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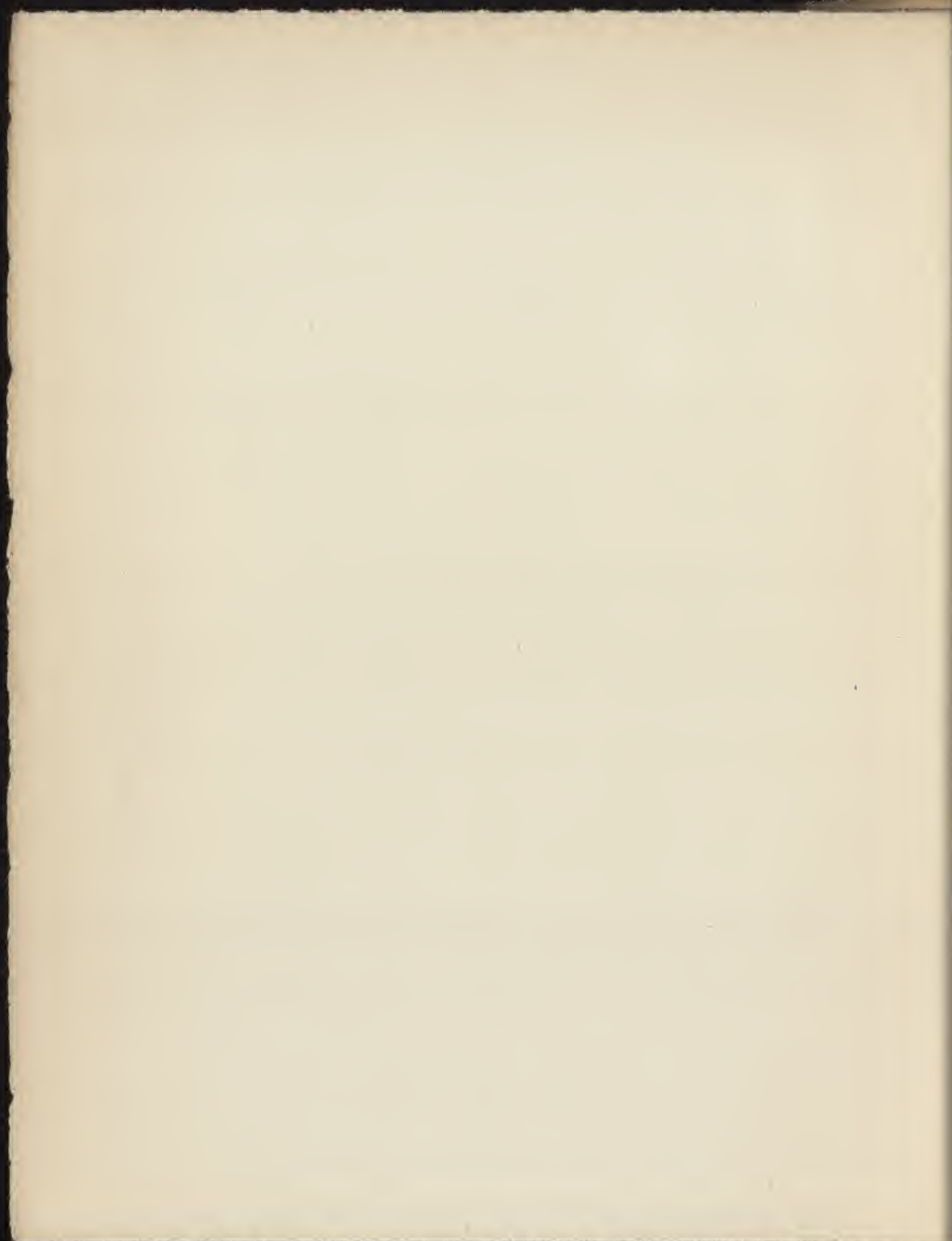
THE LIFE OF LEONARDO DA  
VINCI BY GIORGIO VASARI DONE  
INTO ENGLISH FROM THE TEXT  
OF THE SECOND EDITION OF  
THE "LIVES" WITH A COM-  
MENTARY BY HERBERT P.  
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TO  
BERNHARD BERENSON



## PREFATORY NOTE

THE life of Leonardo da Vinci has always been regarded as one of Vasari's most fortunate essays: it certainly stands apart by itself among the "Lives of the Painters." "Why has Vasari written so admirably of Leonardo?" asked Mariette already in the earlier part of the eighteenth century. Vasari is ordinarily at his best when he is writing of men with whom he was personally acquainted; but he could never have seen Leonardo, for he was only a child of four when the master went to France, in 1515. Yet not only does Vasari draw a portrait of him such as he has given us of no other master of the fifteenth century, but he relates the successive events of his life in their proper order; whereas the lives of the earlier masters which precede it, excepting that of Brunelleschi, which Vasari took from an earlier biography, are little more than so many collections of anecdotes.

In the present volume, I have attempted to convey something of the literary charm of Vasari's narrative, and to illustrate its value as a piece of biography and criticism. His "Lives" have still to be adequately translated into English; for, in spite of a recent attempt, Mrs. Forster's version, such as it is, remains the best, and in a sense the only complete, rendering. To convey the inimitable charm of his style is a task the difficulty of which can be appreciated only by those who have made the attempt. In much, Vasari recalls the English writers of the seventeenth century; but, unlike them, he is never merely quaint. With no real literary training, garrulous, often redundant, and sometimes even ungrammatical, he attempts to write the Ciceronian prose of his age; yet notwithstanding he always remains easy and natural,

the most engaging of story-tellers, a master of literary portraiture, and, though it is now the fashion to deny it, a master of criticism.

In my notes, which I have been forced to cast into the briefest form, on account of the restricted space of these little volumes, I have chiefly attempted to illustrate Vasari's narrative, correcting those errors which modern research has placed beyond discussion, and supplying the more important omissions in his story. In this way I have endeavoured to give the tenor of all the chief documents relating to Leonardo's life, with the places where the originals may be found at length; and also to describe and discuss all his genuine paintings, and to indicate the nature of his extant manuscripts, and the more important collections of his drawings. For my aim has been not only to give the general reader as adequate an account of Leonardo and his art as my space might admit of, but also to furnish more serious students of Italian painting with a brief introduction to the study of Leonardo. More than this, there are several Leonardesque questions which I have been able to elucidate more fully, I believe, than has hitherto been done.

I have to thank my friend Mr. Bernhard Berenson for several suggestions both in regard to the translation and the notes; and especially for calling my attention to the allusion in Anton Francesco Doni's letter to the "Battle of the Standard."

H. P. H.

THE LIFE OF LEONARDO DA VINCI BY GIORGIO  
VASARI, DONE INTO ENGLISH FROM THE  
TEXT OF THE SECOND EDITION OF THE  
"LIVES," WITH A COMMENTARY, BY HERBERT  
P. HORNE.

I

THE greatest gifts, and at times of a supernatural order, are often seen in the course of nature, rained by heavenly influences on human creatures ; beauty, grace, and ability, being beyond measure united in a single person, in a manner that whatever such an one turns to do, his every action is so divine, that, surpassing all other men, it is plainly recognised as a thing bestowed by God, and not acquired by human art. This was seen by all the world in Leonardo da Vinci, in whom, besides beyond a beauty of body never to be sufficiently extolled, there was an endless grace in all his actions ; and so great, and of such a kind, was his genius, that to whatever difficult things he turned his mind, he solved them with ease. In him, great physical force was joined to a dexterity, spirit and courage, ever royal and magnanimous ; and the fame of his name so increased, that not only in his lifetime was he held in estimation, but after his death his renown became still greater among posterity. Truly marvellous and celestial was Leonardo, the son of Ser Piero da Vinci ; and in learning, and in the elements of letters, he would have made great proficience if he had not been so variable and unstable : by reason of which he set himself to learn many things, and then abandoned them after he had begun them. Thus, in arithmetic, during the few months that he studied it, he made such progress, that by continually

presenting doubts and difficulties to the master who taught him, he very often perplexed him. He gave some little study to music, and presently resolved to learn to play the lyre, as one who was by nature of a most lofty spirit, and full of delicacy; wherefore he sang divinely to that instrument, improvising upon it.

¶ Leonardo was born in 1452, the love-child of Ser Piero d' Antonio di Ser Piero di Ser Guido di Ser Michele da Vinci, by a girl "of good blood," as the *Anonimo Gaddiano* records, called Caterina, who afterwards became the wife of Accattabriga di Piero del Vacca da Vinci. The little town of Vinci, in which Ser Piero's family had its origin, and Leonardo his birth, is situated in the lower valley of the Arno, on the slopes of Mount Albano, some twenty miles from Florence. At the time of Leonardo's birth, his father was a young man of twenty-five: the same year he married his first wife, Albiera Amadori. He came of a race of notaries, his forebears, as their style of "Ser" implies, having followed that calling for many generations; and he appears to have settled early at Florence, in the practice of his profession. In 1469 his name first occurs in documents as Procurator of the monastery of the SS. Annunziata, and notary to the Signoria of Florence. In course of years, he engrossed the chief business of the city; and no other notary of his time has left behind him so vast a number of notarial attestations. He was four times married, and the father of nine sons and two daughters begot in lawful wedlock; his youngest son being born shortly before 1504, the year in which Ser Piero died, at the age of seventy-seven.

Leonardo had already been received into his father's house in 1457, and his mother married to Accattabriga. In a Declaration to the Officials of the Taxes, returned in 1469, Ser Piero enumerates, among the other members of his family, "Leonardo, figliuolo di detto Ser Piero, non legittimo, d'eta 17." Ser Piero was then living in a house in the Piazza San Firenze, on the site of which the Palazzo Gondi was afterwards erected by Giuliano da San Gallo, c. 1490. [N. S. Scognamiglio, *Ricerche e Documenti sulla Giovinezza di Leonardo da Vinci*, Napoli, 1900, pp. 132, 135, 143, 144, etc.]

Leonardo's early education appears to have been of the elementary kind ordinarily given in the fifteenth century to the sons of well-to-do citizens. In the schooling of a Florentine boy, *Abbaco*, that is the elements of arithmetic, necessary to the casting of accounts, played so important a part, that the expression, *Sta all' Abbaco*, became a synonym for going to school. Leonardo's manuscripts afford several indications that his knowledge of the higher mathematics was formed in after life. For the rest, he would have acquired as a boy, but "small Latin and less Greek." In one passage in the *Codice Atlantico*, Leonardo expressly says that he was no man of letters, meaning that he was not read in the Greek and Latin writers, nor able to express himself in the Ciceronian prose of the Humanists: "So bene che per non essere io letterato, che alcuno prosuntuoso gli parrà ragionevolmente potermi biasimare, coll' allegare io essere omo senza lettere." [C. A., fol. 119, r.]

Nevertheless, although he employed himself on many various matters, he never gave over drawing and working in relief; those being things which took his fancy more than any other. Ser Piero having remarked this, and having considered the loftiness of his genius, took one day some of his drawings, and, carrying them to Andrea del Verrocchio, who was much his friend, straitly besought him that he should tell him whether Leonardo, by studying drawing, would make any proficience.

Andrea was amazed to see the extraordinary beginnings of Leonardo, and exhorted Ser Piero that he should make him study it; whereupon his father arranged with Leonardo that he should go to the workshop of Andrea, which Leonardo did with no ordinary willingness. And he practised not one branch of art alone, but all those of which drawing formed a part, and having an intellect so divine and marvellous, and being an excellent geometrician, he worked not only in sculpture, executing, in his youth, in clay, some heads of women that are smiling, of which casts in plaster are still taken, and likewise some heads of boys which possess all the appearance of having come from the hand of a master, but in architecture, also, he made many drawings both of plans, as of other projections of buildings; and he was the first, although a mere youth, that put forward the project of reducing the river Arno to a navigable channel, from Pisa to Florence. He made designs for flour-mills, fulling-mills, and machines, which might be driven by the force of water: and because he wished that painting should be his profession, he studied much in drawing from nature, and often in making models of figures in clay, which he covered with soft, worn linen dipped in clay, and then set himself to draw them with great patience, on a particular kind of very fine Rheims cloth, or prepared linen; and he executed them in black and white with the point of a brush, to a marvel, as some of them which I have in our book of drawings still bear witness: besides which he drew on paper with such diligence, and so well, that no one has ever attained to such fineness of execution; and of such I have a head drawn with the style in chiaroscuro, that is divine.

¶ To the influence of Andrea del Verrocchio (1435-1488), "goldsmith, master of perspective, sculptor, inlayer of woods, painter and musician," Leonardo largely owed the development, if not the bent, of his genius, his mastery of many arts, his universal curiosity and love of knowledge. The date is not known at which Leonardo was placed with Verrocchio: but it cannot well have been earlier than 1465, or later than 1469. At Florence, in the 15th century, boys were commonly put to learn a craft, or trade, on completing their thirteenth year. Leonardo was still working with Verrocchio in June, 1476. One of the first works of importance which was executed in Andrea's workshop, after Leonardo had entered it, was a difficult piece of constructional art, namely, the ball, or sphere, of gilded copper to be placed on the lantern above the dome of the Cathedral at Florence, in accordance with the design of Brunelleschi. Luca Landucci records in his *Diario*, that it was drawn up into its place on 27th May, 1471, and three days after, the cross was placed above the ball, amid the singing of the *Te Deum*. In 1472, Verrocchio finished the tomb of Giovanni and Piero de' Medici, in the Church of San Lorenzo at Florence; and in 1476 he cast the bronze statue of David, now in the Bargello, for the staircase of the Palazzo Vecchio. The following year he executed the

relief of the "Decollation of the Baptist," for the silver altar of the Baptistery; and c. 1478, he began the bronze group of "Christ and St. Thomas" which still stands in one of the niches of Or San Michele. [Vasari, ed. Sansoni, vol. iii. p. 381.]

Of Leonardo's life during the time he was working under Verrocchio, few notices are extant. In the *Libro Rosso*, an account book of the fees payable to the "Compagnia di San Luca," the religious society of the Florentine painters, by its members, "Leonardo di Ser Piero da Vinci" is debited in an entry of the year 1472, with the ordinary fees of membership, which, as the credit side of the account is left blank, were presumably not paid. [G. Uzielli, *Ricerche intorno a Leonardo da Vinci*, ed. 1872-84, p. 149.] Since it appears from the same volume of accounts, that Leonardo duly paid fees to the company, after his return to Florence in 1502, it would be unjustifiable to argue that the omission to do so in 1472 arose from any indifference to the orthodox observances of religion. Vasari, however, in a passage in the first edition of the *Lives*, which he afterwards suppressed, asserts that Leonardo "was of so heretical a cast of mind, that he conformed to no religion whatever, accounting it, perchance, much better to be a philosopher than a Christian." Nor does Leonardo entirely escape some shadow of censure of a kind which, in pre-Christian Italy, would have been lightly passed over.

In the earlier part of the 15th century, a Magistracy had been erected at Florence, known as the "Officiali di Notte e Monasteri," who were charged with the regulation of the morals of the community in general, and of the religious bodies in particular. On 8th April, 1476, a *tamburazione*, or secret and anonymous accusation, was dropped into one of the boxes provided by this Magistracy for the purpose, of which the following copy is preserved among the records of this office, in the Florentine Archives:

"Notifico a Voi, Signori Officiali, com'egli è vera cosa, che Jacopo Saltarelli, fratello carnale di Giovanni Saltarelli; sta collui all'orafo, in Vacchereccia, dirimpetto al buco [tamburo]—veste nero, d'età d'anni 17 o circa; il quale Jacopo va dietro a molte miserie, et consente conpiacere a quelle persone lo richieggano di simili tristizie.

"Et a questo modo à avuto a fare di molte cose, cioè servito parecchie dozzine di persone, delle quali ne so buona data: Tal parte dirò d'alcuni: Bartholomeo di Pasquino, orafo, sta in Vacchereccia. Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci, sta con Andrea del Verrocchio. Baccino farsettaio, . . . Leonardo Tornabuoni, dicto il Teri, veste nero."

Against the names of the four persons accused, is a minute to the effect that they were released on the condition that they might be again brought up on further evidence: "absoluti cum conditione ut retamburentur." On the following 7th June, the accusation was repeated (at that time Leonardo was still working with Verrocchio), and against the four names is another minute to the effect that they were again released on the same condition: and there is a passage in the *Codice Atlantico* that seems to point to the fact that Leonardo in his youth had been in prison. [*Archivio Storico dell'Arte*, Roma, Ser. II. vol. ii. p. 313, 1896.]

Neither the heads of smiling women in terra-cotta, nor the casts of them which were still sold in Florence when Vasari wrote, nor the heads of *putti*, are known to have survived. Giovan Paolo Lomazzo, in his *Treatato dell'Arte de la Pittura*, Milano, 1584, lib. II. cap. viii. p. 127, says that he possessed a little head of Christ as a child, in terra-cotta, by the hand of Leonardo, which was perhaps one of the "teste de' putti," described by Vasari.

Among the evidences which we possess of Leonardo's studies in architecture, may be mentioned a manuscript of a Treatise of Civil and Military Architecture, by the Siense painter, sculptor, and architect, Francesco di Giorgio (1439-1502), the margins of which contain annotations in the handwriting of Leonardo. This manuscript, which is preserved among the *Codici Ashburnham*, No. 361, in the Biblioteca Laurenziana, at Florence, has hitherto remained inedited.

It is probable, as Dr. Solmi suggests, that the project for reducing the Arno to a navigable canal, from Florence to Pisa, was brought forward by Leonardo, after his return to Florence in 1500: a little before that time, designs for such a project had been given by Luca Fancelli. [E. Solmi, *Leonardo*, p. 127-8.]

In devising such projects, and in inventing mills and other machines, Leonardo was concerning himself with problems which had occupied not only architects and engineers,



but even painters, goldsmiths, and sculptors at Florence, during the 15th century. The sketch-book of the goldsmith, bronze-caster and architect, Buonaccorso di Vittorio Ghiberti (1451-1516), the grandson of Lorenzo Ghiberti, which is preserved among the Magliabechian Manuscripts, cl. xvii. cod. 34, in the Biblioteca Nazionale at Florence, contains many drawings for machines and engines of various kinds, besides studies of paintings and sculpture.

