

BROWNING AND THE FLORENTINE RENAISSANCE

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by



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CHAPTER I

Florence the Center of the Italian Renaissance

Until nearly the end of the thirteenth century Florence was a small and, from an artistic standpoint, a comparatively uninteresting city. She had no cathedral that would compare with the duomi of Pisa and Siena; her only building of any beauty was the Baptistery^{1.} The end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth witnessed a rapid development, and Florence became the intellectual and artistic center of Italy. Blashfield in his Italian Cities says: "Among all the Italian towns, Florence possesses the highest place, for in that long period from 1300 to 1580, which covers the Italian Renaissance in its various phases, she was the focal point for at least two hundred years."^{2.} It is to Florentine history that the student must turn for an explanation.

There seem to me to be three distinct causes why Florence rather than any of the other city states was the center of the Italian Renaissance. The first of these is that she preserved her popular government long enough to develop initiative and the spirit of freedom in her citizens; second, she enjoyed a great commercial prosperity;

1. Grant, Allen, Florence, p.19.

2. pp.168-169.

and third, and perhaps most important, she was so fortunate as to have, until almost the middle of the sixteenth century, despots who governed with almost unprecedented justice and who were the most liberal patrons of art in all Italy.

Part I

A Brief History of Florence During the Renaissance.

For an understanding of the forces at work in Florentine history during the time of the Renaissance it is necessary to go back to the twelfth century which witnessed the beginning of the commune, the first attempt of nobles to gain political supremacy, and the birth of the Guelf and Ghibelline factions.

The history of the commune dates from the beginning of the twelfth century when the city asserted its independence at the death of Countess Matilda of Tuscany in 1115. In the last quarter of the century the Uberti made an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the consuls. In 1185 Frederick Barbarossa took away the powers of the republic. They were restored, however, before 1200 by his son Henry VI. From the last years of the century dates the beginning of the struggle between the Guelf and Ghibelline factions, which parties, according to Gardner,^{3.}

3. The Story of Florence, pp. 20-21.

were the democratic burgher class and the military nobility under new names. Their struggles continued with vigor throughout the thirteenth century. In 1260 the Ghibellines gained complete control of the state and the Guelfs were exiled. Six years later the Guelfs succeeded in overthrowing the Ghibelline aristocracy. The Ghibellines never regained their lost power, but matters were no better, for the Guelfs themselves split into two contending factions, the whites and the blacks. In 1302 the blacks were victorious and all the prominent whites were either put to death or exiled. Dante was one of this number.

Yet in spite of this strife and discord, the city was growing in prosperity and size, speedily becoming the most powerful city in Tuscany. Beautiful buildings were being erected: the Palazzo Vecchio, the Duomo, the Loggio, and Santa Croce were all started between 1284 and 1300.

With 1300 begins real Renaissance history. This century was a troubled one for Florence, yet a glorious one. In the first quarter, with the aid of her ally, the King of Naples, she repulsed Emperor Henry VII. Then in order to protect herself from external enemies, she was forced to take an overlord: first, King Robert of Sicily, then his son Charles. The death of Charles in 1328 gave the city back her liberty. A war with Lucca was started.

Becoming discontented at lack of success the citizens gave the command of their armies to Walter de Brienne, Duke of Athens. By force and cunning he succeeded in 1342, in getting himself proclaimed Lord of Florence for life. Ten months of servitude sufficed the Florentines, and in July 1343 he was overthrown.

A struggle between the grandi and popolani, in which the latter were victorious, followed. The next few years were indeed dark times for Florence. In 1348 the fatal Black Death swept through the city, suspending all business and social activities and carrying off three-fifths of the population.

During the third quarter of the century the city gradually recuperated and regained her lost supremacy. She held her own against the Visconti, tyrants of Milan, and waged successful war against her old rival Pisa. Party strife was kept up in the city by the Ricci and Albizzi.

By 1400 with the exception of Venice, which was never a republic except in name, Florence was the only important independent city in Italy. One after another the city states had been forced to submit to the rule of a strong man; Della Scala at Verona, Carrara at Padua, and Visconti at Milan. Gian Galeazzo Visconti in the last years of the century threatened to subjugate all Italy north of Rome. He already had conquered all of Lombardy with the exception of Venice and much of Tuscany when the pestilence, for once a friend to Italy,

brought an end to his career in 1402.

Florence was saved from foreign domination, and for almost another half century under the leadership of the Albizzi kept her popular government.

Sismondi, the lover of liberty, pays the following glowing tribute to the aristocratic Albizzi: "No triumph of an aristocratic faction ever merited a more brilliant place in history. The one in question maintained itself by the ascendancy of its talents and virtues, without even interfering with the rights of the other citizens, or abusing a preponderance which was all in opinion. It was the most prosperous epoch of the republic, - that during which its opulence acquired the greatest development, - that in which the arts, sciences, and literature adopted Florence as their native country, - that in which were bred and formed all those great men, of whom the Medici, their contemporaries, have reaped the glory, without having had any share in producing them, - that finally in which the republic most constantly followed the noblest policy: considering itself as the guardian of Italy, it in turn set limits to the ambition of Gian Galeazzo Visconti; of Ladislaus, king of Naples; and of Filippo Maria, duke of Milan."⁴

Rinaldo degli Albizzi with many misgivings saw Cosimo de Medici rise to power. The son of Giovanni de

4. History of the Italian Republics, p. 205.

Medici, gonfalonier in 1421, he had many advantages. His family had a traditional popularity in Florence, because it was descended from Salvestfo de Medici, who in 1378 had been one of the leaders in the Ciompi uprising; he had vast wealth, with counting-houses in all the great cities of Europe; and he was a patron of art and no mean scholar himself. Cosimo made no pretense at upholding democratic beliefs, but followed the policy of severely criticizing the rule of the Albizzi. It was this policy which caused his exile in 1433. Rinaldo had failed in securing a death sentence.

The next year the new Seignory was favorable to Cosimo. He and his friends were recalled, and Rinaldo Albizzi with all his party exiled. Albizzi, aided by Filippo Maria of Milan, made desperate but futile attempts to overthrow his rival. This was in 1434.

Cosimo soon began "to aspire to become the prince of a country in which he had risen as head of the democratic party."⁵ Before long Florence practically ceased to be a republic, though the outward forms of popular government were carefully preserved. "The grand Palace of the Priors," says Gardner, "was still ostensibly the seat of government, but in reality, the state was in the firm grasp of the thin dark-faced merchant in the Palace in the Via Larga, which we now know as the Palazzo Riccardi."⁶

5. Sismondi, op. cit., p. 212.

6. The Story of Florence, p. 78.

Cosimo de Medici was not the only powerful man in Florence: Neri Capponi, the brilliant soldier and statesman, and Lucas Pitti, with his vast wealth and his contempt for laws, were both men to be reckoned with. Cosimo, however, was by far the most popular and the most powerful. He did not excite the suspicion and envy of the people by display, but lived the life of a wealthy citizen. His purse was open to nobles and artisans alike. He was a liberal patron of artists and scholars: such names as Brunelleschi, Michelozzo, Donatello, Fra Lippo Lippi, Fra Angelico, and Marsilio Ficino are for all time linked with his. He built churches and convents: San Lorenzo, San Marco, the Badia of Fiesole, to mention only a few.

Cosimo died in 1464 and at his request was buried without pomp in San Lorenzo. The following year the Seignory caused to be inscribed on his tomb, "Pater Patriae."^{7.}

Cosimo was succeeded by his son Piero. Piero was an invalid who wisely did not attempt to inaugurate any new policies, but adhered to those of his father, further tightening the union with Milan and Naples and lavishing money on festivals and public buildings. He survived Cosimo only five years, leaving at his death two sons Lorenzo and Giuliano, neither of whom at the time had shown any political ambition. It was not long,

7. Gardner, p. 82.

however, before the elder manifested, as even Cosimo had not, a passion for power and dominion. Giuliano was of a different temper: more cowardly and at the same time more licentious than his brother. His disreputable career was cut short by the hand of an assassin in that series of attempts at the lives of tyrants which swept^{8.} over northern Italy between 1475 and 1478. Lorenzo, fortunately for the Renaissance, escaped.

Lorenzo early had begun his policy of decreasing to a minimum the power of the people. In 1470 both the Council of the People and the Council of the Commune were deprived of all functions. These were invested in the Council of the Hundred, a thoroughly Medicean body. Lorenzo proved himself an able statesman by his handling of both foreign and internal affairs. In 1480 he succeeded in making an honorable peace with Ferdinand of Naples when he found himself in an unequal war, without allies, and ruin facing his house. He kept peace in Florence and maintained the balance of power in Italy until his death in 1492.

Lorenzo de Medici has come down in history as the greatest Italian ruler of the fifteenth century. He incarnates as no other man in history the spirit of the Italian Renaissance. He was a brilliant scholar and poet, a charming conversationalist, a connoisseur and generous patron of art, a lavish and extravagant entertainer, hand-

8. Cf. Sismondi, pp. 237 ff.

some in appearance and pleasing in manner, yet withal an absolute despot, not so tyrannical and cruel as the tyrants of other Italian cities, but unscrupulous and totally lacking in moral consciousness.

But it was just such encouragement and patronage as he gave; just such a love for beauty and color, and just such a joy in living with which he inspired the Florentines that were necessary for the artistic productions of the Renaissance. With all of its brilliancy and glory we must admit that the Italian Renaissance was a time of licentiousness, gross immorality, treachery, and cold-blooded assassinations.

Before Lorenzo's death a strong reactionary movement had been started by Savonarola and his followers. Even Lorenzo was not immune to the power of this remarkable friar. On his death bed he sent for the stern Dominican to give him absolution.

The effect of the death of Lorenzo upon the Florentine populace is realistically described by George Eliot in the first chapter of Romola. Some were awe struck; some mourned the loss of a friend and patron; others rejoiced for the sake of liberty; and still others considered that God had struck him down because of his crimes.

Lorenzo left three sons, none of whom was equal to the task of guiding the city through the troubled times that were ahead. Italy was again to be over run by a foreign invader. In 1494 Charles VIII with his

mighty French forces came into Italy at the invitation of the Duke of Milan, who wished to pit the French forces against the King of Naples. The coming of Charles was looked upon by the Italians with varying emotions: some with fears, others with eager anticipation. Savonarola proclaimed in Florence that Charles was coming as the scourge of God to drive out the tyrants and restore liberty to Italy.

Piero, the oldest son of Lorenzo, adhered to his father's alliance with Ferdinand of Naples, and prepared to dispute the passage of Charles through Tuscany, only to turn traitor and deliver the Florentine fortresses to Charles. The Florentines, although in the first place wishing to remain neutral, were so incensed at Piero's perfidy and cowardice that they forced him and his brothers to leave the city. Thus the sovereignty which the Medici had held for more than half a century was lost without a blow being struck.

Charles entered Florence where he was treated as a guest, but conducted himself as a conqueror. Even the piagnoni failed to see the servant of God in the arrogant, wizard-faced king.⁹ After leaving Florence, Charles proceeded to southern Italy. After remaining in Italy for some months, he was forced to retreat to Austria without having accomplished anything definite.

9. For a graphic account of Charles' visit to Florence, see Romola, Chapters XXI-XXII.

After the expulsion of the Medici, Savonarola and his followers succeeded in gaining the preponderance of power in the city. The Council of the People was declared sovereign with the power of electing public officers. The whole appearance of the city was changed: psalm singing and public bonfires of vanities took the place of festivals and pageants. Every one crowded daily to the Duomo to hear the great Frate preach and the children sing. But the holy time did not last. Savonarola was excommunicated, the populace turned against him, and after being tortured and given a mock trial, he was burned alive in the public square on May the 23rd, 1498.^{10.}

The death of Savonarola did not greatly change the government. The Council of the People still remained in power. In 1502 it elected Piero di Tommaso Soderini, Gonfalonier for life. Soderini, although a man of no unusual ability, was honest and blameless both in public and private life and a sincere patriot. The brilliant statesman Niccolo Machiavelli was secretary of the Seignory and the chief controller of foreign affairs. It was in 1509 that Pisa was finally reconquered.

In art these last years of the Republic were glorious ones. Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Andrea del Sarto, Raphael, and Fra Bartolommeo were all working

10. For an account of the martyrdom of Savonarola, see Gardner, pp. 134-136; Romola, chapter LXXII.

in Florence.

In 1511 Giovanni de Medici and Giuliano, the
 11.
 two younger sons of Lorenzo, with Spanish help overthrew
 the Council, sent Soderini into exile, and again establish-
 ed the Medici rule in Florence. The Medici remained in
 power until 1527 when the Florentines again expelled them
 and re-established the republic. It, however, had only
 a brief existence. In 1530, when peace was made between
 Pope Leo X, a Medici, and the Emperor, Florence was forced
 to give up her liberty and accept Alessandro de Medici
 as hereditary Duke. He was a most cruel and immoral
 tyrant. In 1537 he was found murdered in his bed. With
 his death the rule of the elder branch of the Medici family
 came to an end.

Cosimo I of the younger branch was proclaimed
 Duke. Gardner calls Cosimo I "the most able and most
 12
 ruthless of all Florentine rulers." He was considered by
 13.
 many to be the very incarnation of Machiavelli's Prince:
 all who opposed him were relentlessly put to death. In
 1564, worn out with political affairs, he resigned the
 government to his eldest son Francesco I.

It was in this year that Michael Angelo died.
 The Renaissance was ended as far as Florence was concerned.

11. Piero had been drowned eight years before.
12. Op. cit., p.144.
13. The Encyclopaedia Britannica - under Medici.

All of the great artists were gone. Fra Bartolommeo had died in 1517; Leonardo, in 1519; Raphael, in 1520; and Andrea del Sarto, in 1531. By the beginning of the rule of Cosimo I Florence had ceased to be the center of the Renaissance. Rome and then Venice were the centers of the period of decadence.

Part II

Florentine Renaissance Art and Artists.

A Literature

Of the four Renaissance arts literature, architecture, sculpture, and painting, literature was the earliest to develop. The three great Florentines, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio came early, and were not, as was the case with the painters, the natural culmination of a long line of forerunners. They came, however, not altogether unannounced. There had been previous attempts at literature in the vernacular both in Sicily in the brilliant court of Frederick II (1275-1300) and among the troubadours in the northern cities. In Florence the Tuscan dialect was in a measure made ready by Lapo Gianni, Cino da Pistoja, and Guido Cavalcanti.

14. Art is used here in its broad sense to include literature, music, architecture, sculpture, and painting. As there was no Renaissance music of importance, it is omitted. A brief discussion of the revival of learning, although not in a strict sense coming under the title of this division, will be given as it is inseparably connected with Renaissance literature.

Dante, the greatest of all Italian poets, seems almost marvelous when the insignificance of his predecessors and the meagreness of his direct literary heritage are considered. Dante degli Alighieri was born in Florence in 1265. Only the barest facts of his life are known. His works show the two great influences of his life to have been his love for Beatrice and his exile from Florence. The Vita Nuova was the direct result of his love for Beatrice, and The Divine Comedy was written during his exile and was greatly influenced by it. Although Dante used the vernacular in his great poem, he was in religious thought, feeling, and belief medieval rather than modern. His attitude towards love, as shown in the Vita Nuova was also medieval. The lady of his affections was idealized and worshipped from afar. Dante stands at the dividing line between the old and the new with his face towards the future, but his heart yearning for the past. He was the last and greatest product of the middle ages.

Petrarch (1304-74) was a modern. He not only saw the beauty of life, appraised the values of life as moderns do, and valued knowledge for its own sake; but he inspired others to do likewise. Petrarch is best known in literature for his lyrics, a series of love poems inspired by the beautiful Laura. He is, however, of more importance to the revival of learning than to literature. He was one of the best Latin scholars of the times and wrote many poems in highly polished Latin verse. He had

a deep reverence for the Greek verse, but was unsuccessful in his attempts to master it.

His pupil, Boccaccio, (1313-1375), succeeded better. Boccaccio, however, had no great passion for the classics. He owes his importance in Renaissance history to his works in the vernacular. Boccaccio was a master story teller, but his stories often sink to a licentiousness that not even the loose morals of his time can excuse. Even Chaucer never descended to his coarseness.

After the vernacular had been used by Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, the attention of scholars was turned to a revival of Latin and Greek, and the Tuscan dialect, having produced its great masters, was neglected. The revival of learning was given a strong impetus by the influx of Greek scholars after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. This renewed enthusiasm for the classics was a very important phase of the Renaissance. It found manifestation not only in the increasing numbers of Latin and Greek scholars, but in the establishment of Greek and Latin chairs in the universities, and in the general enthusiasm for old manuscripts, coins, and inscriptions.

B. Architecture

The Italians had never entirely departed from the classic ideals in architecture. The Gothic never gained the favor in Italy that it did in northern Europe.

