THE FLORENTINE PAINTER AND SCULPTOR, LEONARDO DA VINCI.*

[BORN 1452—DIED 1519.]

THE richest gifts are occasionally seen to be showered, as by celestial influence, on certain human beings, nay, they some times supernaturally and marvellously congregate in one sole person; beauty, grace, and talent being united in such a manner, that to whatever the man thus favoured may turn himself, his every action is so divine as to leave all other men far behind him, and manifestly to prove that he has been specially endowed by the hand of God himself, and has not obtained his pre-eminence by human teaching, or the power of man. This was seen and acknowledged by all men in the case of Leonardo da Vinci, in whom, to say nothing of his beauty of person, which yet was such that it has never been sufficiently extolled, there was a grace beyond expression which was rendered manifest without thought or effort in every act and deed, and who had besides so rare a gift of talent and ability, that to whatever subject he turned his attention, however difficult, he presently made himself absolute master of it. Extraordinary power was in his case conjoined with remarkable facility, a mind of regal boldness and magnanimous daring; his gifts were such that the celebrity of his name extended most widely, and he was held in the highest estimation, not in his own time only, but also, and even to a greater extent, after his death, nay, this he has continued, and will continue to be by all succeeding ages.

Truly admirable, indeed, and divinely endowed was Leonardo da Vinci; this artist was the son of Ser Piero da Vinci;† he would without doubt have made great progress in learn-

* Vinci is a small castle in the lower Valdarno, near the lake Fucecchio. This life of Leonardo is one of the best that Vasari has written. Nor has any other writer conveyed so high an idea of this wonderful genius, as we here receive from the simplicity and brevity of Vasari.—*Ed. Flor.*, 1832-8.

† Leonardo, born in 1452, and not earlier, as some of his biographers assert him to have been. He was the natural son of Ser Piero, notary to the Signoria of Florence, but is believed to have been legitimized by his father in his early youth.—See *Notizie Storiche di Lionardo da Vinci*, by Carlo Amoretti.—*Milan*, 1804; see also Brown's *Life of Leonardo*, &c. London, 1828; and Gaye, *Carteggio inedito d'Artisti*, vol. i., where we have documentary evidence as to the period of his birth, &c., &c.

ing and knowledge of the sciences, had he not been so versatile and changeful, but the instability of his character caused him to undertake many things which having commenced he afterwards abandoned. In arithmetic, for example, he made such rapid progress in the short time during which he gave his attention to it, that he often confounded the master who was teaching him, by the perpetual doubts he started, and by the difficulty of the questions he proposed. He also commenced the study of music, and resolved to acquire the art of playing the lute, when, being by nature of an exalted imagination and full of the most graceful vivacity, he sang to that instrument most divinely, improvising at once the verses and the music.*

* Of Leonardo's poetical compositions, the following sonnet, preserved to us by the care of Lomazzo, is the only specimen remaining :—

Chi non può quel che vuol, quel che può voglia;
Che quel che non si può folle è volere.
Adunque saggio l' uomo è da tenere,
Che da quel che non può sua vogler toglia.

Però che ogni diletto nostro è doglia
Sta in sì e nò saper, voler, potere;
Adunque quel sol può, che col dovere
Ne trae la ragion fuor di sua soglia.

Nè sempre è da voler, quel che l' uom pote.
Spesso par dolce quel che torna amaro.
Piansi già quel ch' io volsi, poi ch' io l' ebbi.

Adunque tu' lettor di queste note,
S' a te vuoi esser buono, e agli altri caro,
Vogli sempre poter quel che tu debbi.

Which may thus be rendered :—

If what thou would'st thou can'st not, then content thee
To will as thou may'st act. It is but folly
To will what cannot be. Soon learns the wise
To wrest his will from bootless wishes free.

Our bliss and woe depend alike on knowledge
Of what we should do, and, that known, to do it.
But he alone shall compass this who never
Doth warp his will when right before him stands.

All he can do, man may not safely will.
Oft seemeth sweet what soon to bitter turns.
How have I wept of some fond wish possessed!

Thou, therefore, reader of these lines, would'st thou
Count with the good, and to the good be dear?
Will only to be potent for the right.

But, though dividing his attention among pursuits so varied, he never abandoned his drawing, and employed himself much in works of relief, that being the occupation which attracted him more than any other. His father, Ser Piero, observing this, and considering the extraordinary character of his son's genius, one day took some of his drawings and showed them to Andrea del Verrocchio, who was a very intimate friend of his, begging him earnestly to tell him whether he thought that Leonardo would be likely to secure success if he devoted himself to the arts of design. Andrea Verrocchio was amazed as he beheld the remarkable commencement made by Leonardo, and advised Ser Piero to see that he attached himself to that calling, whereupon the latter took his measures accordingly, and sent Leonardo to study in the bottega or workshop of Andrea. Thither the boy resorted therefore, with the utmost readiness, and not only gave his attention to one branch of art, but to all the others, of which design made a portion. Endowed with such admirable intelligence, and being also an excellent geometrician, Leonardo not only worked in sculpture (having executed certain heads in terra-cotta, of women smiling, even in his first youth, which are now reproduced in gypsum, and also others of children which might be supposed to have proceeded from the hand of a master); but in architecture likewise he prepared various designs for ground-plans, and the construction of entire buildings: he too it was who, though still but a youth, first suggested the formation of a canal from Pisa to Florence, by means of certain changes to be effected on the river Arno.* Leonardo likewise made designs for mills, fulling machines, and other engines, which were to be acted on by means of water; but as he had resolved to make painting his profession, he gave the larger portion of time to drawing from nature. He sometimes formed models of different figures in clay, on which he would arrange fragments of soft drapery dipped in plaster; from these he would then set himself patiently to draw on very fine cambric or linen that had already been used and rendered smooth, these he executed in black and white with the point

* This magnificent work was executed about 200 years after, by Vincenzio Viviani, a disciple of Galileo.—*Bottari.*

of the pencil in a most admirable manner, as may be seen by certain specimens from his own hand which I have in my book of drawings. He drew on paper also with so much care and so perfectly, that no one has ever equalled him in this respect: I have a head by him in chiaro-scuro, which is incomparably beautiful. Leonardo was indeed so imbued with power and grace by the hand of God, and was endowed with so marvellous a facility in reproducing his conceptions; his memory also was always so ready and so efficient in the service of his intellect, that in discourse he won all men by his reasonings, and confounded every antagonist, however powerful, by the force of his arguments.

This master was also frequently occupied with the construction of models and the preparation of designs for the removal or the perforation of mountains, to the end that they might thus be easily passed from one plain to another. By means of levers, cranes, and screws, he likewise showed how great weights might be raised or drawn; in what manner ports and havens might be cleansed and kept in order, and how water might be obtained from the lowest deeps. From speculations of this kind he never gave himself rest, and of the results of these labours and meditations there are numberless examples in drawings, &c., dispersed among those who practise our arts: I have myself seen very many of them.* Besides all this he wasted not a little time, to the degree of even designing a series of cords, curiously intertwined, but of which any separate strand may be distinguished from one end to the other, the whole forming a

* A certain portion of these, published at Milan in 1784, were republished at the same place with notes, by Vallardi, in 1830. There were thirteen folio volumes of Leonardo's writings and drawings in the Ambrosian Library (Milan), but these were taken to Paris; and one only, the *Codex Atlantico*, which treats principally of mechanics, has been returned. These also have been published by Girolamo Mantelli of Canobio (Milan, 1785). There is a specimen of Leonardo's MSS. at Holkham; this is a small folio, with the title, *Libro originale di Natura*, &c., &c., it is written from right to left, as was the custom of Leonardo, and the text is illustrated by means of drawings: there is likewise an ancient copy of the same work at Holkham. For many curious instances of the fact that this extraordinary genius had made various discoveries and produced numerous inventions in science generally, and in physics more particularly, some of which have been re-discovered or re-invented during succeeding ages, see Amoretti, *Memorie Storiche*, with the works of Gerli and Chamberlaine.

