

"The acquisition of any knowledge is always of use to the intellect; because it may thus drive out useless things, and retain the good.

"Avoid studies of which the result dies with the worker.

"Reprove your friend in secret, and praise him openly."

In the midst of the corruption of that age, we hear no word breathed against the character of this eager, brilliant, many-sided man. He won from his pupils the most complete devotion, and he seems to have given as fond an affection in return. This possibly satisfied the craving of the human heart for love. Perhaps, after all, life did not appear as satisfactory as he could have wished, with all his worship of the beautiful, for he says, "When I thought I was learning to live, I was but learning to die." He seemed at the zenith of his powers when death came; but who shall estimate the value of a life by its length? He said, "As a day well spent gives a joyful sleep, so does life well employed give a joyful death. . . . A life well spent is long."

## RAPHAEL OF URBINO.

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"IN the history of Italian art Raphael stands alone, like Shakespeare in the history of our literature; and he takes the same kind of rank—a superiority not merely of degree, but of quality. . . . His works have been an inexhaustible storehouse of ideas to painters and to poets. Everywhere in art we find his traces. Everywhere we recognize his forms and lines, borrowed or stolen, reproduced, varied, imitated,—never improved.

"Some critic once said, 'Show me any sentiment or feeling in any poet, ancient or modern, and I will show you the same thing either as well or better expressed in Shakespeare.' In the same manner one might say, 'Show me in any painter, ancient or modern, any especial beauty of form, expression, or sentiment, and in some picture, drawing, or painting after Raphael I will show you the same thing as well or better done, and that accomplished which others have only sought or attempted.'

"To complete our idea of this rare union of greatness and versatility as an artist with all that could grace and dignify the man, we must add such personal qualities as very seldom meet in the

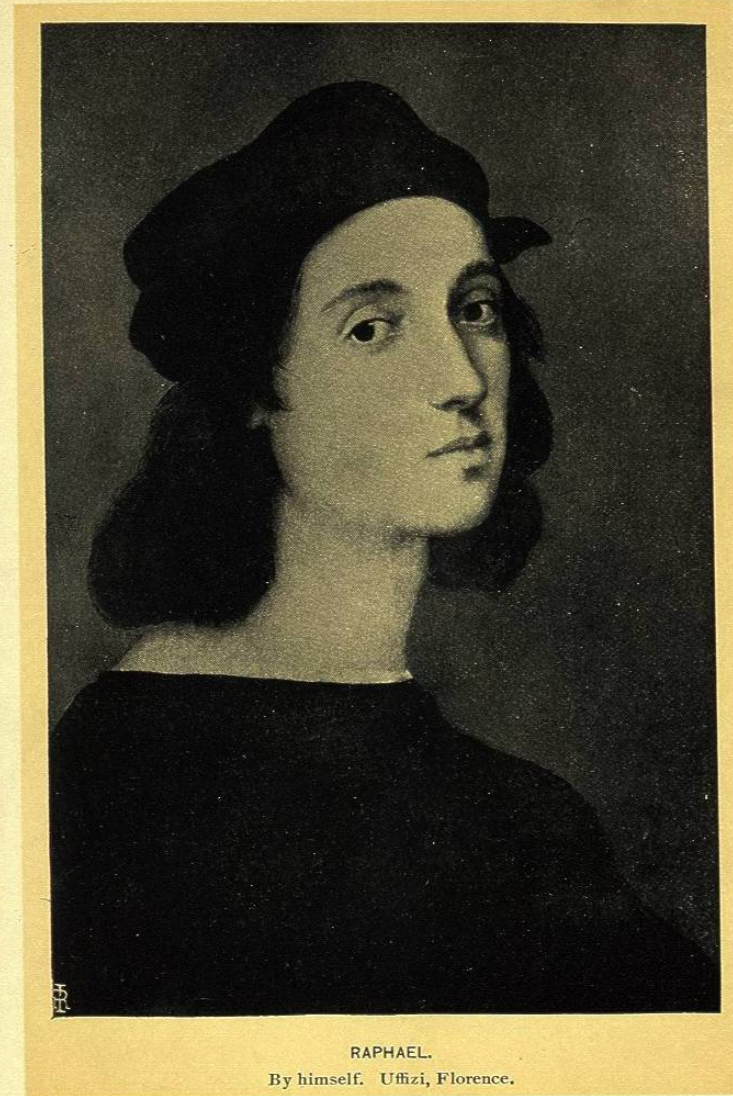
same individual — a bright, generous, genial, gentle spirit; the most attractive manners, the most winning modesty."