Il Cecca, the Florentine engineer (1447-1488), is especially mentioned by Vasari among those who "employed their industry in methods of traction, in machines of war, in water-works, and in all those cautionary devises proper to military engineering and architecture, by means of which, disconcerting their enemies, and accommodating their friends, they render the world beautiful and convenient." [Vasari, ed. Sansoni, vol. iii. p. 195.]

And there was infused in that brain such grace from God, and a power of expression in such sublime accord with the intellect and memory that served it, and he knew so well how to express his conceptions by draughtsmanship, that he overcame with his arguments, and confuted with his reasons, every stalwart wit. And he was for ever making models and designs to enable men to remove mountains with facility, and to bore them in order to pass from one level to another; and by means of levers, and cranes, and screws, he showed how great weights could be lifted and drawn; together with methods of emptying harbours, and pumps for drawing up water from low places, all which his brain never ceased from inventing; and of these notions and labours many drawings are to be seen, scattered abroad among artists; and I myself have seen a good number. Moreover, he was so prodigal of time as to draw knots of cords, contrived according to an order, that from one end all the rest might follow on till the other, so as to fill a round; of which a most difficult and beautiful one is to be seen executed in stamp, and in the midst are these words, *Leonardus Vinci Accademia*. Among these designs and models, there was one by which he often demonstrated to many ingenious citizens, who then governed Florence, that he was ready to raise the temple of San Giovanni in Florence, and place steps under it, without damage to the building; and with such weighty reasons he counselled it, that it appeared possible; although each one of them, after he had departed, would recognise, when alone by himself, the impossibility of such an undertaking. Leonardo was so pleasing in conversation, that he attracted to himself the affections of men. And although he possessed one might say nothing, and worked little, he always kept servants and horses; in which latter he greatly delighted, and particularly in all other animals, which he controlled with the greatest love and

patience; and this he showed when often passing by places where birds were sold, taking them out of their cages with his own hand, and, having paid to those who sold them the price that was asked, he let them fly away into the air, restoring to them their lost liberty. Wherefore nature desired so to favour him, that wherever he turned thought, brain, and mind, he showed such divine power in his works, that, in bringing them to perfection, no one was ever his equal in readiness, vivacity, excellence, bounty, beauty, and grace.

It is evident that Leonardo, through the comprehension of art, began many things, and never finished any of them, since it appeared to him that the hand was not able to attain to the perfection of art in executing the things which he conceived; seeing that he imagined difficulties so subtle and marvellous, that they could never be expressed by the hands, be they ever so skilful. And so many were his caprices, that, philosophising of natural things, he gave himself to understand the properties of herbs; going on and observing the motions of the heavens, the course of the moon, and the going forth of the sun.

¶ Vasari here digresses to speak of Leonardo's genius and character in general. A great number of his drawings for machines and mechanical inventions of all kinds are scattered among his manuscripts. Of the knots in stamp, to which Vasari here alludes, there are three prints in the British Museum, which are described by J. D. Passavant in his *Peintre-Graveur*, Leipsic, 1860-4, vol. v. p. 182, No. 9. They all consist of an endless cord, elaborately interlaced and twisted, according to different geometrical designs, so as to fill a circle. On a roundel, suspended in the centre of the first print, is the inscription, ACADEMIA LEONARDI VINCII; and the same legend is repeated, in various ways, on the other two prints. This inscription has been adduced, by some writers, as evidence that an Academy of the Arts and Sciences was formally established by Leonardo at Milan; but there can be little doubt that the word "Accademia" is here to be understood in the sense of an academical exercise. There is a fourth print of the same kind, which is undescribed by Passavant, in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. The proposal to raise the Baptistery of San Giovanni at Florence was put forward, in all probability, after his return there, in 1500. This Baptistery is probably the oldest building now remaining in Florence; and, in course of centuries, the accumulation of the surrounding soil has been such, that the level of the existing pavement of the church, laid down in the 14th century, is many inches below the level of the piazza in which it stands. Leonardo's proposal to place it upon steps, similar no doubt to those on which the beautiful octagonal temple in Raphael's "Sposalizio" at Milan rests, might have proved a difficult, but by no means insuperable, problem to the science of engineering in Leonardo's time. In Bologna, Aristotile Fioravanti had moved an entire tower from one place to another. [E. Solmi, *Leonardo*, p. 128.]

Having been placed then in his boyhood, as I have said, at the instance of Ser Piero, to learn art with Andrea del Verrocchio, who was making a picture on panel of St. John

baptizing Christ, Leonardo painted an angel who was holding some garments; and although he was a mere lad, he executed it in such a way that it was much better than the figures of Andrea; which was the reason that Andrea would never again touch colour, disdaining that a child should know more than he.

¶ In his life of Verrocchio, Vasari states that this picture was painted for the Church of the Monastery of San Salvi, a house of the Congregation of Vallombrosa, without the Porta alla Croce, at Florence. After the suppression of the monastery in 1808, the picture was taken to the gallery of the Florentine Academy, where it is now preserved, No. 71. It is not in a fine state of preservation. The two kneeling angels on the left of the picture [Plate I.] were clearly executed from Verrocchio's cartoon, though not by the master himself. The assumption that the foremost of these figures was painted by Leonardo, is, perhaps, not altogether unsupported by the internal evidence of the picture. His story that Verrocchio abandoned painting in consequence of Leonardo's progress, must, however, be taken *cum grano salis*. Although Verrocchio executed, as Vasari says, a number of cartoons from which his various assistants painted pictures, few paintings by his hand have come down to us.

The commission was given to him for a cartoon for a door-hanging that was to be executed in Flanders, woven in gold and silk, in order to be sent to the King of Portugal, of Adam and Eve sinning in the Earthly Paradise, wherein Leonardo drew with the brush in chiaroscuro, heightened with white, a meadow of endless kinds of herbage, with some animals, of which, in truth, one could say that, for diligence and truth to nature, divine wit could not make the like. In it is the fig-tree with the fore-shortening of the leaves, and the various aspects of the branches, executed with such care that the brain turns at the mere thought of how a man could have such patience. There is also a palm-tree that has the radiating crown of the palm, executed with so great and marvellous art, that only the patience and brain of Leonardo was able to accomplish it. This work was not carried farther; hence the cartoon is now at Florence, in the illustrious house of the Magnificent Ottaviano de' Medici, given to him not long since by the uncle of Leonardo.

¶ The *Anonimo Gaddiano* also mentions this cartoon of "Adamo et Eua d'aquarello." [ed. Frey, p. III.] Ottaviano de' Medici, to whom this cartoon had been given by the uncle of Leonardo, was descended from an elder, but less illustrious branch of the Medici, than that from which the Ducal family was descended. He died on 28th May, 1546. The passage from Vasari in question occurs in the ed. of 1550.

It is said that Ser Piero da Vinci, being at his villa, was besought, as a favour, by a peasant in charge of his estate, who had made a buckler with his own hands, out of a fig-tree which

he had cut down on the farm, to get it painted for him at Florence, which he very willingly did, since the countryman was very ready in catching birds and fishing, and Ser Piero made great use of him in those pursuits. Whereupon, having taken this buckler with him to Florence, without telling Leonardo whose it was, Ser Piero asked him to paint something upon it. Leonardo having one day taken this buckler in his hands, and seeing it twisted, ill-made, and clumsy, straightened it by the fire, and, having given it to a turner, from the rough and clumsy thing that it was, caused it to be made smooth and equal; and afterwards, having covered it with *gesso*, and having prepared it after his own method, he began to think of what he might paint on it, that should be able to terrify all who should come upon it, producing the same effect as once did the head of Medusa. Leonardo therefore, to this end, carried to a room into which no one entered but himself alone, slow-worms, lizards, field-crickets, snakes, moths, grasshoppers, bats, and other kinds of such-like animals, out of the number of which, variously put together, he evolved a most horrible and terrifying creature, which poisoned the air with its breath, and turned it into flame; and he represented it coming from out a dark and jagged rock, belching poison from its open throat, and fire from its eyes, and smoke from its nostril, in so strange a manner, that it seemed altogether a monstrous and horrible thing; and such pains did he take in executing it, that although the smell of the dead animals in the room was very noisome, it was not perceived by Leonardo, so great was the passion that he bore towards his art. The work which, no longer asked for either by the countryman or his father, being finished, Leonardo told the latter that he might send for the buckler at his convenience; since, for his part, it was finished. Ser Piero therefore, having gone one morning to the room for it, and having knocked at the door, Leonardo opened it to him, asking him to wait a little; and, after he had adjusted the buckler to the light on the easel, and put to the window, in order to lower the light, he made him come in and see it. Ser Piero, at the first glance, taken unawares, immediately started, not thinking that that was the buckler, nor the figure which he saw there was merely painted, and, falling back a step, Leonardo checked him, saying, "This work serves the turn for which it was made; take it then, and carry it away, since this is the effect that it was intended to produce." The thing seemed to Ser Piero little

short of a miracle, and he greatly praised the ingenuity of Leonardo. Then, having privately bought from a pedlar, another buckler painted with a heart transfixed by an arrow, he gave it to the countryman, who remained obliged to him for it, for the rest of his life. Ser Piero afterwards secretly sold the buckler of Leonardo to certain merchants in Florence, for a hundred ducats; and in a short time it came into the hands of the Duke of Milan, having been sold to him by those merchants for three hundred ducats.

¶ The form of this anecdote shows that Vasari is here relating a legend which was current in his own time, in the Florentine *botteghe*: of the picture itself, which had already disappeared when Vasari wrote, no other notice has come down to us.

Leonardo then made a picture of Our Lady, which belonged to Pope Clement VII., a work of great excellence; and, among other things painted there, he counterfeited a glass vase full of water, with some flowers in it, in which, besides its marvellous naturalness, he had imitated the drops of dew on the flowers, so that it seemed more real than the reality.

¶ No picture painted by Leonardo's own hand, and answering to this description, is known to exist. The motive of the glass vase filled with flowers was a common one, at the time of Leonardo's youth.

For Antonio Segni, who was very much his friend, he made, on a folio sheet of paper, a Neptune drawn with such diligence that it seemed wholly alive. It represents the ocean troubled, and Neptune's car drawn by sea-horses, with fantastic creatures, monsters, and winds; and there are in it some heads of sea-gods that are exceedingly beautiful. This drawing was given by Fabio, the son of Antonio Segni, to M. Giovanni Gaddi, with this epigram—

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

¶ This drawing is now lost; but a study, apparently for the principal group of Neptune in his Car, drawn by Sea-horses, is preserved in the library at Windsor. [Plate II.] Antonio di Neri d'Antonio di Segna Guidi, as he describes himself in his Declarations to the Officials of the Taxes, preserved in the Florentine Archives, was of a different family from that from which Bernardo Segni, the historian, was descended. He states, in a return of February 1480-1, that he was then living with his widowed mother, in their house in the parish of San Romeo, or Remigio, in the quarter of Santa Croce, Gonfalone Lion Nero; that he was 21 years of age; that he was not in trade, but that he “re-

paired at times to the bank of the Bartolini." He was then by no means a rich man : the wealth which enabled him to become a patron of the Arts, must have come to him at a later period of his career. In the first years of the last decade of the 15th century, Botticelli painted for him the famous "Calumny of Apelles," now in the Uffizi : and if the style of the study at Windsor furnishes any clue to the date of the lost drawing of the "Neptune," we may conclude, with tolerable certainty, that it was executed by Leonardo after his return to Florence, in 1500. Fabio, the son of Antonio Segni, and a celebrated *dilettante* of his day, wrote the epigrams on the painters which Vasari inserted into the first edition of the *Lives* : from him Vasari no doubt obtained this notice of the "Neptune" of Leonardo.

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

¶ The painting of the "Head of Medusa" is thus described in an inventory of the *Guardaroba*, or Wardrobe of the Duke Cosimo I., taken in the year 1553 : "Uno quadro di legname pittovi una Furia infernale di mano di Leonardo da Vinci senz' ornamento." [C. Conti : *La Prima Reggia di Cosimo I, nel Palazzo già della Signoria di Firenze*, p. 138.] The *Anonimo Gaddiano* describes the picture as "una testa di megera con mirabil] et rarj aggruppamenti di serpi." [ed. Frey, p. 111.]

The finished painting in the Uffizi, No. 1159, which tradition has attempted to identify with the unfinished picture described by Vasari, is a work executed many years after Leonardo's death. It cannot even be regarded as a copy of the lost picture. The other painting of an angel, which, according to Vasari, was also preserved in the *Guardaroba* of Duke Cosimo, is not described in the inventory of 1553. J. W. Brown, in his *Life of Leonardo da Vinci*, London, 1828, p. 249, sought to identify it with a painting then in the possession of Signor Fineschi, at Florence ; but small reliance can be placed on such assertions.

It is a thing to be marvelled at how that genius, wishing to give the highest relief to the things which he executed, went so far with dark shadows, in order to obtain grounds of the deepest tone, that he sought for blacks that might produce deeper shadow and be darker than other blacks ; that by their means he might make the lights appear the brighter : and this method resulted in the end so dark, that, no clear light remaining there, his paintings have rather the appearance of things made to counterfeit an effect of night, than the pure quality of daylight ; but all this was the result of seeking to give greater relief, in order to arrive at the limit and perfection of art.

He took so great a delight in beholding certain bizarre heads of

men with the beard or hair naturally worn, that he would follow one that pleased him a whole day, and so stored him up in idea, that afterwards, when he came home, he drew him as if he had had him present before him. Of this kind, many heads are to be seen, both of women and men; and I have several drawn by his hand with the pen, in our book of drawings, to which I have alluded so many times: such was the drawing of Amerigo Vespucci, which is a most beautiful head of an old man drawn in charcoal; and likewise that of Scaramuccia, the captain of the gypsies, which afterwards belonged to M. Donato Valdambini of Arezzo, Canon of S. Lorenzo, left to him by Giambullari.

¶ Amerigo Vespucci, the navigator, who gave his name to the Continent of America, was born in Florence in 1451, and was, therefore, only a year older than Leonardo himself. The drawing of him as an old man must, consequently, have been done after Leonardo's return to Florence, in 1502.

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

¶ This "Adoration of the Magi," of which only the under-painting in umber and terra-vert was executed, is now in the gallery of the Uffizi, No. 1252. [Plates III. and IV.] There can be little doubt, not only on account of the early character of the picture, but also of the subject and the dimensions of the panel, that this is the altar-piece which Leonardo was commissioned by the monks of San Donato a Scopeto to paint for the high altar of their church, which, up to the time of the siege of Florence in 1529, stood in the suburb of the city, without the Porta Romana. According to a document preserved in the Florentine Archives, Leonardo began the picture in March, 1480-1: he undertook to execute it for the sum of three hundred gold florins, and to finish it within twenty-four, or, at the most, thirty months. In August, 1481, he received a load of wood and fagots, in payment for having painted the clock of the monastery of San Donato a Scopeto. [G. Milanesi, *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 1872, Ser. III. vol. xvi. p. 228.]

A number of drawings for this altar-piece have been preserved. An admirable study in pen and ink, for the whole composition, once in the Galichon Collection, is now in the Louvre. [Reproduced in E. Müntz's *Leonardo da Vinci*, London, 1898, vol. i. p. 65.] Another fine study for the horsemen and buildings in the background, is in the Uffizi, Frame 96, No. 436 [Plate V.]. Other studies are in the Valton and Bonnat collections, at Paris.

With this notice of the "Adoration of the Magi," Vasari concludes his account of the first period of Leonardo's career, which ends with his departure from Florence, c. 1482, in order to enter the service of Lodovico Sforza, at Milan. In this portion of his narrative, Vasari ascribes to Leonardo's earliest years, at least two works, namely, the "Neptune" executed for Antonio Segni, and the head of Amerigo Vespucci, which must have been executed after his return to Florence, in 1500. Vasari, at the same time, omits to notice more than one work of Leonardo's early period, of which authentic notices have been brought to light.

Among the drawings in the Uffizi, Frame 97, No. 8<sup>p</sup>, is a study in pen and ink of a

landscape, inscribed: "Di di sancta Maria della Neve, addi 2 daggosto, 1473" [Plate VI.]. This is the earliest dated study by his hand which has come down to us.

Leonardo, as we have seen, was still working with Verrocchio in June, 1476; but in the course of the following year, at the latest, he must have set up for himself as an independent master. On 1st January, 1477-8, he received the commission to paint the altar-piece for the Chapel of San Bernardo, in the Palazzo Vecchio, a work which had been given to Pietro Pollaiuoli, eight days before, and which had probably been declined by that master. On the 16th March, 1478, Leonardo received 25 gold florins on account of the work. [G. Milanesi, *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 1872, Ser. III. vol. xvi. p. 227.]

A sheet of studies by Leonardo, preserved in the Gallery of the Uffizi, Frame 97, No. 446, containing a head of an old man and a slighter sketch of a young man's head, bears the following memorandum in his hand: ". . . bre 1478 inchominciaj le 2 Vergini Marie": that is, between the months of September and December (the first part of the date being cut away), 1478, Leonardo began two pictures of the Virgin." There are several early drawings by Leonardo, which may well have been intended to serve as studies for these pictures. In the Uffizi, Frame 93, No. 421, is a design in pen and wash for a composition of the Virgin, at half-length, with the Child, who is playing with a cat. On the margins of another sheet in the Uffizi, Frame 95, No. 435, a copy of some lost original by Leonardo, are a series of studies for the same composition. Others are in the Royal Library at Windsor, and in the British Museum.

