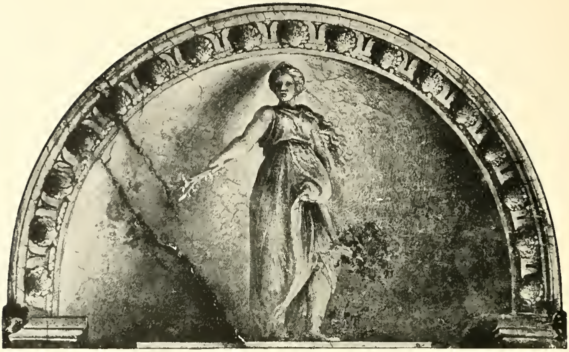
Five days later Caccia replies that all his efforts to trace the missing works have been vain, and that it would be best to inquire at Correggio, whither the painter himself, or his children, had taken all his possessions, with the exception of two chests, in which nothing had been found. The Duke returned to the charge a month later, soliciting Caccia to inquire at the house of Scipione Montino della Rosa: "having heard that they are in his hands." The governor answered that they were certainly not in Scipione's possession, that he had sought them first of all at his house, and that Montino had declared he knew nothing of them.[1]

Caccia, no doubt, had demanded them of the very person who probably had them, thus giving him notice of the quest, and enabling him to conceal them!

Federigo Gonzaga never obtained his cartoons, nor is it very likely that he recovered his money.

(china manufacturers), have a fine picture of *Narcissus and Echo*, which some persons suppose to be by Correggio.

[1] W. Baghirolli, *Dei rapporti di Federigo Gonzaga con A. A. da Correggio* (*Giornale d'erudizione artistica*, i. p. 329 *et seq.* Perugia, 1872).

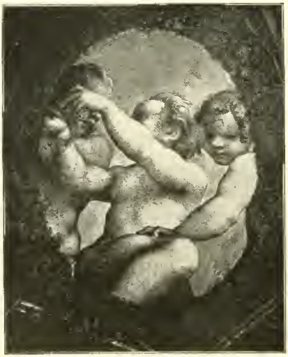


VIRGINITY. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER XIV

THE DEATH OF CORREGGIO

THE PAINTER'S END—SUPPOSED PORTRAITS OF CORREGGIO—HIS DISPOSITION AND CHARACTER—HIS TOMB—MONUMENTS TO HIS MEMORY—THE HISTORY OF A SKULL



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

THE deed by which the Franciscans commissioned Correggio to paint his first great altar-piece in 1514 was executed in the artist's bedroom, on the ground floor of his own humble dwelling.

With the first breath of spring, on March 5, 1534, Correggio passed away among his own people in that same house, perhaps in that same little room, where the first vision of art had dawned upon him. He was barely forty years old, and had been a widower for five years.

On the following day, a Friday, mass was said for the repose of his soul. He was then laid in his tomb. His father[1] caused another mass to be said a year afterwards.[2]

His illness cannot have been a long one. We have seen that he acted as witness to the marriage settlement of Chiara da Correggio little more than a month before his death, and that on June 15 following, his father refunded the twenty-five gold *scudi* paid him by Messer Alberto Panciroli of Reggio on account for the altar-piece he did not live to paint.

Vasari repeats a curious tradition connected with his death: "Having received a payment of sixty *scudi* in copper at Parma, he wished to take the money back with him to Correggio for a certain purpose, and he accordingly started to walk home, loaded therewith; the heat being very great, he was much overcome, and drinking water to refresh himself, he took to his bed with a great fever, and never raised his head again."[3]

This is obviously a fable. Correggio's work in Parma had been finished and paid for some years before; and he was certainly not so poverty-stricken as to have been compelled to make the long journey between Parma and Correggio (a distance of over forty kilometres) on foot. We know from various documents, too, that he had returned to his native city some time before. But the most ridiculous part of the story is that which says that his illness was caused by the heat of the sun. Unhappily, winter still reigns in the valley of the Po throughout the month of February. Its waters are ice-bound, and its cold winds sweep over a snow-covered country!

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[1] Pellegrino Allegri died on March 1, 1542, his wife Bernardina three years later.

[2] In the register, or account-book, of the sacristy of San Francesco at Correggio, the following entry occurs: "In the year 1534 of the month of March, on the 6th day, which was a Friday, the funeral office was performed by Padre Fra Pedre, L.—: 9: —; on the same day, for the interment of Master Antonio de Alegri, painter, L.—: soldi 13: den. 8; on the 9th day, which was a Monday, the mass of the seventh day was said for Master Anto de Alegri, painter, L—: sold. 13: den. 8; on the 10th day, which was a Tuesday, the mass of the thirtieth day was said for the above: Lire —: soldi 13: den. 8." In the year 1535, on the 8th day of March, which was a Monday, a mass was said by desire of *Doman*, called Allegro; on the 9th day, which was a Tuesday, a mass was said for the above." In Antonioli's transcription, published by Magnanini (p. 81), the mass of the octave mentioned by Tiraboschi (vi. 298) and Pungileoni (ii. p. 251), is omitted. The latter further extracts the following from the account-book of the Confraternity of San Sebastiano: "Zan Antonio Massaro, for the death of Master Antonio de *Doman*, an *iulio* and a candle, L.—: 8:—4." It has been stated elsewhere that *Doman* was the *sobriquet* of Correggio's father.

[3] *Vite*, iv. p. 119.

We have no authentic record, either literary or artistic, of Correggio's personal appearance. As far as we know, no old writer described him, no painter nor sculptor of his time left a portrait of him. There are several portraits extant which claim to have been made "after his image and likeness," but not a trace of evidence can be brought forward in support of their authenticity. On the other hand, we have Vasari's testimony, which is of great weight in this case. "I have," he says, "most diligently sought to obtain a portrait of him, but he never painted it himself, nor was he ever painted by others, for he always lived very modestly, and I have been unable to find one."[1]

After this, it would be idle to linger over the various reputed portraits of the master, painted and engraved. The reader who cares to know more of these is referred to Ratti,[2] Lanzi,[3] Pungileoni,[4] and Meyer,[5] who, among them, give an exhaustive account of the subject.

We may remark, however, that two types predominate in these supposed likenesses. One is derived from a panel attributed to Dosso Dossi; the other, from a figure frescoed by Lattanzio Gambara in Parma Cathedral.

The first, which is the one usually accepted by modern writers, represents a young man with a long fair beard, in a round cap. It was first reproduced by Ratti in his *Notizie*; he writes of it as follows: "The frontispiece of my book was copied from a portrait which I myself have had in my hands, painted upon a panel of walnut wood, with much intelligence and precision. It was bought at Geneva by an English gentleman for eight *zecchini*, and on the reverse was this inscription, written apparently when the picture was painted: *Portrait of Master Antonio Correggio by the hand of Dosso Dossi.* I have always kept the copy, not having been able to procure the original."

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[1] *Op. cit.* iv. p. 118.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 72.

[3] *Storia pittorica*, ii. p. 305.

[4] *Op. cit.* i. p. 254 *et seq*; ii. pp. 141, 254 *et seq.*

[5] *Correggio*, p. 25 *et seq.*; p. 453 *et seq.*

It is not known whether the copy in Ratti's possession was the one painted by Mengs.[1] But the inscription is of very small historic value. It bears a suspicious likeness to many others of comparatively modern manufacture, with which the owners of pictures have sought to increase their value.

Another series of portraits owes its origin, as we have said, to a fresco by Gambara. To the right of the main entrance in Parma Cathedral he painted a slightly bald man, with a dark beard, an aquiline nose, and a high forehead. Now Lattanzio was not born till after the death of Correggio, and did not paint in the cathedral till some thirty years later (1568–1573). But setting this fact aside, how are we to reconcile the appearance of this wrinkled, elderly man, who looks at least sixty, with that of the painter, who died at the early age of forty?[2] The story must have been invented by some imaginative sacristan, for the delectation of foreigners from whom he expected a *douceur*.

Nevertheless, credulous persons have gravely reproduced the portrait as that of the artist. The spare, bent, bald old man who figures as Correggio in some editions of Vasari, is merely an exaggerated version of the unknown painted by Gambara. Lanzi declares this print to have been derived from a collection of drawings belonging to Padre Resta, known as the *Galleria portatile*; but allowing this, it may still have owed its origin to the fresco.

In addition to these two generally received versions, or, as we may call them, these two contagious sources of error, we have what may be called the *sporadic* cases, fancy portraits by various painters, some of them of our own times, who have either evolved a Correggio from their inner consciousness, or have discovered him in the unknown face that looks out upon them from some smoky canvas.

Among the *sporadic* specimens, we class the portrait in the Bolognese edition of Vasari, the first instalment of which appeared in 1648; the portrait formerly in the Palazzo del Giardino at Parma, described as that of a black-bearded man in a black dress and pointed collar,[1] the portrait published by Isaac Bullart in 1682,[2] the portrait in the Gallery of Tours, claiming to be by no less a person than Tintoretto, which came from an abbey in Touraine,[3] and a hundred others, ending with Agostino Marchesi's beautiful engraving of 1855.

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[1] *Opere*, ii. p. 200, note by G. N. d'Azara.

[2] Tiraboschi, pp. 272, 301, 302.

To all these legendary and imaginary portraits we must add those which owe their designation to some mistake or confusion. Meyer has already suggested that the *Antonio da Correggio* ascribed to Dosso may have been a portrait of Bernieri; D'Azara tells us he saw a portrait at Turin, in the *Vigna della Regina*, inscribed *Antonio Allegri da Correggio*, whereas Lanzi says it bore the forged inscription *Antonius Corriggius.*[4] This portrait, which was, as a fact, in the palace of the King of Sardinia, near Turin, generally known as the *Vigna della Regina*, came from the Marchese di Monferrato's collection, and claimed to be a copy from an authentic original at Parma! Antonioli, however, who had a copy of it from Tiraboschi,[5] pronounced it to be a portrait, not of the painter, but of one Antonio da Correggio, rector of San Martino,[6] in which case (for it was reproduced several times, once in the second Sienese edition of Vasari) we have a worthy parish priest figuring as a great artist. Nor is this all. A modern biographer has endeavoured to combine with this legend of the portrait, another, of a servant who is supposed to have succeeded Correggio's wife as his model about 1530, and who, after the death of the painter and his parents, is said to have returned to her native place, carrying with her the portrait, which eventually passed into the *Vigna della Regina!*[7]

We will refrain from submitting an assortment of these various portraits of Correggio to our readers, though the infinite variety of types might afford them some amusement. As a matter of fact there is barely one to which even a vestige of authenticity attaches, and we prefer therefore to omit from our pages even the one which has hitherto been generally accepted.

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[1] G. Campori, *Cataloghi ed inventari*, p. 270.

[2] *Académie des sciences et des arts, contenant les vies et les éloges historiques des hommes illustres.* Paris, 1862.

[3] *MS. Minutes of the Accademia di belle arti of Parma*, vii. pp. 16, 25, 35, 36.

[4] Mengs, *Opere*, ii. p. 200. Lanzi, *op. cit.*

[5] VI. p. 301.

[6] Meyer, pp. 25–26.

[7] Magnanini, p. 116. This romance was built upon the mere fact that in his will of November 19, 1538, Pellegrino Allegri left twenty gold *scudi* to his servant Margherita di Jacopo di Arimondo of Villa Sala in the district of Turin, *pro benemerentiis et servitiis.*

Though scarcely more than a sketch, this supposed portrait is undoubtedly of the school of Correggio. The brushing and the tones of the colour recall Girolamo Bedoli. It is of the same size as another, of Parmigianino, which has a similar frame. Both were originally in the Rossi collection, acquired by the Parma Gallery in 1851. In the old catalogues it figures as: "Supposed portrait of Correggio."[1] It is probably a hasty sketch of some one or other, but it is thoroughly artistic as a picture, and full of animation and intelligence.

With regard to our painter's moral character, we have nothing to guide us but the words of Vasari, on which all other biographers have drawn: "He was of a very timid disposition, and exerted himself to excess in the practice of his art for the sake of his family, who were a great care to him; and although by nature good and well-disposed, he nevertheless grieved more than was reasonable under the burden of those passions which are common to all men. He was very melancholic in the exercise of his art, and felt its fatigues greatly." And again: "Oppressed by family cares, Antonio was so bent on saving that he became miserly to a degree."[2]

Vasari evidently exaggerates. But we do not think with Meyer[3] and Morelli,[4] that he romanced merely for the sake of filling out his biographies, or making them interesting. D'Azara very unjustly calls that of Correggio "unworthy."[5]

It has been the fate of Vasari's work to be at once the best abused of books, and the one to which its critics are most deeply indebted. Some attack him for his inaccuracies in the matter of dates and facts; some accuse him of partiality because of the praise he bestows on Tuscan artists; some declare that he invented episodes and anecdotes to make his book amusing; others are indignant with him for omitting to mention some local celebrity; and others again pronounce him as poor a critic as he was a painter!

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[1] Archives of the Parma Gallery, C. ii.

[2] *Vite*, iv. pp. 110, 119.

[3] *Correggio*, pp. 14, 28.

[4] *Le opere dei maestri italiani*, p. 21.

[5] Mengs, *Opere*, i. p. xcvii.

Unfortunate *Giorgetto Vasellario, Aretine painter!* as Benvenuto Cellini calls thee! How is it that under this perpetual shower of stones the life is not crushed out of thee?

The *vérité vraie* in this matter seems to be that half the reproaches heaped upon the author are unjust and disingenuous.

He is accused of being confused and inaccurate, more especially in his history of the revival of art in its first manifestations. But access to the documents preserved in the archives was denied him, and all art records then extant were extremely meagre and defective. He was therefore driven to accept vague and doubtful traditions, and if he occasionally offers them to the reader without testing and examining them very severely, we must remember that the canons of criticism were not as yet determined.

Nor is it difficult to justify the diffuseness with which he treats Tuscan art and Tuscan masters. He was born in Tuscany, and though he certainly visited most of the principal cities in Italy twice, he lived nearly all his life in Florence. He therefore had leisure and opportunity for the collection of materials for his notices of Tuscan masters, and could invoke the aid of friends to help him in his researches. It was impossible, taking into account his brief sojourns in other districts, and the difficulties of communication with which a writer of those days had to reckon, that he should have been as well informed about the masters of other schools. He himself often laments that he can give but a brief notice of artists to whom he would gladly have dedicated several pages. He had, it is true, agents who made researches on his behalf in certain districts, as, for instance, Gian Battista Grassi, who supplied him with "special information concerning things in Friuli," but the method and the activity of his "loving and courteous" friends were naturally by no means equal to his own. If, indeed, we find occasional passages in the *Lives* which seem to betray a preference for the Tuscans, is it just to quarrel with the writer, who, perhaps, felt himself most strongly drawn towards the great creations among which he had been born, and had grown up, and the art which he had studied in all its splendid and harmonious development?

Why, we may reasonably ask, after having spoken of Correggio in terms of the most enthusiastic admiration, should he have proceeded to invent details to prove him sordid and miserly? Why, in other cases, does he lament over the scantiness of his materials, instead of drawing a series of finished imaginary portraits? Why does he content himself with dry catalogues of the works of other masters, concerning whom he had been unable to glean any information, instead of giving colour and vivacity to his narrative by inventions and falsehoods? We can only conclude that the anecdotes he gives us of certain artists were commonly related of them in his day, just as similar stories are current about the famous men of our own times.

Vasari tells us that Antonio was good and gentle, of a timid disposition, absorbed in his family cares and his work, and highly sensitive. He adds that the artist was miserly, and here his informants may have exaggerated, or he himself may have laid on the shadows of his portrait somewhat heavily. The legends of Correggio's extreme poverty arose from a mistaken interpretation of the passage: "He was so bent on saving that he became miserly (*misero*) to a degree." The Italian word *misero*, with its double meaning, *poverty-stricken* and *miserly*, has strangely enough been accepted here in the first of these senses, though the whole tenor of the passage clearly indicates the second.

The mistake grew with repetition, as always happens, until it assumed the most exaggerated form. Annibale Carracci, Scannelli, Giuseppe Bigellini, and some others, were almost persuaded that the painter died of hunger. A reaction, of course, took place in due course, and when it was actually proved that he possessed houses and lands, his poverty was suddenly converted into wealth, and his modest origin became a nobility dating back several centuries.[1]

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[1] Mengs (ii. pp. 138, 144) and Pungileoni (i. p. 248) went so far as to adduce Correggio's use of good materials, such as expensive panels and colours, for his work, as a proof of his prosperous social condition. Tiraboschi (vi. p. 240) very justly points out the absurdity of this argument, for the quality of his materials may have been due, not to his own expenditure, but to the taste and liberality of his patrons.

That he was miserly we do not believe. An amicable arrangement, due to his initiative, brought a long litigation over a disputed inheritance to an end. We can well believe, on the other hand, that he was careful and saving. It may be that a presentiment of his own early death, a desire to leave his family provided for, to give his daughters (two of whom, however, died young) suitable marriage portions, and to make his son Pomponio independent, to some extent, of his profession, no less than the disposition inherited from frugal and laborious parents, induced a sense of wise economy. This disposition, misinterpreted or exaggerated by some, caused him to be considered miserly, a trait the more likely to excite remark in his case, because of the absurd theory which obtains among the herd, that an artist must of necessity be eccentric, unmethodical, extravagant, and fantastic.

That there was a strain of sadness in his character, or, as Vasari says, that his temperament was "melancholic," is not incompatible with the joyous and cheerful serenity of his art. The artist's psychology is not always apparent in his works. A strange duality sometimes proclaims itself in the natural disposition and the intellectual production of a man. Some happy and sweet-tempered souls can express none but gloomy and violent thoughts with pen or brush, and others, of a silent and brooding habit, burst upon us with unsuspected fire, vivacity, and humour in their artistic creations.