Thus writes Mrs. Jameson of the man of whom Vasari said, "When this noble artist died, well might Painting have departed also, for when he closed his eyes, she too was left, as it were, blind. . . . To him of a truth it is that we owe the possession of invention, coloring, and execution, brought alike, and altogether, to that point of perfection for which few could have dared to hope; nor has any man ever aspired to pass before him."

Raphael of Urbino was born at Colbordolo, a small town in the Duchy of Urbino, April 6, 1483. His father, Giovanni Santi, was a painter of considerable merit, and was possessed also of poetic ability, as he wrote an epic of two hundred and twenty-four pages, in honor of Federigo of Montefeltro, then Duke of Urbino. This duke was a valiant soldier, and a patron of art and literature, who for years kept twenty or thirty persons copying Greek and Latin manuscripts for his library.

The mother of Raphael, Magia, the daughter of Battista Ciarla, a merchant at Urbino, was a woman of unusual sweetness of disposition and beauty of character. Unfortunately she died when Raphael was eight years old. Her three other children died young.

These years must have been happy ones to the gentle, loving child. Their home was in the midst of the snowy peaks of the Apennines, looking



RAPHAEL.

By himself. Uffizi, Florence.

towards the blue Adriatic. It is not strange that he became a worshipper of the beautiful. Nature soon grows to be an inspiring companion to those who love her. She warms the heart with her exquisite pictures of varied earth and sky; she caresses us with the glow of sunlight and the fragrance of flowers; she sings us to rest with the melody of the sea and the murmur of the trees and the brooks.

Giovanni Santi married for his second wife Bernardina, the daughter of the goldsmith, Pietro di Parte, a woman of strong character, but lacking the gentleness of Magia. Two years after this marriage he died, leaving Raphael doubly orphaned at eleven years of age. What prospect was there that this boy, without father or mother, without riches or distinguished family, would work his way to renown?

The will of Giovanni left the Santi home to Bernardina as long as she remained a widow, and the child to her care and that of his brother, a priest, Don Bartolomeo. The latter does not appear to have been a very saintly minister, for he and Bernardina quarrelled constantly over the property, quite forgetting the development of the boy left in their charge. Finally Magia's brother, Simone di Battista Ciarla, came to an understanding with the disputants, and arranged that the lad, who had worked somewhat in his father's studio, should be placed under some eminent painter.

Pietro Perugino was chosen, an artist who had one of the largest schools in Italy, and who was noted especially for his coloring and profound feeling. It is said that when he examined the sketches of the boy, he exclaimed, "Let him be my pupil: he will soon become my master."

Perugino had been a follower of Savonarola, but after he had seen that good man put to death, he gave up his faith in God and man. When he was on his death-bed, he refused to see a confessor, saying, "I wish to see how a soul will fare in that Land, which has not been confessed."

For nine years Raphael worked under Perugino at Perugia, studying perspective and every department of art, and winning the love of both master and pupils. When he was seventeen, Passavant, in his life of Raphael, says, the young artist painted his first works, his master being in Florence: a banner for the church of the Trinita of Città di Castello, and the "Crucifixion." The banner has the "Trinity" on one sheet of canvas, and the "Creation of Man" on the other. The "Crucifixion" was bought by Cardinal Fesch at Rome, and at the sale of his paintings, in 1845, was purchased for about twelve thousand five hundred dollars. It is now in Earl Dudley's collection.