After literature and the revival of the classics, it was in architecture that the Renaissance art spirit expressed itself strongly. Of the three great Italian Renaissance architects, Brunelleschi (1377-1446), Alberti (1404-1472), and Bramante (1444-1514), two were Florentines. Brunelleschi was the architect of many of the most beautiful churches in Florence, two of the most perfect of which are San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito. It was Brunelleschi, too, who accomplished the great engineering feat of erecting the vast dome of the Duomo. To Alberti is due the honor of 15. reviving the classic in architecture. In Florence he designed the principal façade of the church of Santa Maria Novella and the Palazzo Strozzi. Bramante of Milan is most famous for his work at Rome where he was commissioned to erect St. Peters. At his death this work was continued by Michael Angelo.

C. Sculpture.

Sculpture had been less neglected than any other art during the Middle Ages. Although the domination of the church is seen in the gaunt, emaciated figures, yet the spirit of naturalism was not so completely lost as it was in painting. In the fourteenth century Pisa not Florence 16. was the greatest school of sculpture in Italy. It was here

15. The Encyclopaedia Britannica, - under Alberti.

16. Cf. Heaton, History of Painting, p.41.

that sculpture first showed evidence of the new life in the works of Niccolo Pisano (1207 ?-1280). Niccolo, however, did some important work in Florence, and belongs almost as much to that city as to Pisa. The other important names in early Florentine sculpture are Andrea Pisano (1270-1348), who executed a pair of doors for the Baptistery, and Ocagna (1316 ?-1376 ?), his Florentine pupil.

The real masters of Italian Renaissance sculpture before Michael Angelo were Jacopo della Quercia (1371-1438), Ghiberti (1378-1455), Donatello (1386 ?-1466), and Luca della Robbia (1400-1480). Jacopo della Quercia showed his great power in the figure of Lady Ilaria del Carreto, which Hulme calls "one of the most beautiful figures in all sepulchral art"^{17.} Ghiberti is famous for his two exquisite pairs of gates for the Baptistery which represent the loving work of a life time. The figures of Donatello show strength rather than mere beauty. His statue of David is significant as being the first nude, bronze statue of the Renaissance. Luca della Robbia confined himself to religious subjects, but his works show the classic spirit. He was the inventor of the new art of glazed terra-cotta. All of the important later sculptors were also painters, and will be discussed in the division on painting.

17. Renaissance and Reformation, p. 113.

D. Painting.

Painting was the supreme art of the Italians as sculpture was of the Greeks: and what Athens was to Greek sculpture, Florence was to Italian painting. It was here that Renaissance painting first gained its impetus and here that it reached its highest development.

In the middle ages painting was merely the "handmaiden of the church". Its supreme purpose was didactic. The Byzantine school, which dominated medieval painting, was interested not a whit in naturalism and beauty, but only in painting as a presentation of symbols. There was no need for artists to go to nature; their business was to copy the emaciated figures, the ill-shaped heads, and crude colors of their predecessors. All was prescribed, even to the color of the Virgin's robe.

Giovanni Cimabue (1240-1302) was the first to indicate that a decided change was at hand. Even in the sixteenth century he must have been considered the first of the modern painters, for Vasari began his first edition of Lives of the Painters with his name.

Cimabue has been almost forgotten in the greater fame of his pupil Giotto (1266-1337). "Figure-painting", says Berenson, "was the one preoccupation of Giotto." Giotto, here at the very dawn of Florentine art, struck

18. For an interesting discussion of this subject cf. Symonds, Renaissance in Italy, Vol.III.,ch.I.
 19. Hulme, op. cit.,p.116.
 20. Florentine Painters of the Renaissance, p.3.

the key-note of the whole Florentine school. He revived the power of showing convincingly the third dimension in painting. This was his greatest contribution to art. His followers fell into an imitative manner, and over a century elapsed before Florence produced a painter worthy to rank with this early master.

Indeed not until Fra Angelico (1387-1455) did Giotto have a worthy successor. This Dominican monk represented the trend of development exactly opposite^{to} that represented by Giotto. He was the artist of faith and spirituality rather than of naturalism. Heaton sees in Giotto the founder of the school of artists that culminated in the massive works of Michael Angelo; and in Fra Angelico, the representative of that group which reached its highest development in Raphael. ✓ His powers of expression, although not so great as those of Giotto, are not to be scoffed at. His figures are usually stiff and unnatural, yet his sweet spiritual faces cause one to forget his limitations.

Masaccio (1401-1428) is more characteristic than Fra Angelico of early fifteenth century painting. His frescoes show a similarity to the works of Giotto in their power of conception and execution and were highly esteemed by the later masters. An early death cut short what promised to be an exceptional artistic career.

Fra Filippo Lippi (1412-1469) also represented the

21. History of Painting, p.53.

dominant tendency in fifteenth century art. He was a Dominican but vastly different from Fra Angelico. He strove to portray beauty pure and simple: for his Madonnas he selected the most beautiful faces around him, not the ones that showed the greatest purity and elevation of soul. Unlike his Dominican brothers, he mingled with the world and painted men and women as he saw them on the streets of Florence and at the house of his patron, Cosimo de Medici. One of his most famous pictures is the Coronation of the Virgin in the Academy.

In the last half of the fifteenth century what the brilliant young Lorenzo de Medici was to the political and social world of Florence, Ghirlandaio (1447-1494) was to the artistic. He was immensely popular: his paintings rich in color, perfect in technic, splendid in wealth of detail, but utterly lacking in imagination and spiritual power, were greatly admired. His real excellence lay in his ability as a portrait painter.

In point of genius if not of popularity, Botticelli (1446-1510) was the foremost painter of this period. He was a pupil of Fra Filippo, and added a fine imagination to the technical skill of his master. Although his Madonnas are remarkable for their sweet, pensive expressions, yet he is best known for his paintings of classic subjects. In

22. So called because he was a garland maker. His real name was Domenico Bigordi.

these he shows a freedom and poetic feeling not yet evinced by a Renaissance artist. His two best known pictures are Spring and The Birth of Venus.

There are four additional painters of this period who merit mention: Antonio Pollaiuolo, Andrea del Verrocchio, Filippino Lippi, and Piero de Cosimo. Pollaiuolo (1429-1498) is more renowned as a gold-smith and sculptor than as a painter. He is said to have been the first Renaissance artist to make a study of anatomy. Verrocchio (1435-1488) was also a gold-smith and sculptor. The Baptism, the only extant example of his work that is generally accepted as authentic, shows him to have been a master in portraying the human form and also to have been an innovator in landscape painting. Filippino Lippi (1460-1504) was a son of Fra Filippo Lippi and a pupil of Botticelli. He possessed the artistic passion of his father, but lacked the poetic imagination of his teacher. Two of his best pictures are the Trial and Crucifixion of S. Peter, and the Adoration of the Magi.^{23.} Piero de Cosimo (1462 ?-1521) was a fanciful painter with an eccentric personality. Most of his pictures are of fantastic subjects from pagan mythology.

We come now to the sixteenth century, the great flowering time of Renaissance art. Of the three great sixteenth century masters Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael Santi, and Michael Angelo, two, Leonardo and Michael Angelo, are Florentines and the other, Raphael, studied and worked

23. It was this painter whom George Eliot selected to represent the artist class in Romola.

in Florence during several years of his life. Then there were the Florentines Andrea del Sarto, who barely missed making a fourth to the world's three greatest painters, and Fra Bartolommeo, the last of the great monastic painters.

In point of time Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) belongs more to the fifteenth than to the sixteenth century, but in the excellency of his work he undoubtedly belongs to the high Renaissance. Leonardo was one of the most versatile men of the Renaissance. He was an anatomist, an engineer, a poet, a musician, a sculptor, and a painter. He did not paint many pictures, but all he painted were

^{24.} great. His Last Supper, painted in the refectory of S. Maria delle Grazie at Milan, is one of the most famous pictures, if not the most famous, in the world. Through the ravages of time and war the original has been almost destroyed. His most famous portrait is the world

^{25.} renowned Mona Lisa, the lady with the baffling smile.

Fra Bartolommeo (1475-1517) was the Florentine painter who was most influenced by the fiery preaching of Savonarola. In the early part of his life he studied the works of Leonardo and was greatly influenced by them.

24. For reproductions of his pictures, sketches, and also an appreciative account of his life and works, cf. Dr. Jens Thiis, Leonardo da Vinci.
25. For an appreciative interpretation of this picture, cf. the essay, Mona Lisa, by Walter Pater in Great Pictures.

Bartolommeo's greatest pictures are the Madonna della Misericordia at Lucca and The Holy Family. These pictures combine the pensive spirituality of the early church painters with the technical skill of the later masters.

The names of Raphael and Michael Angelo have been universally coupled, but perhaps greater diversity in genius has never been shown by two artists of the same age. They represent the culmination of two distinct tendencies in Italian art; the one of the Christian spirit, the other of the classic. Raphael rose on the shoulders of Fra Angelico, Brancia, Perugino, and Fra Bartolommeo; Angelo on the shoulders of Masaccio, Fra Filippo Lippo, Mantegna, and Luca Signorelli.

Raphael Santi was born at Urbino in 1483. His and life^{26.} works are usually divided into three periods: the Umbrian, lasting until 1504, during which time he was a student of Perugino; the Florentine, 1504-1508, a short but very important period, for it was during this time he came under the influence of Leonardo and Fra Bartolommeo; and the Roman, 1504 until his death in 1520, when he with the other great artists worked in the imperial city at the command of the Pope. It will be necessary in this brief account to pass over the interesting life and personality of the great master and mention only a few of his best known productions. The greatest picture of the Florentine period is the Madonna del Granduca, the

26. Cf. Heaton, History of Painting, p. 103.

Madonna "that visits Florence in a vision", which is now in the Pitti Palace. This picture foretold the wonder of the Sistine Madonna. Raphael did his greatest work at Rome where he was called by Pope Julius II to assist in the decoration of the Vatican. Here at Rome were painted La Disputa, The School of Athens, The Holy Family (of Madrid), Madonna di Foligno, The Madonna with the Fish, The Holy Family (of Louvre), St. Cecelia, Madonna Sedia,^{28.} the world renowned Sistine Madonna, and the scarcely less famous Transfiguration.^{29.} Raphael died in Rome in 1520,^{30.} mourned, Vasari tells us, by all classes, churchmen, nobles, and artists.

Michael Angelo perhaps more truly than Raphael represents the natural culmination of Florentine art. He was born at Castel Caprese near Florence in 1475. When he was thirteen, he was apprenticed to Ghirlandaio. Although Angelo did most of his greatest work at Rome, he was a product of Florence, not of the papal court. It was due chiefly to political circumstances that Rome more than Florence was glorified by the work of the great master. But Florence after the death of Lorenzo did not offer the encouragement and inspiration to artists

27. Browning, One Word More, l. 23.
 28. For an interpretation of this picture, cf. the article by F. A. Gruyon in Great Pictures.
 29. Cf. article by Mrs. Jamexson in Great Pictures.
 30. Lives of the Painters, Vol. III., p. 61-64.

that she had for the previous century. It was given to a Medici, Pope Leo X., at Rome to reap the rich harvest of Florentine art.

Yet Florence was far from neglected by Michael Angelo. She has her statue of David which still stands in front of the Palazzo Vecchio, a painting on one wall of this Palazzo portraying Florentine soldiers surprised while bathing in the Arno, and, above all, her statues of Night, Morning, Dawn, and Twilight carved for the tombs of Giuliano and Lorenzo de Medici.

For Pope Julius II, the predecessor of Leo X, Angelo decorated the vaulted roof of the Sistine Chapel. Words are incapable of expressing the grandeur and nobleness of this work. Especially remarkable among the frescoed groups are The Creation of Light and The Creation of Adam. After the death of Julius, Angelo carved his magnificent figure of Moses for the mausoleum of his holy patron. Later, he was commissioned to paint The Last Judgement in the Sistine Chapel. This picture is conceived in a spirit entirely different from that of other religious painters. It is the wrath of God, not his mercy that dominates the picture. It is conceived in a pagan spirit. This was Michael Angelo's last painting. The last years of his life were dedicated to working on St. Peter's, the massive dome of which he planned. Angelo, having out-lived his age, died at Rome in 1564. His body was taken to Florence for burial,

as he had requested.

Andrea del Sarto (1486-1531) has come down in the history of art as the painter who just missed making a fourth to the three great sixteenth century masters. He was perfect in composition and in coloring, but somehow he failed to reach the heights attained by the great masters. Something is lacking in all of his pictures: his Madonnas, Holy Families, and frescoes, though he rightly deserved the title "Il pittore senza errori",^{31.} "the faultless painter", which the Italians have bestowed upon him.

With the death of the great sixteenth century masters ends the greatness of Italian painting. Their pupils and followers fell prey to exaggerations which brought about a decline from which Italian painting has never revived.

Before the middle of the sixteenth century the Renaissance was over as far as Florence was concerned. The great writers, architects, sculptors, and painters, with the exception of Michael Angelo who was working in Rome, were all dead, and there were none left worthy to take their places. The Renaissance continued for some years in Rome and Venice, but in neither place did it reach the height it did in Florence.

31. Symonds, op. cit., Vol. III., p. 497.

CHAPTER II.

Browning in Florence.

It is impossible to determine the exact year in which Browning first saw Florence. It is certain that he did not visit the city during his first trip to Europe in 1838. In a letter to Miss Hawth¹ soon after his return, he enumerated the towns he saw and Florence was not among them. Sordello, Pippa Passes, and In a Gondola show the influence of this visit.

Mrs. Orr gives very little information concerning Browning's second Italian visit in 1844. He went direct to Naples, she believes, then proceeded to Rome. Before leaving Italy he went to Leghorn to see Mr. Edward John Trelawney, and returned to England probably by way of Genoa.²

1. The following is an extract from this letter: "I went to Trieste, then Venice - then through Treviso and Bassano to the mountains, then delicious Asolo, all my places and palaces you will see. Then to Vicenza, Padua, and Venice again. Then to Verona, Trent, Innsbruck (the Tyrol), Munich, Salzburg in Franconia, Frankfort, and Mayence; down the Rhine to Cologne, then to Aix-la-Chapelle, Liege, and Antwerp; then home." (Mrs. Orr, Life and Letters of Robert Browning, Vol. I, p. 142.)

2. Mrs. Orr, op. cit., Vol. I., pp. 196-198.

Though there is no record of his having gone through Florence, it seems probable that he did. He would scarcely have been as near as Leghorn without visiting so famous a city. Then, too, he would hardly have missed the opportunity of seeing the native city of Dante in whom he had already shown a decided interest.^{3.} Furthermore, Luria, which was published in 1846, the last of The Bells and Pomegranates, gives strong evidence, as will be shown in chapter III, that Browning knew Florence, her people, her history, and her buildings. It is certain that Luria was written before Browning's marriage and the beginning of his permanent residence in Italy in the fall of 1846, because Elizabeth Barrett in a letter to Browning January 22, 1846, comments at length upon the poem and makes a few suggestions for alterations.^{4.}

Robert Browning met Elizabeth Barrett after his return from Italy in 1844. He had for years admired her poetry and she his. She, however, was an invalid and saw no one but her own family and a few intimate friends. It was only at the urgent request of Mr. Kenyon, a friend of Browning and a cousin of Miss Barrett, that Browning was permitted to visit the frail poetess. Their admiration

3. Cf. p. 83.

4. The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett, Vol. I., pp. 418-419.

and friendship deepened into love. Early in the fall of 1846, Miss Barrett's health having improved, they were quietly married. Mr. Barrett objected to the marriage, so it was solemnized without his consent or knowledge. He later said to Mr. Kenyon: "I have no objection to the young man, but my daughter should have been thinking of another world."^{5.}

Mr. and Mrs. Browning left England a week after the ceremony for Italy, where Mrs. Browning had been ordered by her doctors. They stopped at Paris, and then at Genoa for a few days rest before going on to Pisa, where they settled for the winter. The most valuable source of information for the Brownings' life in Italy is Mrs. Browning's letters to Miss Mitford and to Miss Sarianna Browning to which Browning's biographer, Mrs. Orr, had access. Unfortunately Browning caused his own correspondence to his family to be destroyed.^{6.}

Concerning Pisa, Mrs. Browning wrote to Miss Mitford sometime in 1846: "For Pisa, we both like it extremely. The city is full of beauty and repose and the purple mountains gloriously seem to beckon us on deeper into the vine land."^{7.} In February 1847 she again wrote to Miss Mitford: "We leave Pisa in April and pass through Florence

5. Mrs. Orr, Vol.I.,p.208.

6. Ibid., Vol.I.,pp.215-216.

7. Ibid., Vol.I.,p.217.

8. towards the north of Italy." So delighted were they with Florence that instead of merely passing through, they remained during the summer and the following winter, and then decided to make the city their permanent home.

