

PISANELLO



STUDY FOR MEDAL OF ALFONSO OF NAPLES

PISANELLO

BY

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PREFACE

Ed or di quali scole
Verrà 'l maestro, che descriva appieno
Quel, ch' i' vo' dir in semplici parole?

PETRARCH, *Triumph of Fame.*

THE genesis of a particular volume in a series of Lives of artists is not likely to be of interest to any one but its author. But I may be forgiven for saying something in palliation of the deficiencies of which I am only too sensible. It was originally intended that this volume should give an account of the early Italian medallists, with Pisanello, of course, as the central figure. But it was abundantly clear from the outset that Pisanello the medallist is inseparable from Pisanello the painter. An excursion outside the bounds of the author's ordinary province thus became inevitable; and the other medallists have been relegated to the limbo of a final, and very sketchy, chapter, in order to allow of a fuller treatment of the founder of their art in his aspect of painter. Some day, perhaps, the ideal book on this master will be written by a critic possessing an equal knowledge of Italian paint-

ing and Italian medals; up to the present many good critics have written on his work, but always with a somewhat divided attention. It would perhaps have been wiser not to expose myself to the charge of amateurishness by attempting to deal with his paintings; wiser still not to write the book at all without being able to command more opportunities for research than are available in the intervals of official occupation. But the volume claims to be little more than a fairly full summary of recent research for English readers. I have not ventured on any constructive theory without a careful examination of originals, although I must plead guilty to the crime of having, in one or two cases, expressed doubts as to certain received theories on the evidence of photographs merely.

Were I to name all those who have borne uncomplainingly with my inquiries for information, the cynic would be astonished at their number. I must confine myself to mentioning a few, whom to omit would be criminal ingratitude. To Mr. E. A. C. McCurdy I am in the deepest debt for his conscientious and always helpful criticism of the proof-sheets. I have received the most ungrudging assistance from the staff of various public collections, such as the Coin Cabinets in the Bibliothèque Nationale and at Berlin, and above all from M. Guiffrey, whose courtesy greatly facilitated the examination of the rich collection of drawings concerning my subject in the

Louvre. Of owners of private collections, I am under many obligations to Messrs. Bonnat, Dreyfus, Rosenheim, Salting and Valton. Finally, the footnotes give some, though not an adequate, indication of my indebtedness to that indefatigable collector of material for the history of art, Signor Adolfo Venturi, in whose edition of Vasari's *Gentile da Fabriano* and *Pisanello* is laid the foundation of all study of these artists for many a year to come.

As regards the illustrations of the medals, the majority (*i.e.*, all of those by *Pisanello* and *Pasti*) have been made of the actual size of the original and, according to the practice which experience shows to give the best result, from plaster casts. Several of these have been kindly supplied by M. Valton, from his collection of casts, and in some of these cases it is difficult to trace the present owner of the original. Otherwise the collection to which the actual specimen illustrated belongs has as a rule been stated.

The portrait in the Louvre (Pl. 14) and M. Dreyfus' plaque of Alberti (Pl. 58) have been reproduced by kind permission from the *Revue Archéologique* and Heiss, *Les Médailleurs de la Renaissance*, respectively.

G. F. HILL.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE materials available for the biography of Pisanello are as full as can be expected in the case of a non-Tuscan artist of his time. External evidence is practically non-existent for the events of the first thirty or forty years of his life; and even after that period the dates of the production of his works must, except in the case of his dated medals, be conjectured from their style and from what we know of his movements. Apart from his medals and drawings, his extant works can almost be numbered on the fingers of one hand: the frescoes of the *Annunciation* in San Fermo and of *St. George* in Sant' Anastasia in Verona, the *St. Eustace*, and the *St. Anthony and St. George with the Virgin* of the National Gallery, the portrait of an *Este Princess* in the Louvre, and that of *Leonello d'Este* in the Morelli Collection at Bergamo, are all the paintings which can with certainty be assigned to him. We are fortunate in possessing, in the "Recueil Vallardi"* in the Louvre, a

* Vallardi acquired the "Recueil" from "a noble family living far from Milan on the Via Emilia" in 1829; but they themselves had obtained it from another family. He published a catalogue (*Disegni di Leonardo da Vinci posseduti da G. V.*, Milan, 1855); the drawings were

very large series of drawings which, though they do not often enable us to construct the external details of his biography, are invaluable as an index to his methods of work, and as a key to the attribution of other drawings.*

Our chief literary source for his biography is, of course, Vasari. Unfortunately, the fact that Pisanello was not a Florentine made it difficult for his biographer to realise his importance in the history of Italian art. Certain distortions in the *Life* are undoubtedly due to the desire to reconcile what was known or vaguely felt as to his real position in the development of painting with the idea of Florentine supremacy. The protests of Maffei and Bernasconi were of little effect, and only in our own day has the master's true position been rightly appreciated. Even were none of his paintings extant, his medals, and the chorus of praise which a small crowd of the literary men of his time sang to him, would suffice to show that he was

acquired by the Louvre in 1856. Reiset (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1877, t. 15, p. 119) and B. de Tausia (*Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 60) seem independently to have discovered that most of the drawings are by Pisanello.

* For a nearly complete list of the drawings in the "Recueil Vallardi" and elsewhere, see Venturi, pp. 88 ff. Questions of attribution will, if necessary, be discussed wherever occasion arises to mention a drawing. Here it will be sufficient to say that among the drawings assigned to Pisanello in the "Recueil" are a large number which cannot be directly from his hand. This is especially true of the series of large studies of heads and horses, which, although they can in some cases be proved to have a connexion with his extant paintings, are so coarse and heavy in style and so lacking in the sureness and distinction of his authentic drawings, that we must assume them to be school copies. In some cases they may be actual chalk drawings of the master, which have been inked over because they had a tendency to fade. We are, however, as a rule justified in regarding them as indirect evidence of the master's designs for his paintings or medals; for in no case do they show any sign of being merely copied from any completed work of his.

a master to be reckoned with. The scientific study of medals is of quite recent growth. Their artistic value, it is true, was appreciated by students as far back as the time of Goethe, but the quality of the criticism of those days may be gauged by the fact that Sperandio was preferred to Pisanello. The work of Armand, Friedländer and Heiss has made a juster estimate possible; and with the growing facilities for the study of his medals, by means of photographs and casts, has increased the desire to know something of his other work. We still, however, think of him especially as a medallist, although in signing his medals he is careful to emphasise the fact that he was a painter. The history of art is full of such ironies; how difficult it is, for instance, to think of the greatest Greek sculptors as chiefly workers in gold and ivory, or in bronze, when all that remains to us of their creations is in marble!

Fate, however, has in the case of Pisanello not been entirely unjust; for we are able to judge that his achievement as a medallist is supreme, whereas in painting, great as his work was, others of his time equalled or surpassed him in their own way.

Vittore Pisano, called Pisanello—the diminutive is convenient,* in order to avoid confusion with the artists of the school of Niccolò Pisano—was born some time in the last third of the fourteenth century, probably not much earlier than 1390, in Verona, or in Veronese territory. As he died not later than 1455 his career coincides almost

* Bernasconi (*Studi*, p. 60) objects to the form, as being found on none of his works. But it was used in his lifetime, in the accounts of the payments for his work in St. John Lateran, in the passport issued by Eugenius IV., and elsewhere. Cp. Spaventi, p. 20.

exactly in date with those of Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Donatello and Fra Angelico. The date of his birth is inferred merely from Vasari's statement, that he died *assai ben vecchio*, coupled with the fact that when first heard of—in 1409 according to the earliest, in 1422 according to the latest estimate—he was already sufficiently famous to be summoned to Venice to decorate the Ducal Palace. True, Vasari's phrase is excessively vague, and fame was rapidly acquired in those days. But the earliest extant work of Pisanello, the fresco in San Fermo, which may be dated between 1424 and 1428, is not that of a quite young man. We may therefore safely conclude that he was born between 1380 and 1390, and, if anything, nearer to the latter than to the earlier date.*

A still persistent error assigns to him as birthplace either San Vito or San Vigilio. It is based on a picture with a worthless signature and a curious history.† The

* The evidence of the portrait-medals of Pisanello is too vague and uncertain to be taken into account here.

† It represents the half-figures of Madonna (holding the Child), St. Catherine of Alexandria, St. John Baptist, and St. Clara of Assisi; on a label is the inscription

OPERA D. VETORE. PISANE
LO DE SAN VI VERONE
MCCCCXI (?)

Once in the collection of Count Bartolomeo dal Pozzo (see his *Vite de' Pittori*, &c., Verona, 1718, p. 305) it passed eventually to the Berlin Gallery, where its identity was discovered by von Tschudi (Berlin *Jahrb.* vi., 1885, pp. 18 ff., with illustration). Von Tschudi speaks with some hesitation as to the inscription: it has some strange features, but its unusual character and its circumstantiality are in favour of its being in part genuine, since a forger would, perhaps, have taken an easier way. At the same time, the ways of forgers are unaccountable; and if the large label already existed—as in Pisanello's St. Eustace—it was

name of the artist may go back to Pisa,* but it would be rash to do more than assume that his family may originally have come thence. It is tempting to connect him with the important Venetian family of the Pisani, members of which held positions of dignity in Verona in the first half of the fifteenth century. (Bertuccio Pisani was podestà in 1416, Francesco Pisani in 1422.) The attempt to derive one of the drawings assigned to him from a sarcophagus in the Campo Santo at Pisa is, as we shall see, unsuccessful; Vasari omits in his second edition the statement, made in his first, that the artist died at Pisa; and the description *Pisanellus de Pisis* which we shall meet with in a document has every appearance of being a mere blunder. Not to mention the definite statement of Guarino of Verona that Pisanello was his compatriot, he is, with the exception just noted, invariably described as of Verona, and we may

necessary to invent a long inscription. As certain of the letters are said to be in a somewhat different hand from the rest, the question arises whether these letters—*e.g.*, the four crucial letters PISA—are a mere restoration or an alteration of what originally stood there. If the former alternative is accepted, then—since the picture cannot be by Pisanello—the whole inscription must be rejected. To judge by its style, the picture is the work of an artist influenced by Squarcione's teaching, and can hardly be much earlier than the middle of the century (*cf.* Kristeller, *Mantegna*, p. 55, note 2, "it comes very close to Schiavone"). The date, which dal Pozzo read MCCCCVI, may possibly once have been MCCCCXLIX. In any case the Pisanello whom we know cannot possibly have painted such a picture. On the basis of this inscription dal Pozzo suggested that the artist was born at San Vito in the Gardesana, while Maffei (*Verona Illustrata*, pt. iii., p. 154, Verona, 1732, fol.) preferred San Vigilio on Lago di Garda. The utmost that can be said is that there may have been some sort of tradition that Pisanello was born at San Vi . . . ; but even this is not justified if the letters PISA were not in the original inscription.

* See P. Schubring, *Altichiero*, p. 136.

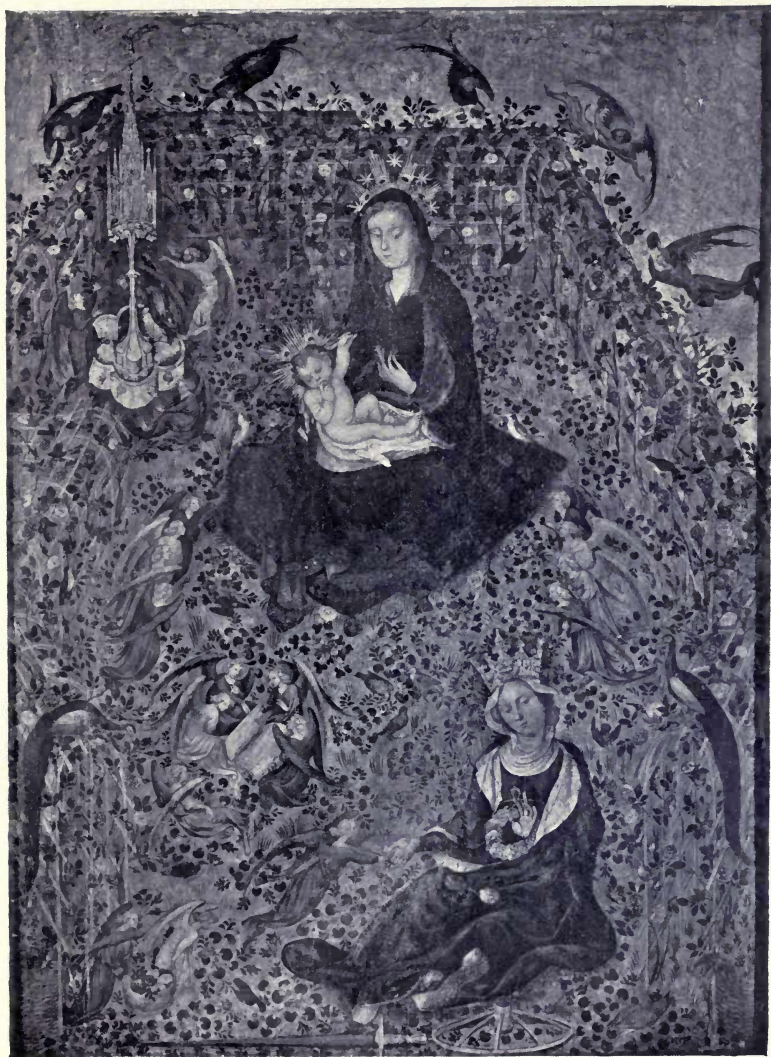
rest assured that if he had had any immediate connexion with Pisa, the historians who have glorified Tuscan art to the disadvantage of other schools would not have missed the point.

Of his early life we know absolutely no details. For we must dismiss from our minds all credence in Vasari's statement that he owed his advancement to having worked with Andrea del Castagno, and finished some of this master's work after his death.* Certain characteristics of Pisanello's technique favour the suggestion that he had a training as an illuminator.† It is true that this view has usually been inspired by such a picture as the *Madonna and St. Catherine in a Garden* (Verona Gallery), which few critics would now consent to attribute even to the early days of the master.‡ (Plate I.) But even in his

* See Vasari, ed. Milanese, iii., p. 1. Andrea was a young man when Pisanello was about fifty, and died in 1457, that is, at least by two, and perhaps by five or six years the later of the two.

† Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *North Italy*, i., p. 452. "That Pisano had just issued from a school of illuminators, like Lorenzo Monaco or Pietro of Montepulciano, we might readily believe." This casual suggestion has been widely repeated, in the sense that one of these two may have been Pisanello's master. I am not sure that it was intended to be taken quite so definitely,

‡ No. 52 of the Catalogue of 1865; formerly in the Convent of S. Domenico. 1.30 x 0.98m. Courajod sees in it the influence of the Flemish and Cologne schools (*cf.* von Schlosser, *Vienna Jahrb.* xvii., p. 204); Morelli ascribes it to Stefano da Zevio. The whole effect, with its spotty background, lack of composition, and timidity of execution, is that of a miniature of the middle of the fifteenth century. Note, for instance, its resemblance in feeling to the page from a Franciscan Breviary at Bologna (Univ. Library, cod. 337) of 1446 (*Atlante Paleografico Artistico*, pl. lxvi). The Madonna type is, however, clearly influenced by Pisanello, as is shown by a comparison with the Madonna of S. Fermo (cp. Biermann, *Verona*, p. 101).



MADONNA AND ST. CATHERINE (VERONESE SCHOOL)

Alinari

Verona Gallery

Face p. 6

authentic works one is impressed by the minute treatment of details, and also in some cases—notably the *St. Eustace*—by the tendency to sacrifice the general composition to the elaboration of particular figures. These features seem to indicate that the artist had been trained to work on a small scale. Such faults are magnificently conquered in the medals, which represent his ripest achievement, and which will bear any degree of enlargement without betraying smallness of style. But it is in his drawings, notably in his watercolours on vellum, that his relation to the illuminators most clearly emerges; as indeed his drawings reveal many other elements, essential or unessential, which are covered over in his finished work. In them we can admire, without any attendant dissatisfaction, that minute and loving, yet perfectly sure draughtsmanship, the value of which, in the panels, is somewhat lowered by the defective composition which it encourages.* But we cannot with any

* The *Anonimo Morelliano* (ed. Frizzoni, p. 74) says that in the house of a cloth-merchant in Padua there was a sheet of parchment with many animals in colours, “de mano del Pisano.” This was doubtless merely a sheet of drawings, like those in the “Recueil Vallardi,” and not an illumination proper. The same is probably true of the *picturae in membranulis*, mentioned by Facio (*De Viris Illustr.*, Flor., 1745, p. 47). Ephrussi (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1881, t. 24, p. 172) has attributed to Pisanello a so-called miniature in the Louvre (No. 635). It represents a young woman seated, caressing a spaniel with her right hand. He compares it with a drawing in the Albertina (Wickhoff, Vienna *Jahrb.* xiii., p. clxxxii., S. R. 20, and Pl. III.; *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, loc. cit. p. 177, and 1894, t. 11, p. 209). This sheet contains, among other things, two studies of richly dressed young women seated to front, holding falcons; one, who has a headdress something like that of the Princess of S. Anastasia, also caresses a greyhound; the other holds in her right hand the leg of a large bird. The Louvre Catalogue classes the “miniature” as Flemish; and Wickhoff, not without reason, assigns the Albertina drawing to a pupil of Pisanello, rather than to

certainly identify the particular school of illuminators who had most influence on the young artist. The Veronese school was of no importance before his time; not until about the middle of the fifteenth century did it begin, with Matteo de' Pasti, to attain a position of some consideration.* But it existed, and it is therefore not impossible that the young Pisanello exercised in his native city the art which has left traces in his maturer work.

Undoubtedly the most powerful factor in the making of him is to be sought in Verona. The two great masters, Altichiero da Zevio and Avanzo, began in the latter half of the trecento to produce in Verona and in Padua a series

the master himself. In the work in the Louvre the animals are undoubtedly very good, but the figure weak, and not at all in the style of Pisanello; in any case, as it is not a miniature properly speaking, but an ordinary water-colour drawing, the argument drawn therefrom as to Pisanello's being an illuminator is ineffectual.

* H. J. Hermann (*Vienna Jahrb.* xxi., p. 123) points out the rarity of MSS. betraying the influence of Altichiero—as MSS. illuminated in Verona towards the end of the trecento probably would betray it. He instances cod. 6 in the *Bibl. dell' Accad. dei Concordi* (Silvestri) at Rovigo, which contains numerous Genesis pictures showing Veronese influence. This is the MS. which P. Schubring (*Altichiero*, pp. 94 f.) had a few years earlier described as a specimen of Paduan miniature-painting of the middle of the trecento, or a little later, arguing that it was to the influence of this school that Avanzo to some degree owed his style. Thus we see not only that such MSS. are rare, but that, until more of them are known and dated, it is as well not to base historical deductions on them. Schubring (p. 126) mentions two other illuminations which, made probably at the end of the trecento, show the influence of the Veronese school. The Cerruti book, published in great detail by von Schlosser (*Vienna Jahrb.* xvi.), is dated by him to the time of the last Scaligers, and accordingly regarded as a witness to the condition of Veronese art shortly before the rise of Pisanello (p. 210). But between such work and the art of fresco-painting at the time the connexion seems to me to be slight.

of paintings of great brilliancy and originality.* Only in Padua does much remain of their work ; but in Verona many a fresco from the hand of one or the other was once to be seen in church and palace. The two worked together on the frescoes in the great hall of the palace built by Cansignorio in 1364. Altichiero represented the siege of Jerusalem as described by Josephus, and his frescoes were bordered by a row of medallions, portraits of distinguished men of the time. Avanzo painted two trionfi, which excited the admiration of Mantegna. The work of the two masters, especially that of Altichiero, long remained the most famous sight in Verona. The only two painters mentioned by Marin Sanuto in his account of these parts, where he travelled in 1483, are Altichiero and Pisanello. And a doggerel description of Verona † sings thus of Altichiero's fresco :

Tra gli altre ve una sala percertano
Tutta dipinta di magne figure
A l'istorie di Tito e Vespasiano,
Et e si rica d'oro e de penture

* On the work of these artists see the already cited monograph by P. Schubring (*Altichiero und seine Schule*, Leipzig, 1898). For our purposes it is hardly necessary to distinguish between the work of the two ; both represent the same tendencies, which culminated in Pisanello. Nor are we concerned with the question (p. 90 ff.) whether they owed much to the influence of Guariento and the miniature-painting of Padua, or to Tommaso of Modena. It is worth noting, however, that they must have already formed a style or styles of their own and obtained a considerable reputation before they were called to Padua. Biermann's recently published *Verona* contains a useful account of the remains of the early Veronese school in that city.

† *Chronicle of Francesco Corna da Soncino*, Brit. Mus. MS. 14,097, f. 33. Dated 1477.

E le figure son si naturale,
Che in tuta Italia non e altro tale.

These paintings have vanished ; so too have those in the Palace of the Counts Sereghi, which the two artists executed together after their return to Verona—paintings containing numerous contemporary portraits. But among the remains of the work of the school in Verona there are especially two frescoes which help to indicate the kind of atmosphere which the young Pisanello must have breathed. Oddly enough they are both close to the two remaining frescoes from his own hand. In S. Anastasia, in the Cavalli Chapel, is preserved the noble presentation of the knights of the Cavalli family to the Virgin by their patron saints, St. George, St. Martin, and St. James. (Plate 2.)* It is probably from the hand of Altichiero himself, and one of his latest works, for it must have been painted after 1390. The colouring is warm, the composition very simple but effective. The groups, each consisting of a kneeling figure and a saint standing beside him, are extraordinarily dignified. The faces of the saints and of the Virgin are of great beauty. The repetition of exactly the same motif in the three groups is avoided by making St. George, who presents the first knight, turn back towards the second ; thus, by an artifice comparable to the *cæsura* in a verse, the artist at once breaks and harmonises the rhythm of the whole. The architecture of the chapel in which the scene is set binds together the two parts of the picture : on the one hand, the Virgin with her attendant angels grouped around her, showing a pleasing curiosity in

* Cp. Schubring, Plate 9, pp. 87 f ; Biermann, *Verona*, p. 83 ; P. Molmenti, *La Pittura Veneziana* (1903), p. 9.



PRESENTATION OF THE CAVALLI KNIGHTS (ALTICHERO)

S. Anastasia, Verona

Face p. 10



CRUCIFIXION (EARLY VERONESE SCHOOL)

Anderson
Plate p. 11

S. Permo, Verona

what is going on ; on the other, the approaching knights and their patrons. In largeness of style and dignified serenity of conception Verona contains no painting which can surpass this.

In S. Fermo Maggiore, over the west entrance, is a *Crucifixion* of quite respectable merit, which undoubtedly should be connected with the school with which we are dealing. (Plate 3.)* Inferior as it is to the fresco of S. Anastasia, it illustrates features which the latter does not, features which were destined to survive in the later school of Verona. Here are animated groups of onlookers, each face instinct with individuality, each figure picturesque in costume or pose. The grouping is, it is true, thoroughly schematic ; the whole composition is divided vertically into two parts by the Crucifix, and horizontally into three parts. The lowest contains the standing figures, the middle the persons on horseback, the uppermost the angels. Horizontal lines could be drawn across the picture touching the heads of nearly all the human figures. Such a fault of composition is avoided in the greater works at Padua ; but here, as there, the treatment of the individuals forming the crowd shows a surprising amount of spirit. The horses, too, are painted with expression, and with some attempt at anatomical truth. Here then we have the promise of some of the most essential elements of Pisanello's style ; the groups of horsemen are, as it were, the forerunners of the famous group of the St. George fresco ; and the young man with three plumes in his helmet, set firmly

* It is connected with Altichiero by Schubring, p. 89, note. Cp. Biermann, *Verona*, p. 85. Crowe and Cavalcaselle (*North Italy*, i., p. 449) had assigned it to Turone.

in his saddle, and looking straight out of the picture, was destined to become St. George's squire.

We must pass over the works of minor painters, such as Pietro Paolo de' Cappelli and Martini, who worked in Verona in the last years of the trecento. It is to the works of Altichiero and Avanzo in Padua that we must go for the clearest intimations of the art which was to arise in Verona in the early quattrocento. The *Crucifixion* in S. Giorgio* is interesting in many ways, but not least as containing the only instance of antique influence in the extant works of the two Veronese artists. The figure on the right, looking up at the crucified Christ, and seen nearly from behind, is very probably inspired by the statue of some Roman wearing the toga. Here again we find emphasis laid on the individual members of the crowd; here, too, are the horse foreshortened from behind, and the horse's head looking out of the picture, which are to figure so largely in Pisanello's work. Similarly effective groups of individuals occur in other of the frescoes in S. Giorgio, and in the S. Felice Chapel. Architecture in most of them plays an important part, framing in the groups, and filling the greater portion of the picture, the figures being relatively small; or else it rises up in the background amid a rocky landscape. In the latter case we have an anticipation of the *St. George* fresco in S. Anastasia; in the former, of the *Annunciation* in S. Fermo. The architecture is a free adaptation of the debased Gothic of the time; but the painter's imagination does not run riot, and the construction is seldom or never wholly fantastic. As regards

* P. Molmenti, *La Pittura Veneziana*, p. 11. For the toga-figure, see von Schlosser, *Vienna Jahrb.* xvi., pp. 209, 214.

the groups of human figures, perhaps the most striking of all are to be found in the S. Felice *Crucifixion* ;* and here again the horsemen appearing out of the hollow lane behind the rocky foreground, with the castle towering up behind them, suggest the horsemen of Pisanello's St. George fresco.

It would be easy to enumerate other instances from these Paduan frescoes of the anticipation of features characteristic of the later artist: his curious liking for unexpected attitudes, his recognition of the possibility of expressing character in a back view of a figure, his audacity in foreshortening, his passion for bizarre costume, his fondness of animals and of genre motifs; finally, that reckless use of a contemporary setting for scenes of sacred history which is common to him with other artists of the quattrocento.

In the problems of linear perspective the early Veronese school had made considerable progress; indeed it cannot be said that Pisanello himself added much to what they had accomplished. The Veronese proceeded by entirely empirical methods, and no further real advance was possible until the theoretical studies of the Florentines paved the way. The services of the Veronese school to the progress of art were not concerned with the theoretical side. They lay rather in the close observation and faithful reproduction of all that is picturesque and attractively characteristic in the individual human being or natural object—*attractively* characteristic, for they did not descend to a brutal realism. Subjects of sacred history they treated with reverence and genuine religious feeling, but

* Schubring, Plates 3 and 4, pp. 32 f.

they placed them in a vividly contemporaneous setting. The hieratic scheme was broken down here some decades earlier than in Tuscany, where the first great artists of the Renaissance themselves established a numbing tradition. In fact the seeds which were sown by Giotto in Padua germinated there and were propagated in Verona, in the vigorous northern soil, whereas the fields of Tuscany lay sterile for the better part of a century. It has even been suggested—with how much probability this is not the place to decide—that the reawakening of Tuscan art at the end of the trecento was partly due to the influence of the Veronese school on Antonio Veneziano.*

However this may be, the peculiar character of the Veronese painting of the trecento owed much to the political atmosphere of a town like Verona, swayed by a despot, not by a church or by a bourgeoisie to whom uniformity was the chief of political or social virtues. Thus in Verona, as in other of the north Italian towns, the individual was of supreme importance, whether the ruler or the distinguished member of his court. The art which flourished in these centres was a court art, not primarily addressing itself to the feelings of the ordinary person, whether religious or layman, but glorifying the individual ruler or courtier or distinguished citizen. The portraits which decorated the halls of Cansignorio or the Counts Sereghi were the artistic prototype of the medals of Pisanello. The extant paintings of the early Veronese school make it quite clear that the transition to the new order, with its insistence on the all-importance of individual character, was being effected harmoniously and with

* Schubring, pp. 129 f.

ease. In addition to the political conditions which, as we have seen, made this possible, it must not be forgotten that the traditions of learning had, if anywhere, been preserved at Padua; nor can the nearness of the invigorating influence of the races north of the Alps have been without effect.

The Cavalli chapel fresco, as we have seen, was painted after 1390, and the lost paintings in the hall of the Sereghi dated from after the Paduan period, and belonged to about 1384 at the earliest. Altichiero and Avanzo were therefore probably alive and at work when Pisanello was a boy. Given such masters, given also the talents of keen observation and tireless application, and a passionate love of animals and the woodland aspects of nature, the young artist could not but make great strides in the movement which was revolutionising art at the turn of the century. We have no need to go so far afield as the Campo Santo at Pisa for the link that connects him with his predecessors.*

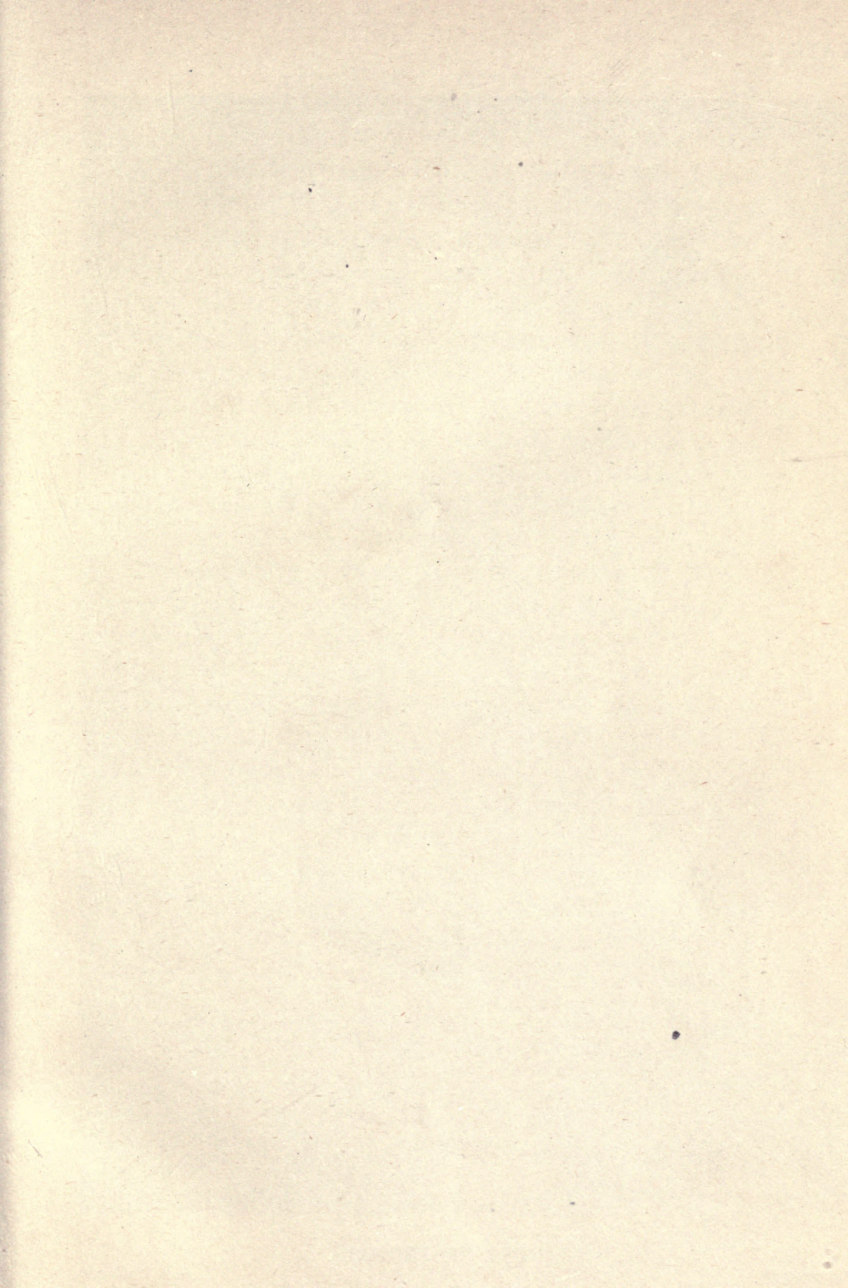
But another possible source of influence has to be taken into account. In the fourteenth century French, Flemish and German artists first began to cross the Alps in some numbers, although the influx did not acquire very great proportions until after 1400.† French or Flemish influence

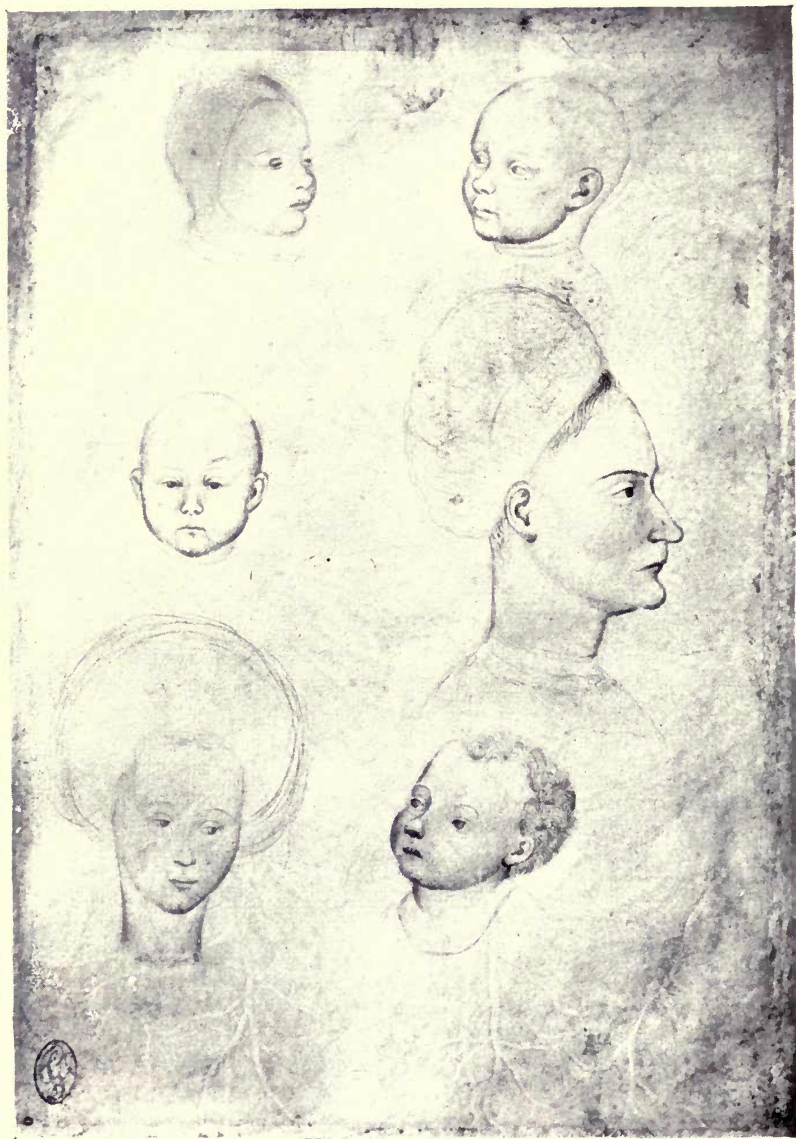
* Schubring, p. 137, remarks that Pisanello's fresco in S. Anastasia is dependent on Antonio Veneziano's first fresco in the S. Raineri series at Pisa, with which city the name Pisano connects him. It is surely more simple to assume that Antonio Veneziano and Pisanello drew from a common source. Or, if it is necessary to make Antonio a link in the chain, did he not decorate at Venice the walls of the Ducal Palace where Pisanello was afterwards to work? The question of Pisanello's connexion with Pisa is dealt with elsewhere.

† Cp. E. Müntz, *Hist. de l'Art*, i. p. 634. In *L'Ami des Monuments*, ii. (1888), pp. 247 f., he gives a list of French artists in Italy in the

was most likely to affect the western part of North Italy, German the eastern. Non-Italian writers on Pisanello have taken pains to insist on the importance of northern influence in the formation of his style; Italians, as a rule, prefer to deny it outright. Those of the former class who have not confined themselves to generalities have in some cases based their conclusions on quite false premisses. Thus the unfortunate *Madonna and St. Catherine* of the Verona Gallery has played some part in the argument. Again, because in his frescoes in the Ducal Palace Pisanello represented a number of German types, is it reasonable to suppose that he must have acquired some of his peculiarities of costume and setting from the Germans or Flemings so numerous at Verona or Padua? It would be idle to deny that he was influenced, in a general way, as much as any other north Italian artist of his time, by the northern incursion. He may well have seen foreign tapestries in which the naturalistic treatment of natural objects was beginning to oust the conventional; or he may have seen illuminations such as those which came from the hands of Pol de Limbourg and his associates, who worked for the Duc de Berry,* or—to mention an artist fourteenth century. For more general statements, *cp.* J. von Schlosser, *Die ältesten Medaillen*, pp. 23 f, and in the *Vienna Jahrb.* xx., p. 280; Courajod, in *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1890, t. 3, pp. 75 f.; Gruyer, *ibid.*, 1894, t. 12, p. 487. Most of the foreigners mentioned by Müntz are found at Milan. He mentions none at Verona, but such there must have been. Federico Tedesco was painting at Padua in 1375.

* The earlier pictures in the *Très Riches Heures* of the Duc de Berry, which must date before 1416, show that miniature art in the North of France was in some respects surprisingly in advance of painting in Italy at that time. See P. Durrieu, *Les Très Riches Heures de Jean Duc de Berry*, 1904. No other contemporary illuminations, however, stand on so high a level as those in this remarkable book.





STUDIES OF HEADS

of a very different kind—of the “Monk of Hyères,” who produced such marvellously faithful renderings of objects of natural history.* And in the drawings of an artist of so singularly receptive a nature it would be strange if we did not see some occasional traces of northern influence. It would, however, be an exaggeration to say that this influence went farther than suggestion, that it directly contributed any characteristic to his style, so far as Pisanello the painter is concerned. It must be remembered that the various “Gothic” architectural motifs which we find in his frescoes are merely renderings and elaborations of motifs which, whatever their origin, were already naturalised in Italy. They do not seem to be directly inspired by any northern form of art; they are rather the inevitable development of those used by the earlier Veronese painters, with selections and variations in more modern style.

Amongst the large number of drawings which have come down to us, some eight or nine have been described as betraying northern influence. Amongst these is the study of the heads of a woman, a girl, and four babies, one of the most exquisite sheets in the “Recueil Vallardi.” (Plate 4.)† But the profile head is as Italian as that of the Princess in S. Anastasia, nor is there anything peculiarly Flemish in the girl’s head. Another alleged instance is the sketch of the *Virgin and Child* for the National Gallery picture. (Plate 44.)‡ Now here the handling of the

* A MS. by this artist is exhibited in the British Museum (Add. MS. 28, 841; Grenville Library, Case 4, No. 43) and reproduced by the Palæographical Society (149, 150). Von Schlosser’s doubt as to whether the borders are as early as the rest of the MS. seems to be unnecessary.

† Fol. 190, No. 2392.

‡ Vallardi, fol. 130, No. 2623 v^o.

subject is somewhat harsh and even clumsy, and by no means characteristic of Pisanello's finely finished or even sketchy work; and indeed we have in it just one of those drawings which seem to be merely school copies, in many cases by German hands, of the original fine chalk or pen drawings of the master. In other words, the northern element in this drawing is superinduced by the pupil on his master's original. The same is true of some of the other pieces which are adduced in evidence for this theory.* The most that can be allowed is that the artist, if he saw an interesting type, of whatever nationality, noted it for future reference; that he was influenced by French, Flemish or Rhenish art in the sense in which he was influenced, let us say, by his Veronese predecessors, or by Gentile da Fabriano, it would be a gross exaggeration to maintain. In general, such resemblances to northern work as are noticeable—for the actual borrowing of motifs has not, I believe, been proved †—are due to the fact

* Gruyer, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 12, pp. 486 f., enumerates the two drawings already mentioned, and the following, also in the "Recueil Vallardi": (1) Fol. 175, No. 2541 v^o: *Annunciation*. This is an unfortunate choice, since the drawing of the hands, the lines of the drapery, the fat-faced child-angel, clearly indicate the style of Stefano da Zevio (cp. his signed picture in the Brera). (2) Fol. 176, No. 2542: Virgin seated on the ground with the Child on her knees. Probably not by Pisanello. (3) Fol. 177, No. 2634: Virgin and Child with adoring angel. (4) Fol. 177, No. 2634 v^o: Virgin dancing the Child on her knees. The coiffure of the Virgin is no more Flemish than that of the ladies in the frescoes by Michelino da Besozzo in the Casa Borromeo. (5) Fol. 69, No. 2326 (B. de Tauzia, *Dessins*, 1888, No. 1994): seated woman holding swaddled child. (6) Fol. 195, No. 2398 (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, *loc. cit.* p. 493): two Virgins with books, seated.

† One might instance, as a parallel to Pisanello's use of architecture in the S. Anastasia fresco, the way in which the upper parts of the

that both schools were at the same time independently realising and working out the same problems. Of course, those externals of life, which happened to be the same in Italy and in France, would be equally reflected in both arts. Thus we may be struck with the resemblance to Pisanello's manner in a miniature of the *Très Riches Heures* of the Duc de Berry, where we have a lady in profile, with long sweeping robe.* Or the splendid group of animals in the "Hallali du Sanglier" of the same book† may remind us of the *St. Eustace*. But, after all, it was the fashion of the time that both artists represented, and Pisanello's dogs are not copied from Pol de Limbourg's, or any other artist's, but from nature. And, as we have seen, the Veronese school of the fourteenth century had already inculcated the practice of observation of individual human beings and animals.‡

When we come to deal with Pisanello the medallist, we shall meet with the fact that a powerful impulse was given to him by works which some authorities have assigned to a Flemish or North French origin. We shall, however, find that the northern origin of the pieces which may be supposed to have influenced Pisanello is not definitely established. But even if we accept it, it is important to recognise that these works influenced him purely in the externalities

buildings are seen over rising ground in the Journey of the Magi in the *Très Riches Heures* (Durrieu, *op. cit.* Pl. xxxvii). It is, however, hardly more than a parallel.

* *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1904, t. 31, p. 51. Durrieu, *op. cit.* Pl. iv.

† *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1884, t. 29, Plate facing p. 290. Durrieu, *op. cit.* Frontispiece.

‡ It is interesting to note that one of the Duc de Berry's artists was a Veronese by origin: Pierre de Verone.

of his art; there is not the slightest trace, in Pisanello's medal of John Palæologus, of any of the inner stylistic qualities of those medals of Constantine and Heraclius which are associated with the collections of Jean, Duc de Berry.

We have not, however, yet dealt with all the possible influences which surrounded Pisanello. What of the antique, which so mightily affected other great artists of the quattrocento? Did he feel its attraction also? So far as his youth is concerned, there is no trace of such a fact. But when we come to his Roman period, there is more definite evidence. We can point to drawings, some certainly from his hand, others at any rate of his school, which are made from the antique, and we can in some cases identify the originals.* Peculiarly interesting is a sheet containing three figures, which at first sight look as if they were meant to form a single composition.† One is a figure of Hercules. The original, however, was an Orestes from one of the various sarcophagi, in which the hero is represented with a sword in his right hand, which is drawn across his body so as to deliver a back-handed cut. But, in more than one extant example, the arm is broken off, and Pisanello has restored it as holding, not a sword, but a club—as, be it said, no Hercules would have held it. The second figure is a Venus, taken from a quite different sarcophagus, representing the goddess hastening to Adonis. The third figure is also probably from a sarcophagus, but has yet to be identified. It cannot be said

* For a more detailed discussion of some of these drawings I may refer to a forthcoming article in the *Papers of the British School at Rome*.

† Vallardi, fol. 194, No. 2397 v^o, reproduced in *L'Art*, viii. (1), 1882, p. 227; E. Müntz, *Ren. à l'Époque de Charles VIII.*, p. 286.

that Pisanello has in any great degree caught the spirit of the originals; true, it is something that this drawing has always been recognised as from the antique, although the figures have remained unidentified. But his treatment of the nude is stiff and angular; the anatomy is insufficiently understood—as is especially plain in the upper part of the “Hercules.” Again, the head of the same figure does not in the least resemble any Roman head. It has the same haggard, anxious expression as the St. George in one of the sketches (Plate 43) associated with the National Gallery picture.*

Still more divergence from the spirit of the antique do we find in another drawing, which is probably taken from the same sarcophagus as the Venus already mentioned. It represents a boar-hunt.† The painfully anxious attitudes and expressions of the two somewhat clumsy nude figures are in quaint contrast with the vigorously depicted boar and hounds.

A rather better piece of work is the copy of the Tiber statue now on the Piazza of the Capitol, and formerly on the Monte Cavallo.‡ Here the torso is much more vigorously handled, but there is the same freedom in the treatment of the head. When the drawing was made, the statue represented not the Tiber, but the Tigris.

* Vallardi, fol. 173, No. 2633. This is, perhaps, only one of the school copies of the kind already mentioned; nevertheless, it doubtless reproduces a type of face used by the master.

† Berlin, 1358 (*Berlin Jahrb.*, ii. p. xxxiv). It has been supposed that this was copied from another sarcophagus, in the Campo Santo at Pisa (Lasinio, Pl. 109). I am not absolutely sure that this drawing and that next to be mentioned are from Pisanello's own hand; but they most closely resemble his work.

‡ Berlin, 1359, vº. (*Jahrb.*, ii. p. xxxv.)

Unfortunately for its archæological value—it must be remembered that these are among the earliest known Renaissance drawings from the antique—the tiger under the river-god's right elbow, where now are the wolf and twins, is omitted. In its place we have a separate sketch of a small boy, possibly inspired by an Eros torturing a butterfly. On the same sheet is a figure of a putto leaning on a knotted staff, very probably taken from an Eros or Hypnos with inverted torch.

Other sketches from the antique attributed to our artist are the copy of one of the Dioscuri of the Quirinal, and the two "garland-holders" from some sarcophagus.* A small sheet of vellum at Oxford † contains two pen and ink studies of Bacchanals playing tympana, probably also from a sarcophagus. These are in some ways the best of Pisanello's drawings from the antique, and possibly date from a later period than the others, in fact to the end rather than to the beginning of the thirties.

It would be interesting could we find among the drawings any trace of inspiration by ancient coins. In the collections at Venice, Ferrara, and Naples we might well

* The former is at Milan (Venturi, p. 123), the latter at Berlin 1359 r^o, *Fahrb.*, ii. p. xxxv). M. Léon Bonnat's sheet of studies inspired by the porphyry "sarcophagus of S. Costanza," now in the Vatican, is described by Venturi as nearer to Jacopo Bellini's style than to Pisanello's. Nevertheless, the copy on that sheet of a mutilated statue (armless and legless figure, sitting with head thrown back much in the attitude of the Towneley Silenus in the British Museum) is quite Pisanellesque.

† University Galleries. From the Lagoy collection. On the r^o, besides the studies mentioned below in connexion with the Princess of S. Anastasia, is a beautiful study of a courtier, bareheaded, standing l.; embroidered on his cloak are a flax-hackle and a climbing tree with grafting-slips.

suppose that he found suggestions which bore fruit in his medals. Unfortunately, not one of the drawings in the "Recueil Vallardi" which are inspired by or directly copied from Greek or Roman coins can be regarded as from his hand.* It is most significant that the only drawing of the kind which has a claim to authenticity, the head of Faustina the Elder under a Gothic arch,† is not treated in a medallic way. In other words, the drawings do not bear out the theory which finds the inspiration of the antique in Pisanello's medals.

What influence, then, can the study of ancient models be supposed to have exerted on his style? So far as actual reminiscences or reproductions of motifs are concerned, his completed works yield no trace of the antique. Yet is it not possible that from the study of the coins in such a cabinet as belonged to the Este family at Ferrara he might have learned some of that extraordinary conciseness and concentration, combined with monumental largeness of style, which is characteristic of his medals? These qualities are all the more surprising because in more than one of his extant paintings he shows a tendency towards

* Such are the enlarged heads of Hadrian (fol. 99, No. 2593, coarsely reproduced in Courajod, *L'Imitation et Contrefaçon*, p. 37), which is at best only of his school; of Aurelian (fol. 98, No. 2592; Courajod, p. 33), and of Severina (fol. 97, No. 2591; Courajod, p. 32). The last is inscribed SEVERINAE AVGVSTA (*sic*) in good Pisanellesque letters; but both it and the Aurelian (from the same hand) are miserable drawings. Further, we have more direct copies of coins on fol. 12, No. 2266, fol. 64, No. 2315 (Courajod, p. 26 f.), the style of which is utterly unworthy of the master.

† Louvre, Coll. His de la Salle (B. de Tauzia, *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 58, No. 81 v^o). Inscribed DIVA FAVSTINA, and signed PISANVS. HOC. OPVS.

diffuseness and lack of balance. The two portraits, at Bergamo and at Paris, approaching most nearly as they do to his medallic work, sin least in this lack of reserve ; we may say nearly as much of the *St. Anthony and St. George* of the National Gallery. But, as the evidence of the drawings is negative, we must attribute not to the study of the antique, but to his native sense of what was fitting to the material in which he worked, the origin and growth of the qualities which distinguish his medallic work above that of all other artists.

Among the drawings at Milan attributed to Pisanello there is one which reproduces the Navicella of Giotto in St. Peter's.* The drawing, like much else of Pisanello's, was formerly given to Leonardo da Vinci. Assuming that in its present state the mosaic represents the main outlines of the original composition, we see that the copy is exceedingly free. The arrangement is much modified, especially on the right hand, where the draughtsman seems to have run short of room, so that he has brought Christ and St. Peter down below the level of the ship. As in the drawings from the antique, the character of the faces has been entirely altered.

If we could be sure that another drawing † in the Ambrosiana were from Pisanello's hand, we should see him in the convent of S. Marco at Florence copying figures from

* R^o of the sheet with the Dioscurus (Venturi, p. 123); reproduced by H. Stevenson, *Topogr. e Monum. di Roma nelle pitt. a fresco di Sisto V. della Bibl. Vat.*, Pl. V., No. 4. Cp. *Mélanges de l'Ecole française*, 1888, p. 460.

† B. de Tauzia, *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 70, and *L'Art*, 1882 (viii. 1), p. 232; followed by Stevenson (*loc. cit.*). The recto has been photographed by Fumagalli.

the great *Crucifixion* by Fra Angelico. The figures in question are those of the good thief and St. Francis of Assisi. There are some points in favour of the attribution: the modification of St. Francis' head and neck, so as to give him a more haggard and ascetic expression, the careful work in the little bunch of flowers, and the subject on the verso (monkeys and cocks) remind us of Pisanello. On the other hand, there is a lack of decision and of firmness, especially in the drawing of the extremities, which points to the work of a pupil rather than the master. Further, between the probable dates of the painting of the *Crucifixion* (1442-3)* and of Pisanello's death, it is difficult to see when he can have spent any time in Florence.

On the verso of the Berlin drawing which reproduces a scene from an Adonis sarcophagus already discussed,† is the figure of a putto from Donatello's pulpit at Prato. It is the solitary instance, and that not entirely authenticated, of a connexion between these two artists. The two moved on parallel lines, each contributing something as a pioneer in the realism of the quattrocento. If Donatello was the greater artist of the two, as it would be absurd to dispute, he might yet have learned something from the devotion with which Pisanello addressed himself to the task of reconciling truth to nature with not merely picturesqueness but beauty—an aim which the Florentine, in his uncompromising cult of realism, too often neglected.

Of all Pisanello's earlier contemporaries, however, the one with whom he came most closely in contact, and with

* Langton Douglas, *Fra Angelico* (1902), p. 87 f.

† See above, p. 21.

whom he shows a most decided affinity, is Gentile da Fabriano. How the two men were first brought together we do not know, nor is it quite easy to discern which owes the greater debt to the other. But any discussion of their relationship is necessarily bound up with the history of the paintings in the Ducal Palace at Venice; and we are thus brought to the point at which Pisanello first appears in the historical records.

CHAPTER II

VENICE

THE question of the proper preservation of the frescoes in the Hall of the Greater Council in the Ducal Palace* agitated the authorities from the year 1382 onwards. The paintings of Guariento† and Antonio Veneziano had evidently fallen into bad condition by 1409; for in that year and in 1411 we have records of money being voted for the necessary repairs. In 1415 it is recorded that the decorations of the hall attracted the attention of sight-seers, and an additional grant was made to provide for better access. The new hall, therefore, was presumably completed by this time. In 1422 the sum of 100 ducats a

* For Pisanello's paintings in the Ducal Palace, see especial F. Wickhoff, *Repert. für Kunstwissenschaft*, vi. (1883), pp. 20-24, and Venturi, pp. 5, 29. The records of payments, &c., at various periods are given by G. Lorenzi, *Mon. per serv. alla storia del Pal. duc. di Ven.*, Part i. (Venice, 1868); p. 40 (June 10, 1382); p. 52, No. 137 (May 25, 1409); p. 53, No. 140 (April 19, 1411); p. 56, No. 145 (Sept. 21, 1415); p. 57, No. 148 (July 9, 1422). On pp. 61 f. he gives a copy, made in 1425, of the verba descripta in capitellis picturarum historie depicte in Sala Magna Maioris Consilii, indicating the subjects of the pictures and their disposition on the three walls.

† His "Paradiso" has recently been uncovered. See R. Schmidt in *Kunstchronik*, N.F. xiv., pp. 462 f; *L'Arte*, 1904, p. 395.

year was voted to the Procurators of St. Mark's, in order that they might cause the paintings in the hall to be repaired in case of damage, and keep them in good and due order; and they were to find and retain a fit and sufficient master-painter to do the work on the paintings.

As we know that Gentile da Fabriano and Pisanello helped to decorate the hall with paintings, it has generally been supposed that Gentile was appointed in accordance with the decree of 1422. But recent criticism has shown that it is difficult to reconcile this date with Gentile's movements as otherwise recorded, and that, as the hall seems to have been fit for use and famous for its decorations in 1415, Gentile's work was probably done between 1409 and 1414. In the latter year he went to Brescia.*

It is further usually assumed—without, it would seem, any direct evidence—that Pisanello worked at Venice in conjunction with Gentile. The strong affinity between the two artists is undeniable. It would, it is true, be sufficiently accounted for if we supposed that the Veronese painter went to work at Venice soon after his predecessor had left for Brescia, while the new paintings of the sea-fight, etc., were still attracting every one's attention. We

* For the authorities see Venturi, pp. 8f. Gentile appears at Florence in the roll of the Confraternity of St. Luke in 1421, and in the registers of the doctors and druggists on Nov. 21, 1422. He must have qualified by residence, so that he can hardly have undertaken an important work at Venice in the latter half of this year. For some years following he was busy in Florence and other places in Tuscany. Thus we cannot accept Wickhoff's contention (*op. cit.* p. 20) that, with a large staff under him, he could have finished the work in a year; for there is not a year to spare. As Venturi points out (p. 6), the decree of 1422 provides for the keeping of the pictures, and repairing occasional damage, rather than for newly decorating the hall.

must remember, too, that some years later Pisanello was called to Rome to finish pictures begun by Gentile. Ever since the story of the competition for the Wounded Amazon there has always been a tendency in historians of art to make great artists work in conjunction or rivalry. We have no right therefore to assume as certain that Pisanello was at Venice actually at the same time as Gentile. Nevertheless, if the hall was practically completed by 1415, there is no ground for doubting that the sojourns of the two artists may have overlapped. Pisanello is no more likely to have been the master painter mentioned in the decree of 1422 than Gentile, for the reason already adduced.

Guariento's *Paradiso* occupied one of the smaller walls of the hall (at the eastern end). The cycle of the frescoes relating the story of Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander III. began on the right-hand (southern) long wall, next to the *Paradiso*. On this wall were seven pictures. On the short western wall opposite the *Paradiso* were two; and on the remaining long wall, which in that time had no window opening on to the court, were thirteen.

