

Bulletin of The Detroit Museum of Art

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No. 7



AN EARLY XVIIth CENTURY BOLOGNESE ALTARPIECE
SHOWING THE VIRGIN ENTHRONED WITH ST. AMADIO AND
ST. ANTHONY

By BARTOLOMMEO RAMENGGI, called BAGNACAVALLLO
(1484-1542)

A XVI CENTURY PAINTING BY BARTOLOMMEO RAMENGGHI

Vasari, in discussing the creative works of Bartolommeo Ramenghi, (called Bagnacavallo, from the place of his birth), digresses long enough to express his personal dislike regarding this artist's traits, and in that digression gives us the viewpoint of the aspiring artist of the early sixteenth century. He thinks that the "emulation to which artists are impelled" * * * "is to be extolled." * * * * "Much more safely does the hope of the modest and timid student conduct him toward his object" who "does due honors to the works of good masters, and labors with all diligence to imitate their productions."

There is food for reflection in the fact that despite this prevalent attitude, and despite the apprenticeship system with its tendency toward slavishly imitating the style of the master, great individuality was developed and personality was as much at a premium in the high renaissance of Italy as it is in the world today. Perhaps the thorough mastery of his craft by an apprentice, until material method became second nature to him, enabling him to concentrate his vision and cerebration on the meaning and arrangement of his picture, is responsible in a large measure for the individuality of style that is apparent. Certain it is that the resemblances and differences between artists of

this period are sufficiently discernable at a distance of three or four centuries to establish without difficulty an artist's identity, even though little is known of his biography or history.

Bartolommeo Ramenghi, born about 1486, owed his art education to the school of Francesco Francia, at Bologna. He went to Rome, where his work came under the influence of Raphael and Dosso Dossi. By some authorities it is claimed that he worked with Raphael in the fresco painting of the Vatican. He appears to have remained in Rome but a short time, after which he returned to Bologna where most of his works were done.

Through the increasingly valuable gift of the James E. Scripps collection, the Museum came into possession, in 1889, of an important painting by Bartolommeo Ramenghi which it has only recently placed on exhibition for the first time. The picture showing "*The Virgin Enthroned with St. Amadio and St. Anthony*" is painted on a wood panel, fifty-three inches high by forty-four inches in width, and at the time it was received, had suffered such serious injury from the climate that it was never displayed. It has recently been successfully restored and is now hanging in Gallery I.

The picture shows the Virgin seated on a marble throne holding a

book in her left hand. The Infant Saviour, nude except for a necklace and bracelet of pearls, sits on a cushion on her right knee. St. Anthony of Egypt stands at the right of the picture with his traditional emblems, the crutch, the bell, the black pig, the fire and the Greek tau or T on his shoulder—the first letter of the word Theos, God. St. Amadio stands at the left in the robes of a bishop, holding the model of a city in his gloved hands, which the Holy Child leans forward to bless. On the pedestal of the Virgin's throne is an inscription in Latin, the literal rendering of which is: "*I, Peter Demeo, from Ceregia, had these figures made for my devotion on the last of November, 1529. Beneo, Ramenghi Fecit.*"

St. Anthony, surnamed the Great, was born in Egypt in 251 and died in 365. He was rich and educated, but gave all his property to the poor and retired into the desert, where he spent many years in ascetic solitude. He later organized a society of anchorites and thus became the founder of the monastic system. The crutch seen in his pictures symbolizes his age and feebleness, the bell his power to exorcise evil spirits; the pig represents the demon of sensuality which Anthony vanquished; the fire signifies his spiritual aid as patron saint, against fire in all shapes, in the next world as well as in this.

The picture was formerly in the collection of Giuseppe Placidi of Rome.

C. H. B.

PAINTING BY F. C. FRIESEKE ACQUIRED

From the special membership and donations fund contributed by Mr. David Gray, Mr. Paul R. Gray, Mr. Philip Gray and Mrs. William R. Kales, "*The Blue Gown*," a painting by Frederick C. Frieseke, has been acquired for the permanent collection from the recent exhibition of paintings by American artists.

