THE MADONNA IN ART.

The Part which It Has Played in Sacred Painting for the Past Four Hundred Years.

Four hundred years ago, when the School of Masters was created in Italy, the work of painting the Madonna and Child was taken up as a life study. The great painters did it, not as an incident in a life of art, but as a work to be prayed over, slept over and entered over; to be studied, expanded, redrawn and worked upon until, finally, at the conclusion of a long life, the painter could say, "I have finished my Madonna."

The church was the scene in which he entered, and the altar was the page of rare beauty or value which presented itself for toil and sacrifice. In this sanctity he lived, and religion came to be a part of his painting. Each stroke was put to the canvas under the Divine influence, and to this day those are legends of the inspiration under which the painters labored when they worked.

MADONNAS OF TO-DAY.

To-day the work of painting the Madonna and the Child goes on. And it would be unfair to say that it is not the work of religious men, but clearly the religion that inspires them holds a very different place in the every-day life from that it held when the earliest of the great masters painted. These are, to plain truth, easel pictures, intended to be hung among others, to be part of room or box outdoors, objects that furnish pleasantly the houses of their owners. Kowalski, the painter of hunting and campaign scenes, places a graceful model, with a boy at her knee, in sober surroundings, paints the scene with simplicity and refinement, and calls it "The Infancy of Christ." Pappertzi, with vivid imagery of the later Renaissance, makes a brilliantly picturesque rendering of his subject, the attention of which is in the floating, impossible veil, and in the highly wrought texture of the flesh. Adolphe Chaus keeps closer to the simple conception, while Knause and Hofer give rest to a freshness, if not a more sympathetic fancy. The pictures in themselves are pleasing. They find their welcome in multitudes of homes, and are cherished by multitudes of those hearts. If they are no longer of the old religious art, yet they may be the centres of sincere and tender religious feeling.

The earliest masterpiece of the Madonna and Child of which we have record is that of Giovanni Bellini, who lived 1427 to 1516. With Bellini came the full development of art with religion. The previous Madonnas had either religion without art, which meant nothing, or art without religion, which became sacrilege. But with Bellini there arose the first great masterpiece of the Madonna.

Bellini, under the shadow of the altar, painted the grave face of the mother of Christ, full of contemplation. The Child was serious, with intent consciousness of the future. He modeled in simple, broad methods, and finished in a refined, smooth way without eccentricity to detail to mar his conception.

THE FIRST MADONNAS.

Taine afterward said that the work of Bellini was the crowning of religious art.

While Bellini was painting, for Bellini was Italian, Pietro Perugino, who lived 1446 to 1523, was also painting, and in some senses he painted better, for his art was more highly religious. His was a joyful Madonna with a Child who rejoiced that he had come into the world.

Titian, the famous, began life in 1477, and for nearly half a century he painted. Titian lived a tranquil life until his hundredth year, and the records tell us that he painted for eighty years. During that time he turned out from his patient hand the happiest, healthiest, most religious pictures that ever came from a painter's brush. Titian had a calm and steadfast will, which shows now in his paintings. He turned off noble, splendid, masterpieces, of which the Madonna surrounded by the four saints, is the most beautiful.

It gave to the artist an opportunity for rich color, of which he availed himself. The picture would be fitting the wall of a Venetian palace, it is so warm and beautiful.

The Virgin is a dignified and gracious lady, of high birth and fortunate life, whose simple robe and skillfully adjusted head dress are borne with the same ease and natural pleasure that the painter has in rendering them. She is, moreover, the centre of interest about which the grave, mature men and the graceful woman, who are the "four saints," are becomingly grouped, and the group is framed in the heavy curtain, to which the massive base of the column on the right gives the touch of palace splendor. It is the religion and the art of Venice, both parts, and religion, not the greater, is a life of vigor and success and luxury.

Raphael was born in 1483, only six years later than Titian, but lived to be only 37 years of age. Titian, who was older than he, lived to see the boy, Raphael, grow up, paint for eight ten years, and die. But what Titian took a century to do, Raphael accomplished in his brief span, for he painted as one inspired. His Madonna in art is to-day as popular that in the minds of many, he is the originator, the creator of all the Madonnas that have followed, and a part of those that have gone before are supposed to have been followers of him.