About this time the "Coronation of the Virgin" was painted for Madonna Maddalina degli Oddi, a lady of great influence, who obtained for Raphael several commissions, concerning which he expresses great joy in his letters. How many are willing to

employ an artist after he is famous; how few before! A woman had the heart and the good sense to help him in these early years, and she helped the whole art world thereby.

This picture was kept in the Franciscan church at Perugia until 1792, when it was sent to Paris, but was restored to Italy by the treaty of 1815, and is now in the Vatican.

For a friend of Perugia he painted the beautiful Conestabile Madonna. "The mother of the Saviour," says Passavant, "a figure of virginal sweetness, is walking in the country, in early spring, when the trees are still bare, and the distant mountains are covered with snow. She is walking along pensively, reading in a little book, in which the child in her arms also looks attentively. Nothing could be found more exquisite. Everything in it shows that Raphael must have devoted himself to it with especial ardor."

This picture, only six and three-fourths inches square, was sold in 1871 to the Emperor of Russia for sixty-six thousand dollars.

Raphael left the studio of Perugino in the beginning of 1504, before he was twenty-one, and painted for the Franciscans, at Città di Castello, the "Marriage of the Virgin," now the chief ornament of the Brera gallery at Milan, and called the "Sposalizio." "The Virgin is attended by five women, and St. Joseph by five young men who were once Mary's suitors. The despair of the lovers is

shadowed forth by the reeds they hold; they will never flower; and the handsomest youth is breaking his across his knees."

Grimm says of this picture, "Next to the Sistine Madonna, it may be considered Raphael's most popular work. In the figures of this composition we recognize types of all the different ages of man, which allow every one who stands before it, whether young or old, to feel as if the artist had been the confidant of all the thoughts and feelings appropriate to his period of life. . . . Raphael's elegance obtrudes itself nowhere, as with other artists is so often the case. Beside this, the harmony of his colors, which, although hitting against one another almost sharply, still have the effect of a bed of flowers whose varied hues combine agreeably. A youthful delight in the brilliancy of color is apparent, which later yielded to a different taste. Like Dürer, Raphael might have confessed, in his ripest years, that while young he loved a certain garishness of coloring, such as he had afterward renounced."

Raphael now returned to Urbino, where he painted for the reigning duke, "St. George slaying the Dragon" and "St. Michael attacking Satan." He made many friends among the noted people of the court, but, full of ambition, and having heard of the works of Da Vinci and Michael Angelo at Florence, he was extremely anxious to go to that city. A lady, as previously, took interest in the boyish artist, and wrote to Pietro Soderini, the



LO SPOSALIZIO.

The mystical marriage of Mary and Joseph. Brera, Milan. Raphael.

Gonfaloniere of Florence, the following letter of introduction:—

*“Most magnificent and powerful lord, whom I must ever honor as a father,—*

“He who presents this letter to you is Raphael, a painter of Urbino, endowed with great talent in art. He has decided to pass some time in Florence, in order to improve himself in his studies. As the father, who was dear to me, was full of good qualities, so the son is a modest young man of distinguished manners; and thus I bear him an affection on every account, and wish that he should attain perfection. This is why I recommend him as earnestly as possible to your Highness, with an entreaty that it may please you, for love of me, to show him help and protection on every opportunity. I shall regard as rendered to myself, and as an agreeable proof of friendship to me, all the services and kindness that he may receive from your Lordship.

“From her who commends herself to you, and is willing to render any good offices in return.

“JOANNA FELTRA DE RUVERE, [*sic.*]

“Duchess of Sora, and Prefectissa of Rome.”