On the 28th December, 1479, Bernardo Bandini, who had assassinated Giuliano de' Medici, in the Pazzi conspiracy, was hanged at one of the windows of the *Bargello*, or official residence of the *Capitano di Giustizia*, which at that time adjoined the Palazzo Vecchio, on the side towards the Via de' Gondi. On the miscarriage of the plot, Bernardo fled to Constantinople, but, at the request of Lorenzo de' Medici, he was given up to the Florentines by the Grand Turk. As the wretched man hung dangling from the window of the palace, Leonardo made a drawing in pen and ink of him, noting the colours of his dress on the margin. This drawing is now at Paris, in the collection of M. Léon Bonnat. [Reproduced in J. P. Richter's *Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, vol. i. pl. lxii. No. 1.]

Two other works of Leonardo's early period must be mentioned here, on account of their importance: one is the head of a knight in silver point, a highly finished Verrocchiesque drawing, in the Malcolm Collection, No. 34, in the British Museum [Plate VII.]; the other, in the Gallery of the Vatican, at Rome, is a small picture or panel of "St. Jerome," of the same period, and in the same unfinished condition, as the "Adoration of the Magi," in the Uffizi; the under-painting in umber and terra-vert having alone been completed. [Plate VIII.]



## II

It happened that Giovan Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, being dead, and Lodovico Sforza raised to the same rank, in the year 1494, Leonardo was brought to Milan in great credit to the Duke, who much delighted in the sound of the lyre, in order that he might play it : and Leonardo took with him that instrument, which he had made with his own hands, in great part of silver, and in the form of a horse's skull (a thing bizarre and new), to the end that the harmony might be of greater volume and sonority of tone ; whereby he surpassed all the musicians that had assembled there to play. Moreover, he was the best improviser in verse of his time. The Duke hearing the marvellous discourse of Leonardo, became so enamoured of his genius, that it was a thing incredible ; and at his request, he painted an altar-piece containing a Nativity, which was sent by the Duke to the Emperor.

¶ Vasari, beyond all question, was in error when he stated that Leonardo went to Milan in 1494. The *Anonimo Gaddiano* states that Leonardo was sent "in his thirtieth year," that is, in 1482, to the Duke of Milan by Lorenzo de' Medici, Il Magnifico. [ed. Frey, p. ] Such indications as we possess, serve to confirm this statement. Again, it is difficult to believe Vasari's statement, that Leonardo was called to Milan, by reason of his skill in playing on a lyre, which he had constructed in imitation of the instruments of the ancients. There can be little doubt that he first attracted the notice of Lodovico Sforza, called Il Moro, the uncle and regent of the young duke, Giovan Galeazzo Maria, as a sculptor capable of executing the equestrian statue of the Duke Francesco.

In the *Codice Atlantico* is preserved the following draft of a letter addressed to Lodovico, Il Moro, in which Leonardo offers his services, as a military architect and engineer, and sets forth at length what he is able to achieve in that capacity. The letter was apparently written after Leonardo had arrived in Milan, and certainly after the proposal had been discussed, that the execution of the equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza should be entrusted to him.

"Having, most illustrious Lord, now sufficiently seen and considered the essays of all those who proclaim themselves masters and inventors of warlike instruments, and that the invention of those instruments, as regards their operation, differs in nothing from those in common use, I will attempt, without derogating from the merits of others,

to make myself understood by your Excellency, laying open my secrets to you, and afterwards offering them to you, at your pleasure, as occasions admit, to put them effectively into operation, as well as all those things, which for the sake of brevity shall be in part only set forth here below.

"1. I have forms of very light and strong bridges, and contrived so as to be transported with great ease, that, while carrying them, the enemy can be pursued, and, on occasion fled; and others secure and indestructible by fire and battle, and easy and convenient to remove and set up; together with methods of burning and destroying those of the enemy.

"2. I know, during the siege of a town, how to draw off the water from the fosses, and make endless bridges, battering rams, scaling ladders, and other instruments pertaining to such expeditions.

"3. Moreover, if by reason of the height of the ramparts, or on account of the strength of the place or situation, it should not be possible, during the siege of a town, to make use of bombards, I have modes of destroying every fortress or other stronghold, even if it should be built upon rock.

"4. I have also forms of bombards, very convenient and easy to remove; and with these I am able to hurl forth [showers of] small stones, almost in the semblance of a tempest; and with the smoke of it to strike terror into the enemy, to their heavy damage and confusion.

"5. Moreover, I have methods of forming mines, and secret and tortuous ways, without any noise, in order to reach a given [point], although there be need to pass under fosses, or a river.

"6. Moreover, I will make covered chariots, secure and unattackable, which, entering among the enemy with their artillery, there is no multitude of men-at-arms so great, that they will not break them; and behind these, infantry will be able to follow wholly unharmed, and without any hindrance.

"7. Moreover, as need may arise, I will make bombards and mortars and field-pieces of most beautiful and useful forms, and out of the common use.

"8. Where the employment of bombards should fail, I will contrive catapults, mangonels, *trabocchi*, and other machines, of marvellous efficacy, and such as are not in use; and in brief, according to the variety of the circumstances, I will contrive various and endless means of offence and defence.

"9. And when [the encounter] should happen to be at sea, I have forms of many machines admirably adapted for offence and defence, and ships that are able to resist the attack of all the largest bombards, and powder and fumes.

"10. In time of peace, I believe that I can very well give satisfaction, in rivalry with any other, in designing both public and private buildings, and in bringing water from one place to another.

"Moreover, I will execute in sculpture, whether of marble, bronze, or clay, and likewise in painting, whatever may be done, and in rivalry with any other, be he whom he may.

"Also, I shall be able to put the work of the [bronze] horse into execution; which will be to the immortal glory and eternal honour of the prince your father, of happy memory, and of the illustrious house of Sforza. And if any one of the above named things seem to any one to be impossible, and not to be done, I am prepared to make a trial of it in your park, or in whatever place may please your Excellency, to whom I commend myself with the utmost humility" [J. P. Richter, *Literary Works of Leonardo*, vol. iii. p. 395.]

The *Anonimo Gaddiano* also records that Leonardo "painted an altar-piece on panel, for Lodovico, Lord of Milan, which was said by those able to judge, who have seen it, to be one of the most beautiful and rare works that have been seen in painting; which painting was sent by the said lord into Germany, to the Emperor" [ed. *Frey*, p. 112].

No other notice of such an altar-piece has come down to us: but is it not possible that Vasari and the *Anonimo* are here alluding, from hearsay, to the altar-piece in the Louvre, known as the "Madonna of the Rocks," No. 1599 [Plate IX.] which, though not strictly a "Nativity," might loosely be so described? If this conjecture is allowable, the history of the picture may thus be explained. At some unspecified date,

but not long after Leonardo's arrival in Milan, he and the Milanese painter, Ambrosio de Predis, received a commission from the members of the Confraternity of the Conception, to execute an altar-piece for their chapel in the Church of San Francesco, at Milan; Leonardo undertaking to paint "a picture of Our Lady in oil," and de Predis to paint "two pictures with two large figures of angels in oil," and to make an altar-frame, or "Ancona of figures in relief, overlaid with fine gold." Some time after the work was finished, the two painters drew up a *supplicatio*, or petition, addressed to some high official, perhaps the Duke of Milan. This document is undated, but a minute of the same suit has recently been found in another Protocol, preserved in the Milanese Archives, from which it appears that the petition was presented between 1491 and 1494. [*Rassegna d'Arte*, Milano, Luglio, 1901, p. 110.] In the petition in question, Leonardo and Ambrogio de Predis state that three appraisers, two being members of the confraternity and the third a monk, having been appointed, according to agreement, to estimate the value of the work, a grave dispute had arisen as to the price to be paid; and, amongst other things, they assert that these three appraisers wish "to estimate the said picture of Our Lady executed in oil by the said Florentine, at only 25 ducats, although it be of the value of 100 ducats, as appears by an account of the petitioners, and this price of 100 ducats they have arrived at from certain persons who have wished to buy the said picture of Our Lady." Wherefore, on the ground that "the said members of the confraternity are not expert in such things," they petition that two expert appraisers be appointed, and that the members of the confraternity, according to their estimate, either reimburse the said petitioners, or release to them the said picture of Our Lady executed in oil." [E. Motta, *Ambrogio Preda e Leonardo da Vinci*, printed in the *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 1893, Anno xx. p. 915.] How the suit ended, we can only conjecture. It is unlikely that the confraternity were either able, or willing, to pay the large sum of 300 ducats demanded for the entire *ancona*; and the picture of Our Lady appears to have been returned to Leonardo, and afterwards bought by Lodovico, Il Moro, who presented it to the Emperor Maximilian, probably about the time of his marriage with Bianca Maria Sforza, the sister of Lodovico, in December, 1493. At an early period, it passed into the French Royal collection: there is a tradition that it was in the possession of Francis I.; but it is first mentioned by Pere Dan, in 1642, among the pictures at Fontainebleau. [F. Engeraud, *Inventaire des Tableaux du Roy rédigé en 1709 et 1710*, par Nicolas Bailly, Paris, 1899, p. 8.]

In order to fill the place of Leonardo's picture in the *ancona*, Ambrogio de Predis appears to have undertaken to execute, from Leonardo's cartoon, and probably with his supervision, a replica of the original. This, and the two side panels, were still in the Church of San Francesco in 1751: about 1777, the central panel was brought to England; and all three panels are now in the National Gallery, Nos. 1093, 1661, and 1662.

He also executed in Milan, for the Friars of Saint Dominic, at Santa Maria delle Grazie, a Last Supper, a most beautiful and marvellous work; and to the heads of the apostles he gave such majesty and beauty, that he left the head of Christ unfinished, thinking that he was not able to give it that divine air which is looked for in the image of Christ. This work, remaining thus almost finished, has always been held by the Milanese in vast veneration, and by other strangers as well; seeing that Leonardo so imagined and executed it, as to express that apprehension which possessed the apostles in wishing to know who should betray their Master. Wherefore in all their faces are seen love, fear, anger, or

grief, at not being able to understand the meaning of Christ : which thing does not arouse less wonder, than the sight of it in contrast with the obstinacy, hatred, and treachery of Judas. Moreover, every least part of the work shows an incredible diligence ; since even in the table-cloth, the texture of the fabric is imitated in such a manner that linen itself could not appear more real.

It is said that the Prior of that place urged Leonardo, in a most importunate way, to finish the work ; it seeming strange to him that the painter should sometimes stand half a day at a time, lost in thought : and he would have had him go on with his work as if he were digging in a garden, without ever stopping his brush. And this not contenting him, he complained of it to the Duke, and so besought him, that he was constrained to send for Leonardo, and adroitly urged him to finish the work, showing nevertheless that he did all this on account of the importunity of the Prior. Leonardo, knowing the intellect of that Prince to be acute and discerning, began to discourse at large with the Duke upon this matter, a thing which he had never done with the Prior ; and arguing with him much about art, made him understand how men of lofty genius sometimes produce the most, when they work the least ; seeking out inventions with the mind, and forming those perfect ideas, which the hands afterwards express and portray from the images already conceived in the brain. And he added that there were still wanting two heads for him to paint : that of Christ, which he was not willing to seek on earth ; and he could not think that it was possible to conceive in the imagination, that beauty and celestial grace which ought to belong to God incarnate. Next, there was wanting for him to paint that of Judas, to which he also had given thought, not believing that it was possible to imagine a face which should express the countenance of him who, after so many benefits received, had a mind so cruel, as to resolve upon the betrayal of his Lord and the Creator of the world. Wherefore he would seek out a head for the latter ; but if in the end he did not find a better, he should not want that of the importunate and unreasonable Prior. This thing moved the Duke mightily to laughter, and he said that he had a thousand reasons on his side. And so the poor Prior, in confusion, betook himself to look after the work of the garden, and left Leonardo alone, who finished only the head of Judas, which seems the very presentment of treachery and inhumanity : that of Christ remaining unfinished, as I have said.

The nobility of this picture, both on account of its design, and from its having been executed with an incomparable diligence, caused the King of France to wish to transport it into his own kingdom; for which reason, he attempted by every possible means to find out whether there were architects who, with cross-stays of wood and iron, might have been able to strengthen it in such a manner, that it might be transported in safety, without regard to the cost which might have been incurred therein; so much did he desire it. But the circumstance that it was painted on the wall deprived his Majesty of his desire; and the painting remained with the Milanese. In the same refectory, while he was executing the "Last Supper," on the end wall where is a "Passion" in the old manner, Leonardo drew the portraits of this same Lodovico with Massimiliano, his eldest son; and, on the other side, the Duchess Beatrice with Francesco, their other son, both of whom afterwards became Dukes of Milan: all of whom are portrayed divinely well.

¶ The first memoranda for the design of the "Last Supper" occur in one of the notebooks in the South Kensington Museum, and were written apparently *c.* 1494-5. [Forster Collection, MS. No. ii. fol. 2 *recto*, 1 *tergo*, &c.] The actual painting was probably begun *c.* 1495, and brought to an end in 1498. [Plate X.]

In a letter addressed to his secretary, Marchesino Stanga, dated 29th June, 1497, Lodovico Sforza sends instructions, among other things, "to urge Leonardo, the Florentine, to finish the work of the Refectory [of Santa Maria] delle Grazie, which he has begun, in order to attend afterwards to the other wall of that Refectory [of Santa Maria] delle Grazie, and that articles subscribed by his hand be executed, which shall oblige him to finish the work within the time that shall be agreed upon with him." [E. Solmi, *Leonardo*, p. 97.]

The large "Crucifixion" on the wall of the Refectory, opposite to the "Last Supper," to which Vasari refers as "a 'Passion' in the old manner," was executed, in 1495, by Giovanni Donato Montorfano. Of the kneeling figures of Lodovico, Il Moro, and his wife, Bianca Maria, with their children, which Leonardo introduced into the lower part of Montorfano's work, little more than the mere outlines now remains.

Several original studies for the "Last Supper" have come down to us, and will be found reproduced in Dr. J. P. Richter's *Literary Works of Leonardo*; namely, two preparatory sketches for the general composition of the picture; one in pen at Windsor [Richter, vol. i. pl. xlv.], and the other in red chalk in the Accademia at Venice [*l. c.*, pl. xlvi.]. At Windsor, also, are studies for the following heads of the apostles: St. Matthew, the fourth figure on the left of Christ, in red chalk [*l. c.*, pl. xlvii.], St. Philip, the third figure on the left of Christ, black chalk [*l. c.*, pl. xlviii.], Judas, red chalk [*l. c.*, pl. l.], and the study for the right arm of St. Peter, black chalk [*l. c.*, pl. xlix.]. The head of Christ in the Brera, at Milan, is probably the original study; but it has been so completely retouched that it retains scarcely a trace of Leonardo's hand.

At a very early period, the painting of the "Last Supper" began to flake from the wall. Lomazzo, writing in the latter part of the sixteenth century, says it was then "entirely ruined": and in 1652 its condition was such, that the monks did not scruple to make a doorway in the wall on which it is painted, destroying the legs of the Christ and the apostles next to him. In 1726, and again in 1770, it was so completely

restored, that only in a few passages, such as the heads of St. Matthew, Thaddeus, and St. Simon, can any trace of Leonardo's hand be detected. However, a number of early copies have come down to us, of which the most important is the one by Marco da Oggionno, in the Diploma Gallery of the Royal Academy.

The story of Leonardo and the Prior occurs in its original form (though with considerable variation from Vasari's version), in one of the Discourses of Giovanni Battista Giraldi, who relates the story as told him by his father. According to Giraldi, Leonardo having finished the painting of the "Last Supper," with the exception of the head of Judas, the Prior complained to the Duke, he had left it in this state for more than a year. Leonardo replied that for more than a year he had gone every morning and evening into the Borghetto, where all the worst sort of people lived, yet he could never find a head sufficiently evil to serve for the image of Judas; but, he added, "if perchance I shall not find one, I will put there the head of this Father Prior, who is now so troublesome to me, which will become him mightily." [*Discorsi di M. Giovannibattista Giraldi, . . . intorno al comporre de i Romanzi, delle Comedie, e delle Tragedie, e di altre maniere di Poesie*, Vinegia, 1554, p. 194.]

Of far greater interest is the picture which Matteo Bandello, Bishop of Agen, has drawn in his *Novelle*, of Leonardo at work on the "Last Supper." "Leonardo," he relates in the Prologue to the 58th novel of the First Part, "was often used (and I myself have more than once seen and observed him) to go early in the morning and mount the scaffolding, for the "Last Supper" is somewhat raised above the ground—he was used, I say, from sunrise to dusk, never to lay the pencil out of his hand; but, oblivious of both eating and drinking, to paint without ceasing. After that, he would remain two, three, or four days, without touching it; yet he always stayed there, sometimes for one or two hours, and only contemplated, considered, and criticised, as he examined with himself, the figures he had made." Bandello then goes on to relate, that a certain German cardinal who was staying in the monastery, came one day to the refectory to visit Leonardo, and view the painting on which he was engaged. In the course of their conversation, the cardinal asked the painter what salary he received; to which Leonardo replied, "2000 ducats, besides the gifts and presents which the Duke constantly made him, in the most liberal fashion." This seemed to the prelate, adds Bandello, a great sum. After the cardinal had retired to his own room, Leonardo related to his followers, the story of Filippo Lippi, the Florentine painter, among the Turks, which forms the subject of the 58th novel, in order to show the esteem in which the art of painting had always been held. [*La Prima Parte de le Novelle del Bandello*, Lucca, 1554, p. 363.]

While he was occupied with this work, he proposed to the Duke to make a horse in bronze, of an extraordinary greatness, in order to place upon it, as a memorial, the image of the Duke. And on so large a scale, he began and went forward with it, that he was never able to bring it to completion. And there are those who have held the opinion (since the judgments of men are various, and often malign out of envy), that Leonardo, as in the case of his other works, began it and did not finish it, in that, being of so great a size, he encountered an incredible difficulty in the attempt to cast it in a single piece; and one would also be able to think that, for this reason, many may have formed such a judgment, although not a few of his works have remained unfinished. But, in truth, one may believe that his vast and most

excellent mind was hindered in being too full of desire; and that the wish ever to seek out excellence upon excellence, and perfection upon perfection, was the cause of it: "Tal che l'opera fosse ritardata dal desio," as our poet Petrarch has said. And in truth, those who saw the great model that Leonardo made of clay, declare that they have never seen a more beautiful, or more superb, work: and this remained up till the time that the French came to Milan with King Louis of France, and broke it all in pieces; and they also destroyed a little model in wax that was held to be perfect, together with a book of the anatomy of the horse which he had made by way of study.