complete circle: a very curiously complicated and exceedingly difficult specimen of these coils may be seen engraved; in the midst of it are the following words: — *Leonardus Vinci Academia.* Among these models and drawings there is one, by means of which Leonardo often sought to prove to the different citizens—many of them men of great discernment—who then governed Florence, that the church of San Giovanni in that city could be raised, and steps placed beneath it, without injury to the edifice: he supported his assertions with reasons so persuasive, that while he spoke the undertaking seemed feasible, although every one of his hearers, when he had departed, could see for himself that such a thing was impossible. In conversation Leonardo was indeed so pleasing that he won the hearts of all hearers, and though possessing so small a patrimony only that it might almost be called nothing, while he yet worked very little, he still constantly kept many servants and horses, taking extraordinary delight in the latter: he was indeed fond of all animals, ever treating them with infinite kindness and consideration; as a proof of this it is related, that when he passed places where birds were sold, he would frequently take them from their cages, and having paid the price demanded for them by the sellers, would then let them fly into the air, thus restoring to them the liberty they had lost. Leonardo was in all things so highly favoured by nature, that to whatever he turned his thoughts, mind, and spirit, he gave proof in all of such admirable power and perfection, that whatever he did bore an impress of harmony, truthfulness, goodness, sweetness and grace, wherein no other man could ever equal him.

Leonardo, with his profound intelligence of art, commenced various undertakings, many of which he never completed, because it appeared to him that the hand could never give its due perfection to the object or purpose which he had in his thoughts, or beheld in his imagination; seeing that in his mind he frequently formed the idea of some difficult enterprise, so subtle and so wonderful that, by means of hands, however excellent or able, the full reality could never be worthily executed and entirely realized. His conceptions were varied to infinity; philosophizing over natural objects; among others, he set himself to investigate the properties of plants, to make observations on the heavenly bodies, to follow

the movements of the planets, the variations of the moon, and the course of the sun.

Having been placed then by Ser Piero in his childhood with Andrea Verrocchio, as we have said, to learn the art of the painter, that master was engaged on a picture the subject of which was San Giovanni baptizing Jesus Christ ; in this Leonardo painted an angel holding some vestments ; and although he was but a youth, he completed that figure in such a manner, that the angel of Leonardo was much better than the portion executed by his master, which caused the latter never to touch colours more,* so much was he displeased to find that a mere child could do more than himself.†

Leonardo received a commission to prepare the cartoon for the hangings of a door which was to be woven in silk and gold in Flanders, thence to be despatched to the king of Portugal ; the subject was the sin of our first parents in Paradise: here the artist depicted a meadow in chiaro-scuro, the high lights being in white lead, displaying an immense variety of vegetation and numerous animals, respecting which it may be truly said, that for careful execution and fidelity to nature, they are such that there is no genius in the world, however God-like, which could produce similar objects with equal truth. In the fig-tree, for example, the foreshortening of the leaves, and the disposition of the branches are executed with so much care, that one finds it difficult to conceive how any man could have so much patience ; there is besides a palm-tree, in which the roundness of the fan-like leaves is exhibited to such admirable perfection and with so much art, that nothing short of the genius and patience of Leonardo could have effected it : but the work for which the cartoon was prepared was never carried into execution, the drawing therefore remained in Florence, and is now in the fortunate house of the illustrious Ottaviano de' Medici, to whom it was presented, no long time since, by the uncle of Leonardo.‡

* The picture wherein Leonardo painted the Angel is now at Florence in the Academy of Fine Arts. The figures of Andrea are without doubt hard and dry, while the Angel of Leonardo is full of life and expression. —*L. Schorn.*

† See *ante*, p. 255.

‡ Of this cartoon no authentic account can now be obtained, it is believed to be lost.

It is related that Ser Piero da Vinci, being at his country house, was there visited by one of the peasants on his estate, who, having cut down a fig-tree on his farm, had made a shield from part of it with his own hands, and then brought it to Ser Piero, begging that he would be pleased to cause the same to be painted for him in Florence. This the latter very willingly promised to do, the countryman having great skill in taking birds and in fishing, and being often very serviceable to Ser Piero in such matters. Having taken the shield with him to Florence therefore, without saying any thing to Leonardo as to whom it was for, he desired the latter to paint something upon it. Accordingly, he one day took it in hand, but finding it crooked, coarse, and badly made, he straightened it at the fire, and giving it to a turner, it was brought back to him smooth and delicately rounded, instead of the rude and shapeless form in which he had received it. He then covered it with gypsum, and having prepared it to his liking, he began to consider what he could paint upon it that might best and most effectually terrify whomsoever might approach it, producing the same effect with that formerly attributed to the head of Medusa. For this purpose therefore, Leonardo carried to one of his rooms, into which no one but himself ever entered, a number of lizards, hedgehogs, newts, serpents, dragon-flies, locusts, bats, glow-worms, and every other sort of strange animal of similar kind on which he could lay his hands; from this assemblage, variously adapted and joined together, he formed a hideous and appalling monster, breathing poison and flames, and surrounded by an atmosphere of fire; this he caused to issue from a dark and rifted rock, with poison reeking from the cavernous throat, flames darting from the eyes, and vapours rising from the nostrils in such sort that the result was indeed a most fearful and monstrous creature: at this he laboured until the odours arising from all those dead animals filled the room with a mortal fetor, to which the zeal of Leonardo and the love which he bore to art rendered him insensible or indifferent. When this work, which neither the countryman nor Ser Piero any longer inquired for, was completed, Leonardo went to his father and told him that he might send for the shield at his earliest convenience, since so far as he was concerned, the work was finished; Ser

Piero went accordingly one morning to the room for the shield, and having knocked at the door, Leonardo opened it to him, telling him nevertheless to wait a little without, and having returned into the room he placed the shield on the easel, and shading the window so that the light falling on the painting was somewhat dimmed, he made Ser Piero step within to look at it. But the latter, not expecting any such thing, drew back, startled at the first glance, not supposing that to be the shield, or believing the monster he beheld to be a painting, he therefore turned to rush out, but Leonardo withheld him, saying :—The shield will serve the purpose for which it has been executed, take it therefore and carry it away, for this is the effect it was designed to produce. The work seemed something more than wonderful to Ser Piero, and he highly commended the fanciful idea of Leonardo, but he afterwards silently bought from a merchant another shield, whereon there was painted a heart transfixed with an arrow, and this he gave to the countryman, who considered himself obliged to him for it to the end of his life. Some time after Ser Piero secretly sold the shield painted by Leonardo to certain merchants for one hundred ducats, and it subsequently fell into the hands of the Duke of Milan, sold to him by the same merchants for three hundred ducats.*

No long time after Leonardo painted an admirable picture of Our Lady, which was greatly prized by Pope Clement VII. ; among the accessories of this work was a bottle filled with water in which some flowers were placed, and not only were these flowers most vividly natural, but there were dew-drops on the leaves, which were so true to nature that they appeared to be the actual reality.† For Antonio Segni who was his intimate friend, Leonardo delineated on paper a Neptune in his chariot drawn by sea-horses, and depicted with so much animation that he seems to be indeed alive ; the turbulent waves also, the various phantasms surrounding the chariot, with the monsters of the deep, the winds, and admirable heads of marine deities, all contribute to the beauty of the work, which was presented by Fabio Segni, the son

* All trace of this shield has been lost.—*Ed. Flor.*

† This is believed to be the Madonna now in the Borghese Palace in Rome. The flask of water is there, as described, with the flowers in it.—Amoretti, *Memorie Storiche*, &c., p. 160.

of Antonio, to Messer Giovanni Gaddi,* with the following lines :—

Pinxit Virgilius Neptunum, pinxit Homerus ;
Dum maris undisoni per vada flectit equos.
Mente quidem vates illum conspexit uterque,
Vincius ast oculis ; jureque vincit eos.