These first months at Florence must have been full of delight for the Brownings. We can imagine them glorying in the wonderful churches and palaces, in the statues and paintings of the city, and delving enthusiastically into art histories and criticisms. Mrs. Browning writes: "I have seen the Venus, I have seen the divine Raphaels. I have stood by Michael Angelo's tomb in Santa Croce. I have looked at the wonderful Duomo ----- At Pisa we say, 'How beautiful!' here we say nothing; it is enough if we can breathe."^{9.}

Here in Florence they could breathe the very air of the old city - the city of Dante, of Fra Lippo, and of Angelo. Old Florence of today is not very different from the Florence of the Renaissance:^{10.} the same narrow streets, the same piazzas, and the same buildings, where the masters walked and worked. The city is much larger than it was in the days of the Renaissance. It has grown from a relatively small city in the fifteenth century to a city of about two hundred and thirty thousand inhabitants at present. But

8. Mrs. Orr, Vol. I, p. 219.

9. Griffin and Minchin, The Life of Robert Browning, p. 159.

10. Blashfield, Italian Cities, p. 174.

It is not within the old wall, which indeed has lost its towers, that the great changes have taken place. It is in the space outside the city walls, where formerly the Dominicans and Franciscans each in their monastery held undisturbed sway, that the new streets, boulevards, and buildings are located. Old Florence engrosses our interest as indeed it did the Brownings.

The Brownings first took an apartment in the Via Belle Donne in the very heart of the city. Here they were in sight of San Marie Novella, and a few hundred yards to the east "the startling bell-tower Giotto raised" and the Duomo, where so many years before Savonarola had swayed the multitude, proudly shown in the sunlight. By walking a few blocks farther east and a little north all of the wonders of the Accademia delle Belle Arti were theirs. It was here in the Sala del Perugino that Browning saw Fra Lippo's Coronation of the Virgin, which he describes in detail in the monologue of that roguish friar. We can imagine him lingering longest in the Sala dei Maestri Toscani before the works of the early masters, the pseudo-Cimabué, the Giotto, the Angelico, and Gaddis.

11. Old Pictures in Florence, l.15.
12. For a vivid description of the great Friar preaching to the multitudes, cf. Romola, ch. XXIV.
13. This room takes its name from three pictures of Perugino which it contains, (Gardner, The Story of Florence, p.319.)
14. Cf. p. 98.
15. Gardner, op. cit., pp.321-323.

The neighborhood between the Academy and the Piazza San Maria Novella is rich in memories of the Renaissance artists. In the Via Ricasoli, Giotto, Taffi and his pupil, Buffalmacco, had worked. Nor far away Gaddi had lived in the Via del Melarancio; and in the Calzaioli, running from the Duomo towards the river, Donatello and Michelozzo had worked together. Off the Calzaioli in the Piazza Or - San - Michele, Andrea del Sarto had his dark little work shop. Pollaiuolo and Finiguerra had their shops in the Vacchereccie, Ghiberti cast his gates in the Via Sant Egidio, and Benvenuto had his furnaces in the garden of the Via della Pergola. In the Via Dante the famous poet had probably lived. For the spots sacred to Michael Angelo, Browning must go south and east from the Duomo to the Via Ghibellina, where the master had lived as an old man and the Via del Anguillara, where he had worked as a youth, and on to Santa Croce, where he with the other great and famous of Florence lies buried.^{16.}

The rooms in the Via delle Belle Donne did not prove altogether satisfactory, so in October the Brownings moved to an apartment in the Piazza Pitti, "small yellow rooms," Mrs. Browning writes, "with sunshine from morning^{17.} til evening." The winter passed quietly.

16. Cf. Blashfield, Italian Cities, pp.182-185, and Lucas, A Wanderer in Florence, pp.170-182.

17. Mrs. Orr Vol. I. p. 225

Here in the Piazzzi Pitti Browning became familiar with that part of Florence south of the Arno. They were directly opposite the Grand Duke's palace, the fortress like pile reared by Lucas Pitti, with its renowned Picture Gallery, which Baedeker regards as an extension of the Uffizi. "No collection in Italy," he says, "can boast of such an array of masterpieces, interspersed with so few works of subordinate merit."^{18.} Here Browning must have come again and again to study the works of Filippo, Perugino, Fra Bartolomeo, Andrea del Sarto, Raphael, and the others; and then gone past the old home of Machiavelli, which still bears his name, and across the Ponte Vecchio to the Uffizi, where the great art collection started by the Medici still adds glory to their name. Here Browning saw many of the greatest pictures in the world: Raphaels, Da Vincis, Michael Angelo's only completed easel picture, The Holy Family, and the Madonna delle Aspie, judged to be the finest of Andrea's productions.^{19.} The apartment in the Piazzzi Pitti was very near the beautiful churches Santo Spirito and Santa Felicita and not far from Fra Lippo's church, the Santa Maria del Carmine.

Let us not imagine that Browning was so engrossed with the wonderful past of Florence as to be insensible to her present. Mr. and Mrs. Browning were both deeply interested in the subject of Italian freedom; they longed

18. Northern Italy, Hand book for Travelers, p.539.

19. Gardner, op. cit., p.171.

for the time when Italy should throw off the oppressive yoke of the Austrians. Both of them were ardent admirers of the new Pope, Pius IX, who promised so fair for Italy. They must have witnessed with pleasure the liberal demonstration when Cobden, the English Radical politician and reformer, passed through the city in 1847, and the wild rejoicing when some months later the Grand Duke granted the city a constitution. Browning wrote so little of nineteenth century Italy that one is apt to minimize his interest in her contemporary affairs. Such masterly poems as The Italian in England and The Patriot, to say nothing of the last stanzas of Old Pictures in Florence, show that his interest in the cause of Italian freedom was scarcely less than his wife's. Griffin and Minchin suggest that "he deliberately refrained from intruding upon the field which Mrs. Browning was making so peculiarly her own." Mrs. Browning perhaps for a similar reason did not intrude upon the Renaissance period which was her husband's chosen Italian field.

The Brownings during their first months in Florence lived very quietly. Both their natural inclination and Mrs. Brownings health kept them from going much in society. Among some of their first friends were three

20. Op.cit., p.158.

21. Op. cit. ch. IV. pp.79-81.

Americans, Hiram Powers, the sculptor, G. W. Curtis, a former member of the famous Brook Farm community, and George Stillman Hillard, the writer. Miss Mary Boyle,^{22.} the niece of Lord Cook, was their most frequent companion.

So well were they pleased with Florence by the end of their first year's residence that they decided to furnish an apartment and make the city their permanent home. In May 1848, accordingly, they rented a flat in Casa Guidi, only a few steps from their apartment in the Piazzia Pitti, seven rooms, "three of them quite palace rooms and opening on a terrace," Mrs. Browning writes.^{23.} It was for the walls of these rooms that Browning bought the fine old paintings connected with the poem, Old Pictures in Florence.^{24.}

It was here at Casa Guidi that his son, Robert Barrett Browning,^{25.} was born March 9, 1849, and here a few days later he received news of his mother's death. The long planned trip to England was postponed, for Browning, who loved his mother passionately, had no heart for London just then. Most of the summer of 1849 was spent at Bagni Di Lucca. Mrs. Browning had gradually become stronger since her coming to Italy until by this time she was able

22. Griffin and Minchin, pp.160-163.

23. Ibid., op. cit., p. 164.

24. Cf. p.95.

25. He was generally known by his nickname, Penini, Peni, or Pen. (Mrs. Orr, op.cit., Vol.I., p.252.)

to accompany her husband on long tramps over the hills. ^{26.}

The autumn found the Brownings again in Florence at Casa Guidi. On their return they were sought out by the Countess Ossoli, better known in America as Margaret Fuller. The Brownings saw much of her during the following winter and were greatly grieved at her tragic death a few months later. ^{27.} During this winter, also, began the acquaintance with Miss Isa Blagden who became one of their most intimate friends.

In the spring of 1850 Christmas Eve and Easter Day appeared. This was the first poem Browning had had published since his coming to Italy in 1846. The poem received some friendly criticism, but much adverse. Although this poem contains Browning's first reference to Florentine Renaissance painting, ^{28.} the poem on the whole is English, containing very little that is distinctively Italian.

Venice was visited in June of this year. Mrs. Browning was very enthusiastic about the city, but Browning preferred Florence. ^{29.} In September a few weeks were spent near Siena.

The only noteworthy events recorded for the following winter are a visit from Goethe's grandson and the beginning of an acquaintance with Mrs. Trollope.

26. Griffin and Minchin, p.179.

27. She with her husband and child was drowned on their way to America.

28. Cf. p. 92.

29. From Mrs. Browning's letter to Miss Mitford, June 4, 1850, Mrs. Orr, Op.cit., Vol. I., p.243.

In the summer of 1851 their long planned visit to England was realized. After several months ^{abroad} by the way, mostly in Venice and Paris, they reached England in July. They had been in Italy almost five years. The details of the two summers in England and the winter in Paris will be passed over as irrelevant to this study. Sufficient to say that their visit must have been somewhat darkened by Mr. Barrett's continued displeasure. In England, however, they had the pleasure of seeing much of such congenial people as Carlyle, Tennyson, Kingsley, Landor, Rossetti, and Ruskin. It was here, too, they met Mazzini who was an exile from Italy. Early in November Mrs. Browning's declining health necessitated a hurried return to Italy.

Casa Guidi proved a quiet haven for work after the distraction of London society. Browning was busy with his Men and Women, and Mrs. Browning with Aurora Leigh. The news of the success of Colombe's Birthday, which was produced at the Maymarket Theatre, reached them in April.

The summer of 1853 was spent at Lucca and the following winter at Rome, with only a short stay at Florence in between. At Rome Browning became very much interested in sculpture and made friends with many artists. The one he saw the most of was his old friend Story. Then there were Gibson, Leighton, and Fisher, and the Americans, Crawford, and Miss Hosmer.

30. Cf. Griffin and Minchin, pp. 192-193.

May 1854 found the Brownings back at Florence hard at work. Browning wrote to Story in June: "I am trying to make up for wasted time in Rome by setting my poetic house in order."^{31.} In June of this year Mrs. Browning wrote to Miss Mitford: "I love Florence --- the place looks exquisitely beautiful in its garden ground of vineyards and olive trees, sung round by the nightingales day and night ----- If you take one thing with another, there is no place in the world like Florence, I am persuaded, for a place to live in - cheap, tranquil, cheerful, beautiful, within the limits of civilization, yet out of the crush of it."^{32.}

This next winter was spent in Florence and to good purpose. Browning's biographers say that it was the custom this winter for him and his wife to go to separate rooms after breakfast and spend the morning writing poetry.^{33.} Mrs. Orr makes an interesting statement concerning the difference between the manner in which Mr. and Mrs. Browning wrote. "To him as to most creative writers, perfect quiet was indispensable to literary production. She wrote in pencil on scraps of paper, as she lay on the sofa in her sitting-room, open to interruption from chance visitors, or from her little omnipresent son; simply hiding the paper beside her if any one came in, and taking it up again when she was free."^{34.} The afternoons were spent in going out and receiving

31. Griffin and Minchin, p. 195.

32. Mrs. Orr, Vol.I.,p. 292.

33. Griffin and Minchin, p. 195.

34. Mrs. Orr, Vol.I.,p. 302.

visitors. By this time the Brownings were not so great stay-at-homes as in the first years in Florence.

In the following May the Brownings started for England; Browning taking with him his Men and Women for publication. This volume contains all of the best of Browning's work, with the exception of Luria, done under the inspiration of Florence. It is a volume that any poet might well be proud to offer as his life work.

The two summers in England and the intervening winter in Paris will be passed over. Mrs. Browning sent Aurora Leigh to the publisher before the return to Italy in October. Browning, we are told, gloried in his wife's fame and was vastly prouder of her press notices than of his own. Browning, indeed, always protested that his wife was more of a poetic genius than himself; that he was "only a painstaking fellow."^{35.}

The following winter and spring (1857) were clouded by the news of the deaths of Mr. Kenyon and Mr. Barrett. Mr. Barrett's death was made harder for Mrs. Browning, because he refused even at the last to remove from her the ban of his displeasure.^{36.}

35. Griffin and Minchin, pp.209-210.

36. Mrs. Orr, Vol.II, p.335.

37. The Brownings received 10,000 guineas from Mr. Kenyon's estate, which served to relieve them henceforth from financial worry.

In the spring of 1857 Mrs. Browning writes a glowing account of their attendance at the carnival in Florence.^{38.} It is difficult to imagine our grave poet and frail poetess in gay dominoes in the noisy, jostling carnival crowd, brushing elbows with artisans and nobles alike. Even the Grand Duke, Mrs. Browning writes, came down among the people. It must truly have been a democratic crowd. Mrs. Browning comments on the lack of roughness and license that foreigners usually associate with the Italian carnival.

The summer of 1857 was again spent at Lucca in company with Mr. Lytton. The Brownings returned to Florence in the fall. The following is an extract from a letter written by Browning to Mr. Fox at this time, which shows how deeply in love he was with Italy: "I hate the thought of leaving Italy for one day more than I can help --- and satisfy my English predilections by newspapers and a book or two. One gets nothing of that kind here, but the stuff out of which books grow, - it lies about one's feet indeed."^{39.}

This winter passed quietly. The summer of 1858 they spent in France, returning to Florence in October. From Casa Guidi Mrs. Browning writes: "Robert and I are delighted to feel here in a divine abstraction from civilized life. Florence looked like a city of the dead to us on our arrival. There was one man wandering along the quay (the fashionable Lung Arno!) and another man looking at him with intense

38. Mrs. Orr, Vol.I.,p. 309.

39. Ibid., Vol.I.,p. 323.

interest. Still we are acclimatized; and we begin again to live our own lives, one day of which we have not lived for these four months.^{40.}"

But Mrs. Browning was not strong, and Rome was deemed better for her than Florence, so with a bare month at Casa Guidi Florence was quitted for the winter. From 1858 until Mrs. Browning's death, Florence was their home in little but name. It was now necessary for them to spend both the summers and the winters elsewhere. In a letter to Sarianna Browning, Mrs. Browning writes: "Isa Blagden bids us observe that we pretend to live at Florence and are not there much above two months in the year, what with going away for the summer and going away for the winter. It's too true. It's the drawback of Italy. To live in one place there is impossible for us, just as to live out of Italy at all is impossible for us. It isn't caprice on our part."^{41.} From May until August, 1859 they remained at Casa Guidi, but to the detriment of Mrs. Browning's health. The remainder of the summer was spent at Sienna, after which, a brief stay at Florence before the third winter at Rome.

Browning became engrossed in modeling and wrote very little poetry this winter. "I wanted his poems done this winter very much," Mrs. Browning writes, "and here was a bright room with three windows consecrated to his use, but

40. Griffin and Minchin, p.213.

41. Mrs. Orr, Vol.II.,p.332.

he had a room all last summer and did nothing - - - There has been little poetry done since last winter, when he did ^{42.} much."

The summer of 1859 was spent at the Villa Alberti near the Storys, Landor, and Isa Blagden. September hurried the Brownings to the warmer air of Rome. Political events engrossed their interest this winter. They followed with anxious eyes the careers of Garibaldi and Cavour.

Here at Rome Mrs. Browning received news of the death of her sister, Mrs. Surtees Cook. Mr. Browning be- ^{43.} lieved his wife's deep sorrow shortened her own life. She had not been well since the year before, and was almost an invalid. In the spring, however, she was so far improved as to be able to return to Florence. Here another severe shock came to her in the death of Cavour, to whom she looked for the salvation of Italy. "If tears or blood could have ⁴⁴ saved him to us," she writes, "he should have had mine." He died on the 6th of June 1861. Her own death followed shortly after on the 29th of the same month. She was seemingly little worse than she had been for some time. She passed away unexpectedly and without much pain.

Browning bore his great sorrow heroically; resolutely tore himself away from Florence with its dear sorrowful

42. Mrs. Orr, Vol.II., p.338.

43. *Ibid.*, Vol.II., p.352.

44. Griffin and Minchin, p. 222.

memories, and went with his son to England, as he told
Story, to begin life anew, "to live and work and write."^{45.}

Browning never saw Florence again, though in
the last years of his life he spent many autumns in Venice
and Asolo, but Florence always held the first place in his
affections, and he was ever remembered kindly by the
Florentines. At his death at Venice in 1889, the Floren-
tine Municipality sent a message of condolence.^{46.}

45. Griffin and Minchin, p.224.

46. Mrs. Orr, Vol.II.,p.623.

CHAPTER III.