Of the 22 pictures, that representing the naval battle, in which the Venetians captured the Emperor's son Otto, was painted by Gentile. That in which Otto, set free by the Republic to go as ambassador and plead its cause with the Emperor, appeared before his father, was the work of Pisanello.* The painting was on the side towards the

* Bart. Facio (*de viris illustr.*, Flor., 1745, p. 47), writing in 1455-56, says that Pisanello painted at Venice in the Palace Frederick Barbarossa and his suppliant son, &c. Sansovino (*Venetia*, ed. Martinioni, 1663,

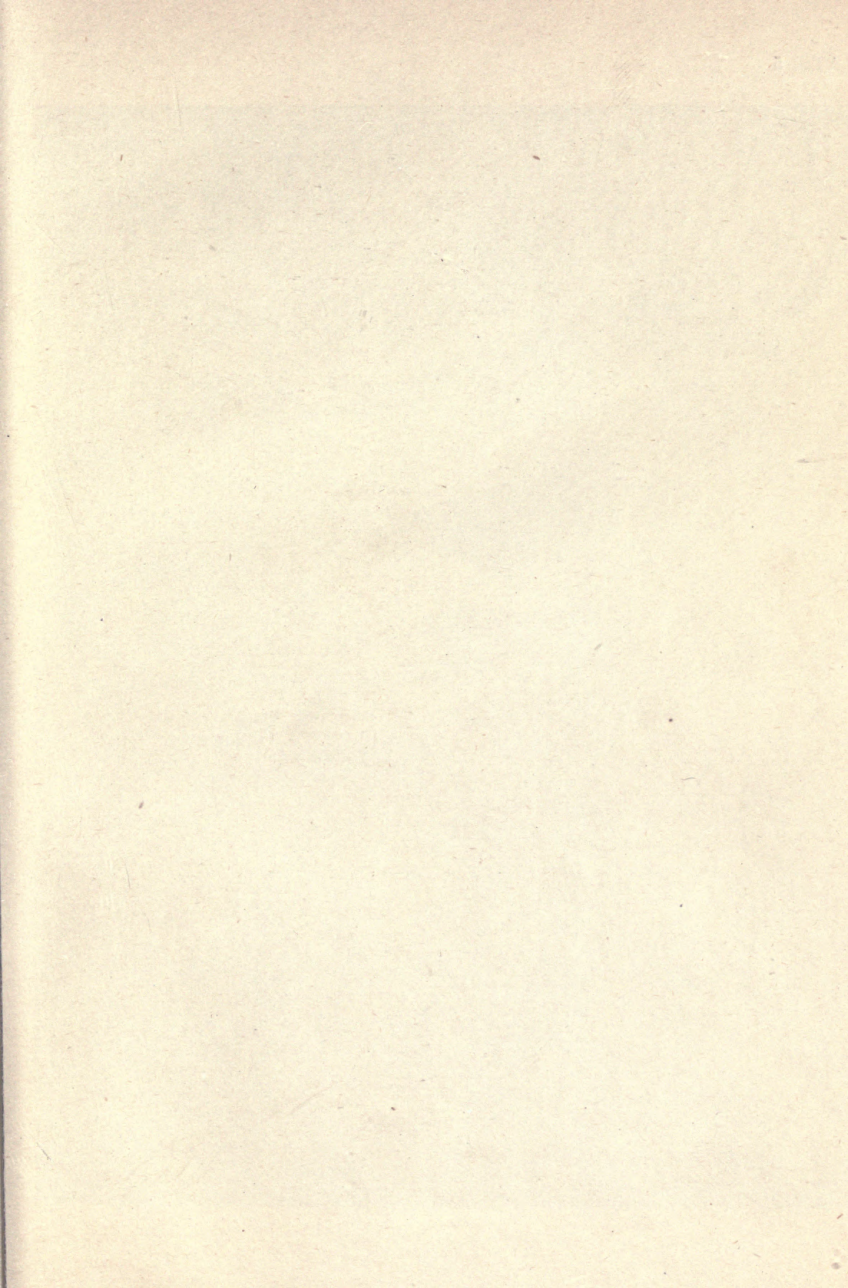
court, and bore an inscription to the effect that the Emperor receives his son with much joy, but utterly refuses to make peace, until at last, after a long dispute, he is persuaded, and gives Otto power to treat for peace. The Emperor was represented with his son suppliant before him, and surrounded by a great company of nobles, whose Teutonic characteristics of body and features were indicated by the artist. A motif in the picture, which was evidently popular, was the representation of a priest making a grimace at some boys, and provoking them to laughter so pleasantly as to excite hilarity in all observers. This is probably the only instance of humour recorded in the works of Pisanello; yet it need not surprise us, for there are tendencies in this direction observable in the work of his predecessors,* and he has a distinct feeling for any quaintness of attitude and expression observable in the animal world.†

Besides persons of Teutonic countenance, the picture also contained portraits of others. Among these we are able to name Andrea Vendramin, who, says Sansovino, *essendo giovane, fu il più bello, e il più gratioso gentilhuomo*

pp. 325, 332) says that in 1479 the same picture was partly repainted by Luigi Vivarini, and finished after his death by Gian Bellini. Facio mentions the German types and the *sacerdotem digitis os distortquentem*. Sansovino mentions Vendramin. Selvatico (*Stor. Estetico-critica delle Arte del Disegno*, ii. p. 466; cp. Lorenzi, p. 102) shows that in 1488 the Council accepted Vivarini's offer to paint a picture in the Hall for out-of-pocket expenses, and the provisors were ordered to let him have a *telarium in loco ubi extat pictura Pisani*.

* A cheerful piece of *genre* is the servant coming up from the cellar in the S. Giorgio fresco, where St. George is drinking the poison (Schubring, *Altichiero*, Plate 5, pp. 53 and 115).

† Cp. the delightful studies of dogs, Vallardi, fol. 243, No. 2498.





STUDIES OF AUDIENCE SCENE AND DOGS

della città. The future Doge (1476-77) was then probably still in his teens.*

The frescoes of Gentile and Pisanello are no more ; even in the fifteenth century that of Pisanello was repainted by Luigi Vivarini and Gian Bellini. But is there, among Pisanello's drawings, anything which can serve to recall the nature of his work ? We must confine ourselves to the scene described above, although doubtless Pisanello painted other pictures in the same hall. In the first place a sheet in the "Recueil Vallardi"† contains a rapid sketch—a mere note—of a scene which has been identified with Otto's audience with his father. (Plate 5.) We have a hall with arched windows ; in the upper part is a representation of the outer wall with pointed battlements and coats of arms ; below, by a convention usual in the trecento and also later, the side wall is imagined away, so that we may see what goes on within. A person is seated on a throne, on a dais ; beside him is a dignitary of some kind ; before him kneels a third person. The seated figure raises

* Marin Sanuto, *Vite de' Duchi* (Muratori, xxii. 1204), says that he was 76 when elected Doge on March 5, 1476. Sansovino (*Venetia*, ed. Martinioni, 1663, p. 583) gives his age as 84. On the other hand, Venturi (p. 30) dates his birth in 1395. If one of these earlier dates be right, it is an additional reason for placing Pisanello's Venetian period earlier than 1422.

† Fol. 219, No. 2432. The sheet was first used for some fine studies of dogs. The note with which we are dealing was a subsequent addition, as its borders are interrupted by the figures of two of the dogs. The theory that this sketch is connected with the Venetian fresco is propounded by Wickhoff (*Repert. f. Kunstwiss.*, vi., 1883, pp. 20 f.). Guiffrey (Venturi, p. 111) describes the scene as a coronation. Müntz (*Rev. de l'Art Anc. et Mod.*, i., 1897, p. 68) accepts Wickhoff's identification ; but he also accepts the British Museum drawing, to be discussed later.

his right hand. In four rows ranged along the room, at right angles to the dais, sit a number of people. Wickhoff identifies the room as the Hall of the Great Council itself, the throned and kneeling figures as the Emperor and his son. The audience sit, as was the custom in the Hall of the Great Council, in rows not facing, but at right angles to, the dais. If the identification is correct, Pisanello has—very naturally—taken the hall which he was decorating as his setting for the scene which, according to the legend, took place in Apulia. The theory that the sketch represents a coronation taking place before a castle will not bear examination; for the action is clearly meant to be going on within the building; and a coronation would doubtless take place in a church, which the building certainly is not. As, however, the sketch is so slight, it seems rash to base any theory upon it. And our doubts as to its connexion with the Venetian period are strengthened when we realise that it must be later than the drawings of dogs on the same sheet. Now the dogs are in Pisanello's ripest manner; nothing could be more admirable than the two spaniels and the large dog fore-shortened from behind. If they belong to his Venetian period, or to an earlier time, Pisanello must even then have been a consummate delineator of animals, and it cannot be said that his later work shows any progress in this respect.

But there is another sheet, in the British Museum,*

* Sloane, 5226-57. Pen and bistre on paper prepared with a red ground. For the attribution see S. Colvin, *Academy*, xxvi. (1884), pp. 338 f. (summarised in *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1884, t. 30, p. 282), and *Brit. Mus. Guide to Exhibition of 1891*, p. 7. The audience scene is reproduced by Müntz, *Revue de l'Art*, i., 1897, p. 70.

which demands careful consideration. The two subjects on the sheet are described as the attack made by the Romans on Barbarossa and his knights outside the Porta S. Angelo,* and Otto's reception by the Emperor. In the latter we have a Gothic colonnaded hall, showing considerable resemblance to the architecture of the Ducal Palace. At the top of the central arch is a shield bearing the imperial eagle. Below, a monarch, enthroned, receives a young man who kneels to clasp his hand. Another figure kneels lower down; yet another stands in an attitude of respect; among the columns is a crowd of courtiers, including a man holding a hawk; and three dogs play in the foreground. The monarch, the man kneeling before him, and his companions, are bearded, contrary to the Italian fashion of the early cinquecento. On the *verso* are some extremely free and bold drawings of scenes from a battle, and the representation of the horses, particularly in one group where we have one horse seen from behind and another from the front, is nearly as spirited as anything that remains of Pisanello's.

It is at least a strange coincidence that the two sides of this sheet represent scenes which—apart from the question of authorship—may well belong to subjects painted in the Ducal Palace. We know little of the artists who decorated the hall in the trecento, but the drawings seem to be too far advanced to be attributed to them. On the other hand, they have clearly nothing to do with Luigi Vivarini or Gian Bellini, who repainted the frescoes. There is,

* One of the frescoes in the hall represented the attack on Barbarossa's people *ad molem Adriani*: see Lorenzi, *loc. cit.* We do not know whether this was by Pisanello.

therefore, on external grounds, a fairly strong presumption in favour of the attribution to Pisanello. Unfortunately, however, when we come to the question of style, the case is altered. Fine as they are, these drawings seem by no means at home among the many other sketches from his hand. True, most of the latter are of later date ; but there seems to be no point of contact between the two. In the British Museum drawing the architecture, although probably not exactly copied from any one building, is drawn with some practical knowledge of the art, and is not by any means of the imaginative kind associated with Pisanello, and, to a less degree, with the earlier Veronese painters. The figures in the battle-scene are, as we have said, bold and spirited, and they are seized in striking attitudes ; but, nevertheless, they do not show that combination of fine minute drawing with sureness of line which is characteristic of our artist. The effect is obtained by other means. Finally, as a small point, it is worthy of notice that the watermark (a pair of pincers with recurved handles) does not apparently occur on any other paper used by Pisanello.

If it were possible to accept without reserve the identification * of certain of the portrait-sketches in the “Recueil

* Müntz (*loc. cit.*) enumerates, among others, the following Vallardi sketches as probably connected with the Ducal Palace. Fol. 72, No. 2329: tonsured head of monk. Fol. 86, No. 2339: profile of bearded man; across his breast a cord fastened by a ring surmounted by a cross. Against the beard is written in two different hands *canuta* and *piu chanuta*—evidently directions for colouring. (The ring and cross are also used as a brand on a horse on fol. 171, No. 2378.) This profile Müntz compares with the second kneeling figure in the Brit. Mus. drawing. In style it should be compared with fol. 77-79 (2334-2336), which, Dr. Richter suggests to me, are probably early drawings.

Vallardi " with persons represented in the British Museum drawing, we should, of course, be more inclined to accept the attribution of the latter to Pisanello. But the resemblances are too slight and vague to warrant any such identification. Nor is it more than a conjecture that the seated monk, the youth holding a falcon, and the standing figure wearing a spiked helmet, which occur on a sheet at Chantilly,* are studies for the fresco.

In the Museo Correr is preserved an illuminated manuscript of the "Historia di Alessandro III."† Even if later in date than the frescoes in which we are interested—a matter which is doubtful—it does not concern us; for, little as we know of the actual frescoes, it is sufficiently clear that the miniatures in this manuscript cannot be meant to reproduce fresco compositions of the early quattrocento.

We must, therefore, be content to say that, so far as our present information enables us to judge, there is nothing remaining among Pisanello's drawings which can definitely be associated with his fresco in the Ducal Palace. Nor is there much to be said for the attribution to him and to

Fol. 115, No. 2608: profile of a man wearing cap with drapery hanging from it; compared with the person on the extreme left. Fol. 127, No. 2620: strange-looking man with curly beard and snub nose, wearing high cap.

* Venturi, p. 127.

† A. b. 28; Lorenzi, *op. cit.*, Pl. I. ff., reproduces in outline eleven miniatures, supposing them to be copies of the frescoes; Wickhoff (p. 23), rightly rejecting this idea, sees traces of the influence of Pisanello, as, *e.g.*, in the drapery of St. Mark in the initial J (Lorenzi, Pl. I.). It is obviously impossible to draw sound conclusions from Lorenzi's reproductions; but so far as they go I fail to trace the influence of Pisanello, or to see any sign of a later date than the fourteenth century.

his Venetian period of certain drawings at Berlin.* In these the drawing of the purely decorative designs is hard and constrained. The best work is seen in the naturalistic representations of a rose-branch, a peacock's feather, and the like. Yet even here we have a conventional butterfly, of which it is difficult to believe Pisanello capable. Again, the fancifulness of other details—such as the piece of wall-decoration, and the St. Michael on a column—verges on the grotesque. In fact the resemblance to Pisanello's work is purely superficial. In the corner of one of the sheets is an attempt to represent the discovery of the Corinthian capital by Callimachus. The tale of this discovery is preserved by Vitruvius, who, though not absolutely unknown in the Middle Ages, was probably not rediscovered by Poggio at St. Gall until, at the earliest, 1416. Thus this sketch, and the other drawings which are in exactly the same style, are doubtless later than 1416. By that time, as we have seen, the paintings in the Great Hall were probably finished, and Pisanello had left Venice.†

The results of the preceding analysis are entirely nega-

* Nos. 485 (Lippmann, *Zeichnungen alter Meister*, Nos. 155 and 195) and 486 (*ibid.* No. 154). Wickhoff (*op. cit.*) accepts No. 485 as by Pisanello; C. Loeser (*Rep. f. Kunstwiss.*, xxv. p. 348) has recently pointed out that they are not his, but the work of some Venetian with a style nearly resembling that of Jacobello del Fiore.

† Dr. J. E. Sandys, to whom I owe the information as to the date of Poggio's discovery, points out that a correspondent of Poggio was the collector of MSS., Francesco Barbaro, who became a Senator of Venice in 1419 (for the correspondence see *Classical Rev.*, xiii. p. 125). Thus, had we been able to accept the drawing as Pisanello's, it might have been inspired by Barbaro, whom the artist would have learned to know at Venice.

tive. It is different when we come to the effect of Pisanello's visit to Venice on the development of his own art, and on that of the Venetians. For here—perhaps for the first time—he was brought into contact, direct or indirect, with Gentile da Fabriano. The general resemblance between the two masters is obvious, especially if we compare Gentile's *Adoration of the Magi*, which was finished in May 1423.* In this picture, in the quiet group of the Holy Family on the one hand, and in the gay pageant of the kings and their suite on the other, we find contrasted the two elements which were struggling with each other in Pisanello, until in the maturity of his powers the secular side obtained precedence. Gentile's rendering of the sacred group is one of the most attractive in existence, and exerted a strong influence on later artists;† and his Madonna type is closely approached, not only in naïve charm, but also in its general conception, by Pisanello's *Annunziata* in S. Fermo. Still, in subjects of this kind there was less room for originality, and it is more important to notice the close resemblance between the two artists on the secular side. The delight in the beasts and flowers of the field, in gaily appressed, animated groups, in dogs and horses, is common to both. In the delineation of natural objects Pisanello no doubt was, or became, easily the superior of Gentile. The latter artist's foreshortening of his horses is quite ordinary, and the hound couched at the

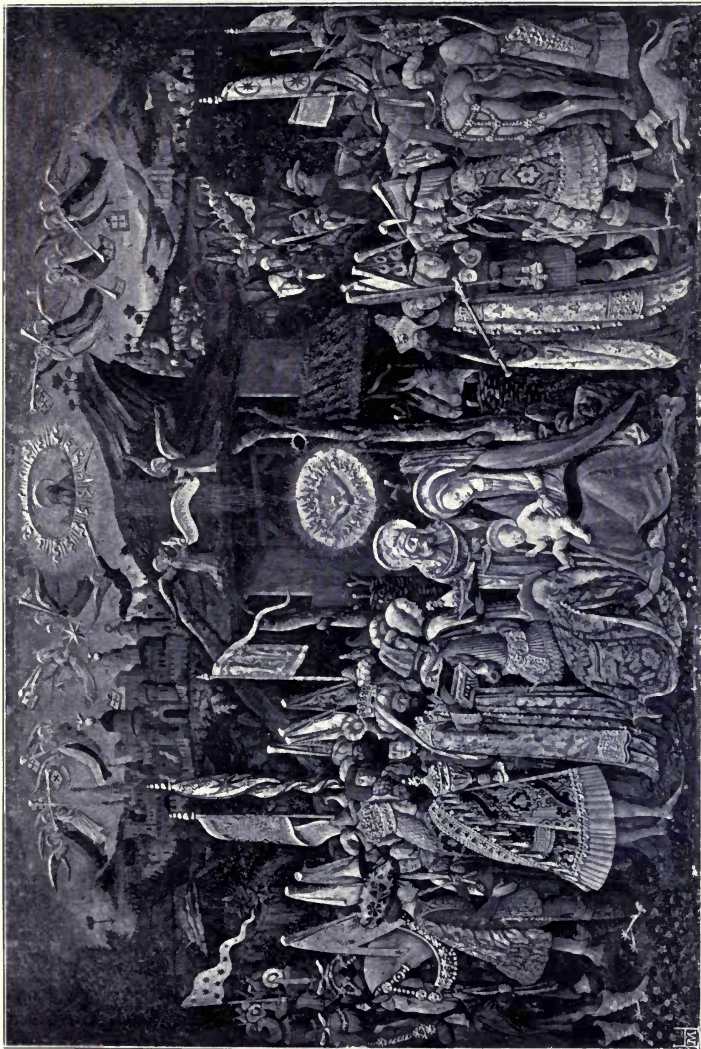
* Venturi, pp. 9 and 22.

† Cp. Stefano da Zevio's *Adoration* in the Brera; the illuminated MS. Brit. Mus. Add. 35,254 E; and, more curious still, Hans Pleydenwurf's painting in the Lorenzkirche at Nuremberg (H. Kehr, *Die Heiligen Drei Könige* in "Studien z. deutschen Kunstgesch.," 53. 1904, Pl. X.).

right hand is also commonplace; the group of two monkeys and the leopard's head are clever, but even they do not show an observation so keen as that of the Veronese. Still the same spirit animates the two men. In his other extant pictures Gentile shows somewhat less of this vivacity and energy, so that the *Adoration*, although his masterpiece, is not really characteristic. Yet it is important as indicating the sympathy which must have been possible between the artists. It is not probable that Gentile first roused in Pisanello the latent passion for natural forms; for the work of Altichiero and Avanzo had most effectively prepared the way in this direction. Indeed, it may be that Gentile learned as much as he taught; in cases of contact between two genial painters the debt rarely remains altogether on one side.

However this may be, a striking proof of the effect of the sojourn of these two painters at Venice is to be found in a picture representing the *Adoration of the Magi* now at Berlin (Plate 6),* but formerly at Venice. By more than one person it has been attributed to Gentile himself—an opinion in which few would now concur. On the other hand, the attribution to Antonio Vivarini, now very generally accepted, has been disputed because the picture shows a certain resemblance to Gentile's *Adoration*! In the central group, with the eldest king kissing the Child's toe, we trace the influence of Gentile. But the attendant figures, the horses, some of them excellently foreshortened from behind, the architecture of the background, are eloquent of

* Venturi, p. 26, No. 24. On the influence of Gentile and Pisanello on Venetian art, cp. Morelli, *Gal. zu München u. Dresden* (1891), p. 10; Bode, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1889, t. i., p. 489; Weizsäcker, *Berlin Jahrb.*, vii. p. 55.



ADORATION OF THE MAGI (ANTONIO VIVARINI)

Hangstängel

*Berlin
Face p. 38*

the fact that the painter knew the work of Pisanello, and knew it well. The beautiful cavalier who stands behind the youngest king holding a flag is brother to the St. Eustace of the National Gallery, or, for that matter, to Don Iñigo d'Avalos as we see him on Pisanello's medal. (Plate 63.)

Of course we must not suppose that works like this of Antonio Vivarini's were directly inspired by the frescoes in the Ducal Palace; after all, there were other paintings enough by Pisanello within easy reach of Venice. But the frescoes undoubtedly attracted considerable attention; and this explains the fact that we can trace in one and the same picture the influence of the two artists in combination.* This influence, it must be noted, did not last long; but, what was better than creating a school, the stimulus of the two masters awakened Venetian art, and enabled its exponents to receive other influences, and finally to create a school of their own. We shall see subsequently how Pisanello further acted on the development of Venetian art through the medium of Jacopo Bellini. But workshop-pieces, like Antonio Vivarini's *Adoration*, are especially valuable to the historian because they show the scaffolding by means of which an independent art is established.

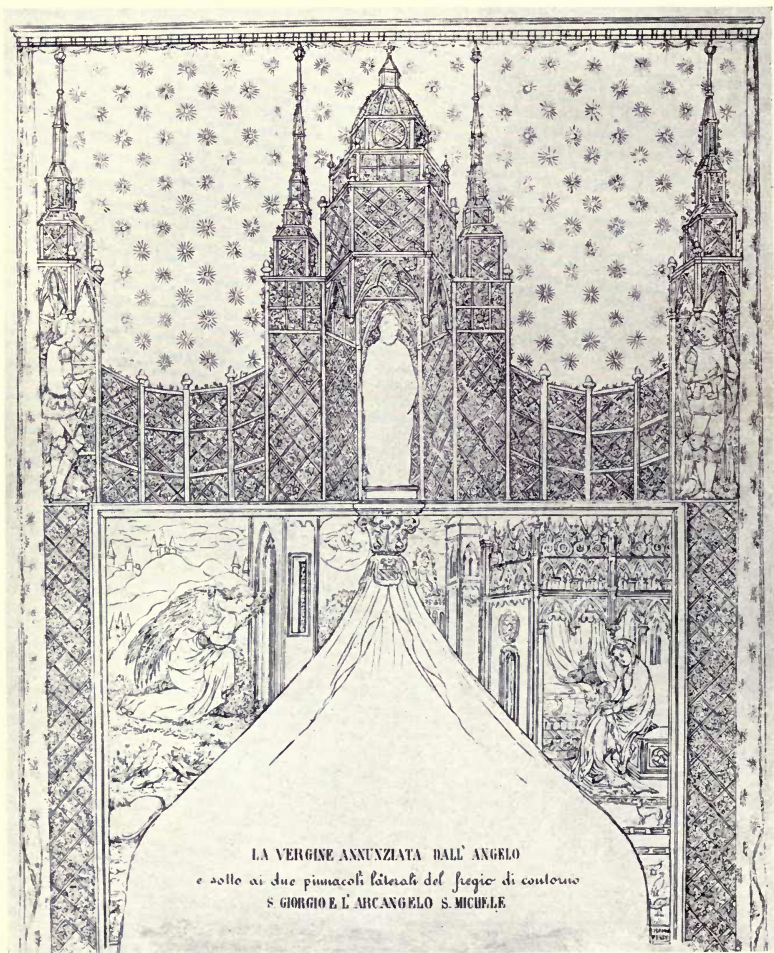
* The beautiful picture in the Louvre, now attributed by Corrado Ricci to Jacopo Bellini, might seem to come under the same category; but Pisanello's influence on the painter of this picture far outweighs Gentile's. We shall therefore deal with it later.

CHAPTER III

THE "ANNUNCIATION" IN SAN FERMO

WE have no information as to Pisanello's movements between the time of the completion of his work at Venice and his visit to Rome. But there is one work in Verona which certainly belongs to this period: the *Annunciation* in San Fermo. Here we have, for the first time, a tangible monument of Pisanello's art. It is painted on the north wall of the church, immediately on the left as one enters by the west door, and is merely a subsidiary decoration of the Brenzoni monument carved and signed by Giovanni di Bartolo (il Rosso).* The monument, which represents the Resurrection, is ugly, and the attitudes strained; it has been remarked that there is little to suggest that the sculptor was a pupil of Donatello, except perhaps the figure which crowns the whole monument. Since il Rosso was at Florence until 1424, the monument must be later

* The monument is figured in P. Schubring, *Das ital. Grabmal der Frührenaissance* (1904), p. 26, Fig. 37. Cp. A. G. Meyer in *Berlin Jahrb.*, x. p. 92; P. Toesca in *L'Arte*, vi. (1903), p. 229 f. The whole fresco is rudely reproduced by P. Nanin, *Disegni di varie Dipinture a fresco che sono in Verona* (Verona, 1864), Pl. 4, from which our Pl. 7 is reproduced; the two halves of the *Annunciation* in Venturi's Vasari and in his *La Madonna*, pp. 166, 167. For the signature, see Venturi, p. xix.



THE BRENZONI ANNUNCIATION

Nanin

S. Fermo, Verona

Face p. 41

than this year.” As we shall see, Pisanello probably went to Rome in or soon after 1428 ; so that the execution of the monument, and of the fresco which forms the background to it, may be dated to the second half of the twenties.

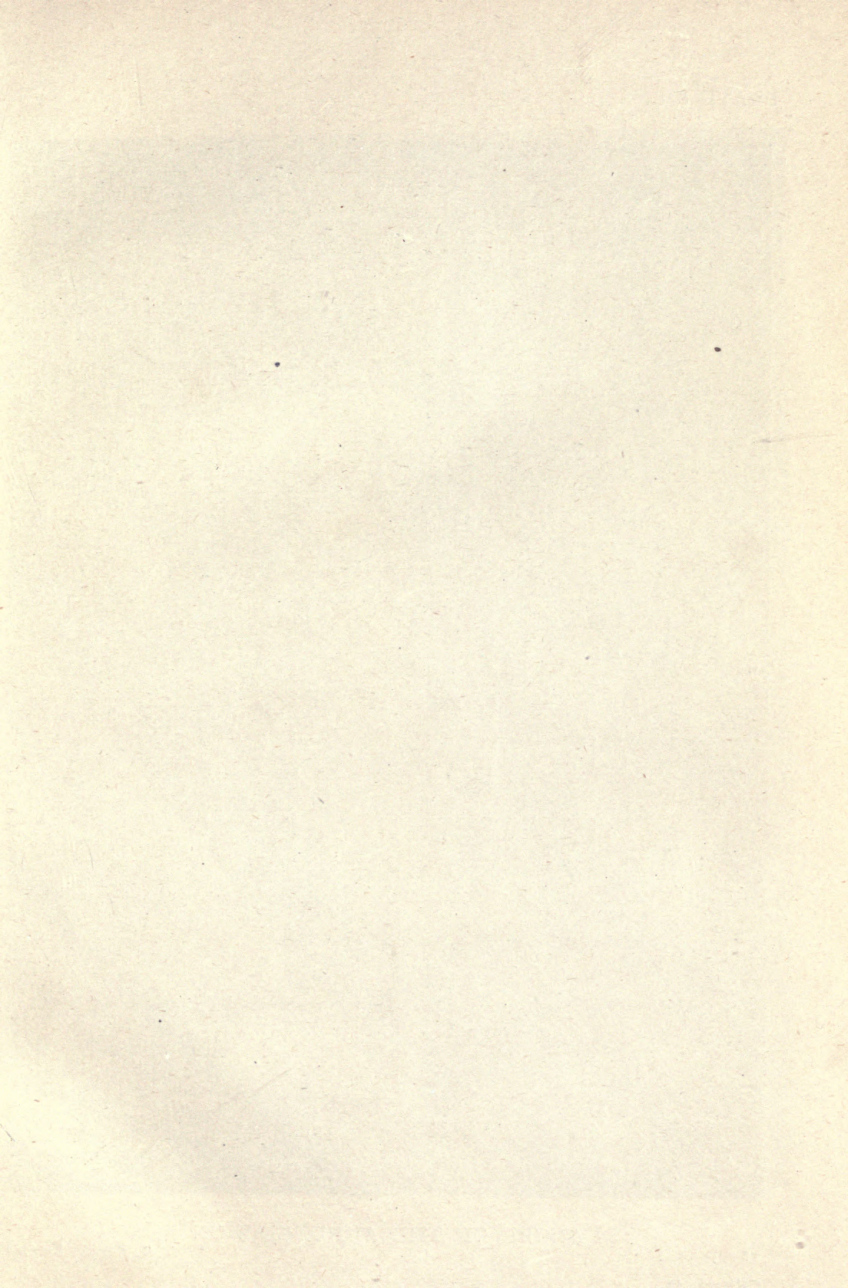
The whole of the monument, with the exception of the crowning statue which surmounts the baldacchino, is framed in a rectangular moulding. The triangular spaces between this moulding and the baldacchino are occupied by the fresco of the *Annunciation*. Painted on the wall above the moulding rises a wonderful complex of fanciful architecture, of debased Gothic style. Under the lateral pinnacles of this building stand, on a level with the sculptured prophet in the centre, figures of St. George on the left and St. Michael on the right. The signature of the artist ^{PISANVS}
^{PINSIT} is placed on a sham stone slab, low down on the right-hand side, below the Virgin.

The fresco is in a most deplorable condition of decay and dirt, and not rendered easier to examine by the monument to which it is subordinated. It was described, on the authority of Fra Marco Medici, by Vasari, who has been followed by most later writers without much attempt to add to his description, possibly for the reason just indicated. He praises for their beauty the two figures of the Virgin and Gabriel, which are touched with gold, after the manner of the time, as well as the drawing of the architecture and of some small animals and birds scattered through the picture.

To make a good composition of the subject, given the two triangular spaces separated by the baldacchino, was a task which would have puzzled a painter more skilful at

surmounting such difficulties than Pisanello. He has done his best, but the scene must be regarded as consisting of two almost independent parts. On the left kneels the angel (Plate 8). In the foreground, which is rich with flowers, are a couple of pigeons. They are admirably drawn, and it is not the artist's fault that several writers, one following the other, have described them as partridges! Behind the figure of Gabriel the landscape rises rapidly; a few trees, showing conical masses of thick foliage, are in the middle distance; while farther back, where the ground almost reaches the top of the picture, are groups of pencil-like spires dotted about the hills. All the details of this landscape can, at the present time, only be made out with the greatest difficulty. The angel, regarded as a single figure, is without doubt one of the noblest of Pisanello's creations; no other artist, dealing with the same subject, has surpassed the magnificent sweeping lines of his wings, or better expressed the energy of suddenly arrested motion. Gabriel has just alighted in a kneeling posture before the house of Mary; his fair hair still flies in the breeze, his wings are but partly folded. In his hand he holds a flowering lily. Of the house on this side only the arched doorway is represented. In the corner, above a group of trees, we see the half-figure of God the Father, leaning to the right from among the clouds. This figure forms the link with the right half of the fresco (Plate 9), in the corner of which we see the infant Jesus, in a rosy, golden glory, descending from God the Father on a ray, which bears the dove and passes through a circular traceried window to Mary's bosom.*

* The dove, not visible now, is given in Nanin's reproduction.



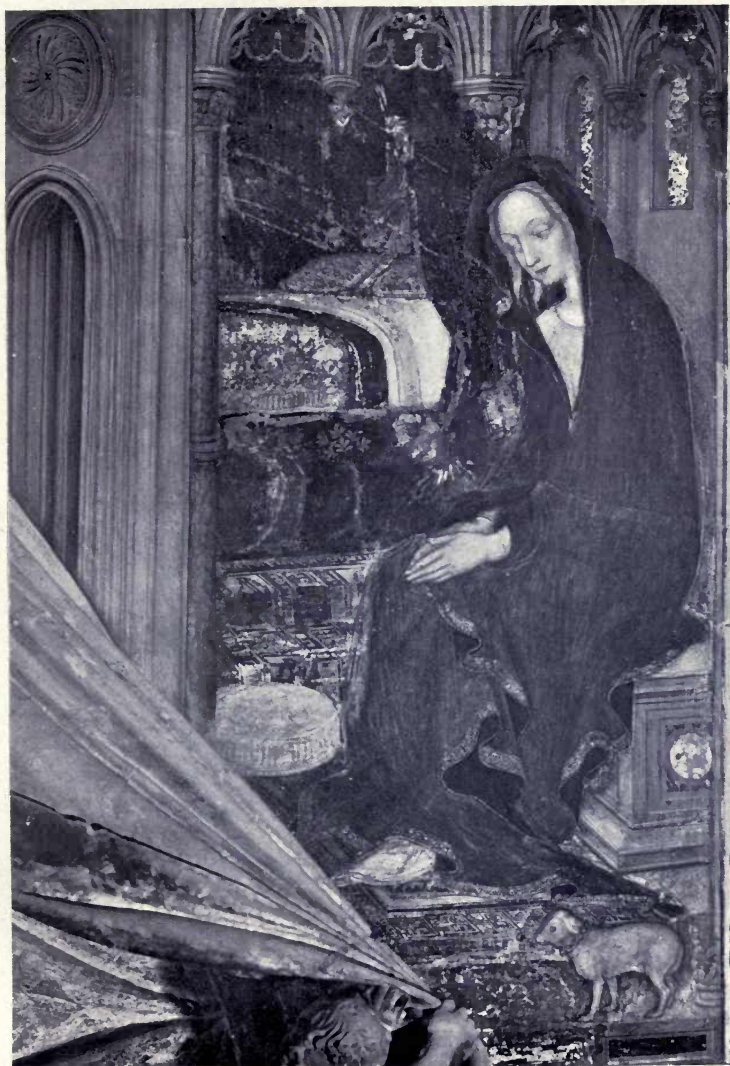


ANGEL OF THE ANNUNCIATION

S. Fermo, Verona

Alinari

Follow p. 42



VIRGIN OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Alinari

S. Fermo, Verona

Face pl. 8

She is seated in her bedroom on a settle ; in the background is the bed, on a daïs approached by carpeted steps.* Behind the bed, at its head, appears to be a small organ. Before the daïs is a round hassock. The perspective of the building, which recalls Venetian Gothic, is creditably managed. The Virgin, whose head is veiled in her mantle and surrounded by a glory of rays, has laid aside the book that she was reading, and folds her hands in prayer. In the foreground is a small dog wearing a collar: the least successful detail in the work, if it is fair to judge of it in its present state. Farther down, beside the folds of the baldacchino, come other details, apparently three birds, and then the signature.

St. George, who stands on the left above the moulding, appears to have a youthful, almost girlish face. He has flowing fair hair, and wears silver armour and a jerkin. He stands looking to the right, resting the weight of his body on the left leg, and leaning with his right hand on the dagger which he wears on his right side, in the attitude which is familiar to every student of Pisanello. His left hand appears to rest on a stick. The monster at his feet is hardly to be made out, and the same is true of the dragon of St. Michael on the right. Here, however, we are fortunate in that the face (Plate 10) and figure have suffered less and have been photographed. The archangel, clad like St. George, stands to the front, his head, with its long waving hair, slightly inclined to the left. His attitude

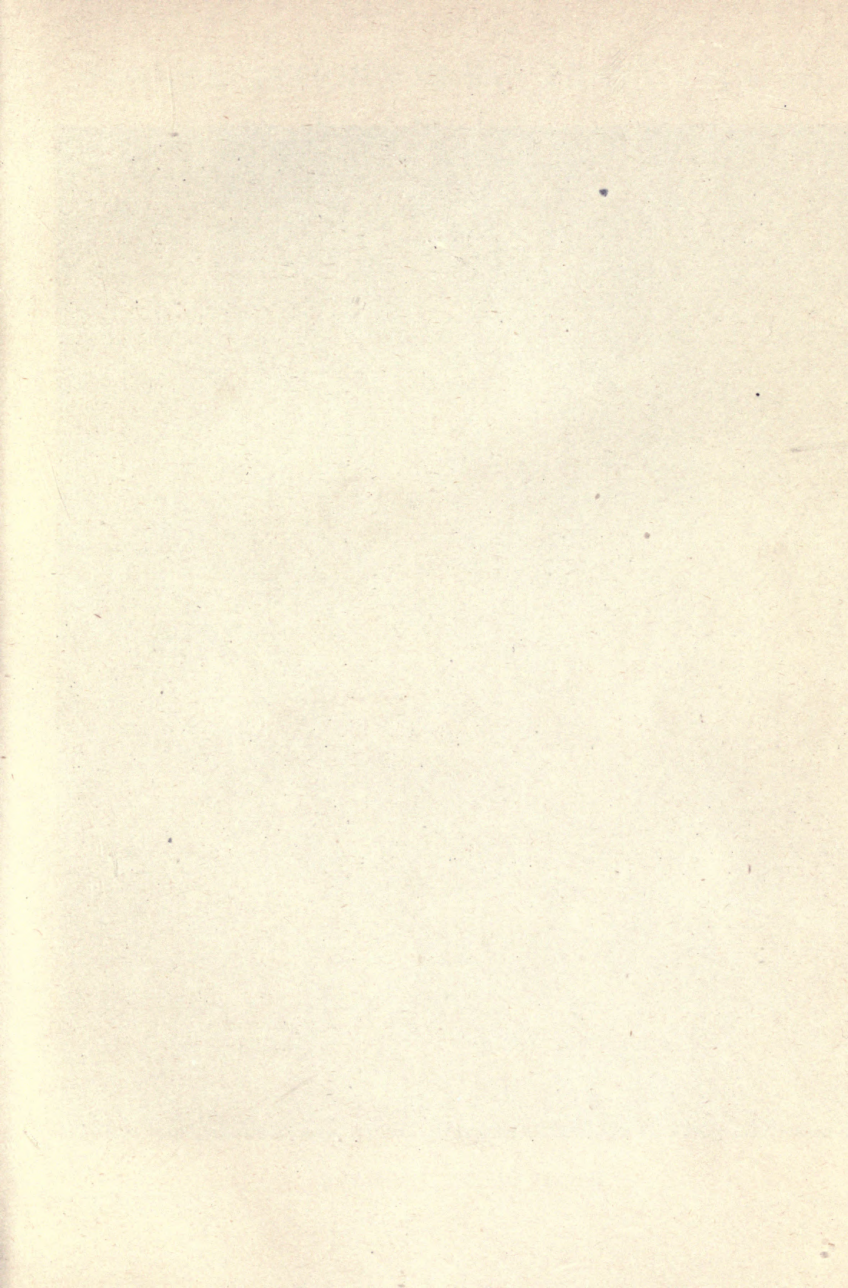
* The coverlet bears an inscription of which only a few letters remain, perhaps representing [*Magnificat anim*]a mea Dn[m]. The uppermost step of the daïs is decorated with two figures (a woman on the left, a man on the right) with a tree between them.

is unusual, his arms being folded across his breast.* He wears a dagger at his right side ; at his left hip we see the hilt of his sword.

The architectural construction, before the wings of which these two figures stand, falls into three parts. In the middle, enclosing the sculptured prophet, is a niche surmounted by a tall erection (hexagonal in plan), terminating in a cupola : it is flanked by two spires, of which the bases are square in plan. To right and left of this central portion stretches a trellis fence, curving slightly so as to present its concave side to the spectator, and overgrown with roses. At the sides are the niches, in which stand St. George and St. Michael, and above which rise spires (square in plan). The trellis pattern of the fence also extends downwards in a border just outside the moulding which encloses the main picture. The background is semé with suns, and this decoration is also represented by Nanin as forming a lateral border to the whole painting. Of this outer border there is now no trace.

The fresco is evidently a work of the artist's immaturity. Compared with the S. Anastasia fresco, its figures lack virility and strength. Yet in the angel Gabriel we admire that verve and success in capturing a momentary attitude which are characteristic of Pisanello at his best. The Madonna has a sweetness which even Gentile da Fabriano could not surpass, and the whole scene is infused with a genuine religious feeling such as the artist—spoiled, perhaps, by the atmosphere of princely courts—hardly displays in any of his later works that survive. The Virgin's

* Nanin represents him with his spear upright, transfixing the dragon's head ; of all this there is no trace.





HEAD OF ST. MICHAEL

Anderson
Face p. 45

S. Fermo, Verona

hands are fine, although some difficulty seems to have been experienced with the wrists. Indeed, if in the face we see the original from which the painter of the Madonna and St. Catherine in the Verona Gallery (Plate 1) derived his type, it is in the hands that the difference between the two painters comes out most markedly. In the treatment of the Virgin's drapery, as in her face, there is a strong trace of the influence of—perhaps we should say, a strong affinity with—Gentile. So much is clear from a comparison with, for instance, the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Brera, or the Berlin *Madonna with Two Saints and an Adorant*.^{*} The faces of the archangels Gabriel and Michael and of St. George are not, as we have seen, virile; notably in the St. Michael the soft oval contour, small mouth, weak nose, and full but not muscular neck, offer a singular but instructive contrast to the forceful development of the same type as we see it in the St. George of S. Anastasia (Plate 16). There—although the drawing is not yet perfect—the modelling of the face and neck shows muscle; the mouth is larger and has more character; the nose is stronger and more solid, the interval between the eyes, although still very wide, being filled by a well-defined bridge between the sockets, and the nostrils and tip vigorously modelled; finally, the hair leaves the forehead freer and broader, instead of reducing it to a pretty triangle.

In the Brenzoni fresco Pisanello seems to have adhered more or less to the colour-schemes in use in the earlier frescoes adorning S. Fermo. The general effect must have been quiet, although redeemed from sombreness by the silver armour, the glories, and the gold used for certain details

^{*} Venturi, Nos. 1 and 8.

Now that these bright adjuncts have wholly or in part disappeared, the general tone is very sober. We find no great spaces covered with bright colour, no strong contrasts. His method in fresco, as in panels, is rather to produce a mellow harmony of low tones, and by means of bright details here and there to heighten the effect of the whole.

In the mass of architecture which rises above the main picture we see a relic of the earlier Veronese school. In Altichiero and Avanzo, however, architecture was, as a rule, used so that it did not seem to be a superfluous adjunct. Here it seems to bear no relation to the main subject. Perhaps it is more just to say that the whole of the fresco above the moulding should be regarded as quite distinct from the Annunciation below it. Pisanello was ordered to decorate the wall-surface behind the statue which crowns the monument, as well as the background of the monument proper, and the two tasks involved quite different methods of treatment.

In the present condition of the fresco it would be futile to discuss how far in his handling of the landscape the artist can be said to have advanced beyond his predecessors. It is obvious, however, that with the naturalistic treatment of the birds we obtain a glimpse into a new world of art.

There are very few drawings which can be connected with this fresco. Some of the numerous young courtiers whom Pisanello was so fond of sketching may have served for the St. George. A sketch of Gabriel, in an attitude more usual than the one adopted in the fresco, with head erect, not bent in salutation, is to be found on a sheet in the Recueil Vallardi. But neither this nor any of the

other drawings supposed to be connected with the fresco can with certainty be regarded as definite studies for it.*

* For the angel, see Vallardi, fol. 157, No. 2631; on the same sheet is a sketch of a figure seated with a book, and an animal below—possibly, therefore, the Virgin. Fol. 175, No. 2541 (Virgin seated on the ground, with an angel above her) and fol. 195, No. 2398 (two Virgins), have been discussed above (p. 18, note *). A study of architecture at Milan is mentioned in Venturi (p. 123) as “recalling the architecture of the background of this fresco and that in S. Anastasia.”

CHAPTER IV

ROME

THE evidence for Pisanello's work at Rome, supplied by Vasari and other writers, is fortunately supplemented by contemporary documents. Before, however, we come to these, it is necessary to consider another hypothesis which has been suggested * to account for Vasari's statement that Pope Martin V., when he came to Florence, found Pisanello there and took him to Rome, where the painter executed certain frescoes in St. John Lateran. Now we know that, in September 1419, Gentile da Fabriano was about to leave Brescia for Rome on the invitation of the Pope. Martin, having been elected by the Council of Constance, stayed in Florence until September 9 of the next year, when he left for Rome. It has been suggested that either Vasari confused Gentile and Pisanello, in regard to this invitation, or the Pope invited them both. Of the two alternatives, the former seems the more probable. There is no other evidence extant to the effect that Pisanello went to Rome at so early a date. As the mention of the fresco in St. John Lateran shows, Vasari is certainly thinking

* Venturi, p. 7. For the evidence as to Gentile's work in the Lateran, see Venturi, pp. 18, 19.

of the sojourn which the artist actually made in Rome in the years 1431-1432, and perhaps a little earlier.

Gentile, if he got any nearer to Rome than Florence immediately after he left Brescia, cannot have spent much time in the service of the Pope; for we have documents proving that he was fully occupied in Tuscany, more especially in Florence, from 1421 to 1426. But from September 17, 1426, to August 1, 1427, he is proved, by payments, to have been engaged in the Lateran on work which was cut short by his death in 1428.

The subject of Gentile's chief work in this church was the history of St. John; in addition, he represented five prophets in chiaroscuro, between the windows. He also painted portraits of the Pope and ten cardinals, whom Facio says he represented to the life. The history of St. John was the painting which he left to be finished by Pisanello.

Of Pisanello's own work in the Lateran, Vasari tells us that it was distinguished by the abundant use of a sort of ultramarine given him by the Pope, and so beautiful and brilliant that it has never been equalled. These paintings were independent of Gentile's—Vasari, it need hardly be said, speaks of a *concorrenza* between the two artists—and appear to have been higher on the walls. In addition, perhaps before he began this independent work, Pisanello completed Gentile's history of St. John.* Vasari speaks

* Bart. Facio, *de viris illustr.* (Flor. 1745), p. 47, writing in 1455-56 supplements Vasari. Three payments to Pisanello for work in the Lateran are given by E. Müntz, *Les Arts à la Cour des Papes*, i. p. 47, and Venturi, p. 33. They are: 40 gold florins on 18 Apr. 1431; 50 on 27 Nov. 1431; 75 on ult. Febr. 1432. The artist is called *magister Pisanellus* (or *Pisanus*) *pictor*. M. Lauer will, I hope, shortly publish

as if he were able to appreciate the great beauty of Pisanello's painting. The more trustworthy Facio, writing on the authority of Pisanello himself, says that the history of St. John had already almost disappeared owing to the dampness of the wall. Possibly the paintings on the higher level did not suffer so much.*

The published documents relating to the work in the Lateran show that he was engaged there at least as late as the end of February 1432. On July 26 of that year he received a passport to leave Rome, his work being presumably finished.

The statement, which is to be found in the first edition of Vasari, that Pisanello also painted in other places in Rome, has disappeared in the second edition. This is not a sufficient reason to suspect its truth, which is otherwise probable. Nevertheless it must be remembered that as Gentile, when he died in 1428, left a great task

documents from the Lateran archives bearing on the same subject, which will define our knowledge of the chronology of this period more accurately.

* In the His de la Salle Collection is a sketch by Pisanello for a Baptism (B. de Tauzia, *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 57, No. 80) containing a figure stripping his vest over his head (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1882, t. 25, p. 229). This figure is closely copied on fol. 20 vo of the "Taccuino di Baldassare Peruzzi" in the Bibl. Comun. at Siena. The sketches in this book seem to have been made in Rome in the eighties of the sixteenth century, in the opinion of H. Egger, who accordingly suggests (*Vienna Jahrb.*, xxiii. pp. 26 f.) that the artist of the notebook may have copied the figure from Pisanello's fresco in the Lateran. If so, the outlines at least of the figures in this fresco must have been visible after Vasari's time. But the sketch in the notebook may have been made from one of Pisanello's drawings, or a copy. Another sketch in the His de la Salle Collection (B. de Tauzia, p. 59, No. 82 vo) is a study for the decollation of John the Baptist (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1882, t. 25, p. 227).

unfinished, the Pope would probably set Pisanello to work on this fresco as soon as he arrived. Of course he may have subsequently found time for other commissions; and it is probable that the copies of Roman antiques and of Giotto's mosaic in St. Peter's, still preserved among his drawings, were made during this period. What is more, it appears, as we shall see, that he paid a hurried visit to Verona in 1431.

The evidence for this journey is to be found in a letter * written by Leonello d'Este in Ferrara to his brother Meliaduse in Rome on January 20 of a year which has to be inferred. The letter, which shows traces of the influence of Guarino, and is therefore later than 1430, recommends Giovanni Aurispa warmly to his old pupil Meliaduse. Now we know from a letter written by Aurispa to Bartolomeo Guasco that Aurispa and Meliaduse were thinking of going to Rome together if the civil war which was raging in the city permitted; and this reference to the revolt of the Colonna against the Pope permits us to date the letter to Guasco in the second half of 1431. Peace was signed on September 22, 1431, after which we may presume that Meliaduse and his old tutor went south. As Aurispa was back in Ferrara about the middle of 1432, after which he went to Basel, the year of Leonello's letter to Meliaduse is fixed as 1432.

In this letter Leonello, after dealing with another matter, continues:

"Pisano, distinguished among all painters of this age,

* *Ferrarie xiii. Kalas Februarias*. See R. Sabbadini, *Biogr. document. di Giov. Aurispa*, 1891, pp. 58 ff.; Venturi, p. 37, and in *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, 1888, p. 425. The letter to Guasco is given by Sabbadini, p. 57.

when he came to Ferrara from Rome, promised to me a certain picture painted by his hand, in which was the image of the Blessed Virgin. And since the picture was at Rome in the hands of a certain friend of his, he offered, as soon as he should have come to Verona, to write to him, in order that he might entrust it to you, to the end that you might send it to me instantly; and at your going hence I for some reason forgot to tell you, as I wished. Wherefore if, as I suppose, it has been given into your hands, I pray you to send it to me safely. For I am wonderfully desirous to see it, as much because of the excellent cunning of the painter as out of especial devotion to the Virgin."

The date of the letter being January 20, 1432, we cannot avoid the conclusion that some time between April 18, 1431* (when Pisanello received a payment for work in St. John Lateran) and September 22, 1431 (after which date Meliaduse seems to have left for Rome), Pisanello made a visit to Verona, passing hurriedly through Ferrara. He was doubtless pressed for time, owing to his engagement in Rome—whither he returned before November 27—and so hard pressed that he could not even wait to despatch a messenger from Ferrara. Leonello, too, was so eager to have his picture that he could not wait until the artist himself should return to Rome, but made him promise to expedite matters by writing in advance from Verona.

Such seem to be the only possible inferences to be drawn from the letter. At first sight it seems more natural to suppose that the dating is faulty, and that

* The Fillon letter to be discussed below may, if genuine, belong to 1432, not 1431.

Pisanello, when he called at Ferrara, had finished his work for the Pope. But—apart from the fact that we cannot fit any other date into what we know of Aurispa's movements—why then should Pisanello have left the picture in Rome, unless he meant to return thither?

The description of the picture as containing the image of the Virgin has suggested that in the National Gallery panel, which represents St. Anthony and St. George with the Virgin and Child above them, we may possess the very work in question. But this, in view of the apparently late style of the painting, is a most hazardous conjecture; and we shall defer the consideration of the panel until we come to deal with Pisanello's work at Ferrara in the forties.

That the painter was much in request has already become evident. None the less is it impossible not to regret the disappearance of a document purporting to be an autograph letter to Filippo Maria Visconti.* Writing from Rome on June 28 (year uncertain), Pisanello prays his patron to be so good as to wait until next October, when he hopes to send the work which, as Signor Ambrogio will have testified, he had undertaken to execute in bronze;

* See Müntz, *Les Arts à la Cour des Papes*, i. p. 47; Charavay, *Inventaire des autographes . . . composant la coll. de M. B. Fillon*, 1879, ix. sér., p. 121; also *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1879, t. i. p. 377. The facsimile of the signature is also reproduced by Venturi, p. xix. The document was not sold with the rest of the Fillon collection. Montaiglon, who communicated it to Müntz, did not suspect it; Müntz himself afterwards (*Hist. de l'Art*, i. p. 634 note) began to suspect a mystification, because no one, since Montaiglon quoted the details, has ever been able to see the letter. De Tausia's doubts as to the real reference of the letter (*L'Art*, 1882, i. p. 226) have been met by Stevenson (*Mé. d'Archéol.*, 1888, p. 458), and are entirely removed by our knowledge of the true date of Gentile's death (1428).

he is unable at present on any account to leave the paintings on which he is engaged in a church, and that work will not be completed until the end of the summer. Nevertheless, he will do his best, as by gratitude bound, to satisfy the Duke. As we have seen, Pisanello's work in St. John Lateran occupied him until the summer of 1432. The letter may therefore have been written in that year rather than in 1431, as has been supposed. Signor Ambrogio, as Müntz has suggested, may have been the distinguished scholar Ambrogio Traversari, who was in Rome in 1431.

The letter having disappeared, it is exceedingly difficult to decide whether it ought to have the benefit of the doubt or to be put out of court. If genuine, and if of 1431 or 1432—a condition by no means certain—it would be especially important as showing that, at least six years before he produced the first medal which can with certainty be assigned to him, the artist was accepting commissions to work in bronze. Further, we find him in close relations with Filippo Maria Visconti, and expressing gratitude for past favours; some ten years must elapse before we are able to point to him in similar relations with the Duke. Were there no mystery about the disappearance of the letter, these considerations would have no weight; as matters stand, they make us hesitate to accept the document as genuine. It should be observed that the writing of the signature (of which alone we are able to judge, since the facsimile of it has been published) is unlike any writing to be found in the *Recueil Vallardi*.

Whether or no Pisanello painted in Rome elsewhere than in St. John Lateran, it would have been surprising had he exercised no influence on other artists who worked

in the city. Such influence is traceable—although it would be wrong to exaggerate its definiteness—in Masolino's frescoes in the Chapel of St. Catherine in S. Clemente, painted apparently about 1446–1450.* In the scene where St. Catherine mocks the idol, one of the youths who looks on wears a rich cloak such as was dear to Pisanello's heart; but the artist has failed to give to the figure, in spite of his dress, the courtly distinction of Pisanello's gentlemen and pages. The splendid Crucifixion also owes something to Pisanello—witness the bold foreshortening of the horses. The same feature is reproduced in the miracle of St. Ambrose, where we have a group of horsemen hurrying away from the house on which is descending the destruction called down by the wickedness of its inhabitants. Again, Wickhoff compares the treatment of the bedroom of the dying saint with interiors such as are depicted in the early Veronese frescoes in the S. Felice Chapel at Padua, or in the Pisanellesque decoration of the bell-chamber of S. Maria della Scala at Verona. It is, however, necessary to insist that none of the resemblances which have been pointed out are more than superficial; in no sense can Pisanello be said to have affected the style of Masolino, although he may have supplied an occasional motif. In the plastic rendering of the human figure, in the treatment of space and landscape in the *Crucifixion*, Masolino is very far ahead of anything that can with certainty be assigned to Pisanello.

* See F. Wickhoff, *Zeitschr. f. bild. Kunst*, xxiv. (1889) pp. 301 f. Spaventi (*Vittor Pisano*, p. 26) suggests that they may be from Pisanello's own hand!

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST FERRARESE PERIOD

ON July 26, 1432, Pisanello received a passport* from Eugenius IV. (who had succeeded Martin V. in March 1431). The artist, at present dwelling in Rome, and having need to visit various parts of Italy for divers matters of business, receives a passport for himself, companions and household, to the number of six, mounted or on foot, and all his goods.

From the date of this document until the beginning of 1435 we have no information about Pisanello's activity, and it is idle to speculate as to what were the divers cities in Italy which he visited. This is, however, as suitable a place as any in which to deal with the frescoes which he is said to have executed at Florence. It has, indeed, been suggested that Pisanello followed fairly soon in the steps of Gentile da Fabriano, transferring himself to Florence

* Text of the *littera passus pro Pisanello pictore* in Venturi, p. 36 (earlier publications: E. v. Ottenthal, in *Mitth. des Inst. f. Oesterr. Geschichtsforschung*, Innsbruck, v. 1884, p. 443; Gnoli, *Arch. stor. dell' Arte*, iii. 1890, p. 25). The artist is called *dilectus filius Pisanellus pictor familiaris noster*. Dat. Rome apud Sanctum petrum. Anno Incarnationis dominice M^oCCCC^{mo} (vacat) vii. kalendas Augusti, Pontif. nostri Anno secundo. The second date fixes the year as 1432.

towards the end of the twenties. I have already mentioned a drawing preserved at Berlin* and representing an angel from Donatello's pulpit at Prato, which was erected in 1428. The drawing may, however, have been made at any time after 1428; and, in any case, its connexion with Pisanello is not absolutely certain.

Vasari tells us that, according to some persons, when Pisanello was in Florence as a young man, learning his art, he painted in the old church of the Temple, which stood where now stands the old citadel, the legend of the Pilgrim who, when on his way to the shrine of St. James, was punished for a robber, but was succoured by St. James and brought back safely to his home.

The Compagnia di S. Maria della Croce al Tempio had for its object the service and consolation of persons condemned to death. In 1428 it received a legacy for the purpose of building a hospital,† and it has been suggested that here, in an eminently suitable place, as being designed for the reception of pilgrims among others, Pisanello depicted the legend of the Pilgrim. The story may be read in the Golden Legend; in an amplified version it is found as a miracle-play. A father, mother and son, on

* No. 1358 v^o. Berlin *Jahrb.* ii. p. 26. Venturi, p. 122, No. 4 (where a doubt is expressed as to the authenticity of the drawing on this side of the sheet).

† G. Richa, *Chiese fiorentine*, tom. ii. pp. 125 f., 131 f., cited by Venturi, p. 30, who suggests that the paintings were in the hospital, and gives a summary of the plot of the miracle-play after Aless. d'Ancona, *Sacre rappresentazioni*, iii. p. 465 f. The father and mother approaching the gallows, on which hangs their son, comforted by St. James, are depicted in the woodcut illustrating the Florentine miracle-play: cp. *Rappres. duno Miracolo di tre Peregrini*, &c., Flor. 1519. Venturi suggests the date 1428-30 for the fresco.

their way to the shrine of St. James of Compostella, put up at an inn. The daughter of the host tries in vain to seduce the young man, and in revenge puts a silver cup into his wallet. After the departure of the pilgrims, the cup is missed, they are pursued, the cup is found in the young man's wallet, he is taken before the podestà and hanged. The father and mother proceed on their pilgrimage; on their return, passing by the gallows, they are greeted by their son, whose life has been preserved by the saint. They hasten to the podestà, who says he believes their story as much as he believes that the roast fowl on the table before him will revive. This miracle immediately takes place, and the podestà, convinced, has the young man cut down. On his evidence, the host and hostess are hanged and the wicked girl burned alive.