In this picture, as in many of Mr. Frieseke's works, there is a dominant decorative quality, pervaded by a subtle play of gradations of light and color. The brilliant and vibrant palette of the Impressionists that has during the last few decades pitched painting in a more joyous key the world over, is

adopted by the artist, but has been made to conform to his ideas of pictorial unity. The happy result is alike admired by painter and layman. It is not always given to a painter to be appreciated by both fellow artists and the public in his own time, but Mr. Frieseke receives this common approbation without sacrificing the very personal note and spirited craftsmanship so characteristic of his work.

His joyous subject matter which usually has to do with charming femininity and its dainty and colorful accessories, is so beautifully formed into a decorative scheme that one has no desire to see his

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HOURS

The Museum is open daily from 9:00 a. m. to 5:00 p. m.; Sundays from 2:00 p. m. to 6:00 p. m.; holidays from 2:00 p. m. to 5:00 p. m. Admission is always free.

(Continued from Page Fifty-nine)

movement of color or space arrangement altered in any particular. His masterly skeleton of design has been concealed beneath charming and delectable subject matter.

In "*The Blue Gown*" a young woman is lying at ease on a "chaise longue" behind which is a flower patterned wall. Her head is resting on one arm while in her left hand she holds a filmy bag. At her feet is a work basket that has been laid aside, and this affords the artist a relished opportunity to indulge in the bit of sparkling and spontaneous still life that has become a feature of many of his pictures.

Of the American artists living in Paris, Frederick Carl Frieseke is among the best known. He has developed a distinctive style which makes him highly regarded by his French contemporaries. In recognition of his superior workmanship both in this country and abroad, he was made a Societaire of the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts in 1908, elected an Associate of the National Academy of Design, New York, in 1912, received a Silver Medal at the St. Louis Exposition in 1904, a Gold Medal in Munich the same year, the fourth W. A. Clark Prize at the Corcoran Gallery, Washington, in 1909, the Temple Gold Medal, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, 1913, and the Gold Medal of Honor at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, 1915, for the most distinguished competitive group of pic-



"THE BLUE GOWN," by FREDERICK CARL FRIESEKE

One of four paintings acquired through the Special Membership Fund contributed by Mr. David Gray, Mr. Philip Gray, Mr. Paul R. Gray, and Mrs. William R. Kales.

tures at the exposition. He is represented in the Luxembourg Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the Museum of Fine Arts of Syracuse, the Modern Gallery of Venice, Italy, the Museum of Odessa, and other public galleries.

It is doubly gratifying to have an example of Mr. Frieseke's work in

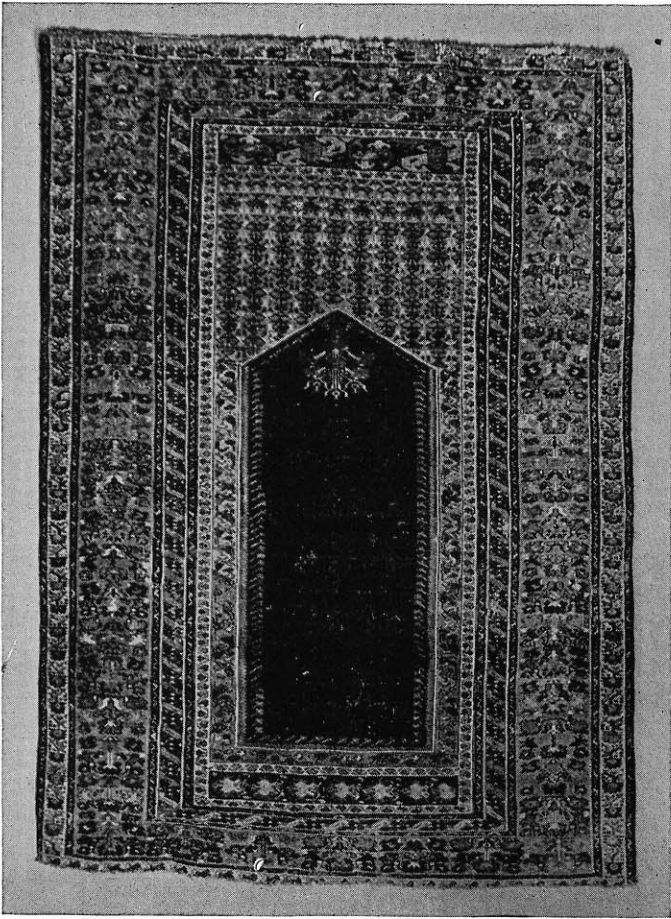
the Detroit Museum of Art, as Michigan claims him as a native son. He was born at Owosso, Michigan, and studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students' League of New York, before taking up his residence abroad. In Paris he studied with Benjamin Constant, Jean Paul Laurens and Whistler.