Leonardo also had a fancy to paint the head of a Medusa in oil, to which he gave a circlet of twining serpents by way of head-dress; the most strange and extravagant invention that could possibly be conceived: but as this was a work requiring time, so it happened to the Medusa as to so many other of his works, it was never finished. The head here described is now among the most distinguished possessions in the palace of the Duke Cosimo,† together with the half length figure of an angel raising one arm in the air ; this arm, being foreshortened from the shoulder to the elbow, comes forward, while the hand of the other arm is laid on the breast.‡ It is worthy of admiration that this great genius, desiring to give the utmost possible relief to the works executed by him, laboured constantly, not content with his darkest shadows, to discover the ground tone of others still darker ; thus he sought a black that should produce a deeper shadow, and be yet darker than all other known blacks, to the end that the lights might by these means be rendered still more lucid, until he finally produced that totally dark shade, in which there is absolutely no light left, and objects have more the appearance of things seen by night, than the clearness of forms perceived by the light of day, but all this was done with the purpose of giving greater relief, and of discovering and attaining to the ultimate perfection of art.

Leonardo was so much pleased when he encountered faces

* The collections of the Gaddi family having been dispersed, the fate of this work is now unknown.—*Ed. Flor.*, 1832-8.

† Still in excellent preservation in the Florentine Gallery of the Uffizj; it will be found in the room wherein are the smaller pictures of the Tuscan school. An outline engraving of this work may be seen in the first series of the *Gallerie di Firenze illustrata*, tom. iii. tav. cxxviii.

‡ This picture was long believed to be lost, but was found in the hands of a broker, by a dealer in and restorer of pictures; it was much injured, and though seen by many connoisseurs, was not supposed to be a work of Leonardo, but the dealer, "having given it a plausible appearance, sold it as such to a Russian of high rank." For further details, see Passavant.

of extraordinary character, or heads, beards or hair of unusual appearance, that he would follow any such, more than commonly attractive, through the whole day, until the figure of the person would become so well impressed on his mind that, having returned home, he would draw him as readily as though he stood before him. Of heads thus obtained there exist many, both masculine and feminine; and I have myself several of them drawn with a pen by his own hand, in the book of drawings so frequently cited. Among these is the head of Amerigo Vespucci, which is a very beautiful one of an old man, done with charcoal, as also that of the Gypsy Captain Scaramuccia, which had been left by Gianbullari to Messer Donato Valdambrini, of Arezzo, Canon of San Lorenzo.* A picture representing the Adoration of the Magi was likewise commenced by Leonardo, and is among the best of his works, more especially as regards the heads; it was in the house of Amerigo Benci, opposite the Loggia of the Peruzzi, but like so many of the other works of Leonardo, this also remained unfinished.†

On the death of Giovanni Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, in the year 1493, Ludovico Sforza was chosen in the same year to be his successor, when Leonardo was invited with great honour to Milan by the Duke, who delighted greatly in the music of the lute, to the end that the master might play before him;‡ Leonardo therefore took with him a certain in-

* The fate of these works cannot be ascertained with certainty; there are many of the kind here described, and known to be by Leonardo, in the British Museum. Other drawings by this master are in the possession of Lord Arundel. A considerable number of his caricatures have been engraved.—See *Variæ figuræ monstrosæ a Leon. da Vinci delineatæ ære inc. a Jacobo Sandrart.* Ratisbon, 1654; see also Gerli, as cited above. Lomazzo, *Trattato della Pittura,* relates that he was himself present at a supper to which Leonardo had invited a number of peasants, whom he diverted by stories which made them laugh immoderately, and display the most extravagant contortions; the artist then withdrew, and reproduced the faces thus distorted, with an effect so irresistibly comic, that none could look at them without laughter.

† Now in the Uffizj, in the larger Hall of the Tuscan School. There is an outline engraving of this work also, in the *Gallerie di Firenze,* &c., above cited.—Serie 1, tom. ii. tav. lxxxviii.

‡ For the question of when Leonardo first repaired to Milan, and details respecting his works undertaken there, see Amoretti, *Memorie Storiche sulla Vita di Leonardo,* &c.

strument which he had himself constructed almost wholly of silver, and in the shape of a horse's head, a new and fanciful form calculated to give more force and sweetness to the sound. Here Leonardo surpassed all the musicians who had assembled to perform before the Duke; he was besides one of the best *improvisatori* in verse existing at that time, and the Duke, enchanted with the admirable conversation of Leonardo, was so charmed by his varied gifts that he delighted beyond measure in his society, and prevailed on him to paint an altar-piece, the subject of which was the Nativity of Christ, which was sent by the Duke as a present to the Emperor.* For the Dominican monks of Santa Maria delle Grazie at Milan, he also painted a Last Supper, which is a most beautiful and admirable work; to the heads of the Apostles in this picture the master gave so much beauty and majesty† that he was constrained to leave that of Christ unfinished, being convinced that he could not impart to it the divinity which should appertain to and distinguish an image of the Redeemer.‡ But this work, remaining thus in its unfinished state, has been ever held in the highest estimation by the Milanese, and not by them only, but by foreigners also: Leonardo succeeded to perfection in expressing the doubts and anxiety experienced by the Apostles, and the desire felt by them to know by whom their Master is to be betrayed; in the faces of all appear love, terror, anger, or grief and bewilderment, unable as they are to fathom the meaning of their Lord. Nor is the spectator less struck with admiration by the force and truth with which, on the other hand, the master has exhibited the impious

* This work has been generally reported to be still in the Imperial Gallery, but is no longer to be found there.

† Of this admirable picture, justly regarded by Lorenzo as "the compendium of all Leonardo's studies and writings," an engraving by Raphael Morghen appeared in 1800: and this engraving is considered the masterpiece of the engraver, as the picture is that of the painter. The work was also copied in mosaic, and for that purpose, a cartoon, now in the Leuchtenberg Gallery at Munich, and a finished picture, now at Milan (in the Brera), were prepared by the Cav. Bossi—See *Del Cenacolo di Leonardo da Vinci*, Milan, 1810; see also Gœthe's admired remarks on the same subject, in the *Propylæen*.

‡ The head of the Saviour is, on the contrary, admirably finished, and, notwithstanding the ruined condition of the work, is one of those in which the hand of Leonardo can be most clearly recognized.

determination, hatred, and treachery of Judas. The whole work indeed is executed with inexpressible diligence even in its most minute part, among other things may be mentioned the table-cloth, the texture of which is copied with such exactitude, that the linen-cloth itself could scarcely look more real.

