

My own bare feet, the rocks, the sandy shore—  
Salt-water filled my mouth—I saw no more.

I did not struggle much—I could not swim.  
I sank down deep, it seemed—drowned but for  
*him*—

For Black, I mean—who seized my jacket tight,  
And dragged me out of darkness back to light.  
The ship was gone—the captain's gig afloat;  
By one brave tug he brought me near the boat.  
I seized the gunwale, sprang on board, and drew  
My friend in after me. Of all our crew,  
The dog and I alone survived the gale:  
Afloat with neither rudder, oars, nor sail!

Boy though I was, my heart was brave and stout,  
Yet when the storm had blown its fury out,  
I saw—with who can tell what wild emotion!—  
That if we met no vessel in mid-ocean,  
There was no help for us—all hope was gone:  
We were afloat—boy, dog—afloat alone!  
We had been saved from drowning but to die  
Of thirst and hunger—my poor Black and I.  
No biscuit in the well-swept locker lay;  
No keg of water had been stowed away,  
Like those on the *Medusa's* raft. I thought....  
Bah! that's enough. A story is best short.

For five long nights, and longer dreadful days,  
We floated onward in a tropic haze.  
Fierce hunger gnawed us with its cruel fangs,  
And mental anguish with its keener pangs.  
Each morn I hoped; each night, when hope was  
gone,

My poor dog licked me with his tender tongue.

Under the blazing sun and star-lit night  
I watched in vain. No sail appeared in sight.  
Round us the blue spread wider, bluer, higher.  
The fifth day my parched throat was all on fire,  
When something suddenly my notice caught—  
Black, crouching, shivering, underneath a thwart.  
He looked—his dreadful look no tongue can tell—  
And his kind eyes glared like coals of hell!

"Here, Black! old fellow! here!" I cried in vain.

He looked me in the face and crouched again.  
I rose; he snarled, drew back. How piteously  
His eyes entreated help! *He snapped at me!*

"What can this mean?" I cried, yet shook with fear,  
With that great shudder felt when Death is near.  
Black seized the gunwale with his teeth. I saw  
Thick slimy foam drip from his awful jaw;  
Then I knew all! Five days of tropic heat,  
Without one drop of drink, one scrap of meat,  
Had made him rabid. He whose courage had  
Preserved my life, my messmate, friend, was mad!

You understand? Can you see him and me,  
The open boat tossed on a brassy sea,  
A child and a wild beast on board alone,  
While overhead streams down the tropic sun?  
And the boy crouching, trembling for his life?

I searched my pockets and I drew my knife—  
For every one instinctively, you know,  
Defends his life. 'Twas time that *I* did so,  
For at that moment, with a furious bound,  
The dog flew at me. I sprang half around.  
He missed me in blind haste. With all my might  
I seized his neck, and grasped, and held him tight.  
I felt him writhe and try to bite, as he  
Struggled beneath the pressure of my knee.  
His red eyes rolled; sighs heaved his shining coat.  
I plunged my knife three times in his poor throat.

And so I killed my friend. I had but one!

What matters how, after that deed was done,  
They picked me up half dead, drenched in his gore,  
And took me back to France?

Need I say more?

I have killed men—ay, *many*—in my day,  
Without remorse—for sailors must obey.  
One of a squad, once in Barbadoes, I  
Shot my own comrade when condemned to die.  
I never dream of *him*, for that was *war*.  
Under old Magon, too, at Trafalgar,  
I hacked the hands of English boarders. Ten  
My axe lopped off. I dream not of those men.  
At Plymouth, in a prison-hulk, I slew  
Two English jailers, stabbed them through and  
through—

I *did*—confound them! But yet even now  
The death of Black, although so long ago,  
Upsets me. I'll not sleep to-night. It brings....

Here, boy! Another glass! We'll talk of other things.

