

# EXHIBITIONS AND OTHER MATTERS OF FINE ART

## THE GOTHIC IDEA IN NEW YORK

### Modern Drawings and Mediaeval Sculptures—The Van Eycks.

By ROYAL CORTISSOZ.

This is hardly the moment for new events in the art world of any great significance. Between Christmas and New Year's Day there is inevitably a lull. But it is only a lull. Unless all signs fail, the opening months of 1915 will witness unusual activities. The Riggs collection of armor is impending at the museum. Already more than one important sale is in sight. At the American Art Galleries there will open next Friday an exhibition of the antique Chinese rugs collected over a long period by Mr. Thomas B. Clarke. There are more than three hundred pieces, which will be sold on the afternoons of January 6, 7, 8 and 9. The same firm will in February dispose of the pictures brought together by the late Ichabod T. Williams, notable examples of the Barbizon school, with a few old masters and a group of American paintings, including a work by Sargent. For the present week the dealers continue the various exhibitions which have lately been noted in this place, and there is, of course, the winter academy.

The illustrated catalogue of the exhibition recently opened at the Corcoran gallery in Washington gives one a



WINGED FIGURE.  
(From the painting by Abbott Thayer in the Exhibition at Washington.)

tasteful sense of the interesting things to be seen there. Some canvases loaned for the occasion must be regarded as a good deal. One of these is Sargent's full length portrait of Miss Ada Rehan, one of the handsomest pictures he ever painted. Abbott Thayer is finely represented, too, by the "Winged Figure," which comes from Smith College. He has dealt with the theme over and over, but every time he has touched it he has given it a new charm. Presumably we will see a number of the Washington pictures in the spring Academy or in some of the smaller shows. We hope that Mr. Tarbell, as one of the Ten, will exhibit here his interior with figures, "My Family." From the reproduction it would appear to be a notable illustration of his art.

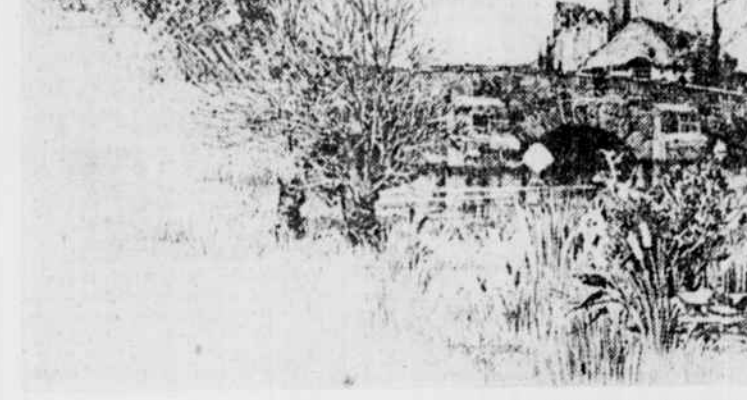
Some Drawings by Mr. Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue.

The worst thing that can befall a member of one of the artistic professions is for him to become thoroughly professionalized. Theoretically he would appear to have reached his highest point of efficiency when he has mastered all his possible resources and organized them into a state of perfect balance; but, humanly speaking, it is just at that point that he is most in danger of invalidating his best inspiration. He is apt to get a little muscle-bound, to rely upon system, upon habit. What he has done well once he will proceed, automatically, to do a second time, in the same way, and perhaps, but not certainly, he will do it well again. Conscious of fully developed and zealously disciplined powers, he would scorn the charge that he had adopted a formula, but that is often precisely what he has done. He is often precisely what he has done. He is often precisely what he has done. He is often precisely what he has done. He is often precisely what he has done.

bridge in the foreground, if just a shade incongruous in style, nevertheless brings just the right human note into the picture. Almost are we persuaded that Mr. Goodhue is fooling us, that Traumburg must exist, somewhere in Hadecker. But we would not labor this point about the artist's ability to create an illusion, for that is, after all, largely a matter of pictorial cleverness and of the proficiency in drawing which he can claim. Much more important is the fact that to Mr. Goodhue architectural form is really a medium, in which he works as a sculptor works in clay. He has the gift of design, the instinctive faculty for weaving romantic patterns out of line and mass and color. For a designer of his Gothic predilections he has, too, an extraordinary width of range, which comes

now for the benefit of the families of French sculptors killed or still on active service in the war, but it is to be hoped that it may always be accessible to lovers of mediæval decoration and sculpture. Mr. Barnard brought his collection together by exploring certain fields and gardens in France and rescuing from base uses the fragments of carving which had once made the glory of the monastery of St. Guilhem. He found that peasants were using, to prop up their vines, bits of sculpture and architecture which were to them merely so many convenient pieces of stone. Incidentally, of course, he picked up diverse examples in a pretty good state of preservation, and his cloister contains a number of figures, capitals and so on, which bear undimmed the very bloom of Gothic art.

