

[On Palladio, vol. 9, Vasari's *Lives*. Excerpt from article on Sansovino]

Vicenza, then, has likewise had at various times sculptors, painters, and architects, of some of whom record was made in the Life of Vittore [Pg 211] Scarpaccia, and particularly of those who flourished in the time of Mantegna and learned to draw from him; and such were Bartolommeo Montagna, Francesco Verbo, and Giovanni Speranza, all painters, by whose hands are many pictures that are dispersed throughout Vicenza. Now in the same city there are many sculptures by the hand of one Giovanni, a carver and architect, which are passing good, although his proper profession has been to carve foliage and animals, as he still does excellently well, although he is old. In like manner, Girolamo Pironi of Vicenza has executed praiseworthy works of sculpture and painting in many places in his city.

But among all the masters of Vicenza he who most deserves to be extolled is the architect Andrea Palladio, from his being a man of singular judgment and brain, as many works demonstrate that were executed by him in his native country and elsewhere, and in particular the Palazzo della Comunità, a building much renowned, with two porticoes composed in the Doric Order with very beautiful columns. The same Palladio has erected a palace, beautiful and grand beyond all belief, with an infinity of the richest ornaments, for Count Ottavio de' Vieri, and another like it for Count Giuseppe di Porto, which could not be more beautiful or magnificent, nor more worthy than it is of no matter how great a Prince; and another is being built even now for Count Valerio Chiericati under the direction of the same master, very similar in majesty and grandeur to the ancient buildings so much extolled. For the Counts of Valmorana, likewise, he has now carried almost to completion another most superb palace, which does not yield in any particular to any of those mentioned above. In the same city, upon the piazza commonly called the Isola, he has built another very magnificent fabric for Signor Valerio Chiericati; and at Pugliano, a place in the Vicentino, a most beautiful house for the Chevalier, Signor Bonifazio Pugliana. In the same territory of Vicenza, at Finale, he has erected another fabric for Messer Biagio Saraceni; and one at Bagnolo for Signor Vittore Pisani, with a large and very rich court in the Doric Order with most beautiful columns. Near Vicenza, at the township of Lisiera, he has constructed for Signor Giovan Francesco Valmorana another very rich edifice, with four towers at the corners, which make a very fine effect. At Meledo, [Pg 212] likewise, for Count Francesco Trissino and Lodovico his brother, he has begun a magnificent palace upon a hill of some eminence, with many ranges of loggie, staircases, and other appurtenances of a villa. At Campiglia, likewise in the Vicentino, he is making for Signor Mario Ropetta another similar habitation, with so many conveniences, rich apartments of rooms, loggie, staircases, and chambers dedicated to various virtues, that it will be, when once carried to completion, an abode rather for a King than for a nobleman. At Lunedo he has built another, in the manner of a villa, for Signor Girolamo de' Godi; and at Angarano another for Count Jacopo Angarano, which is truly most beautiful, although it appears a small thing to the great mind of that lord. At Quinto, also, near Vicenza, he erected not long ago another palace for Count Marc'Antonio Tiene, which has in it more of the grand and the magnificent than I could express. In short, Palladio has constructed so many vast and lovely buildings within and without Vicenza, that, even if there were no others there, they would suffice to make a very handsome city with most beautiful surroundings.

In Venice the same Palladio has begun many buildings, but one that is marvellous and most notable among them all, in imitation of the houses that the ancients used to build, in the Monastery of the Carità. The atrium of this is forty feet wide and fifty-four feet long, which are exactly the diameters of the quadrangle, the wings being one-third and a half of the length. The columns, which are Corinthian, are three feet and a half in thickness and thirty-

five feet high. From the atrium one goes into the peristyle, that is, into a claustr (for thus do the friars call their courts), which on the side towards the atrium is divided into five parts, and at the flanks into seven, with three orders of columns one above the other, of which the Doric is at the foot, and above it the Ionic and the Corinthian. Opposite to the atrium is the refectory, two squares in length, and as high as the level of the peristyle, with its officines around it, all most commodious. The stairs are spiral, in the form of an oval, and they have neither wall nor column, nor any part in the middle to support them; they are thirteen feet wide, and the steps by their position support one another, being fixed in the wall. This [Pg 213] edifice is all built of baked stone, that is, of brick, save the bases of the columns, the capitals, the impostes of the arches, the stairs, the surface of the cornices, and the whole of the windows and doors. The same Palladio has built for the Black Friars of S. Benedict, in their Monastery of S. Giorgio Maggiore in Venice, a very large and most beautiful refectory with its vestibule in front, and has begun to found a new church, with such beautiful ordering, according as the model shows, that, if it is carried to completion, it will prove a stupendous and most lovely work. Besides this, he has begun the façade of the Church of S. Francesco della Vigna, which the very reverend Grimani, Patriarch of Aquileia, is causing to be made of Istrian stone, with a most magnificent disregard of expense; the columns are four palms thick at the foot, forty palms high, and in the Corinthian Order, and already the whole basement at the foot is built. At Gambararaie, a place seven miles distant from Venice, on the River Brenta, the same Palladio has made a very commodious habitation for M. Niccolò and M. Luigi Foscari, gentlemen of Venice. Another he has built at Marocco, a place in the Mestrino, for the Chevalier Mozzenigo; at Piombino one for M. Giorgio Cornaro, one at Montagnana for the Magnificent M. Francesco Pisani, and another at Cicogna in the territory of Padua for Count Adovardo da Tiene, a gentleman of Vicenza. At Udine, in Friuli, he has built one for Signor Floriano Antimini; at Motto, a township likewise in Friuli, one for the Magnificent M. Marco Zeno, with a most beautiful court and porticoes all the way round; and at Fratta, a township in the Polesine, a great fabric for Signor Francesco Badoaro, with some very beautiful and fantastic loggie. In like manner, near Asolo, a place in the territory of Treviso, he has erected a most commodious habitation for the very reverend S. Daniello Barbaro, Patriarch-Elect of Aquileia, who has written upon Vitruvius, and for the most illustrious M. Marc'Antonio, his brother, with such beautiful ordering, that nothing better or greater can ever be imagined. Among other things, he has made there a fountain very similar to that which Pope Julius caused to be made at his Vigna Giulia in Rome; with ornaments of stucco and paintings everywhere, executed by excellent masters. In Genoa M. Luca Giustiniano has erected a building with the design of [Pg 214] Palladio, which is held to be very beautiful, as are also all those mentioned above; but it would have made too long a story to seek to recount the many particulars of the strange and lovely inventions and fantasies that are in them. But, since there is soon to come into the light of day a work of Palladio, in which will be printed two books of ancient edifices and one book of those that he himself has caused to be built, I shall say nothing more of him, because this will be enough to make him known as the excellent architect that he is held to be by all who see his beautiful works; besides which, being still young and attending constantly to the studies of his art, every day greater things may be expected of him. Nor will I omit to say that he has wedded to such gifts a nature so amiable and gentle, that it renders him well-beloved with everyone; wherefore he has won the honour of being accepted into the number of the Academicians of Design in Florence, together with Danese, Giuseppe Salviati, Tintoretto, and Battista Farinato of Verona, as will be told in another place, speaking of the said Academicians.