

into bold relief by a dark and lonely background. The Magdalen is distinguishable from Venus only by her upturned face and tearful eyes."

Who was this new model? Could it possibly have been Cecilia, the lady whom Titian married about this time? In 1525, a son, Pomponio, was born to him, who became a lifelong sorrow, and before 1530 two other children, Orazio and Lavinia. The happiness of this married life was of short duration, for on the fifth of August, 1530, after the birth of Lavinia, with a mournful heart, he buried Cecilia. One of his friends wrote to the warder of Mantua, "Our master, Titian, is quite disconsolate at the loss of his wife, who was buried yesterday. He told me that in the troubled time of her sickness he was unable to work at the portrait of the Lady Cornelia, or at the picture of the 'Nude,' which he is doing for our most illustrious lord."

Left with three helpless children, Titian sent to Cadore for his sister Orsa, who came and cared for his household as long as she lived. He had grown tired of his home on the Grand Canal, and, longing for the open country, hired a house in the northern suburbs. A little later he took a piece of land adjoining, which extended to the shore, and which became famous in after years for its beauty as a garden and for the distinguished people who gathered there.

Mrs. Jameson says, "He looked over the wide canal which is the thoroughfare between the city of Venice and the Island of Murano; in front, the

two smaller islands of San Cristoforo and San Michele; and beyond them Murano, rising on the right, with all its domes and campanili like another Venice. Far off extended the level line of the mainland, and in the distance the towering chain of the Friuli Alps, sublime, half defined, with jagged snow-peaks soaring against the sky; and more to the left, the Euganean hills, Petrarch's home, melting like visions, into golden light. There, in the evening, gondolas filled with ladies and cavaliers, and resounding with music, were seen skimming over the crimson waves of the Lagoon, till the purple darkness came on rapidly — not, as in the north, like a gradual veil, but like a gemmed and embroidered curtain, suddenly let down over all. This was the view from the garden of Titian; so unlike any other in the world that it never would occur to me to compare it with any other. More glorious combinations of sea, mountain, shore, there may be — I cannot tell; *like*, it is nothing that I have ever beheld or imagined."

Who does not recall such beautiful scenes in silent Venice! And yet one longs, while there, for the sound of the feet of horses, and the zest of a nineteenth-century city; one feels as though life were going by in a dream, and is anxious to awake and be a part of the world's eager, stirring thought. Gondolas and moonlight evenings delight one for a time, but not for long!

Titian was now fifty-four. He had painted the "Entombment of Christ," which was a favorite



with Van Dyck, and helped to form his style — a picture four feet and four inches by seven feet, now in the Louvre; the Madonna of San Niccolò di Frari, now in the Vatican, which Pordenone is reported to have said was “not painting, but flesh itself;” the “Madonna di Casa Pesaro,” which latter especially won the heartiest praise. St. Peter, St. Francis, and St. Anthony of Padua implore the intercession of the Virgin in favor of the members of the Pesaro family.

Crowe and Cavalcaselle thus speak of it: “High up on a spray of clouds that inwreathes the pillars of the temple, two angels playfully sport with the cross; and, with that wonderful insight which a painter gets who has studied cloud form flitting over Alpine crags, Titian has not only thrown a many-toned gradation of shade on the vapor, but shown its projected shadow on the pillar. The light falls on the clouds, illumines the sky between the pillars, and sheds a clear glow on the angels, casting its brightest ray on the Madonna and the body of the infant Christ. . . . Decompose the light or the shadow, and you find incredible varieties of subtlety, which make the master’s art unfathomable. Both are balanced into equal values with a breadth quite admirable, the utmost darks being very heavy and strong without losing their transparency; the highest lights dazzling in brightness, yet broken and full of sparkle. Round the form of the infant Christ the play of white drapery is magic in effect. . . .”

“To the various harmonizing elements of hue, of light, and of shade, that of color superadded brings the picture to perfection; its gorgeous tinting so subtly wrought, and so wonderfully interweaving with sun and darkness and varied textures as to resolve itself with the rest into a vast and incomprehensible whole, which comes to the eye an ideal of grand and elevated beauty, a sublime unity, that shows the master who created it to have reached a point in art unsurpassed till now, and unattainable to those who come after him.”

