

**HANDBOOK OF THE
PAINTINGS, ANCIENT AND
MODERN, BELONGING TO
THE DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART**

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Handbook of the paintings, ancient and modern, belonging to the Detroit Museum of Art by
James E. Scripps

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COMPILED BY JAMES E. SCRIPPS.

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PREFACE.

It is the purpose of the Trustees of the Detroit Museum of Art to issue a series of handbooks explanatory of the objects on exhibition in the various galleries of the Museum. The handbook to the pictures herewith presented is the first of the series, and it is to be shortly followed by one on the Japanese collection, and that in turn by others.

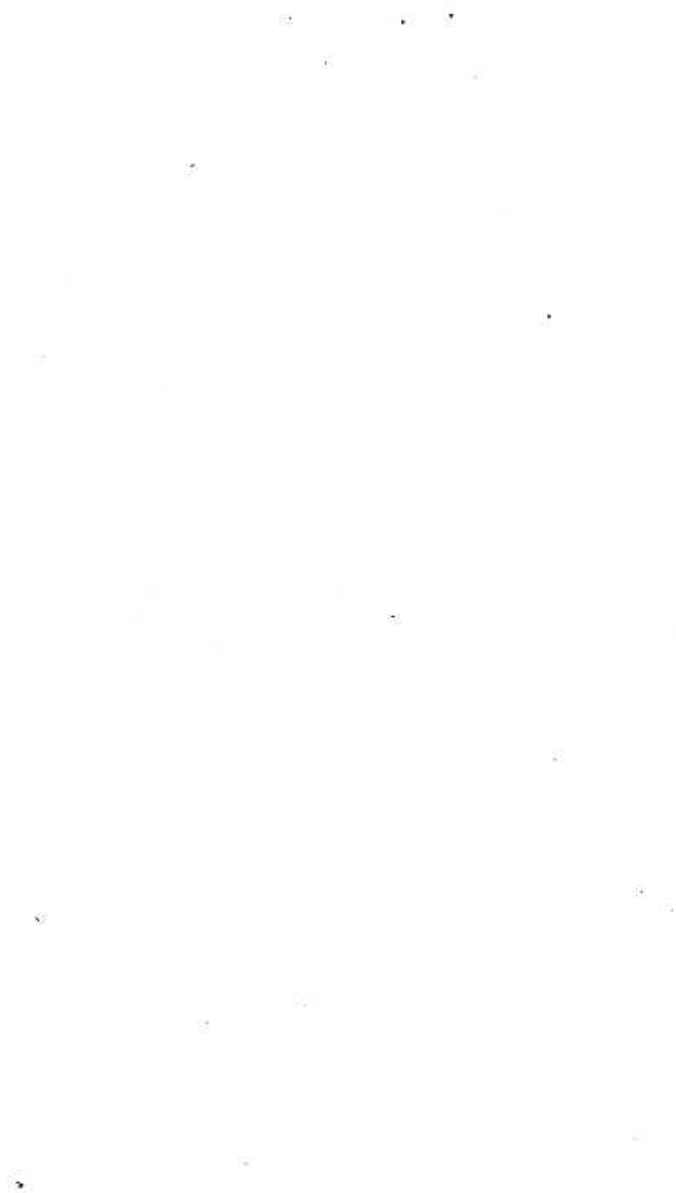
In the following catalogue the pictures are separated into two classes—old masters, or pictures painted before the beginning of the 19th century, and modern pictures, which include those painted since A. D. 1800. With the exception of the first picture in the catalogue, which is given prominence as the first work of art acquired by the Detroit Museum and from its having been a gift from Pope Leo XIII., the old masters are arranged in chronological order, as they appeared in a former catalogue issued in 1889. The modern pictures, with the exception of the great and famous work of Rembrandt Peale, are arranged by the artists' names in their alphabetical order.

It is believed that by a careful study of this catalogue in connection with the pictures the educational value of the Museum will be greatly enhanced.

In order to encourage this the price of the catalogue has been put at the small sum of ten cents.

J. E. S.

Detroit, October 10, 1895.



OLD MASTERS.

SCHOOL OF NORTHERN ITALY OF THE 16th CENTURY. Painter unknown.