In his last years, circumstances were not wanting which may have aggravated his natural melancholy. Foremost among these was the death of his wife. Yet Vasari's phrase, "that he grieved more than was reasonable under the weight of those passions which are common to all men," seems to us a just and acute pronouncement on his character. Devoted to his art, absorbed in the marvellous visions of his genius, intent on the loveliness created by his own brush, Correggio no doubt felt a perturbation out of all proportion to the actual trouble when some small mishap forced him to withdraw himself from communings with the gods, and brought him into momentary conflict with his fellowmen. Too modest, on the one hand, to seek for praise, we think he must have been keenly sensitive to criticism, even of the most ignorant and irresponsible kind. The witticism of the canon, when his frescoes in the cathedral were first displayed, must have been very bitter to him.

This modest reticence, this shrinking sensibility, no doubt explains why Correggio never sought to measure himself against the other famous artists of his time, in some great centre of Italian culture. Gentle and retiring, contented with his lot, without ambition, he may have felt no aspirations after the successes of his contemporaries, perhaps had no idea that he himself was their equal, in some respects indeed their superior.

His simple mind was satisfied with the affectionate admiration of his pupils and friends. His desires and efforts all centred in the peaceful and constant exercise of his art. Francesco Algarotti wrote as follows to Antonio Maria Zanotti in 1761: "If fortune is lacking, why should not your own merit content you? Merit is no empty name; it will at least give you a subsistence, and will keep you happily employed all day. Correggio and Barocci were of this mind; the one remained at Parma, the other at Urbino; and they were more happy and contented than many kings' painters."[1]

Scarcely more than a century after his death, Correggio's tomb in the church of San Francesco was demolished. It was under a recess in the outside wall of the church, adjoining the cloister of the cemetery, and was destroyed in 1641, when certain alterations were carried out. Tiraboschi, quoting from a letter of Padre Resta's, dated November 30, 1695, says that when Correggio's sepulchral niche was taken away, "his bones were removed, and were perhaps placed where the chapel of San Giuseppe da Copertino now stands, or near the side door by which the church is entered from the porch."[2] The chronicler Bulbarini, in one of his notes to the Zuccardi chronicle, is more precise: "In the outer cloister of San Francesco, where the miracle of the mule adoring the Blessed Sacrament is painted, there was a chapel, like a room, with an altar, the picture from which is now in the Arrivabeni Chapel; at the base of this altar was a tomb with a wooden lid, on which was carved *Antonius de Allegris pictor*. When the chapel was demolished, the bones of the dead man in this tomb were interred not far off, that is to say, below the painting of the other miracle, that of the marble shattered by the drinking-glass,[1] where the monument of the Conti now is. This was told me by a person who saw some of these things himself, and had heard others from one who saw them."[2]

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[1] Bottari, *Lettere*, vii. p. 475.

[2] Vol. vi. p. 299.

It is, therefore, well known where the painter's bones were laid in 1641. Their resting-place, shared, no doubt, by other members of his family, is clearly indicated in the inscription preserved by Pungileoni, which begins *Antonii Allegri ossa translata anno domini MDCXLI ibi nobiliorem expectant tumulum.* The marble slab which Girolamo Conti had carved in Correggio's honour in 1647, was originally built into the wall over the spot to which the bones had been removed; it was placed over the lateral porch of San Francesco in the second half of the eighteenth century. Hence we must suppose that when the friars were importuned for a piece of the painter's bone, and declared they did not know where he was buried, they were only anxious to avoid the profanation of his ashes. The anecdote told to Contarelli and preserved by Tiraboschi is as follows: "An Austrian official quartered here during the last war with Italy,[3] was so enthusiastic a worshipper of Correggio, that he asked for a small piece of the painter's bone to set in a ring, supposing his remains to be under the stone; the reply of the monks even then was that they would have allowed an excavation, but that they could not exactly say where the skeleton had been placed!"[4]

A shameful farce, if we may so speak of the violation of a tomb, was enacted in 1786, to gratify the sentimental folly of Ercole III., Duke of Modena, who, aping the Academy of St. Luke at Rome, where Raphael's skull was preserved in a glass case, ordered that of Correggio to be exhumed, and placed in the Academy of Modena! How far this was conscientiously carried out we may judge by two documents published by Bigi, which we cannot forbear to reproduce.[5]

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[1] An allusion to a miracle of St. Anthony.

[2] Pungileoni, iii. p. 43.

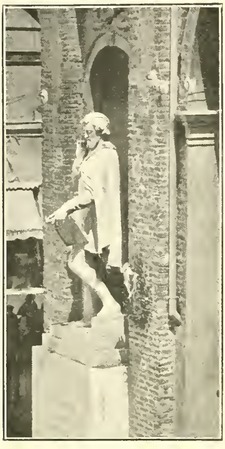
[3] This must have been during the war of the Austrian Succession, perhaps after the battle of Camposanto, on the Panaro, in 1743.

[4] Pungileoni, iii. p. 43.

[5] *Della vita e delle opere certe e incerte di A. A.*, pp. 96, 97.

On June 22, 1786, Count Vincenzo Fabrizi, governor of Carpi and Correggio, wrote from Carpi to Count Munarini, the Duke of Modena's minister, "Immediately upon receiving your Excellency's revered communication, I hasten to inform you of what is taking place in connection with the painter Antonio Allegri. . . . In the first months of my governorship, I made diligent inquiries touching this great man, but was unable to discover anything, save that he was buried in the first cloister of the Conventual Minorites. I could never discover any trace of his body, seeing that his bones were mixed with those of other corpses under the said cloister. . . . If the Signor Sola is coming to Correggio with the intention of fetching the skull of the famous painter, his journey will be in vain, for the reasons I have given above; but as he may have some other object in view, I shall be happy to receive him, and shall be myself in the city on Sunday, on business of state, and to take part in the solemnities in honour of the second patron of the city. I have felt myself bound so far to represent to your Excellency with much reluctance, that his Serene Highness's lofty aspirations cannot be gratified, and that the Academy cannot obtain a memento which might well have excited the envy of the most famous and highly esteemed of such associations."

To this frank communication from Fabrizi, Munarini sent the following disingenuous answer the next day: "The present will serve as an answer to your letter . . . . relating to the skull of Correggio, buried in the city. I must warn you, however, that this communication must be kept strictly secret by you, if you wish to regulate your conduct according to the intentions and earnest desires of his Serene Highness. He wishes the Signor Conte Brigadiere to have the place where we know Correggio's body lies, opened, *and to take thence an ancient skull, and to set it aside, saying it is the skull of Correggio, and to preserve it as such until further orders, and to give me an immediate account of these proceedings, as if in answer to the first letter I wrote on this subject to the Signor Conte Brigadiere . . . . making no allusion to this present communication.* In his letter the Signor Conte might further include a certificate, attesting the truth of this little invention concerning the said skull; he may also say that he is preserving the same with all care, in expectation of further orders from his Serene Highness. His Serene Highness wishes the skull to be preserved in the Academy of this city, as is that of Raphael at Rome, and as there can be no disadvantage therefrom, but rather a benefit and great increase of prestige to the Academy, his wish may be carried out by the above means without any difficulty whatever. Having now explained the sovereign will to my esteemed Signor Conte, it only remains for him to execute and cause it to be executed with all possible despatch and with the utmost care and circumspection."



STATUE OF CORREGGIO, BY AGOSTINO FERRARINI.

In the Piazza, Parma

Fabrizi understood that it was useless to insist any further, and that he must make up his mind to hold a candle to the devil! The tomb was ransacked with a great show of reverence and enthusiasm; a number of bones were removed, which were sent to the Palazzo Communale;[1] the first skull that was picked up was gravely handed round and examined by all the prosaic Hamlets present, and finally sent off to Modena. There were, of course, other skulls in the tomb, but these were not taken out with the bones, lest suspicion should be roused. It was given out that only the skeleton of the painter had been discovered, and that this had been equally divided between Correggio and Modena; the skull, that is to say, to the ducal city,[2] the rest of the body to his native town.

Ercole's foolish and unworthy artifice has brought its own punishment in the discovery of the letters here reproduced. But even if these had never come to light, the fraud would have been exposed by the anatomical examination of the skull, which shows it to have belonged to a woman of advanced age.[1] Such are the pitiless results of criticism, with its indiscreet insistence on proofs and verifications! But for this merciless examination of facts, we should be admiring Correggio's lineaments in the face of a country priest, and reverencing the skull of a toothless old woman as the shrine of his mighty genius! We are glad that our painter's fellow-citizens took no part in this act of deceit and profanation. It would be a pity that even the slightest stain should sully the history of their devotion. They watched with pride the development of his genius, gave him his first commissions, secured the peace of his last years, and stoutly opposed the thief who substituted copies for his original works by the ducal orders at a later date. They honoured the prophet who was given them, and this inclines us to deal leniently with their tardiness in providing a suitable monument to his memory.

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[1] These bones were placed under the monument erected to Allegri at Correggio in 1880.

[2] It is still preserved in the R. Instituto di Belle Arti at Modena. Why is it not sent back and replaced in some tomb in the church of San Francesco?

STATUE OF CORREGGIO BY VINCENZO VELA.
In the Piazza Correggio.

We have already seen how in 1612 a first appeal to the Correggese was made in vain, and how Conti, a resident in Rome, set up the memorial we have mentioned, some thirty-five years later. In 1682, the Council was assembled "by the tolling of the great bell" to consider a scheme for the erection of a marble monument to Correggio. Three years passed before a faculty was granted for its execution,[2] and yet another three before Giovanni

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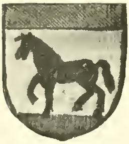
[1] Bigi, *op. cit.* p. 98.

[2] Communal Archives of Correggio. *Registro degli atti del Consiglio Comunale dal* 1647 *al* 1694.

Martino Baini submitted designs and terms to the Council.[1] But nothing came of all these meetings, deliberations, and discourses.

Girolamo Tiraboschi tells us that Padre Resta, indignant at the dilatory manner in which the Correggese treated all proposals for commemorating the great artist who had made their city glorious, declared himself "ready to undertake the charges of a suitable monument," for which purpose he proposed to raise money by the sale of a number of drawings he believed to be by Correggio. He went so far as to have a bust carved for the proposed memorial. But finding no purchaser for his drawings, and being unable to provide the necessary funds, he professed his willingness to hand over the bust to the Correggese. Disgusted, perhaps, when he saw that the latter made no attempt to carry out the scheme he had been forced to abandon, he changed his mind, and sent it to Monsignor Resta, Bishop of Tortona.[2]



SUPPOSED COAT OF ARMS OF CORREGGIO.

It is unnecessary to give a detailed list of busts and memorials erected to Correggio in other places. Suffice it to say that in 1870 a statue of the painter by Agostino Ferrarini was unveiled in the Piazza Grande of Parma, and that in the same year a committee was formed at Correggio "to repair a great wrong hitherto unexpiated, and remove the reproach of a prolonged ingratitude, for which every worthy citizen must feel remorse." This time the deliberations of the committee had a practical result. A subscription was set on foot, and a sufficient sum was raised to allow of the execution of a statue by the famous sculptor, Vincenzo Vela, which was publicly dedicated to Correggio's memory in his own city, on October 17, 1880.[3]

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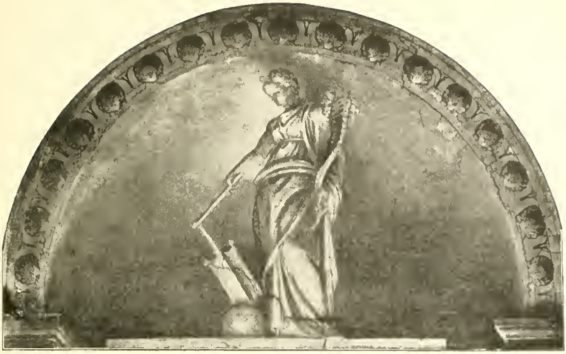
[1] Pungileoni, iii. p. 46. The proposed monument was to have been crowned with a heraldic shield, perhaps the arms of the commune. Domenico Manni, however, reproduced a supposed coat of arms of Correggio, which was in the possession of the Marchese Alfonso-Taccoli, of Parma. The crest is a horse. See *Osservazioni storiche circa i sigilli antichi*, vol. xxix. No. 75. Florence, 1784. This volume contains an anonymous biographical sketch of Correggio, dated March 2, 1716.

[2] Vol. vi. p. 299.

[3] G. B. Fantuzzi, *Del Monumento al Correggio, opera di Vincenzo Vela* (Correggio, 1881), and *Antonio Allegri, Conferenza*. Correggio, 1880. D. G. Cesare Marchi Castellini, *Antonio Allegri, detto il Correggio, Vincenzo Vela e Luigi Asioli*. Correggio, 1880.

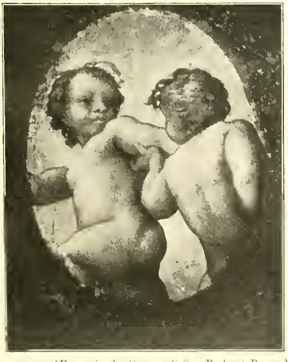


FORTUNE. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER XV

THE GENIUS AND STYLE OF CORREGGIO

PERSONALITY—SCHOOL—COMPOSITION—CORREGGIO AND MICHELANGELO COMPARED—SUBJECTS—DRAWING—HIS INTUITIVE SENSE OF FORESHORTENING—HIS SENTIMENT—GREAT ARTISTS CONTEMPORARY WITH HIM—HIS TUMULTUOUS GROUPING OF FIGURES IN MOTION—RELIGIOUS FEELING AND SENSUALITY—ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ART—CORREGGIO'S TECHNIQUE—CHIAROSCURO—LIGHT—COLOUR—HIS AFFINITY WITH LEONARDO, GIORGIONE, AND LORENZO LOTTO—TECHNICAL METHODS—HIS USE OF THE BRUSH—"CORREGGIOSITY" AND "DEMONIAC FORCE."



PUTTI. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

WE know that Ortensio Landi was the first to appreciate Correggio's great artistic personality. The prolonged hesitation of criticism in determining who were his masters, and to what school he might properly be affiliated, demonstrates more plainly than any affirmations, ancient or modern, how complete was the domination of individual over acquired qualities in his art. Nay, more; if we consider the gradual development of other great Italian painters, we shall see that very few among them worked out their own artistic salvation so unswervingly, or saw the world around them in a light so peculiarly individual. In this respect his only peers are Leonardo and Michelangelo; and even here, the advantages of the comparison are on his side; the influence of Tuscan art, especially that of Verrocchio, is more obvious in the case of Leonardo, and that of Jacopo della Quercia, Donatello, and Luca Signorelli in the case of Michelangelo, than are the influences of the Ferrarese and of Mantegna in the works of Correggio. With Raphael and Titian we are not here concerned, for the evolution of formulæ which culminated in their manner is absolutely logical and self-evident.

Correggio's development, on the other hand, has been a fruitful theme of discussion. He was long supposed to have been a member of the Lombard school, and to have come under the immediate influence of Leonardo; then, after a certain manipulation of conflicting dates, he was relegated to Mantua, and pronounced a disciple of Mantegna; academic classicism could not brook the thought of his exemption from Roman influences, and proclaimed him a student of Raphael, Buonarroti, and the antiques of the Eternal City; finally, by a bold and happy inspiration, his affiliation to these various schools was cancelled, and he was handed over to that of Ferrara. Correggio indeed assimilated all the energy of this latter, and reinforced it with the depth and grandeur of Mantegna's conceptions, but only to prepare himself for lofty and independent flight. These influences were but the *point d'appui*, as it were, whence he rose and soared on the wings of his own genius. To discover their traces, we are compelled to a close analysis of his work, seeking them within the narrow limits of a tint, a fold, or a type. Such traces, barely recognisable in his mature creations, are by no means proclamatory even in his juvenile works, where conventional and scholastic traits are already transfused with personal sentiment.

This individuality seems to have disconcerted Vasari, who found it impossible to class him in the school of the Emilia. Before he had explored the territory, and seen Correggio's work, he seems to have had no suspicion that art in this region was not quietly working out the formulæ of the fifteenth century, or that its development had passed beyond the stage marked by the works of Francia and Costa. Vasari, who had spent his life between Rome and Florence, looked upon the Emilian school as antiquated. We gather this from his acceptance of the legend that Francia died of mortification when he saw in Raphael's *Saint Cecilia* the condemnation of his own art, and it is even more clearly apparent in his words, when, with ill-concealed wonder, he pronounces Correggio to have successfully attained to "the modern manner."[1] This unexpected discovery leads him to lament that the painter had never been to Rome, where "he would have done wonders, and given trouble to many who in his time were accounted great."

Vasari's regrets are, of course, unshared by those who believe that Correggio's originality was largely due to his isolated life. Michelangelo's influence, it is often said, would have been fatal to him; and in support of this theory, Buonarroti's effect upon Raphael has been cited for the thousandth time, by those who forget, also for the thousandth time, that Raphael's genius was above all things assimilative. We think that criticism should no longer lend itself to these facile hypotheses and conditional theorisings. The originality of Correggio would not have been easily turned aside from its natural artistic bent; his genius, under the implied conditions, might rather have served to temper the consequences of Michelangelo's stern and terrible power. The life of a great intellectual centre may either quicken or destroy an assimilative talent; it has no such power over great original gifts. But why should we insist further? Personal tendencies determine the course adopted by men, and Correggio arrived at the summit of artistic greatness without travelling thither by way of Rome.