“The Martyrdom of St. Peter Martyr,” completed in 1529, where Titian “reproduced the human form in its grandest development,” has been studied by generations of artists, from Benvenuto Cellini and Rubens to Sir Joshua Reynolds. So valued was it by Venice that the Signoria threatened with death any one who should dare to remove it. Unfortunately it was destroyed by fire in 1867, together with the chapel which contained it.

The “Madonna del Coniglio,” at the Louvre, is also much valued. “We ask ourselves, indeed, when looking at this picture, whether an artist with only fleeting ties could have created such a masterpiece; and the answer seems to be that nature here gushes from the innermost recesses of a man’s heart who has begun to know the charms of paternity, who has watched a young mother and her yearling child, and seized at a glance those charming but minute passages which seldom or never meet any but a father’s eye.”



In 1533 a most fortunate thing happened to Titian. Charles V. had come to Bologna, to receive the homage of Italy. The great emperor was an enthusiastic lover of art, had seen Titian's work, and desired a portrait from his hand. The artist hastened thither and painted Charles in armor, bare-headed. He used to say of himself that he was by nature ugly, but being painted so often uglier than he really was, he disappointed favorably many persons, who expected something most unattractive.

Another portrait of him which Titian painted, now at Madrid, shows him in splendid gala dress, with red beard, pale skin, blue eyes, and protruding lower lip.

The sculptor Lombardi was so anxious to look upon the emperor that he carried Titian's paint-box at the sittings, and slyly made a relief portrait of Charles on a tablet in wax, which he slipped into his sleeve. The emperor detected him, asked to see the work, praised it, and had Lombardi put it in marble for him.

Charles was so pleased with the portraits by Titian that he would never sit to any other artist. He called him the Apelles of his time, and paid him one thousand scudi in gold for each portrait. He created Titian a Count of the Lateran Palace, of the Aulic Council, and of the Consistory; with the title of Count Palatine, and all the advantages attached to those dignities. His children were thereby raised to the rank of Nobles of the

Empire, with all the honors appertaining to families with four generations of ancestors. He was also made a Knight of the Golden Spur, with the right of entrance to Court.

The Cadore youth had reached the temple of fame, unaided save by his skilful hand and inventive brain. He sat daily from morning till night at his easel, often ill from overwork, yet urged on by that undying aspiration which we call genius.

He painted the beautiful portrait of the young Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, now in the Pitti Palace, whom Michael Angelo so tenderly loved, and whose untimely death by poison at the hand of his cup-bearer, at Itri, caused general sorrow. Ippolito sat to Titian at Bologna "in the red cap and variegated plumes of a Hungarian chief. His curved sabre hung from an Oriental sash wound round a red-brown coat with golden buttons, and he wielded with his right the mace of command. It appeared as if the burning sun of the Danube valley had bronzed the features of the chieftain, whose skin seemed to glow with a tropical heat, whilst its surface was smooth and burnished as that of the *Bella Gioconda*." Ippolito urged Titian to come to Rome; Francis I. wished him to visit France; but Titian loved his Venice gardens and his mountain resort at Cadore, and could not be induced to leave them. His father, Gregorio Vecelli, had died in 1527, three years before the death of Cecilia, and Francesco, the dearly loved artist brother, had gone to care for the Cadore



home, where he often welcomed with enthusiastic admiration his famous brother, Titian.

The next paintings from the great artist were the "Rape of Proserpina;" portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Urbino, Isabella d'Este Gonzaga, the beautiful Eleonora Gonzaga, the twelve Cæsars for Duke Federigo Gonzaga of Mantua; the "Annunciation," for which he received two thousand scudi from the Emperor; "La Bella di Titiano," now in the Pitti, and the "Venus" of the Uffizi. The face of the 'Bella' was so winning that it lurked in Titian's memory, and passed as a type into numerous canvases, in which the painter tried to realize an ideal of loveliness. The head being seen about two-thirds to the left, whilst the eyes are turned to the right, the spectator is fascinated by the glance in whatever direction he looks at the canvas. The eye is grave, serene, and kindly, the nose delicate and beautifully shaped, the mouth divine. Abundant hair of a warm auburn waves along the temples, leaving a stray curl to drop on the forehead. The rest is plaited and twisted into coils round a head of the most symmetrical shape. A gold chain falls over a throat of exquisite model, and the low dress, with its braided ornaments and slashed sleeves alternately tinted in blue and white and purple, is magnificent. One hand, the left, is at rest; the other holds a tassel hanging from a girdle. Nothing can exceed the delicacy and subtlety with which the flesh and dress are painted, the tones being harmonized and thrown