C. H. B.

A GROUP OF ORIENTAL RUGS

Six Oriental rugs, illustrating three of the great classes of Oriental rugs—Persian, Turkish and Caucasian—loaned to the Museum by Mrs. G. D. Pope, have been hung on the walls of the entrance hall and first floor. They include three

Persian types, a Shiraz, a Joshaghan and a Khorassan; two Turkish, a Ghiordes and a Kulah, and one Caucasian, a Karabagh. Oriental rugs derive their names from the cities, towns, provinces, or countries in which they are made, and in



KULAH PRAYER RUG
 Early XVIIIth Century
 Loaned by Mrs. Gustavus D. Pope

some instances, are named after the tribes by whom they are made. There is generally also some slight difference in the weave, the material, the color, the design, or the finish, which gives each type its distinguishing technical character.

The general characteristics of the three great classes may be summed up as follows: In the

Persian rug, the so-called Senna knot, with one end protruding from every space between the warp threads, is usually employed. It is closer and more compact and creates firmness in the rug. Cotton is mostly used for warp and woof and gives a firmer weave to the fabric. The Persians run largely to graceful floral designs



GHIORDES PRAYER RUG
 Late XVIIIth Century
 Loaned by Mrs. Gustavus D. Pope

with occasional figures of animals and birds. Their lines are more often curved or circling, than straight.

The Ghiordes knot, the ends alternating with every two threads of the warp, is nearly always employed in Turkish rugs. It is loose compared with the Senna knot, and, consequently, there are fewer knots to the square inch. The nap is longer than in the Persian class.

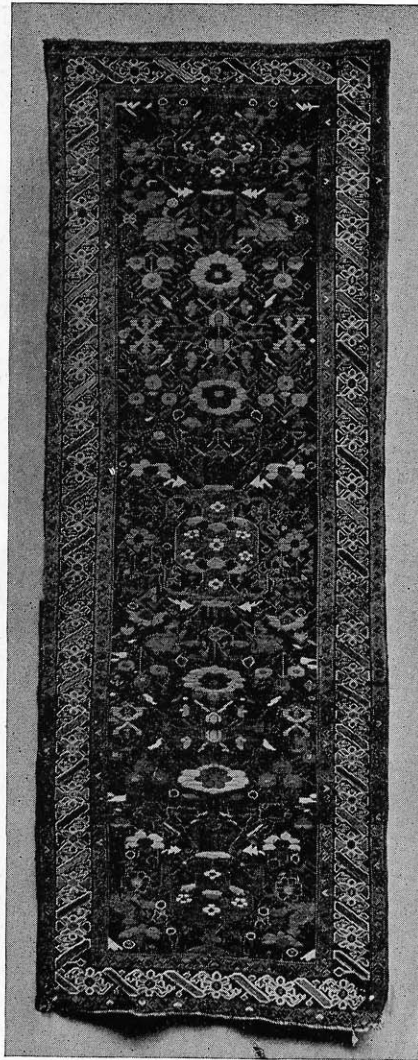
Both geometrical and floral designs are employed, but more often the former. Animals, birds and human beings never appear in the designs, as the teachings of the Koran forbid it, lest it should lead to idolatry. The warp and woof are always of wool or goat's hair, and the colors are brighter and more pronounced than in the Persian or Caucasian weaves.

