

and durable as the wall itself. The old practice of fresco painting, and the technical processes which it rendered necessary, are to be thanked for much in the development of Italian art. These processes necessitated thorough, direct work in every stage. The space being fixed, it was absolutely necessary to determine with great thought, what was the best way to dispose the subjects, and a general comprehensive plan had to be decided upon. This being done, it was necessary to prepare careful cartoons or drawings, the full size, of the proposed pictures. To execute these, many studies had to be made of the parts from nature. When the cartoons were prepared and the painter ready to begin with his color, he must do so much of the picture in such a time, while the plaster was wet. Thus each day's work must be done definitely and well, or destroyed at once and commenced anew. Nothing in all this was left to chance. To know what was to be done and to do it promptly, this was demanded, above all, of the painter in fresco. It will be seen from this that extreme deliberation and certainty were of the first consequence, and habit of thoroughness was thus engendered. This was, of course, none the less true, whatever might be the proficiency of the artist. To work up to his best mark he must reflect at each step. In art it is especially true that careless, thoughtless work is the source of all evil. In fresco there was no room for deception. What a man could do and what he could not do were by the exigencies of the method, frankly confessed. There was no attempt to deceive by a simulated facility, and, comparatively speaking, no going back to improve and reconstruct with simulated knowledge. Much later in the history of art, when the practices of oil painting were thoroughly comprehended, and all its resources known, great harm resulted from the use in the hands of insincere painters, of a technique which enabled them to appear to the uninstructed in art abler men than they were. Like every other kind of sham and subterfuge, facile practices of this sort had an evil influence both on schools of painting and individual men. The history of fresco painting especially, and