¶ So far from the project of the Bronze equestrian statue having been proposed by Leonardo, during the time that he was engaged on the painting of the "Last Supper," as Vasari states, the painting was not taken on hand until some twelve years after Leonardo had begun the statue.

Since the year 1473, the Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza had had the intention to erect a colossal equestrian statue of bronze, gilt, to the memory of his father, the Duke Francesco. This intention on the part of Galeazzo Maria was, however, interrupted by the events of the time, and by his death in 1476. At a later period, *c.* 1482, the project was again taken up by the regent, Lodovico, Il Moro; and there appears to have been a competition of sculptors who submitted designs for the work. Vasari relates that he possessed two drawings by Antonio Pollaiuoli for the statue: one of these is now preserved in the Print Room, at Munich.

Sabba da Castiglione states that over "the model of the horse of Milan," Leonardo "consumed sixteen consecutive years." [*Ricordi ovvero Annumaestramenti di Monsignor Saba da Castiglione*, . . . Vinegia, 1554, fol. 51 *tergo*.] As the undertaking was finally interrupted by the fall of Lodovico, Il Moro, in 1499, it must have been begun, according to this statement, in 1483. On 22nd July, 1489, Pietro Alamanni, the Florentine ambassador at Milan, wrote to Lorenzo de Medici, Il Magnifico, that "the Signor Lodovico desires to erect to his father a great monument, and has already ordered that Leonardo da Vinci should execute the model, namely, a great horse of bronze, on which is the Duke Francesco armed. And since his Excellency would wish to make a work of more than ordinary perfection, he has requested that I should write to you on his behalf, that you may send him a master capable of such a work; and though he has entrusted this work to Leonardo da Vinci, it does not seem to me that he is greatly persuaded that this master knows how to execute it." [*Jahrbuch der K. Preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, 1897, vol. xviii. p. 155.]

This letter, I think, leaves it an open question, whether Lodovico desired a sculptor to begin the statue afresh, or merely a bronze-caster, to execute the model which Leonardo had made. On the other hand, it may be argued both from this letter and other indications, that Leonardo has finished the model, but was already confronted with the difficulty of casting it. "The *Anonimo Gaddiano* says that Leonardo was resolved "to cast it in one piece," which was declared to be impossible. [ed. Frey, p. 112.] And the sting of Michelangiolo's bitter gibe, related by the same writer, lay in the reproach that, after Leonardo had finished the model, he was unable to cast it. [*l. c.*, p. 115.] His capacity to model the statue was never called into question. It is probable that, failing in his attempt to cast the first model about the time of Alamanni's letter, Leonardo began a second one with a view to facilitate the casting; for in one of his note books at Paris, is the entry: "On the 23rd day of April, 1490, I began this book, and began again the horse." [Bibliothèque de l'Institut, Paris, MS. C., *recto of cover*.] Among the "shows" exhibited in honour of the marriage of Bianca Maria Sforza with the Emperor Maximilian, in November, 1493, was Leonardo's finished model of "the horse." [*Jahrbuch der*

*K. Preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, 1897, vol. xviii. p. 159.] From the passage out of Bandello, already cited, it appears that he was still working on it, at the time he was finishing the "Last Supper," c. 1497-8.

The model was still in existence in September, 1501, when Ercole d'Este begged it of the Cardinal of Rouen, for a statue to be erected at Ferrara. [G. Campori, *Nuovi Documenti per la vita di Leonardo da Vinci*, Modena, 1865, p. 6.]

Sabba da Castiglione mentions among the works of Leonardo "the model of the horse of Milan, whereon," he adds, "he consumed sixteen consecutive years; and assuredly the dignity of the work was such, that he cannot be said to have lost his time and labour; but the ignorance and carelessness of certain persons, who, being ignorant of the worth of genius, set it at naught, shamefully left it to fall into ruin, and I have to record (and not without grief and displeasure, I say it) that a work so noble and ingenious, became a target for Gascon archers." [*Ricordi ovvero Anmaestramenti di Monsignor Saba da Castiglione*, . . . Vinegia, 1554, fol. 51 verso.]

A number of original studies for the statue of Francesco Sforza are in existence, for the most part in the Library at Windsor, of which the most important are reproduced in Dr. Richter's *Literary Works of Leonardo*, vol. ii. pl. lxxv. to pl. lxxvi. They chiefly consist of studies for various projects of the monument; and a careful study of them has not shown what was the definitive form of the statue. [Plate XI.] On this point, M. Louis Courajod's little book, *Leonard de Vinci et la Statue de Francesco Sforza*, Paris, 1879, may be consulted.

He next turned his attention, but with greater care, to the anatomy of the human body, aided by, and in turn aiding, in this study, Messer Marc' Antonio della Torre, an excellent philosopher, who then lectured in Pavia, and wrote of this matter; and he was one of the first (as I have heard say) that began to illustrate the questions of medicine with the doctrine of Galen, and to throw true light upon anatomy, which up to that time had been plunged in the thick and gross darkness of ignorance. And in this he was wonderfully assisted by the mind, work, and hand of Leonardo, who made a book drawn in red chalk, and annotated with the pen, of the subjects which he dissected with his own hand, and drew with the greatest diligence; wherein he showed all the frame of the bones, and then added to them, in order, all the nerves, and covered them with muscles; the first attached to the bone, the second that hold the body steady, and the third that move it; and against them, part by part, he wrote in letters of an ill-shaped character, made with the left hand, backwards; and whoever has no practice in reading them, cannot understand them, because they cannot be read except with a mirror. Of these papers of the anatomy of the human body, a great part is in the hands of M. Francesco da Melzo, a Milanese gentleman, who in the life-time of Leonardo was a beautiful youth, and much beloved by him, and now is a beautiful and gentle old man; and he holds them as precious, and keeps such papers together, as though they



were relics, along with the portrait of Leonardo of happy memory ; and to all who read these writings, it seems impossible that that divine spirit should have so well discoursed of the art, and of the muscles and nerves and veins ; and with such diligence of everything. So also, there are in the hands of N. N., a painter of Milan, some writings of Leonardo, likewise in characters written with the left hand, backwards, which treat of painting, and of the methods of drawing and colouring. This person, not long since, came to Florence to see me, wishing to print this work ; and he took it to Rome, in order to give it effect, but I do not know what may afterwards have become of it.

¶ In the Library at Windsor are a great number of sheets of anatomical studies, which, according to Dr. Richter, formed portions of four distinct treatises, or series, or books of studies. [J. P. Richter, *Literary Works of Leonardo*, vol. i. pp. 5-6.] Among these are a number of sheets drawn in red chalk, and annotated with the pen, which probably formed portions of the volume which Vasari saw in the possession of Francesco Melzi. One of these sheets is inscribed : "On the 2nd day of April, 1489, the book entitled, Of the Human Figure, that it may please our Lord God that I may be able to demonstrate the nature of men and their habits, in the same manner as I am describing their form." [*l. c.*, vol. i. p. 132.]

It is evident, however, that the anatomical studies of Leonardo occupied him at intervals during the greater part of his life. Already in the workshop of Verrocchio, there is evidence that Leonardo fell under the influence of Antonio Pollaiuoli, who worked in the same street, Vacchereccia. Antonio was not only a goldsmith, painter, and caster of bronzes, but also the greatest draughtsman of his generation. In the words of Vasari, "he understood the nude more modernly than the masters who preceded him had done, and dissected many bodies in order to study their anatomy ; and he was the first to show the method of finding out the muscles that have form and order in the human figure." In Antonio, the school of the nude in Florence had its definite beginning. His influence over Leonardo in this regard, has never been adequately discussed : it is marked, among other traits, by the Pollaiuolesque character of the male heads in Leonardo's anatomical drawings.

After Leonardo's return to Florence in 1500, he continued these studies : the *Anonimo Gaddiano* records that he drew the anatomy of many bodies in the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. [ed. Frey, p. 112.]

During his second stay at Milan, between the years 1506 and 1513, Leonardo made the acquaintance of Marc Antonio della Torre, the greatest anatomist of his age, who had been born at Verona, in 1481, and who at that time held the chair of anatomy in the university of Padua. [G. B. De Toni, *Intorno a Marco Antonio Dalla Torre, anatomico veronese del xvi secolo*, Atti del R. Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, ser. vii. vol. vii. 1895-6, pp. 190-203.] During this time Leonardo made a series of anatomical studies in pen and ink, now preserved at Windsor, which have been published in facsimile under the title : *I Manoscritti di Leonardo da Vinci della Reale Biblioteca di Windsor. Dell' Anatomia—Fogli A—Pubblicati da Teodoro Sabachnikoff : trascritti e annotati da Giovanni Piumati*, etc., Parigi, 1898. Leonardo has written on one of these sheets : "During this winter of 1510, I look to finish all this anatomy." [*l. c.*, p. 179.]

Leonardo's *Treatise of Painting* was first published in a garbled form, at Paris, in 1651. Only fragments of his original manuscript have survived ; but the work has come down entire, in more than one manuscript copy, of which the best and earliest is preserved in the library of the Vatican at Rome. It has been excellently edited, and published in vols. 15-18 of the series, *Quellenschriften für Kunstgeschichte*, etc.,

under the title, *Das Buch von der Malerei: nach dem Codex Vaticanus (Urbinas) 1270, herausgegeben, übersetzt und erläutert, von H. Ludwig.* Wien, 1882.

The Manuscripts once in the possession of Francesco Melzi are now dispersed, some being mutilated and others lost. Of those that have survived, the most important are: the *Codice Atlantico* in the Ambrosiana, at Milan, a vast collection of miscellaneous sheets, formed by Pompeo Leoni, of which a reproduction in facsimile, and a transcription of the text, is now in course of publication by the Accademia de' Lincei, at Rome. Another large volume of miscellaneous drawings, etc., also formed by Pompeo Leoni, and bought by Charles II., on the advice of Sir Peter Lely. This volume, which is now split up, originally consisted of 234 leaves, and contained 779 drawings: these are now preserved in the library at Windsor Castle. [C. Rogers, *A Collection of Prints in Imitation of Drawings*, 1778, vol. i. p. 4.] A series of twelve note-books, once in the Ambrosiana at Milan, and now in the Bibliothèque de l'Institut, at Paris. These have been admirably edited under the title, *Les Manuscrits de Léonard de Vinci . . . de la Bibliothèque de l'Institut publiés en fac-similés, avec transcription littérale, traduction française, . . . par M. Charles Ravaisson-Mollien*, Paris, 1881-1891. Three unedited note-books are in the South Kensington Museum, in the Forster Collection, and another in the British Museum. A complete Bibliography of Leonardo's manuscripts will be found in Dr. Richter's *Literary Works of Leonardo*, vol. i. pp. 5-7.

And to return to the works of Leonardo: in his time the King of France came to Milan, on which account Leonardo being besought to contrive some bizarre thing, made a lion that came forward several paces, and then opened its breast which was found full of lilies.

¶ The lion, here described by Vasari, probably formed part of an entertainment offered to Louis XII., during his visit to Milan, in May 1507.

While in Milan he took Salai, the Milanese, for his servant, who was most comely in grace and beauty, having fine locks, abundant and curled, in which Leonardo much delighted; and he taught him many things of the art; and there are certain works in Milan that are said to be by Salai, but which were retouched by Leonardo.

¶ The name of Salai occurs for the first time in the manuscripts of Leonardo, in an entry of the year 1494. [*Bibliothèque de l'Institut*, Paris, MS. H., fol. 142 verso.]

Vasari, in his account of Leonardo's life at Milan, alludes to little else than his works in painting and sculpture, and his studies in anatomy. Sabba da Castiglione says that few other works in painting by Leonardo were to be seen at Milan, in the middle of the 16th century, besides the "Last Supper," "because when he ought to have attended to painting, in which without doubt he would have proved a new Apelles, he gave himself entirely to geometry, architecture, and anatomy." [*Ricordi ovvero ammaestramenti di Monsignor Saba da Castiglione*, Vinezia, 1554, fol. 51 verso.] Leonardo appears to have spent no inconsiderable portion of his time at Milan, upon architectural works, both civil and military, for Lodovico, Il Moro. He seems to have been chiefly engaged upon works for the Cathedral, and the Castle of the Sforza, the "Castello di Porta Giova." The best and most concise account of Leonardo's life in Milan, is to be found in Edmondo Solmi's *Leonardo*, Firenze, 1900, cap. iii.-v.

### III

HE returned to Florence, where he found that the Servite Friars had commissioned Filippino to paint the panel for the high altar of the Annunziata; at which Leonardo said that he would gladly have executed such a work. Whereupon Filippino having heard it, like the amiable person that he was, withdrew from the undertaking; and the friars, in order that Leonardo might paint it, took him into their house, bearing the charges of himself and all his family; and in this way he put them to trouble and expense, a long time, yet never began anything. At length, he made a cartoon wherein was a Madonna and a St. Anne with a Christ, which not only caused all the artificers to marvel; but when it was finished, men and women, young and old, continued for two days together to flock as if to a solemn festival, to the room where it was, in order to behold the marvels of Leonardo, which caused all those people to be astounded; for in the countenance of that Madonna was seen whatever of the simple and beautiful can by simplicity and beauty lend grace to an image of the Mother of Christ; for he wished to show that modesty and that humility which should be in a figure of the Virgin, wholly content with joy at seeing the beauty of her Son whom she holds with tenderness in her lap: the while that with most chastened gaze she was regarding St. John, as a little child, who was playing below with a lamb; not without a smile from St. Anne, who, overflowing with gladness, was beholding her earthly progeny become divine; conceptions born, indeed, of the intellect and brain of Leonardo. This cartoon, as will be related below, was afterwards taken to France. He made the portrait of Ginevra d'Américo Benci, a most beautiful work; and abandoned

the execution of the altar-piece to the Friars, who once more gave it to Filippino; but he, being overtaken by death, was not able to finish it.

¶ Vasari makes no allusion to the departure of Leonardo da Vinci from Milan, after the fall of Lodovico, Il Moro, nor to the wanderings of the painter, previous to his return to Florence. Il Moro, having set out from Milan, on 2nd September, 1499, for the Tyrol, with the intention of raising an army to resist King Louis XII. of France, who laid claim to the Duchy of Milan, the Milanese immediately sent ambassadors to invite the French king to take possession of the city. Twelve days after the departure of Il Moro, Bernardino da Corte, to whom the Duke had entrusted the Castle of Milan, then deemed to be impregnable, sold it to the French, without so much as firing a shot. In less than twenty days, Louis XII. had quietly possessed himself of the whole Duchy; and, on 6th October, he made his solemn entry into Milan. The Milanese quickly discovered that there were worse evils than the tyranny of Lodovico, Il Moro. "Already every one is deploring the Sforza," exclaims Girolamo Morone, who had accepted office under Louis XII., in a letter of November, 1499, "the people are disillusioned of their hopes; the lust and abuse of the French soldiers are extreme, and the obligations of entertaining them in the private houses exceeds the horrors of whatever tyranny."

Leonardo soon determined to retrieve his broken fortunes elsewhere. Having transmitted by a letter of exchange, dated 14th December, 1499, the sum of 600 gold florins to be deposited with the authorities of the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, at Florence [G. Uzielli, *Ricerche*, ed. 1872-84, vol. i. p. 165], Leonardo set out for Venice, accompanied by his assistant Salai, and Luca Pacioli, the mathematician. On their way thither, they made a brief stay at Mantua, where Leonardo drew the portrait of the famous Isabella d'Este, the wife of Giovan Francesco Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua. On 13th March, 1500, Lorenzo Gussasco da Pavia, a maker of musical instruments, who had known Leonardo at the court of Lodovico, says, in a letter to Isabella of Mantua: "Leonardo Vinci, who is at Venice, has shown me a portrait of your Ladyship, which is extraordinarily like you: it is scarcely possible that it can be so well done." [A. Baschet, *Aldo Manuzio*, Venezia, 1867, p. 72.] This, no doubt, is the beautiful drawing now in the Louvre. [Plate XII.] In a later letter of 1504, addressed to Leonardo, Isabella, referring to this drawing, says: "When you were in this city, and drew our portrait in charcoal, you promised you would one day certainly execute it in colour." [A. Luzio, *I Precettori d'Isabella d'Este*, Ancona, 1887, p. 34.]

Meanwhile, on 4th February 1500, Lodovico, Il Moro, had re-entered Milan in triumph; but his success was destined to be of brief duration. On the 10th April following, the French army under Louis XII. routed the mercenaries of Lodovico, near Novara, and Lodovico himself was taken prisoner. "The pen must of necessity keep company with the pen-knife; and, moreover, useful company, for the one can do nothing without the other," Leonardo had written on the cover of one of his note-books, and, under it, he jots down in a confused, dejected manner: "The castellan made prisoner. Visconti [?] betrayed, and afterwards his son dead. Gian della Rosa robbed of his money. Borgonzo made a beginning, and then would not, and therefore fortune fled him. The Duke has lost his State and goods and liberty; and no one of his works is finished for him." [Bibliothèque de l'Institut, Paris, MS. L., 1st verso of cover.]

After a brief stay in Venice, Leonardo set out for Florence, in company with Salai. He arrived there previously to 24th April, 1500, for on that day he drew from the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, 50 of the 600 gold florins which he had deposited with the authorities of the Hospital. [G. Uzielli, *Ricerche*, ed. 1872-84, vol. i. p. 164.]