At Parma, however, far from the direct influences alike of antique art and of the great moderns, both such irresistible forces in Rome, he was able to preserve his own sincerity and follow out the bent of his peculiar aptitudes, which displayed themselves more especially in the movement and variety of multitudinous figures, in audacity of grouping, in a consummate mastery of perspective, combined, nevertheless, with great simplicity of conception and unity of idea.

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[1] *Vite*, iv. p. 110.

His compositions are never characterised by a lofty development of thought or incident. The life he expresses in each subject is never complicated by contrasts, but unfolds itself in a smooth, continuous harmony, broken at most only by the gradations of a dominant sentiment. It is a life entirely independent of realistic or historic elements.

In his *Last Supper*, Leonardo opposed a wonderful variety of purely human emotions to the divine resignation of the Saviour; Raphael, in his Vatican frescoes, expressed the spirit of the Papal Court during the Renaissance, in its extraordinary union of theological and humanistic activities. He emphasises this versatility by placing the *Dispute of the Sacrament* beside the *School of Athens*. The composition of these masters is occasionally extremely simple; but their spiritual intention is always complex and profound. Correggio, on the other hand, informs his tumultuous throngs with greater warmth and vivacity; but they are all animated by some single aim, some transparent idea. He gives us no "linked sweetness" of varied harmonies, but one strain of infinite melody, sung by a thousand voices in unison. In the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista we see the Saviour soaring heavenward among his Apostles; in the dome of the cathedral, the Virgin ascends, surrounded by saints and angels. Even in these two grand works, we are impressed by the greatness of the painter, rather than that of his conception, which is extremely simple, and so expressed that its significance is apparent at a glance.

The dissimilarity of aim is even more striking if we compare Correggio's works with those of Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel, where life is studied under its most solemn and fateful aspect, from the hour of creation to the day of doom, with a poetic intensity which seems to vibrate between the harmonies of the Scriptures and those of Dante.

Nevertheless, Correggio has one quality in common with Michelangelo. This is his intuitive perception of a subject as *form*. With both, an idea, no matter of what nature, was not a purely psychical phenomenon, which gradually took substance after long fatigue and labour on the part of its creator; it sprang at once into concrete being, as it were, and found an immediate plastic expression, so great was their imaginative knowledge of effect, and their unerring skill of hand. Every impression which their minds received came to them in definite artistic form, and this is the secret of their individual and spontaneous style. Each, according to his temperament and manner, set free the images of his inner vision, and gave them a special truth and reality, which yet show little evidence of direct study from actual models. This peculiarity of their genius may perhaps explain the fact that neither of them painted any portraits, either as separate studies, or in their great compositions, whereas these are of frequent occurrence in the *œuvre* of Raphael, Titian, and many other great masters. That Correggio's types were not directly derived from nature, but were idealised by passage through his brain, seems to be further evidenced to some extent by an ethnological fact. In the streets of Parma we meet at every turn with faces which recall the genial types of Parmigianino and Anselmi, whereas a Correggesque head is never seen.

Now this innate cohesion of form and idea, due to the strength of the imaginative faculty, is more marked in Correggio and in Michelangelo than in any other artist of the Renaissance.

But the intimate artistic faculty common to both these great men resulted in no real affinity as far as their creations are concerned. Other personal elements divided them sharply one from another. The genius of the one was grandiose, complex, and austere; that of the other, simple, pellucid, joyous.

Correggio showed himself superior to Buonarroti in his splendour of colour, in the restrained power of his modelling; in his joyous ease and animation, in the transparency of his tints, he surpassed Raphael; but he is unquestionably the inferior of both in variety and in fancy, as in grandeur and impressive solemnity of composition.

Allowing this, and recognising the extreme simplicity of his conceptions, it cannot be denied that he showed a lofty imagination in their treatment, an admirable originality, a keen sense of breadth and expression in the use of line.

Some, indeed, have quarrelled with Correggio, not only for his want of grandeur, but for a supposed lack of harmony in his compositions. They were, perhaps, unable to pardon his rejection of traditional forms, his indifference to symmetry, or rather, to academic repose.[1] Cochin condemned him for having made his Apostles in the cupola of San Giovanni of colossal stature, and imagines him to have overlooked the fact that their vast proportions would detract from the apparent size of the dome. The French traveller, however, ignored a fact Correggio wisely took into account, namely, that in the gloom of the dimly lighted church, the figures would have been invisible had they been smaller.[2]

It is true that Correggio is above all things a *painter* ; nay, more ; he may perhaps be called the painter *par excellence* among the great Italians. But we may recognise this truth without detracting from his other qualities. Of his drawing we shall speak presently. His compositions have been condemned as "uninteresting," and as "lacking in true beauty." It is admitted that "he grouped his figures skilfully" ; but, continues the critic, "his chief concern was for the distribution of masses in his chiaroscuro, rather than for truth of expression."

Thus is Correggio offered up as a sacrifice by those who wish to glorify Raphael!

They ignore the severe and dignified treatment of the evangelists and doctors in the pendentives of San Giovanni, and of the Apostles in the dome above ; the lunette in the same church, with the Evangelist of Patmos, a supreme example of Correggio's mastery of line ; they overlook the triumphant originality of the *Madonna with St. Jerome* and the *Notte*, as contrasted with that obedience to accepted forms (in which, nevertheless, we detect a new animation) which characterises the first and the last of his great altar-pieces, the *Madonna with St. Francis*, and the *Madonna with St. George*.

It is obvious that he was not solely preoccupied with pictorial effect, as is supposed, but that his artistic decisions were governed by an intense perception of pictorial unity. His treatment was further influenced by his anxiety to give life and movement to all his figures, to have no inert and purposeless character in the drama. In expressing the sentiment of a conception by the play of attitude and gesture he has had few rivals, and this is the more remarkable, in that the art of his time sought beauty rather in harmony of lines than in unity of interest. The number of *supernumeraries* introduced purely for effect in the great pictures of the period is a characteristic feature of the age. In Correggio's work, on the other hand, each person has his function. St. Joseph is no longer a melancholy and passive intruder; he participates in the joy of the Virgin; he gathers fruit for the Child, or plies his trade beside the pair. The angels no longer gaze from the canvas in rapt and motionless abstraction. They seek

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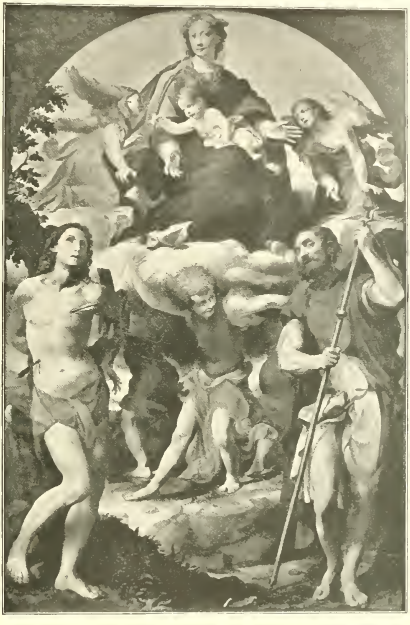
[1] Mengs, *Opere*, i. p. 183.

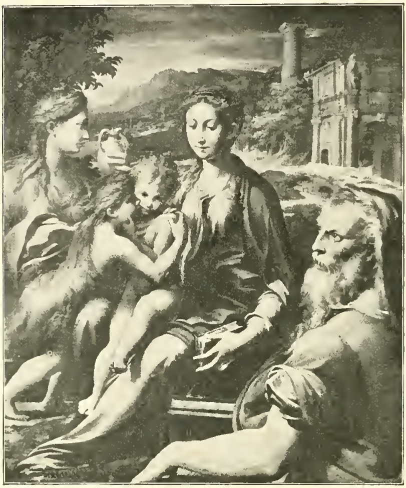
[2] *Histoire des Peintres de toutes les Écoles. Le Corrège*, by Paul Rochery. Paris, 1876.



MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH ST. SEBASTIAN AND ST. ROCH, BY ANSELMI

In the Parma Gallery.

to divert the Infant Jesus; they turn the pages of a book for him, offer him fruits, help St. Joseph to draw down the branches of the date-palm, or tether the ass to a tree. Youthful genii, scattered in joyous profusion throughout his compositions, are busily employed in supporting models of cities, pastoral staves, books, and mitres; they peer into the Magdalen's jar of ointment, or play with St. George's armour.

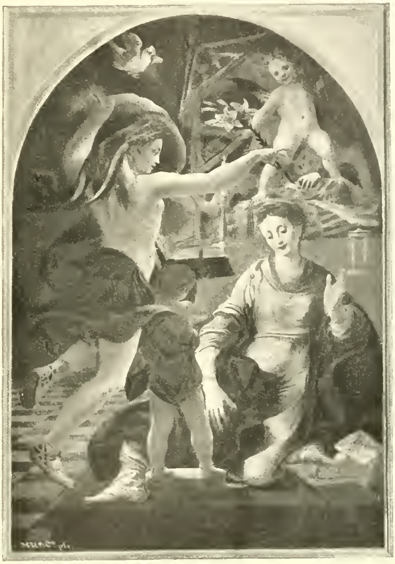


THE MADONNA WITH ST. ZACHARIAH, BY PARMIGIANINO.
In the Uffizi, Florence.

It is clear that this intensity of life, expressing itself harmoniously in every detail, tends to the production of an emotional, rather than of a technical effect; and therefore, that the artist's desire to express his thought was at least equal to his passion for pictorial result.

Hence it would seem that criticism has occasionally confused beauty and harmony of composition with breadth and grandeur of subject. The themes which agitated the minds of the pontifical court, and suggested the works of Michelangelo and Raphael, were no doubt more complex than those which contented Correggio, and demanded a more intense application of the intellect.

Correggio's pictorial tendencies are, perhaps, most clearly manifested in his drawings, which rarely, if ever, consist of careful and accurate studies of details, or display a very conscientious study of contours. They are simply impressions, the principal object of which is the distribution of figures, and the massing of light and shadow. In early times they were not very greatly valued. Vasari, who owned some, wrote as follows: "If Antonio had not carried out his works with that final perfection which we see in them, his drawings (though they are good in style, and pleasing, and show the technical ease of a master) would not have entitled him to take that high rank won for him by his pictures."[1]



THE ANNUNCIATION, BY GIROLAMO MAZZOLA-BEDOLI.

In the Naples Museum.

As the master's fame increased, the demand for his drawings and their market value increased proportionately. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, we find Giuseppe Pinacci delivering himself in this wise: "As to drawings, they are all highly prized when they are by masters of the first rank, I mean old masters. Mantegna, however, is perhaps the earliest of those masters whose drawings seem to be equally prized as objects of study and as pleasure-giving possessions. The drawings most sought after are those which are highly finished and in good preservation. As to studies of draperies, feet, hands, and mere sketches of accessories, even if by famous masters, they are only in demand among painters; and they are esteemed only if by one of three authors, when they are prized for their rarity, as much as for the great names of the draughtsmen, that is to say, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Correggio. Every scrap of paper touched on by these is of value."[1] Almost at the same date Zanetti, speaking of drawings to an amateur, exclaimed: "You, with your cultivated taste, will be on your guard against those who praise and cry up a thing worth a few pence with protestations and perjuries, trying to pass it off as by Titian, Correggio, or Raphael."[2] To this higher estimate the new direction given to research contributed very powerfully. Early collectors sought examples solely for their intrinsic interest. A desire to acquire sketches in order to follow the artist from his first conception to his subsequent corrections, tracing the evolution of his work, was a growth of the sixteenth century, and may be reckoned among the benefits of an age

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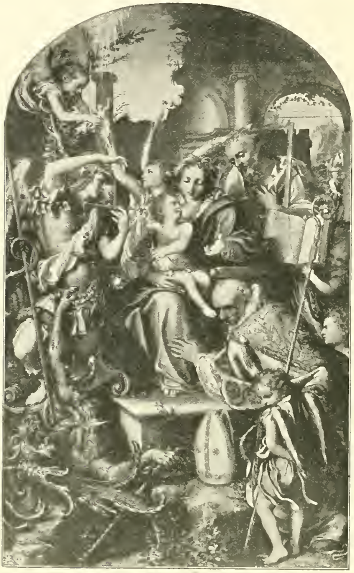
[1] *Vite*, iv. p. 113.



MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS, BY GIORGIO GANDINO DEL GRANO.
In the Parma Gallery.

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[1] Bottari, ii. p. 121.

[2] Vol. ii. p. 133.

peculiarly rich in artistic activities. The Jesuit Leonardelli, in a small and practically unknown book, thus expands an idea of Pliny's: "Pictures left unfinished by gifted painters are highly prized and held in great consideration, because in them we discern what is not to be seen in the colours, but was imaged in the brain of the dead. Those lightly sketched heads, those imperfect features, those fragmentary lines, foreshadow the beauty with which the skilled hand meant to endow the finished work, and manifest those occult fancies which the brush was not permitted to set forth in their integrity as finished creations."[1] The carelessness of Antonio's little sketches and jottings, for which he often atones by traits of wonderful actuality and fascinating vigour, has not been so freely condemned as his drawing in his great works. In the first edition of his *Lives*, Vasari indirectly accuses him of a want of thoroughness in his drawing by saying that if this had been as good as his colour, he would have "caused amazement in heaven, and have filled the earth with wonder." Lodovico Dolce spoke more plainly: "It is true that he was a better colourist than draughtsman."[2]

The judgment pronounced in the middle of the sixteenth century was, of course, handed on with gradual exaggerations down to the time of Sandrart and Mengs, the latter of whom described Correggio's drawing as grand and fascinating, but inaccurate.[3]

It is curious to note, however, that this accusation seems almost always to have been followed by certain misgivings in the minds of those who made it. Vasari suppressed his disparaging allusions in the second edition of his work, and Mengs finally declared that the charge of inaccuracy brought against the master was, strictly speaking, a false one. "It is true that he did not always select objects of such simple forms as the ancients, that he did not display such an intimate knowledge of anatomy as Michelangelo, that he made no such parade of his mastery of the nude as the Florentines. On the other hand, he drew the objects he had chosen with absolute correctness, and in none of his original works do we find traces of hesitation or correction."[4] We cannot surprise Dolce in self-contradiction of the same kind. But when we find a writer of critical treatises declaring that Correggio was Giulio Romano's inferior in all save colour and charm, we may safely disregard his opinion, even though he flourished in that golden age of art—the sixteenth century. Comment is superfluous, and we need surely institute no comparison between Correggio's magnificent figures of the Apostles, and the contorted, uncouth *Giants* of the Palazzo del Te at Mantua.

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[1] *Le vere sorti*, p. 337. Venice, 1684.

[2] *Dialogo sulla pittura intitolato l'Aretino*, p. 63. Venice, 1557.

[3] *Opere*, i. p. 51.

[4] Vol. ii. p. 183.

Here and there in his works it is certainly possible to find defects of drawing, as in the Saviour's left arm in the *Coronation of the Virgin*, and in the right arm of the *Danäe*. But were it the true function of criticism to judge a master, not by his work in its integrity, but by microscopic details, none could hope to escape censure, for no work of man is perfect, and it was only in graceful hyperbole that Andrea del Sarto was hailed "the faultless painter."

Such censure as applied to Correggio is still less justifiable when not only the weakness of certain details, and the obscurity of certain foreshortenings is laid to his charge, but when he is further reproached with that vagueness of contours, and that freedom of lines characteristic of his work, where there is no ostentatious display of anatomical research, and no very scrupulous continuity of outline. When, on the other hand, we recognise the profound knowledge of the human body shown by Correggio; when we note the ease and originality that marks his rendering of its most intricate attitudes and movements, the infinite variety he gives to the play of the extremities—feet seen from every imaginable point of view, hands bent, outstretched, folded, or clustering together with extraordinary diversity of gesture—we are lost in amazement, and turn from contemplation of his works with a conviction that not even Michelangelo himself propounded or solved such an infinity of problems.

So great indeed was the wondering admiration roused by these effects, that a curious legend sprang up in connection with them.

Scannelli, who was the first to refer to it, tells us that in his time it was commonly reported that Correggio made use of small clay models suspended above him to serve as guides in the process of foreshortening. The story was repeated from time to time, and gradually found acceptance. The modeller, whom Scannelli stated to have been "a friend, who was a skilful worker in relief,"[1] was shortly afterwards identified with Antonio Begarelli![2] Ratti, in his turn, embellished the tale so much that he only just stops short of pronouncing Begarelli the real author of the frescoes in the cupola of the cathedral! "Of each figure," he writes, "Begarelli made a clay model for Correggio, and he also made a model of the cornice round the dome for him, so that he might be able to observe the right effects with all possible exactness." But even this was not enough. Ratti further tells us that the painter, Giuliano Traballesi (who lived from 1727 to 1812), "had found one of the models in the soffit of the cupola" while studying at Parma.[3]

The student who marks Correggio's predilection for perspective effects, even in the early works painted under the influence of Mantegna; who notes its gradual development in the pictures and frescoes which preceded his great undertaking in the cathedral; who perceives that not one of the innumerable figures is a repetition of the other, and above all, that chiaroscuro and values play the principal part in determining his effects, can only wonder that this absurd fable, which was never heard of till a century after the death of Correggio, and then was probably only advanced by way of hypothesis, should have been so widely circulated, and should even have found acceptance among artists!

His true aids in resolving the intricate problems of movement were unquestionably his own faculties of retention and induction. Every such problem presented itself to his inner vision in a concrete form, as if some Titan were holding up the nude figures before him with a colossal hand, or hurling them into space to enable him to surprise their attitudes. Here, as Vasari says, he showed himself "a wonderful deviser of all sorts of difficulties."[4]

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[1] *Microcosmo*, p. 275.

[2] Mengs, ii. pp. 140, 160. Tiraboschi, pp. 246, 319. Pungileoni, i. pp. 157, 171–73, 222, etc.

