

THE CRUCIFICTION AS SEEN IN THE AUSTRIAN GALLERIES

(Continued from page 3)

Magdalen at its foot; Mary, John and the holy women appear, and soldiers are all about. The questioning expression on the face of one of the soldiers and the splendid perspective are perhaps the best features of the picture. The two wings represent the four donors as angels with Instruments of the Passion. Claessens was fond of painting allegorical pictures and portraits and became a master of the Guild of St. Luke at Burges in 1570, and dean from 1587 to 1606.

L'Orbetto

"Christ on the Cross" by Alessandro Turchi, known in the art world as "L'Orbetto," is one of the most remarkable pictures in the gallery, as it is done in copper and contains more than a hundred figures, all of which are perfect in every respect. The figure of Christ on the Cross is particularly beautiful. In the distance, away up in the clouds, the Father is seen on the Throne. In each corner is the coat of arms of the Archduke Leopold, who owned the picture. Down in the corner is a tablet in Church Latin containing the fourth and eleventh verses of the fourth Chapter of Acts:

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. "This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

L'Orbetto was born in Verona in 1582. He is said to have acquired his name from having been employed when a boy as conductor to a blind beggar. Another reason given is that the name came from the fact that he had a defect in his eyes. He was pitifully poor and unable to pay for a teacher, although he showed great talent. Finally Riccio took him under his protection and gave him his first lessons. Later he went to Venice where he worked for a time and then went to Rome. His work as a church painter was remarkable and they are found in many of the finest churches in Italy. Several of his church pictures are painted on black marble. He died at Rome in 1650.

Hugo Van der Goes

"The Bewailing of Christ" by Hugo Van der Goes is an example of the Netherlands school, and has both strong and weak points. The picture of Christ is thin, and the face one of sorrow and pain. The Virgin is perhaps the best figure of the group, as she leans over the dead Christ. The Magdalen is homely with her flat face and ungainly figure, while the holy women are fairly good. On the whole, the painting is attractive more

on account of its brilliant coloring than of the drawing of the figures. The picture is very large and is painted on oak.

Van der Goes was born at Ghent about 1435, and in early life became a pupil of the Van Eycks. He seems to have had an artistic temperament and at one time entered the cloister near Brussels. He was allowed special privileges, one of them being the entertainment of any distinguished guests who might come to visit him. On these occasions he drank to excess. Five or six years later he went to Cologne with some brother monks and on his return had an attack of madness. Later he seems to have recovered from this and painted several pictures before he died in 1482, still being a lay brother in the Rooden Cloister.

Titian

The gem of the entire gallery is "The Entombment of Christ" by Titian. The picture has a charm of coloring and a wealth of beauty in the design of the figures. The face of the dead Christ shows a wonderful technique. The figures of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, who are depositing Christ in the tomb, are in a position which shows all that gentleness and tender feeling which they are sure to have shown on that occasion. The mourning Madonna and the Magdalen are beautiful, life-like women—entirely different in their type. John stands in the background and here is shown as a much older man than usual. The whole make up of the picture is perfect from an artistic standpoint, and is one of the most valuable in the gallery.

Titian or Tiziano Vecelli, who painted the picture, was one of the world's greatest artists and the head of the Venetian school. He was born in the year 1477 at Capo del Cadore in the Friulian Alps. Early in life he had a predilection for drawing and when he was but ten years of age his father sent him to Venice "to learn to paint." His instructors were the two Bellinis. He soon learned to reproduce the paintings of these men with such fidelity that it seemed that they must have copied his style. He soon became a favorite with the Kings, and Pope Leo X. invited him to Rome. At the same time Francis I. was calling him to France, but it seems that he declined both invitations. He painted about six hundred pictures, which are scattered through the galleries of Europe. He lived to be ninety-nine years of age, and died of the plague in 1576. He was noted for his splendor in coloring and the bold drawing of his figures. His piece in the art world is placed beside that of Raphael, da Vinci and Michael Angelo.

This vast variety in the ideas of the Crucifixion as portrayed on canvas may reflect the religious trend of the artist's mind or may his conception of the historic fact, but whatever the basis for the painting, all the celebrated pictures upon this great theme suggest some thought which lifts the soul away from earthly, fleeting things into those which bear upon immortality and life beyond the grave.



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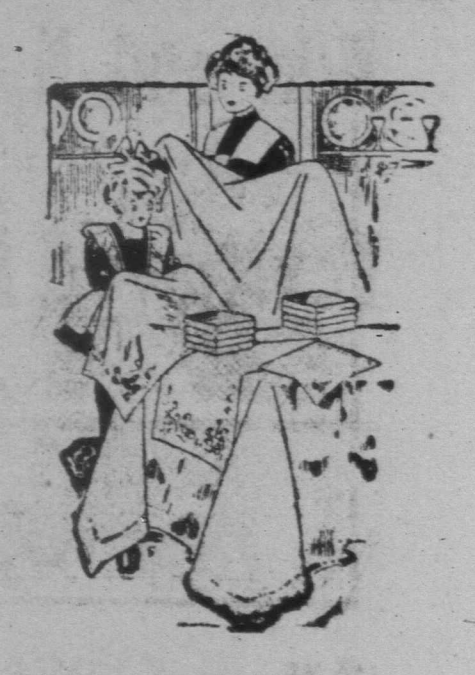
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