It is related that the Prior of the Monastery was excessively importunate in pressing Leonardo to complete the picture; he could in no way comprehend wherefore the artist should sometimes remain half a day together absorbed in thought before his work, without making any progress that he could see; this seemed to him a strange waste of time, and he would fain have had him work away as he could make the men do who were digging in his garden, never laying the pencil out of his hand. Not content with seeking to hasten Leonardo, the Prior even complained to the Duke, and tormented him to such a degree that the latter was at length compelled to send for Leonardo, whom he courteously entreated to let the work be finished, assuring him nevertheless that he did so because impelled by the importunities of the Prior. Leonardo, knowing the Prince to be intelligent and judicious, determined to explain himself fully on the subject with him, although he had never chosen to do so with the Prior. He therefore discoursed with him at some length respecting art, and made it perfectly manifest to his comprehension, that men of genius are sometimes producing most when they seem to be labouring least, their minds being occupied in the elucidation of their ideas, and in the completion of those conceptions to which they afterwards give form and expression with the hand. He further informed the Duke that there were still wanting to him two heads, one of which, that of the Saviour, he could not hope to find on earth, and had not yet attained the power of presenting it to himself in imagination, with all that perfection of beauty and celestial grace which appeared to him to be demanded for the due representation of the Divinity incarnate. The second head still wanting was that of Judas, which also caused him some anxiety, since he did not think it possible to imagine a form of feature that should properly render the countenance of a man who, after so many benefits received from his master, had possessed a heart so depraved as to be

capable of betraying his Lord and the Creator of the world: with regard to that second, however, he would make search, and after all—if he could find no better, he need never be at any great loss, for there would always be the head of that troublesome and impertinent Prior.* This made the Duke laugh with all his heart, he declared Leonardo to be completely in the right, and the poor Prior, utterly confounded, went away to drive on the digging in his garden, and left Leonardo in peace: the head of Judas was then finished so successfully, that it is indeed the true image of treachery and wickedness; but that of the Redeemer remained, as we have said, incomplete. The admirable excellence of this picture, the beauty of its composition, and the care with which it was executed, awakened in the King of France,† a desire to have it removed into his own kingdom, insomuch that he made many attempts to discover architects, who might be able to secure it by defences of wood and iron, that it might be transported without injury. He was not to be deterred by any consideration of the cost that might be incurred, but the painting, being on the wall, his Majesty was compelled to forego his desire,‡ and the Milanese retained their picture.§

* The jesting threat of Leonardo has given rise to the belief that the head of Judas was in fact a portrait of the Prior, but the character of Leonardo makes it most unlikely that he could have offered this affront to an old man who was merely causing him a momentary vexation by a very pardonable, if not very reasonable, impatience; we learn besides that the Padre Bandelli, who was at that time Prior,—

"*erat facie magna et venusta, capite magno, et procedente ætate calvo capillisque canis conspirso.*"

See *Storia Genuina del Cenacolo*, &c., by the Padra Dom. Pino.—*Milan*, 1796.

† Francis I. namely, who visited Milan in 1515; not Louis XII., as some writers have it, who was there in 1499. Yet the work must have been completed some short time before the last date, since Ludovico Il Moro, presented a vineyard in that year to Leonardo, which is believed to have been in acknowledgment of this painting.—*Schorn*, quoting Amoretti, *ut supra*.

‡ De Pagave (Sienese Edition of Vasari) declares that the king, on finding it impossible to remove the picture, caused a copy to be made of it by Bernardino Luini, according to Pagave, which he placed in the church of St. Germain L'Auxerrois, in Paris; but this also is now lost.

§ It would be well for the Milanese if this were fully true, but in so ruined a state is this inestimable work, at the present time, that its posses-

In the same refectory, and while occupied with the Last Supper, Leonardo painted the portrait of the above-named Duke Ludovico, with that of his first-born son, Maximilian: these are on the wall opposite to that of the Last Supper, and where there is a Crucifixion painted after the old manner.* On the other side of the Duke is the portrait of the Duchess Beatrice, with that of Francesco, their second son: both of these princes were afterwards Dukes of Milan: the portraits are most admirably done.†

While still engaged with the paintings of the refectory, Leonardo proposed to the Duke to cast a horse in bronze of colossal size, and to place on it a figure of the Duke,‡ by way of monument to his memory: this he commenced, but finished the model on so large a scale that it never could be completed, and there were many ready to declare (for the judgments of men are various, and are sometimes rendered malignant by envy) that Leonardo had begun it, as he did others of his labours, without intending ever to finish it. The size of the work being such, insuperable difficulties presented themselves, as I have said, when it came to be cast; nay, the casting could not be effected in one piece, and it is very probable that, when this result was known, many were led to form the opinion alluded to above, from the fact that so many of Leonardo's works had failed to receive com-

sion has almost become a mere name. Even in Vasari's time, the humidity of the wall, or other causes, had produced a lamentable deterioration of the picture. Cleaning or restoration, the neglect of the monks, who even permitted a door to be broken through the feet of the central figure (that of the Saviour himself, of course), with the rough usage to which the monastery was subjected in time of war, have all done their part to produce the wreck so universally deplored.—See *Storia Genuina del Cenacolo*, &c. Amoretti, *ut supra*, Gallenberg, *Vita di Leonardo*, and other writers, none of whom can sufficiently lament the misfortune of art in what may be called the almost total loss of this noble work.

* The Crucifixion is by Gio Donato Montorsani.—*Ed. Flor.*, 1832-8.

† These portraits are, nevertheless, declared to have been undertaken by Leonardo with much reluctance. They were painted in oil on the wall, and quickly perished.—See Padre Pino, *Storia Genuina del Cenacolo*, &c., who quotes the Padre Gattico as his authority. In the Ambrosian Library, in Milan, there are portraits of Ludovico il Moro, and of his Duchess, Beatrice d'Este, both painted in oil by Ludovico.—See Passavant, *Kunstreise*, &c.

‡ Not of Ludovico himself, as the manner of the text would imply, but of his father, Francesco Sforza.

pletion. But of a truth, there is good reason to believe that the very greatness of his most exalted mind, aiming at more than could be effected, was itself an impediment; perpetually seeking to add excellence to excellence, and perfection to perfection; this was, without doubt, the true hindrance, so that, as our Petrarch has it,* the work was retarded by desire. All who saw the large model in clay which Leonardo made for this work, declared that they had never seen anything more beautiful or more majestic; this model remained as he had left it until the French, with their King Louis, came to Milan, when they destroyed it totally.† A small model of the same work, executed in wax, and which was considered perfect, was also lost, with a book containing studies of the anatomy of the horse, which Leonardo had prepared for his own use. He afterwards gave his attention, and with increased earnestness, to the anatomy of the human frame, a study wherein Messer Marcantonio della Torre, an eminent philosopher, and himself, did mutually assist and encourage each other.‡ Messer Marcantonio was at that time holding lectures in Pavia, and wrote on the same subject; he was one of the first, as I have heard say, who began to apply the doctrines of Galen to the elucidation of medical science, and to diffuse light over the science of anatomy, which, up to that time, had been involved in the

* See Trionfo d'Amore, cap. iii. p. 453.—*Ed. Flor.*, 1832-8.

† The model being completed, Leonardo computed that 100,000 lbs. weight of bronze would be required for the casting, but this the war against Ludovico il Moro rendered him incapable of furnishing, and in 1499 the French soldiers took the model for a target and destroyed it. That it was never completed was, therefore, not the fault of Leonardo. There is, indeed, a passage in Fra Luca Pacciolo, from which Gerli has sought to prove that he did cast it, and that the bronze casting, as well as the model, was broken to pieces by the French soldiers; but this is by no means to be safely affirmed. There is a design for this work in an engraving which Gerli is inclined to attribute to Leonardo himself (see *Disegni di Leonardo*), and which was at one time in the possession of Signor Vallardi, of Milan: another, the head of an old man, was in the collection of the Duke of Buckingham; and a third, a female head in profile, is mentioned by the late Mr. Young Ottley as in the possession of Mr. Woodburn.