Now it is obvious that the representation of such a legend was peculiarly appropriate to a chapel belonging to a society with the objects of the *Compagnia del Tempio*. It may, therefore, well have been painted not in the hospital, but in the chapel which was founded in 1361 near to the city wall outside the gate of St. Francis, and which seems to have been rased in the siege of 1530.*

Vasari's statement is vague, and based entirely on hearsay. We are not, therefore, bound to believe that the frescoes were done by Pisanello during the time when, according to his biographer, he was learning to paint at Florence. It is not, of course, impossible that a fresco, or

* Richa, ii. p. 127. In the late fifteenth-century view of Florence, published by Lippmann, *The Art of Wood-Engraving in Italy*, facing p. 32, the Tempio is seen outside the gate, and near it the gallows.

series of frescoes, of some importance should be entrusted to this young foreigner. But the passage in Vasari is evidently of a piece with his statement about the relations between Pisanello and del Castagno: both tending to glorify Florence as the metropolis of art. No one has yet succeeded in proving any trace of Florentine influence on the art of Pisanello. If he knew Andrea, and collaborated with him, or finished some work that he had left incomplete,* that would be quite sufficient to originate the story as we find it in Vasari. And this may have happened in the period 1428-30, if we accept the very doubtful suggestion of a visit to Florence in those years; or, more probably, at some time between 1432 and 1438, a period in which we know very little of the artist's movements. Giovio—a thoroughly bad authority—gives us to understand that Pisanello was in Florence in 1439, making a medal of Palæologus. By that time, however, he was working hard for the Ferrarese Court, and it is unlikely that he would have escaped thence to Florence.

We have already seen Pisanello in intimate relation with Leonello d'Este. In January 1435 he sent a present†

* So Venturi, p. 31.

† Mandate of Leonello, dated Feb. 1, 1435, to pay the servant *Pisani pictoris Veronensis clarissimi* 2 ducats of gold, since the said servant has brought and presented to Leonello in the name of Pisano *Divi Iulii Caesaris effigiem*. Venturi, p. 38, suggests that the object was a wedding-present like Guarino's book. For the *capsa quadra in forma di libro, dov' è Julio Cesare in uno quadretto di legno cum le cornice dorate*, see Campori, *Raccolta di catal. ed invent. ined.*, Modena, 1870, p. 30. Venturi refers to *Reg. Camerali* of 1441, C (Modena, Arch. di Stato) for the "Julius Cæsar Room." Thode (*Ztschr. f. bild. Kunst*, xix. p. 103) suggests that the picture of Cæsar was meant to adorn the cabinet of gems and coins. The document has been misunderstood by Crowe

to the young marquis, who was to be married to Margherita Gonzaga in the next month. The object is described as a portrait of Julius Cæsar, and Leonello rewarded the servant who brought it—for Pisanello was not at Ferrara—with two gold ducats. The gratuity cannot, of course, be supposed in any way to indicate the value of the object. A very plausible conjecture connects this portrait with a panel which is mentioned in the inventory of the Este wardrobe of 1494. In the chapter relating to “medals and intaglios and portraits from the life” mention is made of a square casket in the shape of a book, where is Julius Cæsar in a wooden panel with the frame gilt. Julius Cæsar was Leonello’s favourite hero and writer of antiquity, and the palace at Ferrara contained a room known as the “Room of Cæsar,” the decoration of which presumably justified its title. It is probably more than a coincidence that, as Venturi has noted, in this very year 1435 Pisanello’s fellow citizen, Guarino (the editor of Cæsar’s Commentaries), dedicated to his pupil Leonello a tract maintaining against Poggio that Cæsar, and not Scipio, was the greatest captain of antiquity.

It is not quite clear from the inventory whether this portrait of Cæsar was contained in the book-shaped box or decorated its outside. One naturally thinks of a case made to contain a miniature and open like a book. On the whole this seems to be more probable than the idea that the picture was the outer adornment of a gem and medal cabinet.

Whether this identification be correct or not, the loss of and Cavalcaselle (*North Italy*, i. p. 455) to relate to a portrait of Niccolò III.

Pisanello's Julius Cæsar is the more to be regretted because we have no other finished study after the antique from his hand.

Again for three years there is a blank in the chronology of Pisanello's life. We next hear of him in connexion with the plague which fell upon Verona in 1438, and with the war between the Duke of Milan and the Venetian Republic.* Early in July Gianfrancesco Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, declared himself on the side of the Duke of Milan. Mantua and its territory at the time seem to have been crowded with Veronese citizens, who had fled from Verona to escape the plague which had broken out in the city. The Marquis forced such as were able-bodied to take service under him, and forbade the rest to leave his territory without permission. Then followed the siege of Verona, its capture by the army of the Marquis on the night of November 16, 1439, and its recovery by Sforza a few days later. Even during the siege, it would appear, the Veronese orators had pleaded before the Republic the cause of the *fuorusciti*, who in September 1439 were pardoned, on the understanding that they should not return to Verona for the present, but remain *a Padua citra*. On August 9, 1441, a time-limit was imposed within which they should establish their innocence, and again on February 7, 1441 (1442 N.S.), the council published a

* For the war and the capture of Verona, see Daru, *Hist. de la Rép. de Venise*, lib. xx. 12; S. Romanin, *Storia document. di Ven.*, iv. p. 191 ff.; for the other authorities and full discussion, Venturi, pp. 42 ff. The source of the statement that the exiles should remain *a Padua citra* is the Privilegium of Franc. Foscari of 30 Sept. 1439 (Statutes of Verona, 1475, fol. l. (3) verso): *ita tamen quod veniant et stent pro presenti a padua citra et gaudeant bonis suis, et quanto citius venient tanto gratius nobis erit.*

final list of persons who had not yet presented themselves, and who were to be allowed until the end of the next March to clear themselves. The second name in this list is *Pisanus pictor*.

From this document we gather, therefore, that Pisanello was absent from Verona from at least the middle of 1438 until February 1442. We are by no means justified in taking it for granted that he failed to obtain pardon. But, as a matter of fact, there is no record of his presence at Verona at a later date; and, as records of his movements now become frequent, and we find him full of commissions at Ferrara, Mantua and Naples down to within a short time of his death, it seems certain that he did not return to Verona for any long period. From this a conclusion of some importance follows: the great fresco of S. Anastasia must be not later than the first half of 1438; and the St. Eustace of the National Gallery, being obviously a less mature work, must be earlier still. The conjecture that the SS. Anthony and George is the picture mentioned by Leonello d'Este in 1431 rests, as we have seen, on an insufficient basis; the qualities and defects of the panel point to a comparatively late date, so that it will best be described in connexion with the artist's work at Ferrara in the next decade. But no occasion seems so suitable as the present to deal with two other panels: the St. Eustace of the National Gallery and the portrait of an Este Princess in the Louvre. The fresco of S. Anastasia demands a chapter to itself.

The St. Eustace (Plate 11)* in the National Gallery,

* Berlin *Jahrb.* vi. (1885), pp. 16, 17 (Bode). Photogravure in Venturi (no. 6). Cp. also Vienna *Jahrb.* xvi. p. 209 (von Schlosser);

whither it passed from the Ashburnham collection, was formerly attributed to Albert Dürer or even Jean Fouquet, until its true authorship was recognised by Dr. Bode. It is painted in tempera on poplar wood.

St. Eustace (or Placidus, as he was called before his conversion), riding to the chase, found a herd of deer, and among them a stag which was finer than the rest. It left its fellows and plunged into the depths of the forest, pursued by Placidus with all his might. It mounted a high rock, and Placidus approaching considered how he might capture it. And as he diligently observed it he saw between its horns the form of the sacred cross outshining the sun in brightness, and the image of Jesus Christ.

This is the moment represented in the picture. The saint, who raises his right hand in wonder, appears as a magnificently-dressed young cavalier. On his head is a sumptuous headdress such as the courtiers of the time affected and the artist loved to draw: a blue scarf wrapped round his hat like a turban and falling behind to his waist. Over a brown furred coat he wears a loose gold-coloured tunic girt at the waist. At his side hangs his gold-mounted horn, in a baldric decorated with gold quatre-foils. The metal of these decorations, of the studs, etc., on the trappings and bridle of his horse, and of his spurs, is represented by gilt embossed work. The animal is of the heavily-built breed almost exclusively represented in Pisanello's art, and contrasts curiously with the slight

Gaz. d. Beaux Arts, 1894, t. 12, p. 291 (Gruyer); *Berlin Jahrb.* vii. p. 50 (Weizsäcker). It was exhibited at the New Gallery in 1894. Size 65 × 53 cm.

figure of its rider. It is reining back, having, like St. Eustace himself, just caught sight of the portent. Some of the hounds also seem to be aware of the miracle; one looks up and shows its teeth; of the two greyhounds, one looks back towards its master, but the other is intent on coursing a hare. The sacred stag, a superb beast, has mounted *super quandam rupis altitudinem* in the middle distance, and stands calmly facing the hunter. The wooden crucifix between his antlers bears the letters INRI on a gilt label. The figure of Christ is of an archaic realism.

The landscape has almost the effect of a bird's-eye view. The artist's idea was evidently to represent as much of the varied scenery of the *silva vastior*, the forest wilds, as he could in the space, and he has entirely dispensed with the sky. Thus, in the absence of a horizon, it is difficult for us to realise what exactly was his notion of the perspective of the scene. We have before us a broken and somewhat confused piece of country, falling more or less into three parts. There is a lake in the background, whence—or into which—flows a river, which also appears in front of a grove of trees in the middle of the picture. Then there is the forest with its patches of wood interspersed with open spaces, edged by abrupt declivities. Finally, we have the comparatively flat foreground, with a flowery turf, on which stands the group of St. Eustace and his hounds, and a wood on the right, peopled by various gay little birds. In the forest we notice two more stags—one of them standing in a thicket of reeds and drinking from the lake—and two hinds or fawns; on the extreme right is a bear. The lake and its borders are enlivened by a



THE VISION OF ST. EUSTACE

Hans Jüngel

*National Gallery
Face p. 64*

number of aquatic birds—swans, pelicans, an egret, herons, geese.

The first criticism which occurs to one in connexion with this picture is that it is entirely lacking in unity. In spite of the importance which the artist has sought to give to the mounted figure and the sacred stag, neither succeeds in holding the attention, which wanders now to the greyhound coursing the hare, now to the aquatic birds in the lake, now to the pair of spaniels in the foreground, now to the little birds in the wood, and too often to the hideous scroll, the presence of which is not even atoned for by an inscription.* The naturalist has overweighted the artist, and in his laudable desire to provide us with a complete compendium of forest-life, Pisanello has almost forgotten the real subject of his picture. As a composition it is much improved by concealing the top at the level of the Crucifix; there is then less to distract the attention from the main subject, and the eye is not led upwards by the lake in the vain hope of finding a horizon. A more drastic method was adopted by an artist of the sixteenth century, who made a copy of the picture, now in a private collection at Marseilles.† He has boldly removed the lake with its birds to the foreground, thus giving the two spaniels, as it were, something to drink from. In the original they are, of course, snuffing about the ground. Feeling the lack of sky, he has replaced the lake by a distant prospect of hills and buildings. The shape of the picture is thus altered to an upright oblong.

* One may be permitted to doubt whether it formed part of the original picture.

† I have to thank M. J. Guiffrey for communicating a photograph of this interesting work.

It is easy to criticise the shortcomings of this, the first whole-hearted attempt in modern art to realise the fact that there was a life worth painting in

*βροτῶν ἐρημίαις
σκιαροκόμου τ' ἐν ἔρνεσιν ὕλας.*

But, with all its faults, it would not be easy to find another picture which fulfils that purpose so well ; and, considered in relation to its time, it is nothing less than the revelation of a new world. That being the case, we may safely ignore the fact that as a representation of the St. Eustace legend it is inadequate. It is sufficiently creditable to the artist that he has here painted animals in a way that was not surpassed for centuries. There is most fault to be found with the horse—doubtless because Pisanello himself, and other artists after him, have taught us better. He has had considerable difficulty with the anatomy of the joints ; the neck is somewhat wooden ; and the attitude has not been successfully caught, for, while the motion of the loose straps of the harness indicates that the animal is moving forward, the attitude of the forelegs seems to be meant to represent it as reining back. That the hoofs do not sink into the turf, but are visible in full outline, is of course only to be expected at this stage in the history of art. Apart from this, Pisanello has bestowed the most loving care on his horse : notice, for instance, the treatment of the skin on the near hind leg. The dogs, too, have received the same attention ; and here he has been successful in seizing characteristic attitudes, as in the two spaniels in the foreground, the two hounds behind the horse's forelegs, or the growling hound behind them. In the hind-

quarters of the greyhound that is looking back, however, there is some awkwardness, if indeed they are not out of drawing; and this is certainly the case with the hind-quarters of the sacred stag, which could not be so seen with the rest of the body in profile. It is as though the artist's delight in back views had contaminated his treatment of profile. The stag and hind foreshortened from the back are typical of Pisanello. The forms of the water-birds and the clumsy shambling bear are treated with equal care and success. In nearly all cases the work is extraordinarily minute, every hair of the animals' coats being drawn. No wonder then that, working like a miniaturist on details, he lost all sense of the composition as a whole. There is nevertheless some slight idea of linear perspective; at least the stag and hind in the background are reduced in size. But the relative proportions of the animals and the natural features are misrepresented in the usual primitive way.

The greens which once lightened the background have become brownish with age, with the result that the whole background seems in most lights to be almost sombre. Yet, even when it had more varied tints, the general effect must have been very much what it is now, the figures of the gaily-clad cavalier on his isabella-coloured steed, of his various dogs, and of the beautiful brown deer, detaching themselves from the screen of subdued woodland colours. The surface of the picture is, on the whole, even now in brilliant condition, to which the repainted picture beside it acts as an effective foil.

The saint is, as I have said, a typical, almost too refined cavalier of the quattrocento. It would be absurd to seek to identify him with any of Pisanello's patrons; there is

even less to be said for any such identification than in the case of the St. George in the neighbouring picture.* It is one of Pisanello's ideal faces; the profile is almost exactly the same as that of the St. George, but it also reminds us—by a mere accident—of Don Iñigo d'Avalos.

To attach a document to a work of art is the natural desire of every critic; it is not, therefore, surprising to find that this picture has been provided with a sponsor in Bartolomeo Facio. That writer mentions among Pisanello's paintings "Jerome adoring a crucifix . . . and also a Wilderness, in which are many animals of divers kinds, which you would take to be alive." For some obscure reason it has been suggested that Facio has confused St. Jerome with St. Eustace in his memory, or that the St. Eustace is a pendant to a lost St. Jerome.† There is surely no justification for the former conclusion in the passage, which distinctly describes two pictures and not one only. Further, we know from Guarino's poems that Pisanello painted a St. Jerome for his friend. On the other hand, by the *Eremus* it is possible that Facio refers to a picture of St. John the Baptist; for among the Vallardi drawings is a rapid sketch of the saint standing in a mountainous landscape, with many animals. (Plate 12.)‡

Among the many animal drawings by Pisanello there are naturally some which represent motifs recurring in this picture. More than twenty sketches have been connected with it, of which all but two are in the *Recueil*

* See below, p. 155.

† Facio, *De viris illustr. loc. cit.* (Venturi, p. 65). The suggestion is Bode's. Cp. Gruyer, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 12, p. 291.

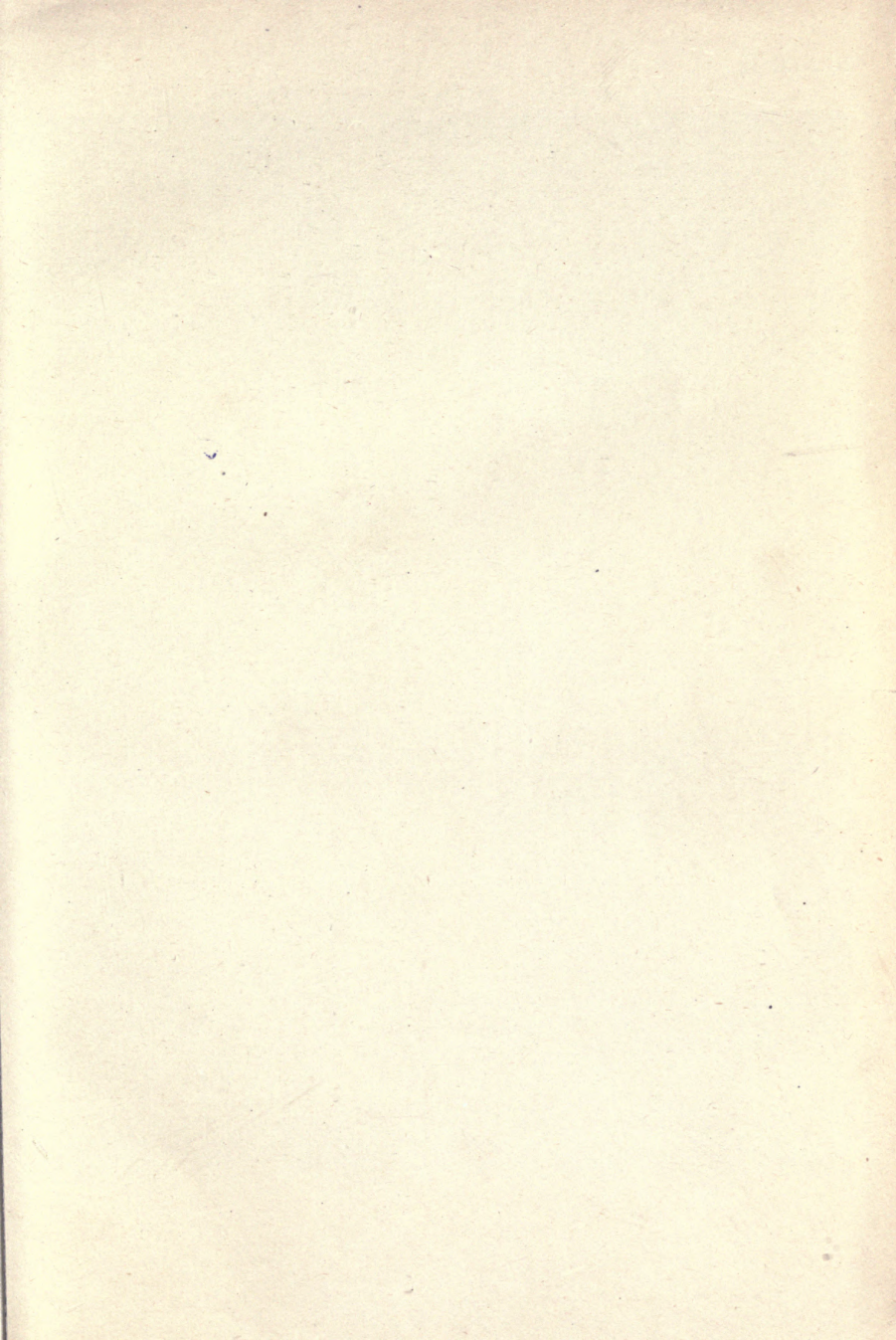
‡ *Recueil Vallardi*, fol. 100, no. 2594 vº.



ST. JOHN BAPTIST IN THE WILDERNESS

Sauranand

Rec. Vallardi
Face p. 68





Vallardi.* One cannot, however, be too cautious of the conclusion that such and such a drawing is a study actually made with the picture in view. Like every observant artist, Pisanello kept voluminous note-books, and for the details of his pictures there was little need that he should make special studies. Even with the scanty materials at our command we can see that some of his animal motifs were used more than once. Thus the attitude of the small dog in the foreground of the S. Anastasia fresco repeats that of the spaniel in the St. Eustace; the two horses' heads in the St. Anthony and St. George are also seen in S. Anastasia; between the recumbent ram of that fresco and the goat-unicorn of the medal of Cecilia

* The others are: (1) sketch of a stag, in the Nat. Mus. at Stockholm (O. Sirén, *Dessins et tableaux de la Renaissance ital. dans les coll. de Suède*, 1902, plate facing p. 34). Pen-drawing, bistre, on yellowish paper, with a rather coarse pen. Although it closely resembles the stag on the left of the picture, with its neck stretched out, it has not—if the reproduction is faithful—the touch of Pisanello's own hand; nor have the other details on the same sheet. (2) Sketch of a bear at Cologne (Müntz, *Rev. de l'Art anc. et mod.* v. 1889, p. 75). The Vallardi drawings connected with the picture by Guiffrey in his list contributed to Venturi's work (sometimes, of course, with a "perhaps") are as follow. For the *horse*: f. 145, 2356; f. 161, 2366; f. 163, 2368 (summary sketch of a horseman, perhaps the first idea of the picture). For the *dogs*: f. 220 v^o, 2429 (greyhound in front of the horse); f. 228, 2547 (the resemblance to one of the two spaniels is slight). For the *deer*: f. 236, 2492, here Pl. 13 (study for the sacred deer, only the head finished, but that exquisitely); f. 237, 2494 (may or may not have been for the picture); f. 241, 2549 (stag foreshortened from behind, in attitude of the hind in the background). For the *bear* f. 207, 2414. For the *herons*, &c.: f. 280, 2471; f. 281, 2472 (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 12, p. 297). These may be supplemented by the list given by Gruyer, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 12, pp. 292 f. The studies of a crucifix and of hands fastened to a cross (f. 163, no. 2368) are also for this picture.

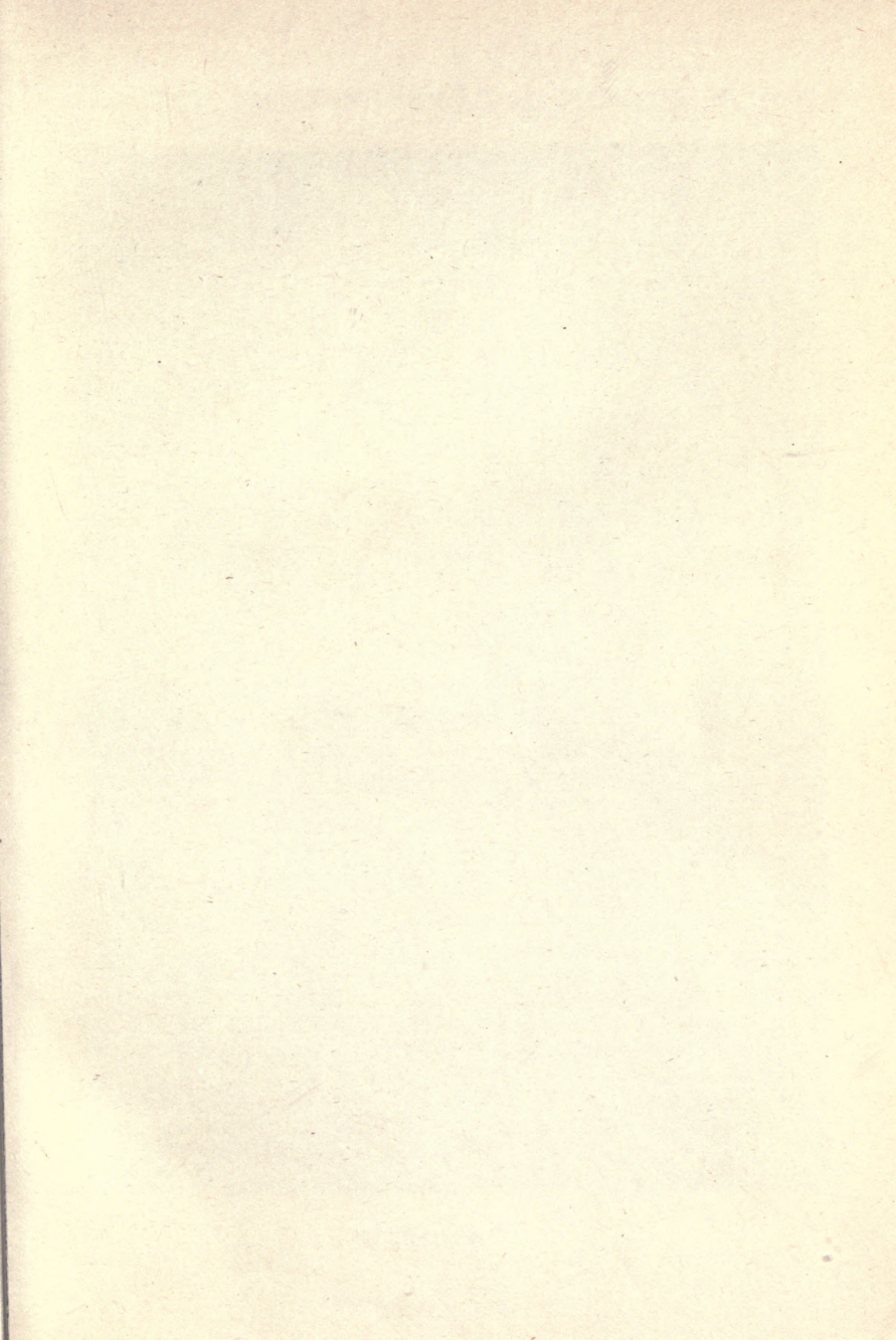
Gonzaga (Plates 52, 53) there is a family likeness. And the rider on a horse foreshortened from behind is so distinctly one of his clichés that it has almost become, for some critics, in itself a sufficient proof of his influence on others.*

There is, I have said, another extant panel which may, with probability, be referred to about the same period as the St. Eustace. This is the portrait of a young lady in the Louvre (Plate 14).† As it and the *Leonello d'Este* of the Bergamo Gallery (Plate 40) are the only two painted portraits by Pisanello still extant, they are naturally associated with each other in most minds. But their sizes are different, and they cannot be companion pictures. What is more, the Louvre portrait is in many respects a less mature work than that at Bergamo; and if, as seems all but certain, the latter belongs to the early forties, we may reasonably date this portrait in the period following Pisanello's work at Rome.

The portrait, which passed from the Felix Bamberg collection to the Louvre, used at one time to be attributed to Piero dei Franceschi; its identification as a work of Pisanello, first published by Venturi, is not disputed. It

* Cp. Venturi's remark (p. xiv. f.) on the mounted figure in Ercole de' Roberti's Procession to Calvary at Dresden.

† Tempera, 41 x 29 cm. Venturi (No. 5) and in *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, ii. p. 165 (illustr. p. 166); Gruyer, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1893, t. 10, p. 366 (coloured plate); *Rev. Archéol.*, 1893, t. 22, Pl. xiv., where Ravaissou identifies the subject with Cecilia Gonzaga. Gruyer (*op. cit.* pp. 214 f.) suggests Margherita. Cp. J. von Schlosser (*Vienna Jahrb.*, xvi. p. 204); E. Jacobsen (*Repert. f. Kunstwiss.*, xxv. p. 272) and my note in *Burlington Mag.*, July 1904, p. 408. Study possibly for this picture: Rec. Vallardi, f. 298, 2504: flowers and leaves of columbines. The profile of a lady, f. 99, 2593 v°, can hardly have anything to do with this picture.





GINEVRA D'ESTE

shows some traces of repainting, especially in the piece of sky at the top. The half-figure in left profile is detached on a background of pinks and columbines rendered with great truth to nature. Among the flowers flit four butterflies (on the left two "red admirals," and on the right a "clouded yellow" and a "scarce swallow-tail"). The background opens at the top and at two places lower down, showing the blue sky. The dress, in the fashion of the time, is very short-waisted; the white bodice is gathered into long folds at the waist in front by a violet girdle, and falls loosely over the shoulder in scarf fashion at the back; the sleeves are red and arranged in long stiff folds, and a thick twisted cord of brown, red and white is placed round the top of the sleeves and round the neck. A sprig of juniper with dark purple berries is stuck into the dress just in front of the left shoulder. The scarf-like piece is embroidered with an *impresa*, which occurs also on more than one of Leonello's medals (Plates 37, 38): a two-handled crystal vase containing branches of a shrub, leafless but with buds, and with roots which are extended through apertures in the bottom. To the handles of the vase are attached chains, which doubtless support anchors as on the medal, although the folding of the drapery conceals them. Rows of pearls adorn the neck and belly of the vase, and a large pearl hangs on its shoulder.

The head has great charm, in spite of what we regard as the ugly way in which the hair is dressed. As was the fashion, the forehead is rendered high and round by plucking out the front hair. What little of the fair hair is seen is on the forehead, temple and nape of neck, and where a wisp escapes from the reddish-yellow coif, which is confined

by a white ribbon. One sees from Syracusan coins how beautiful this kind of headdress could be made by a Greek woman; here the court hair-dresser has drawn the hair up so as to continue the line of the nape of the neck in an ugly curve, and entirely disturb the balance of the head. The dress, too, leaves the top of the back exposed, and accentuates the length of the neck. It is in the freshness and innocence of the face, with its firm, clean, yet delicate contours, and its modelling—nearly as subtle as in the later Leonello portrait—that the charm of the picture lies. The silhouette, however, in this picture is much sharper than in the other, the complexion of the face being paler, the dress brighter, and the whole bust contrasting more decisively with the background.

Attempts have been made to identify this girl with Cecilia and also with Margherita Gonzaga. What Cecilia was like we shall see from her medal; the resemblance between the two is merely that which one finds between most women of the same epoch. Further, if the identification with Cecilia be accepted, the connexion with the Este proved by the *impresa* can then only be explained by a hypothesis for which there is no foundation. Of her sister, Margherita, the wife of Leonello, we have no medal. She died in 1439. As the *impresa* of the "vase with branches, roots and anchors" was being embroidered on a cloak for Leonello in September 1441,* Venturi argues that the identification is impossible. But the fact which he adduces is no proof that the *impresa* had not been used before 1441. At the same time any hesitation that

* Account-book C of the Este Archives, Modena, quoted by Venturi, p. 69.

we may feel in accepting the identification with Margherita Gonzaga is increased by a comparison with the portrait of Leonello. The two faces have almost exactly the same mouth and chin. There is a difference in the noses; but there is no feature which, in members of the same family, may vary more strikingly than the nose. So far as the dressing of the hair permits us to judge, the girl's cranium had the same shape as is represented in one of the medals of Niccolò III.—a shape which Leonello inherited. Venturi's suggestion, therefore, that this girl is one of the many daughters of Niccolò III. has a very high degree of probability.

Which of the daughters it is he does not attempt to decide.* But the sprig of juniper which she wears makes it, to my mind, almost certain that she is the unhappy *Ginevra*. Born on March 22, 1419, she was affianced on March 15, 1433, to Sigismondo Malatesta. She went to Rimini in February 1434, and bore to Sigismondo in 1437 a son, who died before the year was out. On September 8, 1440, she herself died, poisoned, it was thought, by her husband.

The picture certainly seems to represent a girl still in her teens, as Ginevra was in the thirties. We may reasonably suppose that it was painted two or three years after her marriage, possibly when she was on a visit to Ferrara, or even at Rimini itself. We know so little of Pisanello's movements at this time that we are free to choose between the two places. The supposition that the portrait was painted for the Este picture-gallery will suffice to meet the

* E. G. Gardner, *Dukes and Poets in Ferrara*, p. 55 note, prefers either Isotta or Beatrice.

possible objection that the wife of Sigismondo Malatesta would wear not the *impresa* which we know to have been used by her brother, but more probably some device of her husband's.*

In any case, there can be little doubt that this portrait is earlier than the Bergamo portrait of Leonello. As a composition it has certain weaknesses. The dressing of the hair is not, of course, entirely the artist's fault; the awkwardness of the hang of the arm would appear also not to be due entirely to bad drawing, but to the pose fashionable at the time. We have already noticed that the effect of the painting is partly achieved by the elementary device of a strong contrast with the background. The result is a certain restlessness. In the portrait of Leonello we shall see that the artist obtains his clearness of profile without exaggerating the definition between background and subject. In the interval between the two pictures he has learned the art of producing a good profile effect without primitive contrast of colouring; and he has learned it by becoming a medallist.

* The only other portrait of Ginevra known to me is in a MS. of Roddi's *Annali della sua patria* (Harl. 3310, f. 104; 17th cent.). It does not resemble the picture, but it is quite clear that the vast majority of the portraits in this MS. are entirely imaginary.

CHAPTER VI

THE FRESCO IN SANT' ANASTASIA

THE date of the great fresco of the Pellegrini chapel in S. Anastasia at Verona is, unfortunately, no less a matter of conjecture than that of the St. Eustace. A considerable amount of architectural work* seems to have been done on the church from 1421 onwards. In 1428 the façade was begun. Bartolommeo Pellegrini was one of the first "fabricatores" of the church elected in this year. In 1437 the walls were all completed, and in the following years there were further improvements. From 1440 onwards the church, we are told, was beautified with paintings and other interior decorations. Giacomo Pellegrini, who made his will in 1450, left money for the painting of a figure of S. Dionysius. It was probably either this member of the family, or else Bartolommeo, who at an earlier date commissioned Pisanello to decorate the family chapel.

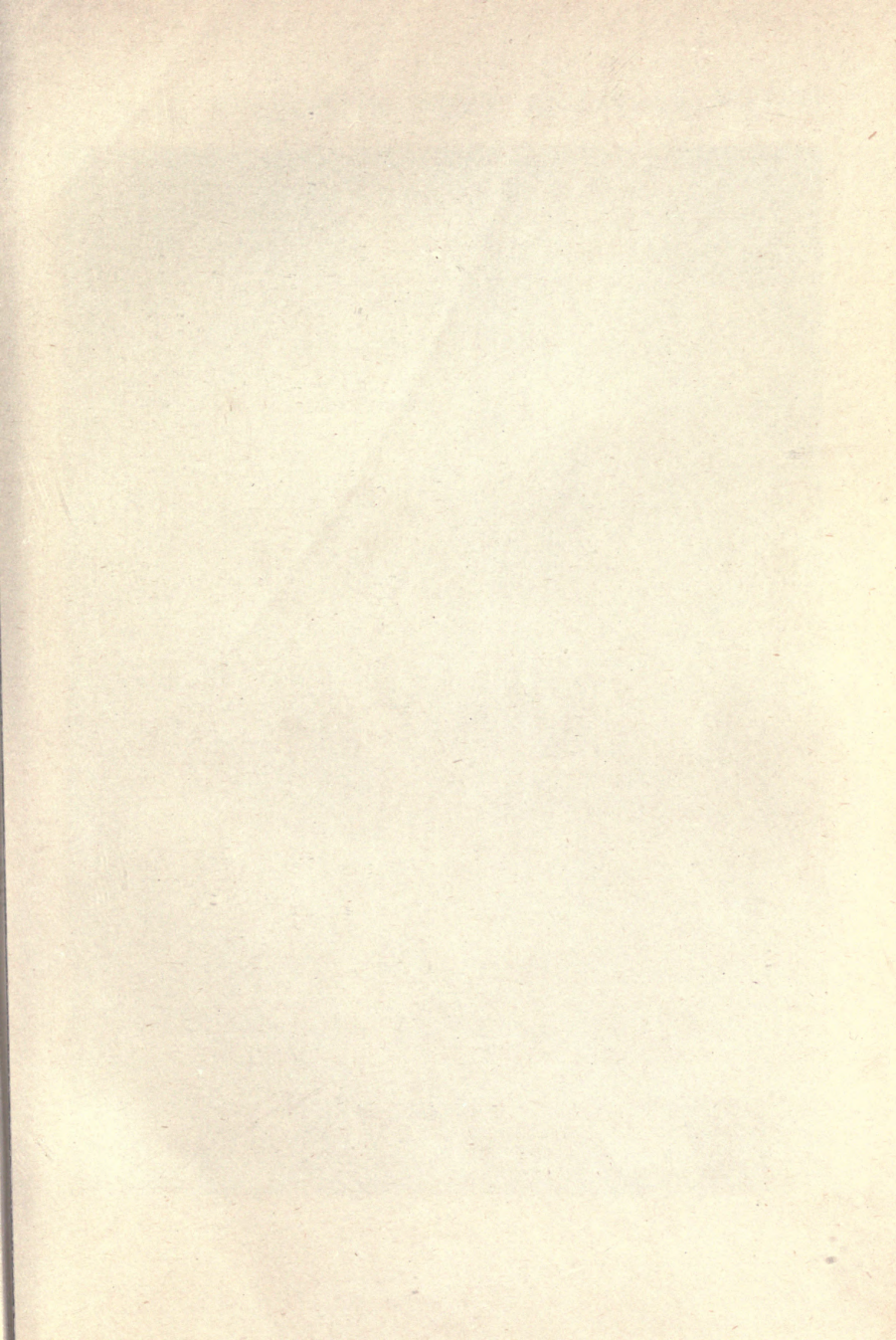
Of course, the fact that the church was being decorated from 1440 onwards does not necessarily date Pisanello's frescoes after that year. We have seen that there are chronological considerations in favour of the fresco

* G. B. Biancolini, *Not. stor. delle Chiese di Verona*, ii. (1749), p. 560; C. Cipolla, *Ricerche stor. int. alla Chiesa di S. Anastasia*, in *Archiv. Venet.* xviii. (1879), pp. 274 f. and xix. (1880), pp. 231 f.

being earlier than the middle of 1438. Much older it can hardly be, if we may judge from the comparative maturity of style which it displays. An attempt has indeed been made to place it after 1438; for where, it is asked,* could the artist have found the material for the wonderful group of Oriental types which he represents, except in the suite of the Emperor of Byzantium at the Council of Ferrara in 1438? As a matter of fact there are at the most only two distinctly Oriental faces in the group of riders. In any case, in Venice at least such types must have been no rare sight at all times. Finally, there is some evidence, if required, for the Emperor's having passed through Verona at an earlier date.† This consideration therefore cannot be allowed to outweigh the chronological

* Gruyer, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. II, p. 427.

† P. Zagata, *Cronica della Città di Verona*, (1747) ii. p. 56: L'anno 1424 adi 21 de Februar vene lo Imperador de Constantinopoli a Verona cum molti Signori circa 80 cavali, dapoì andò a Milano. This date is rejected by Aless. Carli, *Istoria di Verona*, (1796) vi. p. 267, in favour of 1438; in both years the same man, Vettor Bragadino, was podestà, which Carli thinks might account for the wrong date. But I can find no evidence that the Emperor passed through Verona in 1438; he went straight from Venice to Ferrara, and thence eventually to Florence. On the other hand we know (Magenta, *I Visconti e gli Sforza nel Castello di Pavia*, ii. p. 127), that on May 2, 1424, the Duke of Milan ordered an apartment to be made ready at Pavia to receive John Palæologus, who was expected the next day, for one night. The Verona chronicler's date is thus confirmed. Further, Mr. Edwin Pears points out to me that John was absent from Constantinople from November 15, 1423, to the end of October 1424. According to Phrantzes (i. 40) he went to and returned from Hungary; but Marin Sanuto (*Vite de' Duchi*, in Muratori, xxii. p. 971 C) shows that on December 15, 1423, he came to Venice. Thence he must have gone on to Verona and Pavia. If, then, it is desired to find an occasion when Pisanello may have seen Orientals in Verona, it may have been this.



Allward
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ST. GEORGE AND THE PRINCESS

S. Anastasia, Verona



difficulties which beset any attempt to date the fresco later than 1442, by which year Pisanello certainly had not returned to Verona.

Fra Marco Medici, to whom Vasari owed the supplementary matter which he inserted in the life of Pisanello in his second edition, sent the biographer a detailed account of the decoration of the Pellegrini chapel. It has come down to us in the following form (be it noted that even at this time the frescoes were partly decayed) :

"And because he took particular delight in doing animals, he painted in the Church of S. Anastasia at Verona, in the chapel of the family of the Pellegrini, a St. Eustace caressing a spotted tan and white dog ; the dog, with his feet raised and resting against the leg of the Saint, turns his head back, as though he had heard a noise : and this he does in so life-like a manner, as nature herself could not surpass. Beneath which figure is to be seen painted the name of Pisano (who used to call himself now Pisano, and now Pisanello,* as one may see both in the pictures and in the medals from his hand). After the said figure of St. Eustace (which is one of the best which this artist wrought, and in truth most beautiful) he painted all the outer face of the said chapel ; on the other side a St. George armed in white armour, made of silver, as in that age the Saint was customarily represented not only by him but by all the other painters. Here St. George, having killed the dragon, and being about to sheathe his sword, raises his right hand, which holds the sword, the point being already in the scabbard, and lowers his left hand, in order that the greater distance may make it

* As the form Pisanello is found in no genuine extant work, it may be that the dal Pozzo picture (p. 4 note*) was already known to Vasari's informant.

easier for him to sheathe the blade, which is a long one : this he does with such grace, and in so fine a manner, as cannot be bettered. And Michele san Michele of Verona, the architect to the most illustrious Signoria of Venice, a person of great understanding in these fine arts, was many times during his life seen to contemplate these works of Vittore with admiration, and then heard to say that he knew few things which surpassed the St. Eustace, the dog and the St. George aforesaid. Then above the arch of the said chapel is depicted how St. George, having slain the dragon, sets free the king's daughter, who is to be seen near the Saint, in a long dress, after the fashion of those times. In this part of the picture again admirable is the figure of St. George who, armed as before, is on the point of remounting his horse, and stands with his person and face turned towards the people, and, one foot being in the stirrup, and his left hand on the saddle, appears in the very motion of springing on to his horse ; the horse has his crupper turned towards the people, and is all visible, being foreshortened and gotten into a small space most excellently. And, in a word, it is impossible without infinite admiration, nay astonishment, to contemplate this work, for the draughtsmanship, the grace, and the extraordinary judgment therein to be perceived."

The account of Fra Marco, or rather Vasari's redaction thereof, presents a certain obscurity. It is, of course, clear that the St. Eustace was inside the chapel. Then, it would seem, we have two frescoes, one in which St. George is sheathing his sword, having slain the dragon ; the other in which he is mounting his horse, with the Princess beside him. The latter scene is rightly described as being above the arch. In his confused way Vasari, after saying that the outside of the chapel was painted, but before describing

what we know to have been painted there, interpolates a description of a fresco which he describes as being "on the other side." As there is no place where this can have stood on the outside,* we are obliged to conclude that it was on the inside of the chapel.

Of Pisanello's masterpiece—even in Vasari's time the prominence given to these frescoes by Fra Marco seems to show that their claim to this title was not disputed—practically nothing remains save the right-hand portion of the external fresco over the arch. The left-hand portion is in a deplorable state, so that it is with difficulty that one discerns the outlines of some of the details.†

Nevertheless, ruined as it is by the penetration of water from the roof, by the falling of the plaster and scaling of the

* Had it stood higher up on the wall, above the extant fresco, Vasari's informant would hardly have used "dall' altra parte" and "sopra l'arco" as they are used here; but we do not know what confusion Vasari may have introduced. Dal Pozzo (*Vite*, p. 8) says that the St. George sheathing his sword was on the ceiling of the chapel; this seems to be an addition on his own authority to Vasari's account but probably right. In Maffei's time (*Verona illustr.*, ed. Milan, 1826, t. iv. p. 233) even the St. George and Princess were apparently invisible.

† Lotze has photographed the whole. In Bernasconi, *Il Pisano*, is a photograph after a reproduction by Nanin, 1858, the accuracy of which is somewhat doubtful: the dragon is wingless, and what, in the present state of the fresco, seem to be the dragon's young he makes into a continuation of its tail; the bones and skulls are not shown nor is the beast of prey. See also a general sketch in *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 11, p. 423. The right-hand portion is reproduced by the Arundel Society, in Venturi's Vasari, and in P. Molmenti's *La Pittura Veneziana* (1903), p. 19. The group of riders: *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, loc. cit. p. 422. The fresco was treated by Ant. Bertolli in 1890 to preserve it from further decay: see *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, 1890, p. 412, where the state of the fresco at the time is described: little was to be seen of the mountain and the lion's den; below, the dragon and the bones were visible.

colour and of the silver—damage which has been aided by the conscientious application of ladders for the purpose of church decoration—the fresco remains the most striking thing in the church of S. Anastasia, with the possible exception of Altichiero's fresco in the Cavalli Chapel.

Let us deal first with what remains of the left-hand portion. The main object apparent in the landscape—which probably receded to the top of the fresco, without horizon—is the dragon, crouching toward the right, with wings closed and tongue flickering out from between its open jaws. Below it are apparently two of its brood, wingless; and, clearly, two human skulls and some bones. Above, one faintly discerns the outlines of animals: the hind-quarters of a lion or other large beast of prey, crouching to right (either tearing its victim, or about to make a spring); below it, a deer lying dead on its back; further to the right, and on a level with the dead deer, we see the hind-quarters of another animal which is fleeing to the right.*

There is not, and never can have been, room for a figure of St. George on this side of the fresco; moreover, the dragon is not dead, but alive. It follows that, if we regard this side of the fresco as part of one and the same picture with the better preserved portion, we are bound to reject the interpretation recorded by Vasari. St. George is not liberating the Princess after his victory, but is setting forth from the city to slay the dragon.† There were

* Both de Tauzia (*Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 61) speaks of the rest of this portion as representing little episodes in the life of the saint.

† The mistake was recognised by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, and is tacitly corrected by several later writers.

THE FRESCO IN SANT' ANASTASIA 81

various versions of the legend, and Pisanello—if he did not take his own way—may have followed one in which St. George was not said to rescue the Princess from the very clutches of the monster.

We assume, therefore, that this fresco represents St. George about to depart on his adventure, the dragon waiting for him in its den. A lost fresco represented him sheathing his sword after the victory; possibly yet another once existed, in which the actual struggle was depicted.

The space available on the right-hand side of the arch (Plate 15) was nearly half as broad again as that on the left hand; and the artist has made use of every inch. The two portions are divided by an arm of the sea, which appears to reach back to a low horizon. Above, we see a blue sky, the upper portion of which seems, in its present state, to be obscured by a straight band of dark cloud. From the sea a stork* flies landwards, and a barge with inflated sail lies close under the edge of the land. The land itself falls sheer to the sea, and a mass of it extends backwards, almost to the top of the fresco. To the right of this the blue sky appears, giving the mass of land the semblance of a steep mountain, whereas it is really meant for a gently rising background.

In the main scene the attention is arrested by the splendid group formed by St. George, his horse, the Princess, and a mounted squire. The saint, who is bareheaded, has golden reddish waving hair; the silver that was originally used for his armour has for the most part come away. His attitude has already been admirably

* Represented in the Arundel reproduction, but now quite invisible.

described by Vasari.* The Princess stands in left profile, in a magnificent robe trimmed with feathers, wearing her hair dressed over an enormous pad, and confined with an elaborate arrangement of braid.† The third figure is that of the squire, whose horse, boldly foreshortened, looks straight out of the picture; he carries St. George's lance, which his fingers can barely grasp; his head is thrown slightly backward, and his helmet, which has cheekpieces and a huge spherical crest, allows only his nose and eyes to be seen. The picturesque effect of a small squire on a huge war-horse appealed forcibly to Pisanello and his imitators. To the right of this group, emerging from the edge of the picture, are the heads and forelegs of two bridled horses; in the foreground, below them, is a recumbent ram. The ram is balanced on the other side by two dogs, the one a fine prick-eared greyhound, wearing muzzle and collar, the other a kind of spaniel. The figures of the main group stand out against a background of carefully painted foliage, with the same effect as in Pisanello's portrait busts. Behind is a piece of rolling ground, with trees filling some of its hollows; and beyond this rise the buildings of the city. To the left, in the middle distance, and half hidden by a rise in the ground, is a strange group of seven mounted men. Behind these, and before the gate of the city, two corpses swing on a gallows. In the background

* As Benozzo Gozzoli, in his fresco of the Magi in the Riccardi Palace, shows some signs of borrowing ideas from Pisanello, it may be that the man holding a hunting-leopard on a cord, and standing with his left foot in the stirrup, about to mount, also owes something to Pisanello's St. George.

† Gruyer says that her hair is only visible at the temples, the rest being a headdress; but the treatment of the two portions is identical, both here and in more than one drawing.

THE FRESCO IN SANT' ANASTASIA 83

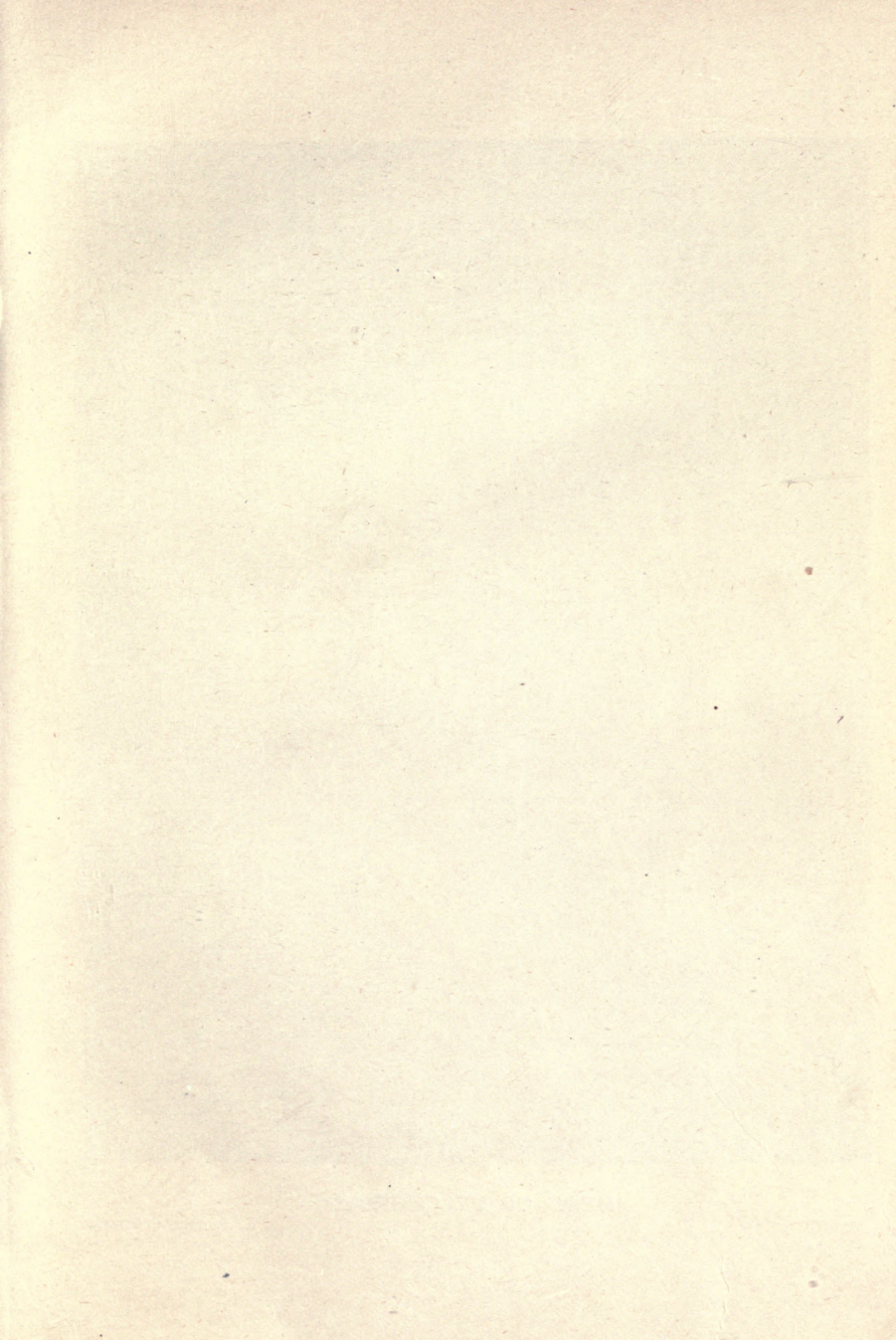
on the left, which, as I have said, seems to rise steeply to the top of the picture, in the manner with which we are already familiar, we see ploughed fields, divided by leafy hedgerows; among them, a road winds up to a church, with sharply pointed steeple and red roof. Behind this church is a hill which shows orange-red in the sunlight, and other hills of the same tint are visible beyond the buildings of the city.

The prevailing tints in the fresco are sober grays, greens, and browns; but these are or were heightened by the use of pink in the clothes of the two corpses—one has a pink shirt, the other pink trousers—and in the hat of one of the seven horsemen; by the red roofs of the houses and the lighting of the hills; and above all by the plentiful use of gold, and of silver in the armour of St. George.

The fresco marks a considerable progress beyond the stage to which the St. Eustace belongs. There is, for instance, a real, effective sky. It does not however follow that the two works must be separated by any considerable length of time; the artist had doubtless much more to guide him, his progress was doubtless more rapid, in monumental fresco-compositions than in the painting of small panels. It may be said that it is not quite fair to judge the fresco from the point of view of composition, seeing that only one half of it is preserved; but, on the other hand, the whole was marked off into two nearly independent halves by the interruption of the arch, so that it is no grave injustice to judge the painter on what remains. As a composition it has real merit; the interest is seized and retained by the noble group which represents the chief actors in the drama. It is perhaps owing to the

scaling of the silver from St. George's armour that the gray and white horses stand out more prominently than the saint and the Princess ; but even so, time has only exaggerated what was characteristic. To more than one artist of the time, when he had to deal with horse and man together, the horse was the more important of the two. In the subordination of the secondary to the primary elements in the composition Pisanello has also taken a great step forward. Thus into the painting of the group of mounted men he has thrown his whole heart, but not so as to disturb the balance of the composition. These faces and costumes are descended, as I have remarked, from the groups of onlookers which are treated with so much individuality and sympathy in the earlier Veronese frescoes ; but, striking as they are, they do not draw our attention away from the chief persons. Again, the architectural background, in regard to the space occupied, plays a more legitimate part than in the early school ; we have no longer a "small-figure" art, in which the architecture overshadows all the rest. And the landscape, primitive though it may seem in the light of what Florence was to produce in a decade or so, is at least original. It will be noticed also that there is some attempt at aërial perspective ; the most distant buildings are treated in a lower tone than those nearer to us. So far as we can judge, the paling of the sky towards the horizon is also indicated.

The study of the fresco in detail reveals to us almost all the qualities of Pisanello's art. The head of St. George, (Plate 16), as we have already seen, shows a considerable advance on that of St. Michael in the S. Fermo fresco (Plate 10). Although there is still considerable weakness in





HEAD OF ST. GEORGE

Alinari

S. Anastasia, Verona



HEAD OF THE PRINCESS

Alinari

S. Anastasia, Verona

Follow p. 84

the drawing of mouth and chin, the face expresses, as well as any painter has expressed it, the frank, manly character of the young hero. The pose is audacious, and completely successful. In deliberate contrast to the energy of St. George is the stately grace of the Princess (Plate 16). Her serene profile, standing out against the background of foliage, the magnificent fall of the richly ornamented robe, the fine hand, hanging unconstrainedly at her side, make up as dignified a figure as the quattrocento ever produced.

The boldly foreshortened horses have at all times excited attention and admiration. We have found instances of this treatment of the animal in the earlier Veronese school; and the same arrangement of two horses side by side, one seen from behind, the other facing, may be observed, for instance, in the frontispiece of a fourteenth-century manuscript of Petrarch's *Epitome Virorum Illustrium*.^{*} Again, we find this foreshortening in Gentile da Fabriano's *Adoration*; among Pisanello's later contemporaries it becomes a commonplace.[†] He did but give effect and permanent value to a motif which his predecessors had invented. The two horses of this fresco have singular energy; their powerful build impresses them on the memory in a way that it would be difficult to parallel. Technically also they are superior to the

^{*} In the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. Müntz, *Hist.* i., p. 229.

[†] A good instance of an unsuccessful adaptation of the scheme by a mediocre artist is to be seen in the interesting relief from Rimini in the Castello at Milan, attributed to Agostino di Duccio (Yriarte, *Rimini*, p. 222). The relief distinctly shows the influence of Pisanello, although the artist's weakness in modelling makes his attempt at foreshortening (as in the horse on the right, and the cow in the middle distance on the left) look somewhat foolish.

horse of St. Eustace. It has been noted that, while the legs of the squire's horse are, perhaps, too long, the general anatomical knowledge shown in it is good, the treatment sure, and only equalled, not surpassed, by the work of Donatello, Verrocchio, and Leonardo. An excellent instance of Pisanello's faculty for seizing slight nuances in the pose of an animal, thus giving a naturalness to the representation, is seen in the way in which St. George's horse stands a little obliquely, setting his feet so as to meet the weight of the rider in the moment of springing to the saddle.*

The two heads of horses which appear on the right margin are exceedingly careful studies, especially as regards mouth and teeth—so careful that they smell of the lamp. The same idea is repeated, as we shall see, in the St. Anthony and St. George, but with a difference: the motif is there better harmonised with the rest of the picture, and the painter's knowledge of the inside of a horse's mouth is less ostentatiously displayed. The study, in other words, is not transferred to the picture direct, but only after receiving the requisite modifications. This is the explanation of the feeling, to which more critics than one have given expression, that Pisanello's studies of animals are better than the animals as they appear in his pictures. In his less mature work he has not yet grasped the idea that the study must be suitably modified in transference to panel or wall.

The group of seven riders (Plate 17) is a collection of vividly realistic studies. The horses and mule are painted

* These observations are due to Weizsäcker (*Berlin Jahrb.*, vii. pp. 50, 51).



GROUP OF RIDERS

Anderson

S. Anastasia, Verona
Face p. 86

with extraordinary spirit—each one, we may be sure, from a particular model. The comparatively “kind” expression of the mule is in striking contrast with the vicious look of the horse on his right, and the fiery profile on his left. Of their riders, the most startling is without doubt the gaunt Kalmuck on the left. The hideous symmetry of his face, with the almost incredible lines of his jaw and curves of eyebrows and moustache, which suggest a piece of savage ornament and yet are so full of life; the great masses of dark hair which frame in the sides of the face; the fantastic headgear; the rich dress—there is nothing to be found more weirdly fascinating than this figure, unless perhaps it be the study for it, which is fortunately preserved. The others are less remarkable in its presence, although they would have sufficed to make the reputation of most other painters of the time. Only one of them has anything definitely Oriental about him—the man next to the Kalmuck—and I doubt whether the models for the rest were other than Italians in dresses partly suggested by actual stuffs, partly invented by the artist’s fancy. The man just mentioned wears a kind of turban, and sits with head thrown back and lips apart—a most unpleasant study. Next to him is a sad-looking man, his cheeks and the lower part of his face swathed in a cloth, his hat pushed down on his eyebrows. The central figure is a good-looking “Italian model.” On his left are two figures, one (the King?) in an ermine headdress and cape, the other in a broad-brimmed fur hat and fur-trimmed cloak, both with long curling hair. On the extreme right is the only pleasing head of the seven—a boy’s, in a fur skull-cap. Every face

is rendered with an intensity that is almost painful, reminding us in some ways of the brutality of Andrea del Castagno. Taken singly, they could hardly be bettered as studies of types; as a group they have no connexion with each other, and most of them are too obviously "having their portraits taken." In more than one way realism can degenerate into photography.