into keeping by a most varied use and application of glazings and scumblings."

Of the Uffizi "Venus," Crowe and Cavalcaselle say, "What the painter achieves, and no other master of the age achieves with equal success, is the representation of a beauteous living being, whose fair and polished skin is depicted with enamelled gloss, and yet with every shade of modulation which a delicate flesh comports: flesh not marbled or cold, but sweetly toned, and mantling with life's blood, flesh that seems to heave and rise and fall with every breath. Perfect distribution of space, a full and ringing harmony of tints, atmosphere both warm and mellow, are all combined in such wise as to bring us in contact with something that is real; and we feel, as we look into the canvas, that we might walk into that apartment and find room to wander in the gray twilight into which it is thrown by the summer sky that shows through the coupled windows."

At the feet of Venus a little dog lies curled up on the couch. In the Venus of Madrid, she pats the back of a dog, while her lover plays an organ at the foot of the couch.

It is interesting to learn how Titian produced such effects by his brush. Says Palma Giovine, "Titian prepared his pictures with a solid stratum of pigment, which served as a bed or fundament, upon which to return frequently. Some of these preparations were made with resolute strokes of a brush heavily laden with color, the half-tints



struck in with pure red earth, the lights with white, modelled into relief by touches of the same brush dipped into red, black, and yellow. In this way he would give the promise of a figure in four strokes. After laying this foundation, he would turn the picture to the wall, and leave it there perhaps for months, turning it round again after a time, to look at it carefully, and scan the parts as he would the face of his greatest enemy.

"If at this time any portion of it should appear to him to have been defective, he would set to work to correct it, applying remedies as a surgeon might apply them, cutting off excrescences here, superabundant flesh there, redressing an arm, adjusting or setting a limb, regardless of the pain which it might cause. In this way he would reduce the whole to a certain symmetry, put it aside, and return again a third or more times, till the first quintessence had been covered over with its padding of flesh. It was contrary to his habit to finish at one painting, and he used to say that a poet who improvises cannot hope to form pure verses. But of 'condiments,' in the shape of last retouches, he was particularly fond. Now and then he would model the light into half-tint with a rub of his finger, or with a touch of his thumb he would dab a spot of dark pigment into some corner to strengthen it; or throw in a reddish stroke—a tear of blood, so to speak—to break the parts superficially. In fact, when finishing, he painted much more with his fingers than with his brush." Titian used to say,

"White, red, and black, these are all the colors that a painter needs, but one must know how to use them." Titian painted rapidly. One of his best friends said that "he could execute a portrait as quickly as another could scratch an ornament on a chest."

In 1537 the Council of Ten, angered at Titian's delays in frescoing the ducal palace, gave a portion of the work to the noted artist Pordenone, took away his brokership, and decreed that he should refund his revenues from that source for the past twenty years. In dismay, Titian left his orders from emperors and princes, and went to work in the great halls. Two years later his broker's patent was restored, and, Pordenone having died in 1538, the patronage of the Republic came again into his hands.

Titian now painted the "Angel and Tobit," of San Marciliano at Venice, and the "Presentation in the Temple," now at the Venice Academy, the latter "the finest and most complete creation of Venetian art since the 'Peter Martyr,' and the 'Madonna di Casa Pesaro.'"

