THE WORLD'S PAINTERS AND THEIR PICTURES



DERISTHE LEVINTE HOYT

ILLUSTRATED &

PUBLISHED BY

E-KİTAP PROJESİ & CHEAPEST BOOKS

www.cheapestboooks.com

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Istanbul

ISBN:

978-625-38700-96

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THE WORLD'S PAINTERS AND THEIR PICTURES

BY

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BOSTON, U.S.A.
GINN & COMPANY, PUBLISHERS

PREFACE.

THE present universal interest in the subject of historic art and the indications that very soon it will hold equal importance in our school curriculums with those of general history and literature, are sufficient excuse for the making of a new book which treats of the world's painters and paintings.

It is hoped that the volume will be of especial usefulness to young students of the subject, to whom it has been carefully adapted, as well as to the general reader.

In it reference will be found to painters of greatest note in the history of art, a careful analysis of the characteristics of their work, and abundant and well-arranged information concerning their most noted pictures, — all in accordance with the decisions of the latest and most authoritative criticism. This latter feature will be found of unusual service to those who are preparing to visit the picture galleries of the Old World.

The significance of colors as used by the old masters and the emblems by which saints and other sacred personages, when found in an old picture, may be readily recognized, as well as the pronouncing vocabulary of artists' names, are useful features of the book.

It also contains a list of pictures which have grown familiar to the public through reproduction, together with names of their painters and the places where they are to be found.

DERISTHE L. HOYT.

NOVEMBER, 1898.

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DEFINITIONS.

PAINTING is the art of representing objects on any surface by means of colors. We have no record of the beginning of this art. Its earliest remains are Egyptian, and of these the very earliest we know (those executed during the time of the Pharaohs, alluded to in the Bible) are by far the best, showing that then the art was already in its decline.

Haydon says in one of his lectures, and all must agree with him, that "the very first man born after the creation with such an intense susceptibility to the beauty of color as to be impelled to attempt its imitation, that man originated painting."

There have been in the history of this art five grand styles, or methods, of using color, viz., Tempera or Distemper, Encaustic Fresco, Oil, and Water-color.

In *Tempera* or *Distemper painting* the colors are mixed with some cohesive substance, such as egg, fig juice, glue, size, etc., which causes them to cling to the surface to which they are applied. This is the earliest style known.

In *Encaustic painting* the colors are mixed with wax. The term encaustic is strictly applicable only to painting which is executed or finished by the direct agency of heat; but it is also applied to modern methods, in which wax colors are dissolved in a volatile oil, and then used in the ordinary way. The true encaustic painting was largely employed by the early Greeks and Romans. These paintings occupy, in color and in general effect, a place midway between oil and fresco.

In *Fresco painting* the colors are mixed with water and lime, and are then applied to wet or dry plaster. When colors are applied to wet plaster, the process is called "buon fresco," or true fresco. Many of the grandest paintings in the world to-day

were executed in this style, as were most of the works of the early Italian masters. When the colors are applied to dry plaster, the process is called "fresco a secco," or dry fresco.

In *Oil painting* the colors are mixed with oils, together with some drying medium, and applied to wood, canvas, or any prepared surface.

In *Water-color painting* the colors are mixed simply with water and applied to a surface, usually a prepared paper.

Painting may be divided into eight especial branches, according to the subject of its representation, viz., *mythological*, *historical*, *portrait*, *ideal*, *landscape*, *marine*, *genre*, and *still-life*.

Mythological painting is the representation of subjects and scenes which are described in ancient mythology.

Historical painting is the representation of events of history with regard to time, place, and accessories[1]; at the same time allowing a proper exercise of the imagination.

Portrait painting is the representation of any human face or figure as it exists in nature.

Ideal painting is the representation of any face, figure, or scene, as it exists in the imagination of the artist.

Landscape painting is the representation of a landscape; that is, of such a portion of territory as the eye can comprehend in a single view, including the objects it contains.

Marine painting is the representation of some part of the ocean with its accessories.

Genre is the branch of painting that takes for its subjects scenes illustrating everyday life. Genre painting takes the place in art that the novel occupies in literature.

Still-life painting is the representation of objects which do not possess animal life, such as fruits, flowers, dead game, etc.

When less regard is given to subject, and the picture depends more for its value upon artistic flow and combination of lines and harmony of color, then it assumes more or less of the *decorative* quality.

Painting without subject or motive is *purely decorative*.