## LUCA DELLA ROBBIA AND HIS SCHOOL.

THE works of Luca della Robbia are not among those which compel instantaneous admiration even from uninstructed eyes. On the contrary, they are usually regarded at first with indifference, if not with disappointment, by the ordinary traveller, however he may veil his feelings under the phrases which his guide-book and his artistic friends prescribe. Nay, he may even live among these works for years without ever having a real sense of their beauty, so overpowering are the mightier triumphs of art by which he is surrounded. But on some day when he is not thinking of them at all, as he passes on his way a cherub face will flash out upon him, and he will wonder that he

has never felt its loveliness before. Or he may stroll into a country church, and a Robbian medallion will shine forth as a jewel among tawdry ornaments and ghastly daubs; or on some lonely mountain a magnificent group of celestial faces will light up a gloomy convent chapel, and he will know that a new spring of pleasure has been opened to him, and rejoice over it as great spoil.

Happily the age which produced this work was capable of appreciating it. Hardly any important building was erected in Tuscany, from the time when Luca della Robbia perfected his invention till its secret died out with his followers, that did not boast among its chief ornaments



MADONNA AND CHILD, IN FAÇADE OF ST. MICHAEL'S, FLORENCE.—TERRA COTTA.—[LUCA DELLA ROBBIA.]

some specimen of Robbian art. Nor was the rage for terra-cotta decoration confined to Tuscany, or even to Italy, but it soon extended all over Europe.

Luca della Robbia was born in Florence in 1400, at the beginning of that wonderful period of fruitfulness in arts and letters which we call the Renaissance. Both time and place were full of inspiration and artistic impulse. Arnolfo's great cathedral was awaiting its dome; Giotto's campanile was nearing the completion of its perfect beauty; the stately walls of Santa Croce were being reared to receive the mighty dead of Florence—on all sides were the signs not only of material prosperity, but of an enlightened use of that prosperity. Churches, hospitals, and palaces were springing up everywhere, and the gold which had flowed so

freely into Florentine coffers was being as freely spent. All classes of citizens felt an equal pride in the beautifying of their common home. "The country," *la patria*, did not then mean to the multitude what it now does; only the aspirations of poets or the ambition of tyrants associated it with the whole of Italy; to the noble it was the petty state which he helped to defend and aggrandize; and to the burgher it did not practically signify much beyond the walls of his own city. Within these narrow limits pride and affection were concentrated, and wealth was lavished.

Religious zeal, also, was more than ever a powerful ally to the cause of art. Churches and hospitals were built in recognition of some deliverance, or in hope of some future blessing; every family of

importance had at least a chapel called by its name, which was adorned with all the magnificence that the owners could afford; every convent had its gems of art. As the architect worked in the sight of men, so the monk toiled at the fresco within, and the goldsmith fashioned the crucifix and the cup, in the same brotherhood of artistic and religious endeavor. A love of art, with a desire to labor in some branch of it, was as common then as it is exceptional now. The household talk was of the marvels which were being wrought before the eyes of these Florentine citizens; each of them thought himself, more or less, a capable art critic, and young minds were not slow to catch the prevailing tone.

After the usual studies of a lad of the middle class, which did not extend much beyond reading, writing, and some knowledge of accounts, Luca was put to learn the trade of a goldsmith. This was the usual preparation for painting, sculpture, or architecture. A late writer\* has well justified this, to us, somewhat strange commencement of a course of artistic study: "As the goldsmith's craft was understood in Florence, it exacted the most exquisite nicety in performance as well as design. It forced the student to familiarize himself with the materials, instruments, and technical processes of art, so that, later on in life, he was not tempted to leave the execution of his work to journeymen and hirelings. No labor seemed too minute, no metal was too mean, for the exercise of the master-workman's skill; nor did he run the risk of becoming one of those half amateurs in whom accomplishment falls short of first conception. Art ennobled for him all that he was called to do. Whether cardinals required him to fashion silver vases for their banquet tables, or ladies wished the setting of their jewels altered, or a pope wanted the enamelled binding of a book of prayers, or men-at-arms sent sword-blades to be damasked with acanthus foliage, or kings desired fountains and statues for their palace courts, or poets begged to have their portraits cast in bronze,....he was prepared for all alike by his apprenticeship to *orfevria*, and to all he gave the same amount of conscientious toil. The consequence was that at the time of the Renaissance, furniture, plate, jewels, and articles of personal adornment were objects of true

art. The mind of the craftsman was exercised afresh in every piece of work. Pretty things were not bought, machine-made, by the gross in a warehouse; nor was it customary, as now it is, to see the same design repeated with mechanical regularity in every house."