[3] Ratti, pp. 71–72.

[4] *Vite*, iv. p. 111.

The artist who idealises, basing his idealisation on truth, is what we mean by a genius. In nature, there are forms and sounds which the mind of man grasps and retains with varying intensity. Some see and feel with the senses alone, and have no true comprehension of the images that present themselves. Others have a certain comprehension, but forget easily; others again, though they may not forget, do not readily evoke the images that lie dormant in their souls when they labour to reproduce them. It is only the highest order of minds that perceive and retain with equal readiness. All they see penetrates by their senses to their souls, and lingers there in clear and definite form, ready to spring forth at the call of the artificer. By such minds, forms are not directly reproduced in words, nor by the brush, nor by musical notes, as a photographic camera or a phonograph might reproduce them, or, indeed, as modern art, intent on the lay-figure, not unfrequently does. Images sink deeply into their souls, and there, in ceaseless activity, in ceaseless modification, they accomplish their spiritual metamorphosis.

Criticism, we think, has hardly ever shown itself in a narrower or more unworthy form than in the theory of a certain commentator, who supposed that Dante observed natural phenomena, and made notes of them, in order to introduce them as similes or comparisons in the *Divine Comedy*.

Memories and images teemed in Dante's brain. His work was a constant evocation of all that life had poured into his heart. Beethoven wrote his marvellous Ninth Symphony after he had become deaf. Its notes were not suggested to him from without, they gushed from the well of harmony within. Galileo in his blindness, expounding new discoveries in natural laws, moved onward with unabated energy in the paths of heaven.

The triumph of Correggio's art lies in this, that the workings of his own psychologic personality informed the simplest themes with a noble poetry, and that by their means he arrived at the loftiest ideality.

Returning to the legend, we may ask what need our painter would have had of Begarelli's help, if, as the biographers who are responsible for the fable say, he himself was also a sculptor? But the confusion of ideas which led to this second statement is no more worthy of attention than Father Resta's assertion that Correggio worked as an architect.

Among certain of Correggio's devotees, indeed, there seems to have been a disinclination to allow that he was a painter only. They regretted that he had not the versatility of other great artists of the Renaissance, such as Leon Battista Alberti, Leonardo, and Michelangelo, who distinguished themselves in a variety of the arts and sciences. Correggio, who came from Nature's hands with the temperament of a great painter, followed his vocation with a single heart, allowing no extraneous influences to distract him from his unity of purpose.

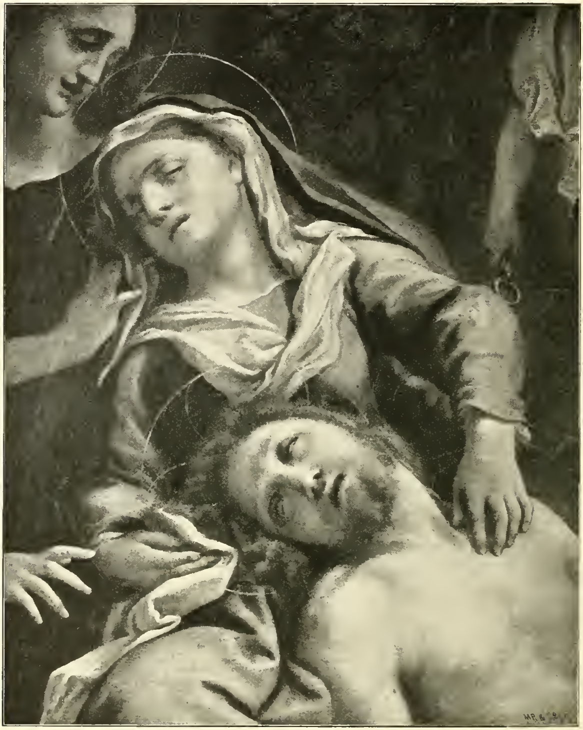
The predominant sentiment of his creations is joy. Nevertheless, he has expressed sorrow and austerity upon occasion as truthfully as any of his contemporaries, in the agonised contraction of the sorrowing Virgin's face, for instance, in the mournful resignation of Jesus, the ecstatic faith of St. Placidus, the inspiration of St. John the Evangelist. But he is more successful in the rendering of individual sorrow, than in depicting a complex tragedy. A head, a figure, perhaps even a small group, may bear the impress of suffering, but we rarely feel that the emotion is shared by those around them. Correggio could not linger over mournful subjects; his treatment of them is always summary. This is very noticeable in his *Descent from the Cross* and the *Martyrdom of St. Placidus*, which, though they have passages of great beauty, are among the least satisfactory of the master's works.

On the other hand, his own delighted emotion overflows when he can fittingly give himself up to the expression of triumphant life, of laughter, of rapture!

Michelangelo, always grandiose and disdainful, seldom smiled himself, and seldom created a smiling face. When his statue of Julius II. was first displayed, it was asked whether he had intended to represent the Pope in the act of blessing or of cursing. Lofty and generous, he was saddened by scorn of the ignoble conflicts which rent Italy asunder, and finally destroyed her liberty, leading at last to the solemn consecration of her slavery by the coronation of Charles V. He was the artist of the grave and the sublime.

[1] See Mengs, ii. p. 140. Tiraboschi, vi. p. 245. Pungileoni, i. p. 177; ii. pp. 196, 206, etc.

Raphael touched the classic dignity of his forms with the mingled sweetness and melancholy of his own angelic character. His Madonnas often seem to gaze at the Child with infinite sadness, as if presaging the mournful end, and agitated by the vision of Calvary.



THE VIRGIN AND DEAD CHRIST, BY CORREGGIO.

Fragment from the Pietà in the Parma Gallery.

Leonardo, the darling of Nature, showed a deeper and more varied range of feeling. To him was it first given to "portray the joy of spiritual bliss, the intimate beauty of the soul." His heart and mind brooded on every problem of art and science, eager to embrace all knowledge. He designed buildings, invented machines, studied the operations of water and of light, the structure of plants, the habits of animals, the anatomy of the human body. He sought the beautiful in all things, and strove to reproduce it with the perfection of technical mastery. A great artist, he divined and resolved an infinity of scientific problems, "the poet and the prophet of æsthetics and of knowledge." The very universality of his genius prevented the concentration of his powers, and he died, leaving a few pictures of the highest psychological and technical beauty, in which, nevertheless, we miss that variety of attitude, and that full development of human expression achieved by Correggio.

By the latter, joyful emotion is rendered with so much charm, completeness, and spontaneity that it communicates itself as if by magic to the spectator. This faculty of the painter's was noted so long ago as the sixteenth century. Vasari, Annibale Carracci, and Guido Reni declared that Correggio's *putti* breathe, live, and laugh with such grace and truth that we are compelled to laugh with them.

The innumerable cherubs, genii, and children scattered throughout his works are the result of his delight in the pictorial expression of grace and happiness. No other painter has succeeded in rendering these little creatures with such truth of form and expression, with such a knowledge of their naïve simplicity and pretty grotesqueness of pose, although, after his time, the palaces and churches of half Europe were invaded by laughing infant hordes. John Addington Symonds writes as follows of the *putti* in the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista: "Correggio has sprinkled them lavishly like living flowers about his cloudland, because he could not sustain a grave and solemn strain of music, but was forced by his temperament to overlay the melody with roulades. Gazing at these frescoes, the thought came to me that Correggio was like a man listening to sweetest flute-playing, and translating phrase after phrase as they passed through his fancy into laughing faces, breezy tresses, and rolling mists. Sometimes a grander cadence reached his ear; and then St. Peter with the keys, or St. Augustine of the mighty brow, or the inspired eyes of St. John, took form beneath his pencil. But the light airs returned, and rose and lily bloomed again for him among the clouds."[1]

We have already noted how this unbridled expression of warm, living, intoxicating joy betrayed him occasionally into that bewildering multiplication of figures in violent motion which characterises his frescoes in the cathedral. But even here we must accept this as a manifestation of subjective impression, and it were unjust to reproach Correggio for having satisfied his own spiritual needs and expressed his own technical mastery. Michelangelo was guilty of exaggeration in his treatment of anatomical forms, because he had become an expert in such treatment, and was impelled to a manifestation of his power. In Correggio's art, movement played the same part as did modelling in that of Buonarroti. He could not even refrain from an excessive application of it in the *chiaroscuri* which simulated statuary, thus depriving them of a proper "sculpturesque immobility."

Correggio's happiest gift lay in his power of rendering grace and sweetness without over-passing the exact point where such grace and sweetness degenerate into an insipid elegance. The robust and healthy structure of his figures saved him from this pitfall; the vigorous painters of the Bolognese school showed their appreciation of this when they refused to allow a comparison between Parmigianino and Correggio, declaring that the former had diverged too widely from his master, by exaggerating his grace and "impairing his purity of attitude and propriety of pose."

The introduction of the same little genii in his sacred and profane subjects, the expression of happy enjoyment which characterises them in both, and the identity of their pictorial treatment in all his works, has been a frequent theme for censure among critics of Correggio's art. He has been reproached with having failed to emphasise the distinction between the frail gods of antiquity and the saints of the new dispensation, and to have made the joy of life a characteristic of both.

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[1] *Sketches in Italy*, p. 154. Leipzig, 1883.

The confusion of terms, and the inherent weakness of the argument, are alike obvious.

It is true that Correggio's saints display little depth and fervour of religious sentiment. Even in those early works, which seem still to exhale the lingering perfume of fifteenth-century feeling, we find few traces of the ascetic and contemplative spirit.

The heads of St. Placidus and St. Flavia may, perhaps, be quoted as exceptions to this rule; yet even the dramatic figures of the fainting Virgin, the dead Christ, and certain others, awaken feelings of sympathy and pity for human suffering, rather than a sense of adoring veneration. But we must not hold Correggio solely responsible for a defect, or rather, for a sentiment, characteristic of the art of his age, which had become sensuous and worldly, a result due in a great measure to its advance in technical mastery. He undoubtedly showed a greater sympathy with "mundane joy" than other artists; but he was by no means guilty of a scandalous innovation in art! The severe and lofty ideality of Michelangelo and Raphael, the solemn grandeur of Titian and Tintoretto, when opposed to the airy simplicity, the ingenuous naturalism of Correggio, seem to convict the latter of an excessive humanisation of his themes, whereas all the artistic forces of his age combined to materialise Christianity. Nevertheless, if Correggio, in his catholic choice of subjects, shows less susceptibility even than the majority of his contemporaries to Christian sentiment, it cannot truthfully be laid to his charge that he showed no sense of appropriate expression, and that his Virgins are scarcely distinguishable from his nymphs. There is nothing in common between the chaste smile of his *St. Jerome Madonna* and the sensual satisfaction of his *Danäe*, between the gentle weariness of the *Zingarella* and the voluptuous slumber of the *Antiope*. The difference is sharply defined, denied though it may be by those who turn from contemplation of his intoxicated pagan divinities to his Madonnas, seeking in the latter, not the sweet and tender mother, but the mystic and exalted creature,[1] and raising the unprofitable question of the moral functions of art.

Art is, above all things, form; the sensuality which is made a reproach to certain painters, and the spirituality for which others are praised, are in many cases merely the result of pictorial type and technique. What innumerable pæans have been raised to the pure and mystic sentiment of the Pre-Raphaelites! It was long before it was admitted that this sentiment was largely due to the forms and colour of Giotto and his disciples.

Unable as yet to render the varied movements of the human body with that ease and mastery displayed by the great painters of the Renaissance, infant art was compelled by its inexperience to preserve an ideal calm in the rendering of figures, and to give an expression of religious intentness to its so-called "choral masses."

To later artists, from Masaccio onwards, the portrayal of two precisely similar figures would have appeared an evidence of inferior ability and poverty of imagination. Giotto and his scholars, on the other hand, did not hesitate to represent some hundred persons all turned in the same direction, and with arms extended or laid together in the same manner. Their draperies do not follow the lines of the body, and hence it seems as if there were no limbs concealed beneath the folds. This gives their figures an unearthly appearance, as if they had alighted for a moment, pausing in some aerial flight, and ready to mount again at the first sign from heaven.

Their almond eyes, which have no transparency, no luminous gleam to indicate lustre and convexity, seem to be mirrors of profound abstraction, in which faith has quenched all traces of human desire, while the pallor of the carnations, which results from glazes laid on over a green ground, seems to hint at suffering and self-denial, rigorous fasts, long nights spent in prayer and meditation.

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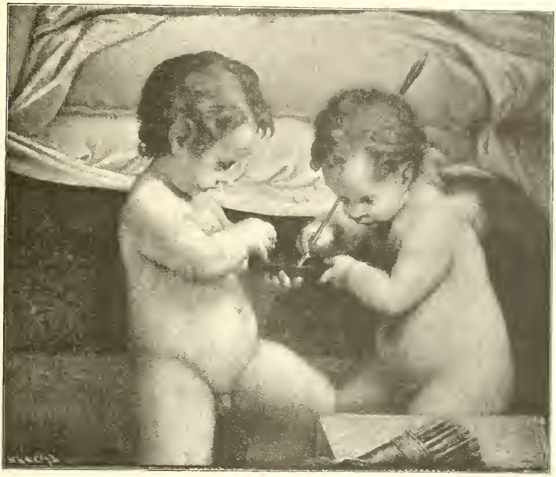
[1] "Term by the eternal counsel pre-ordained."

If therefore the art of the fourteenth century appeared to be mystical in its tendencies, because of the imperfect means of expression at its command, it is only natural that the art which had obtained an absolute mastery of form and expression should seem worldly and material.

No figure created by an artist of the Renaissance was likely to be accepted as a miraculous image by the populace. Byzantines and fourteenth-century effigies were readily accounted of supernatural origin by the mass of the devout. Their very ugliness and want of objective truth were their best recommendations. They seemed the more marvellous to the credulous the more they diverged from reality, from the normal types of men and women. Many perceive super-



AMORINI SHARPENING THEIR ARROWS, BY CORREGGIO.

Fragment from the Danaë in the Borghese Gallery, Rome.

human qualities where humanity is lacking, and discern the divine in the unnatural.

Not one of the fair and blooming Madonnas of the Renaissance, with their sweet and smiling humanity, least of all those painted by Correggio, received a tithe of the devout gifts and prayers lavished on some dry, angular Byzantine figure, or some pallid and sleepy Virgin of the fourteenth century.

How indeed is it to be supposed that such creations as the *Madonna della Scodella*, or the *Madonna with St. George*, should awaken that sense of melancholy proper to spiritual peace? They are but fair and graceful women, loving mothers, caressing their children, and smiling at their gambols, full of life and health and joy. Their faces bear no traces of suffering and privation; they glow, as Vasari says, as if *the brush had laid on living flesh.* Artists will worship their beauty, but just as he is untouched by the sight of young and loving womanhood, the ascetic remains cold before these pictures, which recall some familiar domestic scene.

This tendency, which is common to all the artists of the Renaissance, is more apparent perhaps in Correggio than in any other, owing to the geniality of his types, and the joyous character of his sentiment and technique; but his art, as was inevitable, reflected the impressions and responded to the demands of the age in which he lived, working out its natural and logical development. We think it is time to abandon once for all the idea of art as one of the various manifestations of free will, due entirely to personal initiative; rather ought we to look upon it as an involuntary growth or blossom of the human mind, which, like the earth itself, has its appointed seasons.

The study of forms and pictorial types should precede that of sentiment, to enable us to judge how far the latter is an emanation from the former, a spontaneous result which the artist has produced without conscious effort.

Correggio's facial type, his drawing, the magic of his colour, humanised his sacred subjects on the one hand, while, on the other, they gave a spirituality to the grossness of pagan themes.

It must be admitted that as compared with Correggio's, Titian's pagan nudities are almost vulgar in their abundant development and vigorous warmth of colour.

Correggio, on the other hand, while expressing all the intoxication of love and pleasure in the smiles and movements of his figures, is yet able to suggest a sensuality without corruption, dematerialised, so to speak. The youthful sweetness of their faces, the ingenuous grace of their attitudes, the virginal litheness of their figures, the soft and delicate tones of their carnations, make us accept his Io, his Danäe, his Leda, as innocent maidens, surprised into a first manifestation of frailty.

Burckhardt declares that as regards mere technique, Correggio may be taken to represent the last and highest development of Italian painting.

The process in which his mastery is most complete is the treatment of chiaroscuro, the difficulties of which engrossed so many artists of the sixteenth century, without any very marked result save in the cases of Leonardo and Giorgione. Leonardo, in the gradation of his tones, a gradation almost imperceptible owing to their marvellous fusion, was in danger of overlooking the very essence of painting ; according to him, decision of outline was no longer necessary for the modelling of surfaces in relief. He too attempted to render the play of reflected light, but it was reserved to Correggio to introduce chiaroscuro even in his shadows, thus achieving a transparency of effect which is wanting in the works of his great predecessors, as in those of his subsequent imitators. After him, strong contrasts of light and shade came suddenly into vogue, and his successors lost the secret of that exquisite truth of tones in shadow which he had achieved. With what delicate gradations he often obtained his effects of relief may be seen if we examine some of the tints he used in shadow, tints which in the chromatic scale of other great artists (Leonardo and Raphael, for instance) only appear in the illuminated passages. Yet it is to this very half-light that the superficial grace of the human body is mainly due.[1]

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[1] To judge of the degree of perfection attained by Correggio in the treatment of penumbra and reflections, the visitor to the Dresden Gallery should compare the

Thanks to his masterly use of chiaroscuro in all its gradations, and his avoidance of violent contrasts of light and shadow, he achieved the most extraordinary force of colour by successive glazings. Light was thus diffused among the figures and objects he painted, penetrating to the subordinate parts of the composition, and producing so novel and perfect an illusion that all the forms he represented seem actually to move in space.