It was under these circumstances that Filippino Lippi, who had executed the altar-piece for the church of the Benedictine monastery of San Donato a Scopeto, which Leonardo had abandoned before going to Milan, yielded to Leonardo the commission for the altar-piece for the Annunziata. Within a year of his arrival in Florence, Leonardo has designed the cartoon for this altar-piece, of which Vasari speaks. A

letter written on 3rd April, 1501, by Fra Pietro da Nuvolaria, Vicar-General of the Carmelites, in answer to the inquiries of Isabella d'Este, contains a minute description of this cartoon. Isabella had written to know whether Leonardo was still in Florence, how he passed his time, and whether he had begun any work there: she was desirous that he should paint a picture for her famous study in the palace at Mantua, for the decoration of which Mantegna, Perugino, and Lorenzo Costa afterwards painted the pictures now in the Louvre. More than that, she would have Fra Pietro persuade him to paint for her "a little picture of the Madonna, devout and sweet, as is his wont"; together with "another sketch" of her portrait, since her husband had given away the one which Leonardo had left at Mantua. To these injunctions, Fra Pietro replies: "I have had the letter of your Excellency, and I will do with all haste and diligence that which you write to me. But, so far as I can gather, the life of Leonardo is extremely variable and undetermined, so that he seems to live from day to day. Since he has been here in Florence, he has made only a sketch in a cartoon. It represents a Christ, as a little child of about the age of one year, who reaching forward, almost out of the arms of his mother, takes a lamb, and seems to embrace it. The mother, half-rising from the lap of St. Anne, catches at the child, in order to take it away from the lamb, the animal of Sacrifice, signifying the Passion. St. Anne, rising a little from where she is sitting, seems desirous to restrain her daughter from separating the child from the lamb: which, perhaps, is intended to figure the Church, that would not wish that the Passion of Christ should be hindered. And these figures are large as life, but they are contained in a small cartoon, since all of them sit, or are bent; and the one figure [of the Virgin] is somewhat before the other [of St. Anne], turned towards the left hand. And this sketch is not as yet finished. He has not executed any other work, except that his two assistants paint portraits, and he, at times, lends a hand to one or another of them. He gives profound study to geometry, and grows most impatient of painting." [A. Luzio, *I Precettori d'Isabella d'Este*, Imola, 1887, p. 32.] From this letter, then, it is clear that the composition of the cartoon was identical with that of the picture of the "Virgin and Child with St. Anne," now in the Louvre, No. 1598. [Plate XIII.] Vasari, therefore, who, in all likelihood, never saw either the cartoon or the painting, but described the design from hearsay, was in error when he stated that it contained a figure of St. John. It is also clear, from this letter, that the beautiful cartoon of the same subject, preserved in the Diploma Gallery of the Royal Academy, in London [Plate XIV.], although a work of about the same period, cannot be the cartoon of which Vasari speaks: whether it was a preliminary study for the altar-piece, or, as its size suggests, a wholly different design for a smaller and independent picture, is a question which we have no means of determining. A sketch for the composition of the picture in the Louvre, is preserved in the Academy at Venice.

For an account of the various school-versions of these two compositions, see *The St. Anne of Leonardo da Vinci*, by Alfred Marks [London, 1884], reprinted from the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature.

The *Anonimo Gaddiano*, also, records that Leonardo "drew in Florence, from the life, Ginevra d'Amerigo Benci." [ed. Frey, p. 111.] No such picture by Leonardo's own hand is now known to be in existence. On the other hand, it may have been one of those portraits, mentioned by Fra Pietro da Nuvolaria, which were executed by Salai, or some other assistant, and retouched by Leonardo. The portrait known as "La Belle Féronnière," in the Louvre, is a picture of this kind.

At this point Vasari again passes over an eventful episode in Leonardo's life, namely, his appointment as military architect to Cæsar Borgia. A memorandum in one of Leonardo's note-books marks his hurried departure from Florence, on this occasion—

"Where is Valentino? [as Cæsar Borgia was popularly called.]—Riding boots—Boxes in the custom-house—Collars of office—Friars of the Carmine—Set-squares—Piero Martelli—Salvi—Borgherini—Ask for the travelling bags—Frame of the eye-glasses—The nude of Sangallo," etc. [British Museum, Arundel MS. 263, fol. 202 verso.] Leonardo, we know, was still in Florence in the beginning of May, 1502. On 13th June, 1502, Cæsar Borgia set out from Rome to resume his bloody campaign in the Romagna;

and on the 21st of the same month, he had already made himself master of Urbino. One of the note-books of Leonardo contains several entries which show that he was at Urbino at this time, engaged on military works for Cæsar Borgia. In one instance, he made a note of the construction of a dovecot at Urbino, on the 30th day of July 1502." [Bibliothèque de l'Institut, Paris, MS. L., fol. 7 *tergo*.] Other entries in the same volume show that Leonardo was at Pesaro on the 1st August, at Rimini on the 8th August, and at Cesena on the 10th August: "Alla fiera di Sancto Lorenzo a Cesena, 1502." [*l. c.*, *recto of cover*, fol. 78 *recto*, and fol. 46 *tergo*.] A document records that one of the architects of Cæsar Borgia, doubtlessly Leonardo, gave the design for a canal from the walls of Cesena to Cesenatico, in August 1502. [E. Solmi, *Leonardo*, p. 137.]

On the following 18th August, Cæsar Borgia issued at Pavia, where he had gone to visit Louis XII., a ducal patent to Leonardo, granting him free pass and access to all the fortresses which he was required to inspect in his capacity as architect and engineer-general:—"To all our lieutenants, castellans, captains, leaders, officers and subordinates, to whom these presents shall come, we require and command that, to our most excellent and well-beloved servant, architect and engineer-general, Leonardo da Vinci, the bearer of these letters, who holds our commission to inspect the strongholds and fortresses of our States, to the end that, according to their exigencies and his judgment, we may be able to repair them, they be obliged everywhere to grant a pass, free from every public payment, to him and his assistants, and a friendly reception; and allow him to see, measure, and well estimate as much as he shall desire; and, to this end, to place men at his disposal, as he may require them, and to lend him whatever aid, assistance, and favour he shall ask for: it being our will, that, in regard to the works to be carried out in the dominions, every engineer shall be required to confer with him, and conform to his judgment." [E. Alvisi, *Cesare Borgia*, Imola, 1878, p. 537.]

Meanwhile Leonardo remained at Cesena and Cesenatico, engaged, apparently, on the restoration of the castle and the work of the canal. The latest entry, bearing a date which occurs in the note-book already cited, is: "Porto Cesenatico, on the 5th day of September, 1502." [*l. c.*, fol. 66 *tergo*.] Suddenly, these undertakings were interrupted by the rebellion against Cæsar Borgia, which broke out in the Romagna, at the beginning of October 1502. What attitude Leonardo assumed amid these disorders, we can only vaguely conjecture. Dr. Solmi, relying on certain doubtful indications to be found in the manuscripts, seeks to show that Leonardo still followed for a time the fortunes of Cæsar Borgia. [E. Solmi, *Leonardo*, p. 140.] One thing, however, is certain, that he had returned to Florence before 4th March 1503; on which day he drew 50 florins from the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. [G. Uzielli, *Ricerche*, ed. 1872-84, vol. i. p. 164.]

Leonardo undertook to paint, for Francesco del Giocondo, the portrait of Monna Lisa, his wife; and after he had lingered over it four years, left it unfinished: which work is now in the possession of King Francis of France, at Fontainebleau. In this head, whoever wished to see how nearly art is able to imitate nature, was readily able to comprehend it; since therein are counterfeited all those minutenesses that with subtlety are able to be painted: seeing that the eyes had that lustre and watery sheen which are always seen in the living creature, and around them were all those rosy and pearly tints, together with the eyelashes, that cannot be depicted except by the greatest subtlety. The eyebrows, also, by reason of his having represented the manner in which the hairs issue from the flesh, here more thick and here more scanty, and turn according to the pores of the flesh, could not be more natural.

The nose with its beautiful nostrils, rosy and tender, seems to be alive. The mouth with its opening, and with its ends united by the red of the lips to the flesh tints of the face, appeared, indeed, to be not colours but flesh. Whoever intently observed the pit of the throat, saw the pulse beating in it. And, in truth, one could say that it was painted in a manner that made every able artificer, be he whom he may, tremble and lose courage. He employed, also, this device: Monna Lisa being very beautiful, while he drew her picture, he retained those who played or sang, and continually jested, that they might make her continue merry, in order to take away that melancholy that painters are often used to give to the portraits which they paint. And in this picture of Leonardo's, there was a smile so pleasing, that the sight of it was a thing more divine than human; and it was held to be a marvel, in that it was not other than alive.

¶ Francesco del Giocondo, a Florentine citizen, born in 1460, married as his third wife, in 1495, Monna Lisa, a gentlewoman of Naples, of the Gherardini family. If the letter of Fra Pietro da Nuvolaria to Isabella d'Este is to be relied upon, Leonardo has not begun the portrait of Monna Lisa in April, 1501. It is probable, then, that it was begun soon after the painter's return to Florence in March, 1503, and that he lingered over it till his departure for Milan in May, 1506. Upon the supposition that Monna Lisa was about eighteen at the time of her marriage, she would have been about twenty-seven when Leonardo began the picture in 1503. The portrait of Monna Lisa passed at an early period into the possession of Francis I., probably before the painter went to France, in 1516. After being preserved for nearly three centuries in the old Royal Collection of France, it is now in the Louvre, No. 1601. [Plate XV.]

On account, therefore, of the excellence of the works of this most divine artificer, his fame so increased, that all persons who delighted in art—indeed, the entire city of Florence—desired that he should leave them some memorial, and the means were discussed to commission him to execute some notable and great work, by which the common wealth might be adorned and honoured by such intellect, grace, and judgment, as were shown in the works of Leonardo. And it was arranged between the Gonfalonier and the principal citizens, that the Great Council Chamber, having been newly built, the architecture of which had been contrived with the judgment and advice of Giuliano da San Gallo, Simone Pollaiuoli, called Il Cronaca, Michelangiolo Buonarotti, and Baccio d' Agnolo, and finished in great haste (as will be related more particularly elsewhere), it was ordained, by public decree, that some splendid work should be given to Leonardo to paint; and so the aforesaid hall was allotted to him

by Piero Soderini, then Gonfalonier of Justice. To this end Leonardo, desiring to carry out the work, began a cartoon in the Sala del Papa, an apartment in Santa Maria Novella, of the story of Niccolo Piccinino, Captain of Duke Filippo of Milan ; in which he designed a group of horsemen that were fighting for a standard, a work held to be most excellent, and of great mastery, on account of the marvellous conceptions which he had formed in designing that fight : for rage, hatred, and revenge are seen no less in the men than in the horses, among which two with the fore - legs interlocked, are fighting as fiercely with their teeth, as he who is on horseback does in fighting for that standard, which has been seized by a soldier, as he puts his horse to flight, turning backwards with his body, and seizing the staff of the standard, in order, by means of his shoulders, to wrest it by force from the hands of the four, of whom two are defending it, each with one hand, and with their swords raised in the other, are attempting to sever the staff ; whilst an old soldier in a red cap, crying aloud, seizes the staff with one hand, and with the other raises a scimitar, angrily threatens a blow in order to cleave both the hands of those who, grinding their teeth in the effort, attempt, in attitudes of the greatest fierceness, to defend their banner. Moreover, on the ground, between the legs of the horses, there are two figures in foreshortening, who are fighting together, the one on the ground having over him a soldier who has his arm as high as he is able, that with greater force he may plunge a dagger into his throat, in order to end his life ; while the other, struggling with his arms and legs, does what he can to avoid death.

One is not able to describe the invention which Leonardo showed in the habits of the soldiers, all varied in different ways by him, or in the weapons and other ornaments ; much less the incredible mastery which he showed in the forms and lineaments of the horses, the fiery spirit, the muscles and shapely beauty of which Leonardo drew better than any other master. It is said that, in order to draw this cartoon, he made a most ingenious stage, what was raised by bringing it together, and lowered by expanding it. And, conceiving the wish to colour in oils on the wall, he made a composition of so gross an admixture, as a binder for painting on the wall, that, continuing to paint in that hall, it began to flake off in such a way that in a short time he abandoned it, seeing that it was spoiling. Leonardo had great spirit, and in all



his actions was most generous. It is said that, going to the bank for the money that he was wont to receive every month from Piero Soderini, the cashier wanted to give him certain paper-packets of pence, but he would not take them, saying to him, "I am no penny-painter." Being blamed for having deceived Piero Soderini, the thing began to be whispered against him; whereupon Leonardo so wrought with his friends, that he collected the money and took it to Piero to repay him, but he would not accept it.

¶ The Great Council Chamber, or "Sala del Cinquecento" as it is now called, was begun in July, 1495, from the designs of Il Cronaca, and hurriedly finished in May, 1496, to serve for the assemblies of the Consiglio Maggiore, instituted by Savonarola. [L. Landucci, *Diario*, pp. 112 and 131.] It was erected at the back of the original portion of the Palazzo Vecchio, on the site of the old offices of the Bargello and the Dogana.

Leonardo, as I have shown, had returned to Florence by 4th March, 1503; but it was not until the following 24th October, that the keys of the Hall of the Pope, in Santa Maria Novella, where he executed the cartoon of the "Battle of Anghiari," were ordered to be delivered to him. [Vasari, ed. Sansoni, vol. iv. p. 43, note.]

Again there was a delay; and though the stage for the execution of the cartoon had been built by the following February [J. Gaye, *Carteggio inedito*, ii. 88], it was not till 4th May, 1504, that the contract for the work was definitely settled by a resolution of the Signoria of Florence. By the terms of this contract, it was stipulated that the cartoon was to be finished by February, 1505, and that Leonardo was to receive 15 gold florins the month, reckoning from 20th April, 1504. If the work was not finished by the stipulated time, Leonardo was to pay back the entire sum which he had received. The execution of the painting was to be determined by a further contract. [Vasari, ed. Sansoni, vol. iv. p. 44, note.] The cartoon appears to have been duly finished, for, on 28th February, 1505, certain payments were made for the erection of the stage in the Sala dei Cinquecento, to enable Leonardo to begin the painting. From that time, till 30th August, 1505, a series of entries of payments made for gesso, linseed oil, colours, etc., occur in the books of the *Operai*, or Wardens of the Works, of the Palazzo della Signoria. [J. Gaye, *Carteggio inedito*, vol. ii. pp. 89-90.] But before these payments had come to an end, Leonardo had already gone back to his mathematical studies. A treatise in his handwriting, preserved in the South Kensington Museum, bears the inscription: "Begun by me, Leonardo da Vinci, on the 12th day of July, 1505, the book entitled, *Of the transformation of one body into another, without diminution or accretion of matter*. [Forster Collection, MS. No. I., fol. 1 *recto* and *tergo*.] On the 30th May, 1506, Leonardo obtained permission to leave the city, "on condition that he would present himself, within the space of three months, before the Priors of Florence, under a penalty of 150 gold ducats": and the painting of the "Battle of Anghiari" was destined never to be resumed. Vasari says that Leonardo abandoned the painting, because he found that the colour was flaking from the wall; the *Anonimo Gaddiano*, who is more explicit, adds that Leonardo "took the stucco on which he coloured, from Pliny, but that he did not well understand it. And the first time he tried it in the Sala del Papa, in which place he was working, after he had placed it on the wall, he lighted a great fire of charcoal in front of it, by which, on account of the great heat of the said charcoal, he evaporated and dried the said material; and afterwards, he wished to put it into execution in the Sala [del Consiglio], where, in the lower part, the fire reached and dried it, but above, on account of the great distance, the heat did not reach it, and it ran." [ed. Frey, p. 114.]

The group which Vasari describes, and which is known as the "Battle of the Standard," formed only an incident in the foreground of Leonardo's design. It was the one portion of the cartoon that Leonardo executed in colour on the wall. There can be little doubt

that both Leonardo's cartoon, and the cartoon of the "Surprise of the Pisan Soldiers," which Michelangiolo prepared for the decoration of the same hall, were finished, and that they both early disappeared. Benvenuto Cellini, writing in 1558, or shortly after, says, in his *Autobiography*, that these "two cartoons hung, one in the Palazzo de' Medici, and one in the Sala del Papa; and that, while they remained entire, they were the school of the world." Michelangiolo's cartoon was cut to pieces at the time of the death of Giuliano di Medici, in 1516: the *Anonimo Gaddiano* relates that among the drawings and other property which Leonardo left in charge of the authorities of Santa Maria Nuova, at Florence, on going to France, in 1516, was "the greater part of the cartoon of the Sala del Consiglio, of which the drawing for the group of horses still to be seen executed there, remained in the Palace." [ed. Frey, p. 111.] At the present time, not so much as a fragment of either cartoon remains; but there are several original studies extant for the "Battle of Anghiari," which are reproduced in facsimile in Dr. Richter's *Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*. They consist of several sheets of groups of fighting horsemen in pen and ink, preserved in the British Museum at Windsor and at Venice [*l. c.*, pl. lii. to pl. lvi.], and two sheets of studies in chalk for three of the heads in the group of the "Battle of the Standard," preserved at Buda-Pesth [*l. c.*, vol. i. pp. 338-9]. [Plates XVI. and XVII.] The fate of the painting of the "Battle of the Standard" which Leonardo began on one of the walls of the Sala dei Cinquecento may be surmised with more certainty than that of the cartoon. Luca Landucci records in his *Diario*, in an entry of 12th December, 1512, that the costly wall-panelling, and other fine wood-work, were removed from the hall, at this time, some two months after the return of Giuliano and Lorenzo de' Medici to Florence, in order to construct rooms for their guard: and on 30th April, 1513, the "Operai" of the palace paid lire 8. 12. 0 to a carpenter for boards "to enclose the figures painted in the great hall of the guard, by the hand of Lionardo da Vinci." [J. Gaye, *Carteggio inedito*, vol. ii. p. 90.] The unfinished painting was still to be seen on the wall of the Sala dei Cinquecento at the time when the *Anonimo Gaddiano* was writing, between 1542 and 1548. [ed. Frey, p. 112.] A yet later allusion to the painting occurs in a letter of Anton Francesco Doni, dated 17th August, 1549, giving an account to a friend about to visit Florence, of the "things worthy to be seen in the city": "having ascended the stairs of Sala Grande," he writes, "take a diligent view of a group of horses and men (a portion of the battle of Leonardo da Vinci), that will appear a miraculous thing to you." [G. Bottari, *Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura*, Roma, 1754, vol. iii. p. 234.] It would seem, therefore, that the painting was still in existence when Vasari, shortly after 1557, began the work of remodelling the Sala Grande; raising the roof from 20 to 32 braccia, and decorating the ceiling and walls with paintings. [Vasari, ed. Sansoni, vol. iv. pp. 448-450.] The ceiling was already finished in 1565; but the paintings on the walls were not uncovered until 4th January, 1571-2. [A. Lapini, *Diario*, Firenze, 1900, pp. 150 and 174.] There can be little doubt, then, that Leonardo's painting was destroyed to make way for Vasari's vast frescoes, on the walls of the Sala dei Cinquecento. Vasari himself is ominously silent on the subject. There are a number of ancient copies of the painting of the "Battle of the Standard." These include a copy in colour, on a reduced scale, preserved in the Dépôt of the Gallery of the Uffizi, which probably records the actual state of the painting as it was left by Leonardo, unfinished and without a background; a slight sketch by Raphael in pen and ink, in the University Galleries at Oxford, No. 28; a small copy in colour, with an added background by some Milanese follower of Leonardo, in the possession of Madame Timbal, at Paris, which has been engraved by H. Haussoullier; a large copy on canvas, probably of the size of the original, in the possession of the writer; the drawing by Rubens in the Louvre, No. 565, which was done after the original had disappeared, and of which there is an engraving by Edelinck. There is also a print on a folio sheet, inscribed: "Ex tabella propria Leonardi Vincii manu picta opus sumptum a Laurentio Zacchia Lucensi ab eodemque nunc excussum 1558." Its publication probably marks the date at which the destruction of the painting was determined upon. Lastly, among the Malcolm drawings in the British Museum, Add. No. 1, is an early drawing of a portion of the "Battle of the Standard." [Plate XVIII.]