‡ The celebrated anatomist, Marcantonio della Torre, of Verona, whose eulogy was written by Paul Jovius, but who died in his thirtieth year. There is a portrait of him in the Ambrosian Library, said to be by Leonardo, but not considered to be worthy of that master.—See Passavant. See also, Maffei, *Verona illustrata.*

almost total darkness of ignorance. In this attempt Marcantonio was wonderfully aided by the genius and labour of Leonardo, who filled a book with drawings in red crayons, outlined with the pen, all copies made with the utmost care from bodies dissected by his own hand. In this book he set forth the entire structure, arrangement, and disposition of the bones, to which he afterwards added all the nerves, in their due order, and next supplied the muscles, of which the first are affixed to the bones, the second give the power of cohesion or holding firmly, and the third impart that of motion. Of each separate part he wrote an explanation in rude characters, written backwards and with the left-hand, so that whoever is not practised in reading cannot understand them, since they are only to be read with a mirror.* Of these anatomical drawings of the human form, a great part is now in the possession of Messer Francesco da Melzo, a Milanese gentleman, who, in the time of Leonardo, was a child of remarkable beauty,† much beloved by him, and is now a handsome and amiable old man, who sets great store by these drawings, and treasures them as relics, together with the portrait of Leonardo of blessed memory.‡ To all who read these writings it must appear almost incredible that this sublime genius could, at the same time, discourse, as he has done, of art, and of the muscles, nerves, veins, and every other part of the frame, all treated with equal diligence and success.§ There are, besides, certain other writings of

* The volume of anatomical drawings here described is in England, having been transmitted through various hands to the king's library.—See Gallenberg: see also Chamberlaine, *Imitations of Original Designs by Leonardo da Vinci*, 1796. In this work there is also an engraving of the portrait mentioned immediately after: the mode of writing here described was that ordinarily used by Leonardo.

† There is an engraving in the collection of Leonardo's drawings published by Gerli (tav. iv.), which is said to be the portrait of Melzi.—*Passavant.*

‡ There are two other portraits of Leonardo, by his own hand, still in existence. The one, a profile, is mentioned by Chamberlaine as cited above, and is, or was, in the same collection; of this there is one copy in the Ambrosiana, according to Gerli, and another in Paris. The second, likewise, is in the Venetian Academy. There is also a portrait of Leonardo, painted by himself, in the Florentine Gallery.—*Passavant*, *Schorn*, and others.

§ A Florentine annotator remarks that the celebrated Doctor Gulielmo (William) Hunter, having examined the anatomical designs of Leonardo,

Leonardo, also written with the left-hand, in the possession of N. N., a painter of Milan; they treat of painting, of design generally, and of colouring. This artist came to see me in Florence no long time since; he then had an intention of publishing this work, and took it with him to Rome, there to give this purpose effect, but what was the end of the matter I do not know.*

But to return to the labours of Leonardo. During his time the King of France came to Milan, whereupon he (Leonardo) was entreated to prepare something very extraordinary for his reception. He therefore constructed a lion, and this figure, after having made a few steps, opened its breast, which was discovered to be entirely filled full of lilies. While in Milan, Leonardo took the Milanese Salai for his disciple; this was a youth of singular grace and beauty of person, with curled and waving hair, a feature of personal beauty by which Leonardo was always greatly pleased. This Salai he instructed in various matters relating to art, and certain works still in Milan, and said to be by Salai, were retouched by Leonardo himself.†

Having returned to Florence,‡ he found that the Servite Monks had commissioned Filippino to paint the altar-piece for the principal chapel in their church of the Nunziata, when he declared that he would himself very willingly have undertaken such a work. This being repeated to Filippino, he, like the amiable man that he was, withdrew himself at once, when the Monks gave the picture to Leonardo. And

declared his admiration of their extraordinary exactitude, and has cited them in the introduction to his Course of Lectures published in London in 1784.

* This is the well-known Treatise on Painting which first appeared in Paris in 1651, under the title of *Trattato della Pittura di Leonardo da Vinci.* Later editions have appeared: among them one from a copy in the library of the Vatican, published at Rome in 1807. That of Florence (1792) is also greatly valued, and the work is still considered among the best guides and counsellors of the painter.—*Schorn.*

† Andrea Salai, or Salaino, was the disciple and servant of Leonardo, in whose testament he is mentioned under the latter designation only.—*Schorn.*

‡ After Ludovico il Moro had been deprived of the Duchy; when Leonardo returned to Florence with the mathematician, Fra Luca Pacciolo, for whose treatise *De divina proportione* he had made the drawings.—Gaye, in the *Kunstblatt* for 1836.

to the end that he might make progress with it, they took him into their own abode with all his household, supplying the expenses of the whole, and so he kept them attending on him for a long time, but did not make any commencement; at length, however, he prepared a cartoon, with the Madonna, Sant' Anna, and the infant Christ, so admirably depicted that it not only caused astonishment in every artist who saw it, but, when finished, the chamber wherein it stood was crowded for two days by men and women, old and young; a concourse, in short, such as one sees flocking to the most solemn festivals, all hastening to behold the wonders produced by Leonardo, and which awakened amazement in the whole people. Nor was this without good cause, seeing that in the countenance of that Virgin there is all the simplicity and loveliness which can be conceived as giving grace and beauty to the Mother of Christ, the artist proposing to show in her the modesty and humility of the virgin, filled with joy and gladness as she contemplates the beauty of her Son, whom she is tenderly supporting in her lap. And while Our Lady, with eyes modestly bent down, is looking at a little San Giovanni, who is playing with a lamb, Sant' Anna, at the summit of delight, is observing the group with a smile of happiness, rejoicing as she sees that her terrestrial progeny have become divine; all which is entirely worthy of the mind and genius of Leonardo: this cartoon was subsequently taken to France, as will be related hereafter.* Leonardo then painted the portrait of Ginevra, the wife of Amerigo Benci,† a most beautiful thing, and abandoned the commission entrusted to him by the Servite Monks, who once more confided it to Filippino, but neither could the last-named master complete it, because his death supervened before he had time to do so.‡

* It was afterwards restored to Italy, and was for some time in the possession of Aurelio Luini, son of the painter Bernardino Luini. It is now in England, as our readers are aware, but there are pictures painted from it by the disciples of Leonardo, which are in different galleries, the Louvre and the Leuchtenberg, for example. There are, besides, two in Milan, one in the church of St. Eustorgio, the other in the Brera. There is likewise one in the Florentine Gallery of the Uffizj.

† Now in the Pitti Palace.

‡ It was painted by Pietro Perugino, as has been related in the life of that master. See also the life of Filippo Lippi.

For Francesco del Giocondo, Leonardo undertook to paint the portrait of Mona Lisa, his wife, but, after loitering over it for four years, he finally left it unfinished. This work is now in the possession of the King Francis of France, and is at Fontainebleau.* Whoever shall desire to see how far art can imitate nature, may do so to perfection in this head, wherein every peculiarity that could be depicted by the utmost subtlety of the pencil has been faithfully reproduced. The eyes have the lustrous brightness and moisture which is seen in life, and around them are those pale, red, and slightly livid circles, also proper to nature, with the lashes, which can only be copied, as these are, with the greatest difficulty: the eyebrows also are represented with the closest exactitude, where fuller and where more thinly set, with the separate hairs delineated as they issue from the skin, every turn being followed, and all the pores exhibited in a manner that could not be more natural than it is: the nose, with its beautiful and delicately roseate nostrils, might be easily believed to be alive; the mouth, admirable in its outline, has the lips uniting the rose-tints of their colour with that of the face, in the utmost perfection, and the carnation of the cheek does not appear to be painted, but truly of flesh and blood: he who looks earnestly at the pit of the throat cannot but believe that he sees the beating of the pulses, and it may be truly said that this work is painted in a manner well calculated to make the boldest master tremble, and astonishes all who behold it, however well accustomed to the marvels of art. Mona Lisa was exceedingly beautiful, and while Leonardo was painting her portrait, he took the precaution of keeping some one constantly near her, to sing or play on instruments, or to jest and otherwise amuse her, to the end that she might continue cheerful, and so that her face might not exhibit the melancholy expression often imparted by painters to the likenesses they take. In this portrait of Leonardo's, on the contrary, there is so pleasing an expression, and a smile so sweet, that while looking at it one thinks it rather

* It is now in the Gallery of the Louvre. Francis I. paid four thousand gold florins, a sum equal to forty-five thousand francs of the present day, for this picture, of which there exist some good copies in Munich, Madrid, Rome, London, and St. Petersburg. The original appears to have been early injured by restoration.

divine than human, and it has ever been esteemed a wonderful work, since life itself could exhibit no other appearance.