According to Vasari, Luca's master was Leonardo di Ser Giovanni, "who was considered in those days the first master of his art in Florence." Baldinucci, however, a more reliable authority, says that Lorenzo Ghiberti was his teacher.

Ghiberti was at that time working at his bronze doors for the Baptistry—those wonderful doors which Michael Angelo pronounced "worthy to be the gates of paradise"; and Luca must have found in the designs of his master the best incentive and strictest test of his own powers. His first experiments in modelling in wax were so successful that he took courage to try his hand on a more difficult material, and before long the passion for working in marble and bronze quite turned aside his thoughts from other branches of art. The only glimpse we have of him at this period, when he was probably about twelve years of age, is after a hard day's work, sitting up at night to design, with his feet in a basket of shavings to keep them warm. Indeed, little is known of him from this time till his thirty-first year, though Vasari asserts that he went to Rimini at the age of fifteen to execute some monumental sculptures for the lord of that city, Sigismondo Malatesta; but as the latter was not born till 1417, this must be an error. Doubtless, however, he passed his youth in similar employment, going from place to place, with others of the same profession, as opportunity might offer. That he had acquired a high reputation as a sculptor is evinced by the fact of his recall to Florence in 1431 by the Board of Works for the cathedral, by whom he was engaged to prepare the marble-work for the organ to be placed over the door of the sacristy. This most beautiful work, which is now in the National Museum at Florence, though separated into ten parts, and placed where the spectator must look down upon it, instead of upward as was the sculptor's purpose, impresses every beholder, and awakens a keen regret that its maker's work during the preceding years can not be traced out. They had certainly not been idle years which could lead up to such results.

\* Symonds: *The Renaissance in Italy*.

The designs of these marbles are groups of children singing, dancing, and playing on musical instruments. Such grace and truthfulness to nature are in all their attitudes that the words of Symonds do

One requisite alone was lacking; the inexperienced sculptor had not calculated well the effect of distance upon his figures; and the roughly hewn groups which Donatello made for the opposite



PORTION OF MARBLE-WORK IN ORGAN GALLERY, FLORENCE.—[LUCA DELLA ROBBIA.]

not seem exaggerated. "Wholly free from affectation, and depending for effect upon no merely decorative detail, these bass-reliefs deserve the praise bestowed by Dante on the sculpture seen in purgatory:

*'Dinanzi a noi pareva sì verace,  
Quivi intagliato in atto soave,  
Che non sembrava immagine che tace.'*

Movement has never been suggested in stone with less exaggeration, nor have marble lips been made to utter sweeter and more varied music."

gallery proved far more effective when in position than the elaborately finished ones of Della Robbia. Those of the latter were, however, considered so satisfactory that he was invited to complete the series of bass-reliefs on the lower story of the campanile, which had been left unfinished by Giotto and Andrea Pisano. He contributed five, which are on the north side, next the church. The first represents Donatello teaching Grammar; the second, Philosophy, personified by Plato and Aristotle; the third is a musician playing on

a lute; the fourth, Ptolemy, for Astrology; and the fifth, Euclid, for Geometry.

The bronze door of the north, or, as it is called, the "old" sacristy of the cathedral, is one of the greatest ornaments of that edifice. The contract for it was originally given in February, 1446, to Michelozzo, Masaccio, and Luca della Robbia; but Masaccio dying before the design was completed, and Michelozzo being absent from Florence, the final management, and probably the greater part of the whole work, fell to the share of Luca, and is known as his. The door is divided into ten compartments; in the upper one are depicted the Madonna and Child, and the Resurrection of Christ; beneath these the four Evangelists, and still lower four doctors of the Church, with finely wrought heads, at the corners.