This picture is one of the largest of the master's works, being twenty-five feet long. "Mary, in a dress of celestial blue, ascends the steps of the temple in a halo of radiance. She pauses on the first landing-place, and gathers her skirts to ascend to the second. The flight is in profile before us. At the top of it the high-priest, in Jewish garments, yellow tunic, blue undercoat and sleeves, and white



robe, looks down at the girl with serene and kindly gravity, a priest in cardinal's robes at his side, a menial in black behind him, and a young acolyte in red and yellow holding the book of prayer. At the bottom there are people looking up, some of them leaning on the edge of the step, others about to ascend."

Titian painted several portraits of himself, one now at Berlin, another at Madrid, still another in Florence, and others. They show a bold, high forehead, finely cut nose, penetrating eyes, and much dignity of bearing.

Duke Alfonso of Ferrara and Duke Federigo Gonzaga of Mantua, his noble patrons, had both died; but Pope Paul III. now became an ardent admirer of Titian's work, invited him to Rome, where he spent several months lodged in the Belvedere Palace, and sat to him for a portrait. It is said, after the picture of Paul was finished and set to dry on the terrace of the palace, that the passing crowd doffed their hats, thinking that it was the living pope.

While in Rome, Titian painted many portraits in the pontiff's family, and a "Danaë receiving the Golden Rain," now in the museum of Naples, for Ottavio Farnese, grandson of Paul III., who was married to Margaret, daughter of Emperor Charles V. Danaë was the daughter of Acrisius, king of Argos. An oracle had predicted that her son would one day kill Acrisius; therefore, to prevent the fulfillment of the prophecy, Danaë was shut up in a



DANAË.  
Belvedere, Vienna. Titian.



brazen tower. But Jupiter transformed himself into a shower of gold, and descended through the roof of her tower. She became the mother of Perseus, and she and her son were put into a chest and cast into the sea. Jupiter rescued them, and Perseus finally killed his grandfather.

Titian was now sixty-eight years of age,—growing old, but never slacking in energy or industry. He had painted for the Church of San Spirito "Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac," "The Murder of Abel," "David's Victory over Goliath," "The Descent of the Holy Spirit," "The Four Christian Fathers," and "The Four Evangelists." "His figures are not cast in the supernatural mould of those of Michael Angelo at the Sistine, they are not shaped in his sculptural way, or foreshortened in his preternatural manner. They have not the elegance of Raphael, nor the conventional grace of Correggio; but they are built up, as it were, of flesh and blood, and illumined with a magic effect of light and shade and color which differs from all else that was realized elsewhere by selection, outline, and chiaroscuro. They form pictures peculiar to Titian, and pregnant with his, and only his, grand and natural originality." The "Ecce Homo," twelve feet by eight, in the gallery of Vienna, was painted for Giovanni d' Anna, a wealthy merchant. When Henry III. passed through Venice in 1574, he saw this picture, and offered eight hundred ducats for it. When Sir Henry Wotton was English envoy at Venice in 1620, he bought the painting for the



Duke of Buckingham, who refused thirty-five thousand dollars offered for it by the Earl of Arundel.

In 1546, on the return of the artist from Rome to his home, Casa Grande, in Venice, he painted the portraits of his lovely daughter Lavinia, now in the Dresden Museum, and in the Berlin gallery. "From the first to the last this beautiful piece (in Dresden) is the work of the master, and there is not an inch of it in which his hand is not to be traced. His is the brilliant flesh, brought up to a rosy carnation by wondrous kneading of copious pigment; his the contours formed by texture, and not defined by outline; his again the mixture of sharp and blurred touches, the delicate modelling in dazzling light, the soft glazing, cherry lip, and sparkling eye. Such a charming vision as this was well fitted to twine itself round a father's heart.

"Lavinia's hair is yellow, and strewed with pearls, showing a pretty wave, and irrepressible curls in stray locks on the forehead. Ear-rings, a necklace of pearls, glitter with gray reflections on a skin incomparably fair. The gauze on the shoulders is light as air, and contrasts with the stiff richness of a white damask silk dress and skirt, the folds of which heave and sink in shallow projections and depressions, touched in tender scales of yellow or ashen white. The left hand, with its bracelet of pearls, hangs gracefully as it tucks up the train of the gown, whilst the right is raised no higher than the waist, to wave the stiff, plaited leaf of a palmetto fan." . . .



LAVINIA.  
Titian, Berlin.