Caucasian rugs are characterized

by their prominent borders and their purely geometrical patterns with sharp outlines. The designs are nearly always geometrical, floral designs occurring only in rare instances, and as such are of a rectilinear nature. The predominating colors are the blues and yellows, and the colors are always clear and impressive.

An early XIX century Shiraz rug, named from the city of Shiraz, Persia, where it was made, shows the usual dark blue field, which is covered with the common conventional palm leaf pattern in bright red and blue floral design. Alternate rows of the design have the

stems of the leaves turned in opposite directions. There are two border stripes, the inner bright red carrying a vine to which are attached oval-shaped dark blue flowers, the other



KARABAGH RUG
Late XVIIIth Century
Loaned by Mrs. Gustavus D. Pope

dark blue with red flowers. These rich blues and reds as well as yellows and greens, like autumn foliage or the plumage of birds, are the prevailing colors in the Shiraz rugs. The wool is always wool and the warp generally so, and the sides, as in this rug, are generally overcast with wool of two or more colors.

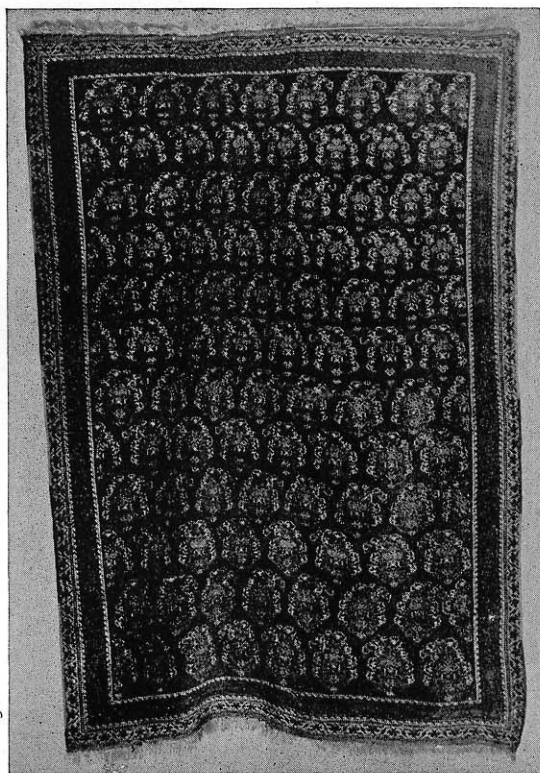
The J o s h a g h a n rugs, named after the Persian village and the district of J o s h a g h a n, where they are made, are among the rarest and best of the Persian weaves, second only to the Ispahans. Mrs. Pope's large example of an early XIXth century rug has a red field

covered with the Guli Henna design of small flowers in rows with floral forms connecting them in network arrangements. There are three border stripes, all with floral

designs of a more or less conventional character. Soft toned colors prevail.