But during these years that Luca was working in marble and bronze, he began to desire a more plastic material, which with less expense of time and labor might receive the forms his imagination was continually suggesting. Probably he was for a long time meditating or experimenting upon the mode in which such a material could be preserved from the dangers of its fragile and perishable character. "After having tried many times," says Vasari, in his quaint way, "he found that a coating, or glaze, made of pewter, litharge, antimony, and other minerals and ingredients, melted together in a suitable furnace, would have the desired effect of rendering works of clay almost indestructible." This description of the wonderful enamel reminds one irresistibly of the recipes of a *chef de cuisine* for his own specialties. Many a worker in clay has earnestly sought to discover what were these "*altri minerali*," and how they were combined. For truly there is no work in bronze or marble which so mocks the touch of time as these hermetically sealed figures of common clay.

The first terra-cotta work of Luca della Robbia of which we have any record is the lunette above the bronze door of the old sacristy already mentioned. This must have been completed in 1443, as there is a record of fifty *lire* being paid for it in that year. The subject is the Resurrection of Christ. It attracted great admiration, and the Board of Works ordered a companion piece for the other sacristy, for which Luca took the Ascension as his subject. These works, though they show less

richness of composition and freedom of treatment than some later ones, are nevertheless very beautiful, and are perfectly preserved.

Cosmo de' Medici was at that period earning his title of *Pater Patriæ*. Nothing that could be of material or intellectual advantage to the state escaped his notice. Art and literature found in him a munificent and discriminating patron. He was collecting manuscripts for the Laurentian Library, which owes its existence to him, and building his villas in the Mugello, at Fiesole, and at Caffagiolo. "There was not a year," says his biographer Vespasiano, "in which he did not spend fifteen to eighteen thousand florins in building. On his palace at Florence he spent 60,000; on the Church of S. Lorenzo, 70,000; 40,000 went to the Convent of San Marco, and was not enough; and the Badia of Fiesole cost him 80,000." And Lorenzo de' Medici, in the *Ricordi* which he has left, thus speaks of this period: "I find that great sums of money were spent between the years 1434 and 1471—incredible sums, indeed, amounting to 663,755 florins, reckoning only what was disbursed for alms, building, and taxes, without other expenses. However," he adds, "I do not complain of this, although in the judgment of many it would have been better to keep a part of it in the treasury; but I think this expenditure a great honor to our state, and it seems to me to have been discreetly made, so that I am exceedingly satisfied with it." Besides these public buildings, a contemporary writer mentions that between 1450 and 1480 thirty private palaces were constructed in Florence.

Cosmo was not slow to perceive the merit of the new kind of sculpture, especially its adaptability for places where pictures could not be preserved on account of dampness. One of Luca's earliest commissions was the finishing of the ceiling and floor of a small room, used as a study, in Cosmo's palace. The fame of this work caused such a demand for the Robbian sculpture that Luca was obliged to call in aid to enable him to meet the orders which poured in from all parts of Italy, from France and Spain, and even from more remote countries. There were houses in Florence which dealt in Robbian ware, much of it, of course, worthless imitation; but it had become the fashion, and France especially could not have enough of it.



FIGURE IN FRIEZE OF HOSPITAL FOR FOUNDLINGS, FLORENCE.—[ANDREA DELLA ROBBIA.]

One of the most beautiful specimens still existing of Luca's work at Florence is the ceiling of the chapel of San Giacomo, in the Church of San Muriato, which contains the monument of the Cardinal James, of Portugal. In the centre of the vault is a medallion representing the Holy Ghost; in the corners are the four Evangelists, and the spaces are filled with *plaques* in the form of scales, diminishing in size as they approach the centre.

Luca lived to the good old age of eighty-two years; but after the record of his invention and its first successes we have scarcely any particulars of his life. Of the many works attributed to him but few have been ascertained to be his beyond a doubt. The beautiful lunette over the door of the church in Borgo Ognis-

santi, and also one over a church door in Via del' Agnolo, and those in the chapel of the Pazzi family in Santa Croce, are by him; and there are also a number in the National Museum and the Accademia delle Belle Arti which are undoubtedly his. The medallions on the arcade facing the Church of Santa Maria Novella are supposed to be by Luca and Andrea della Robbia, and those on each end are the portraits of the artists. This is noticeable, that all the terra cottas that are known to have issued from the Robbian laboratory during Luca's lifetime are far superior both in design and coloring to those of a later date. Luca's first essays were in pure white, to which he gradually added delicate blues and yellows, and occasionally a little very pale green;