Early biographers and writers of treatises, though they overlook these special qualities, are loud in their praises of his colour and his use of the brush. Vasari first asserted that "no one excelled him in laying on colour, and no artist painted with greater beauty and relief; such was the mellow quality of his flesh-tones, and the grace with which he finished his works." Lomazzo, in a phrase which greatly impressed Domenichino, said he who wished to possess two pictures of the highest perfection should have had an Adam drawn by Michelangelo and painted by Titian, and an Eve drawn by Raphael and painted by Correggio. He adds that these pictures would have been the finest ever known in the world.[1] The opinion is debatable, but it proves that towards the close of the sixteenth century our painter was accounted the most superb of colourists. Shortly afterwards, Baldinucci speaks of his tints as marvellous, melting, *laid on as if with vapour*.[2] Nor has there been occasion to modify this opinion in any successive school of criticism.

Some of Correggio's characteristics of style reappear in the works of other artists of Upper Italy. Lanzi very justly remarked that he had certain affinities with Giorgione,[3] who, by the inevitable law of artistic evolution, was following in the steps of Leonardo. But in sentiment and colour, Correggio was more closely allied to Lorenzo Lotto. It has been suggested that Lotto was first a pupil of Leonardo, and

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Madonna with St. George and the *Madonna di San Sisto*, Raphael's most perfect work, and one of the most marvellous pictures in the world in ideality and execution. The shadows on the carnations, especially in the hands and feet of Raphael's Virgin, seem opaque and almost sooty in comparison with those of Correggio's flesh-tints.

[1] *Idea del tempio della pittura*, chap. xviii. Bottari, ii. p. 393.

[2] Bottari, ii. p. 521.

[3] *Op. et loc. cit.*

that he afterwards imitated Correggio. But here again we think the affinities are merely accidental, or, to be more exact, that they were the independent results of social conditions and of the development of artistic expression.[1] Morelli adds that it was Correggio's enviable lot to draw from the chords first struck by Leonardo, Giorgione, and Lorenzo Lotto the sweetest and most complete harmony.[2]

The sparkling effect of his lights gave rise to all sorts of odd suspicions among the turbid colourists of the *baroque* period, as to the supposed preparation of the panels on which he painted. A variety of legends bearing on his technical methods were current in the eighteenth century. Richardson, among others, declared that Correggio painted on a gold ground,[3] and an artist admitted to Lanzi that he believed "Correggio habitually exposed his pictures to the heat of the fire, or to the sun, in order to blend his colours well together and diffuse them equally, which process had given them the appearance of having been melted together, rather than laid on with the brush."

The ground on which Correggio painted was compounded, as a fact, of *gesso*, boiled oil, and varnish, and in no wise differed from that in common use among other careful masters of his time. Nor was there anything unusual in the plaster preparation on which he painted his frescoes. His use of the brush was marvellously delicate, both in his great works and in small pictures. His tones were obtained by building up successive layers of colour, or glazes, which enabled him to correct his drawing as he painted. His aversion to everything which tended to make his colour dense and opaque was so strong, that he preferred to leave the traces of corrections perfectly apparent, as we notice in the uplifted finger of Christ's right hand in the *Descent*

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[1] Bernard Berenson, *Lorenzo Lotto*, p. 325. London, 1895.

[2] *Italian Painters*, ii. p. 153.

[3] Pungileoni, i. p. 20; ii. p. 35. Certain argentine reflections in his pictures suggested to impressionable critics the use of the term *sidereal* to describe Correggio's light. Others found the phrase too vague, and endeavoured to define the effect more closely by christening it *crepuscular*. The two adjectives were well received, and moved the souls of the æsthetes who find in *impressions* a fertile field for chatter of this class.

from the Cross, and in the shortened finger of St. Jerome's left hand.

A painter before all things, it is evident that he not only corrected with his brush, but that he made a free use of it in drawing. Innumerable details in his pictures, more especially the extremities, are rendered entirely by gradations of colour, and show no trace of definite outline. This method, a most dangerous one in the hands of a mediocre artist, produced the most mellow and enchanting results under the direction of his genius. Scannelli is impatient of Vasari's habit of dilating on minutiæ, but there is reason in the biographer's thrice-repeated admiration of the manner in which Correggio painted hair: "so beautiful in colour, and so exquisitely rendered, thread by thread, that nothing better can be seen," and "a perfect lesson in the art of treating it." Thus says the biographer, while in the Proem to the third part of his *Lives*, he had already written: "It would be impossible to describe the exquisite vivacity of his works, and the manner in which he treated hair thread by thread, not in the elaborate manner of his predecessors, which was dry, laborious, and metallic, but with a feathery softness, noting the strands, and rendering them with such facility that they seemed to be of gold, and more beautiful than real tresses, which could not compare with them for colour."[1] But we need say no more. To dwell any longer on Correggio's characteristics would be only to repeat much that has already been noted in describing his various pictures, and would be of little service to the reader, familiar, no doubt, with some of his works, and further able to judge of them to some extent from the reproductions in this volume.

We have endeavoured not to allow ourselves to be carried away by love of our subject, scrupulously recording all that has been said both for and against Correggio, though the critic is often tempted to become the panegyrist before the works of a genius so individual as to justify the well-known phrase, "the Correggiosity of Correggio."

Even those least disposed to admire his forms, the rigid devotees of Florentine dignity and correctness, cannot but admit the fascination that breathes from a thousand lovely creations, moving and smiling in the effulgent light of morning and spring.

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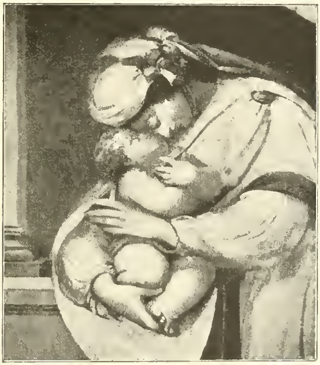
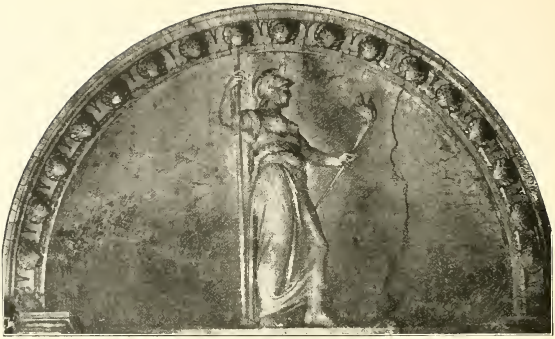
[1] Vol. iv. pp. 12, 115, 119.

This is the "demoniac power," as Goethe calls it, which informs the work of the great creative genius. The magic of form, the intoxication of movement and sentiment, awaken an emotion against which reason and criticism are alike powerless. All defects are forgotten, and, filled with wondering admiration, we recognise the artist's greatness in our own sense of delighted enjoyment.



MADONNA AND CHILD, BY [illegible]

In the Naples Museum.

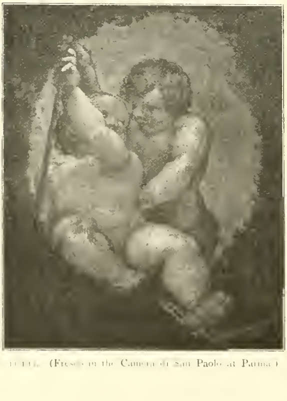


MINERVA. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

CHAPTER XVI

CORREGGIO'S PUPILS AND IMITATORS

FRANCESCO MARIA RONDANI—MICHELANGELO ANSELMI—PARMIGIANINO—GIROLAMO MAZZOLA-BEDOLI—GIORGIO GANDINO DEL GRANO—BERNARDINO GATTI, CALLED "IL SOIARO"—LELIO ORSI OF NOVELLARA—GIOVANNI GIAROLA—POMPONIO ALLEGRI—ADMIRERS AND IMITATORS—THE CARRACCI—CORREGGIO'S FAME.



PUTTO. (Fresco in the Camera di San Paolo at Parma.)

IN our study of Correggio we have tried to paint the society by which he was surrounded, and the events of which he was a witness. But so far we have only casually mentioned his pupils, and those artists who were most strongly influenced by him.

Allegri's sojourn in Parma was the immediate cause of an artistic evolution, which has scarcely been appreciated at its true importance. A band of enthusiastic young men followed in his footsteps, producing works of considerable merit, which sufficiently refute the assertion that Correggio founded no school.

We have followed the history of painting in Parma down to about the year 1520. We have seen that it was first a modest offshoot of the school of Cremona, and that Venetian and Bolognese influences invested it with a certain beauty and animation, under the impulse of which it produced works not wanting in dignity and earnestness, but at the same time of a purely imitative character.

Early art in Parma was, in fact, no product of indigenous taste and knowledge, but an importation of ideas and formulæ, derived not merely from without the city, but from without the territory in which it lay.

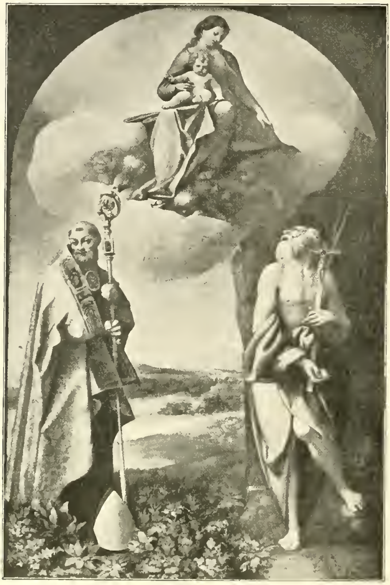
We have shown what must have been the impression produced by the works of the young artist of twenty-four from Correggio, who painted the Abbess Giovanna's chamber. Temperelli, Araldi, and the elder Mazzoli undertook no more great works, and their disciples, even such as were connected with them by ties of kinship, deserted them, and gave themselves up to contemplation of the radiant creations of the new genius.

From about 1518 several young Parmese artists had studied in the old schools, modestly satisfied with the results if they succeeded in adding a little beauty to the forms, a little animation to the colour, of their masters. Girolamo Mazzola-Bedoli, Giorgio Gandino del Grano, Francesco Maria Rondani, Parmigianino, and others, all more or less of the same age as Antonio, with one accord abandoned their former teachers to enrol themselves as his disciples, with the earnest enthusiasm of youth and faith. *Incipit vita nova.*

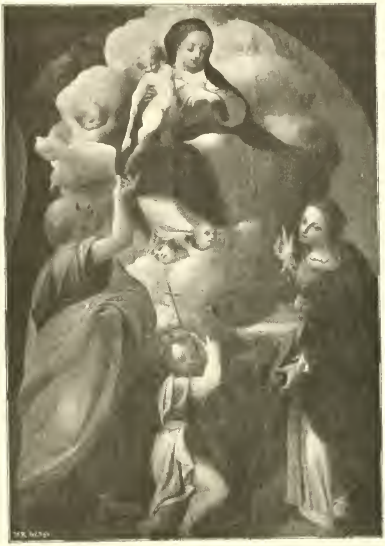
None of these, with the exception of Francesco Mazzola, achieved any great distinction. Their works are to be met with in most of the European galleries, either pompously ascribed to Allegri or Parmigianino, or, more cautiously, to the school of Parma.

Hence their history is almost unknown; the sketches of their lives hitherto given teem with mistakes and inaccuracies, which we will endeavour briefly to correct by the help of contemporary documents.

We have seen that Rondani was the one who seems to have been most closely connected with the master, acting as his assistant in several of his works. He was born at Parma in 1490, and was therefore several years older than Correggio. It has been asserted, on what evidence we know not, that he died in 1548. He was certainly living at the end of November of that year. He is first mentioned, jointly with his brothers, in a will dated 1504; he then appears as witness to a deed of 1512, but he is not described as master nor as painter. He afterwards worked on the decorations at Torchiara, and in San Giovanni Evangelista, where he painted the frieze designed by Correggio. In 1522 he was commissioned by the Chapter of the cathedral to decorate a portion of the transept, but he never carried out this work. Two years later he painted several scutcheons in the governor's palace. He then worked for the Benedictines, decorating the cloister of the novices with scenes from the life of their patron saint; he also painted some frescoes in the refectory, and decorated the soffits of one of the chapels of their


MADONNA ENTHRONED WITH ST. AUGUSTINE AND ST. JEROME, BY RONDANI
In the Parma Gallery

church. Between 1527 and 1531 he frescoed the walls of the Centoni chapel in the cathedral; he subsequently worked in the church of Sant' Alessandro, and collaborated with Anselmi in the decorations of the vault of the Oratorio della Concezione in San Francesco. Very few of his easel pictures have survived. Some of these he signed with his name, on others he painted the three swallows of his coat of arms. He followed Correggio's manner as closely as he could, but his drawing is often coarse, and his execution slovenly. His works have, however, a certain vivacity of colour and breadth of composition, and in his landscape backgrounds he shows a talent certainly above the average.[1] He was, however, greatly inferior, not only to his master, but to Michelangelo Anselmi, who had had the advantage of an early training in the Tuscan school. (*See* illustration on p. 367.)



MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH SAINTS [illegible]

In the Naples Museum.

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[1] The materials for the notices of artists given in this chapter are mainly taken from the valuable unpublished extracts from contemporary documents made by E. Scarabelli-Zunti (now in the Royal Museum of Parma), to which we have before referred. See also Romualdo Baistrocchi, *Notizie dei pittori che lavorarono in Parma*, MS., and Bertoluzzi, *Descrizione della cappella della Concezione*, MS. (*Miscellanea*, no. 1106, in the Palatine Library, Parma).

Anselmi was born in 1491 at Lucca, where his father, a native of Parma, was living in exile. From Lucca he removed with his family to Siena, about 1500. At Siena he entered Sodoma's studio, remaining in the city after his father was permitted to return to Parma in 1505. There is a *Visitation* of little beauty at Siena, painted by him for the *Confraternità di Fonte Giusta*. In reference to his long sojourn in Siena, he was known as Michelangelo Senese. The first documents in which his name occurs are dated April, 1520. They speak of him as a citizen of Parma, and deal with a donation made to him by his uncle, Francesco Anselmi, and with the dowry of his bride, one Ippolita Gaibazzi. The influence of Correggio's genius is very apparent in his art. Among his first works at Parma were the arabesques on the vaulting of the nave in San Giovanni Evangelista, executed, as we have already seen, under Correggio's direction. From this time forward he worked indefatigably; nearly all the principal churches of Parma contain pictures or frescoes by him, and there are examples of his work in many Italian and foreign galleries. In 1538-39 he was at Busseto, where he decorated the Cappella della Concezione of the principal church with frescoes. Gaye published a petition addressed by him to the Signoria of Siena in 1544, from which it appears that he was known by the nickname of *Scalabrino* (mad-cap). It has been suggested that the petitioner was a namesake, but it seems not improbable that he should have returned to try his luck in the place where his youth had been spent. In the document he calls himself Michelangelo, *alias Scalabrino*. It is further to be noted that in the sequence of Parmesan documents in which he is mentioned, there is a gap between 1542 and 1546. He returned to Parma, and died there in 1554. He was one of the most gifted of Correggio's pupils, perhaps, indeed, the most gifted. His works have a pleasing animation; the colour is warm and luminous, the drawing careful and refined. Sometimes, however, there is an appearance of exaggerated movement and contortion in his figures, and in the multitudinous folds of their complicated draperies.[1] (*See* illustration on p. 347.)

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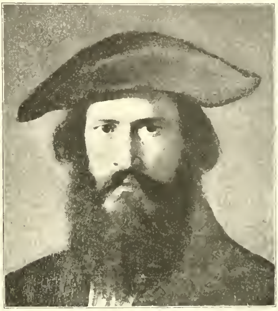
[1] Baistrocchi and Bertoluzzi, documents in the Palatine Library, already quoted. G. Gaye, *Carteggio inedito d' artisti dei secoli*, xiv. xv. e xvi., ii. p. 325. Florence, 1839. Meyer, *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon*, ii. p. 86. Leipzig, 1870.

These two painters, Rondani and Anselmi, were the only ones among his pupils whom Correggio employed as his assistants, and to whom he confided the minor details of his works.

Among the many others who formed their style under his influence, the most famous is Francesco Mazzola, called Parmigianino, born in Parma, January, 1503. His father, Filippo, died when he was only two years old, and he afterwards learnt the elements of drawing and painting in the studio of his uncles, Pier Ilario and Michele Mazzola. He may therefore be quoted as one of the innumerable examples of "artistic heredity." His natural aptitudes were exceptional, and at the age of sixteen he painted a *Baptism of Christ*, which has disappeared. Just at this critical juncture, Allegri appeared in Parma, and determined the future course of the youthful prodigy. Parmigianino's talent has, however, a personal note which makes it impossible to consider him merely as the pupil or imitator of Correggio. His frescoes on the soffits in San Giovanni Evangelista, some of which are still in admirable condition, date from 1522, and were painted immediately after his return from Viadana, whither his parents had sent him that he might be safe from those perils of war we have described. He engaged to paint one of the bays of the cathedral; but as the preliminaries of this undertaking were not carried out with sufficient expedition by the churchwardens, his impatience to go to Rome and see the works of Raphael and Michelangelo, determined him to resign the commission. He left Parma in 1523, carrying with him samples of his works to submit to Clement VII., who had just been elected Pope. He remained some years in Rome, where he was largely employed and patronised. He is said to have been extremely handsome, and

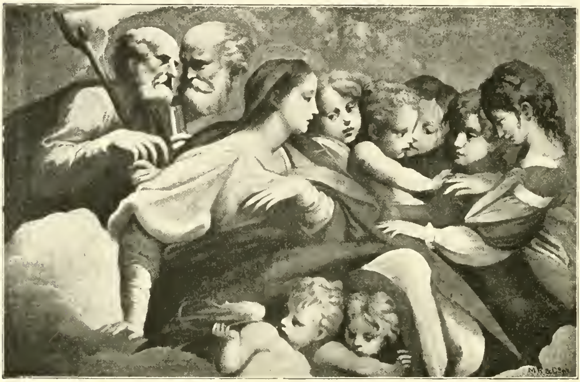


PORTRAIT OF [illegible] BY [illegible]

In the Uffizi Gallery

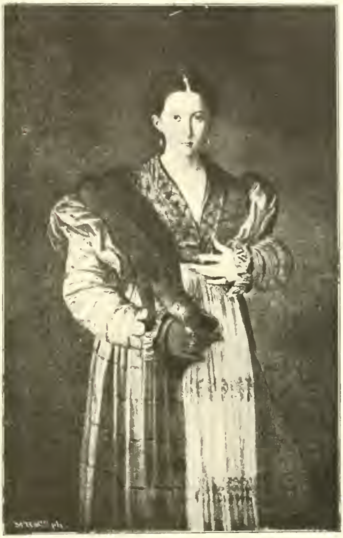
there is a tradition that he found favour with the famous courtesan, Antea.