The term "school of painting" has various significations with

[1] See "Technical Terms Used in Painting," p. 257.

writers on art. In its general and widest sense it denotes all the painters of a given country, without reference to time or style; as the Italian School, or the French School.

In a more restricted sense it refers to the characteristic style that distinguishes the painters of a particular locality or period; in this sense it is used in the following pages.

In its most limited sense it signifies the distinctive style of a particular master; as School of Leonardo da Vinci, or School of Raphael.

The ancient painting of but three countries — Egypt, Greece, and Rome — is considered in this book.

Those who are especially interested in ancient art will find in larger works, notably those of Perrot and Chipiez, much of value regarding ancient Asiatic art, which is not of special service to the general student.

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THE WORLD'S PAINTERS.

CHAPTER I.

ANCIENT PAINTING.

EGYPTIAN PAINTING.

THE beginning of Egyptian painting is unknown; its end was about 400 A.D. There are few known historical facts connected with painting in Egypt. Three classes of paintings have been discovered there, — those on the walls, those on the cases and cloths of mummies, and those on papyrus rolls. None of these can be called imitative, yet they are sufficiently so to be intelligible.

Painting in this country was practised under peculiar conditions: the profession was passed on from father to son by law; not love for the art, but heredity dictated who should be the painter or sculptor; and, as artists were forbidden by a jealous priesthood to introduce any change whatever into the practice of their art, it remained stationary from generation to generation. The principal subjects are Egyptian gods and religious rites connected with them, — wars, various domestic occupations, and burial ceremonials.

Striking characteristics of the painting of the Egyptians are the brightness and purity of the color. Six pigments seem to have been used, — white, black, red, blue, yellow,

and green; and these appear to have been applied without mixture, but sometimes to have been modified by white chalk.

The style of painting is tempera.[1] Different colors are used to represent different objects: men and women are painted red, the men being redder than the women; prisoners are painted yellow; water, blue; and birds, blue and green.

In drawing there is not the slightest indication of a knowledge of foreshortening[2] or perspective.[3] All the figures are drawn in profile without any distinction of light and shade, with the exception of a few small portraits on cedar or sycamore wood which have been found quite recently in mummy cases, and are probably portraits of the persons to whose mummies they were attached. These are generally full-faced and have a very slight relief, distinctly expressed by light and shade.

Egyptian painting can still be seen in temple ruins along the river Nile, especially at Abydos and Philæ; and good specimens of the mummy portraits are in the great Egyptian Museum at Gizeh, Egypt, and in the Egyptian departments of the various art museums of the world.

After the beginning of the reign of the Ptolemies (about 300 B.C.), Egyptian painting was influenced by Greek.

GREEK PAINTING.

Very few Greek paintings are in existence at the present day, yet the works of ancient writers contain abundant information on the subject.

Greek painting in its earliest stages was very crude and simple. At first it consisted merely in coloring statues and reliefs of wood and clay; next, in the decoration of vases; but from about 600–400 B.C. was a period of wonderful

[1] See "Definitions," p. xi.

[2] See "Technical Terms Used in Painting," p. 258.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 259.

development of the art. During this time Greek artists mastered the subjects of foreshortening, perspective, chiaroscuro,[1] and anatomy, and produced pictures, some of which (if we credit the descriptions of Pliny) must have been rivals of the masterpieces of the modern schools.

Greek paintings were executed in tempera and encaustic.[2]

The following are among the most noted Greek painters mentioned in history.

Cimon of Cleonæ (600 B.C.) was the earliest Greek painter worthy of the name of artist. He was the inventor of foreshortening, and was the first to attempt oblique views of the human figure. He also first denoted muscular articulations, indicated the veins, and gave natural forms to draperies.

Polygnotus (about 480 B.C.) raised painting in Greece to the dignity of an independent art. He practised it with such a degree of excellence that it became the admiration of all Greece. De Pauw says: "As Homer was the founder of epic poetry, so was Polygnotus the founder of historic painting." He represented the battles of the Greeks, the taking of Troy, and the visit of Ulysses to Hades, in pictures crowded with figures. These, however, were merely colored outline sketches on a dark background, destitute of all roundness, entirely without perspective, and painted with four colors only. The composition[1] of these pictures would be considered barbarous at the present time; the various groups were not arranged according to any artistic or dramatic design, but simply in rows, one above another (there were three of these rows in each picture), yet the evident thought shown in the whole, the beauty, action, and expression of the figures aroused the admiration of all the critics of that time, and even of those of a much later age.