The gallows with the two corpses before the gates of the city, standing out against the sky, is another piece of realism. It has not been otherwise explained, and surely it needs no other explanation. It may be that good style is shown by the judicious omission of the unessential; the historian of art, however, must also recognise that the determining characteristic of various schools and periods is their idea of what is and what is not the essential. The new realism was bound to pass through this stage, in which corpses swinging in the wind seemed to give liveliness to a city-gate. In the Berlin tondo with the Adoration of the Kings (Plate 65) this element is still present, but minimised. It must be remembered also that the legend of the innocent pilgrim who was hanged, painted by Pisanello at Florence, must have afforded ample scope for the treatment of such a subject; and doubtless the gallows was not absent from the representations of the Albizzi which gained for Andrea del Castagno the nickname "degli Impiccati." These, having been painted in 1434,* might well have attracted Pisanello's attention. And no one can say that such a scene was not characteristic of the time.†

* See Vasari, ed. Milanesi, ii. p. 680 note.

† Müntz, *Hist.* i., p. 304.

THE FRESCO IN SANT' ANASTASIA 89

The city is indicated by a fantastic group of buildings of which only the tops are seen, the rest being hidden by the rolling country which lies behind the group in the foreground. Thus does Pisanello attempt to indicate that the city is some distance away; but unsuccessfully. Although, as we have seen, he has begun to understand something of aerial perspective, his knowledge is still insufficient to enable him to express the distance of the buildings. Still farther off, in the extreme right-hand top corner, is a great castle on a mound, with a road winding up to it from the city. The architecture of this building has little in it that is unusual. Of the buildings of the city, the belfry-like construction, in which some have seen Flemish influence, is a Gothic spire, of which the top has been replaced by a termination in a quite different, baroque style. To the right of this is a still more curious building: evidently a short-naved cruciform church, of which the front, surmounted by a steep gable, and flanked by two square towers, is turned away from us. It has a large central dome over the cross, and we see also the semidomes of two (out of three or more) apsidal chapels. A broad band of tracery runs round the whole church above the level of these semidomes, to each of which further corresponds a gable decorated with crockets and filled with tracery. Between these gables rise comparatively plain pinnacles. In these two buildings Pisanello seems to have taken ideas from Gothic ciboria and turrets, and combined them with other architectural elements in a fashion which, at first sight, suggests that he knew nothing of architecture. Yet in the fresco of S. Fermo the architecture of the Virgin's house is treated without extravagance, and with some

sense of its meaning. The profane architecture of the city—the low towered building with wooden mantlets on the right, and the other fortified buildings and the city-gate on the left—is comparatively sensible ; at least, it does not strike the non-professional eye as obviously grotesque, although it bears traces of exaggeration. Was it that the artist, wishing to represent the temples of the heathen land which St. George converted, hit upon the somewhat primitive device of using this medley of incongruous details ? He had no need to go outside of Italy for architectural models ; a fertile imagination, and a free use of motifs supplied by the debased Italian Gothic style, were amply sufficient to produce these strange constructions.*

Below the figure of St. George, on the lower margin of the fresco, is inscribed his name *SANCTVS GEORGIVS*, in good lettering, such as Pisanello uses on his medals. Were we judging solely from this lettering, on the chronological data afforded by his medals, we should place the fresco late in the forties. But the sharp-topped A, which he does not use on his earlier medals, already occurs in the signature of the S. Fermo fresco, showing that we cannot argue from the medallic epigraphy to that of his paintings. In the medals, in fact, since a long Gothic tradition lay behind him in the series of mediæval coins and seals, he found it more difficult to get rid of the Gothic style of lettering.

To left and right of the arch, small triangular spaces in the spandrels are filled by much damaged sprays of foliage. On the right, where there is more space, we also

* I am indebted to Messrs. G. T. Rivoira and C. R. Peers for some valuable hints in connexion with the significance of these buildings.



THE PELLEGRINI SHIELD

Anderson
Follow p. 90

S. Anastasia, Verona



Hanfstångl

ST. JEROME (BONO DA FERRARA)

National Gallery

Face pl. 18

have a most interesting portion of the fresco, which was barely visible before the recent restoration. In a space defined above and on the right by an ermine bordure is a diapered shield containing the canting badge of the Pellegrini family. A pilgrim (Plate 18) stands to front, his head pensively inclined, wearing a shaggy cloak and broad-brimmed hat, with the scallop-shell fastened on it; he holds his staff and string of beads. The head is carefully studied in the master's manner, and one is strongly reminded by treatment and expression of Bono da Ferrara's St. Jerome in the National Gallery (Plate 19). Certain faults of draughtsmanship—worse faults than we find anywhere else in the fresco—arrest our attention. The arms are disproportionately short and feeble; the hands too are nerveless, but we notice the careful study of the swollen veins under the skin. Here again a comparison with Bono's St. Jerome—the saint's foot is treated in exactly the same way*—is instructive. Finally, the foreshortening of the pilgrim's right foot is quite unsuccessful. Allowing for the fact that the subject is semi-heraldic, we still can only account for the weakness of this portion of the fresco by supposing that the master left it, as being of subordinate interest, for the most part to an assistant. Bono may well have been in Pisanello's workshop at this time. We first hear of him as an independent artist at Siena, in 1441.†

If I am right in dating the fresco of S. Anastasia shortly before 1438, Pisanello must already have passed the prime of life. We can understand, therefore, that

* Cp. Kristeller, *Mantegna* (Eng. ed), p. 73.

† See G. Gruyer, *L'Art ferrarais*, ii. pp. 44-46, for a brief sketch of his career.

the one subject-picture which can be dated later—the *St. Anthony and St. George*—seems somewhat lacking in freshness. The most astonishing feature, however, in the artist's whole career is that at an advanced age he struck out a new line of art, and advanced as far in it as any of his successors.

A very large number of drawings have been noted as studies for the fresco. Here again we must repeat the warning against regarding many of them as studies specially made for the picture. Even the most remarkable of all, that of the Kalmuck bowman, may have been a note made without any view to the purpose for which it was afterwards used.

The Kalmuck (Plate 20) is the most finished of five silverpoint studies of Orientals on a vellum sheet in the *Recueil Vallardi*,* and is almost exactly reproduced in the fresco. The drawing, however, gives also his arms and hands, the right holding an arrow, the left a bow. Each implement is held vertically, in such a way as to accentuate the symmetry which seems to have struck the artist in this subject. In many ways this drawing exercises more fascination than its reproduction in the fresco.

Two other of the riders are also represented by drawings.† One is the ugly man with his head thrown back; the turban and bust are only faintly indicated in chalk. (Plate 21.) The other is the fifth rider from the left; his hair, beard and pose are as in the fresco, but he is without the ermine head-dress and cape. The drawings

* Fol. 68, No. 2325. B. de Tausia, *Dessins*, 1888, p. 55, No. 1993.

† Fol. 64, No. 2315 v° and fol. 128, No. 2621 (Cp. Gruyer, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 11, p. 425).



Sauranau

STUDY OF KALMUCK ARCHER

Rec. Vallardi
Face p. 92



STUDY OF AN ORIENTAL (RETOUCHED)

Sauranaud

Rec. Vallardi

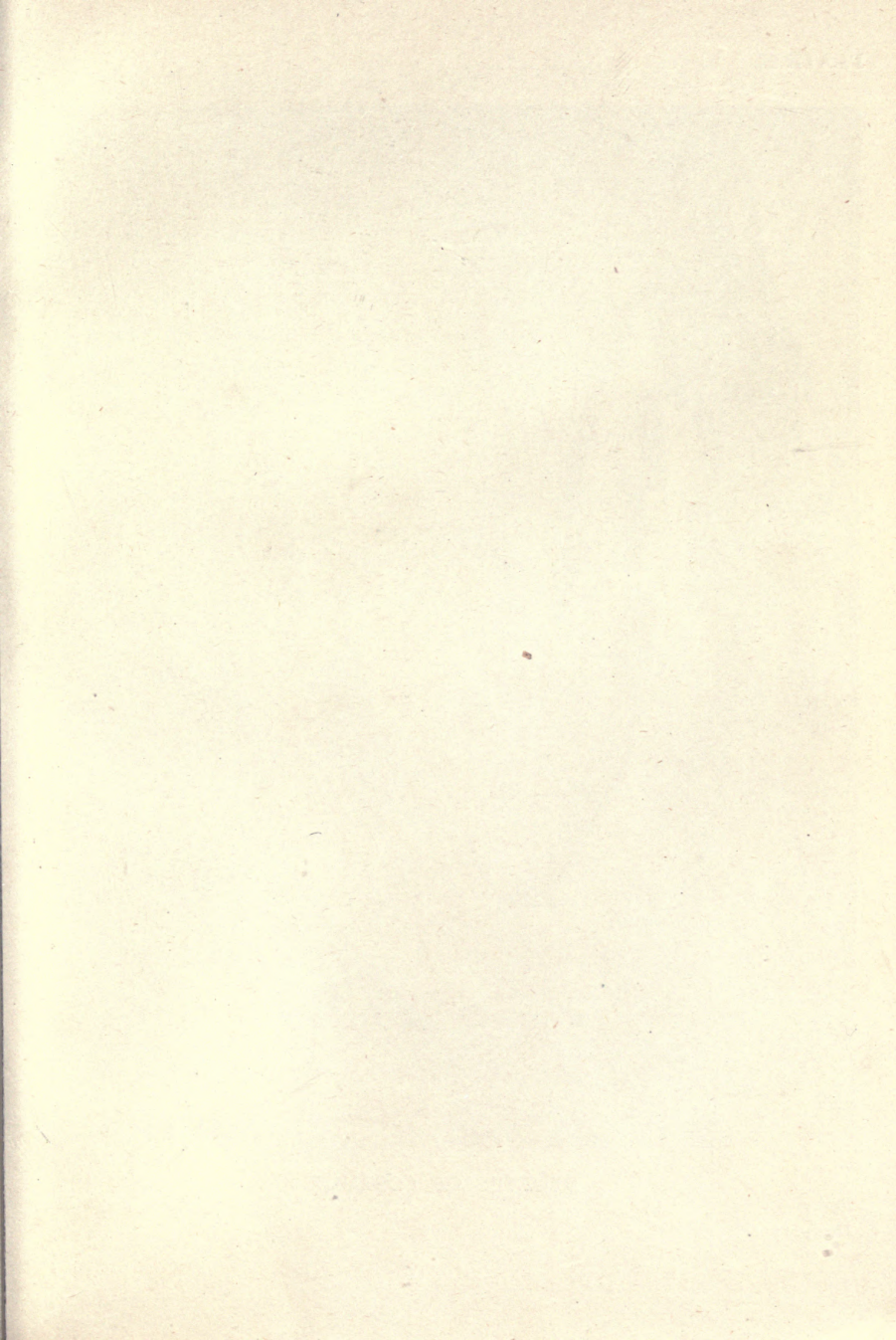
Follow pl. 20



Sauranaud

STUDY FOR THE PRINCESS

Rec. Vallardi
Follow pl. 21





STUDIES OF COSTUME

in their present condition are coarsely executed, and they were probably inked over by another hand, the only remains of the original drawing being the chalk lines in the former.

Peculiarly interesting are those drawings which must be connected with the Princess. Three studies of a lady's head in the *Recueil Vallardi* * are all evidently portraits, and represent a lady rather older than the Princess appears in the fresco. She is evidently a noble lady of Verona, Ferrara, or some other court. The resemblance to Isotta Atti, which has misled some critics, is quite superficial, and due chiefly to the rounded forehead, with the front hair plucked out according to the fashion of the time. In the most finished of the three sketches (Plate 22) the somewhat anxious, haggard expression of the other two has been softened down, and we have a near approach to the beautiful profile of the fresco. In addition to these heads we have several sketches which more or less resemble the whole figure of the Princess. Thus at the University Galleries, Oxford, is the beautiful sheet from the Lagoy Collection, which shows her figure in a long flowered robe to left, together with a separate study of her head (the hair confined with braids as in the third Vallardi drawing). Similar figures are found on the Bonnat drawing now at Bayonne † and on that at Chantilly (Plate 23).‡ On a drawing in the Albertina we have the

* Fol. 92, No. 2342 r° (profile r., wearing a kind of turban); do. v° (profile l.); fol. 93, No. 2343 (profile r., with the hair done over a pad and confined with elaborate braids).

† Venturi, p. 124, No. 3 (reproduced on p. 125): also from the Lagoy Collection.

‡ Venturi, p. 126 (illustration): Lagoy Collection. Müntz, *Hist. i.*, facing p. 312 (wrongly assigned to Malcolm Collection).

upper part of the lady's figure thrice repeated.* Even if all these are not from the artist's own hand, still the three in the *Recueil Vallardi*, and the Oxford, Bonnat and Chantilly drawings, as to the authenticity of which there seems to be no reasonable doubt, although some of them may have been retouched, show how carefully he studied this subject.†

Curiously enough, we are unable to point to any studies for the St. George.‡ It is worthy of notice, however, that the same model which served for the St. George appears in the British Museum drawing signed PISANUS F, in the middle figure of the three; he is, however, here provided with a moustache. As to the corpses hanging from the gallows, Mr. Dodgson has shown that in a drawing in the Malcolm Collection § two of the hanging figures are clearly studies for the fresco, where they are exactly reproduced.

The sketches which may be related to the animals in the fresco are also numerous. Certain careful studies of the heads of horses were probably used several times over; for instance, some of them recur more or less in the same form in the National Gallery St. Anthony and St. George.|| The horse of St. George is represented by

* Wickhoff, *Vienna Jahrb.*, xiii. p. clxxx. S.R. 7, and Pl. ii. Lagoy Collection. "By a pupil of Pisano."

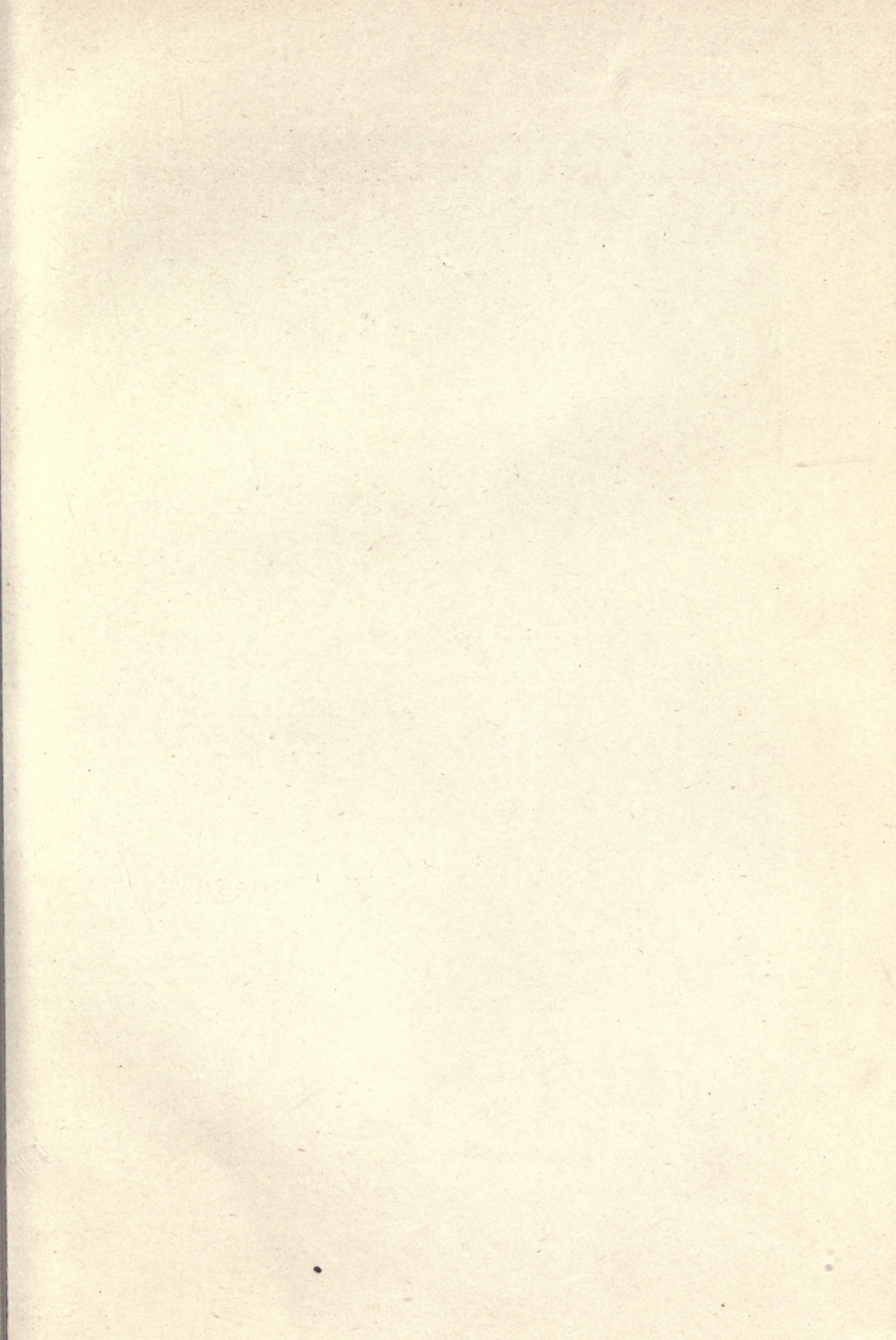
† Müntz (*Rev. de l'Art*, 1899, p. 74) mentions a study for the Princess in the Malcolm Collection. He refers either to a head at the bottom of the sheet, No. 441 (see below), which really bears no resemblance to her, or to the Chantilly drawing already mentioned.

‡ On the alleged study in the Ambrosiana, see below, where the sheet is described in connexion with the National Gallery St. George.

§ Brit. Mus., 1895-9-15-441; Berlin *Jahrb.*, xv. (1894), pp. 259, 260 (reversed in the plate).

|| Vallardi, fol. 141, No. 2352; 144, No. 2355; 146, No. 2357; 150, No. 2361; 151, No. 2362.

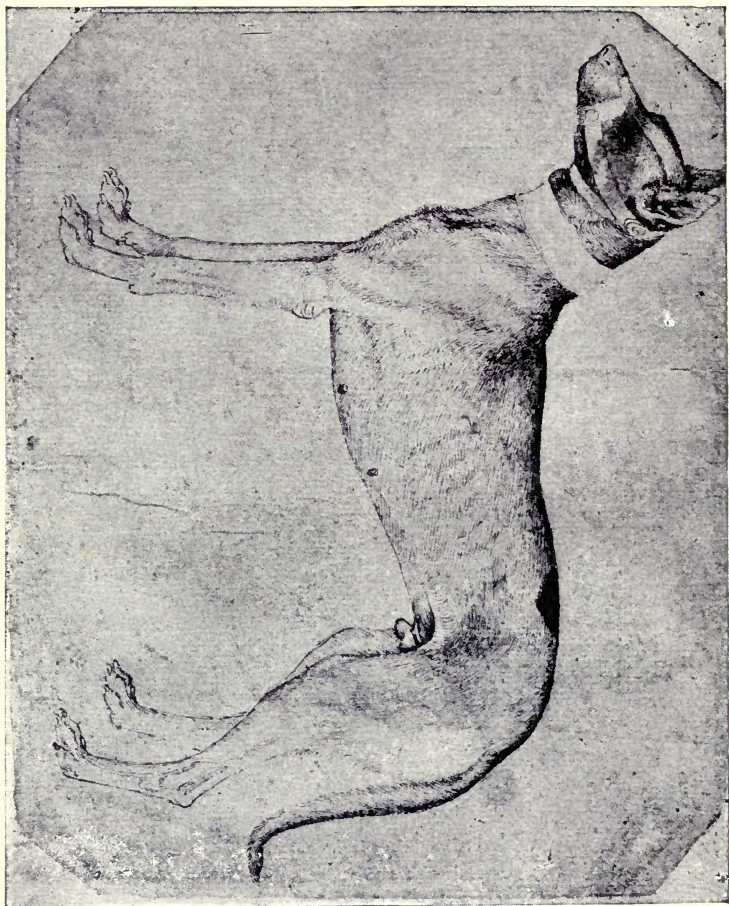




Gaz. d. Beaux Arts
Page p. 95

STUDY OF DOG

Rec. Vulliamy



a study of an armed horseman seen from behind ; * or by a riderless horse, without harness, which stands turned slightly to the left (Plate 24).† Here again we see that the same study may have served also for the medal of Malatesta Novello (Plate 48).‡ In the last-mentioned drawing the tail of the animal is treated as on the medal, not as in the fresco. The mule we have in a fine drawing which has been frequently reproduced.§ More than one drawing may be connected with the greyhound ; || the best known has both muzzle and collar as in the fresco. (Plate 25.)

The architecture seems to be unrepresented by sketches, although one may find here and there more or less similar motifs.¶

* Vallardi, fol. 167, No. 2487.

† Vallardi, fol. 231, No. 2444.

‡ The same applies to the horse in Vallardi, fol. 172, No. 2378 (B. de Tauzia, *Dessins*, 1888, No. 1999, and de Chennevières, *Dessins du Louvre, Éc. ital., Pisan*, Pl. 2), which Gruyer associates with the horse of St. George.

§ Vallardi, fol. 174, No. 2380; B. de Tauzia *op. cit.* No. 1998; de Chennevières, *op. cit.* Pl. 2; *L'Art*, viii. 1882, p. 227; Müntz, *Hist. i.*, p. 639; Venturi, p. 105.

|| Vallardi, fol. 93, No. 2343 v^o (head with collar on which is a motto; straps of muzzle touched with gold); fol. 224, No. 2434 (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 12, p. 421); fol. 225, No. 2435 (red collar and muzzle; B. de Tauzia, *op. cit.* No. 2000; *L'Art*, *loc. cit.* p. 225; Müntz, *op. cit.* p. 637; *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, 1890, p. 148). Note, too, the muzzled dogs in the sheet (Plate 5) already mentioned in connexion with the Ducal Palace fresco, fol. 219, No. 2432. The other dogs on the same sheet belong to a different breed from the spaniel in the fresco; and the studies of rams on fol. 194, No. 2397, can hardly be brought to bear on the fresco.

¶ Venturi, p. 123, notes that the church in a drawing in S. M. sopra S. Celso, Milan, which I have not seen, recalls the architecture of the S. Fermo and S. Anastasia frescoes; probably, therefore, the resemblance is merely general.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST MEDAL

THE question whether Pisanello "invented" the medal has long been decided against him; but it was he, none the less, who gave to the medal its place as an independent work of art, and as one of the most characteristic productions of the Renaissance. The tracking out of his obscure predecessors* cannot therefore alter our estimate of his genius; but it helps to explain how his genius was directed into this particular channel.

The medal, in the modern sense, as a disc of metal, worked in relief, usually on both sides, cast or struck for commemorative purposes and not for circulation as money, was not entirely unknown to the Romans. Even some few Greek coins seem to partake of a medallic character; that is to say, although conforming to a monetary standard, they seem also to have been intended as historical monuments on a small scale. The Roman "medallions" form a regular series which—although their exact use is unknown

* The remarks which follow, so far as they concern the medals of the Carrara family and of Constantine and Heraclius, are chiefly based on the brilliant essay of J. von Schlosser, *Die ältesten Medaillen und die Antike*, in Vienna *Fahrbuch* xviii. (1897), to which I refer for further details.

—were certainly not intended for ordinary currency. The same is true of the Roman “contorniates,” which were perhaps counters or a sort of draughtsmen. Nor had the Middle Ages been without pieces partaking of a medallic character. A remarkable instance of a medallic coin, on the threshold of the Renaissance, is the great gold doubloon of Peter the Cruel, issued in 1360.* But what distinguished the modern medal from such predecessors, what gave it a vogue, was its personal character. As such it had no necessary connexion with the State, although naturally it was the princes who most frequently commanded the services of the greater medallists. Not till later, when the art had long been on the decline, was the use of the medal as an official monument established. In the best period, by its private character, it appealed to the strongest element in the Renaissance, the feeling of the importance of the individual, the admiration for *virtù*, and satisfied that craving for immortality in the memory of posterity which was so characteristic of the age.†

From the time of Petrarch onwards we meet in literature with notices, gradually increasing in frequency, of the practice of collecting ancient coins.‡ Jean, Duc de Berry, is the first amateur of whom we know that he also collected modern works of art of this class. In the fifteenth century, however, the latter practice attained considerable proportions, supply and demand interacting on each other.§

* Heiss, *Mon. Hispano-Crist.* i. Pl. 7, No. 1.

† See C. von Fabriczy, *Italian Medals*, p. 16 f.

‡ See especially C. A. Levi, *Le collezioni venez.* (Venice, 1900), i. pp. xxxvi. f. on collectors like Oliviero Forzetta and Marin Faliero.

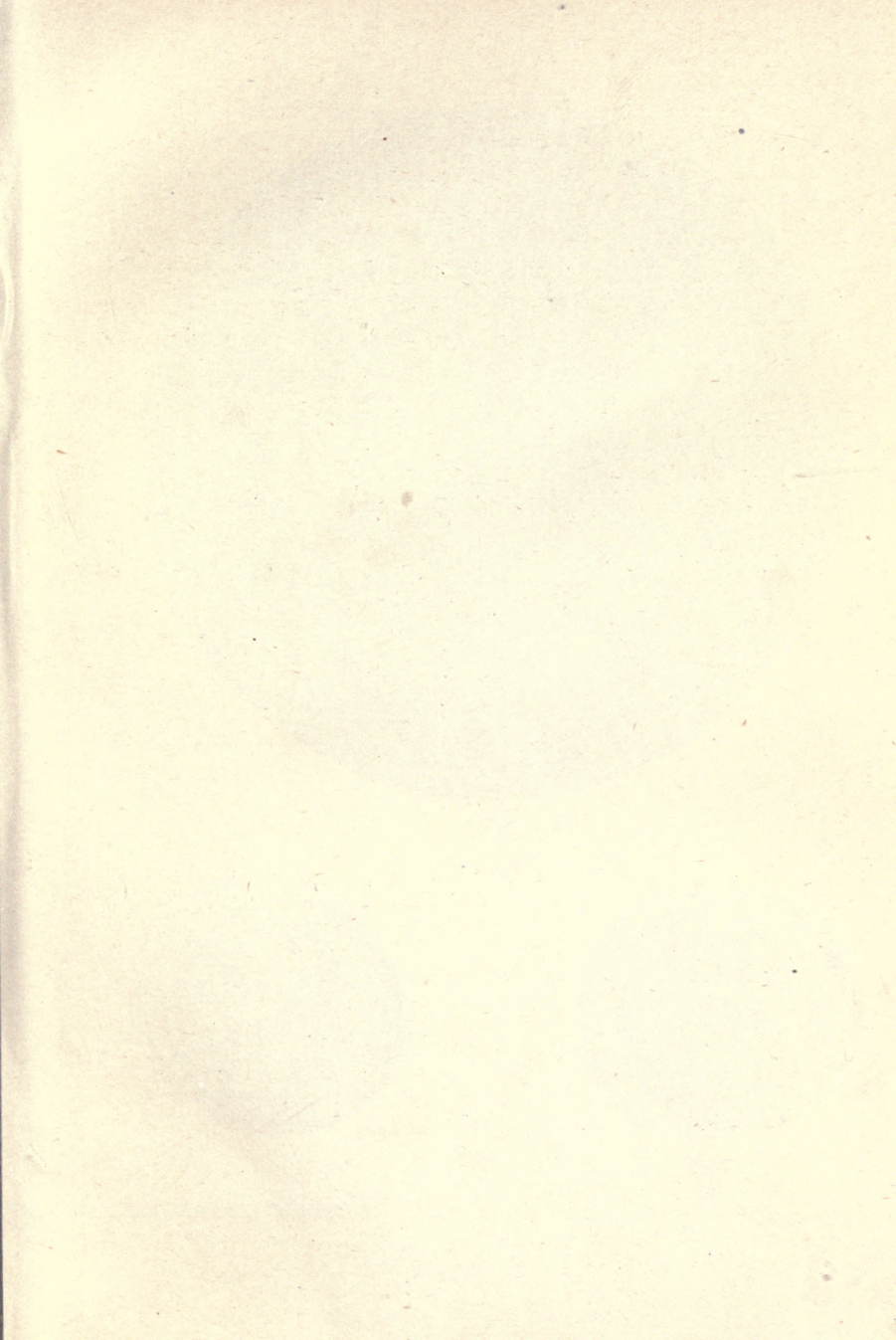
§ See the supplement to Müntz, *Les Précurseurs de la Renaissance*. In addition to the proofs which we shall encounter of the zeal with which

The passion of distinguished men of the time for handing their features down to posterity in this convenient form kept the medallist busily, sometimes too busily, employed; the artistic value and novelty of these portraits excited an ever-increasing demand. And in the eyes of these worshippers of the antique, the modern medal gained additional attraction from the analogy which it bore to the ancient pieces, on which they admired the portraits of an Alexander, a Berenice, a Julius Cæsar, or a Faustina.

We have seen that in the north Italian pictorial art of the trecento the interest of the individual type was, in accordance with the political conditions, most strongly emphasised. It was here then, and in Padua, the asylum of classical learning, that the modern medal first came into existence.* We may pass over some curious pieces, largely inspired by ancient Roman and even Greek coins, which were struck by members of the Sesto family, who worked for the Venetian mint from 1393 to 1483, or even longer. The first pieces which concern us are two remarkable personal medals (Plate 26 a, b), in the full sense of the term. These were made—possibly by one of the same Sesto family—for Francesco II. Carrara, in commemoration of his recovery, on June 11, 1390, of the city of Padua, which his father had lost in 1388. They bear the portraits of the two tyrants, the elder and the younger, treated in a thoroughly classicising style, after the manner of the

Pisanello's medals were collected, I note that the Paduan collector who possessed one of his drawings (above, p. 7, note *) also had a collection of "modern bronze medals."

* The suggestion of Levi (*op. cit.* p. xxxviii. f.), that Petrarch himself may have suggested the making of the Carrara medals, is hardly likely, for obvious chronological reasons.





C



A



A

THE CONSTANTINE, HERACIUS



D



B



B

bronze coins of the first century of our era. So strong is this character, that, but for other evidence of date, one could hardly hesitate to assign them to the sixteenth century, to which time indeed belong the majority of the reproductions known to collectors. The reverses bear the canting badge—a four-wheeled car—of the Carrara family, and an inscription commemorating the recovery of Padua in 1390 *die 19 Iunii*. The legends on both sides are in Gothic characters, the combination of which with a portrait in full Renaissance style has the same effect as Pisanello's drawing of a head of Faustina the Elder under a Gothic arch.* These medals, be it noted, were originally struck from dies, not cast from moulds, although the majority of the extant specimens are casts. As they are small† the striking of them was quite possible with the machinery of the time ; but as the relief of the heads was higher than that of any contemporary coins, it is probable that the sides were often struck separately and afterwards soldered together.

The fact that these medals were actually made in or soon after the year of the event commemorated is established by an entry in the inventory for 1401 of the collection of Jean, Duc de Berry. This mentions a "leaden impression, having on one side the visage of Francesco of Carrara, on the other the mark of Padua." Such a piece must have been a leaden proof made by the engraver of the dies—proofs such as were afterwards and are still more highly prized than specimens in other metals.‡

* See above, p. 23.

† The larger is 34 mm., the smaller 33 mm. in diameter.

‡ A MS. of Livy in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Fonds latin 14,360) which has numerous representations of Roman Emperors freely copied

These medals were practically without effect on the development of the art. In fact, it was not until more than a century afterwards that they won the appreciation which their technical excellence deserved. But it was fortunate that an accident enabled the new art to make its way to the front without the help of a pseudo-classical tradition, and independently of the methods employed at the mint.

About the same time as the Carrara pieces, or shortly afterwards, another group of medals came into existence. One of these seems to have suggested the earliest medal which can be with certainty assigned to Pisanello—his John Palæologus; another is thought by some to have furnished an idea for one of his latest medals. It is again the Duc de Berry's inventories that have thrown light on the historical standing of these curious pieces. They are two, one representing the Emperor Constantine the Great, the other the Emperor Heraclius; and they exist in two or three varieties. The reverse of the Constantine medal bears the Fountain of Life,* with two figures beside it personifying the Church and Paganism. On the obverse

from coins, as well as a copy (fol. 268) of Pisanello's head of John Palæologus, represents (fol. 207) Franciscus de Carraria, bare-headed, with closely-cropped hair, in profile to right, wearing a mauve mantle heightened with gold. The head seems to be taken from the medal of 1390 and, as the MS. is of the second half of the fifteenth century, is another proof of the existence of the medal before the sixteenth century.

* It may be noted that the "stylised plant" which forms the body of the Fountain is developed out of the pine-cone, to the significant use of which in fountains Josef Strzygowski has recently drawn attention (*Der Dom zu Aachen*, 1904, pp. 16 f., and *Römische Mittheilungen*, 1903, pp. 185 ff.).

(Plate 26 c) is Constantine on horseback. Heraclius, on his medal, is represented on the obverse by a prophet-like head with eyes uplifted in prayer. The reverse (Plate 26 d) shows the entry of the Emperor into Constantinople with the Cross which had been recovered from the Persians. In the Duke's inventories of 1414 and 1416 gold specimens of these medals are carefully described among others, no longer extant. The medal of Constantine was bought from a Florentine merchant in Paris in 1402. The Duke also caused copies of these two medals to be made.*

These, and other pieces of a similar kind described in the inventory, seem to have formed part of a series illustrating the history of the Christian religion: thus there were also medals of Augustus and Tiberius bearing dates which, according to certain computations, correspond to the birth and crucifixion of Christ; and very possibly an ornament presented by the Duke to the Sainte Chapelle at Bourges in 1415, representing Philippus Arabs, supposed to have been the first Christian emperor, belonged to the same set.

From a technical point of view, we must notice that the medals of Constantine and Heraclius are the work of goldsmiths, not struck with dies, but cast and chased; in style they are nearer to the great seals of the trecento than to anything else. They bear elaborate inscriptions, partly in Greek, partly in Latin. These characteristics we may be sure belonged to the specimens first acquired by the Duke. But we do not know whether the specimens

* The obverse of the Constantine medal inspired the figure of one of the Magi in the Duc de Berry's *Très Riches Heures* (Durrieu, p. 39 and Pl. xxxvii).

which we possess go back to the originals, or to the copies which were made of them. We cannot therefore definitely say whether the origin of these pieces was Flemish-Burgundian or Italian (as the purchase from an Italian merchant would suggest).^{*} That they were made towards the end of the trecento we may be assured; that Pisanello saw one or both of them is extremely probable; that he took them for antiques it is neither necessary to assume nor possible to prove.

If the medal of John Palæologus is the earliest which can with certainty be attributed to Pisanello, it does not follow that it was his first attempt at the new art.[†] We have seen that as far back as 1431 Pisanello was undertaking commissions for Leonello d'Este; if the Fillon letter is genuine, he was in 1432 producing work of some kind in bronze. Although Niccolò III. d'Este did not die until December 26, 1441, we have no signed medal of him by Pisanello. Considering the closeness of the relations between the artist and the court of Ferrara,[‡] several critics have attempted to bridge this gap by ascribing to him one or all of the unsigned medals which represent Niccolò. (Plate 27.)§ Those who hesitate to accept the attribution

^{*} The theory of an Italian origin is favoured by the two numismatists who have most recently expressed themselves on the subject: J. Simonis (*Rev. Belge de Num.*, 1901, pp. 68-109), and H. de la Tour (*Bull. Soc. Nat. Ant. de Fr.*, 1903, p. 297).

[†] Bernasconi, *Il Pisano*, p. 34, conjectures that Pisanello did not sign his medals until he found that he was being imitated.

[‡] It must be remembered that, so far as our evidence goes, Pisanello's relations were with Leonello more than with his father.

§ For illustrations of the varieties see Heiss, p. 41; *Trésor de Numismatique, Méd. ital.* I. xxx. 1; Venturi, pp. 79 (Nos. 20, 22) and p. 86. Heiss recognises in these two medals the style of Guazzalotti. He is,

do so chiefly on account of the inferiority of these pieces to the authenticated work of the master. Of course in an early work, in an almost virgin field, some inferiority would probably be perceptible. The question is: if we suppose that Pisanello had not yet seen the Constantine and Heraclius medals, which were to open out a new road for him, but only perhaps the Carrara pieces, can we bring ourselves to admit that he could have produced, as a first essay, either of these medals of Niccolò?

Let us take the finer of the two medals—that which has the bust of Niccolò in a cap.* On the reverse is the Este coat of arms flanked by the letters **N M** (Nicolaus Marchio). Placing the obverse of this medal beside others, such as those of Leonello, we see a difference in quality and in the method of relief which makes us hesitate to assign them to the same artist. The work is nearest to that of the artist who did the larger portrait medal of Pisanello, which we shall have to discuss later (Plate 57). And although by no means lacking in force and concentration, it is without the dignity and refinement of Pisanello's authenticated

however, wrong in supposing the second medal to be a mere coarse imitation of the first. Armand and Friedländer, as well as Umberto Rossi (*Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, i. p. 455), Gruyer (*L'Art Ferrarais* ii. p. 585), Venturi and others who are not numismatists, accept the medals as Pisanello's.

* This medal is the source of a portrait of Niccolò in a MS. in the Bibl. Naz. at Rome, published by Ignazio Giorgi (*Bullett. dell' Istituto Stor. Ital.* No. 2, 1887, pp. 88 f.). The drawings in this fragment are poor, and, as a comparison with extant medals shows, of small iconographic value. The MS. is dated by Giorgi at the end of the fifteenth century.

portraits. The other medal of Niccolò,* which represents him bare-headed, exposing unmodified the flat-topped, backward-bulging cranium, is frankly and brutally ugly.

Those who experience difficulty in accepting the attribution of these portraits to Pisanello find it still harder to make their ideas of his style square with the reverses. The treatment of the shield of arms, with its attention to petty ornament, is more in the style of some goldsmith. As the reverse of the second portrait we sometimes find the same shield, sometimes the Gothic initials of N(icolaus) M(archio) E(stensis), with or without a crown—a poverty-stricken device.†

Further arguments which may be mentioned on the side of the sceptics are these. Pisanello never elsewhere uses pure Gothic letters, or the round form of E (except of course in a Greek inscription). The arrangement of the inscription on the obverse is also foreign to his early style. It is only on the comparatively late medals of Vittorino da Feltre, Belloto Cúmano, Decembrio, and Don Íñigo d'Avalos, that he makes the bust fill the field from top to bottom, while the inscription runs in two arcs behind and before the bust.‡ Thus, if there is anything in this criterion, those who would assign this inferior medal to Pisanello must date it in his finest period!

These arguments, however, from the nature and arrange-

* This medal was used for the "portrait" of Ugo Aldrovandino, natural son of Niccolò, in the MS. above-mentioned!

† From the fact that the fleurs-de-lis were granted to the family in 1431, Bernasconi (*Il Pisano*, p. 34) quite unnecessarily infers that the medal without the coat of arms must be earlier than that year.

‡ Cp. also the medals with his portrait (Plate 57).



MEDALS OF NICCOLÒ III. D'ESTE

ment of lettering, are somewhat meticulous; and they could all be swept aside if it were possible to say that the inner qualities of the heads on the obverses were worthy of Pisanello, and that the method of relief was such as he employed. Then, at the risk of being classed with those commentators who obelize only such verses as do not fit their hypotheses, we might attribute the obverses to Pisanello himself, the reverses to some other artist of the calibre of an ordinary engraver to the mint at the time, who would be accustomed to engraving coats-of-arms. The result of this arrangement would be just such an incongruous combination of Renaissance and Gothic work as we have here, and such as we found half a century or so before in the Carrara medals. Many small arguments could be brought to bear in favour of this theory of a division of labour. But on the broader ground of style it remains more probable that these medals are to be removed from the list of Pisanello's work altogether. The larger one, which in method of relief and in feeling is most akin to the larger medal with the master's portrait, was probably made, not in Niccolò's lifetime, but early in the forties, by some pupil of Pisanello at Ferrara.

If the question of this attribution has been discussed at somewhat tedious length, my excuse must be that it is characteristic of the kind of problem which besets the history of the medallic art.

If, however, we reject these medals, we are not left without a portrait of Niccolò III. from Pisanello's own hand. A drawing in the *Recueil Vallardi* (Plate 28) is recognisable by the peculiar profile, bull neck, pursed up

lips, and generally sullen expression, as a portrait of the marquis.*

On January 10th, 1438, there was held at Ferrara the first session of a Council, the chief object of which was the union of the Greek and Latin Churches. The Emperor John VII. Palæologus himself attended, reaching Ferrara on February 29th, and remaining there until January 10th, 1439. The work of the Council of Ferrara, interrupted by the plague, was resumed by the General Council of Florence, which lasted from February 29th, 1439, to April 26th, 1442. But the Emperor left Florence on August 26th, 1439.

It is usually assumed that the medal of Palæologus was made by Pisanello during the Council of Ferrara. He would hardly, it is said, have waited until the Emperor had gone to Florence, since at Ferrara he was so much nearer, and the Court had already given Pisanello commissions. Again, in May 1439 he was working at Mantua; and this fact shortens the time available for a journey to Florence. It is true that Giovio, in the letter quoted by Vasari, almost goes out of his way to state that the medal of Palæologus was made by Pisanello "in Florence, at the time of the Council of Eugenius, where the aforesaid Emperor was present." But he adds that the medal has a reverse with the Cross of Christ supported by two hands indicating the Latin and Greek Church. Now no such reverse has come down to us. But the design is obviously most appropriate to the subject of the Council. Further, the description recalls to us the

* Fol. 20, No. 2276—not, as it has been called, Gianfrancesco Gonzaga.



NICCOLÒ III. D'ESTE

Sauvannaud

Rec. Vallardi

Face p. 106

medal of Constantine with its similar symmetrical arrangement of two figures seated on either side of the Fountain of Life surmounted by the Cross. We shall see that the extant medal of Palæologus is reminiscent of the obverse of the Constantine medal. Are we to assume that Giovio is guilty of invention, or of a false attribution; or did Pisanello make two medals of the Emperor? In spite of Giovio's bad record, he may, perhaps, be allowed the benefit of the doubt. What other medallist was there to whom in 1439 such a subject would have been entrusted, and what likelihood was there of such a subject being handled after the departure of the Emperor or the end of the Council? Giovio's statement that the medal was done at Florence, however, is probably a random guess.* But in any case, whether this medal and the visit to Florence are mere happy inventions of Giovio's or not, is a point which in no way affects the dating of the extant medal. For this, as it represents the Emperor on his travels, may well have been made at Ferrara, whither he had journeyed from Venice with so much circumstance.†

The obverse of this medal‡ (Plate 29) represents the bust of the Emperor in right profile, wearing what Giovio calls "quel bizzarro cappello alla grecanica, which the Emperors usually wore." In spite of the oddity of the headgear, and the curious long curls in which the hair is dressed, the profile has considerable beauty and dignity.§

* See above, p. 59.

† The Greek history of the Council (Labbé-Mansi, *Concilia*, vol. xxxi. p. 463 f.) gives an elaborate account of the Emperor's arrival at Venice and journey to Ferrara.

‡ 103 mm. in diam. Heiss, Pl. I. 1. Fabriczy, Frontispiece.

§ *Uno bellissimo uomo colla barba al modo greco*, he is called by Vespa-siano da Bisticci (*Vite*, ed. Mai, p. 14), who also notices his *cappelletto*

The Greek legend on this side runs 'Ιωάννης Βασιλεὺς καὶ Ἀυτοκράτωρ Ῥωμαίων ὁ Παλαιολόγος, i.e., "John, King and Emperor of the Romans, the Palæologus." On the reverse, which is signed Ἔργον τοῦ Πισάνου Ζωγράφου, and, again, OPVS . PISANI . PICTORIS, we see the Emperor on his journey. He is mounted on a strange, lean, long-barrelled, big-headed horse, such as Italy never produced.* Beside the road along which the beast is ambling stands a cross, and the rider folds his hands in prayer as he passes. Behind him, the space is filled by a characteristic figure, a page mounted on a horse seen foreshortened from behind. The background rises in a rocky height; the foreground is indicated not conventionally, but—in a manner with which we shall become familiar—as a rough track strewn with stones. The design is enclosed in a plain linear border, which is, however, broken by the left ear of the page's horse.

Here we are obviously face to face with an entirely new development in an art which had hitherto been practically confined to the production of coins. It cannot be denied that there are external resemblances to the Constantine medal, as in the representation of an Emperor riding on an ambling horse, and in the mixture of Greek and Latin legends; further, the technical process of reproduction, by casting in metal from a wax model, is the same.† But it is obvious that as regards the inner qualities that go to make

alla greca. The painter of the Dini cassone at S. Kensington gives a very similar hat to the Queen of Sheba.

* Weizsäcker (Berlin *Jahrb.* vii. p. 52) describes it as of a breed such as is found in the Danube district or Russian steppes. The representation of the pace is quite correct, but has been misunderstood by modern writers to whom the amble is unfamiliar.

† See von Schlosser, *op. cit.* p. 23.



JOHN PALAEOLOGUS



EMPEROR OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Bronze
Follow p. 108

the work of art Pisanello has moved from the old world into the new. We have a complete contemporary historical subject treated pictorially, and skilfully reduced to a circular composition. The conventions which hampered the engraver of dies—conventions due partly to long tradition, partly to the inherent difficulty of engraving in a hard material—are swept aside.*

Working with a free hand in the soft wax, the artist makes a mould by surrounding his model with fine casting sand or charcoal.† The wax having been melted out, the mould is filled with the metal in which the cast is to be made. The earliest proofs were probably in most cases made in lead; and such proofs are naturally most highly prized. The metal most commonly used is bronze; specimens in silver or gold that can be regarded as genuine are exceedingly rare, although there is abundant evidence of the use of these metals. Any roughnesses in the casting could be removed with a tool, and from specimens thus chased a fresh mould could be made.‡ The process of reproduction was slow, but as little mechanical as possible; each cast, so far as chased by the artist himself, was an independent work from his hand, not a mere mechanical repetition. The artist who knew his business adopted the

* Von Schlosser, p. 24, shows well how the conditions of working at cast medals (as opposed to struck pieces) were favourable to this art being taken up by a painter, such as Pisanello.

† Cp., *e.g.*, the instructions given by Cennino Cennini for taking impressions of a seal or coin in ashes (chap. 189, trans. Herringham, p. 177).

‡ By the constant repetition of this process, and the contraction of the metal in cooling, the diameter of the later specimens was appreciably reduced. The size of a medal thus becomes a criterion of its age.

golden mean in the matter of chasing; he would use the tool sparingly, only where necessary to clear the details, so that the original freshness of the cast surface should be preserved; or to help out the modelling, much as a Greek vase-painter of the best period uses brown "inner markings." On the other hand, he would not neglect the laborious task of chasing altogether, or leave it to an unskilful pupil. Further, although working his original model in wax, he would restrain himself, remembering that the end in view was a relief in hard metal; therefore, although he would aim at boldness of relief, in comparison with the relief usually found upon coins struck with a die, he would not exaggerate this feature to the degree of pretentiousness; nor would he labour details to the extent of spoiling the largeness of his style. Knowing that medals are subject to wear, he would avoid treating a bust in such a way that the characteristic features would be quickly worn away; speaking generally, therefore, we should find him preferring a profile to a full-face presentation.

All these maxims Pisanello observed, consciously or unconsciously; but fortunately he seems to have formulated no theory of medallic art. Before much more than a generation had passed, the making of the medal was more or less subject to definite rules, and the work was sharply differentiated from that of other bronze sculpture in relief. Thus the medal rapidly lost its monumental character and largeness of style. The introduction of the practice of striking, instead of casting, medals facilitated the descent from grandeur to pettiness.

Compared with Pisanello's later medals, this of Palæologus shows certain slight traces of an undeveloped art.

The profile portrait is, indeed, in its dignified reserve and rejection of all trivialities, quite the finest head that he had yet produced. But on the reverse the composition seems somewhat crowded, although it contains no more details than some of his more successful designs.*

It is interesting to find Pisanello's portrait of Palæologus repeated in Hartman Schedel's Chronicle (fol. 256 verso). But by a sad irony the portrait is labelled *Mahumeth turchorum imperator*. Presumably the German artist, not knowing Greek, only realised that it represented a ruler of Constantinople, and made it serve for the Sultan of his own time.†

* The gold specimen of this medal formerly in the Bibliothèque Nationale disappeared in the great burglary of 1831. That in the Uffizi is a poor cast: see Friedländer, p. 4; Supino, *Medagl. Mediceo*, p. 20, No. 14. Their opinion may unhesitatingly be accepted as against that of L. Milani, who (in G. Sartori's *Protomoteca Veronese*, Verona, 1881) maintains its authenticity. It was given to Cosimo III. in 1715 by Sir Andrew Fountaine, Director of the London Mint. Stevenson (*Mé. de l'Éc. franç.*, 1888, p. 461) says the specimen in the Borgia Museum is also a poor cast; in the same Museum is a bust made after the medal. In a bronze specimen in the Louvre various details, such as an imperial crown round the hat, have been added at some comparatively recent date. In the *Recueil Vallardi* (fol. 80, No. 2478; B. de Tausia, *Dessins*, 1888, No. 1988) is a bust of the Emperor to left, designed for the medal. But the other study in the Louvre (Heiss, p. 44) representing the Emperor on horseback, with a legend (in Venetian dialect) indicating the colours of his attire and harness of his mount, is by some Venetian artist. On the same sheet are other sketches of Greeks and an Arabic legend ("Honour to our master the Sultan, the King, El Muayyad Shiekh, may his victory be glorified") borrowed from some textile. (The Sultan was one of the Burji Mamluks, and reigned 1412-1421.) See H. Lavoix, *Gaz. d. Beaux. Arts*, 1877, t. 16, p. 24; Ephrussi, 1881, t. 24, p. 179. If the drawing were by Pisanello, and the legend in his handwriting the fate of the Fillon letter would be sealed. The style of the drawing, however, differs altogether from his, especially in the treatment of the horse.

† Berlin *Jahrb.*, ii. p. 216 ff.

A somewhat earlier instance, however, of the influence of the same medal on book illustration is supplied by a Ferrarese MS. of the *Imprese di Carlo Magno*, where a bust in the border of the title-page is clearly inspired by Pisanello's work. The manuscript belongs to the time of Borso d'Este.* A Livy in the Bibliothèque Nationale† also reproduces the portrait of the Emperor from the medal, but the bust is to left, in a white robe; the centre of the hat is white, the underside of the brim red.

* H. J. Hermann in Vienna *Jahrb.*, xxi. (1900) p. 143, fig. 11. The MS. (Ferrara, Bib. com., Cod. class. ii. No. 132) shows other traces of the artist's influence.

† MS. Lat. 14,360, fol. 268. See above, p. 99, note †. Second half of fifteenth century.

CHAPTER VIII

GUARINO'S POEM

PISANELLO's compatriot and friend, Guarino, the grandfather of the author of the *Pastor Fido*, and himself one of the most distinguished humanists of his generation, has already been mentioned in connexion with the painter's present to Leonello d'Este. To the friendship that existed between them we owe a Latin hexameter poem, more interesting than beautiful, which appears to have been written in acknowledgment of a present from Pisanello to the author.*

The poem is a glowing eulogy, sincere enough if allowance be made for the exaggeration characteristic of the time. As a piece of versification it hardly does credit to the "fountain of Greek and Latin learning." The writer begins, modestly enough, with a confession :

* See Venturi, pp. 39 ff. The poem was known to Biondo (1450). Vasari mentions it after Biondo, but probably had not seen it. It was re-discovered by Andres (1797) in the Capilupi Library at Mantua ; first published in full by Cavattoni (*Tre Carmi Latini*, Verona, 1861). Venturi has collated the MS., reproducing in notes Cavattoni's errors and alterations, with some suggestions of his own. I give in the text a slightly abbreviated paraphrase, as the poem is full of small points of interest.

"My poetical gifts are not equal to my subject; otherwise would I extol you, so that even after your death you might rise immortal like the phoenix. But, though Nature has denied me excellence in song, goodwill and gratitude are mine; so let the harmony of spirit that has long bound us together testify to our love. Poor though my verses be, it is enough that they should preserve your name. It is not seemly that you should lie neglected, without your meed of praise, you who, adding fresh lustre to a lofty hero's name, can give renown and glory to the lineaments of emperors, clad in warrior's cloak or armour (so that all who look on them are fain to cry out, 'e'en so he looked, e'en so he bore himself!'); you, who can by your art divine bestow immortality on high-souled princes.* This indeed Minerva and your fatherland,† in which we both rejoice, and which has given us kindred names, may not suffer: that fatherland whose glory you spread far and wide by the many virtues, prudence, dignity, modesty, generosity, and good faith, for which all men celebrate you. Great is the renown that comes to our Verona from the excellence of your worth, from the fair garments that adorn you. Add the mighty talent wherewith Heaven has endowed you, so that with line and colour you rival Nature's handiwork, to the wonder of all, whether it be that you depict birds or beasts, raging seas or quiet lakes; we could even vow that

* This clumsy passage should probably be punctuated thus:

Haud decet ut, celsos ornans heroas, honores
Induperatorum faciem sagulumque vel arma
Nobilitans (cunctis ut sit clamare necesse :
Sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora gerebat !),
Principibus vitam divina ex arte perennem
Magnanimis tribuens, jaceas, etc.

The grammar and construction are atrocious, but the general sense is clear, and no emendation seems necessary.

† Reading *natale tuum*, or with Cavedoni *natale solum*.

we see the white gleam of the foam, or hear the waves thunder on the shore. I put forth my hand to wipe the sweat from the brow of the toiling figure ; 'tis as though we heard the neighing of the war-horse, or were thrilled by the blare of the trumpets. You paint a night-scene : the night-birds flit around, and the birds that fly by day hide themselves ; we behold the stars, the sphered moon, and the sunless darkness. Or say the action is in winter : all is frozen and stiff with cold ; frost, and not foliage, clothes the trees. Or it is spring : the green meadows laugh with varied flowers, the trees are clad in their pristine tints, the hills are bright ; the air is sweet with the enchanting songs of birds. But here to my hand is an example of all these various qualities ; for the noble gift of St. Jerome the beloved which you send is a marvellous specimen of your virtue and your art : his splendid, hoary beard ; his holy forehead, austere frowning, rapt in contemplation towards God ; he is present, yet we see that he is far away ; he is here and yet not here ; the cave holds his body, his soul tastes the joys of heaven. The image, though but painted, speaks so vividly, that I scarce dare to utter a sound, and I whisper low, lest my voice break in upon his contemplation of God and the kingdom of heaven, and I be called a rude boor. What a proportion is there of light and shade ! What distance ! What symmetry ! What harmony in the limbs ! Who would not admire and love, venerate and praise and honour to the uttermost the divine intellect and skill of such an artist ? Nature, sister of poetry, was the parent of your art. Our age has produced you, to be numbered with the great sculptors and painters of antiquity, Canachus, Euphranor, Polycleitus, Apelles, Praxiteles, Myron, Polygnotus, Timanthes, Zeuxis ; nor will that mighty line deem you unworthy, who can magnify their glory and praise. They knew how to make lying effigies of gods ; you have power

to depict the Eternal Father, who built up the world out of naught, and those holy men who have taught us by their religion the blessed way to heaven."

At the time when these lines were written, Pisanello had already represented an Emperor (the plural, of course, must not be pressed), and there can be little doubt that Palæologus is meant, whether the reference is to a painting or a medal. It is noticeable that, except in the list of famous artists of antiquity towards the end of the poem, there is no distinct reference to sculpture. We may assume therefore that not much of Pisanello's medallic work was known to Guarino at the time.* This gives us a date for the poem soon after 1438. Further, the artist, to the writer's knowledge, has not yet been celebrated in poetry. Granting that Guarino may not have heard of the sonnet of Ulisse "pro insigni certamine" between Pisanello and Jacopo Bellini (1441) or of other sonnets of 1442 (to be dealt with later), it is extremely unlikely that the elegant little poem of Strozzi should not have come to his notice. Thus Guarino's verses are certainly earlier than 1443, the latest possible date for Strozzi's elegy, and probably earlier than 1441, by which time Pisanello must have already been well-known as a medallist.

Guarino's expressions are sometimes of tantalising obscurity. When he says *cum te multimodis pingas virtutibus*, has the verb more than a metaphorical sense? We shall find that Gauricus described the artist as "most ambitious in carving his own portrait," and that the medals with his portrait bear letters indicating the seven

* Crowe and Cavalcaselle (*North Italy*, i. p. 485, note 1) have remarked that Guarino refers to non-medallic portraits.

cardinal virtues. Did Pisanello lay claim to the virtues in a portrait painted by himself? But of this later. *Pulcroque insignis amictu* shows that he was fond of wearing fine clothes as well as painting them. But the idea that Verona acquired honour thereby, and indeed the whole tone of this passage, would in any other writer or at another period savour of satirical exaggeration.

It is unfortunate that Guarino gives a definite description of only one picture, the *St. Jerome*. It is noticeable that in addition to the harmony of the composition and the fine proportions of the figure, he praises the treatment of light and shade, and the depth of background :

Quae lucis ratio aut tenebrae ! distantia qualis !
Symmetriae rerum ! quanta est concordia membris !