Another early XIXth century Persian rug, a Khorassan, named after the most northeastern pro-

pattern is often called the fish pattern. There are three border stripes, one wide and two narrow, the former with a pink ground covered with the Mina Khani design, which is a combination of red, yellow, and parti-



SHIRAZ RUG
Early XIXth Century
Loaned by Mrs. Gustavus D Pope

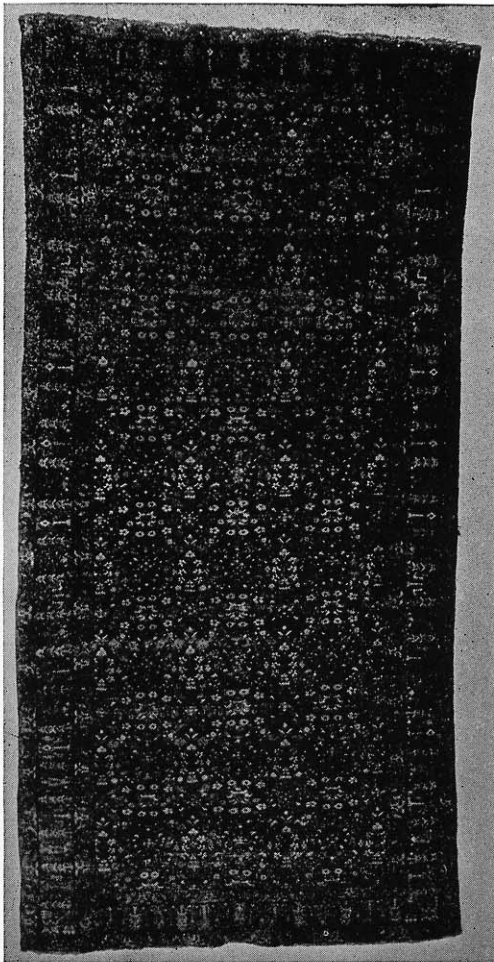
vince of Persia, from which this type comes, has a rich blue field covered with the Herati pattern, which originated in the old city of Herat and consists of a rosette between two lancet-shaped leaves which very much resemble fish. In consequence the

colored red and blue florals joined by rhomboidal vines of olive green in such a manner as to form a lattice arrangement. The warp of the Khorassan is always white cotton and the woof is usually so. Reds, blues, greens, pinks and white are

characteristic colors.

The two Turkish rugs in Mrs. Pope's group are both prayer rugs, a type of small rug, so named because every Mohammedan carries one on which to prostrate himself five times a day when the appointed hour for prayer arrives. Each rug has a mihrab or niche at one end and the rug is always placed so that this will point towards Mecca. The niche represents the door to a mosque and reminds those

who use the rug of the sacred mosque at Mecca. The prayer niche takes various forms in different kinds of rugs. That of the Turkish class is as a rule formed by straight lines and is pointed, as seen in Mrs. Pope's Ghiordes and Kulah.



JOSHAGHAN RUG
Early XIXth Century
Loaned by Mrs. Gustavus D. Pope

The late XVIIIth century Ghiordes, named after the city fifty miles north of Smyrna, has an ivory field with a column on each side which is intended to represent the two huge altar candles of the mosque. A crude figure of a lamp of floral design hangs from the prayer niche, a characteristic feature of many Turkish prayer rugs. There are one wide and many narrow border stripes, the very narrow

twisted ribbon stripe being used to separate the wider ones. These borders have conventional floral designs, that of the widest being perhaps a modification of the Herati design. The Ghiordes prayer rug nearly always has two panels, one above and one below the prayer field, as is the

case in this rug. The prevailing light blues, yellows, and reds of the Ghiordes rugs are seen in this example. Green is seldom used by the Turks in any but rugs of the prayer design because it is regarded as a sacred color and not to be trodden upon.

The early XVIIIth century Kulah prayer rug has a rich dark blue field with a tiny floral pattern resembling the shamrock around the edge, and a hanging flower pendant in the niche. There is one wide border stripe with a multiplication of peculiarly marked small ones carrying designs of various kinds. A distinguishing feature of the Kulah rug is the Kulah border stripe which consists of the repetition of a figure which somewhat resembles an alligator. This design is seen in one of the borders and in the panel above the prayer field. This Kulah has a panel also below the prayer field, which is seldom the case. Red, light blue, golden brown and yellow are the prevailing colors.