Browning's Knowledge of Florentine RenaissanceHistory and Character as Shown by 'Luria'.Purpose of the Chapter Stated.

Luria is Browning's only poem dealing with the political and military side of Florentine Renaissance life.^{1.} I wish to show from a study of this poem; first, that, although the particular incidents and characters of the poem are not historical, the poem shows Browning had an extended knowledge of Florentine Renaissance history; second, that he had a sympathetic understanding of the Florentine people of the period.

Part I.

A. The Extent to which the Poem is Historical.

The poem is historical only to this extent, that in the fifteenth century, which Browning gave as the date of the poem,^{2.} Florence and Pisa did engage in wars.

1. Sordello shows Browning's interest in the details of general early Italian Renaissance history, but it has practically no connection with Florence except through Dante (cf. ch. IV, pp. 82-83). The Statue and the Bust is founded on a legend concerning Duke Ferdinand of Florence, but it does not deal with the political or military aspect of his rule. (For a discussion of this poem cf. ch. IV, pp. 88-89.)
2. In all the editions of the poem I have seen "Time, 14--." is given after the list of dramatic persons. It is evident that Browning submitted the poem for publication with the list of dramatic persons, time, and scene in the order in which they are always printed.

Florence and Pisa were enemies of long standing. A suppressed³ jealousy between the two cities broke out in war in 1222. In this war Florence was victorious, and again in the wars of 1252-1254 and 1256. In 1284, when Pisa was weakened by long wars with Genoa, Florence attacked her and forced a favorable treaty. From 1289 to 1293 the rival cities were arrayed on opposite sides in the wars between the Guelphs and Ghibellines. Peace again was made on terms favorable to Florence. Early in the fourteenth century Lucca and Pisa were united under Castruccia. Together they⁴ defeated Florence. In 1341 the Florentines bought Lucca from Martino della Scala. The Pisans to prevent Florence entering Lucca, laid seige to the city. All through this war Florence had the advantage, and finally took possession of Lucca in 1369. In 1399 Gian Galeazzo Viconti captured Pisa, and after his death in 1404 the city was sold by his son Gabriel Maria, to the Florentines. The Florentines besieged the city by land and sea. The Pisans after a brave defense were forced by hunger to capitulate in October 1406. Florence ruled the city with harshness and severity until 1494 when the conquered city, aided by Charles VIII of

3. My information for these wars has been derived from Napier's Florentine History; Sismondi's The Italian Republics; and Gardner's The Story of Florence.

4. This is the first time Lucca and Pisa were allied against Florence. In the thirteenth century Lucca had been an ally of Florence against the Pisans.

France, threw off the Florentine yoke and by means of continuous fighting maintained a precarious independence until 1509 when she was finally overcome by Florence.

B. Time of the Poem.

Browning gave 14-- as the date of Luria. There were, as we have seen, two distinct wars between Florence and Pisa in the fifteenth century, the one at the beginning⁵ the other at the end of the century. Critics, without an exception, have accepted the years 1405-6 as the background for the poem and have disregarded the later wars. Let us see whether or not the facts in the case bear out this opinion.

It is true that the spirit of the play is that of the early rather than the late fifteenth century. The atmosphere is of Florence in the days of the Republic, when her citizens were jealous for her welfare, but when the spirit of party faction was rife, not of Florence after a century of subjugation to the Medici. If Browning had meant to use Florence of the late fifteenth century as the background for his poem, he could hardly have failed to make mention of French intervention and of the Savonarola revival. Furthermore, he could hardly have dated his poem 14-- if he had intended directly to refer to the last wars

5. Berdoe, The Browning Cyclopoedia, p.260.
 Porter and Clark, Browning, Vol.III., p.329.
 Chadwick, Browning's 'Luria', Poet-lore, Vol.VI.pp.251-264.

between Florence and Pisa, for, although the Pisans revolted in 1494, Florence, busy with trouble at home, did not begin serious fighting against them until 1499. Most of the war took place in the sixteenth century. Another point in favor of the acceptance of the early date is that there occurred in the war of 1405-6 two incidents which may have in part suggested to Browning the plot of the poem. Both of these incidents show the suspicion in which Florence held her commanders. These will be discussed later in a different connection.^{6.}

Nevertheless there are at least two important facts which support the belief that Browning had in mind this later war as a background for Luria. In Act I, 1.22 of the poem Puccio says, "Since Pisa's outbreak and my overthrow." In 1405-6 there was no outbreak at Pisa. Florence, finding that possession of this city as a sea-port was necessary for her commercial welfare, deliberately set to work to take possession of the city. In 1494 there was a decided outbreak at Pisa. Florence had governed Pisa since 1406. When Charles VIII of France came to the captive city in 1494, the citizens visited him in a body and asked him to give them liberty. He, "not well comprehending the exact meaning of the word 'Liberta',"^{7.} granted their request. The people rushed through the streets

6. Cf. pp. 49-50.

7. Napier, Vol. III., p. 531.

shouting, "Liberta and France." The Florentine officers were expelled, and the "Marzocchi" or Stone Lions, the emblem of Florentine rule, were destroyed.^{8.} Later all domesticated Florentines were driven from the city and their property was confiscated.^{9.}

The second point in favor of this later war as the background for the drama is that in the play Lucca is represented as an ally of Pisa, whereas in 1405-6 Lucca did not help Pisa, but did in the war at the end of the century. In these first years, according to Napier, "the Pisans had no defenders but their own stout hearts and determined resolution."^{10.} In 1494 Lucca supplied Pisa with grain and three hundred soldiers, and shared with Siena and Genoa the expense of two hundred men at arms, two hundred light cavalry, and four hundred infantry under Jacopo d' Appiano.^{11.} In writing of a bitter struggle that took place between the two cities on August 1, 1499, Napier says, "female resolution, a relaxation of the attack, and three hundred fresh men from Lucca restored the day and gave them (the Pisans) some years more of sweet though suffering liberty."^{12.}

The conclusion drawn from these facts must be that although Browning had in mind more especially the 1405-6 war

8. Napier, Vol.III.,p.531.

9. Ibid., Vol.III.,p.556.

10. Ibid., Vol.III.,p.13.

11. Ibid., Vol.III.,pp.558-559.

12. Ibid., Vol.III.,p.627.

as a setting for Luria, yet he did not restrict himself to this war, but drew his material for the poem from both of the fifteenth century wars between the two city states.

C. Possible Historical Sources for Suggestions for the Poem.

1. With Respect to Plot.

An attempt at finding parallels and suggestions in Florentine Renaissance history for the Luria situation is not altogether unsuccessful. The several changes of generals in command of the Florentine army in the war of 1405-6 is analogous to the situation in the play of Puccio being superseded by Luria. In 1405-6 the command of the army was changed three times. Jacopo Salviata, a Florentine general, was early in the campaign displaced by Bartoldo Orsini, if not a Moor, yet a mercenary from Ventusia.^{13.} He was charged with rapacity and cruelty and compelled to resign his command to Obizzo da Monte Corelli. Corelli in turn was displaced by Gino Cappani, who brought about the capitulation of the besieged city.^{14.}

It seems to have been the rule rather than the exception for the Florentine Seignory to examine the conduct of her generals with suspicion, and to send with her armies one or more commissaries, whose chief duties were to spy upon the officers. Napier says: "The army was attended by

13. The modern Venosa in the province of Potenza.

14. Napier, Vol.III.,p.12; Porter and Clark,Vol.III.,p.330.

15. The governing Council of Ten at Florence.

a certain number of commissaries on the part of the Seignory with great power of interference, and always assisting at councils of war: they were often mischievous, but absolutely necessary for the control of an army of mercenary foreigners." ^{16.}

^{17.}
Henry Pancoast was the first to suggest that the following passage from Sapia Amminato's Istoria Fiorentina may have given Browning a hint for the situation developed in Luria. "And when all was ready, the expedition marched to the gates of Pisa, under the command of Conte Bartoldo Orsini, a Ventusian captain, in the Florentine service, accompanied by Filippo di Megalotti, Rinaldo di Gian Figliuzzi, and Maso degli Albizzo, in the character of commissaries of the commonwealth. For although we have every confidence in the honor and fidelity of our general, you see it is always well to be on the safe side. And in the matter of receiving possession of a city -- these nobles with the old feudal names! We know the ways of them. An Orsini might be as bad in Pisa as a Visconti, so we might well send some of our own people to be on the spot. The three commissaries, therefore, accompanied the Florentine general to Pisa." ¹⁸ Luria, as Orsini, had three to spy upon him, Braccio, Jacopo, and Domizia. The situation

16. Napier, Vol.II.,p. 597.

17. Luria, Poet-lore, Vol.I.,p.553.

18. Am. XVII.,Lib.Fourp.,675 (Poet-lore, Vol.I.,p.558.)

Browning has created is true to the spirit of Florentine Renaissance politics and from the above passage is clearly in no way an overstatement of the truth. The Florentines suspecting their own nobles, their own generals, and even their own commissaries - placing one to spy upon the other - would naturally have little confidence in a Moor "of the bad faith and doubtful race."¹⁹

Browning has not given an exaggerated idea of the power of the Florentine Seignory. The objection might be made to the plausibility of the Luria plot that the Seignory would not have dared for fear of the populace to condemn Luria, the hero alike of soldiers and citizens. Browning knew he was not overstepping historical authority in allowing so great a power to the Council of Ten. Two quotations from Florentine histories will establish this point. Napier makes this statement: "Whenever it suited the executive to use an authority, which was also legislative in its workings, torture, fine, exile, imprisonment, even the loss of life itself, with confiscation and plunder of property; any or all of these might be inflicted by the Seignory without a murmur being heard from the general mass of citizens."²⁰ As late as the time of Savanorola

19. Luria, Act I., l. 39.

20. Op. cit., Vol. III., p. 538.

21.

this power was unimpaired. "Savonarola", says Guidacci, "preached that order should be introduced into the power of the Seignory so that they might not thenceforth so despotically drive citizens into exile, put them to death, or send them into perpetual banishment by the sole authority of six black beans."^{21.}

In the poem the severity and injustice of the Seignory's treatment of the Travesari nobles is not without many historical parallels. "Lenity", says the historian,^{22.} "was not shown in those cases where nobles were delinquent." As an illustration he cites the case of Pagnozzo Strozzi and his brother. Pagnozzo Strozzi accidentally killed Piero Lenzi, gonfalonier of a company. The case was taken up by the government as an offense against the magistracy. Pagnozzo and his brother, who was entirely innocent, were declared rebels and their property confiscated. A decree was passed offering a certain sum of money to anyone who would kill them, and their relatives were compelled under a heavy penalty to keep peace with and forgive their kinsmen's murderers.

2. With Respect to Characters.

a. Luria.

As parallels may be found in Florentine Renaissance

21. Gio. Guidacci, Expulsione di Piero de' Medici.
This quotation is taken from Napier, Vol. III, p. 553-554.

22. Napier, Vol. II., p. 625.

history for the situation in Luria, so parallels may be found for most of the important characters. Although there is no case in Florentine history of a Moor being placed in command of the troops of the state, yet there are many incidents of foreign generals being hired by the city, and at least two outstanding examples of non-Italian mercenaries in the pay of Florence. The first of these was Gaultier de Brienne, duke of Athens.^{23.} The Seignory in August 1342 conferred on him the title of Captain of Justice, and gave him command of the armies of the city. His subsequent actions fully justify the suspicion in which the Seignory of the poem held Luria. By means of hired soldiers, plots, and intrigues, he succeeded in getting himself proclaimed sovereign lord of Florence for life. Ten months of slavery were all the Florentines could endure. In July 1343 there was a general uprising of the citizens; the power of the duke was overthrown and he was compelled to flee the city.

Sir John Hawkwood, an Englishman, was one of the most famous and most popular of the Florentine foreign mercenaries. He had charge of the armies of the state from 1378 - 1382 and from 1390-1392. He was always treated well by the city; his conduct entirely justified her kindness to him. At his death in 1394 he was honored by a

23. For more information concerning this mercenary, see Sismondi, pp.134-137.

splendid funeral and burial in Santa Maria del Fiore.

The man in Florentine history whose case was most nearly parallel to Luria's was Bertoldo Orsini. He was a mercenary from Ventusia, who served Florence in the war against Pisa in 1405-6. He, like Luria, displaced in command a Florentine general (Jacopo Salviati) who had rendered useful service to the state. Little is known of the character of Orsini beyond the fact that he was looked upon with suspicion by the Seignory, and was removed from command on the charge of showing "more rapacity than soldiership."^{24.} He must have been notoriously cruel, for a certain amount of cruelty was considered by the Florentines to be a virtue in their generals,^{25.} or, like Luria, was the victim of jealous, oversuspicious commissaries.

This distrust of the condottieri was not peculiar to Florence; it pervaded all the Italian states where mercenaries were employed. The history of Venice furnishes numerous illustrations. The case most similar to Luria's is that of Carmagnola.^{26.} Francesco Carmagnola, a Piedmontese soldier of fortune, first rose to prominence in the service of Filippo Maria Visconti, duke of Milan. Carmagnola, according to Sismondi, "justified the duke's choice by the

24. Napier, Vol.III.,p.12.

25. Cf. Macchiavelli, The Prince, p.434.

26. For a fuller account see Sismondi, pp.195-200.

most distinguished talents for war, the most brilliant victories, and the most noble character." ^{27.} Filippo Maria, becoming jealous of the power of this hireling, with typical ingratitude dismissed him from his service.

Carmagnola, as Luria contemplated doing, gave his services to the enemy. In the employment of Venice he was still successful until the campaign of 1431 when, through no fault of his own, fortune deserted him. The Venetians as the Florentines, always distrusted their generals; "they supposed them ever disposed to treachery; and if they were unfortunate, though only from imprudence, they rendered them responsible." ^{28.} With true Renaissance love for deception, Carmagnola was invited to Venice, feasted, honored, and praised, then suddenly set upon, put to the torture, condemned, and beheaded, the terrified populace not daring to raise a voice. Such might have been the fate of Luria had the Florentines, likewise, been altogether ^{29.} incapable of appreciating true nobleness.

b. Braccio.

It is more difficult to find accounts of specific men in Florentine history whose lives were similar to that of Braccio, though we know that each army must have had its

27. Sigmundi, p.196.

28. Ibid., p.200.

29. Browning's beliefs on this matter will be discussed later in the chapter.

Braccio. Florentine histories tell of the power and importance of the commissaries and Council of Ten, but except in a few cases, fail to give the names of either. Fortunately, one man, who was for years secretary of the Seignory, and who at least once acted as commissary, has through his books immortalized his own name and preserved the beliefs and standards of men of his class. This man was Niccolò Machiavelli. The only time we know of Machiavelli's acting in the capacity of commissary was in 1500 in the Florentine camp before Pisa.^{30.} It was just such men as he, cold blooded, practical, and keenly observant who must have been frequently chosen for this position. The similarity between the ideas and beliefs of Browning's Braccio and those of the author of The Prince will be discussed on pages 59, 61 - 64.

There was a historical Braccio of great importance in Italian and Florentine history during the early part of the fifteenth century. He was one of the most famous condottierie of the day with a powerful army under his command. At one time he was commander of the Florentine army and at other times was an ally of the city.^{31.}

c. Puccio.

The name Puccio is also one recorded in Italian

30. Machiavelli, The History of Florence Together With The Prince, Introduction, p.X.
 31. Sismondi, pp.193-197.

history, though he, as the historical Baccio, has no connection except in name with the character in Browning's play. The Puccio Pucci of history was not a soldier,^{32.} but an adherent and adviser of Cosimo de Medici. The case of Jacopo Salviati is most similar to that of Puccio.^{33.} Little is known of him beyond the fact that he rendered useful service to the state and that he was superseded by Bertoldo Orsini.^{34.}

d. Tiburzia.

The Pisans suffered in silence during the days of their conflict with Florence. The only accounts of the bravery of their generals and soldiers are the rare and brief notices in the chronicles of their enemies. In the long years of privation and heroic resistance they must have had many such brave generals as Tiburzia of the poem.

e. Domizia.

A search through Florentine histories has failed to bring to light a woman placed in a situation similar to Domizia's. We know, however, that many of the women of Florence during the Renaissance period were highly intellectual and fully capable of holding such a position.

32. Napier, Vol.III.,pp.200;214.

33. Cf. p. 49.

34. Ibid., Vol.III.,p.12.

In this case, only, the poet seems to have slightly overstepped the bounds of historical probability for the sake of dramatic interest.

The above instances and comparisons must show that Browning not only had a broad knowledge of the facts of Florentine Renaissance history, but that these facts had become so much a part of his mental make-up, that he could combine them, change them, and disregard them at will, creating new ones in their places, yet never lose the spirit of the times.