Raphael worked in Rome, where he left his Madonnas, and their peculiar type have become to be recognized as "The Madonna." The one in the national gallery is the most characteristic. It shows the peaceful, pure face of the Virgin, with the baby, resting Child on her bosom. His hands are nestling on her robe. Both have the beautiful, joyful faces, which to many, form the true idea of the Madonna.

There is true religion in the picture, acceptable to all religions, and the Madonna of Raphael is a human inspiration.

The next Madonna painter was Andrea del Sarto, who lived from 1487 to 1531. Browning calls him the faultless painter and has him say in one of his poems:

I can do with my pencil what I know,
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—
Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,
I do not boast, perhaps.

And Browning also makes him say of his fellows who "do less:"

There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed, beating, stuffed, and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.

Del Sarto's work is in the Pitti palace, and is an example of true art.

Correggio lived from 1494 to 1534, only a short life, but long enough to make himself immortal. Those who have seen his work describe it as being "delightful, smiling and graceful," and his Madonna is a pretty woman, one whom you could love.

Then came Hans Holbein, whose life dates from 1497 to 1544. His Madonna is a tall, cold one, for he was a court painter to Henry VIII., and he strove to make his Madonna as little human as possible. There was not much inspiration in the Court of Henry VIII., and, therefore, Holbein tried to make his work of the world, worldly.

The Madonna of Peter Paul Rubens, who lived from 1577 to 1640, has on a very different shade from previous ones. She was a joyful creature, decorative and lovely. Another of Rubens's masterpieces, which is of conventional difference to the Madonna, is "The Child Jesus with the Little St. John and Angels," where a group of healthy, sportive children play together with a lamb. Rubens was a little bothered, with the dictatorships of Christianity, and he managed sometimes to get his pictures relaxed.

Murillo lived from 1618 to 1682, and like Rubens he won his fame on a Madonna scene. He painted his Immaculate Conception so exquisitely that it is felt by those who do not study art.

The Madonna's upturned face and the aureola shed a glorious light over the canvas. The drapery is exquisite and it is said that the Doreas and Knauer and other great drapery artists to-day study Murillo. Murillo turned off paintings by the wholesale, and decorated all the churches of the Spaniards.

In those days the Madonna was the only subject upon which a painter could win a reputation. But beginning with the patriarch Bellini, and that there were other scenes, and they began to depict great battles upon enormous canvases, which they sold as masterpieces.

To-day there is a revival in Madonna painting and there are springing up new masters, and perhaps next years hence the artists who work faithfully now will be rewarded with the title of "Masters of the Nineteenth Century."

THE MADONNA, AFTER THOURETTE, ONE OF THE NEW MASTERS OF THE RUSSIAN SCHOOL OF SACRED PAINTING.

NATIVE REGIMENTS OF THE COLONIES.

The Bull Army Bill Provides that We Shall Have Them as Great Britain Has Her Indian Troops.

Since President McKinley, in his annual message to Congress, has set the seal of his approval on what is generally known as the Bull Army bill, which proposes to increase the standing army of the United States, it is fair to assume that all the particulars, as drafted by Chairman Hull, will meet with the approval of Congress, and that by the 1st of January the process will have begun of not only increasing the regular standing army to its full prescribed strength of 25,000 men, but also of outlining the method by which the suggested "provisional army" of 35,000 men is entered from the U. S. to replenish the various native military bodies of our new possessions.

The most striking feature of the great military demonstration at the time of the Queen's Jubilee in London were the picturesque and varied uniforms of the native troops of the British colonies, who were brought to London from the four corners of the earth to honor the Queen and to give the British taxpayer a "show for his money."

Heretofore, military displays in America have been sadly lacking in the picturesqueness which comes from a variety of uniforms. For the uniforms of our regular army soldiers have always been of a singularity that borders on the traditions of the Jeffersonian idea.

But if the plan incorporated in the Hull bill is carried out our future military displays may be enhanced by the presence of detachments of native troops from Porto Rico, Cuba, Hawaii and the Philippines.

THE RECRUITS.