The excellent productions of this divine artist had so greatly increased and extended his fame, that all men who delighted in the arts (nay, the whole city of Florence) were anxious that he should leave behind him some memorial of himself, and there was much discussion everywhere in respect to some great and important work to be executed by him, to the end that the commonwealth might have the glory, and the city the ornament, imparted by the genius, grace, and judgment of Leonardo, to all that he did. At that time the great Hall of the council had been constructed anew, the architecture being after designs by Giuliano di San Gullo, Simone Pollaiuoli, called Cronaca, Michelagnolo Buónarroti, and Baccio d' Agnolo, as will be related in the proper place. The building having been completed with great rapidity, as was determined between the Gonfaloniere and the more distinguished citizens, it was then commanded by public decree that Leonardo should depict some fine work therein. The said hall was entrusted, accordingly, to that master by Piero Soderini, then Gonfaloniere of Justice, and he, very willing to undertake the work, commenced a cartoon in the hall of the Pope, an apartment so called, in Santa Maria Novella. Herein he represented the History of Niccolò Piccinino, Captain-General to the Duke Filippo of Milan, in which he depicted a troop of horsemen fighting around a standard, and struggling for the possession thereof; this painting was considered to be a most excellent one, evincing great mastery in the admirable qualities of the composition, as well as in the power with which the whole work is treated.* Among other peculiarities of this scene, it is to be remarked that not only are rage, disdain, and the desire for revenge apparent in the men, but in the horses also; two of these animals, with their fore-legs intertwined, are attacking each other with their teeth, no less fiercely than do the cavaliers who are fighting for the standard. One of the combatants

* The cartoons prepared for this Hall of the Council, whether by Leonardo or Michael Angelo, after having served as a study to the most renowned artists of that period, were cut to pieces and dispersed, insomuch that there now remain only a few detached groups among the works of the older engravers.—*Ed. Flor.* 1832-8.

has seized the object of their strife with both hands, and is urging his horse to its speed, while he, lending the whole weight of his person to the effort, clings with his utmost strength to the shaft of the banner, and strives to tear it by main force from the hands of four others, who are all labouring to defend it with uplifted swords, which each brandishes in the attempt to divide the shaft with one of his hands, while he grasps the cause of contention with the other.* An old soldier, with a red cap on his head, has also seized the standard with one hand, and raising a curved scimitar in the other, is uttering cries of rage, and fiercely dealing a blow, by which he is endeavouring to cut off the hands of two of his opponents, who, grinding their teeth, are struggling in an attitude of fixed determination to defend their banner. On the earth, among the feet of the horses, are two other figures foreshortened, who are obstinately fighting in that position; one has been hurled to the ground, while the other has thrown himself upon him, and, raising his arm to its utmost height, is bringing down his dagger with all his force to the throat of his enemy; the latter, meanwhile, struggling mightily with arms and feet, is defending himself from the impending death.† It would be scarcely possible adequately to describe the skill shown by Leonardo in this work, or to do justice to the beauty of design with which he has depicted the warlike habiliments of the soldiers, with their helmets, crests, and other ornaments, infinitely varied as they are; or the wonderful mastery he exhibits in the forms and movements of the horses; these animals were, indeed, more admirably treated by Leonardo than by any other master; the muscular development, the animation of their movements, and their exquisite beauty, are rendered with the utmost fidelity.

It is said that, for the execution of this cartoon, Leonardo caused a most elaborate scaffolding to be constructed, which

* The description of Vasari is not correct as regards the number of the figures, the whole group consisting of four only.—*Schorn.*

† The group around the banner was engraved by Gerard Edelinck (see Bryan, *Dictionary of Painters and Engravers*), after a design by Rubens, which he is believed to have made according to the description of Vasari, rather than from the cartoon. An engraving similar to that of Edelinck will be found in Malvasia, *Etruria Pittrice*. See also Rosini, *Storia della Scultura*, for various details respecting the works of Leonardo.

could be increased in height by being drawn together, or rendered wider by being lowered: it was his intention to paint the picture in oil, on the wall, but he made a composition for the intonaco, or ground, which was so coarse that, after he had painted for a certain time, the work began to sink in such a manner as to induce Leonardo very shortly to abandon it altogether, since he saw that it was becoming spoiled.

Leonardo da Vinci was a man of very high spirit, and was very generous in all his actions: it is related of him that, having once gone to the bank to receive the salary which Piero Soderini caused to be paid to him every month, the cashier was about to give him certain paper packets of pence, but Leonardo refused to receive them, remarking, at the same time, "I am no penny-painter." Not completing the picture, he was charged with having deceived Piero Soderini, and was reproached accordingly; when Leonardo so wrought with his friends, that they collected the sums which he had received and took the money to Piero Soderini with offers of restoration, but Piero would not accept them.

On the exaltation of Pope Leo X. to the chair of St. Peter, Leonardo accompanied the Duke Giuliano de' Medici to Rome:* the Pontiff was much inclined to philosophical inquiry, and was more especially addicted to the study of alchemy: Leonardo, therefore, having composed a kind of paste from wax, made of this, while it was still in its half-liquid state, certain figures of animals, entirely hollow and exceedingly slight in texture, which he then filled with air. When he blew into these figures he could make them fly through the air, but when the air within had escaped from them they fell to the earth. One day the vine-dresser of the Belvedere found a very curious lizard, and for this creature Leonardo constructed wings, made

* "Vasari has here left a great chasm in his history," remarks the German annotator, passing from 1504 to 1515, and omitting all mention of the travels undertaken by Leonardo during that period, as well as the labours he performed as an engineer and architect. During a part of this time he travelled through certain districts of Italy as architect and engineer to Valentino Borgia, by whom he was commissioned to inspect the fortresses of his states: it is even believed that he made a journey to France, but this seems doubtful.—See Amoretti, *Memorie Storiche*, &c.; see also Della Valle, *Sienese Edition of Vasari*.

from the skins of other lizards, flayed for the purpose; into these wings he put quicksilver, so that when the animal walked, the wings moved also, with a tremulous motion: he then made eyes, horns, and a beard for the creature, which he tamed and kept in a case; he would then show it to the friends who came to visit him, and all who saw it ran away terrified. He more than once, likewise, caused the intestines of a sheep to be cleansed and scraped until they were brought into such a state of tenuity that they could be held within the hollow of the hand, having then placed in a neighbouring chamber a pair of blacksmith's bellows, to which he had made fast one end of the intestines, he would blow into them until he caused them to fill the whole room, which was a very large one, insomuch that whoever might be therein was compelled to take refuge in a corner: he thus showed them transparent and full of wind, remarking that, whereas they had previously been contained within a small compass, they were now filling all space, and this, he would say, was a fit emblem of talent or genius. He made numbers of these follies in various kinds, occupied himself much with mirrors and optical instruments, and made the most singular experiments in seeking oils for painting, and varnishes to preserve the work when executed. About this time he painted a small picture for Messer Baldassare Turini, of Pescia, who was Datary to Pope Leo: the subject of this work was Our Lady, with the Child in her arms, and it was executed by Leonardo with infinite care and art, but whether from the carelessness of those who prepared the ground, or because of his peculiar and fanciful mixtures for colours, varnishes, &c., it is now much deteriorated. In another small picture* he painted a little Child, which is graceful and beautiful to a miracle. These paintings are both in Pescia, in the possession of Messer Giulio Turini. It is related that Leonardo, having received a commission for a certain picture from Pope Leo, immediately began to distil oils and herbs for the varnish, whereupon the pontiff remarked, "Alas! the while, this man will assuredly do