Part II

Luria furthermore shows that Browning understood, appreciated, and was able to portray the characteristics of the Florentines of the Renaissance period. This is shown directly through the Florentine characters themselves and indirectly through the impression Florence and the Florentines made upon the two foreigners, Luria and Hussain.

A. Florentine Renaissance characteristics portrayed through the Florentine characters.

1. Braccio.

Braccio, the statesman, more than any other

35. The characters of this poem are by the nature of the theme limited to men and women connected with politics and war. Browning's knowledge of artists, that most important class of Florentines, will be discussed in the following chapter.

character in the play is a typical Florentine. Puccio is a soldier, and the most typical Florentine is not a soldier. Jacopo is a mere secretary with a mind of his own to be sure, but, in a sense, a reflection of Braccio. Domizia, nursing the wrongs of her house, represents one faction, not all of Florence.

The keen, cool intellectuality of Braccio is his dominant characteristic. It is evident in his every word and action, in his subtle handling of Jacopo and Puccio, in his understanding of Domizia, and, above all, in his treatment of Luria. He has accepted the Machiavellian principle³⁶ that "mankind in general - - - are ungrateful, fickle, timid, dissembling, and self interested."³⁷ He not only says that "man seeks his own good at the whole world's cost",³⁸ but advances upon "the broad sure ground"³⁹ of man's unfaithful, ambitious nature, and dispassionately applies his principle to all with whom he comes in contact. His keen perception and power of analysing characters is confirmed by the fact that each Florentine in the poem (until his latent nobleness is awakened by Luria) bears out Braccio's judgements.

36. Machiavelli lived from 1469-1527. The Prince was not completed until 1520, but the principles and ideas expressed in it had long existed in the city.

37. The Prince, p. 456.

38. Act.III.,1.133.

39. Act III.,1.43.

Jacopo is the one character in the play towards whom Braccio shows any hint of natural affection,^{40.} yet he relies on his faithfulness because he can gratify Jacopo's selfish ambition.

"And when we visit Florence, let you pace
The Piazza by my side as if we talked,
Where all your old acquaintances may see; 41.
You'd die for me, I should not be surprised."

Jacopo, to a certain extent, justifies this opinion of his master. He candidly acknowledges that he warns Braccio from a selfish motive.

"If you trip, I fall; 42.
'Tis in self-interest I speak."

Braccio flatters Puccio, continuously reminds him that Luria has superseded him in command, and uses his jealous, wounded pride to gain information against the Moor. In the very first line of the poem Braccio subtly reminds Puccio that he no longer commands the army.

Braccio (to Puccio) "Then, you join battle in an hour?

Puccio.

Not I;
Luria, the captain."

His next speech to the soldier is obsequious and flattering.

40. Act I., ll. 66-67

"I make you daily write those red cheeks thin
Load your young brow with what concerns it least."

41. Act I., ll. 67-70.

42. Act I., ll. 61-62.

"Sir, let your eye run o'er this loose digest
 And see if very much of your report 43.
 Have slipped away through my civilian phrase."

Again in l. 17:

"Your own proved soldiership's our warrant sir."

Puccio's wounded pride and, in this case, the secretary's
 clever handling of it are shown in Act III., ll. 1-30.

Selfishness explains, Braccio believes, Domizia's
 interest in Luria. It is through him she plans to wreak
 her vengeance,

"She who remembering her whole House's fall,
 That nest of traitors strangled in the birth,
 Now labours to make Luria - - - poor device 44.
 As plain - - - the instrument of her revenge!"

and again the clear intellect has read aright. Domizia
 has employed all her feminine wiles and all her cunning
 in shaping Luria for her plans of vengeance. 45.

It is, however, in Braccio's relationship with
 the Moor and the situation arising from this relationship
 that the commissary's intellectual powers show to the
 greatest advantage.

Braccio in his attitude towards Luria mirrors,
 if we may accept the ideas of Machiavelli as true to
 Florence, the general belief of that city concerning hired
 commanders. Machiavelli in The Prince says: "The commanders

43. Act I., ll. 61-62.

44. Act I., ll. 176-180:

45. CE Act II., ll. 10-22.

of these (mercenary) troops are either men of conduct and abilities, or they are not. If they are, they cannot be trusted; because their own elevation can only be obtained by oppressing the prince (or republic) who employs them, or others against his will; if they are not, they must hasten the ruin of the state they serve so ill."^{46.} Luria is evidently a commander of ability and hence not to be trusted.

Yet Braccio's very method of dealing with the Moor is a partial admission that this man has other standards than his own Florentines. This is shown the first time the two meet in the play, when Braccio relies on Luria's honor to prevent him from reading the proffered dispatch.^{47.} He would not have trusted this much to the honor of one of his own fellow citizens. Again when Luria is debating whether or not to read the intercepted letter brought by Tiburzia, Braccio uses exactly the right argument to influence him, and in so doing pays tribute to the Moor's ideals of service:

"If you serve Florence as the vulgar serve,
For swordsman's pay alone, - break seal and read!
In that case you will find your full desert." 48.

The commissary's cool, intellectual powers are shown, furthermore, in his ability to handle skillfully

46. The Prince, p. 443.

47. Act I, 212-220.

48. Act II., ll. 323-325.

awkward, unexpected situations. In the extremely trying situation when Luria discovers that a trial is in progress against him, Braccio, no whit daunted, triumphantly asserts the absolute right of Florence "to prove each servant to the uttermost, before she grant him her reward."^{49.} When Luria asks what Braccio will do if he in righteous wrath turns his forces against the city, Braccio is equal to the occasion:

"I will rise up like fire, proud and triumphant
That Florence knew you thoroughly and by me,
And so was saved." 50.

And finally when Tiburzio attempts to persuade Luria to desert Florence for Pisa, Braccio, still master of the situation, anticipates Luria's decision by conferring the supreme command of the army upon Puccio.

Braccio's clever subtlety in dealing with men and his power of handling the most complex and sudden situations command a reluctant admiration. Braccio, the statistician, plays well the Florentine game of wits.

Braccio's standard of judgment falls short when it is applied to Luria. Here if he had only trusted his finer intuitions instead of his cold reason all would have been well. These intuitions and fleeting doubts of the fallibility of his principles show that he has at least latent powers of appreciating honor and faithfulness. They

49. Act IV., l. 203.

50. Act IV., ll. 254-256.

make us think that Braccio, as Machiavelli, does not believe the worst of people from choice, but because his experience and observation have convinced him of its truth. At the very beginning of the poem he acknowledges that he has had doubt's concerning his judgment of the Moor. When Jacopo says,

"That man believes in Florence as the saint
Tied to the wheel believes in God."

Braccio replies,

"How strange -
You too have thought that." 51.

Again, after Luria has refused to read the proofs of the perfidy of Florence, Braccio questions his own judgment.

"Yet, Lapo, it may be the Past proves nothing,
And Luria has kept faithful to the end!
- - - - -
He could not choose but tear that letter - true!
Still, certain of his tones, I mind, and looks
You saw, too, with a fresher soul than I." 52.

But this cannot be true: all of Braccio's training and experience tell him mankind in general and mercenaries in particular are faithless, so he proceeds upon "the broad, sure ground." At the end of the play when he is fully convinced of Luria's faithfulness, he vindicates his character by acknowledging his error, suing for pardon, and giving Luria his whole-hearted support; but too late.

One of the particularly Florentine characteristics of Braccio is his belief in the superiority of the civil

51. Act I., ll. 108-110.

52. Act III., ll. 37-38; 40-42.

government, standing for intellect, to the army, standing for brute force. This is hinted at in the opening situation of the poem. Puccio says,

"Luria holds Pisa in his hand"

Braccio corrects him,

"The Seignory hold Pisa in their hand" ⁵³

This idea is emphasized in Act I., ll. 190-194:

"Brute-force shall not rule Florence! Intellect
May rule her, bad or good as chance supplies:
But intellect it shall be, pure if bad,
And intellect's traditions so kept up."

Florence was never the city of soldiers, though her citizens were brave fighters when the occasion arose. The Florentines preferred legislation and arbitration. Men in this city rose to power and governed not by force of arms, but through superior wit and energy. ^{54.}

Another characteristic of Braccio is his conviction that Florence is for the Florentines. He looks with jealousy upon intruders. When he is almost on the point of believing in the Moor's honestness of purpose, his eye falls on the Moorish facade Luria has sketched for the Duomo. He is ^{55.}

53. Act I., ll. 16-17.

54. The Duke of Athens is a notable exception to this rule. His power, however, was of short duration.

55. Such a sketch was found by Mr. Ernest Radford in Florence. Browning was notified of the discovery by Dr. Furnivall. He replied: "I never heard nor dreamed there had been any such notion at any time of a Moorish front for the Duomo - it was altogether a fancy of my own illustrative of feelings natural to Luria and Braccio, each after his kind." (Porter and Clark, Vol. III., p. 330.)

displeased; his prejudice against the foreigner is re-awakened:

"There my Lapo!
A Moorish front ill suits our Duomo's body -
Blot it out - and bid Luria's sentence come!" 56.

As Braccio cannot endure the idea of the Duomo with a Moorish front, the thought of the black face in Florence is repulsive.

"In Florence - the black face, the barbarous name,
For Italy to boast her show of the age,
Her man of men! To Florence with each letter." 57.

This feeling of Braccio is typical of his city. Florence was ever the city for Florentines. Her beautiful buildings were designed by native architects, and decorated by native sculptors and painters. Her rulers, until her final loss of independence, were Florentine citizens. Her laws were made by Florentines. Only in the matter of war was she willing to employ foreign help, and these mercenaries she regarded with suspicion, and surrounded with restrictions.

Braccio's idea of the relative importance of the state and the individual is strikingly Michiavellian. As in The Prince the subjects exist for the ruler, to be used and misused for his advantage; so citizens, soldiers, and generals exist only for the city, to be used as she choose and cast

56. Luria, Act I., ll. 209-211.

57. Ibid., Act I., ll. 389-391.

aside when they have served their purpose. Nor should the state's right to govern their life and death be questioned: the individual exists for the state.

"I assert,

Maintain, and justify the absolute right
 Of Florence to do all she can have done
 In this procedure, - standing on her guard,
 Receiving even services like yours
 With utmost fit suspicious wariness,
 In other matters keep the mummery up!
 Take all the experience of the whole world,
 Each knowledge that broke thro' a heart to life,
 Each reasoning which, to work out, cost a brain,
 - In other cases, known these, warrant these,
 And then dispense with them - 'tis very well!
 - - - - -
 Where is the matter of one moth the more
 Singed in the candle, at a summer's end?" 58.

Florence is much more than the aggregate of her inhabitants. She is a living reality to be loved, admired, and served.

"But Florence is no simple John or James
 To have his toy, his fancy, his conceit,
 That he's the one excepted man by fate
 And when fate shows him he's mistaken there,
 Die with all good men's praises, and yield his place
 To Paul and George intent to try their chance:
 Florence exists because these pass away;
 She's a contrivance to supply a type
 Of Man, which men's deficiencies refuse;
 She binds so many that she grows out of them" 59.

Browning has shown great skill in the creation of Braccio. He has through him portrayed the cunning, deceptive, scheming statist of the Renaissance period, yet has endowed him with just enough good qualities, not to place him outside the pale of human interest.

58. Luria, Act III., ll. 159-170; 175-176.

59. Luria, Act III., 176-185.

2. Puccio.

Through Puccio Browning portrayed his conception of the Florentine soldier. He, in military affairs, as Braccio in affairs of state, proceeds upon nicely worked-out theories. When Luria has won the battle against the Pisans, Puccio instead of giving his whole-hearted praise dissects the tactics Luria has used and finds cause for blame. He has employed two operations where one would have served:

"He led the attack, a thought impetuously,
 - There's commonly more prudence; now he seemed
 To hurry measures, otherwise well-judged;
 By over concentrating strength at first
 Against the enemy's van, both sides escaped:
 That's reparable - yet it is a fault." 60.

Yet Puccio is essentially fair. His soldier's sense of justice compels him, at the beginning of the poem, to acknowledge to the Seignory the worth of Luria. Later when the Moor is deposed and Puccio is again given his old command, he accepts it, but in accepting voices his conviction that Luria is greater than he and that all of his grumblings have been caused by jealousy:

"And if I, for you ingrates past belief,
 Resolve to fight against a man called false,
 Who, inasmuch as he is true, fights these -
 Whichever way he wins, he wins for me,
 For every soldier, for the common good." 61.

60. Act III., ll. 26-30.

61. Act IV., ll. 98-102.

His sense of justice finally triumphs in full:
 he refuses to take the honor due to Luria:

"Then, not for fifty hundred Florences,
 Would I accept one office save my own,
 Fill any other than my rightful post 62.
 Here at your feet, my Captain and my Lord."

3. Domizia.

Domizia shows another side of Florentine character. She stands for the factional spirit, that spirit which had been of such direful importance to Florence since the strifes between Guelphs and Ghibellines in the early twelfth century. Her whole soul is bent upon the destruction of the ruling powers of Florence. Domizia has selected for her instrument Luria, the Moor. Through constant suggestions she shapes him for her purpose. She fills his mind with praises of his worth and power, and inflames him with desire for reward - reward as only the Florentines can give, a procession, gay banners, cheers, and music. Her earnest prayer is that Florence may remain true to her past and give condemnation instead of wreaths of honor. Then Luria, denied the reward he expected, would impetuously turn his forces against the city, and her father, her brothers would be revenged.

At last she too sees her mistake: she no longer desires "animal revenge".

"No brute-like punishment of bad by worse -
 It cannot be, the gross and vulgar way
 Traced for me by convention and mistake,
 Has gained that calm approving eye and brow!
 Spare Florence after all. Let Luria trust
 To his own soul, and I will trust to him." 63.

B. Florentine Characteristics Portrayed Through the Non-Florentine Characters.

It is of interest to note the impression Florence and the Florentines made upon the Moors, Luria and Hussain. Luria's devotion to Florence is one of the strong points of the poem. He knew and loved the external city - her palaces and towers and works of art. He also loved and trusted her people, yet was conscious of their sly cool ways, which he could not fathom.

The Florence of the fifteenth century although not so rich in art as the Florence of today was a city of great beauty. Many of her finest paintings were not contributed until the sixteenth century, but most of her most beautiful buildings were finished before the end of the fifteenth century. Giotto's Campanile had been the pride of the city since 1387. Brunelleschi had completed the dome of the Duomo in 1434. Ghiberti had finished his bronze gates for the Baptistery in 1452. Or San Michele and San Lorenzo had been built. The Palazzo Vecchio, and the New Palace of the Signory were a credit

to the Municipality. The Medici were living in the Riccardi Palace; and across the Arno Luca Pitti had buried his fortunes in the vast pile of the Pitti Palace. It is little wonder that the Moor with his passion for the aesthetic could not endure even in his thoughts to see all this beauty destroyed:

"Beautiful Florence at a word laid low
 - (Not in her Domes and Towers and Palaces,
 Not even in a dream, that outrage!) - low,
 As shamed in her own eyes henceforth for ever,
 Low, for the rival cities round to see
 Conquered, and pardoned by a hireling Moor!" 64.

Neither his Florence, nor his Florentines must be humbled. His people, who loved him, painted pictures, and sang songs of him, were not to blame, "how could they interpose with those old fools in the counsel?" He was nearer Florence than her sons, she stood to him for Mankind. The Florentines, humiliated must go back to their lives of peace:

"Florence at peace, and the calm, studious heads
 Come out again, the penetrating eyes;
 As if a spell broke, all's resumed, each art
 You boast, more vivid that it slept awhile
 'Gainst the glad heaven, o'er the white palace-front
 The interrupted scaffold climbs anew;
 The walls are peopled by the painters brush;
 The Statue to its niche ascends to dwell;
 The Present's noise and trouble have retired
 And left the eternal Past to rule once more." 68

64. Act IV., ll. 259-264.
 65. Act IV., l. 297.
 66. Act II., l. 166.
 67. Act II., l. 242.
 68. Act I., ll. 293-302.

Luria recognizes the impassionate intellectual-
ity of the Florentines and marvels. In his first speech
to Braccio this is shown,

"In his sly cool way, the true Florentine." 69.

And again in the following speech:

"Yet it is better this cold certain way,
Where Braccio's brow tells nothing, - Puccio's mouth,
Domizia's eyes reject the searcher - yes -
For on their calm sagacity I lean." 70.

Still again in speaking to Braccio:

"And thus you, with the clear fine intellect,
Braccio, the cold, acute, instructed mind,
Out of the stir, so calm and unconfused,
Reported me - how could you otherwise!" 71.

And finally, when he has learned the full extent of the
injustice done to him, with a touch of bitterness and
ridicule:

"Let my complacent bland accuser go,
And carry his self-approving head and heart
Safe thro' the army." 72.