The picture was probably the same as the *St. Jerome* adoring a crucifix mentioning by Facio.* And it was also probably the source from which Bono of Ferrara drew his inspiration for the *St. Jerome* in the National Gallery. (Plate 19.) The peculiar composition, with a narrow valley receding between conical hills—*distantia qualis*.—and buildings in the background, was adopted not only by Bono, but also by Vincenzo Foppa in his *Crucifixion* in the Bergamo Gallery.

Another sacred subject painted by Pisanello, to which Guarino alludes, is *God the Father*. Strozzi also mentions it, for the “Jove” of his lines cannot mean anything but the first Person of the Trinity. We shall meet with yet another mention of what is probably the same picture.

* As Venturi remarks (p. 39), it cannot have been the picture of *St. Jerome* mentioned by Guarino in a letter written between 1420 and 1428.

Guarino's enumeration of the manifold qualities of Pisanello's work, even when we allow for his friendly exaggeration, brings home to us the miserable proportion of what remains to the total achievement of the painter. The description of the spring landscape with flowering meadows and singing birds may apply to the St. Eustace ; but where are the raging sea, the battle, the winter landscape, or the scene at night ?

CHAPTER IX

MANTUA AND MILAN, 1439-1443

PISANELLO, as we have seen, was one of those who failed to return to Verona at the time of the war between Venice and Mantua. It is probable that he was at Ferrara when the war began, occupied with the portrait of the Emperor Palæologus. Later on he went to Mantua, where we find him in the spring of 1439. On May 12 the treasurer of the Marquis wrote to the Marchesa Paola Malatesta that, by command of his master, the "Rectore" was to promise the sum of eighty ducats for the painter.* Venturi maintains that the Rectore is not a court official, but rector of a church. The Marchesa had in 1420 founded the church of S. Paola in the monastery of Corpus Christi, to which she eventually retired. Possibly, then, it was in this church that Pisanello was at work. "At Mantua," says Facio, "he painted a chapel (*aedicula*), and some pictures which are much praised."

From a mandate† of the Marquis of Mantua, bearing

*. See Venturi, pp. 44 f.

† U. Rossi, *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, i. (1888), p. 454; Venturi, p. 45. Venturi's text diverges from Rossi's in three points; in one of these, Rossi's *erga* (for *et*) is required by the sense. The debt is apparently 180 ducats at the rate of 86 soldi piccoli to the ducat, not 186 ducats.

date March 27, 1441, "pro Pisano pictore de Verona," it has been assumed that Pisanello was at Mantua at the time. It is ordered that the painter be entered as a debtor for the sum of 180 ducats to certain creditors holding his pledges, and that this sum should be kept back from his salary. Venturi argues that more probably the sum was to be deducted from his salary when he returned to Mantua. For reasons to be discussed when we come to his work in Ferrara from 1441 onwards, it is probable that Pisanello had left Mantua for Ferrara at least a couple of months before the issue of this mandate. On August 16, 1441, he returned by water to Mantua.* Thence he seems soon to have proceeded to Milan, to cast certain medals which we shall describe later. A single entry in the household ledger of the Mantuan court for the years 1442-1444, recording that the artist was to receive a certain amount of tallow candles and oil per month, is the only direct record of his presence at Mantua during the next two years. We shall see that this entry may be connected with a visit paid by him to Mantua from Ferrara in 1443. The court of Ferrara seems to have secured him towards the end of 1442 or beginning of 1443; for, on February 27, 1443, Ludovico Gonzaga wrote from Mantua to Guglielmo Gonzaga† a letter which throws some light on the rivalry between the two courts: "Since we understand that the painter Pisano is there and says that it is not possible for him to come and stay with us

* Venturi, pp. 47 f. On pp. 48, 49, will be found the other documents relating to Pisanello's work at Mantua down to the end of Feb. 1443, and his correspondence with the Marquis down to March 1444.

† Probably his brother; see Litta, *Gonzaga*, Tav. iii.

any more, since such are his orders, and if he should come his goods would be confiscated, we would desire you to endeavour to intervene, if so it be, and advise us thereof by letter speedily. Mantua 27 Febr. 1443." The wording of this letter suggests that Pisanello had not gone from *Mantua* to Ferrara, but that he had been working elsewhere—perhaps at Milan. As we see from another letter from Gianfrancesco Gonzaga to Pisanello himself, the artist had reported his arrival at Ferrara, and his fixture there, and had said that he would be able to tell him more by word of mouth when the Marquis should come to Ferrara. To this Gianfrancesco replies on March 3 that he would willingly hear what Pisanello has to say, but knows not when he will be at Ferrara; and those who say that he is coming thither know more than he knows himself. The next letter, written from Borgoforte on September 11, is a reply to a request for money. The Marquis is, as ever, well pleased to hear that Pisanello is well and in good case; but God knows that he has not at present the means to pay the sum due to him; but it is certainly his intention to do so as soon as possible. In a letter of November 6* from Mantua Gianfrancesco himself makes a claim on the artist; Pisanello had taken away with him a picture belonging to the Marquis, painted on canvas and representing our Lord God. He sends a courier, with instructions to Pisanello to return it carefully packed.

This letter is somewhat puzzling, unless we suppose that

* Pisano de Verona in Ferraria. Egregie dilecte noster. Havendo inteso che tu hai portato cum ti una nostra tavola de tela suxo la qual è pincto nostro signor dio, etc.

Pisanello had been to Mantua recently. For Gianfrancesco writes as though he had just heard of the removal of the picture. It would be strange that he should write thus if the picture had been taken away early in the year. We may therefore infer that Pisanello in the summer, that is at some time between March 3 and September 11, when Gianfrancesco's letters prove him to have been at Ferrara, obtained leave from the Este to go to Mantua. Thus Guglielmo Gonzaga's intervention was successful. To this visit to Mantua, then, the entry relating to oil and candles already mentioned belongs. From Mantua Pisanello brought away a canvas representing a subject to his representation of which, as we have seen, allusions are made by both Guarino (soon after 1438) and Strozzi (before September 1443). It is, of course, quite possible that he painted two pictures with this subject; but the fact that the three references come close upon each other in point of date rather points to one and the same picture. And as it is one of the works singled out for laudation by Guarino and Strozzi, may it not have been in Facio's mind also when he said that Pisanello painted at Mantua *tabulas valde laudatas*? He may have brought it away from Mantua to work on it again; he did so without the knowledge of the Marquis, who, discovering its removal on his return from Borgoforte, lost no time in reclaiming it.

The last letter of this correspondence, so characteristic of the relations between an artist and his Mæcenas in these days, is dated from Mantua, March 11, 1444. The painter's address is not given, but he was doubtless in Ferrara. Pisanello had written giving some information which the Marquis desired about the rooms which he used

to occupy at Mantua, and also asking for some money due; for the lack of this he would be obliged to defer a journey, on which he had resolved, to the court of Naples. The Marquis, though as usual in great straits, promises to try and make some provision. As there is no evidence of Pisanello going to Naples for some years to come, we may assume that the Marquis was unable to fulfil his promise.

Besides the chapel-frescoes and the easel-pictures which Pisanello executed at Mantua, it would seem that he decorated a room—afterwards known as the *sala del Pisanello*—in the Ducal Palace. The frescoes were presumably ruined in 1480 when the ceiling of the room gave way.*

A manuscript destroyed in the recent disastrous fire at the Turin Library seems to have been a significant monument of the influence of the art of Pisanello on miniature painting at the court of the Gonzaga.† Various hands were discernible, but the drawings (done with the pen and finished with colour) showed great similarity to the Pisanellesque style, although the work, in spite of its fineness and minuteness, lacked the spirit of the Veronese painter. The illuminations included medallions of warriors, St. George, etc.; horses were rendered in strong fore-

* For the three letters relating to this, see U. Rossi, *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, i. (1888), pp. 455, 456.

† *Vitae diversorum principum et tyrannorum* (E iii. 19), described by Gino Fogolari in *L'Arte*, vii. (1904), pp. 159 f., whence the details in the text are taken. Gonzaga arms on the title-page. An inferior Vatican MS. (Cod. lat. 1903) of the same subject is derived from that which is now lost; it was written by order of Ct. Bartolomeo Visconti, who died 1457. The Turin codex therefore belonged to the forties or fifties.

shortening; there were careful naturalistic renderings of flowers, of the fur of animals, and the artist showed a delight in the representation of magnificent costumes such as one finds in the master's drawings. A characteristic feature was a series of profile medallions of emperors, taken for the most part from Roman coins.

When Pisanello was working for Gianfrancesco Gonzaga, it may be presumed that he would come into contact with the ally of the Marquis, Filippo Maria Visconti, and also with the condottiere Niccolò Piccinino. For Piccinino commanded Visconti's forces in the war against Venice. When the peace initiated at Capriana was signed, Francesco Sforza also came into close relationship with the Duke. And, as a matter of fact, it would seem that the medals of all these three persons were made in or about the year 1441. Since Piccinino on his medal is called *Vicecomes*, it must have been made between 1439—the probable date of his adoption by the Duke of Milan—and 1441 or 1442, when he was adopted by King Alfonso. It is hardly probable that it should have been made while he was busy with the war. The medal of Sforza describes him also as *Vicecomes* and Lord of Cremona, titles which he acquired by his marriage with Bianca Maria Visconti on October 28, 1441. But he is not called Duke of Milan, therefore the medal is earlier than 1450.* Finally, the apparent age of Filippo Maria Visconti—he was born in 1391—is quite consonant with the supposition that his medal was made about 1441. Possibly, as Heiss has suggested, the peace brought these three men together at Milan at the end of

* If it is the medal of Sforza which is referred to by Basinio of Parma (see chap. xiii.), then it is necessarily earlier than 1448.



FILIPPO MARIA VISCONTI

Mr. Max Rosenheim



DUKE OF MILAN

Bronze
Follow p. 124



FILIPPO MARIA VISCONTI (COPY)

Sauvignaud

Rec. Vallardi

Follow Pl. 30

1441, and they may have sat to Pisanello at the same time.

Let us take first the medal of Filippo Maria Visconti (Plate 30).^{*} There is a tradition that the Duke declined to be painted by any one because of his repulsive looks. Pier Candido Decembrio, indeed, has left us a detailed account of his personal appearance,[†] in the course of which he says that, although he would not be painted by any one, yet Pisano, that famous artist, with marvellous skill made of him a likeness that seems to breathe. Decembrio's statement may be true; nevertheless, numerous portraits of the Duke came into existence, at any rate after his death.[‡] There is no doubt that he was extremely sensitive as to his physical defects, although to call him repulsive is to go beyond our evidence. For the rest, we recognise in Pisanello's portrait some, though not all, of the features noticed by Decembrio: such are the short nose, large jaw, thick neck, and double chin betraying corpulence. The shape of his cranium is concealed by his cap. He is in right profile, wearing a dress embroidered with a bird within

^{*} Diam. 103 mm. Heiss, p. 11 and Pl. I. The much retouched silver specimen in the Bibliothèque Nationale measures only 95 mm.

[†] *Vita Phil. Mariae Vicecomitis* (Muratori, xx. p. 1007 f.), especially cc. 50, 52, 56. The work was finished and submitted to the criticism of Leonello d'Este in 1447 (Rosmini, *Vita e Disciplina di Guarino Veronese*, i. pp. 109 f. and Venturi, p. 58).

[‡] In P. Giovio, *Duod. Vicecom. Mediol. princ. Vitae* (ed. 1630), Part ii. p. 132, is a portrait very like the medal, with the statement that his true portrait is found on gold coins and in various paintings and reliefs (*caelaturae*); but by far the most lifelike is the portrait which Franciscus Tabernius Epistolarum Magister placed on the door of the Great Conclave. No coins, however, with the portrait of the Duke appear to be known; see Gneccchi, *Monete di Milano*.

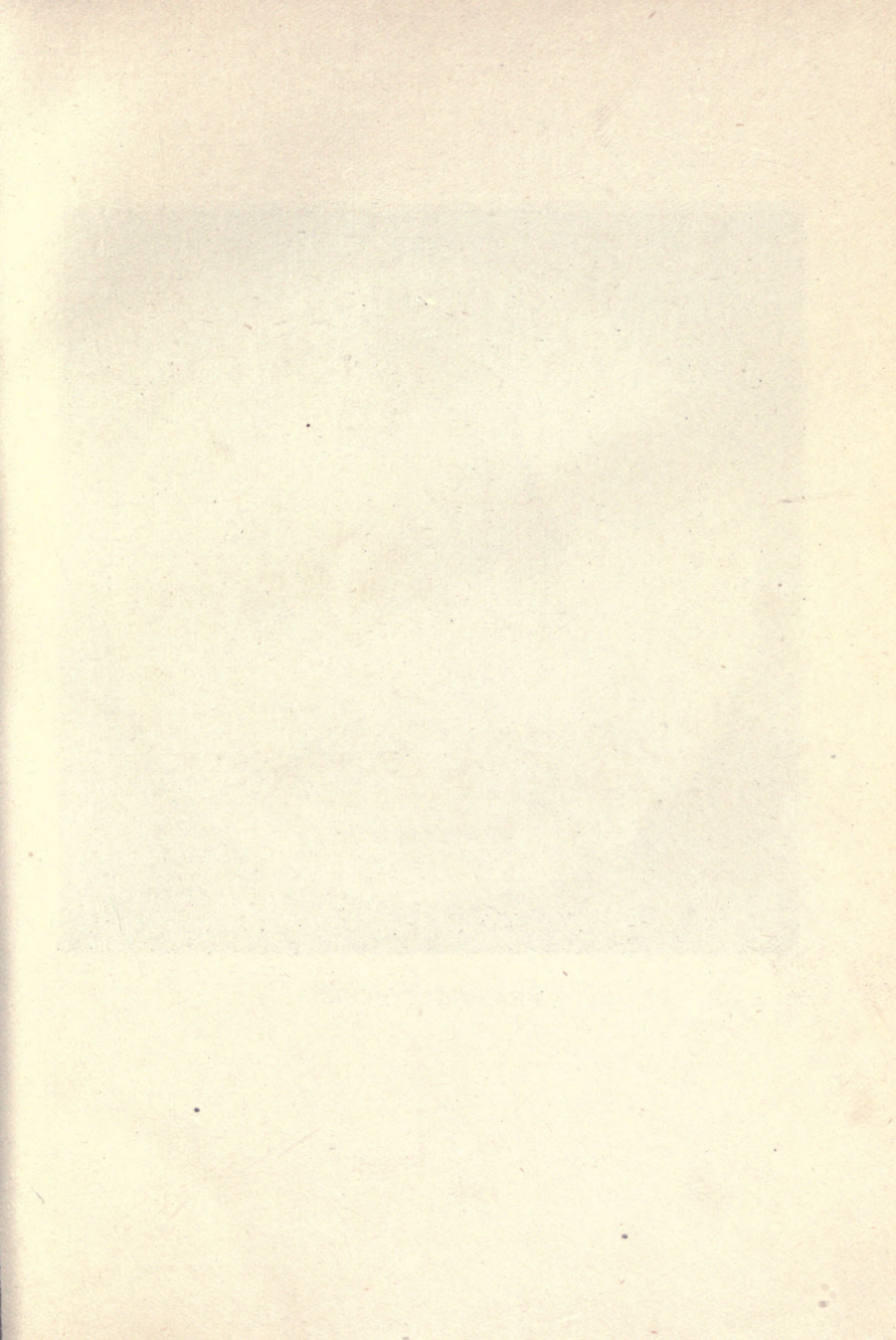
a twisted riband, above which is a crown. He is described as Filippus Maria Anglus,* Duke of Milan, etc., Count of Pavia and Angheria, and Lord of Genoa. Although he lost Genoa in 1435 he never gave up the last title.† On the reverse, which is signed OPVS · PISANI · PICTORIS, is a group of three horsemen. On the left is the Duke, wearing on his helmet the Visconti crest, the *biscione* swallowing a child. On the right is a small page, seen on his horse, considerably foreshortened from behind. Between them we see a third horseman—or rather only his helmet surmounted by a huge crest—looking over the head of his horse much as does St. George's squire in the S. Anastasia fresco. In the background are a mountainous landscape and the tops of buildings; among them is a colossal female statue, apparently veiled and holding a short sceptre.

In some points—as the rather crowded composition, the rocky background—this piece is akin to the Palæologus medal. It is on the whole less successful. The page's horse stands better, but the Duke's looks wooden, and one is not clear whether it is rearing or climbing a hill. Notice, however, the impressive effect of the lances.

Two sketches in the Recueil Vallardi, of which one is reproduced in Plate 31, represent the profile of the

* In the genealogies of the Visconti (*e.g.* Brit. Mus. MS. Add., 26,814, fol. 2), Anglus Junior is the son of Primus Anglus, the son of Ascanius, the son of Aeneas. Anglus was brought into the genealogy as eponym of Angheria on Lago Maggiore.

† This fact, noticed by Friedländer (p. 36) and others, has escaped Beltrami (*Rassegna d'Arte*, i. 1901, p. 53 f.), whose attempt to draw a distinction in age between the drawings and the medal is refuted by Modigliani (*L'Arte*, iv. p. 190).





FRANCESCO SFORZA

Berlin Museum



LORD OF CREMONA

Follow p. 126

Duke.* We notice the same meditative look—he was, in Decembrio's words, *aspectu cogitanti similis*—accompanied by a slight smile. There is certainly nothing repulsive in this face.

The medal of Francesco Sforza (Plate 32),† describes him as *Vicecomes*, Marquis and Count, and Lord of Cremona. The hard profile, the determined mouth, the keen, hawk-like expression, give a vivid idea of the great condottiere. On the reverse (signed in the usual way) is a remarkable horse's head, and beneath it three books and a naked sword. The horse looks a vicious beast, with its bony head and small ears laid back, ready to bite or kick. We can well believe with Weizsäcker that it is a portrait of some favourite charger.‡

The obverse of the medal of Niccolò Piccinino (Plate 33)§ bears a strong resemblance to that of his rival Sforza. It has the same severe simplicity of design, and absence of all parade, and is an admirable representation of the strenuous fighter,

Qui Nicolaus erat Picininus in orbe vocatus,
Corporis exigui, magnus tamen extitit armis.

In these two medals Pisanello, quite apart from the revelation of character by portraiture, made even the externalities of his presentation harmonise thoroughly

* Fol. 88, No. 2483 ; fol. 89, No. 2484 (Heiss, p. 12). The latter seems to be a pupil's copy.

† Diam. 90 mm. Heiss, p. 14 f. and Pl. II. 1.

‡ Berlin *Jahrb.*, vii. p. 51. He thinks the breed is Spanish.

§ Diam. 88 mm. Friedländer, Pl. II. ; Heiss, pp. 16 f., Pl. II. 3. Profile sketches for the obverse of this medal are to be found in the *Recueil Vallardi*, fol. 70, No. 2327, and fol. 87, No. 2482 (Pl. 34).

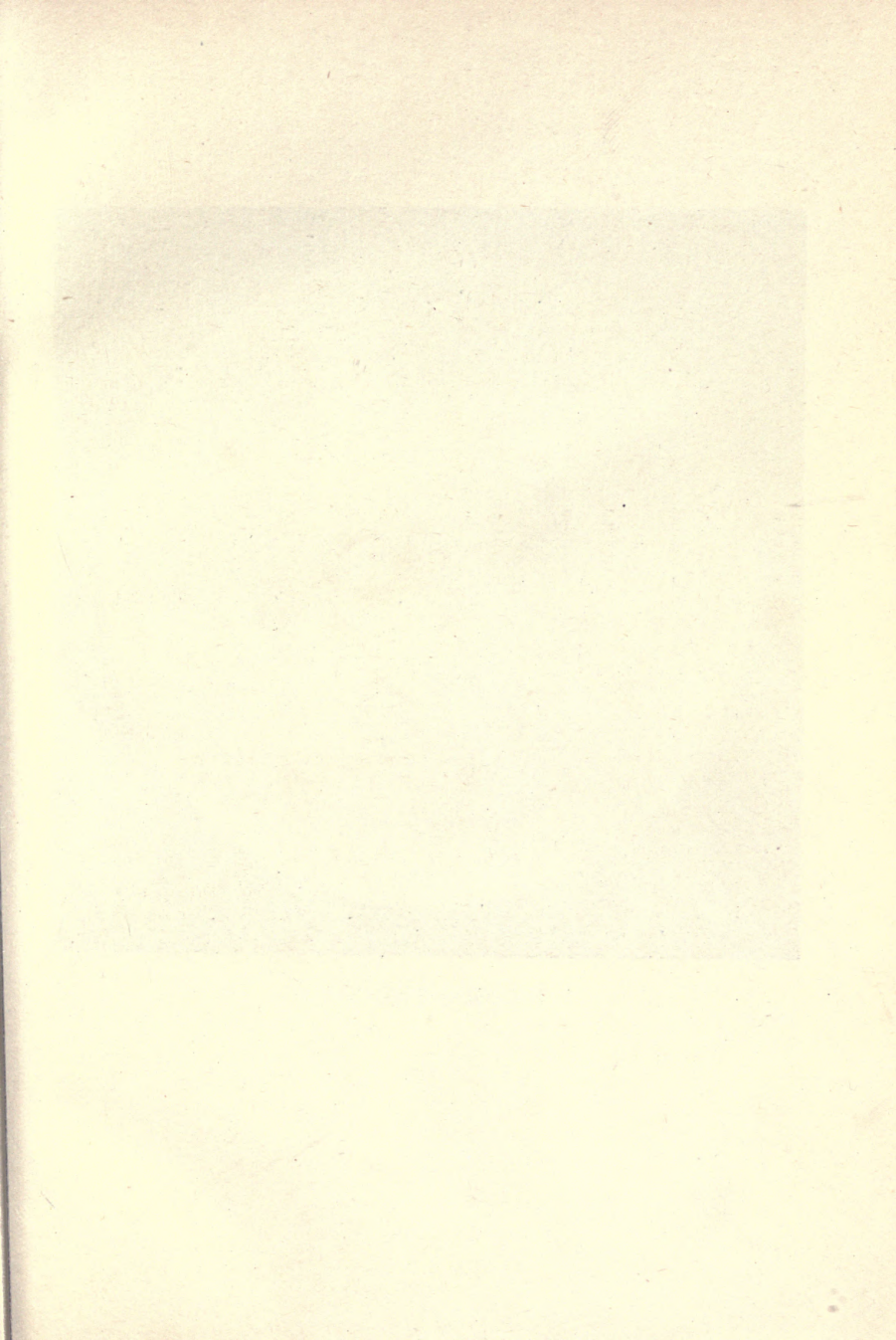
with his subject. These two warriors required no elaborate allegories, such as he designed for the splendid Alfonso, or the cultured Leonello. For Sforza, his favourite horse's head is enough; Piccinino is provided with a design that glorifies both him and his native city by an allusion at once simple and dignified. This "second Mars," as the legend of the obverse describes him, was, like his master Braccio da Montone, a son of Perugia; so the griffin of PERVSIA is represented suckling the infants BRACCIVS and N. PICININVS, as once the she-wolf had suckled the sons of Mars. The design, spirited as it is, has one weak point, in the vacant space above the griffin; it would, indeed, have looked less empty had not the spaces to right and left been filled up with the names of the two heroes. The signature has the unusual form PISANI P. OPVS.*

We have seen that the three medals just described seem to indicate that Pisanello went to Milan towards the end of 1441. From this time until about the end of 1442 or beginning of 1443 he may have worked there and at Pavia. This date for the Pavia frescoes is more satisfactory than the one hitherto proposed, 1424. For although we know that the Duke of Milan was carrying out new works in the Castle of Pavia in 1424, we have no evidence that they were of any importance.†

In the early sixteenth century the frescoes at Pavia

* For a later portrait founded on this medal, see Kenner, *Vienna Jahrb.*, xviii. p. 245. It was perhaps of this medal that Vasari was thinking when he said that Pisanello made a medal of Braccio da Montone. See Friedländer, p. 29.

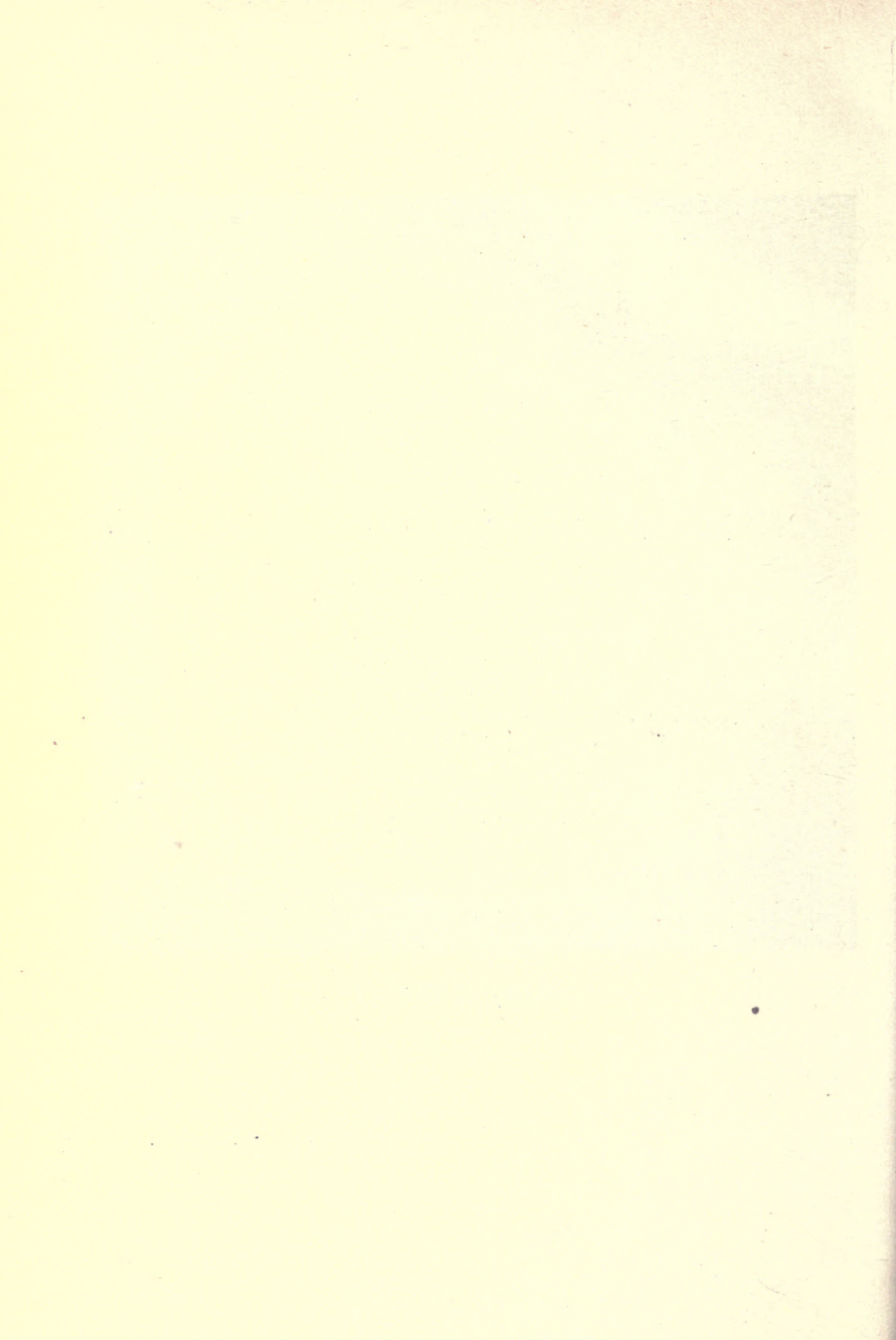
† As we have seen (p. 76, note †), the visit of John Palæologus to Pavia in 1424 was only a passing one, and the work of Pisanello cannot be connected with it as Venturi supposes.





NICCOLÒ PICCININO

British Museum







were still so brilliant that "one could see one's face in them."^{*}

We have no certain knowledge of their subject or extent; but Pisanello's were certainly not the earliest or the only frescoes in the castle. Stefano Breventano in the sixteenth century describes the rooms as having ceilings painted blue, with animals in gold—lions, leopards, etc.—and especially mentions a grand room "all frescoed with beautiful figures, representing hunting and fishing and jousting and various other diversions of the Dukes and Duchesses of this state." Here were subjects suited to the master's hand; nevertheless, as we know that the castle was being decorated with hunting-scenes as early as 1380, we cannot assume that these noble sports were depicted by him. The castle suffered severely from the French artillery in 1527, and all trace of the work has disappeared.

It is but natural to suppose that Pisanello would have been employed not merely at Pavia, but at Milan itself; and accordingly certain frescoes on the ceiling of the Torriani Chapel in the church of S. Eustorgio have been attributed to him.[†] They represent the symbols of the

* For the authorities, see Venturi, p. 32. They are (1) Cesare Cesariano, *di Lucio Vitruvio Pollione de Architectura Libri x.*, Como, 1521, p. cxv.; (2) the Anonimo Morelliano (ed. Frizzoni, p. 12), who quotes Cesariano; (3) Stef. Breventano, *Istoria della Antichità etc. di Pavia*, 1570, lib. i. p. 7. Venturi suggests that the paintings of the diversions of the nobility in the Casa Borromeo at Milan were perhaps inspired by the similar work of Pisanello at Pavia; but the connexion of these with extant work of the master is distant.

† Both de Tauzia in *L'Art*, viii. (i.) 1882, p. 221; *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 62. They have now been photographed by Fumagalli.

four Evangelists, with various saints. In the two lower corners of each of the four triangular divisions of the vaulting are shields bearing the Visconti *biscione* in all cases save one, which has the semi-Gothic initials B M. These have been identified as the initials of Bianca Maria, daughter of Filippo Maria Visconti. As the Torriani Chapel was transformed about 1440,* it might well be that Pisanello, if he were in Milan in 1441, would be commissioned to decorate the roof. The frescoes, which were uncovered in 1868, are unfortunately in wretched condition. Although they may belong to the Veronese school, and show certain traces of the manner of Pisanello,† it is quite impossible to assign them to him with any certainty. De Tauzia considered that he had found two studies intended for these frescoes.‡ A careful comparison of these drawings (the winged ox of St. Luke, and St. Catherine of Siena, kneeling and holding out a scroll) with a photograph of the fresco shows, however, that the resemblances are so slight as in no way to justify the argument based upon them.§ And it is obvious that, even if the desired correspondence existed, it would not definitely prove that Pisanello actually executed the frescoes. His time would have been well occupied with the three medals and with the work at the castle at Pavia. We must, therefore, rest content with the less adventurous opinion

* Venturi, p. 70.

† Cp. Spaventi, pp. 47 f.

‡ Vallardi, fol. 202, No. 2408; *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 58, No. 82.

§ In the drawing the ox is lying down to the right, with its head raised, not lowered as in the fresco, and the book is held quite differently. The attitudes of the saint in the fresco and the drawing are still more divergent.

which assigns these frescoes to a pupil or imitator, possibly, in accordance with local tradition, Cristoforo Moretti.*

If the connexion of these frescoes with Pisanello is indistinct, what shall we say of other works of art in Milan and its neighbourhood in which his influence has been traced? Some of these † have but the vaguest resemblance to his work—a resemblance merely due to their having been done at a time when the naturalistic instinct was awakening. The frescoes by one of the Zavattari (perhaps Franceschino) ‡ in the Chapel of Queen Theodolinda at Monza, which were being completed about 1444, perhaps show this more clearly than any of the other works which have been mentioned in this connexion.§ The love of horses, foreshortened in various ways, the rich costumes, and other qualities—although some of them, like the lack of perspective, are merely negative—remind us faintly of Gentile da Fabriano and Pisanello; but neither in technique nor in spirit is there anything which proves a direct connexion with these masters. The same is true of the charming frescoes by Michelino da Besozzo in the Casa Borromeo already mentioned. The characteristics of

* Cp. F. Malaguzzi Valeri, *Pittori Lombardi del Quattrocento* (Milan, 1902), p. 89.

† Cp. Venturi, p. xv.

‡ Fumagalli and Beltrami, *La Cappella detta della Regina Teodolinda in Monza* (Milan, 1891), especially p. 12.

§ A characteristic scene is that where the Queen and Agilulf are starting for the chase (*op. cit.* Pl. XXXII.): we have a crowd of people, horses foreshortened from in front and behind, dogs (one very much in the attitude of the two spaniels in the St. Eustace, or the small dog in the St. George fresco), a hawk and heron in conflict, a hilly background. Compare also Pl. XXXV. with its background rising sharply, capped by architecture.

Michelino and other painters of the time, in which they show analogies with Pisanello, are of a kind which arise from the tendencies of the age: for instance, the sense of naturalism, the accurate delineation of picturesque costume, the fondness for animals.* Pisanello is, doubtless, the chief representative of these tendencies; but if we think of him as sole begetter of them in others we run the risk of ignoring the widespread character of the awakening of Northern Italy to the new problems of art.

For certain traces of Pisanello's influence on Milanese painting we have to look to Vincenzo Foppa, of Brescia, the real founder of the Milanese school.† The *Crucifixion* of 1456 at Bergamo, like Bono da Ferrara's *St. Jerome*, has a central valley receding between conical hills with buildings in the distance, and the foliage of the trees is quite in the same manner.‡ “The two medals also at the top of the picture point to the great medallist Pisanello, but more particularly the landscape and the delicate technique with the soft high lights.”§ But whereas Bono's picture is the work of an artist without much character, Foppa's is full of promise; in him the seed sown by Pisanello would have borne good fruit, but for the still stronger influence of Mantegna.

* Malaguzzi Valeri, *op. cit.* p. 90. A picture signed by Moretti in the collection of Comm. Bassano Gabba is described by this author (p. 87), as showing clearly the influence of the Veronese school.

† H. F. Cook in his *Catal. of the Milanese Exhibition of the Burlington Fine Arts Club, 1898*, quoted by Kristeller, *Mantegna* (Eng. ed.), p. 65.

‡ Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Hist. of Painting in North Italy*, ii. p. 3: “the landscape of tinted green relieved with yellow touches is like that of Bono Ferrarese.”

§ Kristeller, *loc. cit.*

Before passing on to Pisanello's work at Ferrara in the forties, we may deal with some more literary efforts prompted about this time by his rapidly increasing fame.

In the first place we have two sonnets, which are generally attributed to Ottaviano Ubaldini della Carda.* They are not works of art but show a genuine feeling of friendship and admiration for Pisanello; that is indeed true of all the literary tributes to his genius.

The first sonnet is "sent by the magnificent Signor Ottaviano to Pisanello the painter, 1442." It says that if Cimabue, Gretto (Allegretto Nuzi of Fabriano) and Gentile, and any one who had been superior to them, were to return to life and surpass themselves, they would yet be put in the shade by

el glorioso et dolce mio Pisano.

His proportion, atmosphere, drawing, perspective, realism,

* Dennistoun, *Mem. of the Dukes of Urbino*, i. p. 416. Venturi, (p. 49) assigns them to Angiolo Galli, Secretary of Federigo, Duke of Urbino. Mr. Stuart Jones has kindly examined for me the Vatican MS. (Cod. Urb. 699). According to the title it contains the poems of Galli; but there are also many poems by other hands, as Sigismondo Malatesta, Guido da Valmontone, etc. Of the two sonnets in question, the first is inscribed "Per parte de M^o S. Oct^o al Pisanello pictor. 1442." It may, therefore, possibly have been written by Galli. But the second is inscribed "el sopradicto M^o Oct^o al S. Duca de Milano p^o di d^o gen. 1442," and in the margin "pro eodem. mandando p^o mancia una cerva cū questo sonetto al collo." There is no reason, judging from this superscription, to suppose that it was not by Ottaviano himself. It is followed by another sonnet of the same date, "el M^o S. Oct^o al S. Duca de Milano," also sent with a hind, which is supposed to speak in the sonnet. Mr. Stuart Jones suggests that the marginal note as to the hind has wrongly been added to the previous sonnet. After another sonnet from Ottaviano to Francesco Sforza, the MS. returns to Galli.

and other qualities are praised in the usual terms. The second sonnet, which Dennistoun supposed to have accompanied the medal of Filippo Maria, merely celebrates the extraordinary skill of the artist in portraiture, and, while the language would naturally refer to paintings, there is no reference to "sculpture," or anything else which would imply metallic work.*

The elegy of Tito Vespasiano Strozzi,† of Ferrara, the pupil of Guarino, is perhaps the best of the Pisanello poems, and as it is comparatively short may be reproduced in full.‡

AD PISANVM PICTOREM PRAESTANTISSIMVM

Quis, Pisane, tuum merito celebrabit honore

Ingenium praestans artificesque manus ?

Nam neque par Zeuxis tibi nec praeclarus Apelles

Sive velis hominem pingere, sive feram.

5 Quid volucres vivas, aut quid labentia narrem

Flumina, cumque suis aequora littoribus ?

Illic et videor fluctus audire sonantis ;

Turbaque caeruleam squammea findit aquam ;

* Venturi suggests that nevertheless the poet was thinking of the medals of Filippo Maria and others, of which Ottaviano may have obtained specimens at Milan.

† For his life, see R. Albrecht, *Tito Vespasiano Strozza* (Progr. Königl. Gymn., Dresden, 1891).

‡ I quote from the British Museum MS. 17,421, fol. 29 v°, but without reproducing mis-spellings and mis-punctuations. Those who wish to go into the question of the relation of the MSS. should consult Albrecht's articles in *Romanische Forschungen*, iv. pp. 341 ff., vii. pp. 231 ff., and other references given by Venturi (pp. 52 foll.). The Brit. Mus. MS. ends with the poem *ad Ianum Pannonium* in book iv., like the Venetus, with which it seems generally to agree. In the printed edition (*Strozzi Poetae Pater et Filius*, Aldus, 1513) this poem is on p. 25 of part ii.

- Garrula limoso sub gurgite rana coaxat ;
 10 Valle sues, ursos monte latere facis.
 Tum liquidos molli circumdas margine fontes,
 Mixtaque odoratis floribus herba viret.
 Umbrosis nymphas silvis errare videmus ;
 Haec humero casses, altera tela gerit.
 15 Parte alia capreas lustris excire videntur,
 Et fera latrantes rostra movere canes.
 Illic exitio leporis celer imminet umber ;
 Hic fremit insultans frenaque mandit equus.
 Quis non miretur gestusque et sancta virorum
 20 Corpora, quae penitus vivere nemo neget ?
 Quisve Iovis faciem pictam non pronus adoret,
 Effigiem veri numinis esse ratus ?
 Denique, quicquid agis, naturae iura potentis
 Aequas divini viribus ingenii.
 25 Illustris nec te tantum pictura decorat,
 Nec titulos virtus haec dedit una tibi :
 Sed Polycleteas artes et Mentora vincis ;
 Cedit Lysippus, Phidiasque labor.
 Haec propter toto partum tibi nomen in orbe,
 30 Et meritas laudes candida fama canit.
 Sis felix ; longum Lachesis te servet in aevum ;
 Et nostram, si qua est, dilige Calliopem.

VALE.

The only distinction of importance, for our purposes, between the manuscript versions and the printed edition of 1513, is that the latter replaces lines 30-32 by the following:*

* Gruyer, *L'Art Ferrarais*, ii. p. 591, inverts the order of things when he says that the reference to Strozzi's medal is omitted in the later versions of the poem.

Te praesens aetas posteritasque canet.
 Ast opere insigni nostros effingere vultus
 Quod cupis, haud parva est gratia habenda tibi
 Si longos aliter mea non exibat in annos
 At saltem vivet munere fama tuo.

The poem, in the form in which it is preserved in the MSS., was written before Sept. 27, 1443, on which date Strozzi sent to Leonello d'Este certain *libellos eroticos*, among which there can be no doubt that this was contained. Internal evidence also goes to show that it can hardly be later. It is true that in verses 27 ff. we learn that in the art of sculpture Pisanello surpasses Polycleitus, Lysippus, and Pheidias, while the most famous metal-chaser of the Greeks, Mentor, is also put in the shade. Reduced to prose, this means that Strozzi knew of Pisanello's work in bronze. But he still spends most of his laudatory epithets on the artist's marvellous realism in representing man, animals, and nature generally. So that we infer that Pisanello's efforts in the medallie art were comparatively novel when these lines were written.

Like Guarino—of whose hexameters indeed this poem seems to contain a number of echoes—Strozzi mentions the artist's representations of saints and of the Deity. The latter, as we have seen, is probably the picture mentioned in Gianfrancesco Gonzaga's letter of November 6, 1443. It may well be that Strozzi saw it when it was brought away from Mantua to Ferrara.

The lines added in the printed edition of 1513 have been employed as an argument for assigning to Pisanello a plaque representing Strozzi. But—quite apart from the style of the work, which renders the attribution absurd

—the poet, who was born in 1425, is represented in advanced age, and the plaquette was therefore made long after Pisanello's death.* It will be noticed that the lines only refer to a proposed portrait, not even necessarily a medal. They are later than 1487, since they do not occur in the latest MS., which is posterior to that date. They were probably added after Strozzi's death in 1505—possibly when the poems went to be printed—for one of the following reasons: the editor may have known that Pisanello made a medal or painted a portrait of Strozzi; or he may have known of these plaques, and assigned them to Pisanello, much as Giovio assigned to him everything that he thought worthy of such an artist.

* For this (oblong) plaquette and another (oval) with the same subject, see Heiss, p. 42. They may possibly be by Sperandio, who made a medal of Strozzi (C. de Fabriczy in *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, 1888, p. 429; Venturi, p. 85).

CHAPTER X

FERRARA, 1441-1448

A SONNETEER Ulisse,* possibly the Ulisse de' Aleotti who in 1448 acted as arbitrator between Squarcione and Mantegna, has left us a sonnet describing a contest at Ferrara between Pisanello and Jacopo Bellini. Pisanello, he says, set himself to contend with nature and render in painting the image of the illustrious new Marquis Leonello. Already had he spent six months on his labour when disdainful Fortune brought from Venice the excellent painter Bellini, a new Pheidias, who made a likeness so lively, in the opinion of Leonello's father, that he was reckoned first and Pisanello second.

Although we must not press Ulisse's chronological data too closely, we are justified in assuming that Pisanello had been in Ferrara about six months, working for at least part of this time at the portrait of Leonello, when Jacopo Bellini arrived. If we allow Jacopo another two or three months to produce his rival portrait, it will result that Pisanello

For the sonnet, which was discovered by Venturi, and for the literature relating to it, see Venturi, pp. 46 f. I have adopted his conclusions, which seem to harmonise remarkably well with all details known to us about this time.

must have been in Ferrara quite early in the year 1441, if not earlier. For, as we shall see, Pisanello left Ferrara to return to Mantua on August 16, 1441; and on August 26 Leonello made a present of two bushels of corn to Jacopo Bellini.* The coincidence is so remarkable, that we cannot doubt that the competition between the two artists took place in the summer of this year.

Whether the portrait of Leonello in the Morelli collection is actually that which—in Niccolò's opinion—was surpassed by Bellini's work is doubtful. It is so much the ripest work of Pisanello's brush, that we are tempted to place it somewhat later in this period. The Venetian painter's success, which surprises modern critics, was probably not due to any technical superiority. For Ulisse reveals the fact that Bellini came first

ala sententia del paterno amore.

It does not follow that his picture was the truer portrait. It was, perhaps, more pleasing in expression, just as the head of Sigismondo Malatesta in the picture of the *Madonna* in the Louvre,† which is perhaps by Jacopo, is in some respects more pleasing, but much less full of character, than the representation of the same man on Pisanello's medals.

If Gentile da Fabriano and Pisanello between them sowed the seeds from which sprang the Venetian school proper; if pictures, such as the *Adoration* by Antonio

* Venturi, *Riv. stor. ital.* i. (1884), p. 604.

† No. 1279; attributed to Jacopo by Corrado Ricci in *Rassegna d'Arte*, iii. (1903), pp. 162 f. The usual attribution is to Gentile da Fabriano; Venturi (p. 26) assigns it to the school of Pisanello, as Reiset had done before (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1877, t. 15, pp. 122 f.).

Vivarini to which we have already referred, show the effect of their presence in Venice on the more mechanical sort of painters at a much later time; in Jacopo Bellini, as Corrado Ricci has pointed out, we already see the thorough assimilation of those of the foreign elements which were suitable to the Venetian atmosphere. So far as representation of the *Madonna* is concerned, there is on the whole more of Gentile's manner than of Pisanello's in the work of Jacopo; but in his observation of animals and of nature generally, and in his talent for capturing sudden and picturesque effects of pose, he reveals his affinity with the Veronese artist. Some of the horses in his sketch-book in the British Museum show the influence of the latter very strongly; not so much in the foreshortening—in this he is often unsuccessful—as in the profile attitudes, where the horses step out like those on the Sigismondo Malatesta or Gonzaga medals. The painting in the Louvre already mentioned shows, as Venturi remarks, a certain naturalism proper to the school of Pisanello. The painting of the trees, of the foliage touched with golden light, and of the sunlit conical hills, is quite Pisanellesque; and the small figures in the middle distance, on horses foreshortened from behind, and the similarly treated stag in the wood, are all in keeping. But the sky and landscape show a considerable advance beyond Pisanello's achievement.*

Two documents record the departure of Pisanello by boat from Ferrara to Mantua on August 16, 1441.† A

* Ricci also, with much probability, assigns to Jacopo a drawing in the Louvre (B. de Tausia, *Dessins*, 1888, No. 2029), in which the head of the Virgin was by Venturi (p. 26) attributed to Pisanello.

† Venturi, pp. 47 f.

mandate of Niccolò ordered on August 15 that the most excellent painter Pisanus should be provided with a boat to take him from Ferrara to Mantua, and that free passes should be prepared for him and for his baggage. The payment made to the boatman Jacopo Marazo is recorded on the next day. We have already followed his movements from this date until March 1444, and have seen that much of his time was spent in Ferrara. We have now to mention the documentary evidence for his presence at Ferrara down to August 1448. It will then be possible to deal with such works as may with certainty or by conjecture be attributed to the period 1441-1448.

The medal celebrating the marriage of Leonello in April 1444 indicates that Pisanello was at Ferrara at the time, or soon afterwards. Leonello was spending considerable sums on his country-seat at Belriguardo.* We do not know whether he employed Pisanello to fresco the walls; but he did commission him to paint a picture which was to be placed in the Palace. A mandate† of Leonello of August 15, 1445, orders the payment *Pisano pictori nobilissimo* of fifty gold ducats on account of the sum which will be due to him for a picture which he is painting, to be placed in Belriguardo. Two days later we find the sum entered in the *registro camerale*. On January 8, 1447, we again find a mandate of Leonello ordering the payment *Pisano pictori prestantissimo* of twenty-five gold florins, but the nature of the work is not mentioned. Finally,

* Work had been begun in 1435 (*Diario Ferrar.* in Muratori, xxiv. p. 188; Gruyer, *L'Art Ferrarais*, i. pp. 477-483).

† For this and the following documents relating to the work at Ferrara, see Venturi, pp. 51 f.

on December 31, 1448, there is a record of certain debts to the treasury contracted by the artist; but the entry does not prove his presence in Ferrara as late as this date.* But that he was in Ferrara as late as August 19 of the same year is proved by a letter from Leonello to Pier Candido Decembrio, at that time Secretary of the brief-lived Milanese Republic (August 14, 1447, to February 26, 1450). The letter, with which we shall deal later, proves that Pisanello was living where Leonello could bring pressure to bear upon him, therefore presumably at Ferrara.

To the long period of Pisanello's activity at Ferrara under the reign of Leonello we must ascribe two of his extant paintings and a number of medals. In addition he found time to work for the courts of Rimini and of Mantua.

Of the works connected with Ferrara, the only one bearing a date is the marriage-medal of Leonello, of 1444. It will be as well, therefore, to begin with the medals of this prince. There are no less than seven with Pisanello's signature (or, if we regard as two the slight varieties of the lynx medal, eight). In three Leonello is called merely *LEONELLVS MARCHIO ESTENSIS*; on the others he bears the title of Lord of Ferrara, Reggio and Modena. These five must, of course, all be later than 1441, when he succeeded to his father; the difficulty is to discover

* On the debit side of the account is an entry (March 28, 1448) of a sum of 100 lire owing to Niccolò Marano, late treasurer of the Camera; Niccolò held Pisanello's pledges only for a sum equivalent to 35 ducats (about 85 lire). It has been ordered that Niccolò's heirs should give security for the balance. Thus Niccolò had drawn on the treasury for Pisanello at some time previously to March 28.

whether those with the simpler title were made before that date. If we have rightly decided that the medals of Niccolò III. are not by Pisanello, we shall hardly be able to accept the supposition that while Niccolò was still alive the artist produced no less than three medals of the son and none of the father, even though he worked more especially for Leonello. It must be remembered that these medals were issued for private purposes; they were not, as they became in the seventeenth century, official memorials. We do not now insist on finding the full titulature of the King on, let us say, a medal issued by some society of which he is patron; and it would be no less absurd to argue that a prince of the quattrocento must always have insisted on the display of all his titles on his medals. The obverses of all the medals of Leonello bear so close a resemblance to each other that we are bound to assign them to one period of a few years. In style they belong to a different stage in Pisanello's development of the art from that represented by the medal of Palæologus. At the earliest, then, the medals with the simpler title, even if we admit that they were made before Niccolò's death, cannot be placed before 1441, when Pisanello was at Ferrara for some months painting the portrait of the young marquis.

This fine series of medals,* culminating artistically, and possibly also in point of time, in the marriage-medal of

* Heiss, p. 19, Pl. III. and IV. The smallest medal (the authenticity of which, as we shall see, is open to question) is 42 mm., the marriage-medal 101 mm., all the others 69 mm. in diameter. It must be to the medals, and not to any coins of Leonello, that Flavio Biondo refers, when congratulating him on imitating the Roman imperial fashion, by putting his head and name on them. (Letter of 1446, cited by Voigt, *Wiederbelebung*, ed. 3, p. 563.)

1444, offers us a group of allegorical reverses. The interpretation of these is not without difficulty, although they presumably allude in most cases to the qualities of the sitter. On the smaller medals, he usually wears scale armour (Plate 35), but also in some cases a brocaded dress (Plate 36). The extraordinarily formed head is represented with uncompromising fidelity; nothing is done to soften the rigidity of the contour; the perpendicular line of the nape and the straight line along which the hair is cropped over temple and ear meet at an ugly angle, from which starts the equally abnormal contour of the cranium. These peculiarities are perhaps most glaring in the medal with the triple-face reverse (Plate 35); in some of the others the line of the neck is gently curved, and the angle with the contour of the head is less startling. The ugliness of the profile also comes out most strongly in the triple-face medal; the cruel-looking and sensual mouth, the retreating forehead, are evidently true to life; for are they not as evident in the medals by Niccolò Baroncelli and Amadeo da Milano, and in the portrait by Oriolo? (Plate 41.) Yet this was the cultured and pacific and well-beloved Leonello, than whom the whole Estensian line produced "no brighter example of domestic virtue, justice, and manliness!"* In the other medals the artist has caught his sitter in a gentler mood.†

As though to soften the effect of this stern profile, Pisanello, in some of the medals with the short title,

* *Annal. Est.* in Muratori, xx. p. 457. This writer's praises are, however, too often fulsome.

† One of Pisanello's medals was used for Leonello by the artist of the portraits of the Este in the fifteenth century MS. already mentioned (above, p. 103, note *).



LEONELLO D'ESTE





LEONELLO D'ESTE

British Museum

Face n. 145

Bronze

has made a sort of border of olive-branches, which fill the intervals between the three words of the inscription. He is a master in the handling of inscriptions—one of the elements in which the medallist most frequently fails—and in no case is he more successful than in this.

The series of the Leonello medals offers four varieties of the artist's signature: OPVS PISANI PICTORIS, PISANI PICTORIS OPVS, PISANVS PICTOR FECIT and—if this solitary instance among all his medallic signatures of the omission of the title of painter is genuine—PISANVS F.

The reverses are for the most part *imprese* of Leonello. The most remarkable is perhaps the triple-faced infant's head (Plate 35): three faces so joined that they have only four eyes between them. To right and left pieces of armour—apparently *ginocchielli*—hang from olive-branches. Leonello is thus indicated as the defender of the prosperity and peace of his subjects. The meaning of the triple face has never been explained; but some light is thrown upon it by a black stone panel of the late fifteenth century in the Victoria and Albert Museum, representing a three-headed bust (the central head has a slight beard, the others are apparently female) and inscribed PRVDENZA. The fact that the faces in the one case are infantine, in the other adult, need not prevent us from explaining one by the other.* The reverse of this medal then may be taken as alluding to the prudence of Leonello. The triple-head doubtless has a similar meaning

* The same type on the arms of the Trivulzi is a canting badge, but it may also have symbolised prudence. The triform head on coins of Phraates IV. of Parthia (W. Wroth, *Brit. Mus. Catal. of Greek Coins, Parthia*, p. 116, Pl. XXI. 11) is probably Hekate.

when it appears on the shoulder-piece of King Alfonso's armour in one of Pisanello's drawings (see Frontispiece).*

Another *impresa* (Plate 36) is the mast of a ship, with an inflated sail; at the foot sit two nude men, one young, the other old. It has been explained as symbolising immovable firmness: the mast is Leonello's determination; not bending before the blast it enables the ship of his life, or of the state, to pass along its constant course. In the two figures we may then see the symbols of youth, when character is fully formed, and old age. But these two figures are not necessary to the *impresa*, as we shall see when we come to the marriage-medal. The explanation is unsatisfactory, but none better is forthcoming.†

On a third medal (Plate 37), two nude men stand turned towards each other, each carrying on his shoulder a large basket full of olive-branches. In the background, on rocks, are two closed vessels, which look like censers of some kind; on them drops rain from the clouds.‡ Here again the two figures carrying olive-branches can only refer to the blessings of peace; and doubtless the same meaning attaches to the falling of the rain from the clouds.

Most obscure of all the *imprese* is that which is found on a small medal (Plate 37), which, although signed

* See below, where the medals of Alfonso are described. The His de la Salle drawing, no. 83 v° (B. de Tauzia, *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 59), has two sketches of the same subject; but de Tauzia is inclined to attribute the sheet to Stefano da Zevio.

† M. Chabouillet thinks that it represents the Christian hope of salvation by the cross, which is suggested by the mast and yard. See Gruyer, *L'Art Ferrarais*, ii. p. 587. The *vela* was also used as a badge by Leonello's son, Niccolò.

‡ The shape of the drops shows that they are not meant to represent incense rising from the vases, as one might otherwise suppose.



LEONELLO D'ESTE



LEONELLO D'ESTE: REVERSES

PISANVS F., is possibly not from his hand. The character of the work, at once coarse and petty, the weakness of the lettering, the occurrence of the border of dots, and the unusual form of the signature itself conspire to suggest that the signature is a forgery. The type of the reverse is a two-handled vase containing branches, apparently of olive, and pierced below with holes from which the branches protrude. From the handles hang anchors, one of which is broken in two. Other *imprese* of Leonello,* which do not occur on his medals, seem to harp on the same idea, without revealing to us what it is: a shield with lances, some whole, others broken; a target with some arrows sticking in it, others lying on the ground, and so on. The theory that the vase represents the security and peace of Ferrara is shaken by the analogy of these other devices, which all express some sort of antithesis—perhaps that between good and ill fortune, the successes and failures of life. When we remember that the object of the inventor of an *impresa* was to avoid the obvious, we need not be ashamed of our inability to solve these riddles.

The vase with branches and anchors is also found, on another medal of Leonello (Plate 38), placed on the rocky background, in front of which lies a nude youth. It is a singularly attractive figure, resting—more or less in the attitude of an ancient river-god—on his right arm, his left arm stretched out, with the hand on his left knee; he looks meditatively into the distance. Here again the broken anchor forbids the otherwise plausible explanation that the reposing figure represents security.

* Venturi, p. 78.

The *impresa* of the vase with branches, roots, and anchors occurs, as we have already seen, on the dress worn by a girl whom Pisanello portrayed, and whom I have sought to identify as Leonello's sister Ginevra (above, p. 73).

The last of the *imprese* that concern us is the blindfolded lynx seated on a cushion (Plate 38). Here the medallist Niccolò Baroncelli supplies the key; for he made a medal of Leonello with the same device, to which he added the legend QVAE VIDES NE VIDE. Amadeo of Milan also placed the same *impresa* on the reverse of his medal of Leonello. There can be little doubt that type and motto together express the sagacity of a ruler who sees everything without appearing to notice it, who shuts his eyes to much that he sees.*

The marriage-medal of Leonello (Plate 39) is one of the finest from Pisanello's hand. The obverse represents the marquis in profile to the left, wearing a richly brocaded dress. Apart from this ornament, the presentation is severe in the extreme. The words LEONELLVS MARCHIO ESTENSIS are placed across the field in two lines,

* The medals of Leonello signed by *Nicholaus* and *Amadeus* were, according to Friedländer (pp. 33, 51), cast before 1441, since they give Leonello only the title of Marquis of Este. We have seen that this test is insufficient. Further, we may say with Heiss (*Les Médailleurs*, Niccolò, &c., pp. 7 f., 13 f.) that Niccolò and Amadeo copied Pisanello's lynx. Gruyer, it is true, holds that their reverses are too poor to be anything but their own designs (*L'Art Ferrarais*, ii. p. 587). But the designs are almost exactly the same, and must go back to a common original. The alternative is to suppose that one of these two invented the design, and that the other and Pisanello followed him. But there are no signs that the master was capable of such slavish imitation.—For a study by Pisanello of a lynx, see *Recueil Vallardi*, fol. 206, no. 2413; but it was not intended for this medal.