The perils of the terrible sack in 1527 forced him to take his departure. Vasari relates that he barely escaped with his life, "inasmuch as, at the beginning of the sack, he was so intent on his work, that when the soldiers began to enter the houses, and some Germans were already in his own, he was not distracted by the tumult; when, however, the soldiers came upon him, and saw him painting, they were so astonished at his work, that, like good fellows as they must have been, they allowed him to continue it."



MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE, BY PARMIGIANINO.
In the Parma Gallery.

On his way back, he halted at Bologna, where he painted several pictures. After the coronation of Charles V., whose portrait he painted, he returned to Parma. In 1531 he undertook to decorate the vault of the presbytery and of the apse, and the dome of the Steccata; but he worked slowly and fitfully, distracted by his impatient temper, and by his absorption in the mysteries of alchemy. Hence arose many disputes between the artist and the guardians of the church. Piqued and angry, he at last left Parma in dudgeon. It was then that he became the guest of Sanvitale at the Castle of Fontanellato, where he painted the vault of a small room with scenes from the legend of Diana and Actæon. In 1535 he renewed his agreement for the decorations in the Steccata, and began to work there. But fresh causes of quarrel soon arose, and neither concessions, nor the friendly interposition of outsiders, availed to recall him to a sense of his obligations. He therefore painted only a few figures of the great work he had undertaken—Moses, Aaron, Adam, Eve, and the Wise Virgins. Furious at the threats of the wardens, and perhaps doubtful of his own ability to carry out a vast scheme of decoration which might bear comparison with the two cupolas painted by Correggio, he retired, almost as a fugitive, to Casalmaggiore, where he died after a brief illness at the early age of thirty-seven.[1]



PORTRAIT OF THE WIFE OF PARMIGIANINO

In the Naples Museum

He has been justly accused of painting figures of abnormal length, and of an affected and effeminate type. Albani described him as "intent on the manufacture of nymphs." It is, however, impossible to deny his

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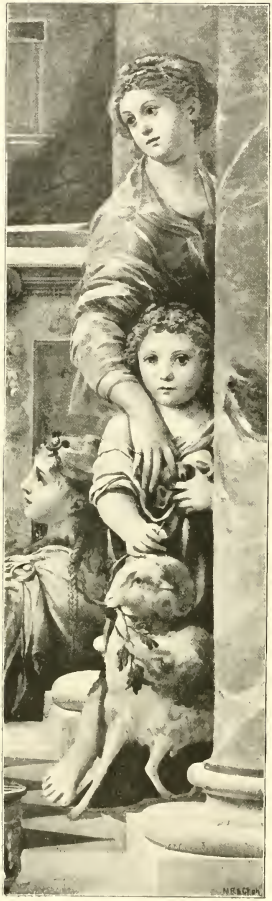
[1] Vasari, v. p. 217 *et seq.* Baistrocchi, *Notizie dei pittori.* Affò, *Vita del graziosissimo pittore Francesco Mazzola, detto il Parmigianino.* Parma, 1784. *Sketches of the Lives of Correggio and Parmigiano,* p. 221 *et seq.* London, 1823. Luigi Sanvitale, *Memorie intorno alla Rocca di Fontanellato.* Parma, 1857. A. Ronchini, *La Steccata di Parma, op. cit.* E. Faelli, *Bibliografia mazzoliana.* Parma, 1884.



MOTHERS PRESENTING OFFERINGS.
Fragment from the Conception, by Girolamo Mazzola-Bedoli.
In the Parma Gallery

rare ability as a draughtsman, which Paolo Veronese eulogised, his pleasing choice of types, and the cheerful vivacity of his colour. His draperies, which he copied from antique models, are airy and graceful. His numerous portraits are superb, full at once of dignity and of nature. (*See* illustration on p. 348.)

Girolamo Bedoli, whose family came from Bedulla, in the commune of Viadana, married Caterina Elena, daughter of Pier Ilario Mazzola, in 1529. By this union he entered into such close relations with the Mazzola family, working for and with them, that he adopted their surname as a prefix to his own. A large number of pictures by this excellent and prolific painter are to be found in Parma, and in other cities, both in Italy and abroad. They are very often ascribed to Parmigianino or his school. Parma, however, owns the majority of his works in oil and fresco. Examples may be seen in nearly all the principal churches, in private houses, and in the public gallery. He died in 1569, aged about seventy.[1]

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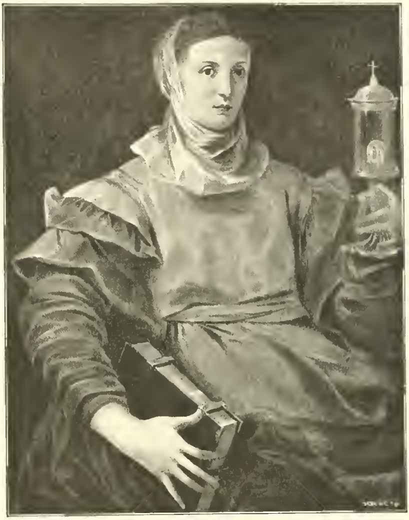
[1] Vasari, v. pp. 235–241. Ronchini, *Due quadri di Girolamo Mazzola* (*Atti e memorie della R. Deput. di storia patria per l'Emilia*, new series, vii. part i. Modena, 1881).

He was a careful imitator of Correggio and Parmigianino, and though their inferior, he shows a strain of pleasing originality in his composition, his types, and, above all, in his colour. Comparing him with Parmigianino, we see him to have been a less accomplished draughtsman; but on the other hand, he is less mannered and artificial. One curious feature of his works is the evident derivation of some of his figures from statues by Antonio Begarelli. His colour is soft and transparent, and at times weak, owing to his over-fondness for those pale opalescent tints which recall the changeful surface of mother-of-pearl.

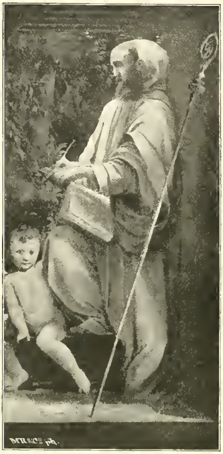


ST. CLARA, BY GIROLAMO MAZZOLA-BEDOLI

In the Naples Museum

His masterpiece is the *Conception*, a picture which fairly ranks as one of the best works of the Parmesan and Emilian schools in the first part of the sixteenth century. The influence of Correggio manifests itself more especially in the transparent colour, the half-tones and shadows of which are exquisitely light and delicate. The scrupulous accuracy of the outlines, the somewhat excessive length of the figures, and the convolutions of the draperies, recall Parmigianino. Some of the figures of youthful angels betray reminiscences of the terra-cottas modelled by

Begarelli for the Benedictines of San Giovanni Evangelista. The general effect is broad and coherent, in spite of the minute execution of details and the number of figures introduced ; but the picture has been most severely cleaned, an operation which has robbed it of much of its brilliance, and has, indeed, completely ruined it in parts. The noble beauty of the faces, especially of the female figures, is, however, but slightly impaired. (*See* illustration on p. 349.)



ST. ROBERT, ABBOT OF CHAISE-DIEU, BY GIROLAMO MAZZOLA-BEDOLI.

In the Parma Gallery.

Giorgio Gandino del Grano, born in Parma towards the close of the fifteenth century, died in his native city in 1538. Very little is known either of his life or his works. The latter are comparatively rare. He felt the influence of Correggio, but though an artist of considerable talent, he never approached his master in transparency of colour and sobriety of composition. His tints are somewhat hard and violent ; the folds of his draperies confused and tortuous. He had a tendency to over-crowd his compositions, as we see in the pictures by him in the Parma Gallery, and one in the Casa Scotti at Milan, the latter attributed to Correggio. The eye wanders over these works, seeking in vain for some reposeful space between the figures ; innumerable accessories fill up every available inch of ground. Certain traits in his pictures seem to indicate that he had been affected to some extent by the neighbouring school of Lombardy. In 1534, immediately after the death of Correggio, he was commissioned to continue the decoration of the cathedral, and paint the vault of the presbytery and the apse. But, as we have seen, he died shortly afterwards before he had begun his works, and his son was compelled to refund the 250 imperial *lire* paid him on account. (*See* illustration on p. 350.)

Many writers include among Correggio's pupils or followers in Parma Bernardino Gatti, called *Il Soiaro*, in reference to the trade of his father, a cooper. He was born at Cremona about 1500. When we consider that constant communication was kept up between Parma and Cremona; that *Il Soiaro* was the same age as Correggio; that his art is evidently based on that of the master; that he was employed by the officials for whom Correggio and Parmigianino had worked, we must admit that the arguments in support of the opinion of early writers are very strong. Indeed, if *Il Soiaro* did not make any sojourn in Parma till 1560, when he came to paint the frescoes of the Steccata, and if we must believe that he had never visited the city before, or at most had only passed through it, how are we to explain the evident reminiscences of Correggio's forms and colour in his works, and how account for the fact that his pictures and drawings have been freely ascribed to Correggio in the past, and are still occasionally so ascribed? *Il Soiaro* was an elderly man in 1560; he was about sixty years old, an age at which no artist adopts a new manner, or revolutionises his own, more especially an artist like Gatti, who had lived in Lombardy, and in contact with a painter such as Pordenone. He worked in his native city, at Pavia, at Piacenza, and at Parma, where he remained for some time, engaged on the frescoes in the Steccata and on various pictures. He died at an advanced age in 1575, and there is a tradition that during the last years of his life he painted with his left hand, his right being paralysed. His works, though distinctly inferior to those of Correggio, are not without a certain grace and sweetness, a certain beauty of colour, and transparency of chiaroscuro, which stamps them as emanations from the art of the latter.[1]

These were the artists whom historic evidences and probabilities combine to group round Correggio at Parma. But there must have been many others, whose names are no longer remembered; and others again, whom it is no longer possible to identify with any work, but who formed themselves by study of or contact with the master.

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[1] Vasari, vi. p. 494. G. Aglio, *Le pitture e le scolture della città di Cremona*, pp. 18, 27, 52, 155, 159, etc. F. Sacchi, *Notizie pittoriche cremonesi*. Cremona, 1872. B. Soresina Vidoni, *La pittura cremonese descritta*. Milan, 1824. Lanzi, *Storia pittorica*, ii. p. 319. Bassano, 1795-96.

Among the most curious and important works of Correggio's school in the Parma Gallery is a *Procession to Calvary.* Jesus, in a white robe, advances in the midst, bowed down by the weight of the cross. He gazes pitifully at the Virgin, who falls fainting into the arms of the Magdalen. In the foreground, a group of soldiers attack St. John, thrusting him violently aside, and forbidding his approach to Jesus, who, at the same time, is pushed away from him by a ruffian, who raises his arm to strike. Behind is a crowd of helmeted soldiers armed with lances, two of them on horseback. One of these, on a black horse, is in complete armour, and carries a standard. The other, whose back is turned to the spectator, rides a white horse, and points with outstretched hand to Golgotha. The sky is veiled in masses of white cloud.

This work was originally ascribed to Anselmi, and later, to Correggio himself. Da Erba declared it to be a juvenile essay of the latter, whereas Algarotti saw in it Allegri's "second manner," and believed it to have been painted at the time when the master abandoned his Mantegnesque style for a more individual method.[1] Such opinions could only have been advanced at a time when no very accurate idea of Correggio's successive phases had been formed. It is impossible to accept this picture as a work of the master. In spite of certain fine qualities of composition, and the luminous effect of the colour, it is very faulty in drawing, and has little grace, and little transparence in the shadows. Neither can we discover in it any of the distinctive characteristics of Anselmi. The brilliant eyes, the careful drawing of the extremities, which he generally represents in animated motion, as challenging difficulties he knows himself able to overcome, above all, the clear and delicate colour, and the complicated folds of drapery, are alike conspicuous by their absence.

The author of the picture is, as a fact, unknown. Was he one of the painters mentioned in documents of the period? Or has the work outlived the name of its creator? The same questions may be asked

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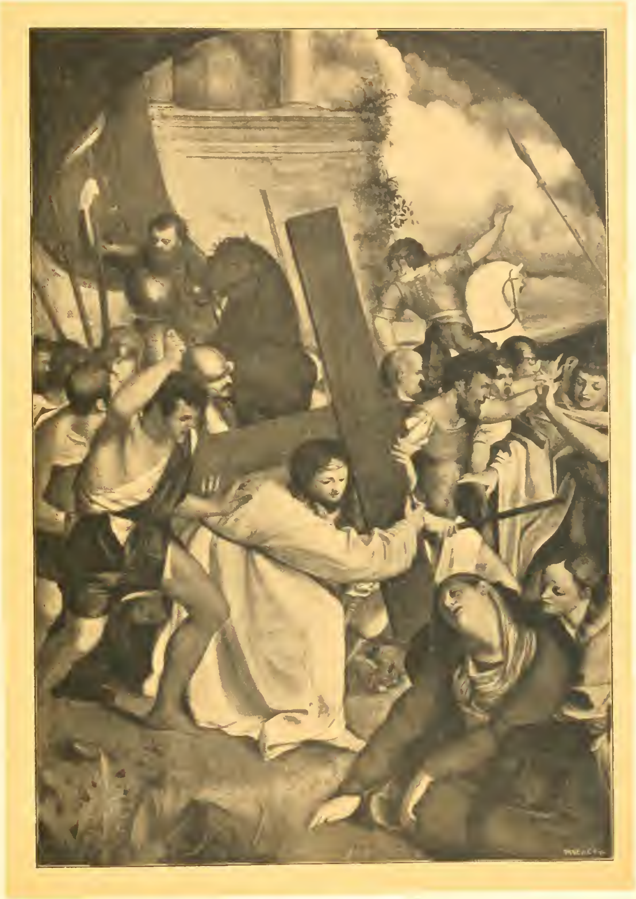
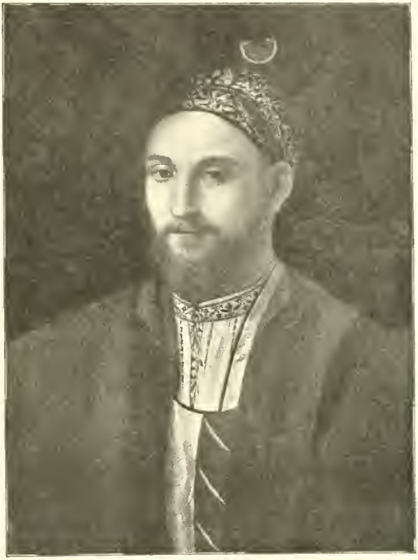
[1] Bottari, *Raccolta di lettere*, vii. p. 420.



THE PROCESSION TO CALVARY

(In the Parma Gallery)

of another picture in the gallery, the supposed portrait of Nicolò Maria Quirico Sanvitale, ascribed by Stanislao Campana and Paolo Toschi to Correggio, who, as we have seen, painted no portraits. Although it has something of the master's tone of colour, the tameness of the conception, and the treatment of the drapery are decisive as against its attribution to Allegri.


PORTRAIT OF NICOLÒ QUIRICO SANVITALE.
School of Correggio.
In the Parma Gallery.

To the list of scholars who admittedly worked under Correggio's influence in Parma, certain biographers have added a group of artists who are supposed to have been his pupils in his native city.

The short sojourns he made at Correggio between his long absences at Parma and elsewhere; the extreme improbability of his having burdened himself with pupils during the last three years of his life, when he was, most probably, already in feeble health, and busily engaged on the Duke of Mantua's numerous commissions, and the ages of the presumptive scholars, all tend to negative the hypothesis of these writers, though in some cases they take the form of definite assertion.

At the most, it may be possible to make exceptions in the cases of Lelio Orsi and Giovanni Giarola.[1] As regards these two, dates at least do not forbid the assumption. They may have come into contact with Correggio after 1530, though, as a fact, we find no mention of either until after his death.

That Antonio Bernieri, a good Correggese miniature painter, studied, or formed himself under Correggio, seems to us highly improbable. He was born in 1516, a fact which has been enough in itself to correct a long array of historical errors. Like Allegri, he is commonly described in documents as Antonio da Correggio, and but for this fortunate disparity in their ages, it would have been almost impossible to avoid a hopeless confusion of their identities.[2]

Finally, we must exclude from the number of his pupils one who has always headed the list hitherto, his son Pomponio. Born towards the end of 1521, he was little over twelve years old when his father died; a misfortune the more to be regretted in his case, inasmuch as Allegri would certainly have dissuaded him from the practice of art!