As already outlined, the bill provides that the artillery branch should be enlarged by increasing the enlisted men in the rank, adding one second lieutenant to each company, on the theory that the artillery will have five more regiments added to the seven now authorized, with an increase in the cavalry regiments. Whether it will be possible for the recruiting officers to keep the grade of the enlisted men up to the present standard in the large number of recruits that will be needed seems to be an open question. This far reason is derived from officers engaged in recruiting service for the regular army show that some difficulty is being experienced in obtaining recruits and that the greater number of applicants are obviously not fitted for military service. The reluctance of the most desirable class of men to enlist is ascribed to the hardships told of the Spanish War, and the reports, sometimes exaggerated, regarding the deadly diseases certain to be encountered by troops stationed in tropical climates.

The mustering officers believe that it will be difficult to get desirable recruits for the regular army on account of the prospect that they will be sent to remote parts of the world to perform garrison duty. In some cases, however, this prospect will operate to the advantage of the recruiting service.

If Congress early in the session should make provision for the increase of the regular army, it is quite probable that men of the volunteer regiments now in the service will be sent to do garrison duty in Cuba. It may be necessary to send troops from the regular regiments. But if the plans for the formation of this new "provisional army" are put in the hands of the proper military authorities there is every reason to believe that the native troops could be utilized for garrison duty almost at once.

PORTO RICO RECRUITS TRAINING.

NATIVE TROOPS.

These troops could be officered from the United States Army and provision made to give them increased rank and pay while on such duty. It is proposed that the cost of maintaining this provisional army should come out of the revenues of the islands garrisoned. It is not intended that the whole garrison should be made up of such organizations of natives, but that a sufficient number of United States regulars should be at each important place to maintain order in any emergency.

Of the regular military organizations that were in existence on our new island possessions before the beginning of the war with Spain, and the annexation of Hawaii, the most perfectly organized and equipped army was that of the Hawaiian Republic.

It consisted of 1,500 men, uniformed and armed much as are our militia regiments of the several States. This little army had been drilled and officered by ex-officers of the American Army, who had been given high salaries by the Hawaiian Republic to take station. With this for a nucleus the other 1,000 men to the Hawaiian division of the provisional army, which, under the control and guidance of an inspector assigned to it from the Regular Army, such as is supplied to every State and territory in the Union, that global department would, in short order, have an admirably trained force for its protection or defense.

CUBA'S SOLDIERS.

In Cuba there are 15,000 volunteers who have been accustomed to regard themselves as soldiers. These volunteers are to remain in Cuba, and it will be some time before the United States can give up possession of the island. Besides that, there are 40,000 men who have served in the "Army of Liberation," that makes 55,000 men who have for the last three years trained in a certain kind of warfare. And that they have no present intention of giving up the life of a soldier is shown by the fact that within a very short time they have purchased 8,000 rifles and that they are continuing to purchase large quantities of ammunition. The Cuban Army, as a whole, wears a uniform of blue drill, with a pale brimmed straw hat turned up in front, and are armed with a variety of makes of rifles, together with the inevitable machete. In a parade of our new "provisional army" they would present a more picturesque appearance than would the troops of any of our new possessions.

Of the Porto Rican soldiery there is little definite information as to numbers. It is presumed that there are about 1,000 men in the native companies, which are organized much as were the old "train bands" of the colonial period in American history. Their uniforms are anything but uniform, and are—from a Northern point of view—rather scanty. Most of them are armed with Mauser rifles, relics of era of Spanish rule. A few army officers and a corresponding number of drill sergeants will work wonders with these detached bands in a few months.

THE PHILIPPINES.

The Philippines of the future will be garrisoned, it is hoped, by the men who, up to a few months ago, were serving against the Spanish forces in Aguinaldo's army. That there is a plentiful supply of these native soldiers to draw upon may be gathered from the statement that on one day three whole regiments deserted from the insurgent army and expressed a desire to fight under the Stars and Stripes.

It is not known as to just how many men there are in Aguinaldo's army. But if he can go on fighting after the loss of three entire regiments it would seem that after peace is declared and the matter of Philippine rule is settled, that Uncle Sam ought to have the pick of a large number of good fighting men for the most distant branch of his picturesque provisional army.

THE PHILIPPINE NATIVES GAZING WITH INTEREST AND ATTENTION UPON UNCLE SAM'S SOLDIERS.