[1] See "Technical Terms Used in Painting," p. 257.

[2] See "Definitions," p. xi.

The first portrait on record by a known painter is that of Elpinice, the sister of a Greek named Cimon, which Polygnotus painted in the picture "The Rape of Cassandra" in the Ceramicus at Athens. That the works of Polygnotus were distinguished for character and expression is shown by the surname of Ethographos (painter of character), which was given to him by Aristotle.

Micon (about 475 B.C.) of Athens won a high distinction by his painting of horses. He was one of the painters employed to record the victories of the Athenians on the walls of some of the principal temples of Athens.

In the Temple of Theseus he painted the "Battle of the Amazons[1] with the Athenians under Theseus" and, opposite this picture, the "Battle of the Centaurs[2] and the Lapithæ."[3] The horses in these pictures are particularly praised by Pausanias. We read that an eminent judge of horses once found fault with Micon because he painted eyelashes to their under eyelids, which horses do not have. Wornum says: "It speaks rather in favor of the painting than otherwise that so experienced a critic could detect only so slight a fault." We know that the representations of these animals by Micon must have been good, for they were produced at the same time as those celebrated ones which were executed on the frieze[4] of the Parthenon under the direction of Phidias,[5] and yet were distinguished for their excellence. Micon's method of painting is spoken of by Varro as being crude and unfinished when compared with the works of Apelles and other later Greek artists.

[1] A fabulous race of female warriors who founded an empire on the shore of the Euxine. [2] Fabulous beings, half man and half horse.

[3] A people spoken of in fabulous Grecian history, descended from Lapithes, son of Apollo.

[4] The flat face above the columns of a building, which is so often decorated with sculptures.

[5] One of the most noted Greek sculptors.

Apollodorus (about 450 B.C.) of Athens, also noted as a sculptor, was the first great master of light and shade. A certain Dionysius of Colophon, who lived and painted just before Apollodorus, had studied chiaroscuro and had made a gradation of light and shade in his works ; but Apollodorus was the first to attain an imitation of the various effects of light and shade upon color that are always to be seen in nature. He received from his contemporaries the name of "the shadower," or "the painter of shadows." He also gave a more picturesque arrangement to his figures than had been done before. Plutarch mentions Apollodorus and says that he was in the habit of writing upon his works : "It is easier to find fault than to imitate." Pliny says that he was "the first artist whose pictures riveted the eye." He also calls him "the first luminary in art," but mentions only two of his pictures, — a "Priest in the Act of Devotion" and "Ajax Wrecked," the latter of which, in Pliny's time, was at Perganum.

Zeuxis (about 400 B.C.) of Heraclea combined a fine representation of form with a high degree of technical excellence. His pictures must have been marked by a thoroughly good general effect, for it is said that Apollodorus once complained that Zeuxis had robbed him of his art.

He was distinguished for his original choice of subjects. Other artists had represented chiefly gods, heroes, and battles; Zeuxis selected things hitherto unattempted, and is said to have succeeded admirably in giving expression to situations full of meaning and vivacity. His most noted picture was "Helen of Croton," which was painted from five of the most noble and beautiful maidens of that place.

Zeuxis is said to have been very proud of his reputation and wealth, and to have worn a shawl or mantle into whose border was woven his name in letters of gold.

Parrhasius (about 400 B.C.) of Ephesus was a rival of Zeuxis, and was remarkable both for invention and execution. He gave especial beauty to the contours of his figures, and excelled in the drawing of hands and feet. According to Pliny, he was the first to apply the law of proportion to the painting of figures. He gave refinement to the expression of the face, elegance to the hair, and a winning charm to the mouth. He was a very vain man, terming himself on his pictures "the elegant" and "prince of painters." Pliny calls him "the most insolent and arrogant of artists." There are several stories told about illusive[1] pictures painted by Zeuxis and Parrhasius which are a proof to us that the Greeks at this time possessed perfect materials with which to work, and that they must have displayed much finish of detail. One is as follows: A contest had been fixed upon that was to decide which of these two rival painters was the greater. On the appointed day very many friends of both Zeuxis and Parrhasius were gathered together. Zeuxis brought a painting of fruit; Parrhasius, a picture covered by a veil. So perfectly was the fruit represented that, when the painting had been placed in a conspicuous position, birds flew down and pecked at it. In proud triumph, amid the acclamations of his friends, Zeuxis turned to Parrhasius, bidding him now remove the veil from his picture that his work might be seen. Whereupon Parrhasius claimed the award, saying *the veil was the picture;* and surely he was the greater artist, since Zeuxis had deceived the birds only, while he had deceived Zeuxis himself. One of Parrhasius' most noted works was a "Theseus," which was afterwards in the Capitol at Rome.