MARRIAGE MEDAL OF

Berlin Museum



LEONELLO D'ESTE

Lead
Follow p. 148



broken by the bust—a device which Pisanello henceforward often adopts. The remainder of the inscription is arranged in two arcs, a small one over the head, a larger below the bust. Leonello is described as D(ominus) FERRARIE · REGII · ET MVTINE and also as son-in-law of the King of Aragon : GE(ner) R(egis) AR(agonum). The disposition of these parts of the inscription in curves is just sufficient to adapt the whole composition to the round space ; and the whole arrangement is an ideal instance of the correct decorative use of lettering.*

The reverse, not merely signed in the usual way but also dated MCCCCXLIII, is the earliest of the more elaborate allegorical compositions which constitute one of their creator's chief claims to immortality—compositions in which the allegory is never frigid, the conception always fresh, the style monumental. A lion (Leonello himself) stands charmed before the young genius of Love, who holds before him an open roll of music, and teaches him to sing. In the rocky background is the Este eagle, treated not heraldically, but merely as a feature of the landscape, perched on a withered branch.† The upright lines necessary to the composition are given, quite naïvely, by a column, which helps also to fill up the vacant space above the lion's head, and bears the date and the *impresa* of the

* From this point of view Mr. Lewis Day has included it in his excellent little book, *Lettering in Ornament*, p. 72.

† The dead branch or tree recurs as a motif in Pisanello's medal of Malatesta Novello (Pl. 48), and was also used by Constantius in his fine medal of Mahomet II. (Pl. 72). The leafless tree, sometimes with a bird perched on it, seen from behind, quite in the Pisanellesque manner, is also a characteristic note in many of Carlo Crivelli's pictures.

mast and sail. The remaining vacant corner is filled by the signature. It would be difficult to exceed the simplicity of the means by which the composition is contrived; the proof of its success is that, although the column is obviously inserted to help out the composition, it does not in any way weaken the effect.

The words "son-in-law of the King of Aragon," the date and the scene on the reverse, show that the medal commemorates Leonello's marriage with Maria of Aragon, the natural daughter of Alfonso V. Leonello was intensely fond of music, says Guarino in his funeral oration; * he was so highly skilled in the art that he trained flute-players and lutanists to a wonderful degree of harmony, and out of good players made them the best. At his marriage the musical pomps were a leading feature of the ceremony: two "catafalques" were carried with various sorts of musics of voices and instruments.†

The marriage-medal of Leonello at once calls to mind the painted portrait (Plate 40)‡ which is one of the chief treasures of the Morelli Collection at Bergamo, and in the matter of technique the most perfect of the extant pictures by Pisanello. From the Costabili Gallery, where it is

* Brit. Mus. MS. Harl. 2580, f. 107. The *Annal. Estens.* (in Muratori, xx. col. 456), and Ugo Caleffini (*Cron. di Casa d'Este in Atti e Mem. delle RR. Dep. per Stor. Patr. per le prov. Mod. e Parm.* ii. p. 288, 289) bear out Guarino.

† Brit. Mus. MS. Chronicle of Ferrara 22,330, fol. 63 (24 April, 1444); cp. Roddi's *Annali di Ferrara* (Brit. Mus. MS. 16,521, fol. 370 f.).

‡ Tempera, 30 × 20 cm. Frizzoni, *La Galleri Morelli in Bergamo* (1892), Plate facing p. 4. Venturi, p. 69 (Plate facing p. 96). Berenson in *Connoisseur*, Nov. 1902. The panel has been renewed for about 4 cm. at the top.



LEONELLO D'ESTE

Morelli Gallery, Bergamo

first heard of it passed to the Barker Collection, and from thence it returned to the land of its origin. It suffers more from reproduction than any other work by the same artist, and the memory of its wonderful colouring is necessary to counteract the curious effect of the line of the hair which is so prominent in a photograph.

As Venturi has remarked, it is unnecessary to assume a direct relation between the medals and the painting; the likeness is such as is inevitable between two portraits by the same artist in the same position and probably from the same studies.

Leonello, whose hair is of a dull gold, wears a garment composed of a dull crimson stuff on the breast, with gold brocade on the shoulders and round the neck. The brocade is of the same colour as the hair, but warmer; it has black-brown borders, and is edged with fur and ornamented with pearls. At the back is a riband tied in a bow. In the background are wild roses. The tone of the picture is a warm golden brown, not unlike that of the St. Eustace, but entirely different from that of the frescoes in their present state. The modelling of the face and neck is exceedingly delicate. In a reproduction, where so much of its subtlety evaporates, one may be inclined to think that too much stress is laid upon the firm, clean contours; that, in fact, the medallist dominates the portrait-painter. Only the sight of the original can correct this misapprehension. Of course the silhouette has distinct value, but it is not overdone, and its effect is softened by the background of roses,* as we have seen in S. Anastasia the heads of the Princess

* The studies of roses, Vallardi, fol. 15, nos. 2269, 2270, do not seem to bear any relation to this picture.

and St. George detached against a background of delicate foliage. The same method was used with much less success in the Louvre portrait (Plate 14). The exquisite painting of the roses themselves is not the least merit of the work; like Philostratus, in his picture of Comus, we "praise the dewiness of the roses, and could vow that the very scent of them is painted there."

Compared with other representations of Pisanello's patron, notably with that by Oriolo in the National Gallery (Plate 41), and also the medals by Pisanello himself, by Niccolò Baroncelli and by Amadeo of Milan, this portrait gives us by far the most amiable presentment of the young marquis. The profile is not unrefined, the expression by no means unpleasant, although it does not lack determination.* Oriolo's picture has all the appearance of being painted with the help of Pisanello's medal. The later artist has altered the fashion of the hair, but he has not been able to give to the features anything but a sullen, almost coarse cast.† In Pisanello's picture we see something of the pupil of the mild humanist Guarino; in Oriolo's, rather the ruler in whom it would seem as if the teacher had failed to quell the tyrant's appetites.

There was doubtless more than one portrait of Leonello by our artist; otherwise, as we have seen (p. 139), we must place the Bergamo picture in the time of Niccolò III. In the inventory of the Este wardrobe of 1494,‡ in the *Capi-*

* M. de Tauzia's phrase "le profil bestial du duc" (*sic*) seems much too strong when one stands before the original, and not a reproduction (*Dessins . . . His de la Salle*, p. 62).

† See Destrée in *L'Art Moderne*, Sept. 18, 1892 (quoted by F. Argnani, *Sul pittore Giov. da Oriolo*, Faenza, 1899, pp. 17 f.).

‡ Campori, *Racc. di cataloghi*, etc., Modena, 1870, p. 30.



LEONELLO D'ESTE (ORIOLO)

National Gallery

Face p. 152

tulo de Medaglie et Intaglie et di Teste retracte dal Naturale, we find mentioned: "two heads of the King of Aragon portrayed in two pictures, and two heads portrayed after nature, with the frames gilt, where is the face of Lord Leonello; another picture where is portrayed a young lady unnamed."

Although there must have been innumerable portraits of Leonello, one of these two pictures of the marquis may well have been Pisanello's; and one would like to believe that in the *Damisella senza nome* we have the Princess of the Louvre.

Another panel, the only extant one with Pisanello's signature, may also be assigned to this period. This is the *St. Anthony and St. George, with the Virgin and Child*, of the National Gallery (Plate 42). Formerly in the Costabili Collection at Ferrara, it was presented to the English nation in 1867 by Lady Eastlake.* Unfortunately it was entirely repainted by Molteni of Milan; and, although the restoration is a wonderfully careful piece of work, it is only necessary to compare colouring and brushwork with the *St. Eustace* hanging beside it, to see that nothing remains of Pisanello except the composition and the forms. The flesh-colour is of a dirty grey, contrasting sadly with the rich brownish flesh-tints of the *St. Eustace*. The repainting is also very obvious in the drapery of *St. Anthony* and in the fur of *St. George's* surcoat.

St. George and *St. Anthony* stand facing each other;

* No. 766; tempera on wood, 46 x 29 cm. It has frequently been illustrated: Venturi, Pl. facing p. 88. It is dealt with by Reiset, *Une Visite à la Galerie Nationale*, 1887, pp. 39 f.; Frizzoni, *L'Arte ital. nella Gall. Naz. di Londra* (1880), p. 43, and *L'Arte ital. del Rinasc.*, 1891, pp. 302 f.; Gruyer, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 11, pp. 212 f.

above them, in an aureole, is the half-figure of the Virgin holding the Child. The two saints are accompanied by their emblems. St. Anthony's pig, however, is transformed into a boar. St. George's dragon, which is alive, is a mild monster, with a head something between a wolf's and a hog's. In the background is a forest of trees growing thickly together. Behind St. George, the heads of two horses project into the picture from the margin, as in the fresco of S. Anastasia. A few small plants grow in the foreground, and the signature *Pisanus Pī* (*i.e.*, *pinxit*) is treated, by a not very happy device, so that it looks like a group of plants.

St. Anthony, in his hermit's hood and cloak, with nimbus and long white beard, holds his staff and bell. The expression of his face is alert and keen; but there is something of unconscious humour in the vigorous way in which he seems to address St. George, contrasted with the latter's imperturbable gaze. The fact is, of course, that the artist did not attempt to give unity to the elements of the picture. The two saints have in reality no connexion with each other, and are completely indifferent to the Virgin and Child above them. But in such lack of significant connexion Pisanello sins no more than other painters who mark the transition from the *ancona*, in which the various saints occupy separate panels, to the true composition. The picture, which has sometimes been called the "Vision" of Saints Anthony and George, cannot properly be regarded as anything of the kind.

St. George stands looking to the left, his back turned slightly towards the spectator. He wears * a coat of silver

* For his armour, see J. Starkie Gardner, *Foreign Armour in England* (1898), p. 32.



SS. ANTHONY AND GEORGE AND MADONNA

Hans Baldung Grien

National Gallery

Face p. 154

mail with gilt borders under a quilted surcoat; over this again is loose-fitting silver plate-armour—shoulder-pieces, coudières, etc. The legs are also clothed in mail with plate-armour over it; on the feet are square-toed solerets and long spurs. On the back of the surcoat, which is heavily trimmed with fur, is embroidered the cross of St. George. On his head, contrasting oddly with the armour, the saint wears a magnificent Tuscan straw hat, with a feather in it, which has largely contributed to such popularity as the picture enjoys. His sword hangs at his side, and in his left hand we see what is apparently a walking-stick. It is held horizontally across the body, so that only the portion in the left hand is visible. The saint's attitude, with the left knee slightly bent, and the weight resting on the right leg, is a favourite one with Pisanello, and is but a modification of the attitude of St. George in the S. Fermo fresco. As a representation of a saint the figure is far from successful. In S. Anastasia we felt that we had an adequate representation, if not of a Christian saint, yet of a hero of romance. The St. George of Pisanello's later years is a mere cavalier of the time, a gentleman of the court of Ferrara, who hardly appears to take even his armour seriously. He has reminded many critics of Leonello himself; but the only resemblance is in the short, crisp hair and rather long-naped neck. The profile and expression are entirely different. There is hardly more excuse for calling him Leonello, than for the remarkable idea that in the fresco of S. Anastasia the St. George is Leonello, the Princess Cecilia Gonzaga, and the squire the squire of the Marquis of Mantua.*

* Spaventi, p. 34.

Of the heads of the horses we have already spoken (p. 86), and compared them—to their advantage—with those in S. Anastasia. The forest in the background is one of the elements of the picture that have lost most by repainting; we miss the golden tints on the leaves, and the mystery of the darkness between the trunks below; the little group of trees on the right of the St. Eustace, and the inferior work in Bono's St. Jerome, serve to indicate what the effect of this background may once have been.

It is hardly too much to say that the group of the Virgin and Child is a blot on the picture. It is as well that we should frankly admit that there is here very little trace of that religious feeling which is distinctly present in the S. Fermo Annunciation, and that the artist has not succeeded because, apparently, he takes no interest in the subject. In fact, the whole group is so utterly out of sympathy with the two figures below, the conception so commonplace, the execution—so far as we can judge in its present condition—so undistinguished, that it seems reasonable to see in it the work of a pupil carrying out the master's instructions. But the lower part of the picture is, if not Pisanello's best, yet entirely characteristic of him.

Here, then, we see the end of his development as painter—a development of which the stages are typified by, let us say, the St. Michael* of S. Fermo, the St. George of S. Anastasia, and the St. George now before us. The three figures—saint, hero, courtier—express better than pages of description the course which his art had run.

* The St. George is so badly preserved that his companion must serve in his stead.

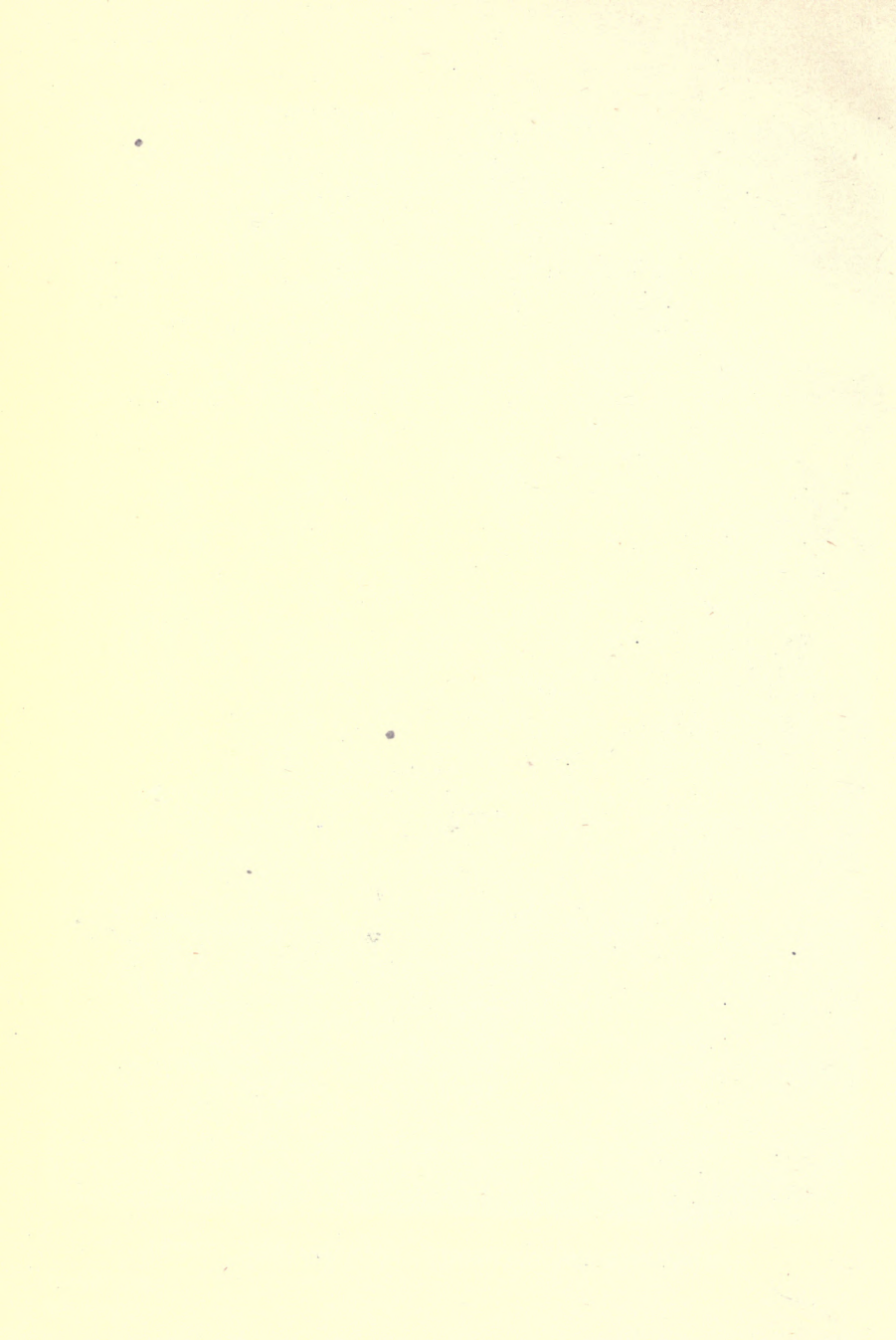


STUDY FOR SS. ANTHONY AND GEORGE (COPY)

Sauranaud

Rec. Vallardi

Face p. 156





STUDY OF VIRGIN AND CHILD (COPY)

Sauranaud
Face p. 157

Rec. Vallardi

Technically, of course, there is a steady improvement. It is true that the old device of gilding over embossing is still largely employed, as in the sword-hilt, the spurs, the rivets and buckles of the armour, the bosses on the harness of the horses, and the bits. But this is the only remaining trace of archaism.

Some of the drawings which may be mentioned in connexion with this picture show slightly different conceptions of the subject. The most elaborate is a rough sketch * representing the Virgin, seated with the Child on her lap, and four saints: on her left St. Catherine and St. George; on her right St. Anthony and a monk. There is no composition in the sketch; the five figures are simply set in a row. Afterwards—if we assume that this was a first idea for the picture—Pisanello got rid of the two figures on the outside, and made a pyramidal composition by putting the Virgin up in the air, and bringing St. George and St. Anthony closer together. A sketch of two figures for this second scheme is extant (Plate 43).† One, seen seated to front, holding a book in his hand, with bare head, curly hair, and short, forked beard, is a much less dignified figure than the one finally adopted for St. Anthony. St. George, wearing instead of his Tuscan hat a tall berretto, mail and plate armour, a fur cloak hanging at his back, and sword at his side, stands to left. He has a walking-stick in his right hand, his left rests on his hip. From this to the arrangement in the picture was but a slight step, but a step which effected vast improvements.

* Vallardi, fol. 157, no. 2631.

† Vallardi, fol. 173, no. 2633. The sketch is a pupil's copy of the master's original.

For the Virgin and Child also we have Pisanello's sketch* (Plate 44), or rather a copy of his sketch by a pupil, differing from the picture in many small details, as the position of the hands and the cast of the drapery. It has as a composition more strength and character than the group in the painting, in spite of the harshness of the drawing. This may be regarded as evidence in favour of the theory already propounded that the execution of the group was left to a pupil; for, as we have seen, in the case of the two saints, the picture shows a great improvement on the sketch.

The attitude of St. George being characteristic of Pisanello, it would be more accurate to describe some of the drawings which have been considered to be sketches for this figure as mere notes for general use. The way in which the artist took notes of gentlemen whom he saw about the court is perhaps best illustrated by a sheet of delightful drawings in the Ambrosiana,† a portion of which is reproduced in Plate 45. At the top is a figure in a broad-brimmed hat which recalls the St. George, and there are seven other similar figures with wonderful hats and fur-trimmed cloaks. One of them almost exactly resembles a figure in a drawing in the *Recueil Vallardi*.‡ A ninth figure, the most beautiful on the sheet, represents a youth in armour resting on a rock,

* Vallardi, fol. 130, no. 2623 v°. See above, pp. 18, 19.

† Venturi, p. 124. The figure which Dr. Carotti there describes as a study for the St. George of S. Anastasia I cannot identify, unless it be the youth in armour! Nor can I see here any face recalling Alfonso of Aragon. Three figures from this sheet are reproduced in Heiss, *Niccolò*, etc., pp. 6, 15, 60.

‡ Müntz, *Hist. I.*, facing p. 298 (on the left).



STUDIES OF COSTUME ETC.

Fumagalli

Ambrosiana, Milan
Face p. 158

his left leg being drawn up so that the foot is supported against the right knee.* He rests his head meditatively on his left hand. This sheet also shows two other figures which can hardly be made out, and a study of a wingless dragon, seen from above.

The cavalier standing at ease—this time with his left hand resting on his sword—is found once more in a drawing in the Albertina, which is, however, attributed by Wickhoff to a pupil, not to Pisanello himself.†

The sketches for the horses' heads have already been mentioned in connexion with the S. Anastasia fresco.

This (with the exception of a medal of Pier Candido Decembrio to be discussed in a subsequent chapter) closes the list of extant works which can be associated with Pisanello's activity at Ferrara. An *Adoration of the Shepherds*, attributed to him, was in the Canonici Collection at Ferrara in the first half of the seventeenth century; for an inventory of 1632‡ has the following item:

"A Christ in the manger by Vittore Pisanello, with the Madonna, St. Joseph, the ox and the ass, three Shepherds, an Angel in the air; has a black frame; 30 scudi."

The influence of Pisanello on the early Ferrarese school has been incidentally mentioned already, in connexion with Bono, who calls himself *PISANI DISIPVLVS* on his picture in the National Gallery. The fresco of St. Christopher in

* Reproduced, Heiss, *Niccolò*, etc., p. 60.

† Vienna *Jahrb.* xiii. p. clxxxii. (S. R. 20) and Pl. III.; Schönbrunner u. Meder, *Handzeichn.* ii. 231; also *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. ii. p. 209. Gruyer (*L'Art Ferrar.* ii. p. 27), speaks of another representation of the same kind in the Bonnat Collection; as it was not there in 1904, it is presumably now at Bayonne.

‡ Campori, *Racc. di Catal. ed. inventarii ined.*, 1870, p. 109.

the Eremitani is also strongly influenced by Pisanello as regards the landscape:* witness the deer foreshortened from behind, the ground sloping rapidly up to a high horizon, and above all the division of the hilly slope into portions by lines of wood or hedgerows, exactly as in the fresco of S. Anastasia. On the resemblance between Bono's flesh-painting and that of the S. Anastasia pilgrim there is no need to dwell further. But with all this proof of the debt of Bono to Pisanello, we are unable to say that he acquired any of the distinction and refinement which were characteristic of his master.

At Ferrara also we meet with another of Pisanello's pupils: Matteo de' Pasti, of Verona. We shall deal with his career in greater detail when we come to consider the followers of Pisanello in the medallion art. Here, however, it is most fitting to mention the work which he did for Leonello as an illuminator. The most important of the artists working in this branch for the Este court was Giorgio Tedesco (Zorzo de Alemagna), and in the breviary—now lost—which he illuminated for Leonello he was assisted by Matteo de' Pasti among others. Matteo, however, was not actually at Ferrara; the entry in the account-book for March 7, 1446, shows that *Matio di pasti da Verona Aminiatores* was paid 35 gold ducats for having illuminated 10 *quinterni* of the breviary, and for his expenses in having come three times from Verona to Ferrara at his own cost.†

* See Kristeller, *Mantegna* (Eng. ed.), p. 73.

† See Campori, *I miniatori degli Estensi* (Atti d. R. Deputaz. di Storia patr. p. le prov. Modenesi e Parmesi, vi. 1872), p. 247 f.; Venturi, *Arch. Ven.* xxx. 1885, p. 417 (in his Vasari, p. xiv., he seems to confuse this breviary with the Bible of Borso d'Este in the

The influence of the master on the Ferrarese miniators is patent in such medallions as have already been mentioned in connexion with the Palæologus medal.* The Bible of Borso d'Este also adapts the design from the reverse of Pisanello's "Liberalitas" medal of Alfonso (Plate 59); we have an eagle standing on a tree stump, with a dead fawn below.† The miniature is attributed to Taddeo Crivelli.

possession of the Archduke of Austria-Este); H. J. Hermann, Vienna *Jahrb.* xxi. 1900, p. 133.

* P. 112. Hermann (*op. cit.* p. 143) describes a figure of a royal rider in the same MS. as Pisanellesque.

† Hermann, *op. cit.* p. 149, fig. 17.

CHAPTER XI

THE MALATESTA, GONZAGA, AND OTHER MEDALS, 1445-1448

OF the two medals of Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, which we owe to Pisanello, one is dated 1445. It is generally assumed that the artist actually worked at Rimini. At present there is no proof of this, and Sigismondo and his brother Novello may have given him sittings elsewhere. But between the dates of March 1444 and August 1445, when we know him to have been at Ferrara, there was time for him to visit Rimini.

The undated medal of Sigismondo is probably the earlier of the two, for on the other he is described as ARIMINI ETC. ET ROMANE ECCLESIE (*sic*) CAPITANEVS GENERALIS, while on the undated piece he is merely ARIMINI FANI D(ominus). The title of Captain General he received from the Pope in 1445,* although he had previously, as early as 1435, been made commander of the troops of the Church by Eugenius IV.† But it is improbable that the two medals are widely separated in date; possibly, indeed, one had

* Battaglini (in *Basinii Parm. Opera*, 1784, t. ii. i. p. 69).

† Yriarte, *Rimini*, p. 90.



SIGISMONDO MALATESTA

British Museum



LORD OF RIMINI AND FANO

Lead
Follow p. 162

but just been completed when, having received the new honour, he commissioned the artist to commemorate it on a second medal.

On the obverse of the earlier (Plate 46)* we have the bust of Sigismondo in right profile, bareheaded, and wearing a brocaded garment, decorated with four-petalled flowers, over a coat of chain-mail. The same flowers, usually called roses, are used as stops in the legend.† On the reverse the celebrated condottiere is represented at full length, in complete armour, with visor closed; he stands to front, turning towards the right, and holds his sheathed sword in both hands. To right and left of him are small trees bearing four-petalled flowers. On one of them hangs his shield, with the SI monogram (for Sigismondo and Isotta) quartered with the Malatesta arms;‡ on the other is his helm, crowned and surmounted by an elephant's head adorned with an enrailed crest. The elephant was the badge of the Malatesta, and the same helm and crest, surmounting the escutcheon with the monogram, form the reverse type of one of the smaller medals of Sigismondo made by Matteo de' Pasti. The signature is in the usual form, OPVS PISANI PICTORIS.

This medal yields to none of Pisanello's other works in severe simplicity. Nor does any other portrait or verbal

* Diam. 90 mm. Heiss, Pl. V. 2.

† Even if they were meant for roses, they could not refer to the grant of the "golden rose," which Sigismondo did not receive until 1466 (Yriarte, *Rimini*, p. 295). The flower, as one of the Malatesta badges, is plentifully used in the decoration of the Tempio Malatestiano.

‡ Quarterly: 1 and 4, the SI monogram; 2 and 3, bendy of six, of which 1, 3 and 5 are chequy or and gules, 2, 4 and 6 argent.

description give a juster idea of this fiery soldier and cultivated man of letters, who combined a brutal licence in the satisfaction of his unspeakable lust with a deep attachment to the brilliant woman who was so long his intellectual no less than his domestic companion. The whole character of the man is expressed in the proud poise of the head, the cruel but intellectual profile, the sensual, tightly compressed lips, the indomitable jaw. The figure on the reverse is felt to be a real living man through the armour in which he is clad from head to foot.

At a somewhat later date, some worker in metal who knew the history of Sigismondo thought that his connexion with Isotta Atti should have been more directly and obviously immortalised by Pisanello, and not merely by the inferior medallist Matteo de' Pasti. Several specimens consequently exist of a false medal, of which one side is cast from the obverse which we have just described, and the other from a medal by Matteo representing Isotta. On this side the signature of Pisanello has been added in the mould. That it is a forgery is sufficiently evident from a comparison of the head with Pasti's portrait of Isotta.*

On the medal of 1445 (Plate 47)† Sigismondo, again in

* It is mentioned in Giovio's letter. There are specimens in the Brera, in the Taverna Collection in the Castello at Milan, in the Cesena Library (Yriarte, *Rimini*, p. 150), in the British Museum, and doubtless elsewhere. They are all in a bad state, and late castings, from 5 to 9 mm. smaller than the genuine medal of Sigismondo. Heiss, pp. 21, 22. A statement of Maffei (*Verona illustr.* ed. 1826, iv. p. 298) suggests that he had recognised the signature on this medal as false: *alcune ancora a lui posteriori ho osservato mentire il suo nome ch' egli ebbe in uso di porvi.*

† Diam, 102 mm. Friedländer, Pl. III. Heiss, Pl. V. 1. Fabriczy, Pl. II.



SIGISMONDO MALATESTA



CAPTAIN-GENERAL OF THE ROMAN CHURCH

Bronze

Follow p. 164

profile to right, wears plate over chain armour. The open four-petalled flower is represented in relief on the shoulder-piece, and is used to mark the beginning of the legend. He is bare-headed; his hair is longer and falls in a heavy mass on the nape of the neck. The bust is set rather low down in the field, and the vacant space above and to the sides adds curiously to the severity of the whole effect. On the reverse we have probably an allusion to the capture of Rocca Contrada in 1445.* Sigismondo, in full armour, rides to the left on a horse whose head reminds us of the reverse of the Sforza medal. He holds in his raised right hand a general's bâton. His helmet has a long plume, but no crests. On the horse's trappings we see the familiar flower. In the background, to right and left, are steep rocks; between them rise the towers of the fortress. On the keep is inscribed the date MCCCCXLV; a side-tower bears the shield of arms surmounted by the four-petalled flower with two leaves. The signature is as usual, but contained in three sunken arcs. The upper part of the design, as on the Palæologus medal, is enclosed in a linear border.

The horse appears curiously long-legged and short barrelled, nor has Pisanello been quite happy in his attempt—for such it appears to be—to foreshorten the neck by turning its head slightly to the front. Nevertheless it is only in comparison with other work of his own that this reverse can be called unsuccessful.

Another Malatesta, Domenico, known as Novello ("the younger"), a natural son of Pandolfo III., was portrayed by Pisanello on a medal which it is generally assumed was

* Yriarte, *Rimini*, p. 126.

made about 1445.* When fighting against Francesco Sforza at Montolmo (Pausula) in 1444, Novello was nearly taken prisoner. It is said that he vowed, if he escaped, to dedicate a hospital to the Holy Crucifix, and the reverse of the medal has been explained as an allusion to this vow, which he afterwards fulfilled at Cesena.†

On the obverse of this, one of the most attractive of all the works of Pisanello (Plate 48),‡ the bust of the

* He was born in 1418. Friedländer (p. 33) thinks that he looks younger than twenty-seven on the medal; but it is needless to insist on the deceptiveness of such appearances. Where the medal was made we do not know. I note that in the same cabinet of the Este guardaroba, which contained the portraits of Leonello, was "un altro quadro grande dove è suso la figura del Sig^{re} Domenego da Cesena" (Campori, *Raccolta*, p. 30).

† See Venturi, p. 81. The battle and Novello's escape are described by Simoneta, *Rev. Gest. Fr. Sfortiae*, Lib. viii. (Muratori, xxi. pp. 354 f.), but without the incident of the vow. Cp. also Yriarte, *Rimini*, pp. 300 f. Sc. Chiaramonte (in Graevius, *Thes. Ital.*, vii. ii. pp. 423 f.) assigns the foundation of the hospital to the period after 1448. If he is right, the medal cannot commemorate the fulfilment of the vow, as Braschi (*Mem. Caesen*, p. 296) and Venturi suppose.

‡ Diam. 85 mm. Friedländer, Pl. II. Heiss, Pl. VI. 1. Fabriczy, Pl. III. The supposed sketch for the reverse of this medal at Munich is a poor German drawing of the early sixteenth century, and is a travesty of the original. The crucifix occupies the middle of the picture, and is to the front; Novello, with bare head, kneels to the left; behind him, on the right, is his horse in left profile tied to a tree in leaf; two other trees and a landscape in the background. Of drawings in the Recueil Vallardi, the sketches of a crucifix and of hands fastened to a cross (fol. 163, no. 2368) are not for this medal, but probably for the St. Eustace. On fol. 171, No. 2378 (H. de Chennevières, *Dessins du Louvre, Éc. ital., Pisan*, Pl. 2; B. de Tauzia, *Dessins*, 1888, p. 57, No. 1999) is a horse foreshortened from behind, branded with a circle surmounted by a cross (compare the ornament worn by a man on fol. 86, No. 2339); it differs from the



MALATESTA NOVELLO

Victoria and Albert Museum



LORD OF CESENA

Bronze

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young lord of Cesena is represented in left profile. The inscription, which is metrical, is divided into two parts ; one (DVX EQVITVM PRAESTANS) occupies an arc above the head ; the remainder is placed across the field in two lines, broken by the bust. This arrangement, which we have noticed on the marriage-medal of Leonello d'Este, recurs on the medals of Gianfrancesco and Ludovico Gonzaga, and of Alfonso of Aragon. The reverse, signed as usual, represents Novello fully armed, kneeling in prayer before a crucifix, which he clasps in his hands ; the Christ bends forward in acknowledgment of his vow. Novello's charger, skilfully foreshortened from behind, stands fastened to a leafless tree ; another tree, also bare, grows on the rocks to the right.

This medal gains enormously in attraction from the inevitable comparison with those of Novello's elder brother. The gentle, refined beauty of the profile, and the pathos of the admirable composition of the reverse are in striking contrast with the relentless severity of the Sigismondo medals. We are too ready, in dealing with the work of Pisanello's maturity, to forget that in S. Fermo he had produced a picture full of deep religious feeling. Time and the company of courts had given him other interests, and when he had to depict a conventional subject like the Madonna of the National Gallery panel, his heart may not have been wholly in the work. But who can deny that this medal is penetrated with religious emotion, or

horse on the medal in standing three-quarters right, and in not having its tail tied up. On the other hand, the horse on fol. 231, No. 2444, although unsaddled, resembles Novello's in position and in the dressing of the tail.

fail to wonder at the universality of the artist who represents with equal fidelity the pagan licence of Sigismondo and the devout simplicity of his brother?

In addition to the documents cited in an earlier chapter, no fewer than four medals, which now fall to be considered, indicate that Pisanello, while so busily employed at Ferrara in the forties, kept up his connexion with the Gonzaga family, although it is improbable that he spent any long time at Mantua after 1444. For the production of medals nothing like the same length of sitting was required as for painted portraits, and the actual work of finishing the model and casting from it could be done by the artist at home.

Gianfrancesco Gonzaga died late in 1444, and was succeeded by his son Ludovico. Of both men, as well as of Gianfrancesco's daughter Cecilia, we have medals; the last is dated 1447. It is a moot point whether the medal of Gianfrancesco was made in his lifetime, or posthumously. The balance of evidence seems to indicate the latter alternative. The resemblance between the medals of father and son is so striking that we can hardly place any interval of time between them. In arrangement of legend the obverses correspond exactly with each other. Now it might be urged that, if we suppose Gianfrancesco's medal to have been made first, that of Ludovico was assimilated to his father's. But the two obverses also correspond with others, such as the marriage-medal of Leonello and the medal of Malatesta Novello, which are not earlier than 1444. It is true that Gianfrancesco is called *Capitaneus Maximus Armigerorum*. He was appointed Capitano Generale by the Venetian Republic in 1433, and did not



GIANFRANCESCO GONZAGA

British Museum



FIRST MARQUIS OF MANTUA

Bronze
Follow p. 168

use the title after the end of 1437. Were the medal made during his life-time, we should accordingly feel compelled to date it not later than 1437. But comparison with the style of the Palæologus medal alone reduces such a date to an absurdity.* On the other hand, when Gianfrancesco was dead, there was no reason why the honourable title which he had for some time borne should not be used to describe him. We may add—without however insisting too much on the point—that his title *first* Marquis of Mantua is the more significant if the second Marquis had already succeeded him.

We conclude therefore that the medal of Gianfrancesco† was cast shortly after his death; that is to say, between 1445 and 1447. The bust (Plate 49) is in profile to left, wearing a brocaded dress, and a curious hat, of which the brim and crown are apparently of fur, the sides being fluted. Across the field is his name IOHANNES FRANCISCVS DE GONZAGA in two lines; above, CAPIT. MAXI. ARMIGERORVM; below, PRIMVS MARCHIO MANTVE. On the reverse the Marquis, wearing a similar hat, armed, and carrying a general's bâton, is seated on a horse ambling to left. Behind him is a small squire on a horse in Pisanello's favourite attitude, foreshortened from behind. The signature fills the space between the two riders; in the vacant space to the left is inserted a circular door-knocker.

* Venturi (p. 80), presumably feeling that the medal cannot be earlier than 1438, suggests that it was cast about that time. But he points out that though Gianfrancesco calls himself by the title down to November 1437, from 1438 he does not use it. Rossi (*Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, i. 1888, p. 455) also thinks that the medal is not posthumous.

† Diam. 100 mm. Heiss Pl. VI. 2 (this specimen has been somewhat retouched).

Some interesting studies are extant, representing various ideas for the reverse of the medal. Of these, one said to be at Oxford represents the idea finally adopted.* Very near to it is a drawing at Milan. Neither of these, however, is above suspicion; but no doubt attaches to the spirited and telling sketch in the *Recueil Vallardi* (Plate 50),† which represents the Marquis accompanied by his daughter and a numerous escort in a mountainous landscape.

The bust on Gianfrancesco's medal was, like many other of Pisanello's portraits, the origin of later representations of the Marquis. Thus it is adapted on one of the panel-reliefs in the Gallery of the Ancestors in the Ducal Palace at Sabionetta,‡ and in paintings of a later date.§ It is especially interesting to find that in the fourth and later states of Rembrandt's "Three Crosses," the rider on the left of the central cross is taken directly from the reverse of the medal;|| the figure was copied straight on to the copper, so that it appears turned to the right.

The obverse of the medal of Ludovico Gonzaga¶ (Plate 51)

* Heiss, p. 24. This drawing is not in the University Galleries, and Mr. Sidney Colvin tells me that he has not seen it in the Christ Church Collection. Judging from Heiss's reproduction—if that is allowed—I am inclined to doubt whether it is an original; the treatment of the ground is not in Pisanello's manner, and the drawing lacks spirit. The Milan drawing is described by Carotti in Venturi, p. 123; its genuineness is doubtful. Of the sketches described as portraits of Gianfrancesco, Vall. fol. 20, No. 2276 (above, Pl. 28), is Niccolò d'Este; and His de la Salle, No. 81 (B. de Tauzia, *Notice . . . His de la Salle*) is not certainly identified.

† Fol. 101, No. 2595 v°, Heiss, p. 23.

‡ *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1898, t. 19, p. 19.

§ Kenner, *Vienna Jahrb.*, xvii. pp. 181 f., No. 43.

|| *Berlin Jahrb.*, ii. p. 258; xv. p. 178.

¶ Diam. 103 mm. Friedländer, Pl. VI. Heiss, p. 25, Pl. VII. 1. The illustration in Pl. 51 is from the lead specimen in the British

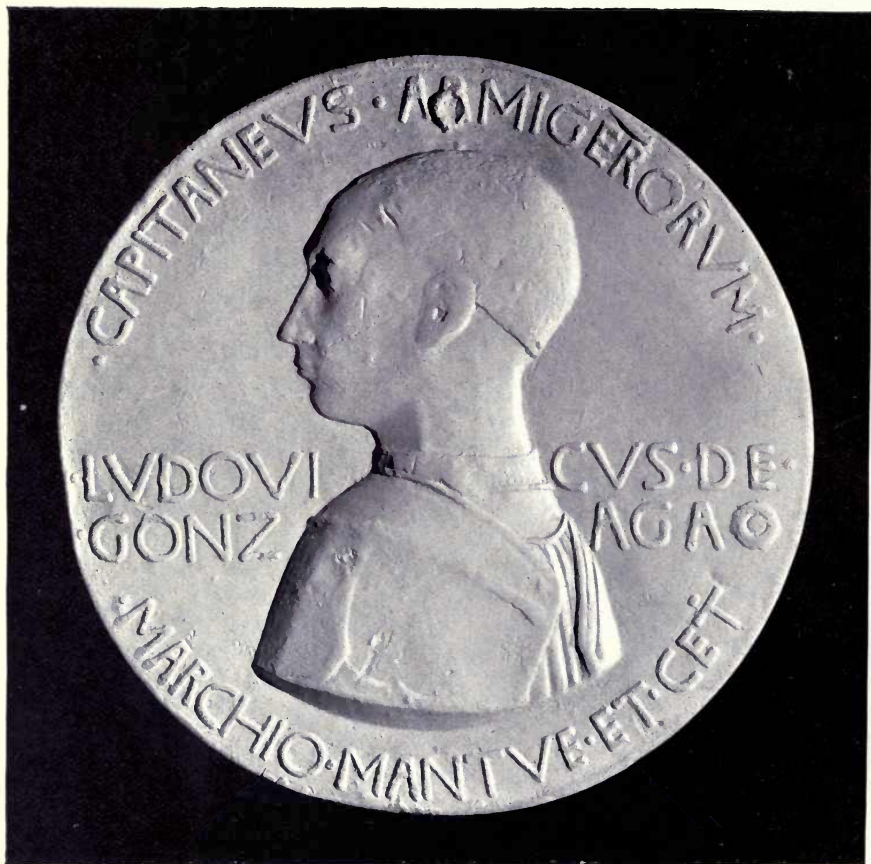


GIANFRANCESCO GONZAGA AND SUITE

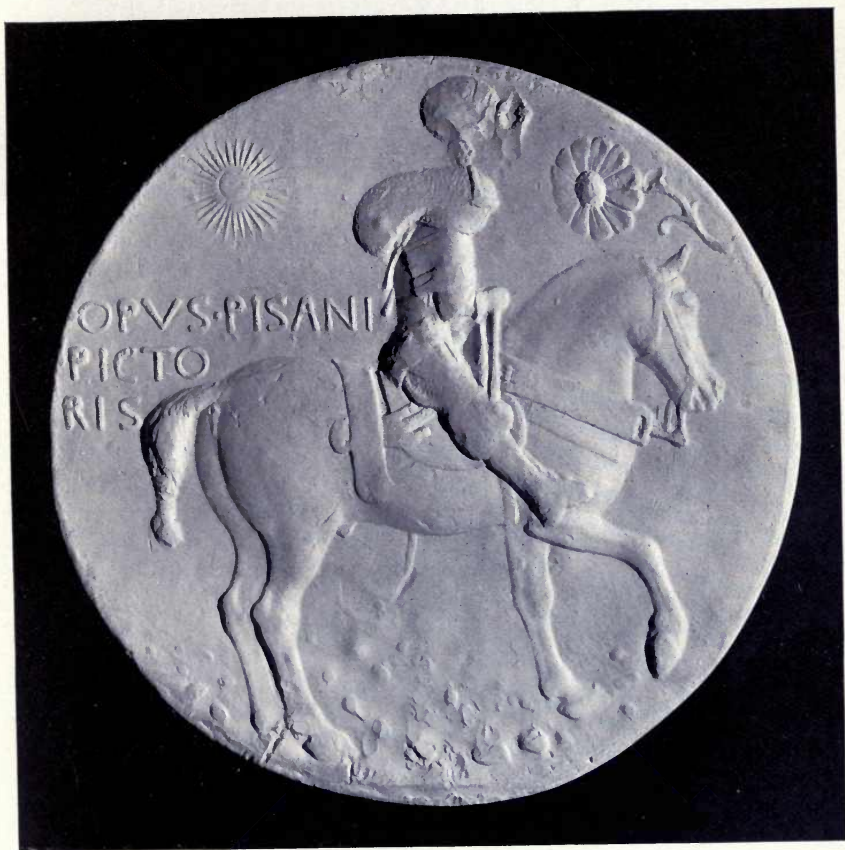
Sauvinaud

Rec. Vallardi

Face p. 170



LUDOVICO GONZAGA



SECOND MARQUIS OF MANTUA

Lead
Follow pl. 50

shows his bust in left profile, bare-headed, and wearing shoulder-pieces of plate armour. As he is called *CAPITANEVS ARMIGERORVM*, it is probable that the medal was made in 1447 or 1448, when Ludovico was using the title of *Capitano Generale*, conferred upon him by the Florentines.* The legend, which is rhythmical, is arranged exactly as on his father's medal. On the reverse, we see the Marquis on his powerful charger pacing to the right. He is clad in full armour; his helmet, with visor closed, is surmounted by a globular crest. He rests his commander's bâton on his right knee. In the field are placed a sun,† and a sunflower turning towards it. The stony ground is represented in the way characteristic with the medallist, whose signature fills the space between the sun and the horse's crupper. The horse is a splendid, heavily-built, tall animal,‡ in many ways finer than Gianfrancesco's charger. The design is an excellent instance of the combination of convention and realism at which the medallist should aim. Later artists regarded the field of the medal in the same way as a painter regards the surface of his panel or canvas; the upper part must be filled by sky or some sort of background. Pisanello, on the other hand, deals with his space in the same way as a Greek vase-painter or coin-engraver of Museum, which perhaps was once in the cabinet of Alfonso of Aragon; for, incised on the shoulder-piece, we see AA (in contemporary lettering) surmounted by a crown.

* Venturi, p. 81.

† Ludovico used the sun as the type of some of his small silver coins.

‡ Weizsäcker, *Berlin Jahrb.*, vii. p. 52. The head of the horse, *Rec. Vallardi*, fol. 147, No. 2358, can hardly be a sketch for this horse; nor are the helmets on fol. 51, No. 2295, meant for this medal (*Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 11, p. 416).

the best period. The vacancies are filled with adjuncts which are simply set on the plane surface; the artist does not disturb himself as to how they could be supported where they are. Yet Pisanello's treatment of the ground gives depth and solidity to the picture.

When in 1465 the porticoes surrounding the court of the palace of the Bentivogli at Bologna were being decorated with portraits of distinguished persons of the ancient and contemporary world, the medal of Pisanello was taken as the model for the medallion of Ludovico.* It was also the source of later painted portraits.† A fine medal of Ludovico was made between 1452 and 1457 by the artist who signs himself *Petrus domo Fani* (Plate 70). He is undoubtedly inspired by Pisanello, but at the same time shows considerable power and originality. The influence of the master is perceptible in the restrained dignity and simple modelling of the portrait, and not in the borrowing of motifs. In this respect Pietro da Fano contrasts favourably with Sperandio, who somewhat shamelessly adapted Pisanello's reverses to suit his own purposes.‡

The most beautiful of the Gonzaga medals is undoubtedly that which Pisanello made for Cecilia, the charming and cultivated pupil of Vittorino da Feltre.

* Letter of Bernardinus Benedusius, May 28, 1465. Rossi, *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, i. 1888, p. 455.

† Kenner, *op. cit.* p. 183, No. 45.

‡ Cp. his medals of Carlo Grati and Giov. Bentivoglio II. (Pl. 74); on the former we have a parody of the medal of Malatesta Novello, on the latter a close copy of the reverse of the Gianfrancesco Gonzaga medal. One would not complain of these borrowings, did not the carelessness of the workmanship indicate that they were prompted by indolence as much as by admiration.



CECILIA GONZAGA

British Museum



DAUGHTER OF GIANFR. GONZAGA

Lead

Follow p. 172

Born in 1425 or 1426, she was destined to be the wife of Oddantonio di Montifeltro, but preferred to take the veil. This she did, we are told, in 1444; * nevertheless Pisanello has represented her in 1447 in ordinary secular dress. This fact, however, is hardly sufficient to prove that the accepted date for her retirement is wrong. Pisanello is content to indicate her seclusion from the world by the inscription *CICILIA VIRGO*, and by the symbolism of the reverse.

The obverse (Plate 52)† represents Cecilia in half-figure to the left. The treatment closely resembles that which we have seen in the portrait of Ginevra d'Este, but the lines of the figure are very much more beautiful, and the contour of the head, thanks chiefly to the more becoming method of dressing the hair, leaves little to be desired. We notice, however, the same slight stiffness in the hang of the arm, due presumably not to the artist but to the fashion of carriage which was prevalent at the time. The forehead is not left completely bare, as we find it in so many contemporary portraits. In its innocent charm, the face is quite equal to that of Ginevra d'Este; nevertheless, it is the face of a woman in her twenty-third year, a cultivated Greek and Latin scholar. There could be no greater compliment to the excellence and wholesomeness of the teaching of Vittorino than this portrait of his pupil.

The composition on the reverse symbolises innocence. The rocky landscape is lit by a crescent moon, as it were

* Litta, *Gonzaga*, xxxiii. 75.

† Diam. 88 mm. Friedländer, Pl. V. Heiss, Pl. VII. 2. Fabriczy, Pl. IV.

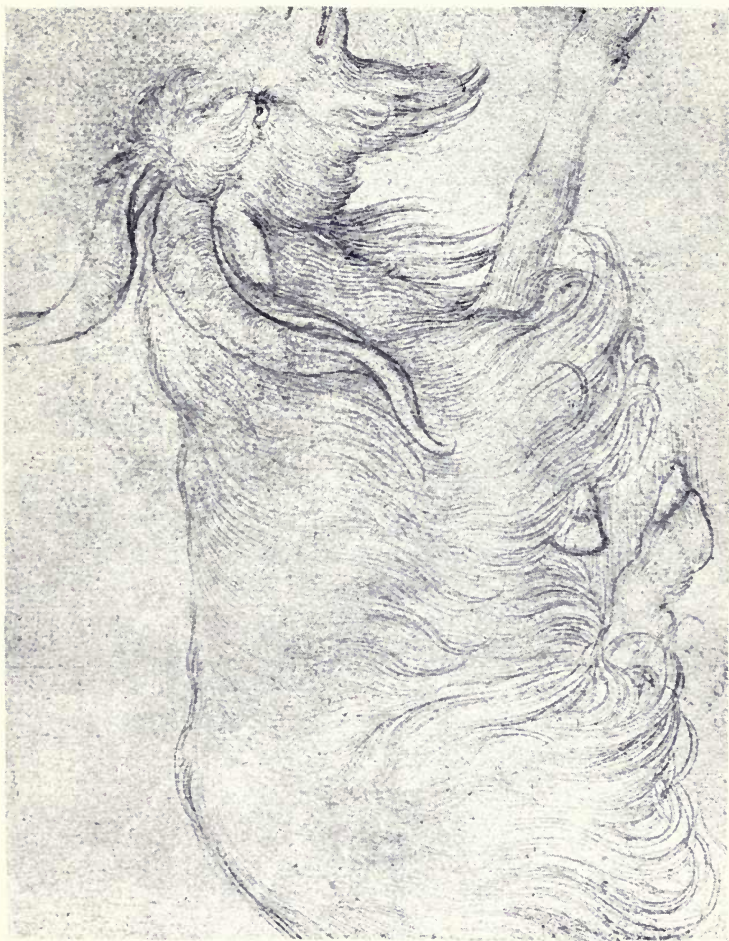
in contrast with the sun in whose light the maiden's brother Ludovico goes forth to war. A half-draped girlish figure, seated in quiet meditation, lays her left hand on the head of a great unicorn, which is couched beside her. The upright figure of the girl is balanced by a cippus, inscribed with the artist's signature and the date MCCCXLVII. The perfect felicity of the composition—the upright lines of the human figure and the cippus contrasting with the horizontal of the recumbent monster—is attained in defiance of all academic rule. By such rule, it would be difficult to justify the insertion of the cippus either here or in the marriage-medal of Leonello d'Este.

The female figure is not meant for Cecilia herself; it bears no resemblance to her, nor would the artist have represented her thus half-nude. It is rather Innocence personified. The unicorn was the symbol of purity, and could, according to legend, only be taken alive by a young virgin. As we shall see, Pisanello has made his unicorn out of a he-goat, and in this fact—the long-bearded beast being an emblem of wisdom—there may be a further allusion to the learning of Cecilia.*

For the unicorn we have two interesting studies of recumbent goats, of which that in the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth (Plate 53) is the finer.†

* Heiss, p. 26. In connexion with this reverse, Venturi (p. 123) mentions a drawing in the Uffizi, representing St. Justina seated, a unicorn beside her, and three hunters with dogs who stop in surprise at discovering her (Alinari, *Racc. di disegni*, Uffizi, 310). It may be of the Veronese school (Both de Tausia, *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 70), but hardly by Pisanello.

† S. A. Strong, *Reproductions of Drawings in the Duke of Devonshire's Collection*, Pl. 10; R. Fry, *Burlington Magazine*, iv. No. 10



STUDY OF A GOAT

Strong, Chatsworth Drawings

*The Duke of Devonshire
Face p. 174*

The apparent difficulty which the animal finds in disposing of its legs in this position is admirably caught by the artist. Eminently characteristic, too, is the way in which Pisanello constructs his monster, merely replacing the two curving horns of nature by the single straight one of fancy. "Like Leonardo after him, exploring those reasons in Nature which are not shown in experience, he does not plunge at once into the possibilities of the unreal; he simply takes one step in advance on the line already traced by Nature."*

With the medals of the Gonzaga family we must associate that of the man who had charge of the education of its younger members. Vittorino da Feltre is perhaps the most attractive character among all the Italian humanists, as English readers may judge from the pleasing sketch of his career by Woodward.† He came to Mantua at the request of Gianfrancesco towards the end of 1423. From that time onwards he conducted the school in which were educated the children not only of the Marquis, but also of other distinguished persons, as well as of certain poor people to whom Vittorino extended his noble charity. He died on February 2, 1446, in his sixty-sixth year, having exercised on his time a far greater influence than many educators who earned fame by their writings.

(1904), p. 5. For the Vallardi drawing (fol. 205, No. 2412), see Heiss, p. 26. The head of a ram on fol. 194, No. 2397, has nothing to do with this subject; nor probably is the half-figure of a woman on fol. 69, No. 2326, a study for the figure of Innocence.

* Strong, *op. cit.* p. 11.

† W. H. Woodward, *Vittorino da Feltre and other Humanist Educators*, 1897. For his personal appearance, see Vespasiano da Bisticci (ed. Flor. 1859), p. 495.

The medal * (Plate 54) represents the great teacher wearing a tall berretto and plain dress. The face is of singular beauty, the beauty of humane asceticism. Age and Spartan self-discipline have worn but not hardened its lines. The inscription, which is continued from obverse to reverse, describes him as VICTORINVS FELTRENSIS SVMMVS MATHEMATICVS ET OMNIS HVMANITATIS PATER. In an inner circle of the reverse is the artist's signature. The type is that of a pelican tearing her breast to give nourishment to her young—an obvious illusion to Vittorino's single-hearted devotion to his pupils.†

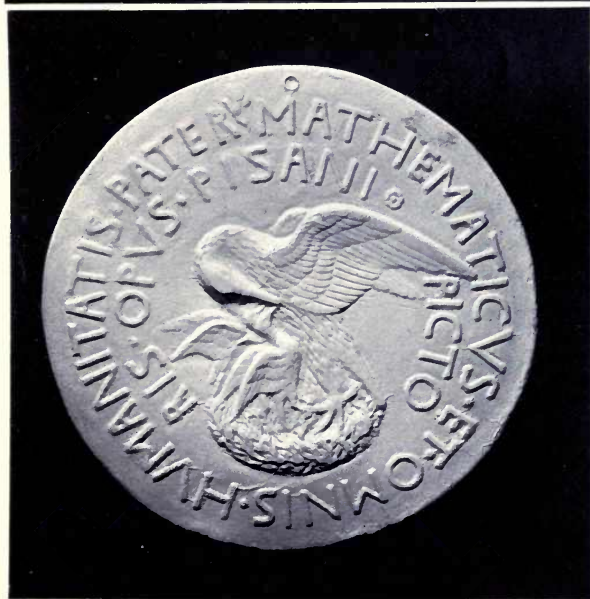
The medal is probably to be dated, at the earliest, in the last years of Vittorino's life.‡ When Pisanello was working on the medals of the Gonzaga family, it was but natural that he should be commissioned to portray their beloved master. We shall find reason to believe that Pisanello also produced a panel-portrait of Vittorino, which may indeed have been painted after the teacher's death.

The Louvre possesses a painted portrait of Vittorino which, although a poor piece of work, is interesting because the head is carefully copied from Pisanello's medal. The head indeed is the only part of the picture that has any merit; bust and hands, for which the medal afforded no help, are stiff and wooden. It is a good

* Diam. 67 mm. Friedländer, Pl. III. ; Heiss, Pl. VIII. 1.

† A sketch of this subject in a somewhat different attitude is in the Rec. Vallardi, fol. 195, No. 2398 (Heiss, p. 27 ; *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 12, p. 493).

‡ There is no evidence, I believe, for the earlier date (life-time of Gianfrancesco) proposed by Rossi (*Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, i. 1888, p. 455).