"GIVING THE THIRSTY TO DRINK."—ONE COMPARTMENT OF THE FRIEZE ON THE HOSPITAL AT PISTOJA.  
[ROBBIAN SCHOOL.]

but in such small quantities did he introduce these colors as to keep them always subordinate, and to throw up the white parts of the design, or only to form a border to it. His successors did not adhere to these pale tints; and any piece of so-called Robbian work which has deep blues and glaring yellows in it may be known to be of a late period, if it is Robbian at all. The modelling of Luca is characterized by an exquisite purity, and the expression of his Madonnas and angels often reminds us of the paintings of Fra Angelico. And doubtless the wonderful visions which the artist-monk was then translating into color on the walls of San Marco were not without their influence on the sculptor. For Luca, if we may judge him by his work, was a man of a reverent and tender spirit, open to religious impressions, and firmly believing in the truth of the legends which he depicted. His saints are rather drawn from his imagination than from earthly models, and his cherubs are something more than mere mortal babies with wings.

During the last years of his life Luca occupied himself much with experiments in painting on flat surfaces of terra cotta, and some specimens of this work may be seen on the Church of Or' San Michele at Florence.

Luca's will is dated February 19, 1471; and except a legacy of one hundred florins to his niece Checca, he gave all his property to his two nephews, Andrea and Simone, the sons of his brother Marco. He died February 22, 1482, and was buried in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore.

Andrea, who seems to have been his uncle's favorite pupil, carried on the art bequeathed to him, and is the author of many beautiful works. The lovely frieze

on the Hospital of the Innocents, at Florence, is by him, and also the altarpiece and other remarkable works in the convent church at Alvernia, in Tuscany. This altarpiece is of marvellous beauty. The figures are life-size, white upon a blue ground. Whether Andrea executed or even directed the Robbia work at Pistoja is matter of doubt, as he must have been over eighty at the time when the hospital was built. The magnificent frieze upon it was probably for the most part the work of his sons Giovanni, Luca, and Girolamo. It depicts different works of charity, in six compartments, which are separated by panels, each having in bass-relief a single figure representing one of the Virtues. The liveliness of the attitudes and the truthfulness of expression in the faces render this one of the most interesting of the later Robbian terra cottas; and though the brilliancy of the coloring strikes one at first unpleasantly, it is soon forgotten in admiration of the skill with which the great difficulties of the subject have been overcome. The most lasting effect upon the mind is, however, produced by the upright figures in the panels, which are wonderfully beautiful. Beneath the frieze, at the intersection of the arches, are medallions, with borders of flowers and fruits. The compartment representing "giving the thirsty to drink" is said to have been made sixty years after the others, by Filippo Paladini; but it harmonizes well with them in design and execution, and is, indeed, one of the most effective. It is uncertain whether the group of the "Visitation," in the Church of San Giovanni Fuorcivitas, is by Andrea or of a later period. However this may be, it is a work whose exquisite loveliness will be long remembered by those who have

hangs somewhere over the Via-Mala. Tourists seem to have accepted the legend—at least, few tire their legs in looking out the real source of the stream that was once believed to be blessed of the gods.

What a strange source it has, in fact! To be exact, however, there are three

Between it and the Disentis convent and village there are pleasant pastures, and the traveller may feast on the best cheese of the Alps, and a most luscious white honey. As a corollary to the honey, bears abound in the woods skirting the valley. So do the chamois and the



HINTER RHEIN.

sources to the baby Rhine; they are born triplets, but before getting far down the mountains they clasp arms, and wander as one

“Down, down to the weary sea.”

One of these baby Rhines is born in the tiny Lake of Toma, about a dozen miles above the old mountain convent of Disentis. This dark green lake is surrounded by dreary rocks and ice-clad mountains. It is 7690 feet above the sea-level.

mountain fox. The people are extremely poor. They are all good Catholics, and here is spoken that queerest of modern languages, the Romansch. It is, in fact, the original Latin, as spoken by the Roman peasantry. The ancestors of these villagers came from Tuscany.

The habits of this pastoral people are singular, and such as will not be met with elsewhere in the whole course of the Rhine.

Drippings of glaciers and snow-fields