BOTTICELLI

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Botticelli by A. Streeter

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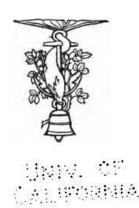
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The Chigi Madonna From the painting by Botticelli in the possession of No. J. L. Gardner Boston Maps.

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A. STREETER



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PREFACE

In attempting to treat of Botticelli's works in a chronological order, I feel that I have undertaken a somewhat venturesome task. All the more so as I have no fresh documentary evidence to bring forward in support of the order in which I have here placed them.

Some system of classification was, however, indispensable; and I have been induced to adopt a chronological system because it seems to me that a classification according to period (though in the case of this artist's works it is beset with difficulties) is clearer and more critical than a classification according to subject. The latter plan-which has been followed by several of Botticelli's biographers, who have dealt with his pictures under the headings of religious works, allegorical works, historical works, portraits, etc.-is attended by serious disadvantages. It obliges the writer to treat of early works side by side with late ones; to overlook all the affinities of type, style, and feeling which link certain pictures together as productions of the same period; and to relinquish the effort to reconstruct the artist's life-work in the order of its natural development.

Although there is as yet no direct clue to the dates of the majority of Botticelli's pictures, yet the dates of a few of them have been ascertained either by docu-