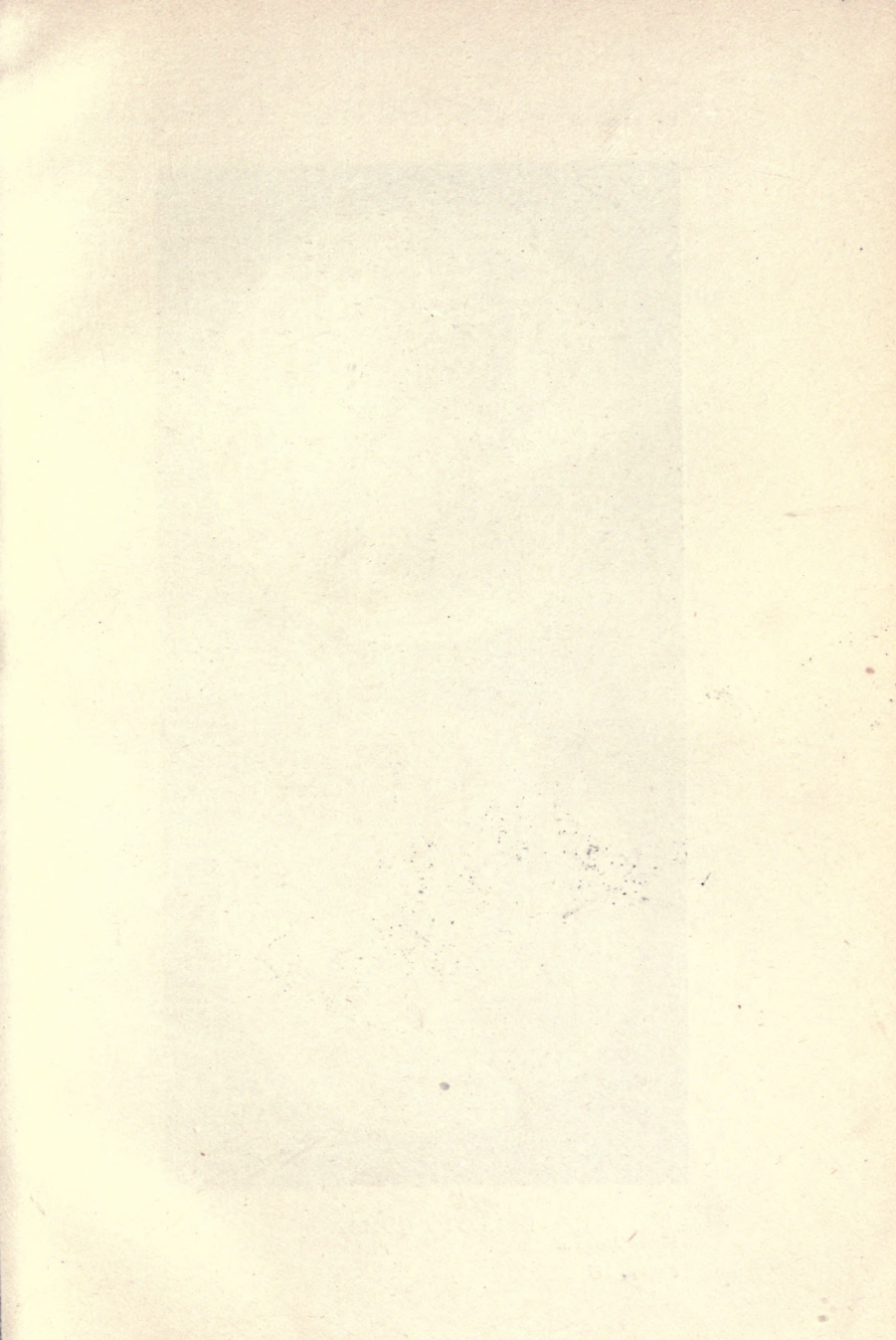


VITTORINO DA FELTRE

Berlin Museum

Bronze

Face p. 176





BELLOTO CUMANO

Berlin Museum

Face p. 177

instance of the way in which medals were used as guides for painting portraits.*

The reverse design of the medal seems to have attracted later artists. Thus Guazzalotti copies it exactly for the reverse of his medal of Pius II.† and Lysippus for his medal of Marinus Philethicus.‡

To the year 1447 belongs a small medal of Belloto Cúmano, a young man of whom practically nothing is known.§ The name Belloto, common in the genealogy of the illustrious Paduan family of Cúmano, was borne by a son of Rinaldo, who was living in 1457, and is therefore probably the youth represented on the medal. Basinio of Parma, writing shortly after this medal was cast, enumerates it (or a painting of the same person) among others :

Bellotusque puer, sed non puerilibus usus
Artibus, ingenio notus et ipse tuo.

It is clear that he was a promising young scholar, possibly a pupil of Vittorino. But we know nothing to connect him with Mantua rather than with Ferrara.

The medal (Plate 55)|| represents him with a *zazzera*, and wearing a cap. On the reverse is an ermine or weasel, moving to the left through underwood, indicated

* Salle des Sept Mètres, no. 1628 ; inscribed VITORINO FELTREN. Friedländer's suggestion (p. 23) that it is the work of Pisanello will not bear examination. Cp. also Ephrussi, *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1881, t. 24, p. 170.

† Friedländer, Pl. XXIV. 5.

‡ Fabriczy, *Italian Medals*, p. 160, Pl. XXXII. 4.

§ What we do know is due to U. Rossi, *Arch. Stor. dell' Arte*, i. 1888, p. 456.

|| Diam. 56 mm. Heiss, Pl. VIII. 2.

by a few leafless plants. Around is the artist's signature (with quatrefoil stops), and above the animal the date MCCCCXLVII. The ermine was a symbol of chastity, and also emblematic of the man who listened much and talked little.* But if the animal is a weasel, it may be a canting type, for in certain Italian dialects the names *bellotula*, *bellora*, and others derived from the Latin *bellus*, seem to have been used instead of the Tuscan name *donnola*.†

The medal, though pretty, especially as regards the graceful and refined profile, cannot be reckoned among the artist's best achievements. The same is true of the medal of Pier Candido Decembrio, to which we now come.‡ Although it is undated, we are fortunate in being able to fix exactly the time of its appearance. On August 19, 1448, Leonello d'Este wrote as follows to Decembrio, in a letter which has already been mentioned:§

"Leonello Marquis of Este to P. Candido greeting. At last we have wrested from the hands of Pisano the painter the coin with your likeness, and send it to you herewith, keeping a copy thereof, in order that you may understand how highly we esteem you and all that concerns you."

The medal (Plate 56)|| represents the distinguished

* Cp. Ul. Aldrovandi *de quadrup. digit. vivip.*, p. 321 (Bologna, 1637).

† Cp. Heiss, p. 28.

‡ Although it was made at Ferrara, it is considered here rather than in the previous chapter, since it has only an accidental connexion with Leonello.

§ Above, p. 142. Published by Venturi, p. 58.

|| Diam. 80 mm. Heiss, Pl. II. Friedländer, p. 40, No. 26.

PIER CANDIDO DECEMBRIO



scholar and statesman in the prime of life. He was born about 1399, became Professor of Greek and Latin at Milan, and enjoyed the favour of Filippo Maria Visconti. After his patron's death he filled the position of Secretary * to the Milanese Republic (August 14, 1447, to February 26, 1450). It is clear from the letter of Leonello that there had been some delay over the medal. It is just possible, therefore, that it was begun, or that the necessary sketches were made, at the time when Pisanello was at work on the other Milanese medals. But we know that in the beginning of the summer of 1447 Decembrio went to Ferrara on behalf of Visconti, and did not return to Milan until about the middle of September.† It is therefore more probable that the medal was begun during this visit.

On the obverse we have Decembrio wearing a cap and plain dress. He is described as P. CANDIDVS STVDIORVM HVMANITATIS DECVS. The type of the reverse is an open book, with eight markers between the leaves. On a specimen in the Taverna Collection at Milan the words LIBER SVM are engraved on the second page; this, and the fact that the book rests upon a rock, may indicate, as Friedländer suggests, that it is a Bible. Decembrio at one time made a special study of parts of the Bible.‡

Although the bust is fine, the medal is otherwise somewhat disappointing. The composition of the obverse is overcrowded; the double arcs of lettering inconvenience the bust, and the lettering itself loses in decorative value

* See M. Borsa, *P. Candido Decembrio e l'Umanesimo in Lombardia*, in *Arch. Stor. Lomb.*, 1893, p. 364.

† M. Borsa, *op. cit.* pp. 359, 362.

‡ Borsa, p. 402.

through lack of space—a fault which is also discernible on the medal of Vittorino da Feltre. In some ways the reverse is better than the obverse; for although at first sight the idea does not seem original, it is redeemed from commonplaceness by the treatment of the rock and of the marking-ribands.*

* On the specimen illustrated by Heiss, as on that in Pl. 56, the lettering is of a character foreign to Pisanello's medallic style, with sharply indicated serifs, and an elegance not preferable to the severity of his usual forms. This character is apparently due to later chasing.

CHAPTER XII

DOUBTFUL AND LOST PORTRAITS

WE have now dealt with all the extant medals which can with certainty be attributed to Pisanello, except those which he was to produce during his activity at Naples in the service of Alfonso. This is the most convenient place in which to discuss the two medals to which we owe our knowledge of the master's personal appearance, as well as certain works (medals, or in some cases more probably paintings) which are mentioned by his contemporaries, but have since disappeared.

Of the two medals (Plate 57) with the artist's portrait, the larger * represents him in the prime of life, wearing a high, soft berretto, much crumpled, and a brocaded dress. On the other † he is bare-headed, and considerably older, and the type is enclosed in a border of dots, such as we find in no other certainly authentic medal by Pisanello.‡ Both describe him as PISANVS PICTOR, and have more or less

* Diam. 57 mm. Friedländer, Pl. I.

† Diam. 33 mm. For the cast of this medal I have to thank M. Valton.

‡ For there are independent reasons to doubt the genuineness of the smallest medal of Leonello d'Este: see above, p. 147.

the same reverse. On the larger the field, which is enclosed in a wreath, contains merely the letters F · S · K · I · P · F · T · in two lines, with small laurel-sprays at the beginning and end of the second line, and a larger spray rising from the bottom of the wreath. On the smaller we have the same letters in a wreath, but the sprays are omitted, and a branch of laurel separates the two lines. The letters are the initials of the seven virtues, Fides, Spes, Karitas, Iustitia, Prudentia, Fortitudo, Temperantia.*

In a work, *de Sculptura*, first published in 1504, Pomponius Gauricus, in a sentence of Plinian crabbedness, mentions among sculptors of his time "Pisanus pictor in se celando ambiciosissimus."† It follows, therefore, that Gauricus believed Pisanello to have made a medal of himself (*caelare*, of course, denoted any form of modelling and chasing on a small scale in metal). Further, we know that this medal was in existence before 1467.‡ In that year Pope Paul II. repaired the Basilica of St. Mark, and on some of the leaden tiles made on this occasion were placed casts of the obverses of the medal which we are considering, and also of the "Liberalitas" medal of Alfonso of Aragon (Plate 59). The casts were apparently made separately in the usual way, in matrices formed from earlier casts, and then affixed to the tiles.§ Paul II. (Pier

* Froehner, *Mélanges d'Épigraphie*, 1875, pp. 79, 80.

† Ed. H. Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1886, p. 254.

‡ H. Stevenson in *Mélanges d'Archéol.* 1888, pp. 438 f. with Pl. X.

§ In the case of the Alfonso medal, there is a double impression, the medal from which the matrix was made having slipped and caused what in the case of struck medals is called a "double-striking." It cannot, as Stevenson (p. 459) supposes, be explained



PISANELLO

British Museum and M. Valtin
Face p. 183

Bronze

Barbo) was, as we shall see, an admirer of Pisanello, and collected his medals. The fact discovered by Stevenson disposes of the theory that the larger medal is a work of the end of the fifteenth century. Finally, we have to consider the question of style. The weight of the opinions of the chief authorities is almost equally divided. Friedländer accepts the medal as by Pisanello. Of those who are not numismatists, Morelli, Brockhaus, Umberto Rossi, and Venturi are on his side. The lettering is in Pisanello's style.

On the other hand, among numismatists, Armand and Heiss decline to accept either of the medals. It is impossible to deny the vigorous characterisation of the portrait. But it is entirely lacking in the elements of dignity and refinement which are to be found in all the signed medals without exception. The fine brocaded dress sorts ill with the shrewd, good-natured, but decidedly vulgar features. Further, if we compare the relief with that of the signed medals—in the absence of originals, this can best be done by consulting Friedländer's admirable plates—we are at once struck by a difference which is somewhat difficult to define, but which is certainly there. On the other hand, we find a somewhat similar treatment in the work of some of the medallists who worked at Ferrara, notably in that of Antonio Marescotti,* and of the creator of the medals of Niccolò d'Este (Plate 27). In Pisanello's work the effect of the silhouette is obtained by great subtlety of contouring; the outlines look as if drawn with a pencil,

as a case of actual striking from a die; the apparatus available at the time was not equal to work on so large a scale.

* Friedländer, Pl. X.; cp. also Petrecini, *ibid.* Pl. XI.

and the relief rises gently within their limits. In the portrait-medal before us, as in the work of Marescotti and others, the angle between relief and background is more pronounced, and the plane of the background appears, as it were, to cut the head in half.

The poverty-stricken reverse is in itself an argument against assigning the medal to Pisanello. It is hard to believe that the great naturalist, whose flowers and branches, even where conventionalised, as on the medals of Sigismondo Malatesta and Leonello d'Este, are full of spirit, could have produced the ugly wreath. It is hard, too, to admit that he who, above all other medallists, possessed the genius of composition, should have contented himself with a string of letters.* It has been suggested indeed that, however vain he may have been, he would hardly have attributed to himself all the seven virtues. This argument, it must be admitted, cannot be pressed, especially since the mention of the virtues does not express a claim to possess them so much as an aspiration of which no one need be ashamed. Some of his admirers, indeed, credited him with nearly all of them, and I have already hinted that certain lines of Guarino may conceivably be interpreted as an allusion to a portrait in which the virtues were actually in some way indicated :

Cui (*scil.* Veronae) decus et famam per longas porrigis oras
Cum te multimodis pingas virtutibus atque
Ore virum volites prudens, gravis atque modestus,

* We are reminded of Petrecini's medal of Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, with a reverse consisting simply of an inscription in a wreath (Friedländer, Pl. XI.).

Munificus propriis alienis fidus amicis.

Moribus ornatus pulcroque insignis amictu

Maxima Veronae reddis praeconia nostrae.

But at the most this can only refer to a painted portrait. Basinio, who gives a nearly complete list of the persons of whom Pisanello made medals, mentions none of the artist himself. As to the testimony of Gauricus, it may be accepted only so far as proving that the writer had seen at least one of the two extant medals, that he thought them works of the artist's own hand, and that he blamed the assumption of a claim to all the virtues.* But as evidence of the authorship of the medals the sentence, published half a century after the death of Pisanello, is of no value whatsoever.

There is, of course, nothing improbable in the supposition that Pisanello produced a portrait or portraits of himself; and we may well believe that in such portraits, if they still existed, we should find the originals of the medals before us. Whoever made them succeeded in coming fairly near to the style of the master in all but its higher qualities.†

The list of medals attributed to Pisanello, of which no

* The contention of Brockhaus (p. 77) that the words of Gauricus may perhaps mean "ambitiously intent on having his own portrait carved" breaks down on its own subtlety; for the phrase would be pointless in the context, which is a list of sculptors and their works.

† Marescotti made a medal of a person of his own name, *Antonio Marescoto da Ferrara*. An unpublished variety of this medal in the British Museum—unfortunately a very poor cast—has, in the portrait bust, a strong suggestion of the larger medal of Pisanello. It is inscribed ANTONIVS. MARESCOTTVS. FERR. Attached to the obverse is a reverse of a later date.

trace now remains, or which can definitely be proved to have some other origin, is lengthy. It will be convenient to discuss them according to the authorities who mention them. We have already dealt with the supposed medal of Tito Vespasiano Strozzi (p. 137), and found that it was never made and probably never contemplated.

An elegiac poem of seventy-eight lines in honour of the artist was composed by Basinio of Parma shortly after 1447 :* *Basinius ad Pisanum Pictorem ingeniosum et optimum*. It begins with a pious wish that Pisanello, who gives immortality to his sitters, who is the best of all painters that have been, or are, or are to be, who has represented Leonello and the Duke of Milan, may not forget to portray the poet also. Then comes a list of portraits : of Carlo Gonzaga, Sigismondo Malatesta, Piccinino, Sforza :

* It mentions a portrait of Belloto Cúmano (whose *medal* is dated 1447), but none of the medals of Alfonso. Further, we may be fairly sure that it was composed before August 1448 ; for although the argument *ex silentio* is treacherous, it would be surprising that otherwise the medal of Decembrio should not be mentioned, where so many other ornaments of the literary world find a place. Vv. 75, 76, show that the poet was engaged on his *Meleagris*, which he did not begin before 1447 (R. J. Albrecht in *Roman. Forschungen*, iv. p. 344). The poem was written while Basinio was still at Ferrara, whither he had come when still a youth, and where he was made Professor of Latin in September 1448. In 1449, probably, he went to Rimini, having lost the favour of Leonello (Battaglini, pp. 7, 12). The poem has nothing to do with any possible visit of Pisanello to Rimini. It has been re-collated by Venturi, pp. 56 f., from the unique MS. in the Bibl. Estense, Modena, iv. F. 24, fol. 27, 28. An earlier transcript, with facsimile, in Cavattoni, *Tre carmi*, p. 34. The MS. is mentioned by Affò (*Notiz. intorno la vita &c. di Bas.*, in *Basin. Parm. opera*, 1784, t. II. i. p. 7).

necnon Sforciadem saevis monstravit in armis
 ut premit armatos, marte tonante, viros.

Further, the great teachers, leaders of the age, who live in these marvellous portraits: Guarino, Aurispa, Hieronymus, the boy Belloto, Tuscanella, Porcellio (who is described as the author of the *Bellum Thebanorum cum Telebois*), Vittorino. Of the last, Basinio's own master, there is an enthusiastic description. The poet then goes on to celebrate the artist's power of depicting nature: the wild beasts of the earth, the bright stars in the firmament, dolphins leaping through the waves, trees bent by the wind, and birds cleaving the air; the eagle seizing the timorous hare, the hounds traversing the haunts of wild beasts, the stag raising clouds of dust in its flight; you may see the hideous bears that howl in the mountains, and hear the voice of the tiger and the lioness; there are tawny lions fighting with boars, so lifelike that you would think the struggle real. Then suddenly he turns to a gentler theme:

Quin etiam teneras fingis, Pisane, puellas
 Et niveam faciem purpureamque manum,
 Et simulas pulchros gemmis duo sidera ocellos,
 Et delinitos cogis amare procos.

If he would only portray for the poet his own Cyris, he would devote his whole Muse to singing the praises of the artist.

In dealing with the problems raised by this poem, it is necessary at the outset to remark that we must not assume that in every case Basinio is describing medals. In spite

of the hint to the contrary expressed by Crowe and Cavalcaselle,* more writers than one have made a list of the names mentioned by the poet, and, subtracting from it those which are found on extant medals, regarded the remainder as representing other medals which are lost. This process has sometimes been adopted with so little intelligence, that a medal of Basinio has been included in this group of lost works. Obviously, however, we can only say that Basinio was anxious to have his portrait on a medal by Pisanello :

ut puer aeterna celatus imagine vivam.

And, if these portraits were not always medals, we can well understand why they have not come down to us. Even the portrait of Carlo Gonzaga, although it is immediately followed by those of Sigismondo and Piccinino, may have been a painting. If the description of the Sforza portrait may be taken literally, it suggests something more than the mere bust which we know from the medal, with the horse's head on the reverse ; possibly he was represented in battle. When we come to the *vates*, *quos vivos mira tabella facit*, the use of the word *tabella* points to paintings. The fact that a medal of Belloto exists does not prove that there was not also a painting of him, made presumably about the same time. In fact, we must remember that the medal in those days largely took the place of the modern engraving or photograph by which a popular picture is multiplied. It is probably to paintings, therefore, and not to medals, that Basinio, at least in some instances, refers in connexion with

* *Hist. of Painting in North Italy*, i. p. 458, note 1.

Guarino, Aurispa, Hieronymus,* Belloto, and Tuscanella.† That Pisanello made a medal of Porcellio we know from the reference to it in Porcellio's own poem, the date of which we shall presently discuss. The description of the portrait of Vittorino da Feltre ends with the following lines :

Et legi ingenuis caelatum epigramma tabellis,
 Dignaque tam prisco carmina culta viro.
 Istum non auri domuit scelerata cupido,
 Non metus, aut animi cura nefanda dolus ;
 Mille viros docuit sacras tractare camenas,
 En alius Socrates solus et iste fuit.

Now the extant medal of Vittorino has no verses on it. The word *caelatum*, it is true, naturally suggests a medal ; on the other hand, *tabellis* points to a picture. May not the solution of the difficulty be that the verses were inscribed somewhere on or below the painting ? Nay, the four lines describing the virtues of Vittorino have all the air of a quotation, introduced as they are by the preceding couplet. If so, then the painting, or at any rate the epigram, was made after the death of Vittorino. Finally, in vv. 69 ff., Basinio is clearly referring to paintings—such

* Perhaps Girolamo Castelli, a pupil of Guarino, who taught in the Studio of Ferrara (Venturi, p. 76, who mentions other identifications).

† Probably Giov. Toscanella, Ducal Secretary at Milan, rather than Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli, astronomer, physician and philosopher (Venturi, p. 85). For the latter, see *La Vita e Tempi di P. dal Pozzo Toscanelli* (1894), by G. Uzielli, who (pp. 70, 71) virtually retracts his older opinion (*Boll. della Soc. Geogr. Ital.*, 1890, pp. 586 ff.) that Pisanello represented the man of science. I have not traced the authority for Kenner's statement (*Vienna Jahrb.*, xviii. p. 140) that Vasari copied a medal of this man by Pisanello.

as that of Ginevra d'Este—rather than to medals like Cecilia Gonzaga's, since he lays stress upon the flesh-colouring.

A portrait of the notorious Giannantonio de' Pandoni, better known by the significant sobriquet Porcellio,* is, as we have seen, mentioned by Basinio. We possess from Porcellio's own pen a little poem of eleven elegiac couplets, in *laudem Pisani Pictoris*.† He gives the customary lavish praises of the artist's skill in painting portraits and nature, and then of his medals: *effigies humanas aere refuso*. Of these he mentions two which are extant:

Aspice quam nitide Leonelli principis ora
Finxit, et anguigeri lumina vera Ducis.

He continues:

Mille alias finxit mira novitate figuras
Quas inter vivet Porcelli effigies.

The four concluding lines express the usual commonplace about the artist's supreme rank in the history of art.

Even if we suppose that the portrait mentioned by Basinio was not the medal here mentioned, but a painting, it is probable that the medal was made about the same time. For it is certain that this poem must be earlier than 1449. Porcellio was secretary to Alfonso of Aragon. Now, when Pisanello went to Naples, one of the first commissions which he executed was a medal of the king. He would not,

* On this unpleasant variety of the humanist, see Ugo Frittelli, *Giannantonio de' Pandoni*, Flor., 1900. The mention of his "Bellum Thebanorum" by Basinio enables us to date it before 1448.

† Cavattoni, *Tre Carmi*, p. 20, with facsimile; Friedländer, p. 15; Venturi, p. 62.

while employed at the court, have set to work on a medal of the king's secretary before this. On the other hand, if the poem were later than 1449, the king's secretary would hardly fail to mention his master's medal of that year. We may conclude therefore that the medal of Porcellio was contemporary, if not identical, with the portrait mentioned by Basinio. Where Porcellio gave the artist sittings we do not know. After his exile from Rome (about 1435) he seems to have passed some of his time with Francesco Sforza; but Ferrara he was never allowed to visit.*

After the poems by Pisanello's contemporaries comes the letter of Paolo Giovio to Cosimo de' Medici, quoted by Vasari. Curiously enough, of all the medals there mentioned, not one is to be found among the genuine extant works of Pisanello. In fact Giovio's statements are of little value, and need not therefore be discussed at length in the text.† To Giovio's six Vasari adds seven, for the authenticity of which there is equally little or less to be said.‡

* Frittelli, pp. 32, 103.

† Friedländer, pp. 28 ff. The medals are: (1) Alfonso in armour, *rev.* Helmet. (2) Pope Martin V. with the arms of the Colonna. (3) The Sultan Mahomet, *rev.* the Sultan on horseback, with a whip (this is the medal of 1481 by Constantius, Pl. 72). (4) Sigismondo Malatesta and Isotta (this is the forged combination described above, p. 164). (5) Niccolò Piccinino with a tall cap, *rev.* Horse in armour. (6) John Palæologus, *rev.* The Cross supported by two hands (see above, p. 106).

‡ (1) Filippo de' Medici, Archbishop of Pisa. He became Archbishop in 1462; there is a medal of him with this title by Bertoldo (W. Bode, *Florent. Bildhauer*, p. 302). (2) Braccio da Montone (see above, p. 128). (3) Giangaleazzo Visconti (died 1402). The fine drawing of him (Vallardi, fol. 67, No. 2323) is probably not intended for a medal, as it is not in profile; nor, for chronological reasons,

So much for the medals ascribed to Pisanello by the older authorities. It is unnecessary to do more than mention the erroneous attribution to him, by more recent writers, of medals of Dante, Eugenius IV., and Cosimo the Elder.* But an attempt to make him responsible for the oval plaques of Leone Battista Alberti requires consideration, as it has been made very recently by Venturi, and in part accepted by Cornelius von Fabriczy. The plaques are three in number.† The largest (Plate 58), which is in the Dreyfus Collection, is a magnificent work, full of freshness and vigour, and of fine nervous modelling. The smaller specimen in the Louvre has, on the other hand, every appearance of being a copy. The modelling is tortured and exaggerated—this is especially noticeable in details like the swollen vein on the forehead.‡ The drapery, too,

can it well have been done from the life. (4) Carlo Malatesta, Lord of Rimini. Perhaps the medal of Novello is meant. (5) Giov. Caracciolo, Grand Seneschal of Naples. Of this we know nothing. (6) Borso d'Este. There are several medals of Borso, none by Pisanello. Two drawings in the *Recueil Vallardi* may possibly be by him (fol. 66, No. 2322, and 63, No. 2314; Heiss, *Niccolò*, etc., pp. 19, 20). (7) Ercole d'Este (only born in 1433). The medals of him are all later than 1471.

* Heiss, pp. 39-41.

† On Alberti, see G. Mancini, *Vita di L. B. Alberti*, Flor., 1882. For the plaques, Heiss, *Léon-Bapt. Alberti*, Pl. 1 and 2. It may be suggested that the winged eye which occurs on the Dreyfus plaque, and also on the reverse of Pasti's medal, is an allusion to Alberti's discoveries and contrivances in the way of optical illusions (Mancini, pp. 110 f.).

‡ Herr von Fabriczy's opinion (*Italian Medals*, p. 34) is diametrically opposed to that stated in the text, which has, however (so far as concerns the originality of the Dreyfus plaque), the advantage of being supported by Dr. Bode (*Zeitschr. f. bildende Kunst*, November 1903, p. 37).



LEONE BATTISTA ALBERTI

Heiss, Les Médailleurs

M. Dreyfus
Face p. 192

is treated in a bungling fashion. The third portrait, a small oval medal, with the name of Alberti in a wreath on the reverse, has still less claim to be an original.

As Bode points out, the shape, style of relief, arrangement and treatment, especially of the drapery and hair, are essentially different from those employed by Pisanello. Still less do they resemble anything known to be from the hand of Matteo de' Pasti. The analogies between these works and Pisanello's medals insisted on by Venturi are as nothing compared with the radical differences. The matter may indeed be summed up in a word—the Dreyfus plaque is not the work of a medallist at all! Rather was its creator an artist of extreme originality and force, whose technique shows no signs of familiarity with the precision and reserve inculcated by work on medals. Why then should it not be the work of Alberti himself, to whom it has been conjecturally assigned, and of whom tradition says that he worked in metal as in every other material? * The work is entirely worthy of that universal genius.

* Cp. the words: *me qui pingendo fingendoque nonnihil dilector* (Alberti, *Op. ined.*, Flor. 1890, p. 238).

CHAPTER XIII

PISANELLO AT NAPLES. HIS DEATH

TOWARDS the end of 1448 Pisanello went to Naples, to which his eyes had turned some years before (p. 123). It was natural that the splendid court of Alfonso the Magnanimous should have attractions for him; and it is probable that the king, as soon as he had established himself in his Neapolitan realm in 1442, took steps to bring to his court the greatest portrait-painter of the time. But six years elapsed before Ferrara and Mantua yielded to Naples.

That Pisanello arrived there before 1449 is proved by a drawing (see *Frontispiece*) dated 1448, showing a design for a medal of Alfonso, with which we shall deal presently. But a *privilegium* of Alfonso, dated February 14, 1449, grants him a regular salary in the service of the king. The document has been a fruitful source of error; but there can be no reasonable doubt that it refers to Pisanello, and not to any other artist.* It is true that it

* Venturi, p. 59, from R. Camera della Sommaria, Privilegi, vol. 4, fol. 93, 94. He gives a history of the errors to which the document has given birth. It was first published by H. W. Schulz, *Denkm. der Kunst des Mittelalters in Unteritalien*, iv. pp. 184, 185, who gives

is headed "Pisanelli de pisis pictoris"; but internal evidence shows that it can hardly refer to any but Pisanello of Verona. The erroneous description "de pisis" may be put down either to the secretary himself or to the copyist who transcribed the document. Although the copy is attested as true by a notary, we do not know whether this attestation applies to the heading.* The name *Pisanus* would naturally suggest Pisa to the clerk, who wished to be precise, and jumped to an erroneous conclusion.

The tedious document begins with a profession of faith, to the effect that princes should patronise men of genius for various reasons. Having heard enthusiastic reports of the singular skill of Pisanello in painting and in bronze sculpture, and learned to know and admire his works, the king resolves to admit him to the royal household, with all the privileges of the position; and, in order that he may be able to remain honourably in the royal service, grants an annual provision of four hundred ducats, to be paid to him, or to his lawful agent, out of the salt-dues

the main document (No. 448) and also (No. 446) a brief abstract of it with the wrong date, 1446. As it stands, the document is a copy abstracted from the original parchment written, signed, and sealed by the king; it is attested by Peter de Casanova, notary public. The heading "Pisanelli de pisis pictoris"—is this from the original, or was it added in the copy?—has produced one imaginary artist, Pisanello da Pisa; and from the phrase "de singulari et picture et sculpture enee (*i.e.* aëneae) pisani arte" has sprung a second, Enea Pisano! The document has also been wrongly connected with the sculptor Isaia da Pisa. The remarks of Rolfs, in the *Berlin Jahrb.*, xxv. p. 84, in reference to Pisanello's activity at Naples, must be corrected in the light of Venturi's investigations.

* On the baselessness of the supposed connexion of Pisanello with Pisa, see above, p. 5.

from the district of Francavilla in the province of the Abruzzi.* The document is dated Puteoli, February 14, 1449. It was subscribed by Thomas of Rieti, the king's secretary, and also passed through the hands of Don Iñigo d'Avalos (locumtenens of the grand chamberlain), with whom we shall meet again. Apparently it did not take effect until June 6.

Thus, then, Pisanello is settled at Naples. Those of his extant medals which we have not yet discussed are all connected with his sojourn there. Besides this, he may also have been employed for various other purposes, such as designing jewellery, and possibly works on a greater scale. But the evidence for these must be gathered from the drawings.

The medals of Alfonso—a series worthy of the magnificent king—fall first to be considered.

The finest of all (Plate 59)† is that which is known, from the inscription on the reverse, as the *Liberalitas Augusta*. On the obverse is the king's bust to the right, clad in plate armour over a coat of mail. In front of the bust is his crown, with the date MCCCCXLVIII in three lines; behind is his helmet. It is adorned with one of his devices, an open book‡ seen from behind, and inscribed on its covers with the half-verse VIR SAPIENS DOMINABITVR ASTRIS.§

* Francavilla al Mare (Abruzzo Citeriore).

† Diam. 110. Friedländer, Pl. VII. ; Heiss, Pl. IX. Fabriczy, Pl. V. There is a specimen in silver at Madrid.

‡ Ant. Beccadelli (Panormita) *de dictis et factis Alphonsi Regis* (Basel, 1538), p. 40: librum, et eum quidem apertum, pro insigni gestavit, quod bonarum artium cognitionem maxime rebus convenire intelligeret, quae, videlicet, ex librorum tractatione atque evolutione perdisceretur, etc.

§ On this tag, see Burckhardt, *Civil. of the Ren.*, p. 510.



ALFONSO I. OF NAPLES



LIBERALITAS AUGUSTA

Lead

Follow p. 196

These words, an allusion to the king's achievements in the science of astronomy, are incised, and not visible on all specimens. The main legend is arranged in an arc above (DIVVS ALPHONSVS REX) and in two horizontal lines below (TRIVMPHATOR ET PACIFICVS).

The reverse bears the legend (in two horizontal lines across the field) LIBERALITAS AVGVSTA, and the metrical signature PISANI PICTORIS OPVS on a sunken arc at the bottom. An eagle is perched proudly on the stump of a tree, at the foot of which lies the dead body of a fawn, with a great gash in its side. Around are grouped four other birds, three of them apparently vultures, the fourth a smaller bird of prey. They are waiting until their lord shall dispense their food. In the background is rocky land, rising up to right and left, but low in the middle, allowing the figure of the king of birds to stand out in uninterrupted majesty of outline. At the top the design is closed by a linear border, which, as it is only necessary for the upper half, is finished off with a little turn where it reaches the mountains of the background. The same kind of border was used in the medals of Palæologus (Plate 29) and of Sigismondo Malatesta (Plate 47).

The meaning of the design, as an allusion to Alfonso's magnanimity, must have been obvious to all who knew the symbolism of the animal world. This moral application of the eagle as the emblem of *Liberalità* is found in the *Fiore di Virtù* from which Leonardo da Vinci copied a passage in his zoological moralisings.* "Of the eagle

* See Gerol. Calvi in *Arch. Stor. Lomb.* xxv. (1898), fasc. 19. The exemplum of the Eagle is cap. xiv. of the 1474 edition of the *Fiore di Virtù* (c. xi. of Bottari's edition of 1740).

men say that he has never so great hunger as not to leave part of his prey to those birds which are around him, the which, not being able to find food for themselves, must of necessity court the eagle, since by this means they are fed." *

A manuscript † from the Aragon library, now at Paris, and containing the Defence of Plato by Andreas Contrarius, reproduces on one of its frontispieces the reverse of this medal. The small bird below and the outer bird on the right are omitted, and other details are not very closely copied. ‡ On the same page are two medallions with heads of Alfonso; but the artist has not availed himself of Pisanello's medal.

The design of this reverse naturally challenges comparison with the group, on ancient Agrigentine coins, § of two eagles standing on the body of a hare, which has been rendered famous not merely by its own spirited beauty, but by the aptness with which it illustrates a magnificent passage in the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus. It has even been said that Pisanello may have seen one of these coins. But beyond the fact that both groups represent eagles and their prey, and are superb, and perfect in their combination of naturalism with dignity of conception and skill in

* J. P. Richter, *Lit. Works of Leon. da Vinci*, ii. p. 317.

† Bibl. Nat. MS. Lat. 12,947; *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1881, t. 24, p. 178; Stevenson, *Mélanges de l'École française*, viii. p. 470; a fine reproduction facing p. 424 of Müntz, *La Ren. à l'Époque de Charles VIII*. Another medallion of Alfonso is on the title-page of the Bibl. Nat. MS. Lat. 17,842.

‡ See also above, p. 161, for another copy of the same design in an illuminated MS.

§ Th. Reinach, *L'Hist. par les Monnaies*, Pl. IV.; Hill, *Coins of Ancient Sicily*, Pl. VII., 15, 17, 18.

composition, how can we say that they are related? The spirit which inspires them is not the same, except in so far as both artists aim at expressing a religious or symbolical idea without being untrue to nature. What is more, we must remember that the collecting and consequent study of Greek coins, as distinct from Roman, was almost unknown at this time. Such Greek coins as were prized were usually those bearing portrait-heads, or having some distinct connexion with a well-known king like Alexander the Great.* The probability therefore that Pisanello was inspired by the coin of Agrigentum is small. But a comparison of the two works is none the less instructive, for it shows at a glance how like and yet how far apart were the styles of the best medallic artists of ancient Greece and the Italy of the Renaissance.

Of studies more or less closely connected with this medal there are more than one in the *Recueil Vallardi*; but the finest—one indeed of the finest of all the artist's drawings—is a carefully finished pen and sepia study (see *Frontispiece*).† Apart from the mere accident that the bust in the drawing is to the left, the differences between the study and the medal are instructive. The shoulder-piece is decorated with the triple child's face, the emblem of Prudence, which was used for one of the medals of Leonello d'Este (Plate 35). The form of the shoulder-plate, with its indented edge, is fantastic. The helmet is surmounted

* Beccadelli (*op. cit.* p. 39) describes Alfonso's own collection as containing the coins of illustrious emperors, but of Cæsar above all others; they were preserved with almost religious care in an ivory cabinet.

† Fol. 61, No. 2307. *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1881, t. 24, p. 171; 1893, t. 10, p. 357; Heiss, p. 33.

by a bat,* with outspread wings, and decorated with the arms of Aragon (or, four pallets gules) crowned and supported, on the sinister side which alone we see, by a griffin.† The structure of the bat's wing is reproduced, in a conventionalised form, in the shoulder-plate. In front of the bust is the crown, more elaborate than on the medal, and below it the date, which at present reads in four lines, . M . | . cccc . | . xlviii . | . iii . The lower two lines are lightly erased. Apparently the artist first proposed to put the date in three lines, and then tried to see how it would look if the three units were transferred to a fourth line. In the medal we see that he placed the crown lower, dividing the date into two parts and creating a better balance. For a similar reason he omitted the bat, which tended to overweight the design by making the accessory nearly as striking as the main object in the design—the bust. So too he eliminated the fanciful element in the decoration of the shoulder-piece. The result is a design of great dignity and richness, but without any of the fantastic features which are perceptible in the drawing.‡

* The significance of the bat (usually a creature of unpleasant association) is obscure; possibly, as it sees best by night, it may allude to Alfonso's astronomical knowledge.

† The same arrangement, in a more elaborate form, is found on Alfonso's triumphal arch at Naples.

‡ This medal was copied for a portrait in the Collection of the Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol (Kenner, Vienna *Jahrb.* xviii. pp. 174 f.), and for a circular marble bas-relief (life-size) in the Museum of the National Library at Madrid (Cardenera y Solano, *Iconografía Española*, I. Pl. xlii.). The Rec. Vallardi contains numerous other sketches of Alfonso. Fol. 63, No. 2311: bust three-quarters r. (Heiss, p. 32). No. 2313: various profiles, including one of Alfonso.



ALFONSO I. OF NAPLES

British Museum



VENATOR INTREPIDUS

Lead
Follow p. 200

Less successful than the *Liberalitas* medal as regards the obverse, but equally fine in the conception of the reverse, is the medal to which we next come (Plate 60).^{*} It is undated, but one of the Vallardi drawings,[†] which is closely related to it, bears the date 1449. On this medal the king is represented in profile to right, wearing a loose fur-trimmed garment; below is his crown. The legend is long, and completely surrounds the type.[‡] It is placed at some distance from the line which forms the border, and is perhaps for that reason less satisfactory in effect. The reverse shows the king as a boy hunting the boar. Represented in heroic nudity, he has leapt on the back of the huge beast, which he is about to despatch with the hunting-knife which he holds in his right hand. One hound has seized the boar by its left ear; another is visible on the farther side. The contrast between the slight human figure and the rough, bristly body of the boar is most effective. Above in two lines is the inscription VENATOR INTREPIDVS; below, in the usual sunk arc, the signature,

Fol. 85, No. 2481: profile r., with thick hair cut straight, without the notch as we see it on most of the medals (Heiss, p. 32). On the *verso* of this are three heads of eagles, and an eagle seen from behind; but none of them is exactly reproduced on the *Liberalitas* medal. The heraldic eagles (fol. 258, No. 2485; B. de Tauzia, *Dessins*, 1888, No. 1997) have nothing to do with this medal. Besides these drawings there are others which will receive independent consideration below.

^{*} Diam. 110 mm. Heiss, Pl. X.

[†] Fol. 61, No. 2306: bust r., DIVVS · ALPHONSVS · REX . MCCCCXLVIII; below, crown.

[‡] It is to be expanded thus: Divus Alphonsus Aragonum Siciliarum Valenciae Hierosolymae Hungariae Maioricarum Sardiniae Corsicae Rex, Comes Barcinonae, Dux Athenarum et Neopatriae, Comes Rosciglionis Ceritaniae.

OPVS PISANI PICTORIS. The rocky background and the linear border above are arranged as on the *Liberalitas* medal.

Two other medals of Alfonso (Plate 61) allude to the king's triumphal entry into Naples on February 26, 1443, and correspond in a way to the descriptions which the literary men of his court produced.* The larger† represents the bust of the king wearing a cloak over chain-armour; below is his crown. The legend (substantially the same as on the *Venator Intrepidus* medal) is arranged in four lines across the field and in a circle around it. On the reverse is a four-wheeled chariot, drawn by four horses guided by two squires, and driven by an angel.‡ A legend (from Exodus xv. 2) in four lines occupies the upper part of the field: *FORTITVDO MEA ET LAVS MEA DOMINVS ET FACTVS EST MICH I IN SALVTEM.*§ Below, on some specimens, is the signature *OPVS · PISANI · PICTORIS.* ||

The design bears a superficial resemblance to that on the

* See Ant. Beccadelli, *op. cit.* pp. 229 f.: *Alphonsi Regis Triumphus*; B. Facio *de rebus gestis ab Alphonso* (Lyon, 1560), p. 185; and V. Nociti, *Il trionfo di Alfonso I. d'Aragona cantato da Porcellio* (Bassano, 1895). The last work is inaccessible to me.

† Diam. 111 mm. Heiss, Pl. XI.

‡ Beccadelli (p. 230) describes the grand four-wheeled, four-horsed car on which Alfonso rode; five noblemen guided the horses and marshalled the procession. Cp. B. Facio, *loc. cit.*: four white horses draw the car, preceded by a fifth.

§ Cp. Beccadelli, p. 230: "after this, in the name of Christ, the true and most wise God, to Whom he always most earnestly desired that all the praise and glory of victory should be given, he ascended the car." Cp. also p. 239.

|| The signature, when it does occur, is lacking in firmness and regularity. Was it added in the mould by a less experienced hand? On the British Museum specimen the place is left rough.



ALFONSO I. OF NAPLES



TRIUMPH MEDALS

reverse of the medal of Heraclius mentioned in a previous chapter (p. 101, Plate 26*d*). By itself, the resemblance would be insufficient to prove that Pisanello had seen the earlier medal; but the similar analogy between the medals of Palæologus and Constantine makes it possible that he is indebted to his predecessor.

The bust on the obverse of this larger Triumph medal is repeated on at least two plaquettes.* The larger, in the Dreyfus Collection, also has the crown below the bust, and is an almost exact reproduction, differing only slightly in the hair. The smaller, without the crown, is otherwise nearly as close a copy. Whether they are from Pisanello's own hand it is hardly possible to decide; such plaquettes could be made in indefinite numbers by casting from the medals.†

The smaller medal (Plate 61)‡ referring to the Triumph of Alfonso is unsigned. This may be merely for lack of space, but we may be permitted to doubt whether it is by Pisanello. The king's bust is to the right, surrounded by the legend *ALPHONSVS · REX · ARAGONVM*. There is no crown below. On the reverse is the angel of Victory in a two-wheeled car drawn by four horses, and the legend *VICTOR · SICILIE · P · REGI*.§ Both sides have linear borders. The

* Dreyfus Collection (octagonal, 90 × 60 mm.) and Vienna Cabinet (oval, 62 × 58 mm.). Heiss, p. 31.

† They should be compared with other plaquettes such as those made from Petrecini's medal of Borso d'Este (Heiss, *Niccolò*, etc., p. 34).

‡ Diam. 25 mm. Heiss, Pl. X.

§ Victor(i) Sicilie P(io) Regi, or Victor Sicilie P(acificator) Reg(n)i. A small medal of Ferdinand, son of Alfonso, has the same type with a different legend (Heiss, p. 36).

work is rough. Apart from the general resemblance of the bust to that by Pisanello and the correspondence in the reverse types, there is no reason to assign this piece to the great medallist.

The Recueil Vallardi contains several sketches for medals of Alfonso which seem not to have been carried out. One sheet* has four little sketches with profile busts of the king. On the reverses are triumphal cars (one of them to the front, another boldly foreshortened three-quarters to right). Three of them bear the legend *TRIVMPHATOR ET PACIFICVS*, the fourth the legend which was used for the larger of the Triumph medals.

On a second sheet† we have two more studies of medals. One represents the crowned bust of the king facing; on the reverse are his arms, sketchily indicated in a floriated lozenge contained in a quatrefoil. The second shows him kneeling in armour, receiving the standard of Aragon from St. Michael—an adaptation of the type of the Venetian sequin, on which the Doge receives the banner from St. Mark. At the king's feet is his helmet surmounted, it would seem, by a bat. On the reverse are his arms, crowned, and supported by two eagles.

Yet another design would have made a fine medal (Plate 62).‡ Alfonso is on horseback, in armour, with a broad-brimmed hat on his head. The horse is richly caparisoned; on its head is perched a fantastic, swan-like bird; on its crupper is a putto holding the shield of

* Fol. 65, No. 2317. Heiss, p. 36; B. de Tausia, *Dessins*, No. 1989 B.

† Fol. 65, No. 2318. Heiss, p. 36. B. de Tausia, *Dessins*, No. 1989 C.

‡ Fol. 249, No. 2486. Heiss, p. 35. B. de Tausia, *Dessins*, No. 1989 A. *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1881, t. 24, p. 169.



STUDY FOR MEDAL OF ALFONSO

Sauranaud

Rec. Vallardi

Face p. 204

Aragon. Above is the royal crown between two shields (Aragon and Sicily on the right; Aragon, Naples, Jerusalem, etc., on the left). This drawing is signed *PISANI PICTORIS OPVS*.

Sketches on two other sheets * seem to represent obverse and reverse of yet another medal. On the one is a circular design representing a dog seated, with head reverted, among grass and flowers. On the same sheet the dog is repeated on a larger scale. At the top of the circular design is a floral decoration which recurs on the second sheet above a circular design containing the arms of Alfonso.

Finally we may note a drawing † which represents an eagle above an open book. The combination of these two subjects suggests that the design was intended for a medal or other work of art relating to Alfonso; but the book is represented lying open in the usual way, and not seen from the back as in Alfonso's *impresa*.

It is probable that Pisanello's portraits of Alfonso were not confined to medals. If, however, he painted any portraits of the king, they are at present lost or unknown. It is true that a panel portrait has been conjecturally assigned to him by Friedländer.‡ It represents the king in half figure, facing, in armour; on a table is his helmet, at the side his crown and a copy of Cæsar, *de Bello Civili*, open at Lib. I. 38.§ The helmet bears the *impresa* of the

* Fol. 21, No. 2277, and 22, No. 2278.

† Fol. 195, No. 2398. *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 12, p. 493.

‡ Pp. 22 f. Engraved in Seroux d'Agincourt (Berlin, 1840), *Malerei*, p. 129, Pl. cxliv., and attributed to Antonello da Messina (?).

§ The passage, except in so far as it deals with the beginning of Cæsar's war in Spain, does not seem to have any particular point in connexion with Alfonso.

book seen from behind. The same device is embroidered on the curtain behind the figure. In the background is a landscape. So far as it is possible to judge from an engraving, the connexion with Pisanello would seem to stop short at the use of the helmet with the device of the open book.

Two sets of drawings not relating to medals have further been connected with the master's activity at Naples. In the first place, the *Recueil Vallardi* contains a certain number of ornamental designs for artillery which bear the arms and emblems of Alfonso.* But for the fact that these drawings are included in the *Recueil*, it is difficult to suppose that any one would have thought of assigning them to Pisanello, so rough and characterless are they. The water-mark which occurs on two out of the three sheets—a five-petalled rosette—is not found on any paper which we know with certainty to have been used by Pisanello.

Secondly, in the same collection are a number of curious sketches of fantastic vessels, borne by dragons.† De 'Tauzia has suggested ‡ that they were designed for the fêtes which Alfonso offered to the people of Naples, at which naval fights took place. On the other hand, Guiffrey points out § that on one at least there are indications of gems on the poop and prow, so that they must be designs for jewellery. In any case, these drawings are no

* Fol. 49, No. 2293 ; 50, No. 2294 ; 51, No. 2295. For reproductions, see Heiss, p. 34 ; *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1881, t. 24, p. 175 ; *L'Arte*, ii. pp. 352 f.

† Fol. 43-48, Nos. 2287-2289, 2291, 2292.

‡ *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 69.

§ In Venturi, p. 90.

more worthy of Pisanello than the sketches of artillery above mentioned.

But that Pisanello's presence at Naples should remain without influence on the art of the city it is hardly reasonable to assume. And indeed more critics than one have seen that influence in the sculptures of the triumphal arch of Alfonso. Weizsäcker, for instance,* finds proof of it in the treatment of the horses on the bronze gates. But it is going far beyond our evidence to suppose† that Pisanello actually supervised the construction of the arch, as Matteo de' Pasti supervised for Alberti the construction of the Tempio Malatestiano.

A distinguished member of Alfonso's court, Don Inigo d'Avalos, son of Ruy Lopez d'Avalos, Constable of Castile, had accompanied the king to Naples in 1442. There by marriage he became second Marquis of Pescara, and Vasto was also conferred upon him in 1444. His portrait is preserved on a medal by Pisanello (Plate 63).‡ He is represented in right profile, wearing a broad-brimmed hat; a scarf is wrapped round the crown and descends in a magnificent sweep to fall over his right shoulder.§ The inscription DON INIGO DE DAVALOS occupies the two arcs behind and before the bust. No composition could be more perfectly adapted to the field, no handling of the contrast between face and dress more harmoniously effective:

* Berlin *Jahrb.*, vii. pp. 56 f.

† With E. Bernich in *Napoli Nobilissima*, xii. (1903), p. 131. His theory is rejected as unproven by Rolfs, Berlin *Jahrb.*, xxv. p. 84.

‡ Diam. 83 mm. Friedländer, Pl. V. Heiss, Pl. VIII.

§ A similar head-dress (although the scarf does not fall to the shoulder) is worn by one of the figures in the sheet in the Ambrosiana already referred to (p. 158, Pl. 45).

the face, sensitive and refined, modelled in low and extremely delicate relief; the hat and drapery disposed in bold masses, with strongly accentuated lines.

Quem non attonitum maiestas reddere possit
Oris, et obstupeat quis non in veste superba?

This portrait is a compendium of the whole art of Pisanello the portrait-painter as well as the medallist. Some colour-effect, such as we see in the head of the St. Eustace, is suggested by the disposition of the planes in the modelling of this bust; yet the design is not in any sense pictorial, but remains truly sculpturesque. In such works as this we see how true it is that in the medal the arts of painting and sculpture meet.

The reverse is somewhat less successful. On a sphere is represented the earth, with the starry heavens above and the sea below. The earth is represented by a landscape with conical mountains, high at the sides and opening out in the middle to show the distance; in the foreground are trees and two cities. Below is the motto *PER VVI SE FA* ("for you is it made"); above, the d'Avalos arms (within a bordure, a castle triple-towered) between blossoming rose-branches. The signature fills so much of the circumference as is not occupied by the arms.

A spirited drawing for the landscape of this reverse fortunately still exists (Plate 64).* We see a plain, surrounded by mountains capped by castles or churches; a large church with many spires; a city and a lake with vessels on it. Above, in the sky, shines a solitary star.

The motto *per vui se fa* and the two cities on the earth

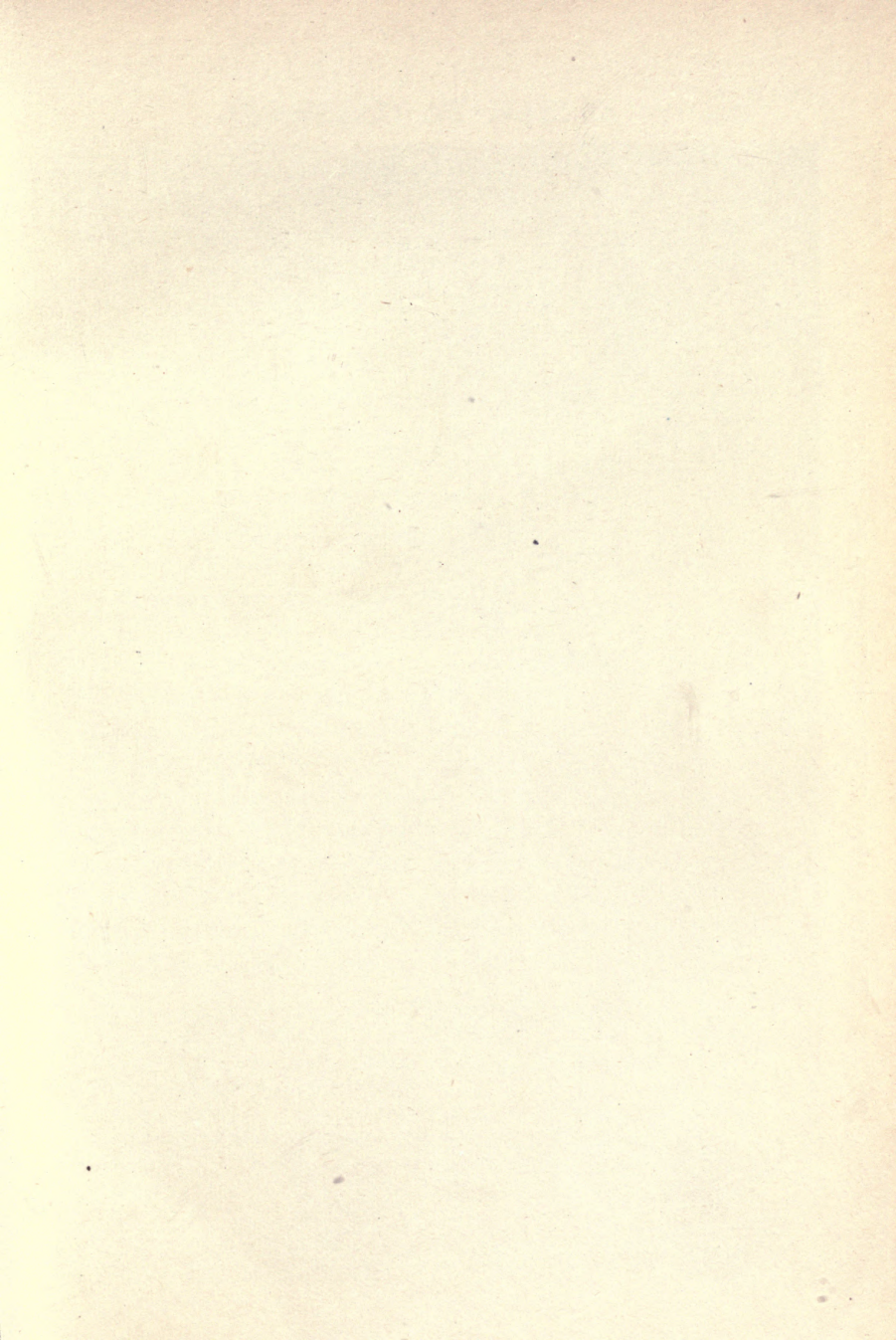
* Rec. Vallardi, fol. 37, No. 2280. Heiss, p. 29.



DON INIGO D'AVAILOS

Bronze
Face p. 208

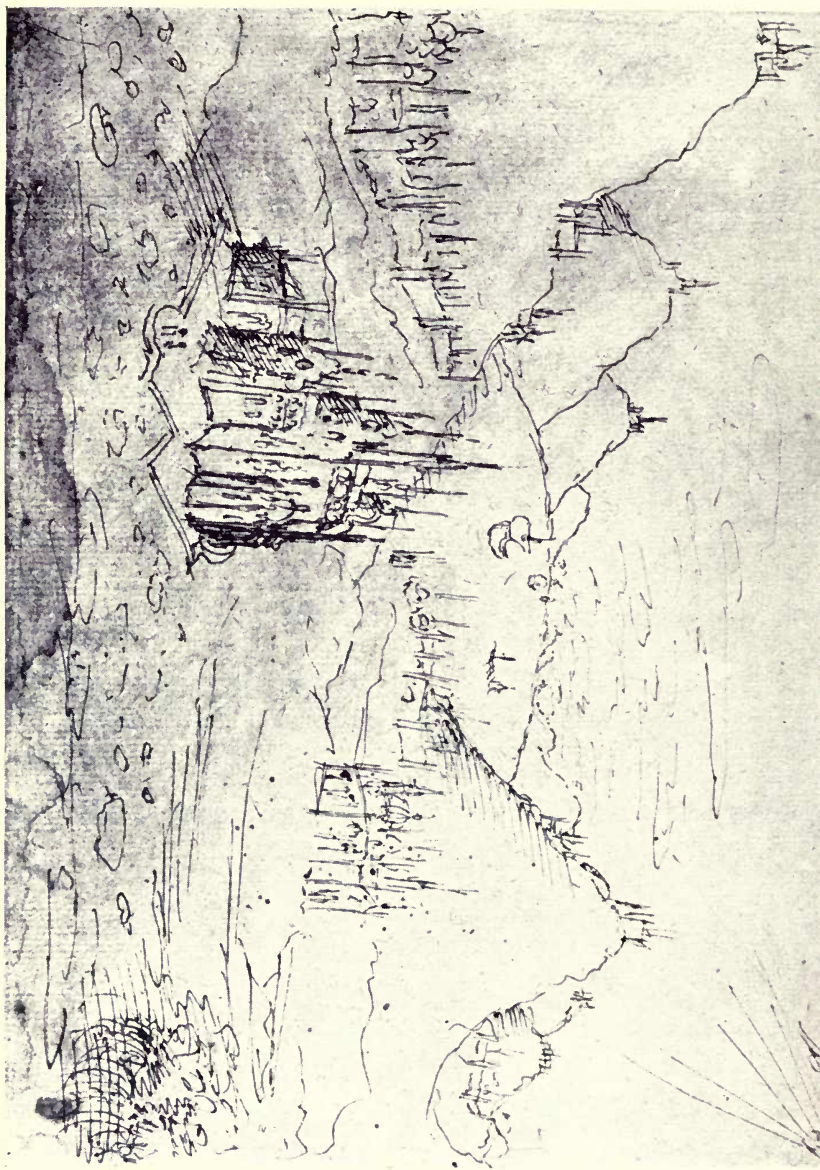




Southern

STUDY OF LANDSCAPE FOR D'AVAIOS MEDAL

Rev. Pallardi



make it possible that the artist has in his mind the shield of Achilles.* In the eighteenth book of the Iliad the poet describes how on the shield the fire-god "wrought the earth, and the heaven, and the sea, and the untiring sun and the waxing moon, and all the signs that make the crown of heaven . . . and on it he wrought also two cities of mortal men, fair cities." Of course there is no attempt to represent the Homeric shield, as, for instance, Flaxman attempted it. The artist is wisely content with little more than an allusion, and entirely disregards literal accuracy. It would, for instance, have been possible for him to make the ocean surround the earth as Homer does. But then he would have been confronted with the difficulty of a composition involving several concentric circles.