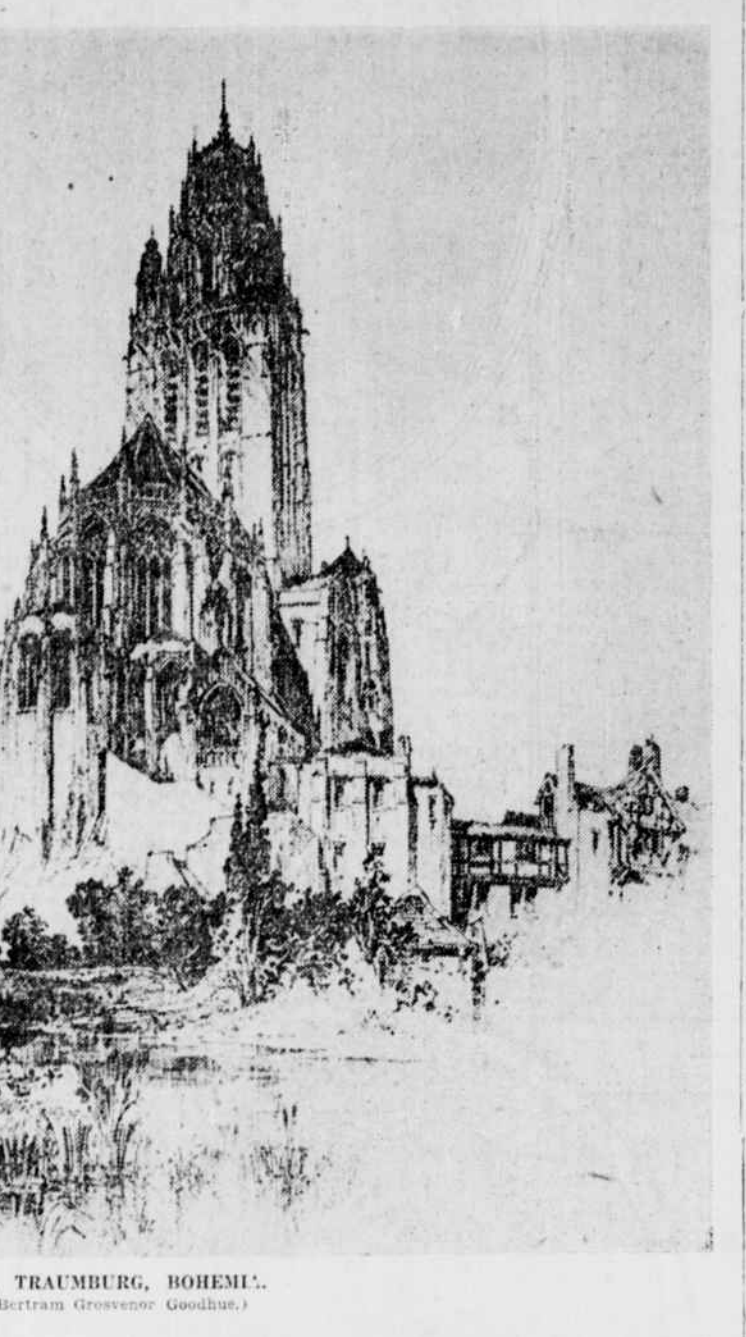
That is what we would designate as Mr. Goodhue's leading inspiration, the sheer glamour of architecture. Modern criticism enforces the principle of Gothic as one essentially constructive, and we are sure that this American exemplar of the style knows all about the ideas of thrust and counter thrust which have emerged from the analyses of all his work is written large the fact that Gothic makes a romantic appeal to his imagination. The most significant episodes in this book are those which commemorate his dreams. It has amused him to invent places and portraits them. Thus he has visited Traumburg, in Bohemia, which you will not find on any map, and the Villa Fosca, ingeniously set "on a forgotten islet in the Adriatic," and the most adorable of hypothetical hill towns, Monteventoso. There is nothing unscamper about Mr. Goodhue's travels.