Timanthes (about 400 B.C.) of Cythnos was also a contemporary and rival of Parrhasius, and was distinguished for originality of invention and expression. Pliny says of

[1] Intended to deceive the eye.

him that, though his execution was always excellent, it was invariably surpassed by his conception, and mentions, as an instance, a picture of a sleeping Cyclops,[1] which was painted upon a small panel ; but the artist had ingeniously conveyed an adequate idea of the giant's huge form by painting a group of little satyrs[2] measuring his thumb with a thyrsus.[3] Only four pictures of Timanthes are mentioned by ancient writers, but more, probably, has been written both by ancient and modern writers about one of these four pictures than about any other ancient work of art. This is the "Sacrifice of Iphigenia," in which was contained the figure of Agamemnon, whose face was concealed within his mantle. All ancient writers, including Cicero and Quintilian, who have described the picture, have approved of this artifice of the painter for hinting at an anguish so deep that it could not be portrayed ; but some modern critics, notably Falconet and Sir Joshua Reynolds, have condemned it, saying that it was simply a trick, and only betrayed the artist's lack of power to express such emotion. Fuseli, on the other hand, upholds Timanthes.

Apelles (350 B.C.) of Cos brought Greek art to its highest perfection. In him grace of conception and refinement of taste went hand in hand with almost perfect execution. Lübke says that "he seems, like an antique Raphael, to have lent to his works a finished charm and that delicate spirit of beauty which can arise only from a combination of exquisitely yielding forms with a subtle fusion of tints and a noble, full-souled conception." The majority of the works of Apelles seem to have been portraits, or of a portrait character.

[1] A fabulous race of giants inhabiting Sicily, who had but one eye each, and that in the middle of the forehead.

[2] A sylvan or rustic deity, half man and half goat.

[3] A staff entwined with ivy or grapevine, which was an emblem of the satyrs.

Several anecdotes are told of Apelles which are of especial interest; one is of the celebrated "contest of lines" which has been so variously explained for ages. The following is Pliny's account: "Apelles, upon his arrival at Rhodes, immediately sought out the studio of Protogenes, who happened to be away from home, but an old woman was in attendance taking charge of a large panel, which was standing ready prepared upon an easel. When the old woman inquired what name she should give to her master upon his return, Apelles answered by taking a pencil (or brush) wet with color and drawing a line (*linea*) on the panel, saying simply, 'This.' When her master returned, the old woman pointed out what had happened, and Protogenes, when he saw the panel, cried out instantly, 'Apelles has been here, for that is the work of no other hand'; and he took a pencil and with another color drew upon the same line or panel (*in illa ipsa*) a still finer line, and going away gave orders to the old woman that when Apelles returned she was to show him 'that,' and tell him it was whom he sought. Apelles returned, and, blushing to see himself surpassed, drew a third line between or upon those two in a third color, and attained the summit of subtilty, leaving no possibility of being surpassed. When Protogenes returned a second time, he acknowledged himself vanquished and immediately sought out Apelles." Pliny goes on to say that this panel was handed down to posterity as a wonder.

The controversy regarding the story has been as to the proper translation of the word *linea*, — whether it means simply a line or a sketch.

The character of Apelles is shown in a noble light by his conduct towards Protogenes, who was not appreciated by the Rhodians, among whom he lived. Apelles, finding that he had many pictures that he could not sell, offered to purchase them at his own price, but Protogenes fixed so

low a sum that Apelles finally told him that he would give fifty talents for the whole, and allowed it to be reported at Rhodes that he intended to sell them as his own work. This caused the Rhodians to see the great merit of their own painter, and they made haste to secure the pictures for themselves at the same great price that Apelles had named.

The common old proverb, "Let the cobbler stick to his last," originated, it is said, with this artist. It was the custom of Greek artists to exhibit their pictures to public view in the front or porches of their houses. A certain cobbler ventured to find fault with the sandal on the foot of one of Apelles' figures thus exposed. When he saw this fault corrected on the following day, he was bold enough to criticise the leg, when Apelles came out and indignantly exclaimed, "*Ne sutor supra crepidam!*" ("Let the cobbler stick to his last!").