The Karabagh rug, which belongs to the late XVIIIth or early XIXth century, was made in the province of that name, in Transcaucasia, just across the Persian border from Tabriz. The black field is covered with an elaborate flower and urn decoration, quite naturalistic in character, which is unusual in a Caucasian rug. There are three border stripes, the wide one carrying the Chichi border design which consists of an eight-petalled flower arranged on alternate steps of the Greek meander or zigzag pattern. The two narrow borders carry a modification of the reciprocal trefoil in blue and red on a green ground, a type of narrow border design which is found especially in Caucasian rugs.

It is to be hoped that this small deposit of rugs will be added to by others owning important Oriental weaves, in order that an adequate representation of the art of early rug weaving in the Orient may be available to the student of this field of endeavor. C. C.

LOAN COLLECTION OF SMALL OBJETS D' ART

A collection of small objets d'art, including a number of jewel boxes, gold, silver, and porcelain utensils, and Chinese and Japanese carvings, recently loaned to the Museum by Mrs. Ralph H. Booth, has been installed in the main court on the first floor.

Several of the boxes are of

French enamel. The figure subjects represented on them are like tiny miniatures, showing a remarkable delicacy of coloring and workmanship in the elaborately costumed little figures. There are also an oval snuff box of Russian enamel with flower decorations, and a jewel box of Russian mala-

chite of a finely marked and polished quality. These, together with other boxes of Japanese silver and lacquer, of Russian lacquer, and of porcelain, make an interesting exhibition.

Examples of the silversmith's art are seen in two ornamental pieces of Dutch silver, one a miniature windmill and the other a miniature full rigged ship, and in three elaborately decorated spoons, two of which have portraits of William of Orange in the bowls. A chased silver and enamel toilet set, consisting of a mirror, hair brush, clothes brush, hat brush, and powder box, the work of Antoine Hiller, possesses a noteworthy quality of workmanship.

Mrs. Booth's collection contains a replica of the Nestor cup, one of a number of solid gold cups found by Dr. Schliemann in his excavations in Mycenae, so called because of its resemblance to the cup of Nestor described in Homer's "Iliad," and a gold replica of a XVth century mazer cup in the Franks Collection in the British Museum. The latter, with a high foot and broad upturned handle, is a rare and elaborate form of the mazer type of cup, which was in its ordinary form merely a shallow bowl. Mazer cups take their name from the spotted marking of the maple wood from which they were first made.

One of the most attractive objects in the collection is an old Spanish fan. The upper part, or mount,

is of parchment on which are painted little figures in gay costumes and rococo decoration in gold. The sticks are of carved mother-of-pearl inlaid with gold and silver decoration in figures and flowers.

Three small porcelain vases, two of which are examples of a fine quality of hard crystallized glaze, were made in the Royal Porcelain Manufactory in Berlin which was controlled by Frederick II, after 1763. These vases bear the trademark of the royal sceptre and consequently were made after the works came under royal patronage. There is also a Japanese teapot of the famous Satsuma crackled faience, with blue and gold enamel decorations.

The high appreciation of jade as a precious material has always been felt by the Chinese, and the many objects of complicated form and elaborate carving fashioned by their craftsmen show the skill attained in working this mineral, which is of a dense, fibrous structure and the hardest of all minerals. Mrs. Booth's collection contains a large and especially fine example of a pale green jade vase and cover, with figures of animals and birds, and pine trees carved in high relief on the sides. The cover is decorated with scroll carving and is surmounted by a crouching lion. The quality of the mineral, the delicate carvings and the highly polished surface, are characteristic of the work done in jade by the Chinese. Vases of this

general design were made in the XVIIIth century.

A curious animal figure carved in amber, from the province of Kwang-

si, China, and two grotesque figures in carved ivory also illustrate the skill of Chinese craftsmen in the carving of various materials. C. C.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

The generous gift of Mrs. Francis J. Sarmiento has added to the Museum library many volumes of value and interest to the craftsman, and to the student of design.