- I The Spiritual Betrothal of St. Catherine of Alexandria with the Infant Jesus; representing symbolically the mystic union between Christ and the Church. In the center sits the Blessed Virgin in a light red tunic and blue mantle, facing to the right, with her right hand uplifted, while with her left she holds the Infant Jesus, seated on a cushion, upon her lap. The latter is nude but for a veil lightly thrown over his left shoulder. In his right hand he holds a ring. St. Catherine, in a rich robe and coronet of pearls, stands or kneels at the right with bowed head. She presents her right hand to the Savior, her left being pressed to her breast. Behind her stands St. Joseph in meditation, leaning upon his staff. At the left of the Virgin stands St. Anthony of Padua, in the brown garb of the Franciscan order, the nimbus about his head, and a bunch of lilies in his hand.

St. Catherine, according to the legend, was an Egyptian princess of great beauty and learning who lived in the third century. When 14 years of age, by the death of her father, she became queen. Being pressed to marry she set her heart on the highest perfection to be found in a husband. At this juncture a hermit gave her a picture of the Blessed Virgin and her Son, for the latter of whom she was immediately filled with love. Later she dreamed that she was espoused to the Savior, and on awaking in the morning found upon her finger a betrothal ring. She suffered martyrdom in A. D. 307.

St. Anthony of Padua was born in Portugal and joined the Franciscan order during the life-time of its founder. He was a young man of great learning and eloquence. He

died in Padua in A. D. 1231. His appearance in the same picture with St. Catherine, who lived 900 years earlier, is one of those anachronisms so common with the older painters. He is always represented as a youthful monk, and the lily is his special emblem.

This picture is painted on canvas and is 36 inches high by 51 long. It was acquired by the Detroit Museum of Art in this way: In 1883 when preparations were making for the great art loan exhibition of that year, Richard Storrs Willis, through clerical friends, solicited of His Holiness Pope Leo XIII. the contribution of a picture from the Vatican. In response this one was received with the Pope's blessing. It was then in an old and inferior frame, and sadly needed cleaning. Some time later the leading Catholics of Detroit made up a subscription with which to provide for it the handsome frame, enriched above with the papal arms, which now surrounds it. At the same time the late Lewis T. Ives carefully cleaned the canvass, developing a brilliancy little before expected.

Various conjectures as to the name of the painter have been hazarded, but all that can be said about it with certainty is that it was painted in Northern Italy (perhaps Padua) by some artist influenced both by Correggio and Titian.

BYZANTINE SCHOOL OF THE 13th CENTURY. The artists of Constantinople, driven to seek new fields by the opposition to pictures inculcated by the Greek Church, found an asylum in the monasteries of Italy, where they pursued their art. From this beginning sprang the famous revival of art in Italy which culminated in the 15th century. These Byzantine paintings are always on wood, usually cut to a convex surface, and are always on a gold ground.

2 **St. Mercurius.** He wears a rich velvet tunic with flowing gold chlamys, and is armed with a sabre, bow and arrows, and a small round shield. The name of the subject appears on the small red disc in the right upper corner in Greek characters.

St. Mercurius was an officer in the service of the Emperor Julian, the Apostate, by whom he was put to death for his loyalty to the Christian faith. On the eve of the battle with the Persians in which Julian lost his

life, St. Basil the Great had a vision in which the Virgin Mary appeared to him and bade him go to the tomb of Mercurius and awaken him that he might slay the apostate. On reaching the tomb he found the body missing, also the arms which had been laid by his side. The next day he again visited the tomb, when he found the body at rest in its place, but the lance freshly stained with blood. It then transpired that in the course of the battle an unknown warrior, bareheaded, pale and ghastly, and mounted on a white horse, charged at Julian, and having pierced him through the body vanished as suddenly as he had appeared.

Size: h. 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., w. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. Presented by J. E. Scripps, Oct., 1889.

GIOTTO DI BONDONE (attributed to) Early Florentine School. Giotto (pronounced Jotto) was born in 1276 and died in 1336. He was originally a shepherd boy. He was discovered drawing a sheep upon a slab of stone by Cimabue, who took him home and gave him lessons in painting, in which art he soon excelled his master. He became the greatest painter of his century. He was an architect also, and designed the beautiful bell tower of the cathedral at Florence, still known as Giotto's tower.

3 A small triptych Altar-piece. Center compartment, the Madonna and child enthroned under a baldacchino; at the right a female saint with book and palm; at the left a male saint with slender cross. Above, on either side of the throne, another female saint. Left wing: the nativity and angel appearing to the shepherds. Right wing: the crucifixion. In the angles of the wings, the annunciation, both the angel and the Virgin sitting. The predella contains dragons in small quatrefoil panels.

Wood: Center compartment, h. 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., w. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. From the collection of the Marchese del Turco at Florence, where it had for some generations been esteemed a genuine work of Giotto. Presented by J. E. Scripps.