

ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR

age of chivalry; here is the legend in full romantic dress.

The single figure, however, retained its importance for painters and sculptors. Standing, with the dragon at his feet, St. George was as effective a figure as St. Michael to fill a side panel or to stand beside the Virgin and Child. Perhaps the noblest instance of his appearance in this function is in Giorgione's *Madonna of Castelfranco*. Donatello's famous statue of St. George, once in its niche at Or San Michele, now in the Bargello, is on the other hand a good instance of the great sculptor's independence of tradition; it is difficult to see in this figure anything but a fine specimen of Italian peasant youth dressed up in character. Yet his fine little bas-relief of the fight with the dragon, below the niche, is a true realisation of the subject. To admit all this is not to deny the proud claims of this figure in every other respect. We are at any rate still far from the stage of development in which an artist's friend or patron masquerades as the Saint. If we wish to grasp all the wide difference between a true and a false conception in art, we may compare, on the one hand, the noble fresco of St. George presenting one of the Cavalli knights to the Virgin, in Sant' Anastasia at Verona, or the quite sincere Flemish picture in the Munich Gallery of the Saint as patron of an