The gift covers a wide field. There are books on architecture, furniture and decoration, metal work, fine plates of some of the beautiful castles of the old world, and a number of original designs for furniture and interior decoration.

The collection, given some months ago, has been frequently consulted, and the library gratefully acknowledges its debt to Mrs. Sarmiento for her valuable contribution.

The library is also indebted to the University of Michigan for five volumes of the Humanistic Series, published by the University.

The gift includes two volumes by Arthur Fairbanks, Director of the

Boston Museum of Fine Arts. These studies are a storehouse of information for the student of the art and life of ancient Greece, and in classifying the vases by style and technique, Dr. Fairbanks has laid the foundation for a true history of this subject.

There are also in this series two volumes by Henry Sanger of the University of Michigan, giving a history and complete description of the Old Testament manuscripts in the famed Freer collection, and a study of the Coptic psalter in the Freer collection, written by William H. Worrell.

This series, written by men distinguished in their various fields of learning, is a most valuable acquisition to the library, and as such gifts come to us, they build a collection which will grow in usefulness.

I. W.

REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The Children's Museum has been in existence about a year and five months. During this period it has developed two lines of activities: the loaning to the city schools, and other educational organizations, collections for class room use, and the holding of exhibitions in the Chil-

dren's Room, in the Detroit Museum of Art. The biological, historical, and geographical material which the Art Museum has come into possession of, but which does not properly come within the scope of an art museum, has formed the nucleus for these collections. This

material, together with gifts and loans of special collections, and the valuable assistance given by teachers and by friends of the Museum in the actual installing of exhibits, have made it possible to hold five exhibitions in the Children's Room. These exhibitions have proved of value to the schools, for many classes with their teachers have visited them, not to mention the hundreds of boys and girls who have come either with their parents or alone. Last spring the Children's Museum was open three week day afternoons. This year it has received visitors every week day and Sundays from two until six p. m.

This department has grown from its crude beginning last year—when only a part of one person's time was given to the work, and when the number of collections borrowed and the number of visitors was small—until now it takes the entire time of two people, has constant requests for its collections, and has many visitors each week to the Children's Room. One Monday morning when some of the schools were closed for half a day, over three hundred boys and girls came to visit the Museum.

The city schools have borrowed over 300 collections, which have reached more than 22,000 children in 65 different schools. Three quarters of these schools have returned for other collections. All grades, from the kindergarten through the high school, have availed themselves of this service.

In addition to the city schools, private schools, churches, Scout Masters, the Society of Arts and Crafts, and other organizations have borrowed material.

In general our policy has been not to organize material as a collection, until a wish for it has been expressed. Every effort has been made to encourage teachers to make their wants known, to obtain from them constructive criticisms, and to have them appreciate that the Children's Museum exists for the help it can extend to the city. The response has been most encouraging. A teacher said recently that the collections were not only vitalizing the class room work, but were also creating in the children an interest in the Art Museum as a whole, and a desire to visit it. The resources of the loan department have been increased through the gift from the Detroit Branch of Junior Red Cross of a collection of Michigan birds, and two sets of Audubon Educational Leaflets. Mrs. Fitch has presented the Museum with some miscellaneous scientific material.

Since November we have had three exhibits in the Children's Room: the "History of Detroit," "Common Birds and Mammals of Michigan," for the Boy Scouts and Scout Masters of the city, and last, at the request of Mr. Henry P. Williams, Educational Chairman of the Detroit Branch Junior Red Cross, an exhibit of work which the Manual Training and the Art De-

partments of the city schools, the Recreation Centres, and the Art Department of the Highland Park Schools had made for the Junior Red Cross. With this exhibit was shown some phases of art of interest to children, for example, the book as a work of art, art of some primitive peoples, peasant costumes, pictures and pottery.