Vasari, who appears to be describing the "Battle of the Standard" from memory,

has somewhat misinterpreted the motive of the principal action of the group. Not five, but four, soldiers on horseback are contending for the standard. One of them, the standard-bearer, has been carrying the flag over his right shoulder, while an opponent has seized it by the staff, from behind. In order to prevent it from being wrested from him, the standard-bearer has turned round in the saddle, and has seized the staff with his left hand, thus acquiring a double purchase. The third figure, that of the old soldier in the red cap, lifts his scimitar in order to cut at the hands of the assailant of the standard; at the very moment that the fourth figure charges at the old soldier in the red cap, to prevent his attack.

At this point, Vasari again passes over in silence a significant passage in the life of Leonardo. After the painter had obtained the permission of the Signoria, on 30th May 1506, to absent himself from Florence for three months, he set out for Milan in order to undertake certain works for Charles d'Amboise, Lord of Chaumont-sur-Loire, the Governor of the Duchy of Milan, in the name of Louis XII. On the 18th August 1506, Chaumont wrote to the Signoria, requesting that the painter might remain at Milan the whole of the coming month of September; "since," he adds, "we have still need of the master, Leonardo, in order to furnish certain works, which we have caused him to begin." [*Jahrbuch der K. Preuss. Kunstsammlungen*, 1899, vol. xx. p. 116.]

The letter of the Signoria to Chaumont granting the permission, is dated 28th August 1506. [Vasari, ed. Sansoni, vol. iv. p. 45, note.] When, at the end of September, Chaumont again requested that Leonardo might be allowed to remain some time longer in Milan, Piero Soderini, the Gonfalonier, replied in a letter of 9th October: "May your Excellency excuse us from coming to an agreement about a day with Leonardo da Vinci, who has not borne himself as he ought to have done, towards this Republic, in that he has received a good sum of money, and has made a little beginning of a great work, which he is under obligation to execute, and he has already comported himself as a laggard, out of deference to your Excellency." [J. Gaye, *Carteggio inedito*, vol. ii. p. 87.]

In spite of this brusque remonstrance, Leonardo still remained at Milan. At length, on 12th January, 1507, the Signoria of Florence received a letter from Francesco Pandolfini, their ambassador at the Court of Louis XII. at Blois, in which he writes: "Being this morning in the presence of the Most Christian King, his Majesty called me, saying: 'Your Signoria must do me a service. Write to them, that I desire the master, Leonardo, their painter, who is now at Milan, to serve me, and that I wish him to make several things for me. See that their Lordships exhort and command him, to serve me speedily, and that he do not leave Milan before my coming.' "And all this," adds Pandolfini, "has been occasioned by a little picture by his hand, which has lately been brought here, and which is held to be a most excellent work. In speaking with him, I asked his Majesty, what were the works he desired. He replied to me: 'Certain little panel-pictures of Our Lady, and other things, as the fancy shall take me: and perhaps, I shall also cause him to make my own portrait.'" [E. Solmi, *Leonardo*, p. 167.] A few days later, on the 14th January, 1507, Louis wrote himself to the Signoria of Florence, to the same effect. [E. Delécluze, *Saggio intorno Leonardo da Vinci*, Siena, 1844, p. 127.]

On the 24th May 1507, Louis XII. made his solemn entry into Milan. It was probably on this occasion that Leonardo contrived, in honour of the French King, the lion, to which Vasari alluding, "which came forward several paces, and then opened its breast which was found full of lilies."

In the autumn of 1507, Leonardo returned to Florence, in order to defend a lawsuit brought against him by his brothers, who sought, on the ground of his illegitimacy, to upset the will of an uncle bequeathing to Leonardo a small property at Fiesole. The painter's arrival in Florence was preceded by a letter of Louis XII. to the Signoria, dated 26th July, requesting that they should use their influence to render the suit "as brief as possible." This letter was followed by another from Chaumont, dated 15th August, in which he says, that "the master, Leonardo da Vinci, painter to the Most Christian King, to whom with the greatest difficulty we have given licence on account of his being under promise to execute a panel-picture for his Most Christian Majesty,

came thither wishing to end certain differences, which have arisen between him and his brothers," etc. Leonardo had arrived in Florence during the first days of September; and in spite of the letters of Louis and Chaumont, his suit still dragged on. It was at this time, as the *Anonimo Gaddiano* records, that Leonardo lived six months in the house of Giovan Francesco Rustici, the sculptor [ed. Frey, p. 110], who was then engaged on the large bronze figures of "St. John the Baptist, between the Levite and the Pharisee." Rustici was then living in the Via de' Martelli, probably in a part of the house of Piero di Braccio Martelli, for on the first leaf of the manuscript, in the British Museum, Leonardo has written: "Begun in Florence, in the house of Piero di Braccio Martelli, on the 22nd day of March, 1508: and this is to be a collection without order, drawn from many papers, which I have here copied, hoping afterwards to put them in order, in their places, according to the matters of which they treat." etc. [Arundel MS., No. 263, fol. i. *recto*.] Only the first portion of this manuscript, however, is a clean copy; the rest is a collection of miscellaneous papers, belonging chiefly to the first decade of the 16th century. In the *Codice Atlantico* are two draughts of a letter addressed about this time to Chaumont at Milan, in which Leonardo says: "I send Salai to inform your Excellency how I am almost at the end of my litigation with my brothers, and how I hope to be there [at Milan] by this Easter, and to bring with me two pictures, in which are two Madonnas of various dimensions, which I have begun for the Most Christian King, or for who ever shall please you." [J. P. Richter, *Literary Work of Leonardo*, vol. II. p. 403, Nos. 1349-50.] Although no such paintings by Leonardo's own hand are now known to exist, it is yet possible, perhaps, to trace the composition of one of these two pictures. In the latter part of the manuscript in the British Museum, which consists, as I have already said, of a collection of miscellaneous papers, dating from the first years of the 16th century, and brought together by Leonardo in 1508, there is a folded sheet of blue silver-point paper, bound up with other sheets, and forming two leaves of the volume. [Arundel MS., No. 263, fol. 253 *tergo*, and 256 *recto*.] On the verso of the first leaf is a slight study in silver-point of the head of a child, suckling; and on the *recto* of the second leaf, a study of a child's hand and foot on a larger scale; all of which appear to be preliminary studies, but in reverse, for the composition, certainly of Leonardo's invention, which has come down in the "Madonna Litta," at St. Petersburg, by Bernardino de' Conti, and in another painting, perhaps by the same hand, in the Museo Poldi-Pezzoli, at Milan. Leonardo's study for the head of the Virgin in the same composition, is in the Louvre. [Vallardi Collection, No. 2376.] The occurrence of this sheet of studies in the Arundel manuscript, formed in 1508, points to the composition in question being a work of that period; if, indeed, it did not serve for one of the two pictures begun by Leonardo, for Louis XII., in that year, and apparently never finished.

After his return to Milan, in 1508, Leonardo remained there in the service of the French, till 1512. During this time, he appears chiefly to have given himself up to his scientific and anatomical studies. In painting, he seems to have executed more designs and cartoons, than finished pictures. He probably painted at this time, with the help of his assistants, the picture of the "Virgin and Child with St. Anne," now in the Louvre, No. 1598, from the cartoon now lost, which he had begun at Florence, in 1501. The lost picture of the Leda, which appears to have been once in the French Royal Collection, may also have belonged to this period of his career; but it is a question, whether Leonardo himself ever executed more than the cartoon. [Plate XIX.] The "Bacchus," in the Louvre, No. 1602, is another picture for which Leonardo probably gave the design at this time; the execution being carried out by his assistants.

The vicissitudes of political events again obliged Leonardo to seek out a new patron. After the death of Gaston de Foix, at the battle of Ravenna, on 11th April, 1512, the French, in consternation, determined to abandon Lombardy; and in the following June, Massimiliano, the son of Lodovico, Il Moro, re-entered Milan under the protection of the Spaniards, the Pope, and the Venetians. For a while Leonardo remained in Milan, waiting for what the course of events might bring forth.

He went to Rome with the Duke Giuliano de' Medici, at the

election of Pope Leo, who was much given to philosophical studies, and especially to alchemy; where, forming a paste of wax, he fashioned creatures very thin, and filled with air, and by blowing into them, as he walked, made them fly through the air, but on the wind ceasing they fell to the ground. On a lizard of a most bizarre shape, found by the vine-dresser of the Belvedere, he fastened, with a mixture of quick-silver, wings formed of the scales of other lizards flayed, which, as it walked, trembled with the motion: and having made it eyes, horns, and beard, taming it, and keeping it in a box, he made all his friends, to whom he showed it, fly for fear. He used often to cause the guts of a bullock to be carefully freed of its fat, and cleaned, and in this way to become so fine, that it could be held in the palm of the hand; and having placed in another room a pair of blacksmith's bellows, to which he fixed one end of those guts, and blowing into them, filled the room, which was very large, whereby whoever was therein was constrained to retire into a corner: showing how, thus transparent and full of wind, from occupying little space at the beginning, they had come to occupy much space; and likening them in this to virtue. He made an endless number of these follies, and gave his attention to mirrors, and tried the strangest methods in seeking out oils for painting, and varnishes for preserving works when executed.

¶ The election of Giovanni de' Medici, the youngest son of Lorenzo, Il Magnifico, to the Papal throne, took place on 11th May, 1513; and Leonardo was called to Rome some four months later. He has recorded the precise date in one of his note-books: "I departed from Milan for Rome, on the 24th day of September, 1513, with Giovan and Francesco de' Melzi, Salai and Lorenzo, il Fanfoia." [Bibliothèque de l'Institut, Paris, MS. E., fol. i. recto.] At Rome, he was lodged in the Belvedere of the Vatican, in some apartments which had been made ready for him, under the supervision of the architect, Giuliano Leni, at the instance of his patron, Giuliano de' Medici. [E. Müntz, *Les Historiens et les Critiques de Raphael*, Paris, 1883, p. 133.]

Vasari has recorded only the tradition which had come down in his time, of the bizarre toys that Leonardo invented for the entertainment of his patrons. His own manuscripts, however, contain some scattered allusions to his mathematical and scientific studies at this time. In one passage, he records the completion of his *De ludo geometrico*, treating of an infinite variety of the quadrature of curved surfaces; which, he adds, was "finished on the 7th day of July, at the 23rd hour, at the Belvedere, in the study made for me by the Magnifico [Giuliano]." [*Codice Atlantico*, fol. 90 verso.] In the Belvedere, a German mechanic, Giovanni degli Specchi, so called from his skill in the manufacture of mirrors, had his workshop. Jealous of Leonardo's influence with Giuliano, this Giovanni contrived to give the painter great annoyance, invading his study, and even traducing him behind his back. In the *Codice Atlantico* are two draughts of a letter addressed by Leonardo to Giuliano, in which he complains bitterly of Giovanni's conduct. [J. P. Richter, *Literary Works of Leonardo*, vol. ii. p. 407, Nos. 1351-2.] One characteristic passage shows how this

German went so far as to disparage Leonardo's studies in anatomy. This man, writes Leonardo, "has hindered me in anatomy, blaming it before the Pope, and likewise at the hospital; and he has filled this whole Belvedere with workshops for mirrors and workmen, and he has done the same in the chamber of Maestro Giorgio,"—another German mechanic, who also worked in the Belvedere, and gave Leonardo trouble.

He made at this time, for Messer Baldasare Turini da Pescia, who was Datary to Pope Leo, a little picture of Our Lady with the Child in her arms, with infinite diligence and art: but whether through the fault of whoever covered the panel with gesso, or by reason of his so many and capricious mixtures of grounds and colours, it is now greatly ruined. And in another little picture he drew the portrait of a boy, beautiful and graceful to a marvel: and both of them are at the present day in Pescia, in the possession of Messer Giulio Turini. It is said that a work being given to him to execute by the Pope, he immediately began to distil oils and herbs, in order to make the varnish; whereupon Pope Leo exclaimed, "Ah me! he will never do anything, for he begins by thinking about the end, before the beginning of the work."

¶ The two paintings executed for Baldassare Turini da Pescia are now lost. Elsewhere, Vasari relates that Giulio Romano designed and decorated the villa at Rome, on the Janiculum, now known as the Villa Lante, for Baldassare Turini. [Vasari, ed. Sansoni, vol. v. p. 534.] He died, as the inscription on his tomb by Baccio da Montelupo, in the Cathedral at Pescia records, in 1543, at the age of 58.

There was great disdain between Michelangiolo Buonarrotti and him, by reason of which Michelangiolo departed from Florence, with the excuse of the Duke Giuliano, having been called by the Pope, for the competition for the façade of San Lorenzo. Leonardo, understanding that, departed and went into France, where the King, having already possessed his works, was much affected towards him, and desired that he should colour the cartoon of St. Anne; but he, as his habit was, put him off a long time with words.

¶ A document preserved among the *Carte Stroziane* at Florence, records that Leonardo was attached to the household of Giuliano de' Medici, after his marriage with Filiberta of Savoy, in January, 1515.

At the beginning of the following July, Giuliano set out from Rome with the Papal army, in order to anticipate any designs which Francis I., in his descent upon Italy, might have on Parma, and the other Lombard cities, of which Giuliano was Governor; but, falling gravely ill by the way, Giuliano was forced to retire to Florence, which he reached on 17th July, 1515. [L. Landucci, *Diario*, p. 350.]

There is no evidence to show that Leonardo followed in the train of Giuliano, in virtue of his office of military engineer, as Dr. Solmi conjectures: for the drawing in the Ambrosiana at Milan, inscribed, "Portrait of M. Artus, Master of the Chamber to King Francis I." which is erroneously ascribed to Leonardo, cannot be taken as

evidence of Leonardo's presence at the meeting of the Pope and the King at Bologna, on 13th December, 1515. [E. Solmi, *Leonardo*, p. 207.] If any definite meaning is to be read into the obscure passage from Vasari, in question, it must be conjectured that the presence of Michelangiolo at Rome, where he is known to have been working on the tomb of Julius II. in 1515, was the cause of Leonardo's resolution to go into France. Michelangiolo would never tolerate any artist of real genius to cross his path. This circumstance may have contributed to Leonardo's determination to accept the service of Francis I.; but there can be little doubt that the chief circumstance which led to this resolution was the death of his patron, Giuliano de' Medici, at the abbey of Fiesole, on 17th March, 1515. [L. Landucci, *Diario*, pp. 360-2.]

The *Anonimo Gaddiano* has preserved a significant anecdote of the enmity which existed between Leonardo and Michelangiolo. "Leonardo," he says, "passing one day, in company with Giovanni da Gavina, near Santa Trinita, by the bench of the Spini, where were gathered together a number of men of repute who were disputing about a passage of Dante, they called Leonardo, asking him to explain the passage to them. And by chance Michelangiolo passed by at that very moment, and, having been called by one of them, Leonardo replied, 'Michelangiolo will explain it to you.' At which Michelangiolo, thinking that he had said it in order to make jest of him, replied in anger, 'Explain it yourself, you who made a model for a horse in order to cast it in bronze, and was not able to cast it, and to your shame abandoned it.' And, having said this, he turned his back to them and went away: and at those words Leonardo, who remained there, grew red." [ed. Frey, p. 115.] This is one of three anecdotes of Leonardo, which the *Anonimo* had from the painter, Giovanni da Gavina, and which, no doubt, relate to the time when Leonardo and Michelangiolo were working together in rivalry upon the cartoons for the Sala Grande.

Leonardo must have gone to France, in the service of Francis I., shortly after the death of Giuliano de' Medici. He was assigned a yearly pension, and the chateau of Cloux near Amboise, for his residence.