With this cordial letter from the sister of the Duke of Urbino, he entered the City of Flowers. He was now a youth of twenty-one, slight in figure, five feet eight inches tall, with dark brown eyes and hair, perfect teeth, and the kindest of hearts. He was received into the homes of the patricians, and was asked to paint pictures for them. Meantime

he used every spare moment in study. Especially did the works of Masaccio and Leonardo da Vinci, says Passavant, "reveal to Raphael his own wonderful powers, until then almost concealed. Awakened suddenly, and excited with the inspiration that seemed all at once to flow in on him from every side, he pushed forward at once towards the perfection he was so soon to attain."

He copied the horsemen in Da Vinci's battle of Anghiari; made sketches from life of the children of the Florentines, in his book of drawings, now to be seen in the Academy of Venice; stood entranced before the gates of Ghiberti, and that marvel of beauty, the Campanile of Giotto.

Raphael now painted for his friend, Lorenzo Nasi, the "Madonna della Gran Duca," now in the Pitti Palace. Until the end of the last century this picture was in the possession of a poor widow, who sold it to a bookseller for twelve scudi. Finally the Grand Duke Ferdinand III. of Tuscany bought it, and carried it with him through all his journeys, praying before it night and morning. "The bold, commanding, and luminous style," says Passavant, "in which the painting stands out from the background, makes the figure and divine expression of the head still more impressive. Thanks to all these qualities united, this Madonna produces the effect of a supernatural apparition. In short, it is one of the masterpieces of Raphael."

Another Madonna on wood, thirty-five inches in diameter, owned by the Terranuova family until

1854, was purchased for the Berlin Museum, for thirty-four thousand dollars.

After some other works, Raphael went back to Urbino and Perugia, but, eager and restless for Florence, he soon returned to that city and was cordially welcomed. His enthusiasm inspired every artist, and his modest deference to the opinions of others won him countless friends; "the only very distinguished man," as Mrs. Jameson says, "of whom we read, who lived and died without an enemy or a detractor!" Between 1506 and 1508, besides the Tempi Madonna now of Munich, and the Colonna Madonna at Berlin, the Ansidei Madonna was painted for the Ansidei family of Perugia as an altar-piece in the church of S. Fiorenzo. It represents the Virgin on a throne, with Jesus on her right knee, and an open book on her left, from which mother and child are reading. The painting was purchased in 1884 by the National Gallery for the Duke of Marlborough for the enormous sum of three hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

On the marriage of his patrician friend, Lorenzo Nasi, he painted for him the "Madonna with the Goldfinch," called also the "Madonna del Cardellino," now in the Uffizi. The Virgin is seated holding a book, while St. John is offering to the infant Saviour a goldfinch, which the child is about to caress. Another picture, painted for his intimate friend Taddeo Taddei, a learned Florentine, "The Holy Family under the Palm Tree," round, and

forty-two and three-fourths inches in diameter, was purchased by the Duke of Bridgewater, for sixty thousand dollars, and is now in the possession of Lord Ellesmere, in London.

Again Raphael returned to the court of Urbino, always winning to himself the most educated and the noblest among the distinguished men and women. Pietro Bembo, secretary to Leo X. and a cardinal under Paul III., one of the most celebrated writers of the time, was very fond of Raphael; Count Baldassare Castiglione, a writer and diplomatist, was one of the artist's most loved companions; Bernardo Divizio da Bibiena, author of "La Calandra," the first prose comedy written in Italy, loved him as a brother; Francesco Francia and Fra Bartolomeo, the noted artists, were his ardent friends.

Something beside genius drew all these men and scores of others to Raphael. Vasari says, "Every vile and base thought departed from the mind before his influence. There was among his extraordinary gifts one of such value and importance that I can never sufficiently admire it, and always think thereof with astonishment. This was the power accorded to him by Heaven, of bringing all who approached his presence into harmony; an effect inconceivably surprising in our calling, and contrary to the nature of our artists, yet all, I do not say of the inferior grades only, but even those who lay claim to be great personages, became as of one mind once they began to labor in the society



THE MADONNA WITH THE BULLFINCH.  
Uffizi, Florence. Raphael.