Pomponio lived at Correggio till 1550. In 1546 he was commissioned to decorate a chapel in the church of San Quirino. After 1550 we find him in Reggio. The documents which show him to have returned to Parma are all later than 1558. He seems to have received constant help and patronage, a result perhaps of the veneration felt for his parentage, or of pity for his poverty, for he soon dissipated his heritage. He painted the Cappella del Popolo in the cathedral (1560-62), and was employed on decorative works in honour of Alessandro Farnese's marriage with Maria of Portugal (1565), also on decorations for the funeral solemnities of the former in 1577, and of the latter in 1593, the last year in which we find any mention of him.[1]

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[1] For Orsi, see Tiraboschi, vi. p. 493. Pungileoni, ii. p. 212. H. Thode, *Lelio Orsi*, *op. cit.* F. Malaguzzi, *Alcune lettere di Lelio Orsi*, *Archivio storico dell' arte*, iv. p. 370. C. Malagoli, *Memorie storiche di L. Orsi*, *op. cit.* For Giarola, see Tiraboschi, vi. p. 431. Pungileoni, i. p. 276; ii. p. 272. Bigi, *Notizie di Antonio Allegri, di Antonio Bartolotti, e di altri pittori*, p. 79. F. Malaguzzi, *Notizie di artisti reggiani*, p. 39.

[2] Tiraboschi, vi. p. 327. Pungileoni, i. p. 276; ii. p. 271. Bigi, *op. cit.* p. 71. Meyer, *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon*, iii. p. 659.

He painted on other occasions for the cathedral, and for the churches of Santa Cecilia, San Vitale, San Francesco, etc. There is also a *Madonna and Child* by him over an altar on the left of the parish church of La Trinità. Of his mediocre art we need say little. In his works all his father's qualities are recognisable in a state of decay and exhaustion. The colour is dull and ashen, the drawing contemptible, the composition poor and feeble. Some faint echo of Correggio's smiling radiance of expression strikes the spectators in a face here and there, but this is all.

Reverence for his father did not secure tender treatment for him from all his contemporaries. The work he executed in collaboration with other artists of his own calibre in the church of San Bartolomeo at Busseto was openly and severely condemned by the Venetian painter, Pietro dal Pozzo, who advised the wardens not to pay the whole of the stipulated price, on the grounds that "there was not a single figure in the composition which showed any trace of contours, muscles, relief, or expression."[2]

It has been stated that with the gradual disappearance of these artists, who flourished at the same time with Correggio, in the same places, and were his disciples either directly or indirectly, the memory of the master and the admiration felt for his works also faded and died out. We must protest against the exaggeration of such statements. It is by no means true that Correggio was ever in danger of being forgotten, or that his works came to be held in very slight account.

The scanty number of writers who concerned themselves with him during the sixteenth century, as compared with the hundreds who made the other great artists of the Renaissance their theme, has caused a misapprehension as to the respect felt for him by the painters who flourished during the half century after his death.

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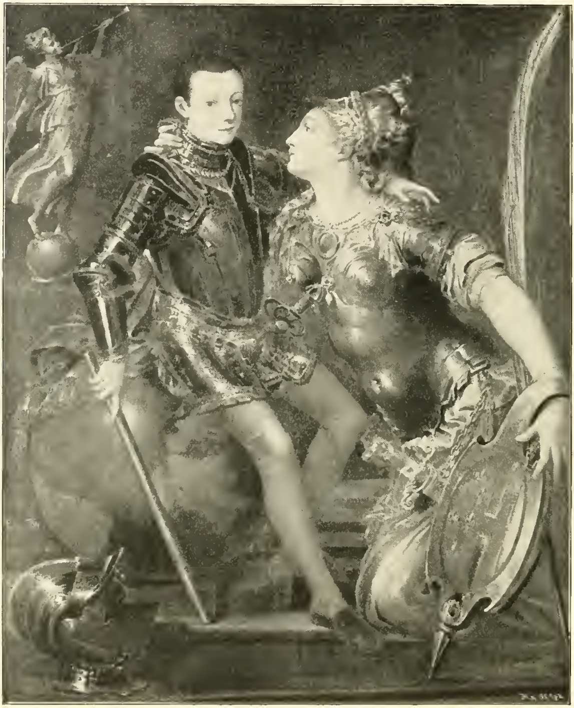
[1] Nicola Tacoli, *Memorie di Reggio di Lombardia*, iii. p. 495 *et seq.* Baistrocchi, *Notizie dei pittori.* Tiraboschi, vi. p. 290. Pungileoni, ii. p. 262 *et seq.* Bigi, p. 63. Meyer, *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon*, i. p. 481. *Correggio*, p. 261, etc.

[2] *Dichiarazione autentica di Pietro dal Pozzo*, presented to the Parma Gallery by Count L. F. Valdrighi.

It is true, however, that no contemporary writer mentions him.

Ariosto, who lived in the same district, who sang the praises of the ladies of the House of Correggio, who visited the Marchese del Vasto in the city in 1531,[1] omits to mention him in Canto xxxiii. of the



ALLEGORICAL FIGURE OF PARMA EMBRACING ALESSANDRO FARNESE, BY GIROLAMO MAZZOLA-BEDOLI

In the Naples Museum.

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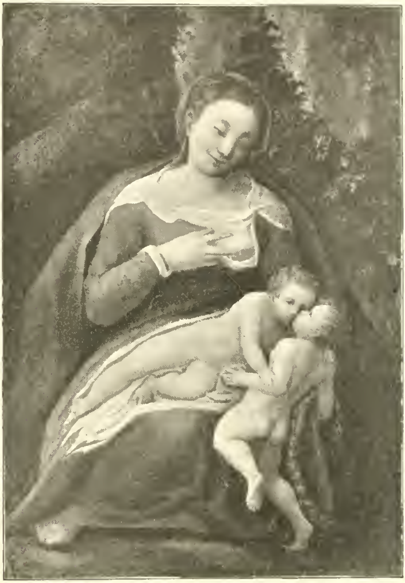
[1] Pungileoni, who records this visit (ii. p. 241), further expresses his surprise (p. 2) that the Marchese should have summoned Titian to Correggio when Allegri was there. As

Orlando Furioso, where he records the fame of Leonardo, Mantegna, Gian Bellini, the two Dossi, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Titian.

This omission, however, by no means convinces us that Correggio's works were not appreciated by his contemporaries. The circle of his admirers was, no doubt, a restricted one, a result of the comparative unimportance of the scene of his labours, where an artist's fame was less likely to become widespread than at Rome and Venice, or even at Mantua and Ferrara. Ariosto, again, was a poet and not a painter; desiring to pay his tribute to art, he may very well have chosen the painters most universally known; he accepts the verdict of the multitude, restricting his own initiative in the matter to the inclusion of the two Dossi, who, like himself, lived at Ferrara, and at the court of the Estensi.

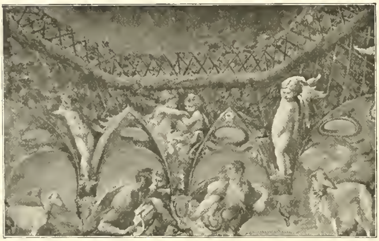


MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH THE INFANT ST. JOHN, BY POMPONIO ALLEGRI

In the Parma Gallery

The fact that Vasari was able to glean few details concerning his life, seems to us a very feeble argument to rely on in proof of the speedy

the reason of this invitation is not explained, it is somewhat unreasonable to wonder at the fact.



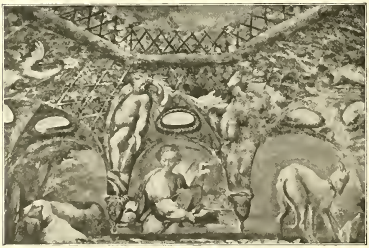
THE LEGEND OF DIANA AND ACTÆON, BY PARMIGIANINO.
In the Castle of Fontanellato.

eclipse of Correggio's reputation. The peaceful and uneventful life he led, his absorption in his work, and the absence of all startling and heroic elements in his history, sufficiently explain the lack of materials for his biography, just as they account for the absurd fables which grew up in default of established facts.

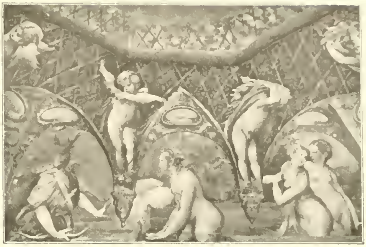
It will be objected that other writers who flourished shortly after Ariosto, are also silent concerning him, among them the episcopal chancellor, Marzocchi, who wrote a description of Parma to Alessandro Sforza, and Leandro Alberti, in his *Descrizione di tutta Italia*.

Yet it is hardly matter for surprise that these ecclesiasts, whose principal themes were fantastic legends bearing on the origin of the cities, the miracles performed by local saints, and the history of relics, should have felt little interest in painters and pictures.

On the other hand, we know that immediately after Correggio's death the Duke of Mantua eagerly demanded the drawings of the *Loves of Jupiter*, and that the wardens of the cathedral at Parma caused the outside of the cupola to be cased with lead for the better preservation of the frescoes; that in 1546 the portion of the wall on which Correggio had painted his *Madonna della*



THE LEGEND OF DIANA AND ACTÆON, BY PARMIGIANINO.
In the Castle of Fontanellato.



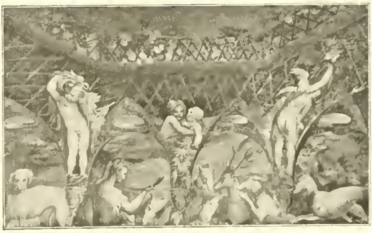
THE LEGEND OF DIANA AND [illegible], BY PRIMATICCIO

In the Castle of Fontainebleau

Scala was carefully preserved when the new bastions were erected; that the Fathers of the Annunciation battened and clamped the piece of wall on which their fresco was painted, and transferred it for safety from one church to another. These facts, which atone in some degree for the wanton destruction of his fresco in the choir of the Benedictine church, sufficiently prove that Correggio's work was treated with peculiar reverence by his immediate survivors.

Historians and writers of treatises were not long silent. In 1552 Landi described him as "a painter nobly formed by Nature herself, rather than by any master. No one," he adds, "excelled him in the painting of children, the treatment of draperies, and the rendering of hair."[1]

Fabio Segni praised him in two epigrams preserved by Vasari.[2] Lodovico Dolce, speaking of Giulio Romano, declares him to be "eclipsed by the finer colour and the greater charm of Antonio da Correggio, a superb master, by whom there are pictures in Parma so beautiful that it is impossible to desire better."[3] In another work he



THE LEGEND OF DIANA AND ACTÆON, BY PRIMATICCIO

In the Castle of Fontainebleau

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[1] *Sette libri de' cathaloghi*, p. 493.

[2] *Vite*, iv. p. 120.

[3] *Dialogo sulla pittura*. p. 63.

includes Allegri among the most illustrious men of his century.[1] At about the same period, Anton Francesco Doni, writing to Messer Simone Carnesecchi, exhorts him not to omit to see Correggio's works during his sojourn in Parma,[2] and Lamo expresses his enthusiastic admiration for the *Noli me tangere* in 1560.

But before this, in the year 1550, Lorenzo Torrentino, of Florence, had published Vasari's *Vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architetti*, in which, save for a trifling reservation in reference to his drawing, the most unbounded praise was bestowed on Correggio's work, and he himself was acclaimed as unique (*singolarissimo*) and "an exquisite genius." During the years which passed between the publication of the first and second editions of the *Lives*, Vasari had seen many of Correggio's works again, but far from modifying his encomiums, he waxed still more enthusiastic. In the second edition he declares that Allegri "had achieved the modern manner so perfectly, that in a few years, by his natural gifts and the constant practice of his art, he had become a rare and marvellous craftsman." We have quoted other criticisms of Vasari's in the course of this work, but his conclusion sums them all up in a phrase: "Many other things might be said of his works; but since everything of his is regarded as divine by the best judges of art among us, I will not linger over them."[3]

The consideration in which he was held throughout those forty years after his death, when it is suggested that he was forgotten and neglected, is still more strongly shown in the tendency of many famous artists to imitate him, and even occasionally to copy from him. The list of painters and pictures would become interminable if we attempted to follow the traces of Correggio's influence down to the time of the Carracci, to whom the credit of having renewed his fame justly belongs. A notable example of the tendency we have pointed out is to be found in the case of Federigo Barocci, who, although a fellow-citizen of Raphael, and an enthusiastic student of his great compatriot's art, was fascinated by the works of Correggio, whose pictures he copied, and whose motives he reproduced. It is interesting, too, to note how even before the time of the Carracci, the current of Bolognese art set in the direction of our painter's manner, and how the tendency to adopt his forms had declared itself before the rise of the great school of Bologna.

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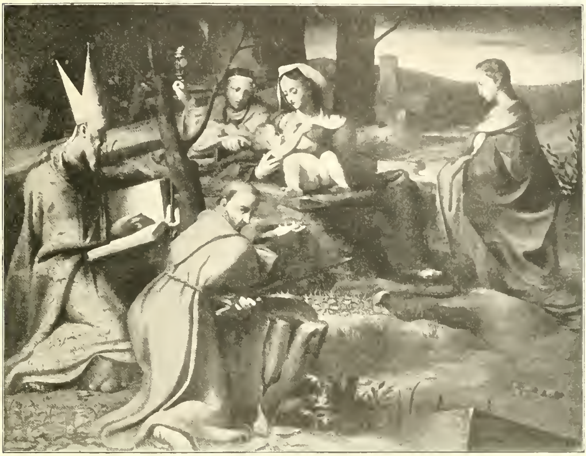
[1] *Vita dell' invitissimo e gloriosissimo imperador Carlo Quinto*, p. 171. Venice, 1561. *Libri tre nei quali si tratta delle diverse sorte delle gemme*, p. 68. Venice, 1565.

[2] Bottari, *Raccolta di lettere*, iii. p. 350.

[3] *Op. cit.* iv. p. 118.

It is true that Biagio Pupini dalle Lame, Girolamo Marchesi, Innocenzo da Imola, Bagnacavallo, and some few others, only threw off the spell of Francia to fall under that of Raphael; but it is equally true that their immediate successors turned with one accord to Correggio. Orazio Sammachini, Lorenzo Sabbatini, the Procaccini, the Passarotti, Nicolò dell' Abate, in fact, all the Bolognese and Modenese painters who flourished in the second half of the sixteenth century, felt the fascination of Correggio's colour and line. In many examples of their art we could point not only to imitation, but direct plagiarism. The *Martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul*, by Nicolò dell' Abate, in the Dresden Gallery, is inspired to some extent by Pordenone's picture at Cortemaggiore; but the central group, with the executioner



MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS, BY PASSAROTTI.

In the Bologna Gallery.

in the act of killing St. Paul, is "lifted" bodily from Correggio's *St. Placidus.*

Bartolomeo Passarotti was perhaps of all these painters the one who approached the master most nearly in his colour, and the sweetness of his types. In a small early picture by him in the Bologna Gallery, representing the Virgin and Child with several saints, in the shade of a wood, the tone, the types, and the motives are very Correggesque in character, and the same may be said of his large picture in the church of San Giacomo at Bologna, where the figures of Jesus, the Virgin, and St. John the Baptist were evidently suggested by those of the *Madonna with St. George.*

No great importance has been attached to the work of these first imitators of the master, for it was silent, reticent, and individual. The Carracci, on the other hand, made the study of Correggio a science, copying his works, and setting their disciples to copy them, lauding his "pure and sovereign style" in their school and in their writings, and challenging discussions as to his merits with the advocates of the Tuscan school. By these means they succeeded in popularising his works, and diffusing that knowledge of, and admiration for them, which at first had been confined to the more discriminating.

The Carracci indeed may be said to have finally determined that tendency to accept the formulæ of Correggio, which, by a sort of historic necessity, had begun to manifest itself ten years earlier. What indeed had the Carracci accomplished on the lines laid down by certain of their predecessors? They set aside the art built up upon the decayed formulæ of the imitators of Michelangelo; they even sought to eliminate those formulæ altogether, and to attach themselves chronologically to the point of departure of the *Michelangiolisti* themselves, more especially to Correggio and Titian. They showed great acuteness in reviving a formula which was peculiarly suited to the taste of the age, and had not as yet been exhausted by use and abuse; reaction had become inevitable; and had the mannerists repeated and gradually emasculated the forms of Correggio and Titian, instead of those of Michelangelo, the final result would not improbably have been a revival of the style of Michelangelo.

That the necessity for some such revival was strongly felt is proved by the fact that even in rebel Tuscany there were some who turned to our painter, invoking, so to speak, a transfusion of new blood in their artistic veins. Lodovico Cardi of Cigoli, Gregorio Pagani, and Cristoforo Allori broke faith with their masters, and borrowed from Correggio something of his chiaroscuro, his grace, and his brilliance.

A transcription of the praises lavished on Correggio from 1580 onwards would be a long and useless task. Admiration had changed to enthusiasm. Artists looked upon his works as their gospel; collectors bought up his pictures regardless of price, forcibly abducted them from churches, or paid for them almost with their weight in gold; writers described them in extravagant hyperbole.

Meyer maintains that all this interest was of a purely practical and technical nature, and concerned itself little with the facts of the painter's life.

It is, indeed, not improbable that his biography was of little moment to those who gave themselves up to enthusiastic worship of his masterpieces, and contented themselves, perhaps, for the rest, with the meagre details they found in Vasari. Lomazzo does not include Correggio among the "seven columns" of his "Temple of Painting." Nevertheless, he sings of him as unsurpassed in colour and in light, as "a superhuman" painter, and worthy to rank with the ancients as a master of the proportions of the body.