ST. KAVIN'S CHURCH, TRAUMBURG, BOHEMIA.  
(From the drawing by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue.)

out especially in his types, borders and other book decorations. There are moments when some of these suggest a purely classical turn of mind, and others which mark him as a disciple of William Morris. Indeed, there are devices in the collection inclining us to the belief that he could employ to good purpose any tradition that happened to come to his hand, early German, Renaissance Italian, eighteenth century French, anything. But it is to the Gothic ideal that he would always return. In the long run it is an ideal somewhat disconcerting to the observer of architectural affairs in the United States, for it is one difficult to reconcile with our national genius and with local conditions. But there are churches by Mr. Goodhue which would seem to resolve the difficulty conclusively enough, by the simple process of being beautiful, and in the present volume he answers our doubts in much the same way. There are some lovely churches put before us in these drawings and even more effectively disarming is that broad impression of a strong personal force to which we have already alluded. The idiom Mr. Goodhue has been using with such skill he now has completely under command, and instead of using it coolly, pedantically, he uses it with a joyous zest. He plays with Gothic exuberance and color. His line soars spontaneously and even gayly. Gothic is to him the richest, freest, most humanly enchanting thing

ensemble has at least the nobility of all domes to crown it and the most impressive of all pillared approaches. The distinguishing characteristic of "The Vatican: its History—its Treasures" (Letters and Arts Publishing Company), a stout quarto edited by Signor Ernesto Begni, Dr. James C. Grey and Dr. J. Kennedy, is its fullness of information about a thousand details. But the subject of the book has a remarkable unity. Matthew Arnold gives us a clue to it in his famous saying about the weakness which the man of imagination is bound to have for the Catholic Church, "because of the rich treasures of human life which have been stored within her pale." The Vatican is a kind of cosmos, stored from top to bottom with the rich treasures of human life. We



alluded just now to something Pagan in its appeal. That sentiment has its origin in the singularly multifarious nature of the Vatican collections. The walls of the Sistine Chapel, of Raphael's Stanza and of scores of other rooms testify to the ardor with which the Papacy has enlisted art in the service of the Church. But the sculpture galleries alone would make it clear that the Papacy has in the historic past accumulated works of art for no other reason than those of a connoisseurship utterly indifferent to creed or faith. This volume gives a vivid idea of the tremendous scope of that vast congeries of buildings. Some ten or twelve writers of authority have been called in to describe the indescribable, men like Corrado Ricci, Luigi Cavenaghi and Alessandro della Sella, and with resolute energy they traverse the chapels and the museums, the collections of coins and geographical charts, the library and the secret archives, the mosaic factory and the gardens. They do their best and Monsignor Baumgarten adds a chapter on the Vatican administration which helps us to see the subject steadily and see the whole. But the Vatican more than any other monument in Europe needs a lifetime for its study. This volume is, indeed, what it ought to be, a picture book no less than a history. The hundreds of illustrations, good half-tones from good photographs, many of

rich color and magnificence of detail make way for the quietude of an Annunciation in a cloister room, beneath which are portraits of Jodoc Vyt and his wife—at those epochs the altar-piece was finished—and grandly draped figures treated in grisaille of St. John the Baptist and the Evangelist. "An Mr. W. H. J. Weale, the foremost authority on early Flemish art, points out probably no picture in the world has been so much discussed as this Ghent altar-piece. Until recently Jodoc questioned the tradition that Jodoc Vyt executed it for presentation to the church of St. John, now the Cathedral St. Bavon, Ghent. More probably, however, it was commissioned by William of Bavaria and finished in 1328, as the inscription on the frame records, by Jan van Eyck at the expense of Vyt, on the altar of whose chapel in the church at Ghent it was placed. During the Calvinistic disturbances of 1566, only two days before the iconoclasts broke into the church, the altar-piece was taken up into the tower, where it was restored to its original position. For almost two centuries it so remained intact. When in 1781 Joseph II visited the church the naked 'Adam' and 'Eve' seem to have displeased him, and were removed. Thirteen years later the four central panels were taken to Paris by the French republicans, and on March 7, 1793, exhibited in the Central Museum of Art with other 'antiquities' masterpieces. Meanwhile the wings, having been hidden for a time, were stored in the Townhouse, and though claimed by the director of the Central Museum of Art with other 'antiquities' masterpieces, were not ceded, thanks to the firm resolve of the Bishop of Ghent. Despite strenuous resistance, many works of art were brought back to Belgium after the battle of Waterloo, and on May 10, 1816, the four central panels of the van Eyck polypych were replaced over the altar. Unfortunately, however, the wings, which at that time were actively disapproved, remained in the Town House. During the absence of the Bishop of Ghent in December, 1817, the wings and 'Eve'—were by the vicar general and church wardens sold to the dealer L. J. Solly, who then at Aix-la-Chapelle, for 100,000 francs (\$4,000). Finally, in 1821, the Solly collection was acquired by William III of Prussia for about \$75,000, the six van Eyck panels being then valued at 400,000 francs. These six panels, split so that both sides could be exhibited, form one of the most precious possessions of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum. As to the masterly figures of Adam and Eve—with on the exterior the central part of the cloister chamber, to right and left of which are the Virgin and the Angel of the Annunciation—they remained from 1781 till 1860 hidden away in a cupboard at Ghent, because, forsooth, the figures are undraped. In 1860 the panels, which in their kind had never been excelled—nor are likely to be—were bought by the Belgian government through the Royal Museum at Brussels. The terms of the purchase were