Nevertheless, when Luria realizes that the "prominent
beauty" is poisoned by "the secret sting", he can say truly,

"I am glad to have seen your wondrous Florentines". 74.

Hussain, the devoted friend, less noble, but
more practical than his captain, from the first sees that

69. Act I., 11. 223
70. Act I., 11. 281-284.
71. Act III., 11.272-275.
72. Act III., 11.285-287.
73. Act IV., 1. 226.
74. Act V., 1. 227.

the Florentines use and deceive Luria. He warns him of his danger:

"This hating people, that hate each the other,
 And in one blandness to us Moors unite -
 Locked each to each like slippery snakes, I say,
 Which still in all their tangles, hissing tongue
 And threatening tail, ne'er do each other harm;
 While any creature of a better blood,
 They seem to fight for, while they circle safe
 And never touch it, - pines without a wound,
 Withers away before their eyes and breath.
 See then if Puccio come not safely out
 Of Braccio's grasp, this Braccio sworn his foe,
 As Braccio safely from Domizia's toils
 Who hates him most! - But thou, the friend of all,
 - - - Come out of them!" 75.

But Luria does not heed, he believes his friend
 "takes the distant chariot-wheels for thunder, festal fire
 for lightnings flash."^{76.}

In Act IV Hussain urges Luria to take a swift, sure revenge on Florence, the deceptive, ungrateful city. Luria with a fine, self-sacrificing devotion refuses, and the outcome proves he, not his friend, had the clearer sight.

"The only fault's with Time;
 All men become good creatures - but so slow!" 77.

The play Luria is to a certain extent Browning's justification of the Florentine Renaissance character. Time after time by popes, emperors, and princes the Florentines had been deceived, and by costly experience taught

75. Act II., ll. 105-117.

76. Act II., ll. 125-126.

77. Act V., ll. 180-181.

that self-preservation is the first law of nature. Yet they are not incapable of appreciating true greatness when once they are convinced of its genuineness. Browning has in this poem accomplished a rather unusual result. He has portrayed with accuracy and insight the moral weaknesses of the Florentine Renaissance character, and at the same time has vindicated his never failing belief in the inherent goodness of human nature.

CHAPTER IV

Browning and ~~the~~ Florentine Renaissance Art
and Artists.

I. Introduction.

Browning's General Interest in Art as Shown by his
Biographers.

The purpose of this chapter is to determine from Browning's poems the extent and nature of this poet's interest in ~~the~~ Florentine Renaissance art. However, I believe it will not be out of place by way of an introduction to state a few facts drawn from his biographies concerning his life-long interest in art and artists. The accounts of Browning's life show that aside from his own particular art of poetry, he had a decided interest in painting, sculpture, and music. As the poet's love for music has no connection with the Florentine Renaissance,^{1.} it has no place in this discussion.

Painting was the art that Browning was earliest interested in. In his father's library was an English edition of The Art of Painting in All its Branches by

1. That Browning was interested in Italian music is given evidence of in the poem A Toccata of Galuppi's and by a number of references to Italian music. For a discussion of this subject, see Miss Hogrefe's, Browning and Italian, Art and Artists, pp. 23-28; 58-59.

Gerard de Lairese. In 1874 Browning made the following note on the fly leaf of this book: "I read this book more often and with greater delight when I was a child than any other: and still remember the main of it most gratefully, for the good I seem to have got from the prints and wonderful text."^{2.} The Dulwich gallery, which was partly responsible for the poet's early love for painting, was within walking distance of his home. Here, when a child, he was often taken by his father.^{3.} After many years he wrote of Dulwich as the "gallery I so love and am so grateful to, having been used to going there when a child far under the age (fourteen) allowed by the regulations - - - - - . I have sat before one, some one of those pictures I had predetermined to see, a good hour and then gone away."^{4.} Here he first became acquainted with many painters of the Italian Renaissance: Raphael, Andrea Del Sarto, Guercino, Titian, Giorgione, Albano, Carlo, and Guido Reni.^{5.}

Browning's love for painting was stimulated by his life in Italy. In 1847, we learn from a letter⁶ of

2. Griffin and Minchin, The Life of Robert Browning, pp.9-10.
3. Robert Browning Sr. had a keen love for art and evidently some talent. In his youth he had desired to be a painter, but was prevented by paternal opposition (Mrs. Orr, Robert Browning, Life and Letters, Vol.I.p.7.)
4. Griffin and Minchin, p. 12.
5. Ibid., pp. 14-15
6. Hogrefe, p.43.

7.
Mrs. Browning's that they were reading Vasari. She had previously written that she knew little of art, but Robert, who knew a great deal, had promised to teach her. The poems of 1855, which will be discussed later, show the rich results of this renewed interest.

In his early life Browning thought, perhaps not seriously, of art as a profession.^{8.} His father evidently believed he had talent. In a letter to Miss Haworth in 1841, Browning wrote: "I am getting to love painting as I did once. Do you know I was a young wonder (as are eleven out of a dozen of us) at drawing? My father had faith in me, and over yonder in a drawer of mine lies, I well know, a certain cottage and rocks in lead pencil and black currant jam-juice (paint being rank poison, as they said, when I sucked my brushes) with his (my father's) note in one corner, 'R. B. aetat, two years three months' "^{9.} Browning did little to fulfill his father's hopes. While in Italy,^{10.} according to Mrs. Orr, he made some drawings from the nude for which he had prepared himself "by assiduous copying of casts and study of human anatomy." These she believed had great merit.

The records of Browning's life show that he made more serious attempts in modeling than in drawing. In

7. Browning seems to have known neither Vasari nor Baldinucci before he went to Italy in 1846.

8. Mrs. Orr, Vol. I, p. 70.

9. *Ibid.*, I, p. 193.

10. *Ibid.*, I, p. 71.

1859 Mrs. Browning wrote to her husband's sister: "Robert has made his third bust copied from the antique. He breaks them all up as they are finished - it's only matter of education. When the power of execution is achieved, he will try at something original."^{11.} Again in 1860 she wrote: "As to the modeling, - well, I told you that I grudged a little the time from his own particular art. But it does not do to dishearten him about his modeling. He has given a good deal of time to anatomy with reference to the expression of form, and the clay is only the new medium which takes the place of drawing."^{12.} It seems that Browning never received any instruction in painting, but was directed in modeling by his friend Mr. Story.^{13.}

Browning's biographers have recorded his interest in art history and his attempts at drawing and modeling, but it is to the poems we must turn for convincing proof of the poet's life-long, deep seated interest in art and artists. The following study has been confined to the Florentine Renaissance artists, because, as will be shown, they were the center of Browning's interest and the chief source of his inspirations.

11. Mrs...Orr., II, p. 337.
 12. Ibid., Vol.II,p.353.
 13. Ibid., I,p.71.

II The Purpose of the Chapter.

The real purpose of this chapter is: first, to show from Browning's poems that he had a special interest in Florentine Renaissance art; second, to determine whether this interest was extended to all the arts, or restricted to particular ones; third, to determine the scope, correctness, and possible source of his knowledge; and fourth, to show whether his poems give evidence of an equal interest in artists of all periods of Renaissance art, or peculiar interest in any particular period or group of artists.

III Proofs of Browning's Special Interest in Florentine Renaissance Art.

It is to be expected that Browning would be especially interested in the art of the Florentine Renaissance, because he was interested in the general subject of art, because the Renaissance produced the best in Italian art, and because Florence, where the poet spent fifteen of the best years of his life, was the center of the Italian Renaissance.

This supposition is borne out by both the number and the nature of references to Florentine Renaissance art in the poetry of Browning. There are in the poems in all ^{14.} two-hundred and twenty-eight references to Italian

14. Duplicate references in The Ring and the Book were not counted.

Renaissance art. Of these twelve are to imaginary artists or productions and two are general references to early Renaissance art. This leaves two-hundred and fourteen specific historical references. Of these one hundred and ten are to Florentine art. The total number of references are scattered through forty-four poems, twenty three of which contain reference to the art of Florence. There are thirteen poems which deal with Italian Renaissance art as their main theme. They are: The Bishop Orders his Tomb, Pictor Ignotus, Old Pictures in Florence, The Guardian Angel, The Statue and the Bust, Fra Lippo Lippi, Andrea del Sarto, One Word More, A Face, Pacchiarotto, Filippo Baldinucci, With Francis Furini, and Beatrice Signorini. Six of these: Old Pictures in Florence, The Statue and the Bust, Fra Lippo Lippi, Andrea del Sarto, Filippo Baldinucci, and Parleyings with Francis Furini, deal with Florentine art. Pictor Ignotus, although a poem about an imaginary artist, is Florentine in spirit. Browning might almost have called the poem Fra Angelico so nearly does it conform to the spirit of this Florentine monastic painter.

The fact that more than one-half of all the references in the poems to Italian Renaissance art, and practically one-half of the poems dealing primarily with Renaissance art and artists are Florentine gives conclusive proof of Browning's special interest in the art of the Florentine Renaissance.

References in Browning's poetry to each of the Florentine Renaissance arts, literature, architecture, sculpture, and painting will be discussed in turn with the object of discovering just how deeply the poet was interested in, and how great a knowledge he had of each of these arts. A comparison will be made of evidences of his interest in the several arts.

IV Florentine Renaissance Literature in the Poetry of Browning.

Of the forty-four poems of Browning in which there are references to Italian Renaissance art, eleven contain references to Italian writers or their works. These poems are Paracelsus, Sordello, Time's Revenges, A Soul's Tragedy, Up at a Villa, Old Pictures in Florence, One Word More, Apparent Failure, The Ring and the Book, The Inn Album, and La Saisiaz. Two of these, Paracelsus and A Soul's Tragedy, make mention only of imaginary poets. Florentine writers are referred to in each of the other poems.

Browning wrote no entire poem having for its main theme a Florentine writer. During the first years of Browning's literary career, the stirrings of the poet had a peculiar fascination for him as a poetic theme. From 1833-1840 he published four long poems, Pauline, Paracelsus, Strafford, and Sordello. Three of these deal directly with the life and work of a poet. Pauline is

largely autobiographical; Paracelsus treats of an imaginary poet; and Sordello of a very shadowy, early Italian troubadour. The scene of Paracelsus is laid chiefly in Würzburg, and Sordello in the four cities Verona, Ferrara, Padua, and Vicenza and territory around the castle of Goito. Both of these poems were written before Browning came under the influence of Florence. Paracelsus was written before he visited Italy at all, and Sordello was completed after his first visit in 1838.¹⁵ Not until 1844 or perhaps 1846 did the poet see Florence and become deeply interested in her history and art. By that time he had come into full possession of his own poetic powers. He did not longer need to write of other poets, "for the poet in himself had found his own purpose and method."¹⁶

The only Florentine Renaissance writers who found a place in Browning's poetry were Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Sacchetti, and Machiavelli. Of these Dante is clearly the favorite. He receives mention in seven poems and in two of these is treated in a serious fashion. An interest in

15. Browning's methods of writing a poem are well illustrated by his work on Sordello. Although the purpose of the poem is not to portray a historical incident or character, we are told by his biographer (Mrs. Orr, I, p. 153) that he read some thirty books on early Italian history merely for the purpose of giving the poem a correct historical background. He, furthermore, visited all the places of importance for the poem.
16. Miss Hogrefe, p. 51.

Dante does not seem to have been a result of Browning's life in Florence, for in Sordello Browning pays him a glowing tribute. In four additional places in Sordello either the poet or his Divine Comedy is referred to. The very fact that Sordello was chosen by Browning as the subject for this long poem bears witness to the influence of the Divine Comedy. It was the Sordello of Dante's poem that probably gave Browning the suggestion for his.

In One Word More Browning makes use by way of illustration and comparison of an interesting incident of Dante's life recorded by him in Vita Nuova: "On that day which fulfilled the year since my lady had been made of the citizens of eternal life, remembering me of as I sat alone, I betook myself to draw the resemblance of an angel upon certain tablets. And while I did this, chancing to turn my head, I perceived that some were standing beside me to whom I should have given courteous welcome, and that they were observing what I did: also I learned afterwards that they had been there a while before I perceived them. Perceiving whom, I rose for salutation and said: 'Another was

17. Sordello, I, ll. 367-373:

"Dante, pacer of the shore
Where glutton hell disgorgeth filthiest gloom,
Unbitten by its whirling sulphur-spume,
Or whence the grieved and obscure waters slope,
Into a darkness quieted by hope;
Plucker of amaranths grown beneath God's eye
In gracious twilights where his chosen lie."

18. For a classified list of all references to Florentine Renaissance artists with poem and line, cf. appendix.

19. Rossetti's translation in Dante and His Circle, p. 68.

with me.' " Browning tells in this poem how each person wishes "only once and for one only" to express his love in an alien art, "so as to be the man and leave the artist." This Raphael did for Margarita in his sonnets; and Dante for Beatrice in his drawing. Browning for a purpose represents Dante as drawing the picture to please his lady, whereas Dante says it was drawn on the anniversary of her death. Another reference is made to Dante and his love for Beatrice in La Saisiaz. References to Dante in the other five poems are of slight significance and are purely incidental to poems with Italian backgrounds. The reference in Up at a Villa is of slightly more significance than the others. Here Dante is classed with Boccaccio, Petrarch, Saint Jerome, and Cicero as standing to the populace for the best in literature.

Petrarch receives bare mention three times: once in connection with Dante and Petrarch in Up at a Villa; once in The Ring and the Book in connection with his birth place Arezzo; and in Apparent Failure in connection with the celebrated fountain of Vaucluse. Boccaccio is referred to by name twice; once in Up at a Villa and again in The Ring and the Book. Franco Sacchetti receives one doubtful mention in The Ring and the Book and Machiavelli is referred to once in King Victor and King Charles.

20. l. 60.

21. l. 71.

22. In The Ring and the Book there is also a reference to A Hundred Merry Tales which probably refers to the Decameron.

23. Cf. Appendix.

The Conclusion drawn from this study must be that Browning showed no unusual amount of interest in Florentine Renaissance writers, and that his interest and knowledge were not dependent upon his life in Italy and were perhaps not greatly increased by it.

V Florentine Renaissance Architecture in the Poetry of Browning.

The list of references to Florentine Renaissance buildings in Browning's poems is of sufficient length to lead one to believe that the poet was especially interested in Renaissance architecture. There are twenty-five poems in which some reference is made to Italian architecture. Of these all but two contain at least the name of one Renaissance architect or building. Six make mention of Florentine Renaissance architecture, seven of Roman. There are some seventy references to Italian Renaissance architecture. More than one third of these belong to Florence and almost one third to Rome. The others are divided between Venice, Asolo, Padua, Fano, Bagni di Lucca, and Arezzo. The preponderance of the references to Florence and Rome is natural, because Browning spent fif-

24. It has - in one or two cases been impossible to determine the exact date of construction of some building architecturally unimportant, but these figures are approximately correct.

25. The largest number of these are in The Ring and the Book.

teen years in Florence, and because Rome was the principal setting for his long poem, The Ring and the Book.

The number of references to Florentine Renaissance architecture is large, but does the nature and purpose of these references justify the first supposition that Browning was greatly interested in Renaissance architecture? The references may be divided into two classes: first, those introduced for the sake of background; second, those which show an interest in the buildings and architects for their own sakes. Into the first class fall the references in The Ring and the Book, Fra Lippo Lippi, Sordello, One Word More, The Statue and the Bust, and Andrea del Sarto. In Luria Browning, through the Moor, shows a delight in the beauty of the palaces, towers, and domes of Florence. In Old Pictures in Florence he shows an interest in the architects Giotto and Gaddi, and the Campanile and Duomo for their own sakes: Santo Spirito and Ognissanti are introduced for the sake of back ground. Giotto, who broke away from the conventional in art and strove after beauty, was of interest to Browning for the same reason Fra Lippo Lippi of a somewhat later period was. The beautiful Campanile, the pride of Florence to-day as it was in the fourteenth century, proves that his strivings were not in vain. Browning looks over Florence and says:

"The most to praise and the best to see
Was the startling bell-tower Giotto raised" 26.

26. Old Pictures in Florence, ll. 14-15.

The most he says in praise of the Duomo is that the Campanile is a fit ally for it, but

"The Campanile, the Duomo's fit ally,
Shall soar up in gold full fifty Braccia,
Completing Florence, as Florence Italy." 27.

We must admit that, although the references in Browning's poems give evidence that he knew the buildings of Florence and was able to use them accurately and fittingly for background material, yet he was only very slightly interested in Florentine Renaissance architecture for itself. The reason for this lack of interest is not far to seek. Browning was always primarily interested in individual men and women - in personality. Architecture is impersonal: it represents the spirit of a people rather than of any one man.^{28.}

VI Florentine Renaissance Sculpture in the Poetry of Browning.