In 1580, Annibale Carracci, referring to Allegri's supposed poverty, delivered himself as follows: "I rage and lament within myself at the very thought of the misery of poor Antonio, so great a man, if indeed he were a man, and not rather an angel in human form, who had strayed into a country where he was misunderstood, when he ought rather to have been exalted to the stars. And here he died miserably!"[1]

In the same year Frate Giovanni Malazappi wrote of him as "the most excellent painter, Antonio da Correggio, famous among all the Italian masters."[2] Borghini described him as "unique, excellent, marvellous!"[3] Armenini,[4] Alessandro Tassoni,[5] Gian Battista Leoni,[6] men of letters and writers of treatises in a body, declared him one of the apostles of painting.

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[1] Bottari, i. p. 122.

[2] *Croniche della provincia Bologna*, *op. cit.*

[3] *Il Riposo*, p. 374. Florence, 1585.

[4] *De' veri precetti della pittura*, p. 12. Ravenna, 1587.

[5] *Pensieri diversi*, vol. x. chap. xix. Carpi, 1620.

[6] Bottari, v. p. 53.

From this time forth, his fame and his merits were never called in question. It would be superfluous, therefore, to glean further suffrages from the writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Artists journeyed to Parma to see his frescoes. His influence gradually permeated throughout half Europe. Meyer tells us that not only in Italy, but in the Tyrol, and in central and southern Germany, it has left its mark in sacred pictures, just as it has manifested itself in the decorations, gay with smiling *putti*, of innumerable French and German palaces.[1] During the past century, and throughout our own, few of the travellers who have written of Italy have omitted to visit Parma, and study Correggio's works there. When Prince Metternich arrived at Parma in 1817 on a mission to the ex-Empress, Marie Louise, he seems to have troubled himself but little with her, her government, or the concerns of Napoleon, then a prisoner at St. Helena. Of his preoccupation and indifference he has left ample proof in his memoirs. For once the cold spirit of diplomacy and the sordid calculations of political opportunism are forgotten in the delight of eye and heart: "Cette ville est le berceau du Corrège. Les salles et les murs sont couverts de ses chefs-d'œuvre. On ne saurait se figurer rien de plus enchanteur que tout ce qu'il a légué à des siècles malheureux de ne pouvoir l'imiter et heureux de pouvoir l'admirer!"[2]

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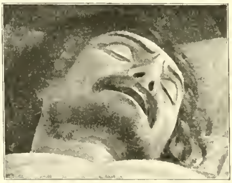
[1] *Correggio*, p. 7.

[2] *Mémoires, documents et écrits divers laissés par le Prince de Metternich*, iii. p. 50. Paris, 1881.



HEAD OF THE DEAD CHRIST, BY MANTEGNA.

In the Brera, Milan

A CATALOGUE OF
CORREGGIO'S WORKS

CORREGGIO'S WORKS

FRESCOES

1518.

1. Vault of the Camera di San Paolo at Parma. *Diana* (over the fireplace). Sixteen ovals in the vault with *putti*, and sixteen lunettes painted in monochrome with the following subjects: i. *The Graces;* ii. *Adonis;* iii. *Bonus Eventus;* iv. *The Earth;* v. *Juno chastised;* vi. *A Vestal;* vii. *A Philosopher;* viii. *The Temple of Jupiter;* ix. *The Fates;* x. *Ino Leucothoë;* xi. *Ceres;* xii. *A Satyr;* xiii. *Chastity;* xiv. *Virginity;* xv. *Fortune;* xvi. *Minerva.*

1520–24.

2. Cupola of the church of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma. Ceiling: *The aged St. John sees the Saviour ascending into Heaven surrounded by Apostles and Angels.* Frieze: *Symbols of the Evangelists.* Pendentives: 1. *St. Luke and St. Ambrose;* 2. *St. Mark and St. Gregory;* 3. *St. John and St. Augustine;* 4. *St. Matthew and St. Jerome.* Subjects in monochrome on the soffits of the arches: *St. Joseph*, *Moses*, *Elijah*, *Daniel*, *Jonah*, *Samson*, *Abraham's Sacrifice*, *Cain and Abel.*

3. *Heads of Angels.* Fragments from Correggio's fresco in the apse of San Giovanni Evangelista. In Mr. Ludwig Mond's collection, London.

4. *The Coronation of the Virgin.* Formerly in the apse of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma; now in the R. Biblioteca Palatina of that city.

5. Frieze in the nave of San Giovanni Evangelista. The design only by Correggio, the work executed by Francesco Maria Rondani, with the exception, perhaps, of the fourth compartment on the right.

1524.

6. *St. John the Evangelist at Patmos.* Lunette over the small door in the left transept of San Giovanni Evangelista.

1524–28.

7. *The Madonna della Scala.* A fresco, formerly over the Porta San Michele at Parma, now in the gallery of that city.

8. *The Annunciation.* Formerly in the church of the Annunziata at Parma, now in the gallery of that city.

1524–30.

9. Cupola of the cathedral at Parma. Ceiling: *The Assumption of the Virgin.* Balustrade: *Genii bearing candelabra, and sprinkling incense upon the flames, while the Apostles gaze at the ascending Virgin.* Pendentives: *The four patron saints of Parma, St. Hilary, St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, and St. Thomas, surrounded by youthful angels.* Six *putti* in monochrome on the soffits of the arches.

PICTURES OF SACRED SUBJECTS

1512–14.

1. *The Marriage of St. Catherine*, in the presence of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Dominic, and St. Anne. A small picture, belonging to Dr. Gustavo Frizzoni.

2. *Madonna and Child, with angels singing and playing.* A small picture, in the Uffizi, Florence.

3. *The Bolognini Madonna.* The Virgin and Child with the little St. John. In the Museo Artistico Municipale at Milan. Transferred from canvas to panel.

4. *The Malaspina Madonna.* The Virgin and Child with the little St. John, St. Elizabeth, and St. Joseph. Small picture in the Museo Comunale, Pavia.

1513–14.

5. *The Nativity.* The Virgin adoring the Infant Christ, with St. Elizabeth, the little St. John, St. Joseph, angels, and shepherds. A small picture in Cavaliere Benigno Crespi's collection at Milan.

6. *The Campori Madonna.* The Virgin and Child. A small picture in the Estense Gallery at Modena.

7. *The Virgin and Child, with St. Elizabeth and the little St. John.* A small picture in Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern's gallery at Sigmaringen.

8. *Christ taking leave of his Mother before the Passion.* Jesus, the Virgin, St. Mary Magdalen, and St. John. A small picture, in Mr. R. H. Benson's collection, London.

1514.

9. *St. Martha.* St. Martha, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Peter, and St. Leonard. Formerly in the chapel of Santa Maria della Misericordia at Correggio, now in Lord Ashburton's collection. An altar-piece.

1515.

10. *The Madonna with St. Francis*, formerly in the church of San Francesco at Correggio, now in the Dresden Gallery. The Virgin and Child enthroned between St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, St. John the Baptist, St. Catherine, angels, and cherubs. Altar-piece.

11. *The Casalmaggiore Madonna* (?) Altar-piece in the gallery at Frankfort-on-the-Main.

1515–17.

12. *The Repose in Egypt.* The Madonna and Child, with St. Joseph and St. Francis of Assisi. An altar-piece, formerly in the church of San Francesco at Correggio, now in the Uffizi, Florence.

13. *La Zingarella*, or *Madonna with the Rabbit.* The Virgin and Child with angels. A small picture, in the Naples Museum.

14. *The Madonna with St. James.* The Virgin and Child, with St. James and St. Joseph. A small picture, in the Hampton Court Gallery.

15. *The Madonna and Child with the little St. John.* A small picture, in the Prado at Madrid.

1518–19.

16. *The Marriage of St. Catherine.* A small picture, belonging to Cavaliere Paolo Fabrizi at Rome. A supposed replica belongs to Dr. Theodor Schall of Berlin.

1519–20.

17. *La Madonna del Latte.* Madonna and Child with an angel. A small picture, in the Budapest Gallery.

18. *La Madonna della Cesta.* The Virgin and Child with St. Joseph. A small picture, in the National Gallery, London.

19. *The Virgin adoring the Infant Christ.* A small picture, in the Uffizi, Florence.

1520–24.

20. *The Martyrdom of St. Placidus and St. Flavia.* Formerly in the church of San Giovanni Evangelista, Parma, now in the Parma Gallery.

21. *The Descent from the Cross.* The dead Christ, the Virgin, the Maries, and Joseph of Arimathæa. Formerly in the church of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma, now in the Parma Gallery.

22. *Ecce Homo.* Christ, with the Virgin Mary, the Magdalen, Pilate, and a soldier. In the National Gallery, London.

23. *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane.* In the distance the sleeping Apostles, and the soldiers with Judas. A small picture at Apsley House, London.

1522.

24. *The Marriage of St. Catherine* The Virgin and Child, with St. Catherine and St. Sebastian. The martyrdom of St. Catherine and of St. Sebastian in the background. In the Louvre.

1524–26.

25. *Noli me tangere.* The Magdalen kneeling before Christ. In the Prado, Madrid.

1525–26.

26. *The Madonna with St. Sebastian.* The Virgin and Child with St. Sebastian, St. Geminianus, St. Roch, and angels. An altar-piece, formerly in the chapel of the Confraternità di San Sebastiano at Modena, now in the Dresden Gallery.

1526–28.

27. *St. Catherine reading.* A small picture, in the Hampton Court Gallery.

1527–28.

28. *The Madonna with St. Jerome*, called *Il Giorno.* The Virgin and Child, St. Jerome, the Magdalen, St. John, and an angel. Altar-piece, formerly in the church of Sant' Antonio at Parma, now in the Parma Gallery.

1529–30.

29. *The Repose in Egypt*, known as *La Madonna della Scodella.* The Virgin and Child, with St. Joseph and an angel. Altar-piece, formerly in the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Parma, now in the Parma Gallery.

30. *The Nativity*, known as *La Notte.* The Virgin and Child with St. Joseph, angels, and shepherds. An altar-piece, formerly in the church of San Prospero at Reggio in the Emilia, now in the Dresden Gallery.

1530–31.

31. *The Madonna with St. George.* The Virgin and Child with St. Peter Martyr, St George, St. Geminianus, St. John the Baptist, and youthful angels. Altar-piece, formerly in the Oratory of St. Peter Martyr at Modena, now in the Dresden Gallery.

MYTHOLOGICAL AND ALLEGORICAL PICTURES

1512–14.

1. *A piping Faun or Shepherd.* A small picture in the Munich Pinacothek.

1521–22.

2. *The Education of Cupid.* Venus, Mercury, and Cupid. In the National Gallery, London.

3. *Antiope.* Antiope, Cupid, and Jupiter in the form of a Satyr. In the Louvre.

1530–33.

4. *Danae.* Danae, Cupid, and two Amorini. In the Borghese Gallery, Rome.

5. *Leda.* Leda, the swan, nymphs, and swans, Cupid, waiting-women, and *putti.* In the Berlin Gallery.

6. *Io.* The nymph Io, and Jupiter in the form of a cloud. In the Belvedere, Vienna.

7. *Vice*, an allegory, in tempera. In the Louvre.

8. *Virtue*, an allegory, in tempera. In the Louvre.

LOST OR MISSING WORKS

1516–17.

1. *Herodias.* The executioner presenting the head of John the Baptist to Herodias.

1517.

2. *Christ, the Son of Man.* A triptych, with the Saviour on a rainbow in the middle. St. John the Baptist on the left, and St. Bartholomew on the right. Formerly in the chapel of Santa Maria della Misericordia at Correggio

3. *The Young Man fleeing from the Captors of Christ.* Formerly in the Barberini Gallery, Rome.

4. *St. Mary Magdalen*, painted for Giovanni Guidotti di Roncopò, priest of Albinea.

5. *The Albinea Madonna.* The Virgin and Child between St. Mary Magdalen and St. Lucy. Formerly in the parish church of Albinea, near Reggio.

1523–24.

6. Frescoes in the apse of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma, destroyed when the choir was enlarged in 1587. The only portions preserved are the fragments mentioned in the list of Correggio's frescoes, Nos. 3 and 4.

1528.

7. *The Magdalen in a Cave,* her hands clasped in prayer. Described in a letter from Veronica Gambara to Isabella d'Este.

1533.

8. *The Loves of Jupiter.* Cartoons executed for Federigo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua.

DRAWINGS

1. *The Marriage of St. Catherine*, in the Royal Library, Turin.

2. *La Madonna del Latte.* The Virgin, St. Anne, the Infant Jesus, the little St. John, and St. Joseph. Sketch, in the Vienna Museum.

3. *An Apostle and an Angel.* Study for the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma. In the Louvre.

4. *Three Apostles with Angels.* Study for the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma. Vienna Museum.

5. *The Apostle St. Paul, with Angels.* Study for the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma. In Herr A. von Beckerath's collection, Berlin.

6 and 7. *An Eagle and an Angel. A Lion and an Angel.* The symbols of the Evangelists St. John, St. Matthew, and St. Luke. Two small studies for the cupola of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma. In the Louvre.

8. *The Coronation of the Virgin.* Study for the apse of San Giovanni Evangelista at Parma. In the Louvre.

9. *The Martyrdom of St. Placidus and St. Flavia.* Study, in the Louvre.

10. *Madonna and Child.* Study for the *Madonna della Scala* at Parma. In the Weimar Museum.

11. *The Madonna and Child.* Study for the *Madonna della Scala.* In the British Museum.

12–14. Three sketches of *putti*, for a frieze. In the Louvre.

15. *St. John the Baptist and Angels.* Study for one of the pendentives in Parma Cathedral. In the Louvre.

16. *An Apostle.* Study for the cupola of Parma Cathedral. In the Vienna Museum.

17. *The Assumption of the Virgin.* Study for the cupola of Parma Cathedral. In the Dresden Gallery.

18. *Adam, Abraham, and Isaac.* Study for the cupola of Parma Cathedral. In the Royal Library, Windsor.

19. *Eve.* Study for the cupola of Parma Cathedral. In the British Museum.

20. *Three Putti.* In the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth.

21. *Two Putti embracing.* In the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth.

22. *Three Putti seated.* In the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth.

23. *The Adoration of the Shepherds.* Study for *La Notte.* In the British Museum.

24. *Putti.* Study for the *Madonna with St. George.* In the Uffizi, Florence.

25. *St. John, St. Roch, St. Agatha, and St. Anthony.* In the Uffizi, Florence.

26. *A sleeping Woman.* Study for the *Antiope.* In the Royal Library, Windsor.

27. *A nude Woman, with Cupids.* Study for the *Antiope* (?). In the Louvre.

28. *A Head of Mercury.* Study for the *Education of Cupid.* In the Uffizi, Florence.

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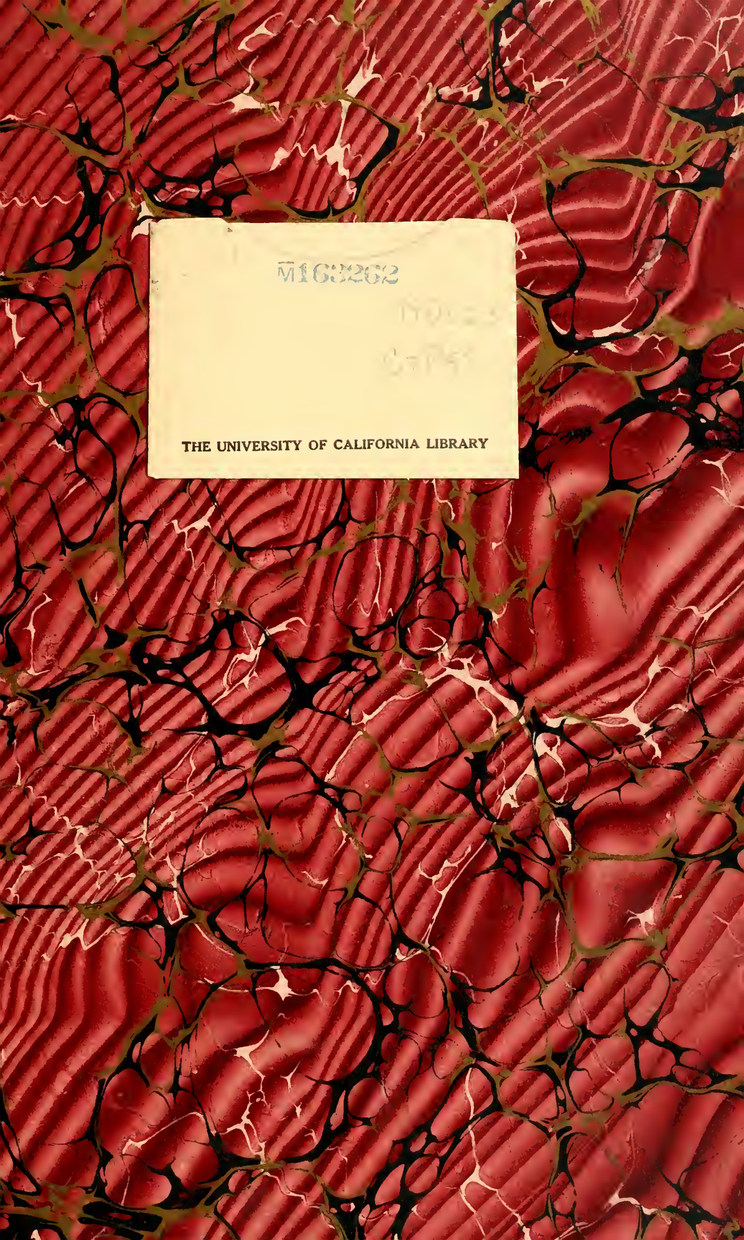

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