Apelles was noted among his contemporaries for his industry, his motto being *Nulla dies sine linea* (No day without a line). His masterpiece was considered to be "Venus Rising from the Waters." This picture was painted for the people of Cos, and was placed in the temple of Æsculapius on that island, and remained there until it was removed by Augustus, who took it in the place of one hundred talents tribute and dedicated it in the temple of Julius Cæsar at Rome. The beautiful goddess was here represented as shaking the water from her long hair, and the sparkling shower was her only veil. The picture received some injury on the voyage, and was in such a decayed state in the time of Emperor Nero that he removed it from the temple of Julius Cæsar, substituting a copy of it by Dorotheus; what afterward became of it is unknown.

Protogenes (about 350 B.C.) of Rhodes was the most noted of the contemporaries of Apelles, from whom he won most hearty admiration. Indeed, Apelles said that Protogenes

equalled him in all respects save in knowing when to leave off. Protogenes was a famous animal painter. It is written of him that, in a picture of a reposing satyr with a flute in his hand, he introduced a quail so exquisitely painted in every detail that it took the attention from the rest of the picture and therefore he effaced it.

His most celebrated picture was "Jalysus and his Dog," on which he is said to have painted seven years. Foam was represented at the mouth of the dog, and it is said to have been accomplished by Protogenes by the throwing of his sponge at the picture of the dog's head in a fit of ill-humor, after he had tried over and over again in vain to produce the desired effect. This picture was preserved in a certain part of the city of Rhodes, and was the means of saving it, for Demetrius, when he besieged the city 304 B.C., respected that part lest the picture should be destroyed. Afterward it was taken to Rome and placed in the Temple of Peace, and finally was burned in the fire that consumed this temple.

About 220 B.C. lived **Antiphilus**, who was the cause of a celebrated picture painted by **Apelles of Ephesus** (about 220 B.C.), which is described by Lucian, and has furnished a theme for several modern painters. Antiphilus, influenced by jealousy, accused Apelles, who was then residing in the court of Ptolemy Philopator, of being connected with the conspiracy of Theodotus, governor of Cœle-Syria.

At first Ptolemy listened to the calumny with some credence, but on the innocence of Apelles being proved, presented him with one hundred talents and condemned Antiphilus to be his slave. Apelles, evidently not satisfied with the attempted reparation, returned to Ephesus and painted his picture of "Calumny." Lucian, who saw it, thus describes it: "On the right hand was the sitting figure of a man, with ears very like those of Midas, holding out

his hand to Calumny, yet at a distance, who was approaching him. Near him, on each side, stood a female figure representing Suspicion and Ignorance. Calumny was represented as a beautiful maid, but with a most malicious expression. In her left hand she bore a burning torch, while with her right hand she was dragging along a young man by the hair, who was extending both his hands towards heaven; she was preceded by Envy, as an emaciated man, and followed by two females representing Deceit and Artifice. In the background was Repentance, weeping, and Truth approaching her."



GREEK PAINTING. MUSE POLYMNIA. CORTONA MUSEUM.

Very soon after this time great political revolutions began to convulse Greece, and the agitation of wars and politics retarded the exercise of the fine arts. Her public buildings were already filled to overflowing with art works (if we may credit historians), and therefore the public demand grew less. Inferior styles of art were developed which characterized this period of decline. Thus, there were painters of *genre*,[1] of barbers' shops, cobblers' stalls, etc. Painting began also to be applied to the ordinary decoration of furniture. A debasement of taste became general, and the decline and death of Greek art was inevitable.

[1] See "Definitions," p. xii.

Examples of ancient Greek painting may be seen to-day in the Museum of Naples, where have been collected quite a number of fragmentary specimens (chiefly from Pæstum), some of which possess great beauty and depth of expression. One fine example is in the Museum of Cortona, Italy. This represents the Muse Polymnia as a young girl holding a lyre.

In the library of the Vatican, Rome, is a very interesting ancient painting called "Nozze Aldobrandini," or the "Aldobrandini Nuptials." This was discovered on a ruined wall near the Arch of Gallienus on the Esquiline, Rome, and was sawed from the wall for Cardinal Aldobrandini, who placed it in his home; hence its name.