Still, even if this explanation be right, it does not take us far; and it must be admitted that there is no attempt at representing a shield. All that we see is a sphere representing the three divisions of the universe. It is the design therefore of Achilles' shield, not such a shield itself, that is indicated. But what connexion has this with the person represented on the obverse? We know how the medal was interpreted in the sixteenth century; for Giuseppe Castaglione of Ancona, who was tutor of the young Tommaso d'Avalos, a descendant of Iñigo, addressed a poem to his pupil on this very subject.† Apparently the poet came

* The suggestion is made by Giuseppe Castaglione in the poem to be mentioned below. Cp. Friedländer, p. 40: "at the court of Alfonso, where the best scholars of Italy were gathered together, such a reference is not improbable."

† Venturi, p. 67; first published at Parma in 1690 (in the *Miscellanea Italica erudita* of Gaudentius Robertus); forgotten until republished by Friedländer, p. 17. Castaglione was tutor first of

across a specimen of the medal, unknown to him before ; he was as delighted as Cicero when he discovered the tomb of Archimedes. The artist "has represented by mystic signs the excellence of the man in the arts of peace and war ; for he has wrought cunningly Olympus, and the constellations, and in the midst the Earth with woodlands and wild creatures, and cities, and castles twain on the mountain-tops, and below the coast where the breakers roar, and the watery plains of Ocean, and has fashioned the whole world for his hero. Such was the shield which Mulciber is said to have shaped for Achilles ; such does Martian Rome devise, stamped on the yellow brass, for its Cæsars, under whose laws the whole world is set."*

Such an interpretation would be more acceptable if we were dealing with the medal of a great prince like Alfonso. To Don Iñigo some less ambitious idea would be more suitable ; but it has yet to reveal itself to us.

It is possible that the Recueil Vallardi contains yet another trace of Pisanello's connexion with d'Avalos. This is an exquisite little drawing,† which seems to be meant for a jewelled badge to be attached to a garment. It bears the

Tommaso d'Avalos, then of the sons of the Duke of Sora, settled in Rome in 1582, became Governor of Corneto in 1598, and died, probably, in 1616 ; see Nicéron, *Mém. pour serv. à l'Hist. des Hommes ill.*, t. 42, p. 352 f.

* Cp. the bronze medallion of Commodus with TELLVS STABILITA, where the Earth-goddess is represented with her hand resting on a starry globe, past which file the figures of the four Seasons. Grueber, *Roman Medallions*, Pl. 32, 1.

† Vallardi, No. 2273. A similar badge, on the *verso* of No. 2612, bears, instead of WAST, apparently the Gothic letter y twice repeated. Is this the initial of *Ynicus*, as the name is sometimes written ?

letters WAST, which suggest the name of Vasto, the estate conferred on Iñigo by Alfonso in 1444.

When Pisanello left Naples, we do not know. The statement made by Vasari in his first edition, that Pisanello painted in the Campo Santo at Pisa, that he spent much time and died there *come in amatissima Patria sua*, is omitted in the second edition, and apparently worthless.* There is some slight reason to suppose that he went to Rome and died there; but the evidence is unsatisfactory in the extreme. It is true that among the drawings ascribed to him is a sketch for a medal of Pope Nicholas V.† It represents Atlas bearing the world; to the left, cross-keys; to the right, a tiara; above, NICOLAVS PAPA. In the corner of the same sheet is a drawing of a circular legend NICOLAVS · PAPA V, without any type. The style of the drawing is not however, convincingly like that of the authentic sketches; and the paper bears a watermark (a pair of shears) which, although it became common about 1440, is not found on any of the paper used by Pisanello that I have been able to examine. This drawing, therefore, affords no evidence for Pisanello's presence at Rome. Apart from this, however, we have a curiously puzzling question as to whether he did not actually die there.

He was still alive when Flavio Biondo was writing his *Italia Illustrata* in 1450.‡ “Of men skilled in the art of

* Possibly, however, “et parimente nel campo santo di Pisa” is a parenthesis, and Vasari meant to say that Pisanello died at Rome. Of course, the omission of a statement in Vasari's second edition is not a proof that he considered it wrong; he did not rewrite his book methodically.

† Rec. Vallardi, fol. 65, No. 2319; Heiss, p. 38.

‡ Published at Verona, 1482.

painting," he says, "Verona had Altichiero in the last century; but there is one still alive, who has easily surpassed all others of our century in reputation, Pisano by name, about whom there is a poem by Guarino entitled *Guarini Pisanus*."

Guarino himself mentions Pisanello in a letter written from Ferrara to his son Battista on December 13, 1452, but unfortunately in a way that does not tell us whether the artist was alive or dead.*

On the other hand, Bartolomeo Facio, writing in 1455-1456 *de viris illustribus*, † in a passage which we have often had reason to quote, speaks of Pisanello as dead.‡

Thus we have to date the artist's death between 1450 and 1455. As we have no knowledge of any work whatever executed by him after 1449, we are naturally inclined to approach as close as possible to the earlier date. The matter is, however, much complicated by a reference in a letter of Carlo de' Medici to Giovanni de' Medici on October 31 [1455].§ "I had," he says, "a few days ago

* Brit. Mus. MS. Harl. 2580, fol. 88; Venturi, p. 64. "Thus to my sense you have surpassed Zeuxis, Apelles, Polycleitus, and (to speak of our own time) Gentile, Pisano, Angelo, in the art of painting, and the more so because in the first place they painted or paint in colours which are fugitive and disappear as the days go on," etc. Venturi points out that Angelo is probably Angelo da Siena, who died at Ferrara in 1455, not Fra Angelico.

† Published at Florence in 1745, p. 47. Venturi, p. 65.

‡ Malaguzzi-Valeri rightly rejects the identification of the artist with the Pisanello who was receiving a salary from the Duke of Milan in March 1456, as a purchaser of horses (*Pittori Lombardi*, pp. 88 f.).

§ The date is quite certain; see V. Rossi in *Rendiconti dei Lincei* (*Cl. di Scienze Mor.*, etc.), Ser. v. vol. ii., 1893, pp. 130-136. For a history of the controversy about the date, see Venturi, pp. 62 f.

bought about thirty very good silver medals from a pupil of Pisanello, who died a few days ago.* Monsignor di San Marco, I know not how, came to know of it, and finding me one day in Sant' Apostolo took me by the hand and did not let me go until he had brought me into his chamber." Finally, Monsignor (Pier Barbo, afterwards Paul II., who, as we have seen, had Pisanello's medals copied on his roofing-tiles) relieved the unfortunate Carlo of the silver medals.†

Signor Venturi has pointed out that it is disputable whether the clause *che morì a questi dì* refers to Pisanello or to his garzone. If to the latter, then we have no reason to suppose that Pisanello was alive much later than 1450.

This, it must be admitted, is a piece of grammatical subtlety. Why should Carlo mention the death of a mere nameless garzone of Pisanello? The death of the great artist, on the other hand, would be news of some interest. And would he call the man *garzone del Pisanello* if the master had been dead some four years? On the natural interpretation of the letter, it would appear that Pisanello had just died; that one of his assistants had parted with a number of medals, probably his late master's property; and that Pier Barbo used his position to secure them for his own collection. On this interpretation we have no need to force the sense of anything in the letter.

* "Io avevo a questi dì comprate circa di 30 medaglie d'ariento multo buone da uno garzone del Pisanello, che morì a questi dì," etc. It should be noted that these silver "medals" were not necessarily contemporary pieces; they may as well have been ancient coins.

† In a letter of March 13, 1456 (Rossi, *loc. cit.*), Carlo says that he will use all diligence in the matter of the medals, "but, as I told you in another letter, there is a marvellous scarcity of them, thanks to this Monsignor of St. Mark's."

But if Pisanello died in Rome in 1455 we are confronted with other difficulties. His hand, when we hear of him last at Naples, has not lost its cunning—witness his crowning achievements in the medals of Alfonso. Down to that date, also, we have almost continuous records of his movements. Yet we are asked to believe that for some four or five years he produced no medals, dated or datable, which are still extant, and that of the three or four documentary records of his existence, for which we should have a right to look, not one has yet been unearthed. Did he suddenly break down, or, like Paolo Uccello, retire to study perspective? Can we assume that Carlo's reason for mentioning Pisanello may have been that his correspondent had asked for some of the well-known medals, and that Carlo had therefore applied to a man who had been a pupil of the master? Even then the mention of the pupil's death seems pointless. It is unsatisfactory to have to return a *non liquet* to these questions, but that is the only rational course to pursue.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

At the close of each stage of the artist's career, as he moved from one artistic centre to another, we have endeavoured to indicate the traces which remain of his influence on the painting of his time. There are indeed few men of the quattrocento of whom it can be said that they left marks upon the art of Venice, Verona, Ferrara, Milan, Rome, and Naples.

It remains now to deal with a certain number of paintings which have not come naturally to be considered in the course of the preceding remarks, and also to sketch, all too briefly, the development of the medallic art in its early stages from its inception at Ferrara.

Among these paintings one takes precedence of all others: the tondo in the Berlin Gallery representing the *Adoration of the Magi* (Plate 65).^{*} In the Barker

^{*} No. 95a. *Klass. Bilderschatz*, 1357. W. Bode u. H. von Tschudi, Berlin *Jahrb.*, vi. (1885), p. 18; cp. *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1889, t. 1, p. 494. Of tone and colouring, having unfortunately been unable to see the original, I cannot pretend to speak; but the description of the Berlin authorities in this respect does not conflict with the estimate stated in the text of those features of the picture which can be judged from photographs.

Collection it was ascribed to Filippo Lippi; for others it was by Dello Delli, or a picture of the school of Pesellino. Morelli * regarded it as a comparatively feeble piece by a Veronese of the school of Stefano da Zevio, trying to imitate Pisanello, and not uninfluenced by contemporary Florentine painting.

When a picture has thus been sent "from pillar to post," it is a sign that it contains many incongruous elements; and these incongruities, *a priori*, make it difficult to accept a theory which attributes it to an artist who, as much as any of his contemporaries, had a distinct and characteristic style. One is reminded of the bronze statue from Cerigotto, which, after being assigned to more than one great sculptor of the fourth century, is gradually being relegated to the class of eclectic works of a later date.

The general effect of the picture is rich, thanks to its good preservation, and to the opportunity for depicting fine costumes which the subject presents. The sacred group is commonplace, and shows no advance on the Gothic tradition. The kings and their suite, on the other hand, are treated with that sumptuousness for which Gentile da Fabriano seems to have set the fashion. The train winds back into the distance in a manner more true to nature, perhaps, than in Gentile's famous picture, but far less effective. The landscape itself is admirably disposed; indeed it is perhaps the feature in the picture which first raises a doubt as to the attribution to Pisanello. The only points in the landscape which suggest his influence are the way in which it is animated by birds—herons

* *Die Galerie zu Berlin*, p. 103.



Hanfstängl

ADORATION OF THE MAGI

Berlin
Face p. 216



attacked by hawks, a peacock, etc.—and the presence of the gallows by the roadside in the far distance, reminding us of the similar motif in the St. George fresco. It is difficult to imagine two pictures more utterly opposed in feeling for landscape than the St. Eustace* and the tondo which we are considering. In the former the landscape is given for the sake of introducing the animals; in this, the few animals are introduced to enliven the landscape, which is a composition in and for itself.

But the attribution to Pisanello is confirmed by the fact that among his drawings are certain sketches of subjects found in this picture? In the first place there is in the *Recueil Vallardi*† a study of a rich mantle trimmed with fur, showing a general similarity to that worn by the page who is seen from behind. A somewhat similar mantle is worn by one of the men in the signed drawing in the British Museum. Again, we have a drawing of a camel, which bears some resemblance to that in the picture, and of a peacock like the one which is perched on the roof of the hut.‡ But it is necessary to remember that Pisanello's drawings, or copies of them, must have been scattered all over Italy. As to the peacock, its position is that in which it is most commonly seen perching. The

* It is true that medals and sketches such as those on Plates 12 and 64 show a great advance beyond the St. Eustace in landscape composition; but the disposition which the artist affects is still clearly different from what we find in this picture.

† Fol. 19, no. 2275. A rough note of a similar mantle on fol. 109, no. 2603 v^o. Cp. also one of the two men conversing, in a drawing in the Ambrosiana (Venturi, p. 123).

‡ For the camel (Vallardi, fol. 195, No. 2398), see *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1894, t. 12, p. 493. The peacock is one of five on fol. 188, No. 2390.

resemblances, in fact, amount to proving no more than the influence of Pisanello, which nobody would deny.

When we come to the figures in the suite of the Magi, the conviction that the picture is the work of an imitator grows. A study of the faces shows that they have no trace of the refinement which is characteristic of the master. His courtiers are always gentlemen; among the portraits here most are vulgar. In the same way, the horse foreshortened from behind, with its abnormally plump barrel, turned-in hocks, and platter-like hoofs, is a caricature of the Pisanellesque type. The painting of the horses is extraordinarily smooth, and the muscles are hardly indicated. This may, it is true, be paralleled from the medals; * but while an imitator might transfer the short-hand method of the medal to a panel, Pisanello himself would be the last to make this mistake. It is significant that the rider on the horse seen from behind turns his head so that it is in profile. The art which avails itself of such a compromise—whether excused or not by the interest which the rider may be taking in the action—indicates a certain lack of self-confidence. It is curiously paralleled in such works as Benozzo Gozzoli's fresco in the Riccardi Palace, or the Schifanoia frescoes.

Thus, in some features of the picture, notably in the landscape and the relation thereto of the figures, we find elements wholly at variance with what we know to be characteristic of Pisanello. The colouring and treatment of atmospheric effect are, by all accounts, not in his manner. The isolated points in which the picture is in contact with him are easily explained by the widespread

* Weizsäcker, Berlin *Jahrb.*, vii. p. 51.

influence which he exercised through his paintings and drawings. And the representation of the human face lacks the distinction which we find in all his authenticated works.

There is neither room nor necessity for a detailed discussion of certain other works which have been ascribed to Pisanello. The following may, however, be briefly mentioned :

A remarkable fresco in the Hospice at Palermo represents the *Triumph of Death*. Müntz's suggestion * that this may have been painted by Pisanello during his Neapolitan period has met with no acceptance. Such apparent resemblances to the master's work as it presents are in reality closer to Lombard painting of the middle of the century.†

The Madonna and St. Catherine in the Verona Gallery has already been mentioned (p. 6). Another Madonna in the same Gallery, once in the possession of Bernasconi, has been much repainted, so that we cannot speak with any certainty of its authorship ; it appears, however, to be a work of the Veronese school.

A picture in the Victoria and Albert Museum, representing the Madonna on a throne with flowers growing about it, and two small angels holding out scrolls above, was given to Pisanello by Both de Tauzia.‡ Apart, however, from salient differences in style, it is signed in large letters PEREGRINVS PINSIT MCC[C]CXXVIII.

Other works which with almost as little reason have

* *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1901, t. 26, pp. 224 f.

† *L'Arte*, iv. p. 340.

‡ *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 65. Venturi, p. xv.

been given to Pisanello are the eight small panels by Fiorenzo di Lorenzo at Perugia, representing scenes from the life of San Bernardino of Siena; No. 3 in the Galleria Lochis at Bergamo; and the fresco of the *Adoration of the Magi* above the Cappella degli Agonizzanti in S. Fermo at Verona.*

It would be tedious and unprofitable, without full illustration, to give details of various other nameless paintings which, although not attributed to our artist, are claimed as showing his influence.†

The most important of the painters in Verona itself who were influenced by him, in fact the only one, save Matteo de' Pasti, to whom we can put a name, was Stefano da Zevio.‡ The works attributed to him, of which the chief is the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Brera, signed and dated 1435, show that he was a graceful but timid painter, who came even more strongly under the influence of Gentile da Fabriano than under that of Pisanello.§ Some

* Cp. da Persico, *Descr. di Verona*, 1820, i. p. 195.

† Some have been noticed incidentally in the preceding pages. Others are: (1) Frescoes in the bell-chamber of S. Maria della Scala at Verona (Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Hist. of Painting in North Italy*, i. p. 457). (2) Panel (part of cassone) in the Este Gallery at Modena with scenes from the life of St. Patrick: B. de Tauzia, *Notice . . . His de la Salle*, p. 65; Venturi, *La R. Galleria Estense* (1883), p. 459; Weizsäcker, *Berlin Jahrb.*, vii. p. 55. (3) Fragment of cassone in Museo Correr, Venice: Weizsäcker, *loc. cit.*; E. Jacobsen, *Rep. f. Kunstwiss.* 22 (1899), p. 26. (4) Crucifixion in Mus. Civ. at Ravenna: Weizsäcker, *loc. cit.* (5) Portrait (dated 1462) of Portinari kneeling before S. Peter in S. Eustorgio, Milan (de Tauzia, *op. cit.* p. 65).

‡ For recent research on this painter, see G. Frizzoni in *L'Arte*, iv. pp. 221 f. A brief sketch of his works at Verona is in Biermann, *Verona*, p. 100.

§ Cp. Venturi, p. xiv.

of the drawings in the Recueil Vallardi which have been utilised to show that Pisanello was affected by northern art may be from his hand.*

Pisanello did not, strictly speaking, found a school in painting. That is to say, he did not leave after him a body of painters who perpetuated his methods and mannerisms. We find, as we have seen, traces of his influence in widely distant places, in painters of widely different character. But the effect seems to have been to stimulate the artists who came into contact with him to further progress, rather than to overpower them by the force of his own personality. Nevertheless in the northern Italy of his time (especially after the death of Gentile da Fabriano) there is no power in painting comparable to him, and his domination is supreme until the rise of Mantegna and of that Venetian school which he had helped to bring into being. But since he is essentially an artist of transition he suffers the fate of his class. The special features which in our eyes contribute charm to the period of the change from archaic to classical art must *ipso facto* disappear as soon as the classical period is reached. Parallels between Italian painting and Greek sculpture are apt to be misleading; but we may perhaps venture to compare Pisanello and others, such as Pol de Limbourg, who were doing the same kind of work, to the Attic sculptors of the end of the sixth and beginning of the fifth century. The loving attention to all such details as they understood, the *charis* which invests all their work, making it, in spite of imperfections, a model to all later art in respect of sincere and honest workmanship, are marks of a

* See above, p. 18, note.

preliminary stage which was necessary to make the art of Pheidias possible. Minutely conscientious work, inspired by a real love of the objects represented, and not by a passion for technical epideixis, suffused by an atmosphere of naïve charm, such as is only possible in cycles when the world is young and cheerful—such work was produced by the early Attic sculptors, and by certain painters of the early quattrocento, of whom in Italy Pisanello is the chief representative.

But there was a strain in Pisanello which is not accounted for in the analogy which I have presented. He sometimes rises in his paintings to the really grand style ; of this the St. George fresco is sufficient evidence. He does not, of course, move consistently on as high a level as, let us say, Masaccio. But the work which he did, in preparing the way for the art of the classical period, was as essential as Masaccio's, although his message was expressed in less elevated language, in less complete form.* The quality of solidity of relief, obtained by regarding the figures represented as palpable masses to be modelled, not mere spaces to be enclosed and decorated by line and colour, was the chief element contributed by the Florentine to the development of painting. This quality is rarely attained by Pisanello in his paintings ; yet that he recognised something of its value is shown by his portrait of Leonello. His experience as a medallist must have increased his power of plastic rendering of form in painting, and the result would probably be evident if we possessed any picture dating from his last years. It is universally admitted that his medals are characterised by a

* Cp. Müntz in the *Art Journal*, 1898, p. 205.

certain monumental, epic quality of style. Working on this small scale, he realised, as perhaps no one since has realised, that too great attention to detail engendered smallness of style. His figures and compositions are consequently free from over-elaboration ; moreover—and this is the supreme test of grandeur—they suffer little from reduction, and will bear enlargement to any degree. Of his followers—and few of the medallists of the second half of the quattrocento are independent of him—some lack refinement ; others the faculty of composition ; some are devoted to elaboration of trivialities ; others fail in their lettering. Only one or two, and those in isolated cases, produced portraits or compositions comparable to his in dignity of conception or largeness of style.

The literary extracts which have been cited in the course of this study are sufficient evidence of the high esteem in which Pisanello was held by his contemporaries. Three other brief testimonies may be cited to the same effect.

It was in 1432 that the Florentine Leonardo Dati, the Latin versifier, came to Rome.* Even if we reject the evidence for the presence of Pisanello in Florence before his visit to Rome, we are not obliged to assume that the two men became acquainted in Rome in the first half of 1432. For in the language of the epigram which Dati wrote in praise of the artist there is no proof that they ever knew each other personally. What is more, it is clear from the beginning :

Inter pictores nostri statuere poetae
Pisano palmam :

* See Venturi, p. 35, with references to further literature, and text of the epigram. In l. 8 read *vivum* (as in Berlin *Jahrb.*, xvi., p. 87) for *civum* ; and in l. 5, I suppose, *parceque* for *parteeque*.

that this was not the first poem in praise of Pisanello. Other poets had been exercising their pens. Dati tells us that although the poets had agreed to give Pisanello the palm among painters, as equalling nature with his pencil, he himself had hesitated to accept this opinion ; but he is astonished and convinced

cum, proh Iuppiter ! ipsum
nostros heroas video deducere vivos,
vivos alipedes, vivum genus omne ferarum.

It is clear from this that Pisanello had won fame not only as a painter of wild animals and horses, but also as portrait-painter—or medallist. In fact, there can be little doubt that Dati had in his mind the verses of Guarino or Strozzi. His epigram therefore must be dated in the forties rather than the thirties.

The other two references are merely made in passing. One is in Giovanni Sanzio's Chronicle of the Life of Federigo di Montefeltro.* A long list of the painters of the fifteenth century begins with Jan van Eyck (*el gran Iannes*) and Rogier van der Weyden (*el discepul Rugiero*). It then continues :

Ma nell' Italia in questa eta presente
Vi fu el degno Gentil da Fabriano
Giovan da Fiesol frate al ben ardente
Et in medaglie et in pictura el Pisano
Frate Filippo et Francesco Pesselli
Domenico chiamato el Venetiano

and so on down to the great names of the end of the century.

* Ed. H. Holtzinger (Stuttgart, 1893), lib. xxii., cap. 96, 120 f. Venturi, p. 19.

Again,* in dedicating to Eleonora of Aragon, Duchess of Ferrara, his "Discorso della Nobiltà," a translation of Leonardo Bruni's "De Nobilitate," the author makes a contemptuous reference to

Cose doro e d'argento fatte d'arti
Meccanice, e tal miniate carte
Da Zotto o dal Pisan . . .

It is impossible here to sketch, however briefly, the careers of even a few of those medallists who derived most directly from Pisanello.† But one of them, Matteo de' Pasti (or de Bastia) of Verona, claims more detailed notice than the rest.‡ He was the son of a Master Andrea, perhaps a member of that Veronese family which had supplied the monastery of S. Zeno with two abbots in the latter half of the fourteenth century.§ He is first heard of at Venice in 1441, when he was engaged on some work illustrating the Triumphs of Petrarch for Piero di Cosimo de' Medici. Early in 1446 he is at Verona, working for the court of Ferrara, whither he journeys from time to time as portions of his task of illuminating a breviary for Leonello are completed (see above, p. 160). In the same year he seems to have transferred himself to Rimini, and settled down there

* Venturi, p. 66, from Cod. Est. vii., A. 31, at Modena.

† The best general sketch of the subject, Fabriczy's *Medaillen der italienischen Renaissance*, is now accessible to English readers in Mrs. Hamilton's translation (London, 1904).

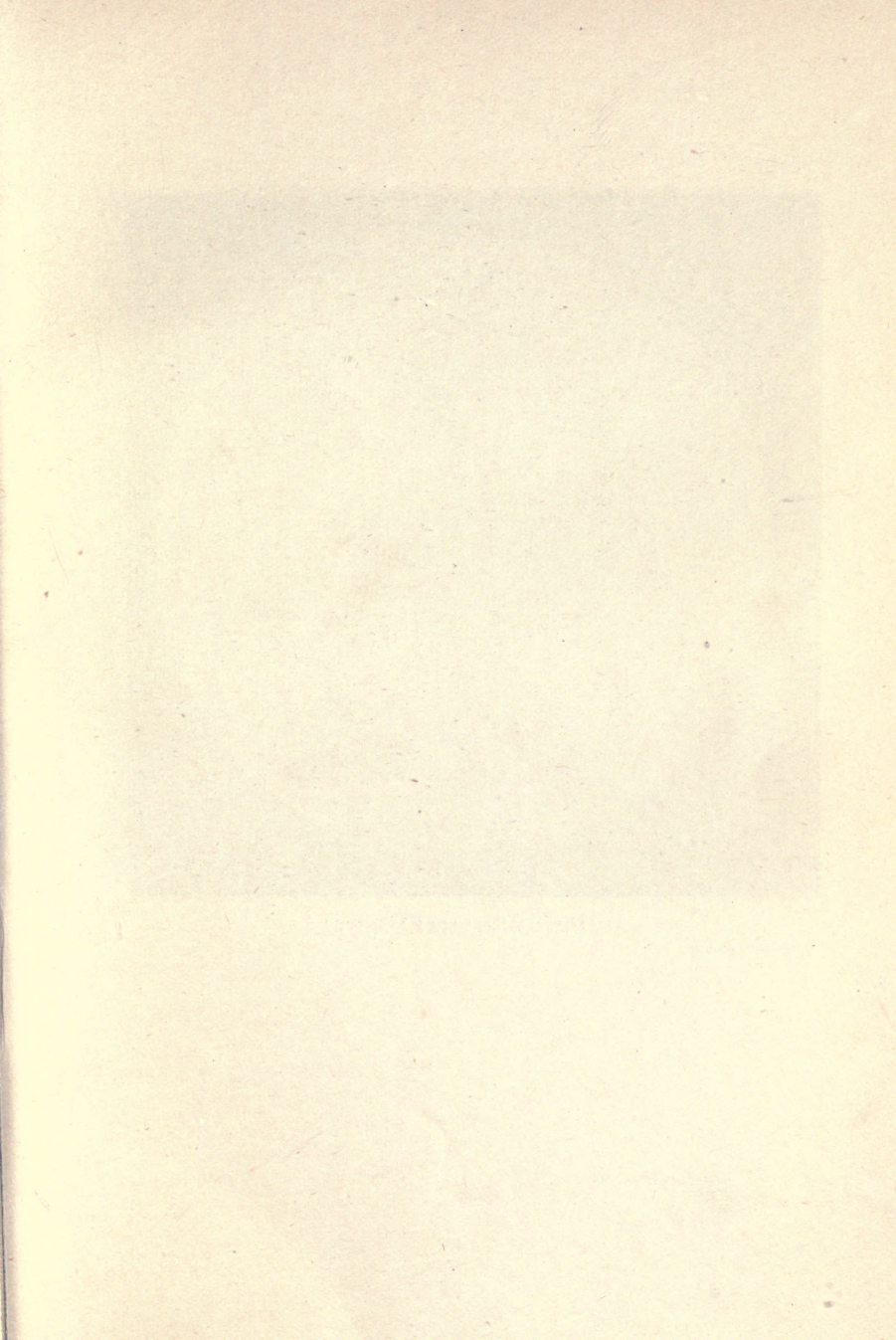
‡ See for details, Ch. Yriarte, *Rimini* (1882), especially pp. 422-425; Heiss, *Léon-Baptiste Alberti*, etc., pp. 16 f.; Gruyer, *L'Art ferrarais*, i. pp. 595 f. Heiss wrongly cites Matteo Bosso, *de gerendo magistratu*, as his authority for certain details; I assume that he obtained them from some other trustworthy source.

§ Ottonello, in 1364; Jacopo, in 1387. Biancolini, *Not. Stor.* i., p. 54.

for a considerable time. He made over twenty medals of Sigismondo and Isotta Atti; some bear the dates 1446, 1447, 1450, 1457, while the rest are undated. In addition we have some half-dozen other medals of distinguished persons, such as Guarino of Verona and Alberti, and also a medal of Christ. Some of these at least, such as the medal of Guarino, presumably belong to the period before he went to Rimini. But more important than his employment as medallist was his superintendence of the work on the Tempio Malatestiano.* In Alberti's absence he carried out the instructions of the architect, who addressed to him a letter, still extant, couched in friendly and flattering terms. He was held in high honour, as Bosso tells us, and as is proved from legal documents, by Sigismondo, who must have appreciated the conversational gift with which he was endowed. He married Livia, the daughter of Giovanni Valdigara of Rimini, and his daughter Pera also married into the family de' Arduini in 1457. About 1460, the Sultan Mahomet II. sent a request to Sigismondo asking for the loan of Matteo to paint a portrait and make a medal of him. A copy of the reply, which was written by Valturio, Sigismondo's secretary, is extant. It lavishes unstinted praises on the artist, who was despatched with a letter and a copy of Valturio's work *de re militari*. He does not seem, however, to have arrived at his destination.†

* Besides the documents quoted by the authorities already cited, see a contract made in 1451 between Matteo and Maso di Bartolommeo for some bronze work (Yriarte, *Livre de Souvenirs de Maso di Bartolommeo dit Masaccio*, Paris, 1894, pp. 16 and 70).

† *L'Arte*, iii., p. 145: extract from a letter of Ant. Guidobono from Venice relating to the journey. The Director of the R. Archivio di Stato at Milan kindly informs me that the date of the letter is





SIGISMONDO MALATESTA

British Museum



BY MATTEO DE' PASTI

Bronze
Follow p. 226

He reached Candia, and there seems to have confided the nature of his mission to an engineer, who communicated with the Venetian authorities. Matteo was promptly sent back to Venice with his book and letter. The Signoria regarded the sending of Matteo as a most unfriendly act on the part of Sigismondo; but we hear nothing more of the matter. As the original request for the loan of the artist came through the Venetian ambassador, we can only conclude that Matteo was entrusted with some secret mission to the detriment of Venetian interests with the Sultan, and that the betrayal of this fact caused his return.* He was back at Rimini in 1464, is said to have lived there until 1483, and to have died in 1491.

Matteo was evidently a versatile artist, whether or no the attribution to him of the designs for Valturio's work, published at Verona in 1472, be accepted. The evidence for the attribution is certainly very slight.† Nor can we be

November 10, 1461, not 1467, and that the original letter from which the extract was copied is also preserved in the same collection (*Potenze estere—Venezia—1461*). It is addressed to Francesco Sforza. In another letter of November 23, 1461, the same affair is mentioned: *Preterea avixo vostra Sub^{te} quello scrisse de quello Matheo Pasto veronexe che andava al turcho e che e destenuto per questa I. S^a e vero, et questa S^a e molto amarichata verso S. Sigis. et farane grande demonstratione; per una altra scrivero piu destexo, ma hollo da bona radice che may non mente.*

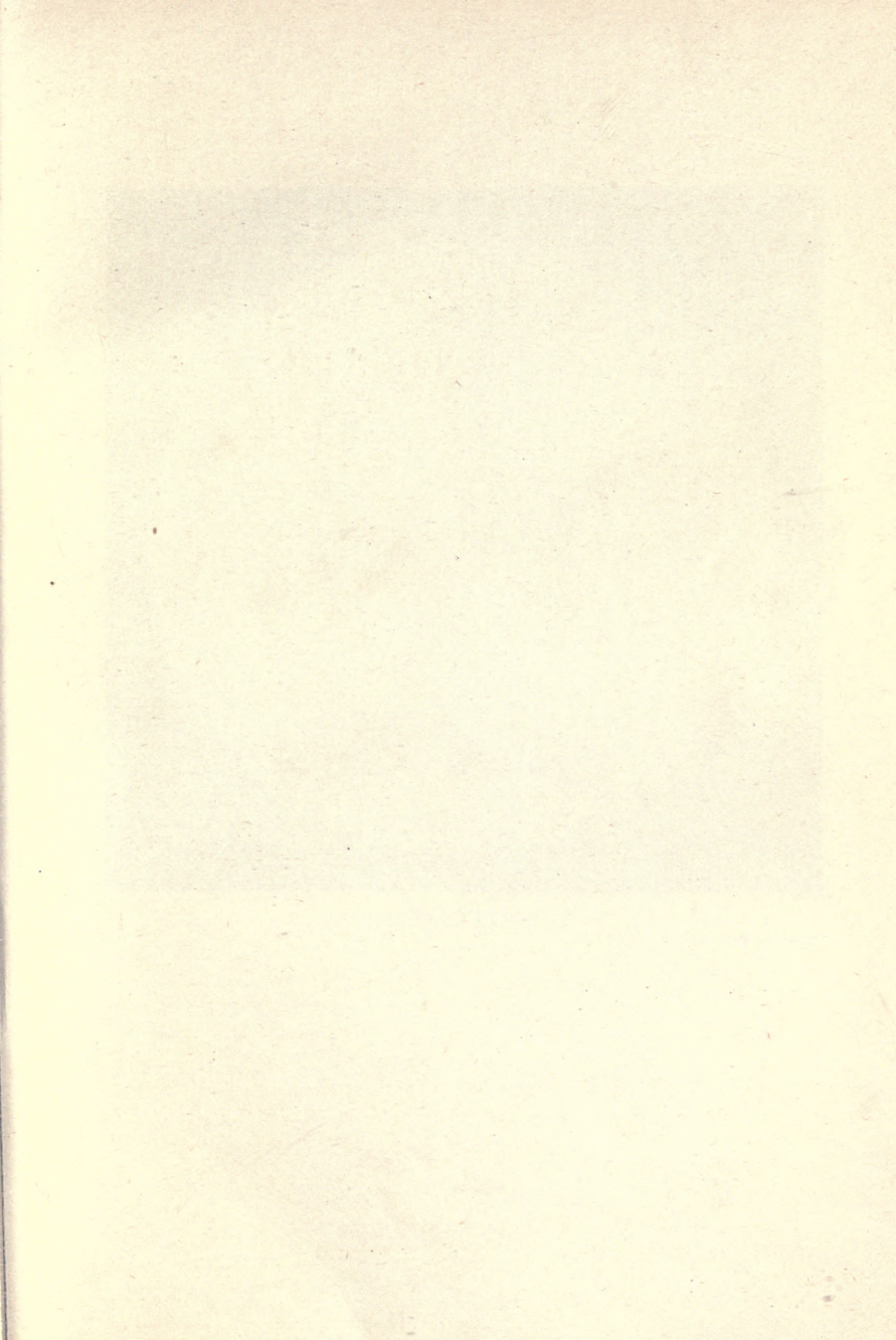
* In connexion with the letter entrusted to Pasti, Burckhardt (*Civil. of the Ren.* 1890, p. 93) cites the speech of Bernardo Giustiniani to Pius II. (*Pii II. Comment.* x. p. 492, ed. 1584), saying that Sigismondo was likely to call the Turks into Italy.

† A conjecture of Sc. Maffei. An interesting MS. of the work (*Brit. Mus.* 24,945), about contemporary with the printed edition, has illustrations on the whole inferior to the engravings. On the latter, see especially Lippmann (*Wood-Engraving in Italy*, pp. 57-62),

sure that any specimen of his work as painter or miniator is extant. On the strength of the letter written by Matteo to Piero de' Medici, a piece of furniture in the Uffizi with representations of Triumphs has been assigned to him.* Stylistically, the attribution rests merely on a superficial resemblance to Pisanello. But the artist who produced the sturdy, if not very successful elephant on the medal of Isotta could hardly have painted the elephants on the chest of the Uffizi. Of Matteo's architectural ability it is also difficult to judge, for in the Tempio at Rimini he was but carrying out the instructions of Alberti. It is even doubtful whether he executed any of the decorative sculptures himself; possibly some of the bronze work may be from his hand. He certainly failed to impress his individuality on the other artists, like Agostino di Duccio, who were working there. Apart from mere reproductions of his medallic designs, such as the Strength with the broken column, his influence is perhaps traceable in the splendid and well-known medallion-portrait of Sigismondo on a column of the chapel of the Madonna dell' Acqua.

It is therefore to his medals that we must go to obtain an idea of his merits as an artist. His most successful efforts in this direction were made in the service of Sigismondo. The portrait-medal with the Rocca Malatestiana on the reverse (Plate 66) is indeed his masterpiece. For it stands quite alone among his medals in combining who also regards favourably the still more doubtful theory that Pasti designed the illustrations for Accio Zucco's Aesop.

* Reproduced in Prince d'Essling and Müntz, *Petrarque, ses Études d'Art*, &c. (Paris, 1902), pp. 135, 139. A similar work at Turin: E. Jacobsen, *Arch. Stor. dell'Arte*, 1897, p. 126.





ISOTTA ATTI

British Museum



BY MATTEO DE' PASTI

Bronze

Follow p. 228

with a fine obverse a really successful and original reverse composition.

The medal, of which several slight varieties exist,* for the most part unsigned, but all certainly from the same hand, bears a fine profile bust of Sigismondo. Still, to the eye fresh from Pisanello's portrait of the same man, Matteo's is a comparatively tame production. It lacks the fire and spontaneity of the great medallist's work; its effect is more formal; one doubts whether it can be as good a portrait, seeing the way in which the contour of the head is accommodated to the circular field.† A little more, and we should say that the style was petty. On the reverse, however, is a design the merit of which has hardly been adequately appreciated. This is the Rocca Malatestiana, in commemoration of the completion of which in 1446 the medal was cast. No representation of a piece of architecture on any other Italian medal can compare with this splendid mass. Doubtless Pasti's practical experience as architect and painter helped him to obtain this surprising effect of solidity and depth. Another medal (of 1450) represents the façade of the Tempio Malatestiano as it would have been if Alberti's design had been completed. Apart from its architectural interest, however, this piece has little merit, both obverse and reverse being heavy and dull. It is unsigned.

The bust of Isotta Atti,‡ Sigismondo's mistress, and afterwards wife, is represented in two forms, and combined

* The "*Poliorcetes semper invictus*" in the Berlin Cabinet, so highly praised by Friedländer and Fabriczy, seems to me to be spoilt by the wreath which Sigismondo wears.

† See the excellent criticism by Venturi, p. 72.

‡ On this lady, Heiss's remarks (pp. 45, 47) should be read in

with many reverse designs. The dated medals are all of the year 1446, long before she was married to Sigismondo, and the others are probably of the same time. The more pleasing of the busts (Plate 67) represents her wearing a veil on the back of her head, the hair being done up elaborately over a high pad. The face of this "Catherine de Médicis au petit pied" is by no means without attraction. But it is distinguished by a certain shrewdness of expression, as of an able woman of the world, such as we know her to have been. The other bust, where she has no veil, is much less pleasing, owing to the bizarre dressing of the hair and the heaviness of the lips. Among the reverse designs the most striking is the Malatesta elephant.

Of other portrait-medals by Pasti, the best known are those of Alberti and Guarino, both perhaps executed about the time when Matteo was working for the court of Ferrara. Guarino was permanently installed there, and Alberti was there in 1444, helping to choose the sculptor for the equestrian statue of Niccolò III. Matteo's portrait of Alberti is a poor and uninspired production. With Guarino he is more successful (Plate 68). This remarkable profile, with its curiously retreating forehead and powerful nose, is at least forceful, and for once Matteo is not the victim of formality. Can it be that he made the medal, while Pisanello painted the portrait, of the distinguished humanist, and that the medal was merely a reproduction of the portrait as conceived by the greater artist? This would explain the superior virility and energy of this

correction of the curious theory of Yriarte (pp. 157 ff.) that her reputation for literary skill was unmerited.



GUARINO. BY MATTEO DE' PASTI

British Museum

*Bronze
Face p. 230*



S. BERNARDINO. BY MARESCOTTI
FEDERIGO I. GONZAGA. BY TALPA

Berlin Museum

Reduced

Face p. 231

head. Still it must be admitted that the medals of Benedetto de' Pasti and Timoteo Maffei reveal a certain amount of the same force.

Matteo's medal of Jesus Christ is eminently unsuccessful. The weak, carefully-groomed head, oppressed and over-balanced by a solid looking nimbus, has little dignity. Nevertheless, this bust had considerable influence on art, and a type more or less closely derived from it may be traced far into the sixteenth century, not only in Italy but also on the northern side of the Alps.*

The reverse designs by Matteo, with the exception of the Rocca Malatestiana, are poor in conception and composition.

Of other medallists who are associated with the court of Ferrara, two, the jeweller Amadeo of Milan, and Niccolò (presumably the sculptor Baroncelli), have already been mentioned. They probably borrowed from Pisanello, but show themselves quite incapable of learning from him, or of grasping the principles of medallic work. More inspiration and understanding of the nature of the medal are to be observed in Antonio Marescotti, whose dated medals range from 1446 to 1462. His most interesting works are the medals of the Beato Giovanni da Tossignano and of S. Bernardino of Siena (Plate 69). The latter portrait—made evidently from a death-mask—has considerable pathos. But honest and full of feeling as Marescotti's

* See K. Lange, *Peter Flötner*, p. 106, and *Reliquary*, 1904, pp. 175 f. A head derived from it is seen in a medallion in Bart. Montagna's altar-piece of 1499 in the Brera (Madonna with four saints).

work may be, it lacks distinction, and the designs show no power of composition.

The obscure artists Lixignolo, Petrecini, Coradini, and their fellows, who worked at Ferrara under Borso and Ercole I., must be passed over. Although by no means independent of the founder of their art, they show no closer connexion with him than do many others, working at other courts, who could only be discussed in a general history of the subject. On the other hand, the remarkable medal of Ludovico Gonzaga by Pietro da Fano (Plate 70), which has already been mentioned, and Bartolomeo Talpa's medal of Federico I. Gonzaga (Plate 69) show that Pisanello's traditions were not forgotten in Mantua. In Venice, too, Marco Guidizani (working between 1450 and 1460) made a fine medal of Bartolomeo Colleoni (Plate 71); and the medal of Mahomet II., dated 1481 (Plate 72), by the otherwise unknown Constantius, has a severity and dignity learned from the master and worthily preserved.

The medallists whom we have mentioned are, however, comparatively unknown to amateurs; even Matteo de' Pasti is little more than a name. But there is another artist who has long enjoyed a wide reputation, and for some time indeed counted as a greater master than Pisanello. This is Sperandio of Mantua (born about 1425, died after 1495), who worked at Ferrara, Mantua, Milan, and Bologna, both as medallist and as sculptor. The fall in his position in the hierarchy of medallists* cannot be due merely to the swing of the pendulum, which diverts

* See the just appreciation of his merits by Friedländer (pp. 61 f.) and Fabriczy (pp. 87 ff.)



LUDOVICO GONZAGA, BY PIETRO DA FANO

Reduced

Face p. 232





BARTOLOMEO COLLEONI
BY GUIDIZANI

Berlin Museum

Reduced

Follow Pl. 70



MAHOMET II. BY CONSTANTIUS

Berlin Museum

Reduced

Follow Pl. 71





FEDERIGO OF URBINO AND FRANCESCO
SFORZA. BY SPERANDIO

Bibliothèque Nationale and Berlin

*Reduced
Face p. 233*

the public taste now to the archaic, now to the classical, now to the decadent period. Our reasons for declining to place him beside Pisanello are based on his breach of certain fundamental principles of good art. He is often pretentious and vulgar, to a degree only surpassed by the Florentine Francesco da Sangallo in his medals; his work is careless, not only in sheer erroneous drawing, but also in roughness of execution. Good castings are very rare, and there can be little doubt that, amid the pressure of the commissions that poured in upon him, he rarely took the trouble to chase his casts himself. His reverse compositions are, as a rule, ugly; even one of the best of them, the figure of Federigo of Urbino on horseback, is ill-proportioned. The bust on the obverse of this medal (Plate 73) is one of his most refined portraits; but it would have been difficult to vulgarise this model despot, as he has succeeded in vulgarising Francesco Sforza (Plate 73). Another somewhat attractive portrait is that of the poet Carbone in advanced age. But it is only necessary to compare this head with Pisanello's Vittorino da Feltre to see at a glance that the later artist has not penetrated below the external appearance of his subject. Admirers of Pisanello also owe Sperandio a grudge for the way in which he has murdered some of his master's most picturesque designs (Plate 74).*

Although for nearly forty years Sperandio was the most popular medallist in North Italy, there were other artists who in a more modest way carried on the more refined tradition. Such were Pier Jacopo Ilario Bonacolsi, known as l'Antico, Gian Cristoforo Romano, Giovanni

* See above, p. 172.

Boldù, Fra Antonio of Brescia, Gambello and Enzola. Less pleasing in their work, but immediately dependent on Pisanello for such merits as it possesses, are Pietro da Milano and Francesco Laurana. Their activity as medallists at the Court of René of Anjou in the sixties had been preceded by work on the Triumphal Arch of Alfonso at Naples, where they had doubtless been directly influenced by Pisanello. But to attempt to characterise the work of these artists would lead us far beyond the scope of this volume; nor can we even mention the names of the early masters of the great Florentine school.

One fact emerges, however, with increasing distinctness, the longer we study the development of the medallic art in Italy, and that is the unapproachable supremacy of Pisanello. Is there any other branch of art in which the greatest name is also the first in point of time?



REVERSES OF MEDALS OF CARLO GRATI AND
GIOV. BENTIVOGLIO II. BY SPERANDIO

Reduced

Face p. 234

APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

Circa 1380-1390. Pisanello born.

Circa 1384. Altichiero and Avanzo paint in fresco the Hall of the Sereghi.

1390. The Carrara Medals.

After 1390. The fresco in the Cavalli Chapel by Altichiero.

Circa 1390-1400. The Constantine and Heraclius Medals.

Between 1409 and 1414. Gentile da Fabriano and P. at Venice, painting in the Ducal Palace.

1423 (May). Gentile da Fabriano's *Adoration of the Magi*.

Between 1424 and 1428. The *Annunciation* of S. Fermo.

1428. Death of Gentile da Fabriano.

1431 (April 18)-1432 (ult. February). Payments to P. for work in St. John Lateran at Rome.

1431 (between April 18 and September 22). P. passes through Ferrara on his way to Verona.

1431 (November 27). P. again in Rome.

1431 or 1432 (June 28). Doubtful letter to F. M. Visconti.

1432 (July 26). P. receives passport.

Between 1432 and 1438. P. in Florence ; paints *Story of the Pilgrim*.

1435 (January). P. sends to Leonello a portrait of Julius Caesar.

Between 1435 and 1438. *St. Eustace* (National Gallery), *Ginevra d'Este* (Louvre), and *St. George and the Princess* (S. Anastasia).

1438 (July). Mantua joins Milan against Venice. P. excluded from Verona.

1438. Medal of John Palæologus made at Ferrara.

Soon after 1438. Guarino's Poem.

1439 (May). P. at Mantua.

1441 (early). P. at Ferrara.

1441 (March 27). Debt recorded against P. at Mantua.

1441 (summer). P. paints portrait of Leonello in competition with Jacopo Bellini.

1441 (August 16). P. returns to Mantua.

1441 (December 26). Death of Niccolò d'Este. Leonello succeeds him.

1441 (end) to 1442. P. at Milan and Pavia. Medals of F. M. Visconti, N. Piccinino, Fr. Sforza. Frescoes in Castle at Pavia.

1442. Sonnet of Ubaldini della Carda.

1442. P. mentioned in list of Veronese *fuorusciti*.

1443-1448. Smaller medals of Leonello. Panel *Portrait of Leonello* (Bergamo). *St. George and St. Anthony with Virgin* (National Gallery).

1443 (February 27, March 3). P. at Ferrara

1443 (between March and September). P. visits Mantua, and brings away picture of *God the Father*.

1443 (September 11). P. at Ferrara.

Before 1443 (September 27). Elegy of T. Vespasiano Strozzi.

1443 (November 6). P. at Ferrara.

1444 (March 11). P. at Ferrara; proposes to visit Naples.

1444 (April). Leonello marries Maria of Aragon. Marriage-medal of Leonello.

1445. Medals of Sigismondo and Domenico Malatesta.
1445-1447. Payments to P. for work at Ferrara.
Circa 1447. Medals of Gianfrancesco and Ludovico Gonzaga, and Vittorino da Feltre.
1447. Medals of Cecilia Gonzaga and Belloto Cúmano.
Circa 1447-1448. Elegies of Basinio and Porcellio.
1447 (August 13). Death of Filippo Maria Visconti.
1448 (August 19). Medal of Decembrio finished at Ferrara.
1448 (end). P. goes to Naples.
1448 (December 31). Debt recorded against P. at Ferrara.
1449 (February 14). Privilegium of Alfonso for P.
1449 (June 6). Privilegium takes effect.
1449. Medals of Alfonso (*Liberalitas* and *Venator*).
Circa 1449-50. Other Medals of Alfonso and Iñigo d'Avalos.
1450. P. mentioned as living by Flavio Biondo.
1455 (October 31). P. mentioned by Carlo de' Medici.
1455-56. P. mentioned as dead by Facio.

APPENDIX II

DRAWINGS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Mr. Sidney Colvin has kindly called my attention to two sheets of drawings (Nos. 1 and 2 below) in the British Museum, which he has recently identified. I take this opportunity of giving notes of all the drawings by Pisanello or his pupils in the National Collection.

1. (P. p. — 10.) Vellum, 15.5 × 22 cm.

Recto. Pen. Four studies. (1) Figure of a man standing to front, bald, full beard, clad in ample cloak which hangs in heavy folds; he holds in l. a book half covered by the drapery. From the same model as the "St. Anthony," Valardi, fol. 173, No. 2633 (Plate 43); note the resemblance in the hands. (2) Half-figure of woman r., looking up, wearing helmet and loose robe, which is tied on r. shoulder with tasselled cord, and hangs in long folds; it is open at the r. side, so as to show the arm; underneath the robe is another garment. The helmet ("Corinthian," crestless, with hook in front of bowl, attachments for crest, and neck-piece, as on Corinthian coins) suggests that this is an adaptation from the antique. (3) Figure of a man seated to front, in girdled robe and full cloak, holding with l. hand on l. knee a closed book, r. extended as though declaiming. (4) Half-figure of an Emperor r., laureate; wears robe with embroidered border

and front, fastened on r. shoulder with tasselled cord, as in subject No. (2). The head vaguely recalls the portraits of the Emperor Frederick II. on his famous gold coins.

Verso. Pen and bistre. Two studies of heraldic eagles. The upper one has its head turned to dexter side and is crowned; the lower, uncrowned, has its head turned three-quarters to sinister. Cp. Vallardi, fol. 258, no. 2485, where the eagles have changed places, the positions are reversed, and both are crowned. The correspondence is so exact that one drawing would seem to have been produced by transfer from the other, were it not that the respective dimensions of the birds have been altered.

The drawings on this sheet, although close to Pisanello, do not seem to me to be from his own hand. The connexion of the chief figure on the *recto* with the artist of the similar Vallardi drawing is very near.

2. (P. p. -11). Vellum, 23.5 × 16.5 cm. Lagoy Collection.

Recto. Pen. Two studies. (1) Male figure, with short beard and ivy-wreath in hair, advancing r.; nude but for drapery which covers his l. shoulder, side, and back, and is knotted round his waist; carries on his l. shoulder an eagle (its legs not shown) which hangs forward with open beak, vomiting. Ground rendered with characteristic hooked strokes; hair and shading minutely done; attitude of staggering under weight of the bird well rendered. (2) Nude female figure, in almost pure outline, standing r., l. hand holding mirror, r. (unfinished) raised to breast. Her hair is dressed in a long plait which is brought round above the forehead, small locks escaping under it. Details can be seen in a large-scale reproduction of this head by a very unskilful pupil in Vallardi, fol. 94, no. 2589.

Verso. Chalk. Two studies. (1) Head of beardless man r., looking up; only the face and ear are seen. (2) Head of

young woman three-quarters l., mantle drawn up over back of head and framing the face with its crinkled edge. The treatment of the mouth and eyes recalls some of the faces in the picture in the Colonna Gallery (Madonna and angels) attributed to Stefano da Zevio.

The drawings on the *recto* of this sheet are among the most delicate from Pisanello's hand, and the more interesting because of the rarity of representations of the nude among his works. They presumably represent allegories. The chalk drawings on the *verso* seem to me to be by a pupil.

3. (1895. 9. 15. 441.) Paper, 19.5 × 28.5 cm. Lawrence, Lagoy and Malcolm Collections. Eight pen studies. (1-6.) Hanging corpses, of which two were utilised for the S. Anastasia fresco. (7) Three-quarter-figure of lady to l. wearing wreath of flowers and dress with high collar and long full sleeves. (8) Bust of boy facing, with curly hair, wearing tunic with high collar and girdle below the arms. See Dodgson, Berl. *Jahrb.* xv. (1894), pp. 259 f., with Plate. (Above, p. 94.)

4. (46. 5. 9. 143.) Vellum 34 × 25 cm. Three pen studies. (1) Courtier, clean-shaven, standing r., wearing broad-brimmed hat, short cloak trimmed with fur; thumb of r. hand stuck in girdle. (2) Courtier, with moustache, standing to front, wearing tall berretto, short fur-trimmed tunic and cloak, broad girdle round waist. (3) Courtier standing to l., clean-shaven, wearing ivy-wreath on head, fur-trimmed cloak. Signed PISANVS F in good lettering. Ground rendered with hooked strokes. Central figure, in spite of the moustache, is probably from same model as served for the St. George of Anastasia. The third figure has a general resemblance to the man seen from behind in the Berlin tondo. The whole drawing has some points of weakness, but much that is

characteristic. See *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, 1881, t. 24, p. 172; Phot. Braun, 287. (Above, pp. 94, 217).

Together with the above, there are placed the sheet (Sloane 5226-57) discussed above (pp. 32 ff.) in connexion with the Ducal Palace, and two small sheets of vellum (1895. 12. 14. 94 and 95) with water-colour sketches of foxes, dogs, hunting leopards, etc., which do not seem to me to belong to Pisanello. On the other hand, the only drawing mentioned by Venturi (p. 123) as being in the British Museum is not there, but apparently at Chantilly (see above, p. 94). I have not identified the drawing of a young man seated, with two figures of saints, mentioned by Ephrussi in *Gaz. d. Beaux Arts*, sér. ii., t. 20, p. 315.

APPENDIX III

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FROM this list (which may be supplemented by reference to the footnotes in the body of the volume) the larger general works on Italian painting, which only deal incidentally with Pisanello, are omitted. The *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* and the *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* are cited as the *Berlin Jahrbuch* and *Vienna Jahrbuch* respectively.

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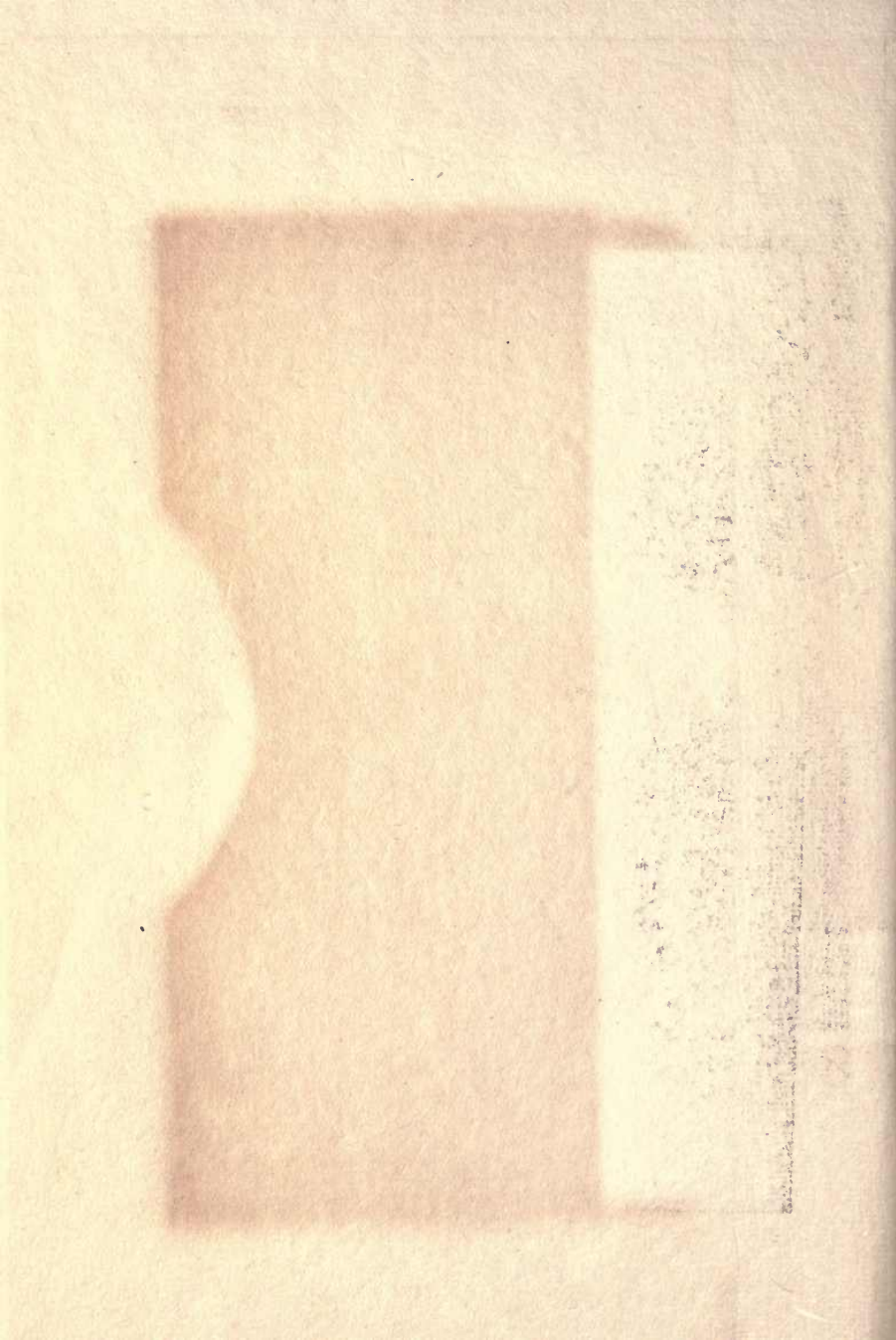
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