PORTRAIT OF A LADY.  
(From the painting by G. de Brush in the Exhibition at Washington.)

that 50,000 francs should be given for the execution of stained glass windows in St. Bavon, and that the copies of the entire wings of the altar piece made by Michael Goedicke in 1857-59, in which the figures of Adam and Eve are draped, should be presented to the same church. Thus it comes about that only the four central panels familiar to visitors to Ghent are originals from the hands of the brothers van Eyck, six panels of the wings being at Berlin, where, too, for the present appear also to be those completing the monumental, rich and moving altar-piece. Furthermore, Berlin owns Michael Coxie's copy of the great central panel showing the Adoration of the Lamb, as there is not something of his which I could have as a memento of him?" She raised to his her velvety brown eyes, which a few moments before were moist with tears, and said: "How would I do?"—Dundee Advertiser.

**A LITTLE REMEMBRANCE.**  
A merchant who had been traveling some months was informed upon his return of the death of a valued friend. A few days later he called on the bereaved widow to offer his expressions of sympathy. During the visit he remarked, "I was a good friend of your husband, and there are many friends of his which I could have as a memento of him?" She raised to his her velvety brown eyes, which a few moments before were moist with tears, and said: "How would I do?"—Dundee Advertiser.

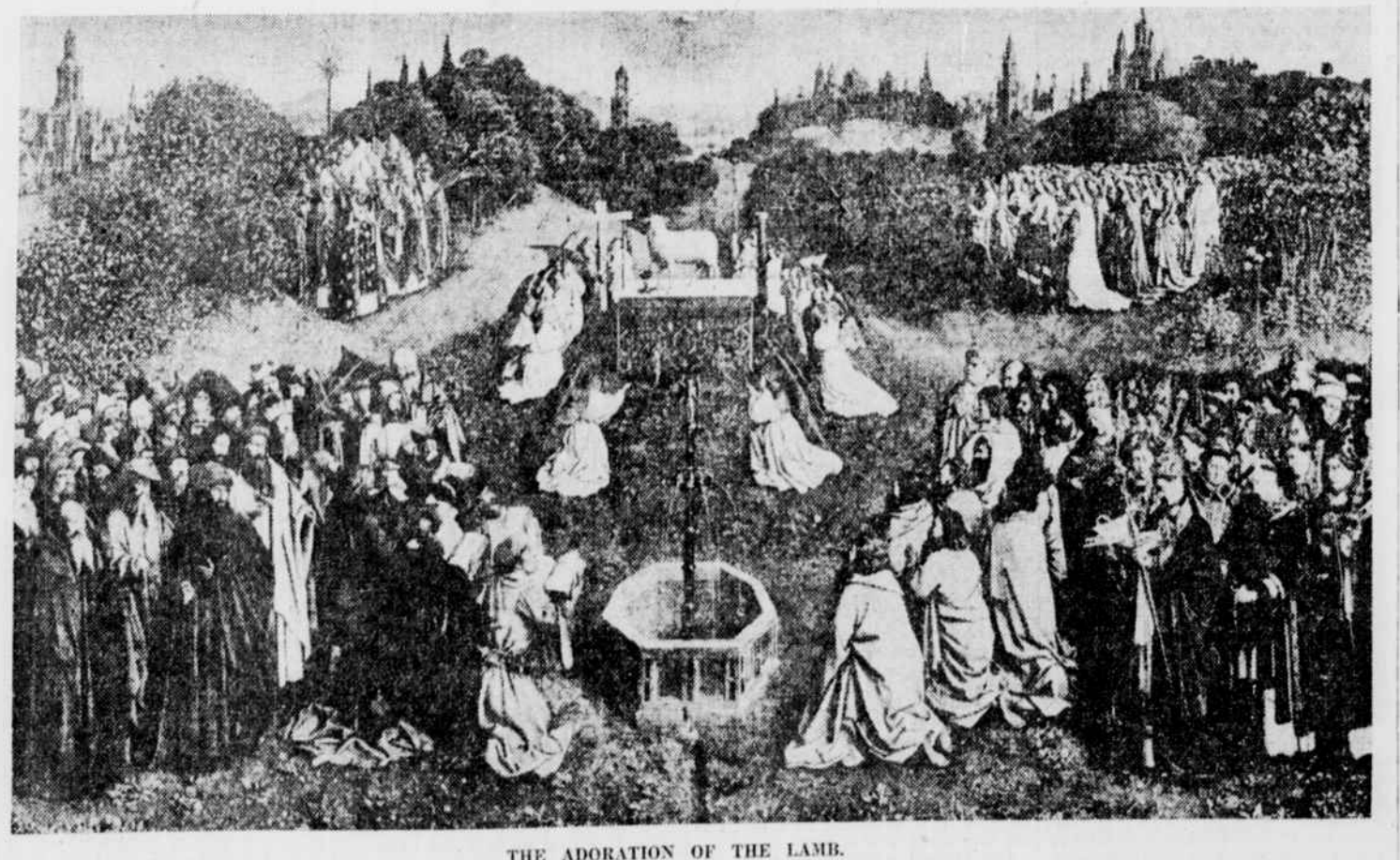
**SORROWS FALL.**  
"Brooder Johnson, what am you yoking me ter charge me for dis loan ob a black coat fash a couple ob weeks?"  
"Who yo want wit it fash only a couple ob weeks?"  
"Mah waife's mother am dead and Ah wants it fer a short mourn."—Philadelphia Ledger.

**SEEING IS BELIEVING.**  
Caller—So your sister and her sweetheart are very close mouthed over their engagement?  
Little Ethel—Close mouthed? You carried to see them together!—Cardiff Times.

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THE ADORATION OF THE LAMB.  