Of Leonardo at Cloux, we possess a significant picture in a passage of a manuscript, in the Biblioteca Nazionale, at Naples, entitled, "The Itinerary of Monsignor the very Reverend and Illustrious the Cardinal of Aragon, my Lord, begun at Ferrara, in the year of our Lord 1516, in the month of May, and described by me, Don Antonio de' Beati." In the course of his journey, on 10th October, 1516, the Cardinal, being at Amboise, paid a visit to "Leonardo, the Florentine, more than seventy years of age [in reality he was only sixty-four], the most excellent painter of our age, in a suburb of the town." The writer of the *Itinerary* goes on to state that Leonardo showed to his illustrious visitor, "three pictures; one of a certain Florentine lady, done from the life, at the instance of the late Magnificent, Giuliano de' Medici; the other of St. John the Baptist, as a Young Man; and one of the Madonna and the Child, which are placed in the lap of St. Anne, and all of them most perfect: but, indeed, on account of a certain paralysis having seized him in the right hand, one cannot expect more fine things from him. He has well instructed a Milanese disciple, who works excellently well; and although the aforesaid Messer Leonardo is not able to colour with that sweetness which he was wont, nevertheless he works at making designs and giving instruction to others.

"This gentleman has compiled so particular a treatise of anatomy, with the demonstration in draught not only of the members, but also of the muscles, nerves, veins, the junctures of the intestines, and of whatever can be reasoned about in the bodies both of men and women, in a way that has never yet been done by any other person. All which we have seen with our eyes; and he said that he has already dissected more than thirty bodies, between men and women of all ages. He has, also, written concerning the nature of water, and of divers machines, and other things, which he has set down in an endless number of volumes, and all in the vulgar tongue, which, if they be published, will be both profitable and very delectable." [G. Uzielli, *Ricerche*, ed. 1872-84, vol. ii. p. 459.]

The pictures of "Our Lady and the Child in the Lap of St. Anne," and the "St. John

the Baptist, as a Young Man," are now in the Louvre, Nos. 1598 and 1579. [Plate XX.] Of the portrait of the Florentine lady, done at the instance of Giuliano de' Medici, nothing is known.

At length, having become old, he remained ill many months, and finding himself near to death, he wished to be diligently informed of the matters of the Catholic faith, of the good way and holy Christian religion, and then with many sighs, confessed and was penitent; and although he was not able to raise himself well on his feet, supporting himself on the arms of his friends and servants, he wished to receive devoutly the most Holy Sacrament, out of his bed. The King, who often and lovingly was used to visit him, came to see him: whereupon he, out of reverence, having raised himself to sit upon the bed, giving an account of his illness, and the circumstances of it, showed withal how he had offended God and mankind in not having laboured at his art, as he ought to have done. Whereupon he was seized with a paroxysm, the messenger of death, by reason of which the King having risen, and having taken his head, in order to aid him and show him favour, in the hope of alleviating his sufferings, his divine spirit, knowing that it could have no greater honour, expired in the arms of the King, in the 75th year of his age.

¶ The story that Leonardo expired in the arms of Francis I. has long been called into question. Indeed, it seems clear that at the time of Leonardo's death, the Court was celebrating the birth of the Queen's second child, at St. Germain-en-Laye, where the King signed a decree on 1st May. On the other hand, we know that Leonardo executed his will on the 23rd April, 1519, in the chateau of Cloux, near Amboise. The document itself which was drawn up by Guillaume Boreau, the King's notary, is dated "23rd April, 1518, before Easter": now, in France, the year was reckoned from Easter, which in 1518 fell on the 4th April, but which in 1519 did not fall till the 24th April. After commending his soul to God, Leonardo wills that his body be buried in the church of St. Florentin, which up to 1808 stood within the precinct of the royal chateau of Amboise, and that four high masses, and thirty low masses of St. Gregory, be celebrated in the churches of St. Florentin, St. Denis, and the church of the Franciscans, in Amboise. Next, he bequeaths "to Messer Francesco de' Melzi, gentleman of Milan, in remuneration of the services graciously rendered to him in the past, all and each of the books which the said testator has at present, together with all other instruments and draughts [*portratti*] concerning his art and industry as a painter." To Salai and Battista De Villanis, both of whom he calls "servitore," he severally gives one-half of the garden, or vineyard, without the walls of Milan, which had been granted to him by Lodovico, II Moro. Then follow a number of minor bequests, and provisions for his funerals. To his brothers, he leaves four hundred scudi, deposited with the chamberlain of the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, at Florence, and his vineyard at Fiesole; to Francesco de' Melzi, his clothes, and the balance of his pension due to him at the time of his death. [G. Uzielli, *Ricerche*, ed. 1872-84, vol. i. p. 202.]

The letter, dated 1st June, 1519, is extant, in which Francesco de' Melzi announces the death of Leonardo to Ser Giuliano da Vinci and his brothers, and informs them of the will which Leonardo had made, and the bequests to them which it contained. Melzi



merely states in it that Leonardo "passed from this present life on the 2nd May, with all the ordinances of the Holy Mother Church, and well prepared." Of the presence of Francis I. at the death, he says nothing. [G. Uzielli, *Ricerche*, ed. 1872-84. vol. i. p. 208.]

The loss of Leonardo grieved, in no common way, all those who had known him; because there was never any one who had done so much honour to painting. With the splendour of his countenance, which was most beautiful, he made serene every broken spirit; and with his words he turned to yea, or nay, every obstinate intention. By his bodily strength he would restrain any violent outburst of anger; and with his right hand twisted the iron ring of a bell, or a horse-shoe, as if it had been lead. With his liberality he used to gather together and support every friend, both poor and rich, if only he had wit and virtue. He adorned and honoured in all his actions, no matter what despised and bare abode; for which reason Florence received, indeed, a very great gift in the birth of Leonardo, and an infinite loss in his death. In the art of painting, he added to the manner of colouring in oils, a certain obscurity, by which the moderns have given great force and relief to their figures: and in statuary, he gave proofs of his skill in the three figures of bronze, which are above the door of San Giovanni on the side towards the north, executed by Giovan Francesco Rustici, but contrived with the counsel of Leonardo, which are the finest pieces of casting and design, as well as the most perfect that have as yet been seen in modern times. By Leonardo, we have the anatomy of the horse, and that of man still more elaborated. It was by reason of his so many divine faculties, although he laboured far more by his words, than by his deeds, that his name and fame can never be extinguished. Wherefore it was thus said in his praise by Messer Giovanni Strozzi:

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

† The *Anonimo Gaddiano* has preserved the following description of his appearance, at the time, no doubt, of his life in Florence, during the first decade of the 16th century: "He was of a fine person, well proportioned, full of grace and of a beautiful aspect. He wore a rose-coloured tunic, short to the knee, although long garments were then in use. He had, reaching down to the middle of his breast, a fine beard, curled and well kept." [ed. Frey, p. 115.]

The bronze figures of "St. John the Baptist between the Levite and the Pharisee," still

remain above the north door of the Baptistery at Florence. Rustici, no doubt, was working upon them during the six months that Leonardo was living with him at Florence, in 1507-8. They were finished and placed in their present position in 1511. Elsewhere, in his life of Rustici, Vasari states that "some hold that Leonardo worked on them with his own hand, or at least aided Giovanni Francesco with his counsel and good judgment. The statues, which are the most perfect and best understood that have as yet been made in bronze by a modern master, were cast in the pieces, and polished in the house where Giovan Francesco lived in the Via de' Martelli." [Vasari, ed. Sansoni, vol. vi. p. 604.]

Giovan Antonio Boltraffio, the Milanese, a very able and intelligent person, was a disciple of Leonardo; and in the year 1500, he painted with great diligence for the Church of the Misericordia, without the walls of Bologna, a panel-picture in oils of Our Lady with the Child in Her Arms, St. John the Baptist, St. Sebastian naked, and the patron who caused it to be made, drawn from the life, kneeling, a truly admirable work; and on it he wrote his name, calling himself a disciple of Leonardo. He has also made other works, both at Milan and elsewhere; but it is enough here to have named this, which is the best. And likewise Marco Oggioni [was one of his disciples], who made in Santa Maria della Pace, [at Milan,] the Assumption of Our Lady, and the Marriage of Cana in Galilee.

† Giovan Antonio Beltraffio, or Boltraffio, was born of noble parents at Milan in 1467, and died there on 15th June, 1516. The altar-piece, painted for the church of the Misericordia, near Bologna, is now in the Louvre, No. 1169. It contains not one, as Vasari states, but two, figures of donors, Girolamo and Giacomo Casio. The fresco in the monastery of Sant' Onofrio, at Rome, of the "Virgin and Child with a Donor," and some beautiful portraits in coloured chalks, in the Ambrosiana, at Milan, all of which are commonly attributed to Leonardo, are to be ascribed to Beltraffio. His masterpiece is in the National Gallery, No. 728.

Marco, called da Oggionno, from the village near Milan, where he was born c. 1470, became at an early age a disciple of Leonardo. His best works are in the Brera at Milan, where are now preserved the paintings once in Santa Maria della Pace, cited by Vasari.

An admirable and succinct account of the Milanese imitators of Leonardo, and their works, will be found in Mr. Herbert F. Cook's *Catalogue of Pictures by Masters of the Milanese and allied Schools of Lombardy*, exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club, in 1898.

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PLATE I.

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PLATE II.

Study for the lost design of "Neptune." By LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
From the Drawing in the Royal Library at Windsor.







PLATE III.

*Photo. Houghton.*

The "Adoration of the Magi." By LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
From the Painting in the Uffizi.





PLATE IV.

*Photo. Houghton.*

Detail of the "Adoration of the Magi." By LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
From the Painting in the Uffizi.



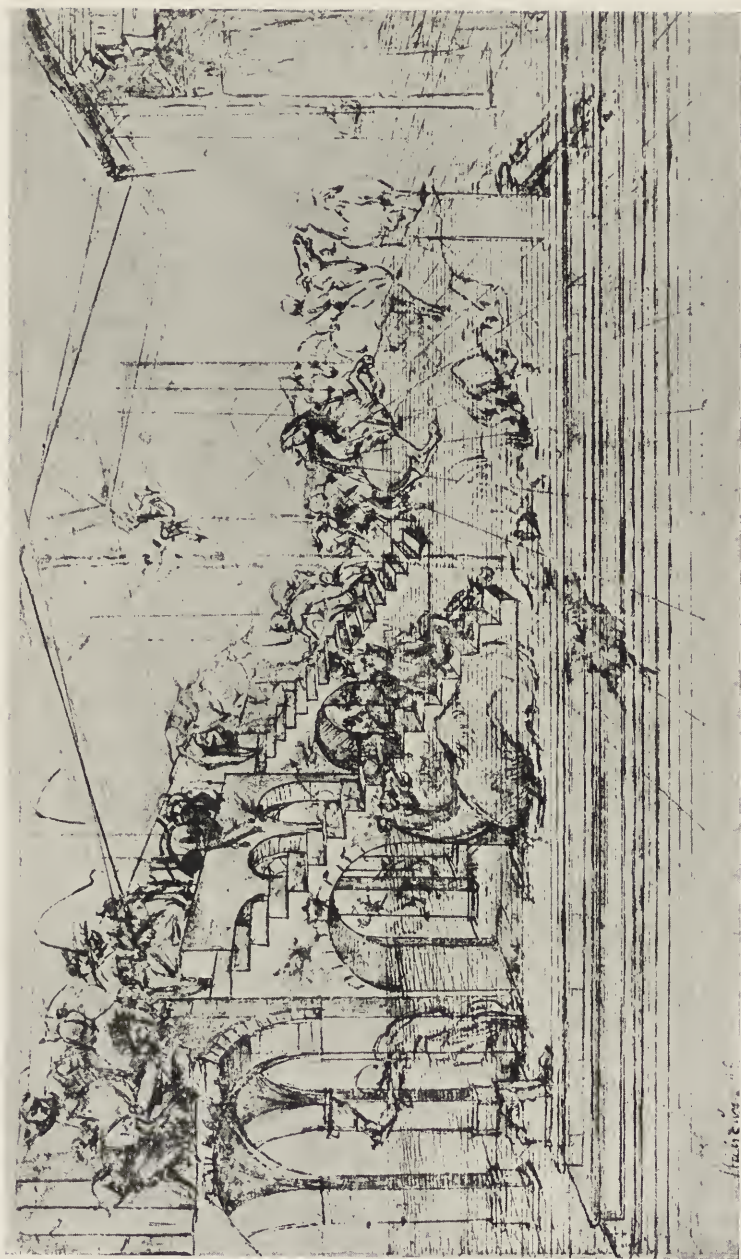


PLATE V.

Study for the Background of the "Adoration of the Magi." By LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
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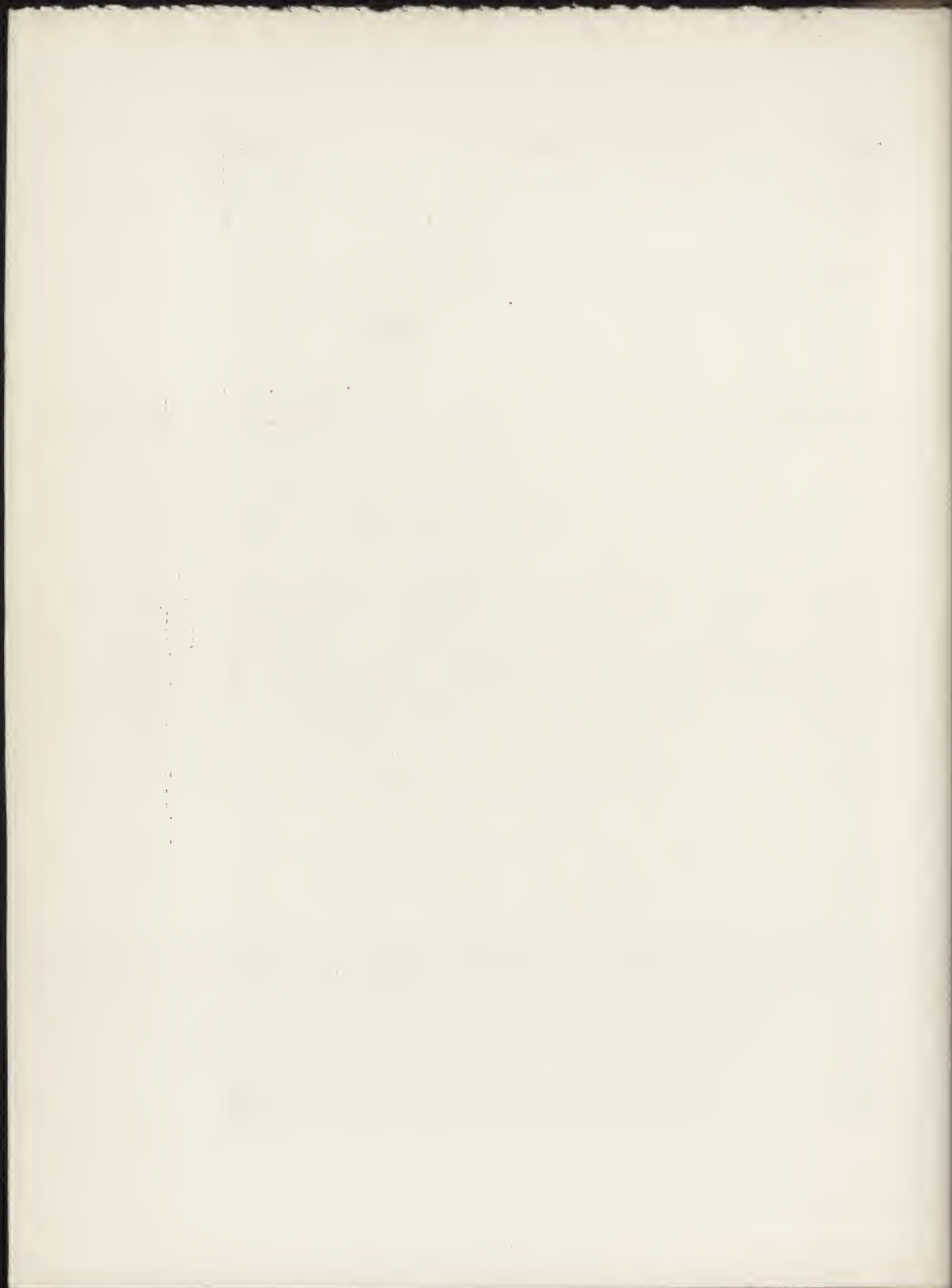






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PLATE XII.

*Photograph: Braun, Clement et Cie.*

Portrait of Isabella d'Este. By LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
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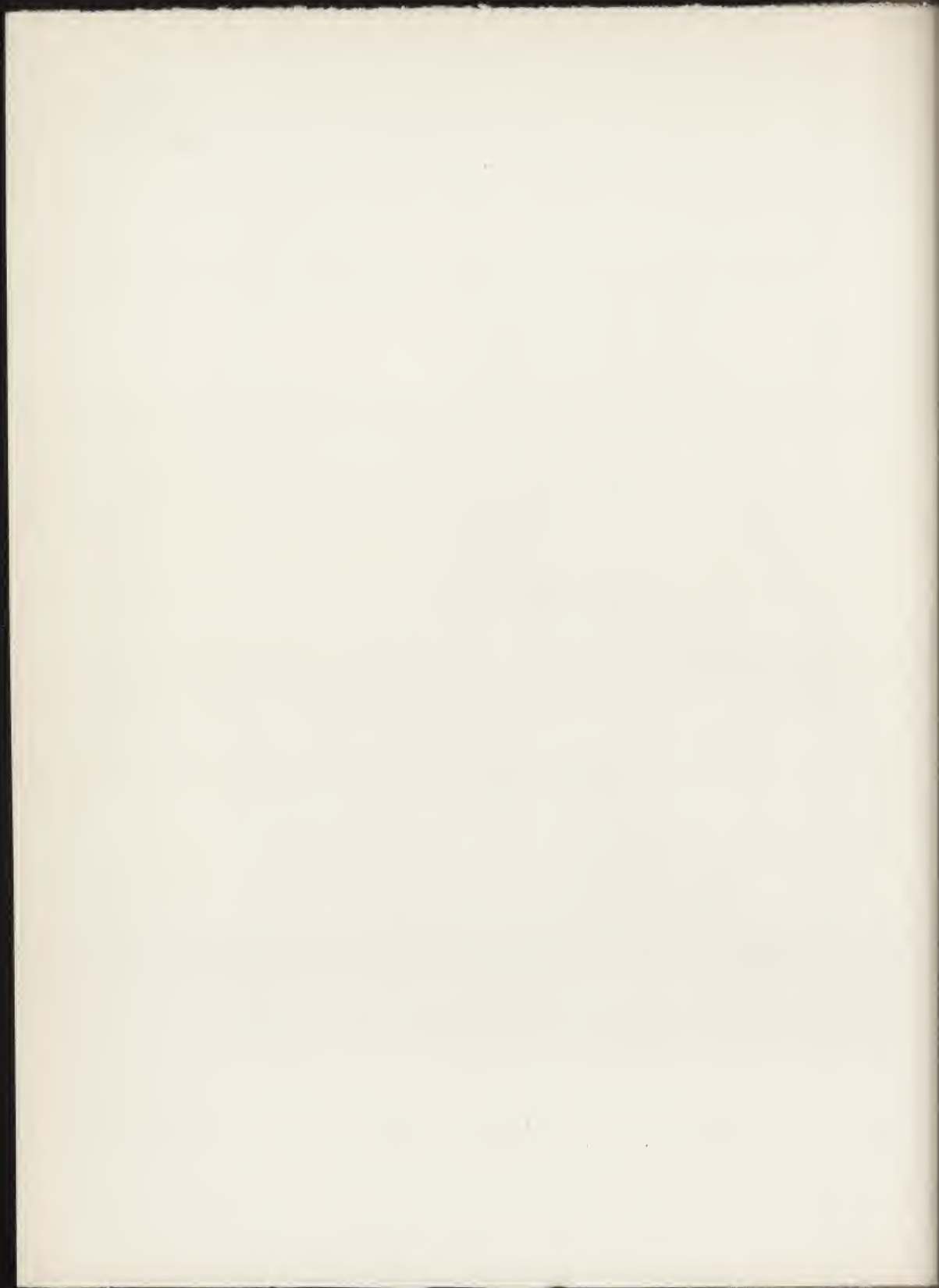




PLATE XIII.