* The first of these pictures is said to be in Munich, taken thither from the Dusseldorf Gallery; the other is supposed to be lost. The German annotator, Förster, declares, but without giving his authority, or the reason for his opinion, that neither of these works was by Leonardo.

nothing at all, since he is thinking of the end before he has made a beginning to his work." There was perpetual discord between Michelagnolo Buonarroti and Leonardo, and the competition between them caused Michelagnolo to leave Florence, the Duke Giuliano framing an excuse for him, the pretext for his departure being that he was summoned to Rome by the Pope for the Façade of San Lorenzo. When Leonardo heard of this, he also departed and went to France, where the king, already possessing several of his works, was most kindly disposed towards him, and wished him to paint the cartoon of Sant' Anna, but Leonardo, according to his custom, kept the king a long time waiting with nothing better than words. Finally, having become old, he lay sick for many months, and, finding himself near death, wrought diligently to make himself acquainted with the Catholic ritual, and with the good and holy path of the Christian religion: he then confessed with great penitence and many tears, and although he could not support himself on his feet, yet, being sustained in the arms of his servants and friends, he devoutly received the Holy Sacrament, while thus out of his bed.* The king, who was accustomed frequently and affectionately to visit him, came immediately afterwards to his room, and he, causing himself out of reverence to be raised up, sat in his bed describing his malady and the different circumstances connected with it, lamenting, besides, that he had offended God and man, inasmuch as that he had not laboured in art as he ought to have done. He was then seized with a violent paroxysm, the forerunner of death, when the king, rising and supporting his head to give him such assistance and do him such favour as he could, in the hope of alleviating his sufferings, the spirit of Leonardo, which was most divine, conscious that he could attain to no greater honour, departed in the arms of the monarch,† being at that time in the seventy-fifth‡ year of his age.

* For the question respecting Leonardo's creed, &c., see Amoretti, *Memorie Storiche*, &c.

† That the truth of this statement is much disputed is known to all. Most writers are now agreed in considering it fabulous. Melzi does not mention the circumstance in the letter which announces the death of Leonardo to his relations; and Lomazzo, *Trattato*, &c., not only affords no confirmation of the account given by Vasari, but even says that the king learned the death of Leonardo from Melzi.

‡ He died on the 2nd of May, 1519, consequently not in the seventy-fifth, but the sixty-seventh year of his age.—*Ed. Flor.*, 1832-8.

The death of Leonardo caused great sorrow to all who had known him, nor was there ever an artist who did more honour to the art of painting. The radiance of his countenance, which was splendidly beautiful, brought cheerfulness to the heart of the most melancholy, and the power of his word could move the most obstinate to say, "No," or "Yes," as he desired; he possessed so great a degree of physical strength, that he was capable of restraining the most impetuous violence, and was able to bend one of the iron rings used for the knockers of doors, or a horse-shoe, as if it were lead: with the generous liberality of his nature, he extended shelter and hospitality to every friend, rich or poor, provided only that he were distinguished by talent or excellence; the poorest and most insignificant abode was rendered beautiful and honourable by his works; and as the city of Florence received a great gift in the birth of Leonardo, so did it suffer a more than grievous loss at his death. To the art of painting in oil this master contributed the discovery of a certain mode of deepening the shadows, whereby the later artists have been enabled to give great force and relief to their figures. His abilities in statuary were proved by three figures in bronze, which are over the north door of San Giovanni; they were cast by Gio Francesco Rustici, but conducted under the advice of Leonardo, and are, without doubt, the most beautiful castings that have been seen in these later days, whether for design or finish.*

We are indebted to Leonardo for a work on the anatomy of the horse, and for another much more valuable, on that of man;† wherefore, for the many admirable qualities with which he was so richly endowed, although he laboured much more by his word than in fact and by deed, his name and fame can never be extinguished.‡ For all these things

* They are still in their place. Two of them will be found in Cicognara.—2 tav. 72.

† His drawings of the anatomy of the horse are said to be lost. Of those relating to the human anatomy many are preserved.—*Schorn.*

‡ Vasari does not make mention of Leonardo's talents in architecture, nor of his skill as an engineer. For details respecting these and other matters the reader is referred to Amoretti, *Memorie Storiche*, &c.; Lomazzo, *Trattato dell' Arte della Pittura;* Passavant, Waagen, and others. The English reader will also find an excellent compendium of the life of Leonardo, with some interesting details and useful references, in Bryan,

Messer Gio. Batista Strozzi has spoken to his praise in the following words :—

Vince costui pur solo
Tutti altri, e vince Fidia, e vince Apelle,
*E tutto il lor vittorioso stuolo.**

The Milanese artist, Gio. Antonio Boltraffio,† was a disciple of Leonardo; he was an intelligent and able master, and, in the year 1500, he painted a picture in oil in the church of the Misericordia, outside the city of Bologna. The subject of this work is Our Lady, with the Child in her arms; there are besides figures of San Giovanni Battista, San Bastiano (Sebastian), a nude figure, and that of the person for whom the work was executed, painted in a kneeling position; a truly admirable picture, on which the artist inscribed his name, with the fact of his being a disciple of Leonardo. The same painter executed many other works

Dictionary of Painters and Engravers, edition of 1849. The *Trattato della Pittura* of Leonardo was translated into English and published in London in 1721. The following are among the principal literary works of this master :—A Treatise on Hydraulics; (those on the Human Anatomy and that of the Horse, have been mentioned in the text;) a Treatise on Perspective, and one on Light and Shade, with a work on Architecture, already alluded to.

* He alone
Vanquished all others. Phidias he surpassed,
Surpassed Apelles, and the conquering troop
Of their proud followers.

"Another was also added," observes Vasari in his first edition, "which was indeed to his honour," and runs thus :—

LEONARDUS VINCIUS
QUID PLURA ? DIVINUM INGENIUM
DIVINA MANUS
EMORI IN SINU REGIO MERUERE
VIRTUS ET FORTUNA HOC MONUMENTUM
CONTINGERE GRAVISS.
IMPENSIS CURAVERUNT.

Et gentem et patriam noscis, tibi gloria et ingens
Nota est; tegitur nam Leonardus humo.
Perspicuas picturæ umbras, oleoque colores
Illius ante alios docta manus posuit,
Imprimere ille hominum, divum quoque corpora in aere;
Et pictis animam fingere novit equis.

† Or Beltraffio. He died in 1516, at the age of forty-nine.—*Ed. Flor.*, 1832-8.

in Milan and elsewhere, but it shall suffice me to have mentioned this one, which is his best. Marco Uggioni* was likewise a disciple of Leonardo, and painted the Assumption of Our Lady in the church of Santa Maria della Pace, with the Marriage at Cana of Galilee, also in the same church.†

* Or Uglone, but more commonly called Marco Oggione.—See Bryan, *ut supra.* See also Lanzi, *Eng. ed., History of Painting* namely, vol. ii. p. 490. The following artists may likewise be counted among the principal disciples of Leonardo:—Bernardino da Luino, Andrea Salai, or Salaino, Francesco Melzi, and Cesare da Sesto; for details respecting whom see Lanzi, as cited above. For an account of the school founded in Milan by Leonardo, see Fumagalli, *La Scuolo di Lionardo,* &c. See also Passavant, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Alten Malerschulen in der Lombardei* (in the *Kunstblatt* for 1838, No. 69).