The references in Browning's poems indicate that he had even less interest in Florentine Renaissance sculpture than in architecture. There are only three poems that even mention this not unimportant phase of Florentine art. They are Old Pictures in Florence, The Statue and the Bust, and The Ring and the Book. Italy on the whole

27. Old Pictures in Florence, ll, 278-280.

28. Some of the buildings of Florence like the Duomo, which was started in 1294 and not completed until 1887, represent the work of several generations.

fares little better than this one city. There are only six poems making mention of Italian sculpture of any period. They are in addition to the ones named: Sordello, Pippa Passes, My Last Duchess, and The Bishop Orders His Tomb at St. Paxed's Church. The references in My Last Duchess are altogether imaginary and those in Pippa Passes and The Bishop Orders His Tomb partly so.

The only Florentine sculptors whose names appear in the poems are: Niccolo Pisano and Ghiberti in Old Pictures in Florence, Giovanni da Bologna in The Statue and the Bust, and Bacci Bandinelli in The Ring and the Book. Michael Angelo, who was primarily a sculptor, is mentioned by Browning twenty times, but always in connection with painting.

The Statue and the Bust may at first glance seem to indicate an especial interest in sculpture on the part of the poet, but such is not the case. Browning did not care whether the Statue of Duke Ferdinand was a good piece of work and characteristic of Giovanni or not. He was interested in the statue and the imaginary bust only as they served his purpose of telling a story and developing his idea that action is better than stagnation even if it involves a crime. According to Mr. Cummings²⁹ there was current in Florence such a story about the Duke. There was, however, nothing in the tale about the Lady returning the

Duke's love, and there was nothing about the bust. These
 30.
 the poet invented for the purpose of his poem.

The Ring and the Book contains only one reference to Florentine sculpture and this is introduced for the purpose of locating the exact place in the square of San Lorenzo where the poet found the Old Yellow Book.

"Across a square in Florence, crammed with booths,
 Buzzing and blaze, noontide and market-time,
 Toward Baccio's marble, - ay, the basement-ledge
 O' the pedestal where sits and menaces
 John of the Black Bands (31) with the upright spear,
 'Twixt palace and church," 32.

But the few words descriptive of the statue are convincing. They make the reader sure Browning knew this statue as they know the houses in their own block.

Two sculptors have crowded themselves into the host of painters in Old Pictures in Florence: Niccolò Pisano, because he is the poet's favorite sculptor, typifying "the season of art's spring-birth so dim and dewy,"
 33.
 and Ghiberti, because he marks the end of the early period.

30. It has never been determined whether or not there is any historical basis for the story. Mr. Cummings (op.cit.) in defense of the probability of the tale, cites the following historical case: A Florentine statesman of the sixteenth century, who was a minister at the court of Victor Emmanuel, became jealous of one of the courtiers. One night the statesman and his wife were at an entertainment where the courtier was present. On taking their carriage instead of going home the jealous husband ordered the driver to take them to his castle among the Apennines. Here he shut up his wife for life. At her death her body was not even removed from the castle. Her casket is still shown in the castle chapel.

31. Giovanni Medici.

32. The Ring and the Book, ll. 40-45.

33. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 179.

All evidence points to the conclusion that Browning had little interest in Florentine Renaissance sculpture. It is rather strange that this is true, for, as we have seen, the poet for at least a time was very much interested in modeling. Furthermore, Florence was by no means poor in works of sculpture. Even the beautiful bronze gates of Ghiberti and the statues of Night, Morning, Dawn, and Twilight carved by Angelo for the tombs of the Medici find no place in Browning's poetry.

VII Florentine Painting in the Poetry of Browning.

That painting was ever the art of the Florentines is strongly reflected in Browning's poems. Whereas there are no poems dealing primarily with the other arts in Florence, there are five dealing chiefly with Florentine Renaissance painting: Old Pictures in Florence, Fra Lippo Lippi, Andrea del Sarto, Filippo Baldinucci, Barleyings with Francis Furini, and, in addition, the imaginary poem Pictor Ignotus, which in spirit belongs to the early Florentines. There are references in eight additional poems to Florentine painting. These references, unlike those to the other arts, show an interest in Renaissance painting for its own sake. In contrast to the five writers, two architects,

34. Cf. pp. 38, 41, 77-78.

35. Gates of the Baptistery.

36. Lorenzo and Giuliano.

37. That Browning was not disinterested in all sculpture is shown by the many references to classic statues. Cf. Old Pictures in Florence, ll. 99-104; The Inn Album, IV, 1. 185.

and four sculptors in the poems, there are twenty-eight painters, some of them receiving mention many times. Michael Angelo is referred to twenty times in ten poems, Raphael seventeen times in seven poems, and Leonardo Da Vinci, five times in five poems. The other twenty-five painters are referred to only once or twice each, but always with some fitting word or phrase that shows an exact knowledge on the part of the poet of the characteristics of even the most obscure of them.

A glance at the dates after the names of the painters in the appendix will give sufficient proof of the breadth of Browning's knowledge. From Cimabue of the thirteenth century to Baldinucci of the seventeenth scarcely a painter of significance has been omitted.

Browning's poems show that from the very earliest years of his literary life until the time of his death he was interested in Italian Renaissance painting. His first poem, Pauline, written in 1833 contains a reference to Caravaggio's Andromeda, and his last volume Asolando, published on the day of his death includes Beatrice Signorini.

38. Although Raphael belongs to the Umbrian not the Florentine school, he studied and worked in Florence from 1504 to 1508. Here he was greatly influenced by Leonardo da Vinci and Fra Bartolommeo.
39. Mrs. Orr, says that this picture was always before Browning as a boy and he loved the story of Andromeda. Caravaggio was a Renaissance painter of the Umbrian school. (Hogrefe, p. 41.)

However, the poems show that Browning was not equally interested in painting during all periods of his literary life. Although all of the early poems Pauline, Paracelsus, Sordello, and Pippa Passes contain at least one reference to Italian Renaissance painting, yet no decided interest is shown in the subject until the appearance of My Lost Duchess in 1842. In the Duke Browning incarnates the spirit of the art connoisseur of the decadent Renaissance. Pictor Ignotus, published in 1845, is the first entire poem devoted to Renaissance painting. Through the imaginary Pictor Ignotus, Browning had very beautifully portrayed the feeling of the early Renaissance church painters. The Bishop Orders His Tomb, published in the same year, again shows Browning's understanding of and incidentally his contempt for the spirit of the decadent Renaissance. Between 1846, the year the Brownings took up their residence in Florence, and 1855 only one poem was published, Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day. It is in this poem for the first time that Browning makes mention of a Florentine painter. But these years between 1846 and 1855 were not being wasted. The poems published in 1855 show that the poet had spent at least part of this time in a serious study

40.

of Florentine art. In 1847 Mrs. Browning wrote to a friend in England that they were reading Vasari. Much time, also, must have been devoted to visiting picture galleries and studying the original works of the masters.

At the end of his first nine years in Florence, Browning gave to the world a volume containing his best thoughts on art. The beautiful old city rich in the works of the masters filled him with such an enthusiasm for art as he had never had before, and never had again. Of the five poems on painting, Old Pictures in Florence, The Guardian Angel, Fra Lippo Lippi, Andrea del Sarto, and One Word More,^{41.}^{42.} published in 1855 all but one are Florentine.

Browning's later art poems, Pacchiarotto, (1876), Filippo Baldinucci (1876), With Francis Furini (1887), and Beatrice Signorini (1889), although testifying to his enduring interest in painting, add little to his art message, and lack the fine inspiration of the earlier poems.

40. Mrs. Browning's letters are the chief source of information concerning the Brownings' life in Italy. Robert Browning saw that all the letters he had written home were destroyed. (Mrs. Orr, Vol. I, p. 215) Mrs. Orr suggests that his letters probably contained much more of art and picture galleries than those of his wife.
41. One Word More has been discussed in Section III in connection with Dante.
42. The Guardian Angel was inspired by a picture of that title by Guercino (1591-1666) of Bologna. This painting Browning and Mrs. Browning saw at Fano where they had gone for a summer vacation. (Griffin and Minchin, p. 166).

Old Pictures in Florence, conceived in a half humorous, half serious vein, contains a message for art lovers. The great masters, says Browning, owe their success to those "wronged great souls"^{43.} who have worked and failed before them, so in praising Raphael, Da Vinci, and Angelo do not forget Cimabue, Giotto, and Dello.

"Da Vincis derive in good time from Dellos"^{44.}
 Furthermore, he seems to say, these old masters should be honored for turning their backs on Greek perfection and directing their eyes inward.

Old Pictures in Florence as no other poem shows the extent and accuracy of Browning's art knowledge. It is to be expected from his native interest in painting and his life in Italy that Browning would be interested in Raphael, Angelo, Leonardo, Correggio, and other well known artists, but the interest shown in this poem in almost unknown painters is indeed unusual. The poem contains references to eighteen painters. Of these not over five or six are known even by name to any except art specialists. Yet Browning was so familiar with them that he could characterize their works in a few telling words or a phrase. A few extracts from the poem will illustrate this point. He speaks of "the great Bigorai"^{45.}

43. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 40.

44. Ibid., l. 56.

45. For a brief statement concerning each of these painters, see Appendix pp. 115-122.

46.
 "the wronged Lippino", "no churlish saint, Lorenzo Monaco," "Pollajolo, the twice a craftsman," "the somewhat petty - - - Alesso Baldovinette", "Margheritone of Arezzo, - - - you bald, saturnine, poll-clawed parrot", "some clay-cold vile Carlino", and "Stefano, - - - - - called Nature's ape and the world's despair".
 47. Only a detailed study of the period and the works of these artists could give Browning such skill at hitting off their dominant characteristics. This poem gives ample proof of Browning's interest in the early painters.

Browning's actual interest in discovering and possessing old pictures is given evidence of in a letter of Mrs. Browning to Mrs. Jameson in 1850. She says that her husband has acquired five paintings in a corn-shop outside the city. The artists of these were not known, but critics suggested such names as Cimabue, Ghirlandajo, and Giotto.
 48. The discovery of these old pictures and vexation at not being able to identify them definitely as the works of certain ones of the early masters, may have suggested to Browning the theme of Old Pictures in Florence.

The poet's knowledge for the poem was undoubtedly gotten chiefly from Vasari, who has recorded the biographies of all but ~~three~~
 49. of the painters mentioned in the poem, and from a study of the works of the early painters

46. Wronged because some critics have thought that many of his works have been assigned to others.

47. See Vasari's, Lives of the Painters, Vol. I, p. 135.

48. Griffin and Minchin, p. 165; Hogrefe, p. 42.

49. These are, ~~Cavaliere Dello~~, Fra Angelico, Lorenzo Monaco, and Pollaiuolo.

50. 51.
 in the art galleries of Florence. Baedeker and Gardner
 in their guide books made mention of paintings by all
 except four of the eighteen artists of the poem. These
 52.
 four are, Cimabue, Stefano, Margheritone, and Dello.
 Browning had probably seen and studied some of the
 original works of all of the other painters of the poem.
 For a knowledge of these four painters he must have re-
 lied entirely on Vasari. In his reference to Stefano
 he practically says such was the case with regard to this
 painter.

"Stefano - - - - -
 Called Nature's ape and the world's despair,
 For his peerless painting (see Vasari)" 53.

Old Pictures in Florence is significant from
 the viewpoint of the present study: first, because it
 shows the poet's deep interest in the early painters; and
 second, because it illustrates the fact that Browning
 knew at first hand about the works of the artists concern-
 ing whom he wrote. The fact that Browning devoted an

50. Northern Italy.

51. The Story of Florence.

52. Concerning pictures of Cimabue in Florence Mr. Gardner
 (Op. cit. p. 66) makes the following statements: "Not a
 single authentic work remains from his (Cimabue's)
 hand in Florence. His supposed portrait in the cloisters
 of Santa Maria Novella is now held to be that of a
 French knight; the famous picture of the Madonna and
 child with her angelic ministers in the Rucellai
 Chapel is thought to be the work of a Sieneese master;
 and the other paintings once ascribed to him have
 absolutely no claims to bear his name."

53. Old Pictures in Florence, ll. 64-65.

entire poem to these early masters, that he said expressly^{54.} that he has "loved the season of art's spring birth," and the appreciative knowledge he shows of the period gives ample proof of his special interest in this phase of the Florentine Renaissance.

In the monologue Fra Lippo Lippi Browning again demonstrates his interest in the pre-Raphaelite painters. This poem shows both a knowledge of Vasari and the paintings of Filippo in Florence. The facts in the poem concerning the life of the monk painter were all evidently drawn from Vasari's Lives. In one slight particular Browning has differed with Vasari. In the poem Masaccio (Guidi) is referred to as the pupil of Filippo, whereas in Vasari^{55.} he is the elder.

In the monologue the Friar speaks of four pictures: The Martyrdom of St Lawrence, which he had finished at Prato; St Jerome which he is at present working on for Cosimo; a picture of the coronation of the Virgin, which he promises to execute as an expiation of his prank; and a slave with the head of John the Baptist, which he would like to paint. The descriptions given in the poem of two of these pictures correspond exactly to two works of the Friar. The painting of

54. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 168.

55. In Browning's time many critics favored his view. The evidence now seems to be that Vasari was right, that Masaccio was born in 1401 and Filippó in 1406.

"Jerome knocking at his poor old breast
With his great round stone to subdue the flesh" 56.

is now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti; The picture
Lippo describes at the end of the monologue,

"Something in Sant' Ambrogio - - - -
God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,
Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-brood" 57.

with himself coming up out of one corner, is the famous
Coronation of the Virgin, also in the Academy. There is
no evidence that Lippo painted at Prato a picture of the
Martyrdom of St. Lawrence. He, however, did paint many
frescoes in a church at Prato, one of which represents
the martyrdom of St. Stephens, which, according to
58.

Vasari, was portrayed in a most realistic manner. The
martyrdom of St. Lawrence, however, was a popular subject
with Renaissance painters. There is a painting of his
martyrdom by broiling by Bronzino in San Lorenzo. There
is also no evidence that Fra Lippo ever painted a picture
with a slave holding the head of John the Baptist.

But there is a fresco by him at Prato of the dancing
girl with the head of the preacher on a charger. This
painting perhaps suggested to Browning lines 196-197 of
the poem,

"Herodias, I would say, -
Who went and danced and got men's heads cut off"

56. ll. 73-74.

57. ll. 355; 357-358.

58. Lives of the Painters, Vol. II, Note pp. 81, 82.

This monologue embodies more of Browning's beliefs concerning art than any other single poem. Although Browning was not a realist in art, yet he possessed enough love of the beautiful, enough joy in living to sympathize with the rebel monk in his revolt against the conventional religiosity of Christian art. It is difficult to discriminate between what is Browning and what is Fra Lippo in the poem. In the light of 59. the other poems, however, it may be safely said that the poet's beliefs are expressed in the following lines:

"A fine way to paint soul by painting body
 So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go further
 And can't face worse!
 Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,
 Left foot and right foot, go a double step,
 Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,
 Both in their order" 60.

59. In Old Pictures in Florence it is Giotto who attempted to "make his flesh liker and his soul more like", who is the poet's chosen artist among the early masters. In the monologue Andrea del Sarto that painter is condemned in spite of his perfect craftsmanship, because he lacks spiritual power, (cf. p. 100). In Francis Purini the nude in art is defended because through the body the artist can portray the soul. In lines 377-382. Browning represents the painter as saying:

"Let my pictures prove I know
 Somewhat of what this fleshy frame of ours
 Or is or should be, how the soul empowers
The body to reveal its every mood
Of Love and hate, pour forth its plenitude
Of passion."

60. Fra Lippo Lippi, ll. 199-201, 205-208.

He would hardly go as far as the friar in the belief,

"If you get simple beauty and naught else,
You get about the best thing God invents." 61.

This is Keats' but not Browning's attitude.

Pictor Ignotus gives the other side of the picture. It represents the monastic painters who worked for the glory of God and the redemption of men with,

- - - - - "endless cloisters and eternal aisles
With the same series, Virgin, Babe, and Saint,
With the same cold, calm, beautiful regard." 62.

It was not the greatest painters whom Browning selected as the characters for his monologues, but those who were partial failures. Andrea del Sarto, "the faultless painter" belongs in this group. The monologue Andrea del Sarto was directly occasioned by a picture. There is a very interesting painting in the Pitti Palace supposed to be a portrait of Andrea del Sarto and his beautiful Lucrezia painted by himself. Kenyon asked Browning to send him a copy of this picture. The poet, unable to procure such a copy, wrote the poem expressing what the picture meant to him, and sent it to his friend.^{63.} And so was produced one of the finest of all Browning's poems.