It is a composition of ten figures clothed in Greek drapery, and evidently represents a Greek marriage ceremony. The painting is very broad and decorative, and is thought by connoisseurs to be probably some skilful decorator's version of a celebrated easel picture, possibly a "Marriage" by Echion, a Greek, who is mentioned by Cicero and Pliny as a famous painter. Pliny speaks of this picture as representing "a bride remarkable for her expression of modesty."

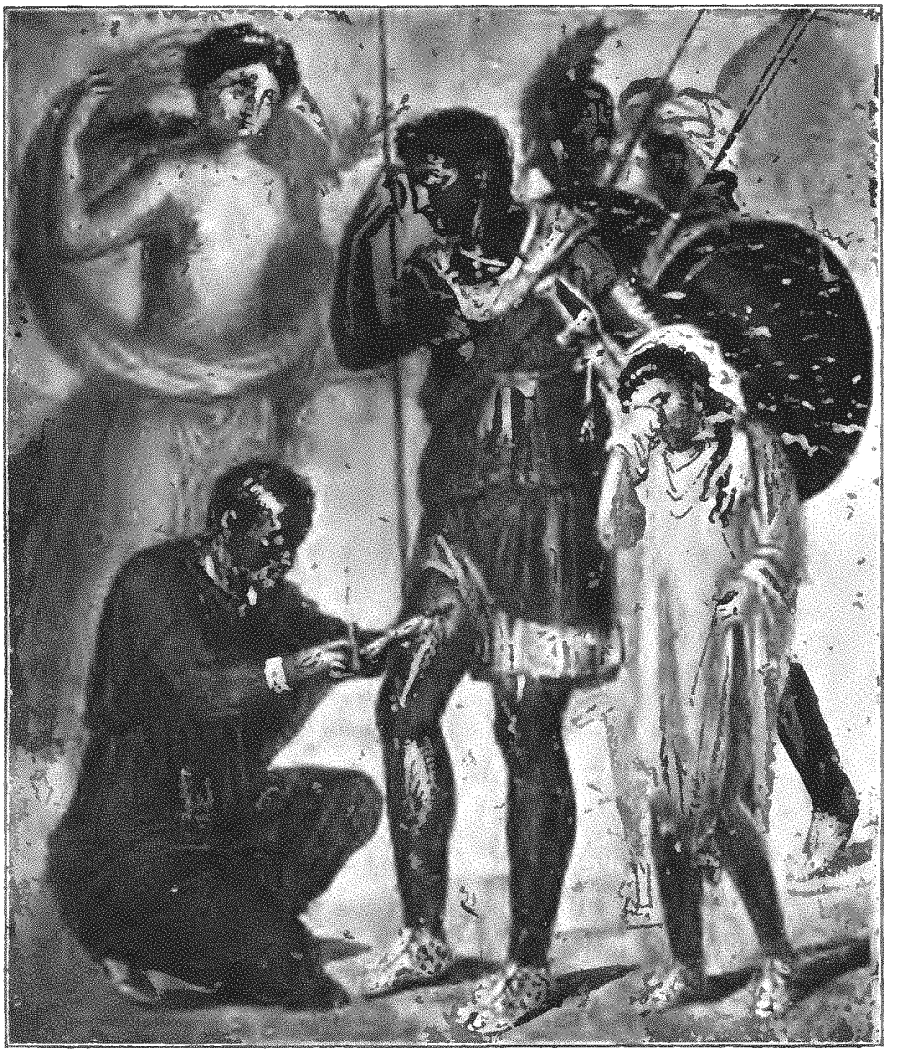
ROMAN PAINTING.

The fine arts were transmitted to the Romans by the Greeks, but only in a debased form.

Ancient Rome was more distinguished for her collections of paintings than for her artists, these collections having been supplied from the rich treasures of Greece. Painting, however, in its decorative[1] form was practised by the Romans as early as 300 B.C. Pliny tells us that the head of the noble family of the Fabii acquired his surname of *Pictor* from his skill in the art, and that he decorated the

[1] See "Definitions," p. xii.

Temple of Salus. The poet Pacuvius also was an artist. "Afterwards," says Pliny, "the art was not practised by 'polite hands' (*honestis manibus*) among the Romans, except,



POMPEIAN FRESCO. ÆNEAS WOUNDED. MUSEUM, NAPLES.

perhaps, in the case of Turpilius, an amateur of his own time, who executed some good pictures at Verona."

At the end of the Republic, Rome was said to be full of artists, but all, or nearly all, were inferior portrait painters