"The Virgin and Child, with St. Anne." By LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
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PLATE XIV.

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PLATE XV.

"Monna Lisa." By LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
From the Painting in the Louvre.

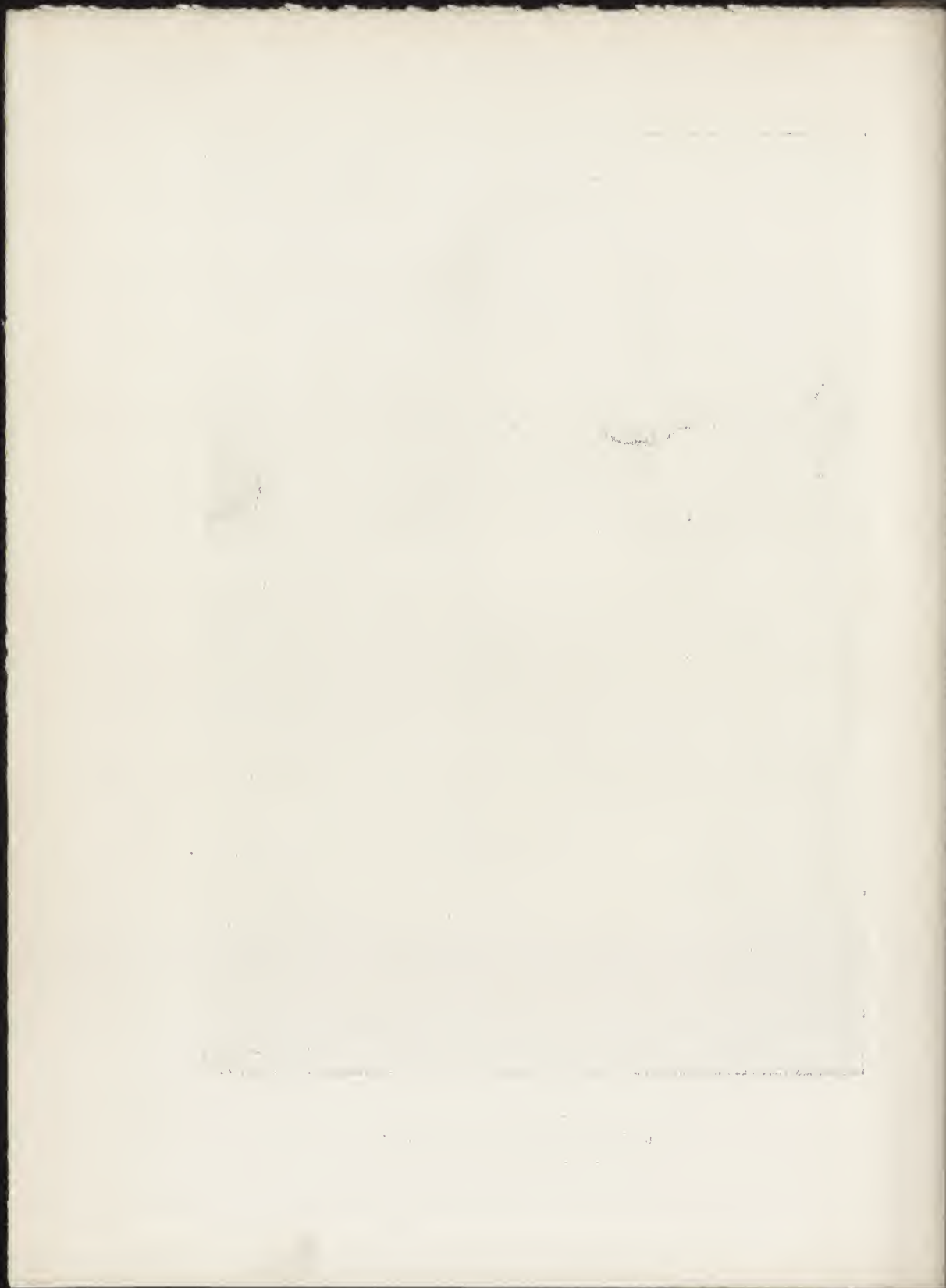




PLATE XVI.

Study for the Head of one of the Soldiers in the "Battle of the Standard."  
By LEONARDO DA VINCI. From the Drawing at Buda-Pesth.





PLATE XVII.

Study for the Heads of two of the Soldiers in the "Battle of the Standard."  
By LEONARDO DA VINCI. From the Drawing at Buda-Pesth.





PLATE XVIII.

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PLATE XIX.

Old Copy of the "Leda," of LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
Formerly in the Deetsch Collection.

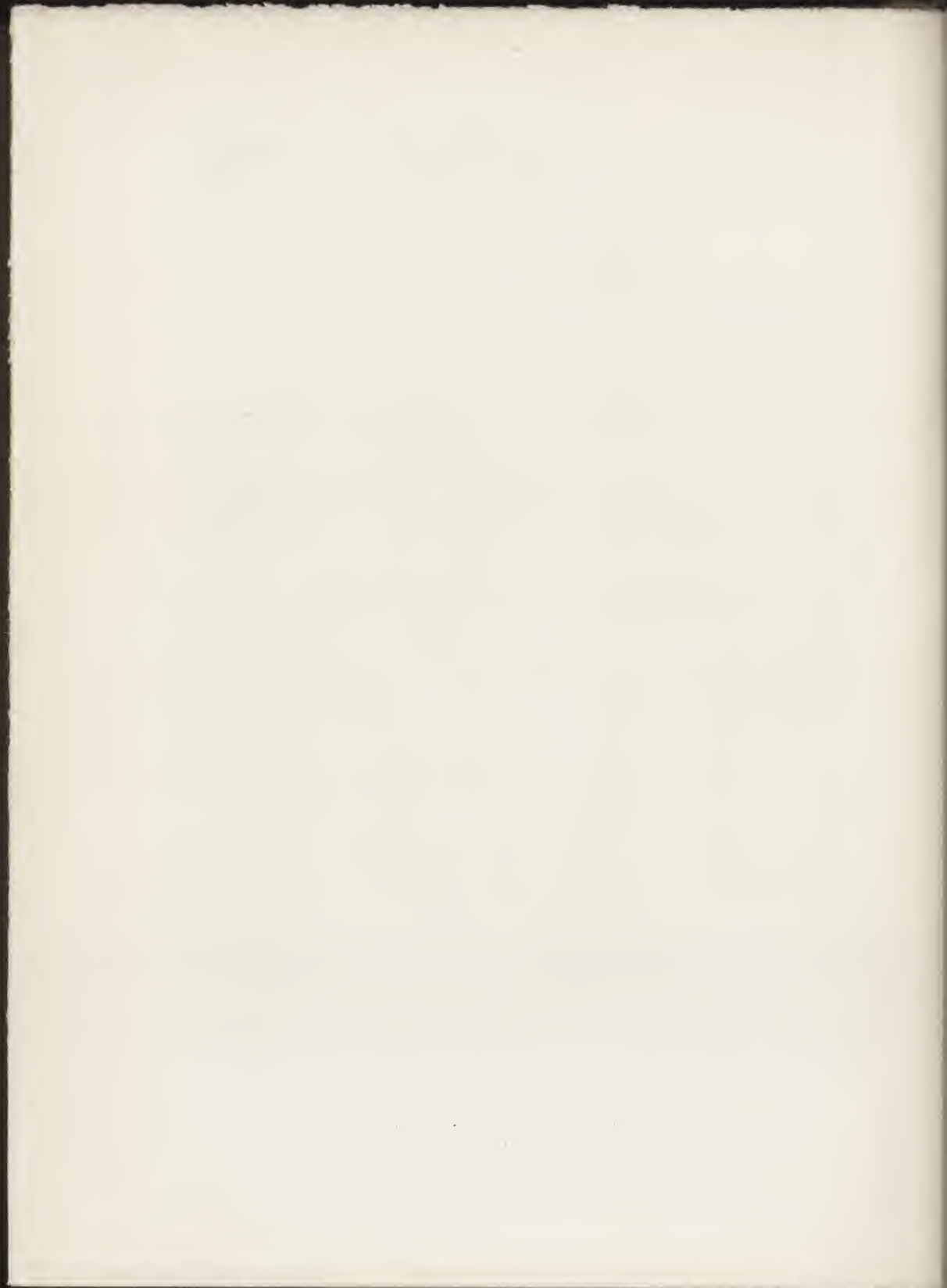
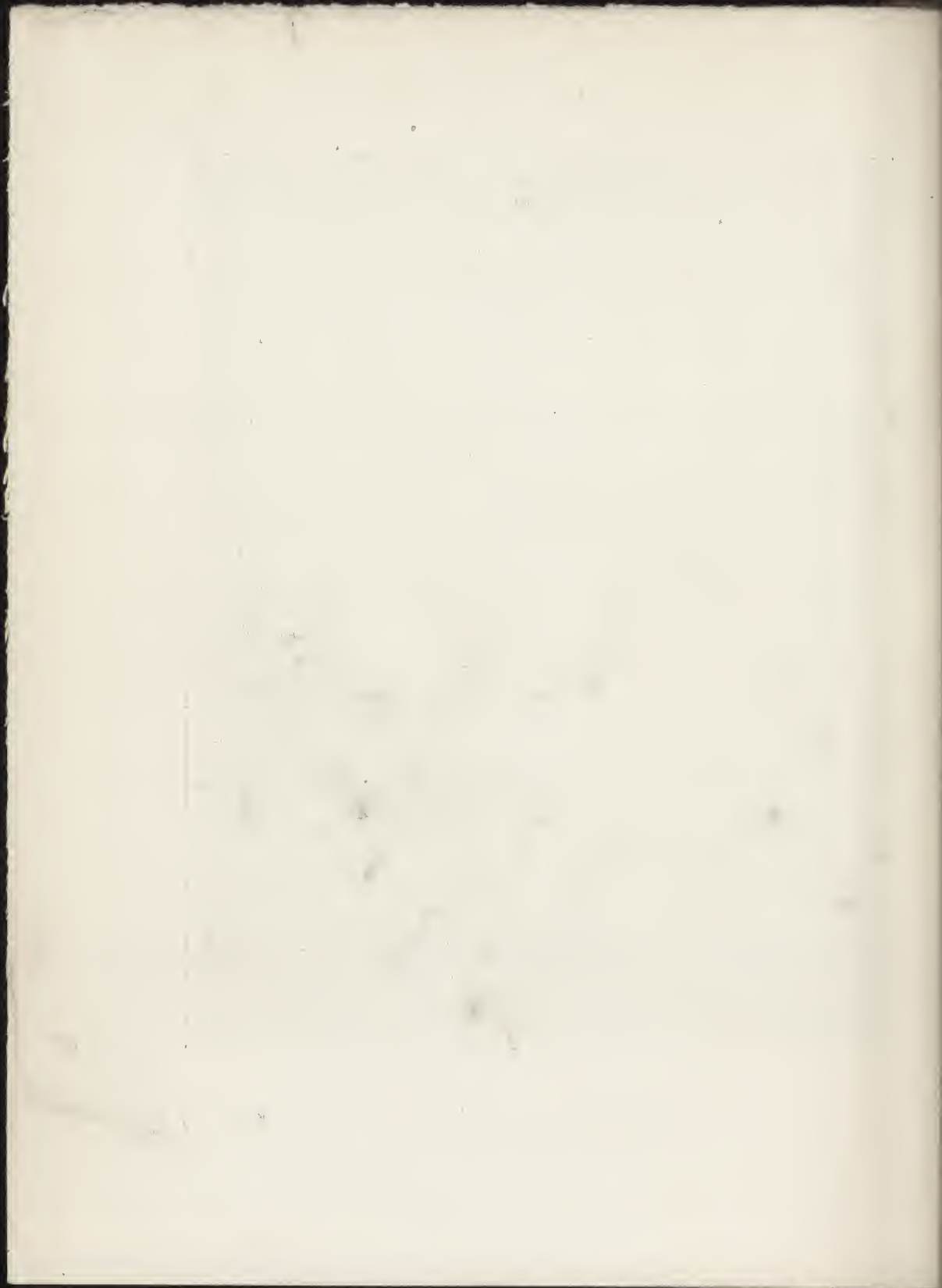
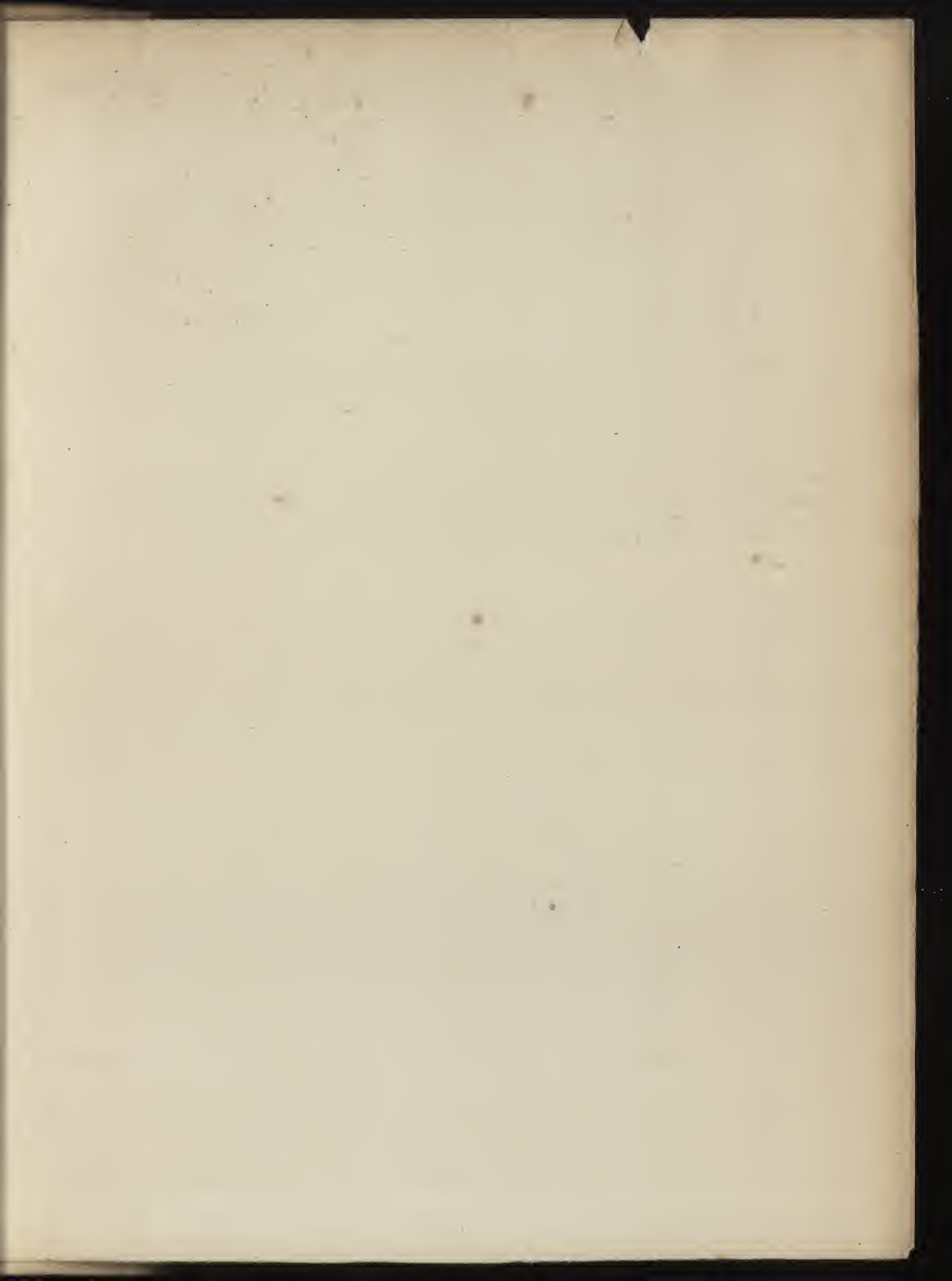




PLATE XX.

"St. John the Baptist." By LEONARDO DA VINCI.  
From the Painting in the Louvre.





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