Browning evidently obtained his knowledge of Andrea's life from Vasari. He emphasized the part

61. Fra Lippo Lippi, ll. 228-229.

62. Pictor Ignotus, ll. 59-61.

63. Griffin and Minchin, p. 200.

Lucrezia played in the failure of Andrea more than Vasari did in the second edition of his Lives. In the first edition, however, the history of Andrea's domestic affairs were given at some length.^{64.}

Andrea del Sarto emphasizes Browning's belief that the spiritual is greater than the material: that Raphael's Madonnas with their faulty lines are much superior to Andrea's with their spiritualless perfection.

The theme of the poem is the cause of Andrea's failure to rise to immortality with Raphael, Angelo, and Leonardo. Browning places the great blame, not on Lucrezia, but on the painter's own immoral, fiberless character.

Old Pictures in Florence, Fra Lippo Lippi, and Andrea del Sarto represent Browning's best work on Florentine Renaissance painters. The two later poems, Filippo Baldinucci and With Francis Furini, are of slight value to the present study except as manifestations of the poet's continuous interest in Florentine painting. The material for both of these poems was drawn from Fillippo Baldinucci's Notices of Painters.^{65.}

The poem called Filippo Baldinucci is concerned with an incident in the life of the painter, Lodovico Buti. The poem is of some interest in this discussion

64. Op.cit., Vol.III, note p.194.

65. Published 1681-1728. There is no copy of this book in the library, so I have been forced to rely on Porter and Clark, and Berdoe for my information concerning the sources of these poems.

as an illustration of Browning's method of using his sources. In this case he has retold in verse an incident related by Baldinucci, with a setting and sequel of his own. There is nothing in the original of the initial situation between the uncle and the boy, and nothing of the sequel related in stanzas XXXVII - l vi. The opening situation was introduced for its dramatic qualities, and the sequel, perhaps to set forth the principle that a work of art can be appreciated altogether apart from its emotional connotation. So the unbelieving Jew desired to possess the picture of the Virgin.

With Francis Furini is of more significance. It is Browning's defense of the nude in art. Francis Furini was a Florentine painter who delighted in the portrayal of the nude and chose subjects in which undraped figures were appropriate. ^{66.} According to Baldinucci he changed his attitude and on his death-bed requested that all of his pictures of the nude be collected and burned. Browning professed not to believe that he made such a request, and in the poem presented his arguments. The poem on the whole is rather dull and includes much irrelevant matter. It is redeemed by a few poetic passages such as the following:

66. This liking for the nude in art is also expressed in Christmas Eve and Easter day and The Lady and the Painter.

67. Among these pictures are Adam and Eve, Lot and his Daughters, The Death of Adam, and Diana and the Nymphs Bathing.

"Yes rosed from top to toe in blush of youth;
 One foot upon the moss-fringe would some nymph
 Try, with its venturous fellow, if the lymph 68.
 Were chiller than the slab-stepped fountain-edge."

VIII Conclusions Summarized.

The conclusions reached in this chapter concerning Browning and Florentine Renaissance art may be summarized as follows:

1. Browning's general interest in art is shown by his own attempts at drawing and modeling.
2. His poems give the best proof of his interest in art.
3. Browning's poems show an interest in Italian Renaissance art and a special interest in Florentine art.
4. Browning's interest in Florentine art was largely dependent upon his life in Florence.
5. The poet's interest in Florentine Renaissance writers was not extensive and seems to have had slight connection with his life in Florence. Dante was his favorite.
6. The references in the poems to Florentine Renaissance architecture and sculpture show an exact knowledge on the part of the poet, but no decided interest in these arts for their own sakes.
7. The poems dealing with Florentine Renaissance painters show:

68. Part II, ll. 80-83. Evidently a discription of one of the figures in the painting, Diana and the Nymphs Bathing.

- a. Painting was Browning's favorite Florentine art.
- b. He was interested in the subject from 1446 until his death, but especially interested during the first nine years of his Florentine residence.
- c. He had an interest in Florentine painters of all periods of the Renaissance, but a peculiar interest in the pre-Raphaelites.
- d. He was more interested in obscure and less successful painters than the great masters.
- e. He possessed an exact knowledge of the lives and works of the painters derived from a serious study of the biographies of Vasari and Baldinucci and the pictures in the Florentine art galleries.
- f. He had seen original pictures by all except a few of the painters to whom he referred.
- g. The art poems show Browning to have been neither a realist nor a mystic in art, but an eclectic.
- h. The two later poems are of importance only as proving Browning's continued interest in art and one of these With Francis Furini as setting forth the poet's defence of the nude in art.

APPENDIX.

Poems Containing References to Florentine Renaissance Art.^{1.}

1. Sordello, 1840.
2. King Victor and King Charles 1842.
3. Times Revenges, 1845.
(Pictor Ignotus, 1845, Florentine only in spirit.)
4. Luria, 1846.
5. Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day, 1850
6. Up at a Villa, 1855.
7. Old Pictures in Florence, 1855.
8. The Statue and the Bust, 1855.
9. Fra Dippo Lippi, 1855.
10. Andrea del Sarto, 1855.
11. One Word More, 1855.
12. James Lee's Wife, 1864.
13. Apparent Failures, 1864.
14. The Ring and the Book, 1868-9.
15. Fifine at the Fair, 1872.
16. Red Cotton Night-Cap Country, 1873.
17. The Inn Album, 1875.
18. Pacchiaratto, 1876.
19. Filippo Baldinucci, 1876.

1. For a list of poems containing references to Italian art of all periods, see Miss Hogrefe, Op. Cit., p.55.

20. With Christopher Smart, 1887.
21. With Francis Furini, 1887.
22. With Charles Arison, 1887.
23. Beatrice Signorini, 1889.

Florentine Renaissance Art in the Poetry of Browning.Literature.

I. G. Baccaccio

(1313-1374. The great prose writer of the Italian Renaissance; a master story-teller.)

1. The Ring and the Book, III l. 1440 (A Hundred Merry Tales, probably a reference to the Decameron); V, l. 557.
2. Up at a Villa, l. 42.

II Dante

(1265-1321. The greatest Italian poet; he stands at the dividing line between medieval and modern thought).

1. Sordello, ll. I, 348; 366-372; VI, 834; (Divine Comedy) V, 590ff; V, 993.
2. Times Revenges, l. 46.
3. Up at a Villa, l. 42.
4. One Word More, ll. 32-58.
(Dante's picture of Beatrice).
5. La Saisiaz, l. 225.
6. The Ring and the Book, VI, l. 452.
7. The Inn Album, II, l. 264.
(The Inferno).

III Macchiavelli

(1469-1527 A Florentine statesman and writer.

Best known as the author of The Prince.)

1. King Victor and King Charles, l. 183.

IV Petrarch

(1304-1374. Often called the first modern man,
of great importance to the revival of literature)

1. Up at a Villa, l. 42.
2. Apparent Failures, l. 12
3. The Ring and the Book, XII, l. 807.

V Franco Sacchetti

(1335 ?-1410 ? A Florentine poet and novelist.

Wrote stories after the manner of Boccaccio).

1. The Ring and the Book, V, l. 558.

(This reference is rather doubtful. Count
Guido of Arezzo says: "My townsman, frank Ser
Franco's Merry Tales." Sacchetti was a
Florentine. The reference may be to
Francesco Petrarch who was born at Arezzo.)

Architecture

I Antinori Palace - the old Riccardi Palace.

(Built about 1481. An example of secular architecture)

1. The Statue and the Bust, l. 1.

II The Campanile of Santa Maria.

(Erected in 1334 - planned by Giotto)

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 15, 136, 278.

III Chapel and the Convent

1. Andrea del Sarto, ll. 41-42.

IV Duomo

(The famous cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore begun in 1294 completed in 1887. Its dome constructed by Brunelleschi in 1420).

1. Luria, Act I, l. 123.
2. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 278.

V Gaddi

(Taddeo Gaddi, (1300-1366) a pupil of Giotto, who actually had charge of the erection of the Campanile).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 205.

VI Giotto

(1267-1337 - an early architect and painter.

Designed the Campanile)

1. Old Pictures in Florence, 11.15,17,24,133,
233,287.
2. Fra Lippo Lippi, 1. 189.

VII Ognissant

(All Saints church, Florence).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, 1. 242.

VIII Palace of the Medici

1. Old Pictures in Florence, 1. 18.

IX Riccardi Palace

(A palace in the Via Larga, at one time the
palace of the Medici).

1. The Statue and the Bust, 1. 33.
2. The Ring and the Book, I, 1. 47.

X St. Ambrose

(A convent in Florence)

1. Fra Lippo Lippi, 1. 346.

XI Sant. Evola

(One of the towers of the outer fortifications
of Florence)

1. Luria, 1. 30.

XII Sant' Empoli

(See. XI)

1. Luria, 1. 33.

XIII Sant' Miniato

(See. XI)

1. Luria, 1. 31.
2. Sordello, V, 1. 859.
3. One Word More, 149.

XIV San Romano

(See XI)

1. Luria, 1. 30

XV Santa Scala

(See. XI)

1. Luria, 1. 32.

XVI San Lorenzo

1. Fra Lippo Lippi, 1. 425.
2. The Ring and the Book, I, 1. 48.

XVII San Felice Church.

The Ring and the Book, I, l. 476.

Sculpture

I A bust of the Lady

(An imaginary bust of the wife of a Riccardi).

1. The Statue and the Bust,

II Baccio Bandinelli

1. The Ring and the Book, I, l. 44.

(Statue of Giovanni de Medici (John of the Black Bands) by Braccio in the square of San Lorenzo, Florence).

III Giovanni da Bologna

(1524-1608. John of Douay)

1. The Statue and the Bust, ll. 202;203-208.

(Equestrian statue of Duke Ferdinand in Piazza dell' Annunziata, Florence).

IV Ghiberti

(1378-1455. First great Florentine sculptor.

The bronz gates of the Baptistery on which he worked forty-two years are his masterpiece).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 182.

V Niccolo Pisano

(-1280. The first sculptor to break away from the restrictions of Byzantine art.

A native of Pisa, but did some work in Florence).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, I. 179.
2. Sordello, I, I. 575.

Florentine Painting

I Andrea del Sarto

(1486-1531. Called by Vasari "the faultless painter". Just missed making a fourth to Angelo, Raphael, and Leonardo.

1. Entire monologue Andrea del Sarto devoted to him.
2. One Word More, 1. 138.

II Michael Angelo Bunarotti

(1475-1564. The greatest Florentine artist; painter, sculptor, and architect).

1. Andrea del Sarto, 11. 130.136.184, 201, 233, 264.
2. Easter Day, 1. 799.
3. With Christopher Smart, 1. 90.
4. Francis Furini, 11. 42;50; 165.
5. With Charles Arison, 1. 232.

(A brief discription of The Creation of Eve on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel).

6. Red Cotton Night Cap Country, 1. 780.
7. Beatrice Signorini, 1. 19.
8. The Ring and the Book, IX, 11.114-5; XII, 1.807.
9. Old Pictures in Florence, 11, 43, 183.
10. Fifine at the Fair, 11. 755; 777.

III Fra Angelico

(1387-1455. A spiritual monastic painter).

1. Fra Lippo Lippi, l, 235.
2. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 204.
3. The Ring and the Book, XI, l. 2119.

IV Artemisia Lomi or Genteleschi

(1590-1642. A famous woman painter of Pisa, did some of her work in Florence. Two pictures in Pitti Palace).

1. Beatrice Signorini (one of the principle characters in this poem).

V Filippo Baldinucci

(1624-1696. A Florentine artist and art historian; better known for his histories).

1. Filippo Baldinucci
2. With Francis Furini, ll. 75, 125, 187.

VI Alesso Baldovinetti

(1422-1499. Best known for his mosaics. The teacher of Ghirlandajo).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 215.

VII Domenico Bigordi

(1449-1494. Better known as Ghirlandajo. Possess-

ed little real genius, but immensely popular in his day).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 182.

VIII Sandro Botticelli

(1444-1510. Real name Alessandro Filipepi.

One of the first Renaissance artists to take an interest in classical subjects).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 202.

IX Lodovico Buti

(1624-1696. A painter little known except for Baldinucci's account).

1. Baldinucci. (Buti is the speaker in this poem).

X Cimabue

(1240-1302. One of Giotto's teachers. Considered by Vasari to be the first modern painter.)

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 179.

XI Pietro da Cortona

(1596-69. Painter and architect, decorated the Pitti and Barberini palaces in Florence).

1. Beatrice Signorini, l. 4.
2. The Ring and the Book, V, l. 486.

XII Carlo Dolci

(1616-1686. Representative of the decline in Renaissance art. His pictures are pretty, but lack power).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 232.

XIII Francis Furini

(1604-1649. A painter of the nude).

1. Francis Furini. (Poem based on a real incident in the painters life).

XIV Taddeo Gaddi

(1300-1366. A painter and architect. A pupil of Giotto).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, ll. 205-207.

XV Giotto

(1266-1337. A painter as well as an architect. His pictures among the first in Renaissance art to show convincingly the third dimension).

1. Fra Lippo Lippi, l. 189.
2. Old Pictures in Florence, ll. 233, 287.
3. Pacchiarotto, l. 44.

XVI Tommaso Guidi (Masaccio)

(1401-1429. According to Vasari, Lippo's pre-

decessor, In Browning's time he was believed to be his follower. Vasari now that to be right).

1. Fra Lippo Lippi, l. 276.

XVII Fra Filippo Lippi

(1412-1469. A Dominican who revolted from the monastic school of painting - a naturalist).

1. Entire monologue Fra Lippo Lippi devoted to him.

Pictures of his mentioned in this poem:

a. A Saint Lawrence at Prato, l. 323.

(Vasari speaks of a martyrdom St. Stephens there, but no Saint Lawrence).

b. Coronation of the Virgin, ll. 346-387.

(Lippi's best known picture, in the Academy, Florence).

c. St. Jerome

("Jerome knocking at his poor old breast".

ll. 72-74. Picture in Academy, Florence).

2. One Word More, l. 138.

XVIII Filippino Lippo

(1460-1504. Son of Filippo Lippi, pupil of Botticelli. Surpassed his father in composition).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 203.

XIX Marghèritone

(1236-1313. A religious painter, very jealous of Giotto's innovations in art).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, ll. 217-224.

XX Lorenzo Monaco

(1370-1425. A monastic painter of great spirituality).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 208.
2. Fra Lippo Lippi, ll. 149;246.

XXI Niccolò Dello

(1404-1464. A painter of frescoes).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 64.

XXII Andrea Orgagna

(1308 ?-1368 ?. A follower of Giotto).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 264.

XXIII Pollaiuolo

(1430-1499. One of the early realists; the first artist to make a study of anatomy).

1. Old Pictures in Florence, ll. 210-212.

Raphael Santi

(1483-1520. One of the three greatest Renaissance painters - an Umbrian not a Florentine,

although he studied and worked in Florence four years).

1. Andrea del Sarto, ll. 103-120, 136, 152, 178, 186, 195, 198, 264.
2. Bishop Blougram's Apology, l. 667.
3. One Word More, ll. 5-30.
4. With Christopher Smart, ll. 40, 90.
5. With Francis Furini, l. 166.
6. The Ring and the Book, VI, ll. 405-6; IX, ll. 114-115; XI, l. 2115.
7. Fifine at the Fair, ll. 517-550, 755.

XXIV Rossi

(Rosso de' Rossi 1494-1541. An imitator of Andrea del Sarto and Michael Angelo).

1. Christina and Monaldeschi, l. 107.

XXV Stefano

(1324 ?-1397 ?. Little known of him except he was greatly praised by Vasari who called him the "Ape of Nature".)

1. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 69.

XXVI Santi Di Tito

(1536-1603. A pupil of Bronzino; an excellent designer).

1. Beatrice Signorini, ll. 123, 125.

XXVII Vasari.

(1511-1571. A painter of the school of Angelo, but more famous for his Lives of the Painters).

1. Ring and the Book, I, 585; VI, 1771; VII, 1323; IX, 602.

(In these references Caponsacchi is compared to St. George, probably suggested by Vasari's St. George and the Dragon in the Pieve at Arezzo.)

2. Andrea del Sarto, l. 105.
3. Old Pictures in Florence, ll. 64-65.

XXVIII Leonardo da Vinci

(1452-1519. One of the three great painters of the Italian Renaissance).

1. Andrea del Sarto, l. 263.
2. Old Pictures in Florence, l. 64.
3. With Francis Furini, l. 165.
4. The Ring and the Book, I, l. 72.

(Reference to the Joconde, better known as the Mona Lisa).

5. James Lee's Wife, VIII, l. 57.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

May 15, 1917

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Dear Sir:

Miss Mabel Mayo's dissertation on
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herewith submitted, has my approval.

Very truly yours

Fredrick M. Fisdell

University of Missouri - Columbia



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