It is planned to have the exhibits cover topics which are especially interesting to children, and which relate, where possible, to the various lines of grade work. An attempt is made to give a general résumé of a topic in a broader and more complete form than it would be possible to treat it in any class room, because the exhibit is the composite work of a number of people with material derived from various sources. It is intended that a part of every exhibit shall be the work of children; for example, when the "History of Detroit" was exhibited, the groups through the centre of the room showing in miniature the "Huron Village" the "Coming of the French under Cadillac," the "Stockade," and "Fort Lernoult," were the work of children, made during class periods in their respective schools, and later brought to the Museum and arranged by them in the Children's Room. Through the help of the English department of the city schools, paragraphs descriptive of prominent men and important events in the history of the city were written by seventh grade boys

and girls, the best papers selected, and placed beneath the picture or the document which required explanation.

Through the co-operation of the teachers of the city, Mr. C. M. Burton, the librarians of the Burton Historical Library, Mr. Daniel Campau, The Detroit Branch of the Daughters of 1812, Mrs. Hal Wyman, Mrs. H. M. Lathrop, Miss Harding, The Society of Arts and Crafts, and others, it was possible to make this exhibit a success. A large part of our last exhibit, was also the work of children, as is patent from the fact that much of the exhibit was Junior Red Cross work. The Children's Museum is indebted to Mrs. Charles Bristol and Mrs. Andrew H. Green, who not only gave helpful suggestions, but also assisted in the actual installing of the Junior work. Material illustrating the steps in the making of handmade paper, the setting of type by hand, the making of colored pictures and lithographs was given the Children's Museum for this exhibit, by Mr. George G. Booth and Mr. Nemetby. To Miss Knapp, head of the Children's Department of the Public Library, the Children's Room was indebted for a loan collection of children's books illustrated by some of the best artists of Europe and America. She also sent specimens showing steps in the binding of books and a bindery. Without the assistance of these interested friends, it would have

been impossible to show the book as a work of art. Miss Mary Turner loaned the Children's Museum a group of dolls dressed in the peasant costumes of Europe. Mrs. Wyman allowed her interesting Eskimo material to be put on exhibition. Mr. Robert B. Livingstone sent a selected group of pictures of interest to children. From the Museum proper was borrowed pottery illustrating the history of this industry.

Where possible, some activity should be in progress when young people visit the Children's Room, and they should feel at liberty to ask to take part, or be shown how to take part, in the work. This plan has at times been carried into effect. Last year when the textiles were on exhibition, some of the children from the School for Cripples came twice a week and wove on the hand loom. They also made baskets and hammocks. Visiting children, who so desired, were allowed under direction to help with the work. These cripple children wove a rug for the Children's Art Centre in Boston. When the "History of Detroit" was on exhibition, Seton Thompson's pictures and directions for making a tepee were put out, and children encouraged to construct one in miniature. During the last exhibit one of the binders from the Public Library gave a demonstration of how books are bound. This constructive work is both interesting and educational, and, where possible, increases great-

ly the value of the exhibit to the children. A small sum of money would make it possible to increase the number of these valuable demonstrations.

No record has been kept of the number of children who have visited the Children's Room, but, since November, 89 classes from 47 different schools have come with their teachers to the Museum. The classes have ranged all the way from the third grade to those of the high school and Vocational Departments. Mr. Henry P. Williams has requested that the Junior Red Cross exhibit be reopened next October when the State Teachers' Association visits Detroit. With this exhibit it is planned to have material showing the natural resources of the state.

The interest and generosity of the public, the co-operation of teachers and supervisors, and the encouragement and suggestions given by the Director of the Detroit Museum of Art, and the Museum employees, have made the Children's Museum a success. The possibilities of the Children's Museum in co-operating with the schools and the public grow constantly. Material that would have been packed away has met a need of the community. The Children's Museum, it is believed, is bringing the children of the city more closely in touch with the Art Museum as a whole.

G. A. G.