† For the question as to whether and to what extent Leonardo practised the art of engraving, the reader is referred to Ottley, *Inquiry into the History of Early Engraving.* See also Zani, *Enciclopedia Metodica delle Belle Arti,* &c.; Amoretti, *Memorie Storiche,* &c., has an interesting document, a letter namely, addressed by Leonardo da Vinci to the Duke Lodovico il Moro, which we subjoin with its translation.

Vasari has but slightly alluded to the distinction obtained by Leonardo as an engineer: his acquirements in civil and military architecture, and in mechanics generally, are, nevertheless, unquestionable, and the letter just alluded to, though well known and frequently cited, will not be unacceptble, expressing, as it does, the opinion of Leonardo himself on that subject. It was written to Ludovico il Moro, Duke of Milan, in 1483; consequently, when Leonardo was little more than thirty years old. We give the original, with the writer's orthography, and as it was copied by Oltracchi from the Autograph, which is now in the Ambrosian Library, Milan.—See Amoretti, *ut supra,* p. 16, *et seq.*

"Haveudo, Sro. mio Ill., visto e considerato oramai ad sufficientia le prove di tutti quelli che si reputano maestri et compositori d'instrumenti bellici; et che le inventione et operatione de dicti instrumenti non sono niente alieni dal comune uso; mi exforserò, non derogando a uessuno altro, farmi intendere da Vostra Excellentia, aprendo a quello li segreti miei: et appresso offerendoli, ad ogni suo piacimento, in tempi opportuni, operare cum effecto circha tutte quelle cose, che sub brevità in presente sarrano qui sotto notate.

"1. Ho modo di far punti (ponti) leggerissimi et acti ad portare facilissimamente, et cum quelli seguire et alcuna volta fuggire li inimici; et altri securi et inoffensibili da fuoco et battaglia; facili et commodi da levare et ponere. Et modi de ardere et disfare quelli de linimici.

"2. So in la obsidione de una terra toglier via laqua de' fossi et fare infiniti pontighatti a scale et altri instrumenti pertinentiad dicta expeditione.

"3. Item se per altezza de argine o per fortezza de loco et di sito non si pottesse in la obsidione de una terra usare lofficio delle bombarde: ho modo di ruinare ogni roccia o altra fortezza, se già non fusse fondata sul saxo.

"4. Ho anchora modi de bombarde commodissime et facili ad portare: et cum quelle buttare minuti di tempesta: et cum el fumo de quella dando grande spavento al inimico cum grave suo danno et confusione.

"5. Item ho modi per cave et vie strette e distorte facte senz' alcuno strepito per venire ad uno certo.....che bisognasse passare sotto fossi o alcuno fiume.

"6. Item fatio carri coperti sicuri ed inoffensibili: e quali entrando intra ne linimici cum suo artiglieri: non è sì grande multitudine di gente darme che non rompessino: et dietro a questi poterranno seguire fanterie assai inlesi e senza alchuno impedimento.

"7. Item occorrendo di bisogno, farò bombarde, mortari et passovolanti di bellissime e utili forme, fora del comune uso.

"8. Dove mancassi le operazione delle bombarde, componerò briccole manghani, tribuchi, et altri instrumenti, di mirabile efficacia et fora del usato: et in somma, secondo la varietà de' casi, componerò varie et infinite cose da offendere.

"9. Et quando accadesse essere in mare, ho modi de' molti instrumenti actissimi da offendere et defendere: et navili che faranno resistentia al trarre de omni grossissima bombarda: et polveri o fumi.

"10. In tempo di pace credo satisfare benissimo a paragoni de omni altro in architettura, in composizione di edifici et publici et privati: et in conducere aqua da una loco ad un altro.

"Item conducerò in sculptura de marmore di bronzo et di terra: similiter in pictura ciò che si possa fare ad paragone de omni altro et sia chi vole.

"Ancora si poterà dare opera al cavallo di bronzo che sarà gloria immortale et eterno onore della felice memoria del Sre. vostro Padre, et de la inclyta Casa Sforzesca.

"Et se alchune de le sopra dicte cose ad alchuno paressino impossibili et infactibili, me ne offero paratissimo ad farne experimento in el vostro parco, o in qual loco piacerà a Vostra Excellentia, ad la quale umilmente quanto più posso me raccomando, etc."

"Most Illustrious Signor,

"Having seen and sufficiently considered the works of all those who repute themselves to be masters and inventors of instruments for war, and found that the form and operation of these works are in no way different from those in common use, I permit myself, without seeking to detract from the merit of any other, to make known to your Excellency the secrets I have discovered, at the same time offering, with fitting opportunity, and at your good pleasure, to perform all those things which, for the present, I will but briefly note below.

"1. I have a method of constructing very light and portable bridges, to be used in the pursuit of, or retreat from, the enemy, with others of a stronger sort, proof against fire or force, and easy to fix or remove. I have also means for burning and destroying those of the enemy.

"2. For the service of sieges, I am prepared to remove the water from the ditches, and to make an infinite variety of fascines, scaling-ladders, &c., with engines of other kinds proper to the purposes of a siege.

"3. If the height of the defences or the strength of the position should be such that the place cannot be effectually bombarded, I have other

THE VENETIAN PAINTER, GIORGIONE, OF CASTELFRANCO.

[BORN 1478.—DIED 1511.]

AT the same time when Florence was acquiring so much renown from the works of Leonardo, the city of Venice obtained no small glory from the talents and excellence of one of her citizens, by whom the Bellini, then held in so much esteem, were very far surpassed, as were all others who had practised painting up to that time in that city.

means, whereby any fortress may be destroyed, provided it be not founded on stone.

"4. I have also most convenient and portable bombs, proper for throwing showers of small missiles, and with the smoke thereof causing great terror to the enemy, to his imminent loss and confusion.

"5. By means of excavations made without noise, and forming tortuous and narrow ways, I have means of reaching any given.....(point?), even though it be necessary to pass beneath ditches or under a river.

"6. I can also construct covered waggons, secure and indestructible, which, entering among the enemy, will break the strongest bodies of men; and behind these the infantry can follow in safety and without impediment.

"7. I can, if needful, also make bombs, mortars, and field-pieces of beautiful and useful shape, entirely different from those in common use.

"8. Where the use of bombs is not practicable, I can make crossbows, mangonels, balistæ, and other machines of extraordinary efficiency and quite out of the common way. In fine, as the circumstances of the case shall demand, I can prepare engines of offence for all purposes.

"9. In case of the conflict having to be maintained at sea, I have methods for making numerous instruments, offensive and defensive, with vessels that shall resist the force of the most powerful bombs. I can also make powders or vapours for the offence of the enemy.

"10. In time of peace, I believe that I could equal any other, as regards works in architecture. I can prepare designs for buildings, whether public or private, and also conduct water from one place to another.

"Furthermore, I can execute works in sculpture, marble, bronze, or terra-cotta. In painting also I can do what may be done, as well as any other, be he who he may.

"I can likewise undertake the execution of the bronze horse, which is a monument that will be to the perpetual glory and immortal honour of my lord your father of happy memory, and of the illustrious house of Sforza.

"And if any of the above-named things shall seem to any man to be impossible and impracticable, I am perfectly ready to make trial of them in your Excellency's park, or in whatever other place you shall be pleased to command, commending myself to you with all possible humility."