(From the Central Panel in the Ghent Altar Piece by the van Eycks.)

the World of Beauty That is Called the Vatican.  
There are two appeals made to the imagination of the traveler who enters the great open space before St. Peter's, in Rome, and pauses, overawed, beneath the shadow of Bernini's colonnade. The first is Christian. But the next is Pagan, or at all events has nothing to do with any dogma of any church. In the light reigns supreme, and though the pines together want the majesty that would be commensurate with their intrinsic significance, it is one of the sublime accidents of history that the

latter hitherto unpublished, serve almost better than the rest to revive the mind of the Pope's domain. Turning the pages and poring over countless well remembered masterpieces we are aware once more of the solemn thrill which flows from its incomparable grandeur. Each painting, each sculpture, has its penetrating message. And the beauty of them all is merged in one mighty human note. You feel this when you are in the building itself. You feel it when you look back across the Campagna and behold the great dome, floating in the violet haze.  
A Note on One of Belgium's Most Precious Relics.  
It has been rumored in the press of

beneath the figures of the Almighty and of Mary and St. John the Baptist, the Adoration of the Lamb, a triumph of mediæval craftsmanship, is depicted as a rapt and impressive union of inward and outward, expressed in spiritually exalted terms. Flower and leaf, the pebbles in the water, the groups of adoring figures, the spiry towns against the serene sky in the distance, these and every detail are rendered with the veracity of a master miniaturist, yet with the passionate insight and power of a creative seer. Around the Lamb are Apostles, Prophets, Priests, Rulers, Sages and Martyrs, while on the wings, advancing from right and left in "soldierly" and "sweet societies" are pilgrims, hermits and chivalrous knights of the Cross. When the altarpiece of the altar-piece are closed, jewel-

the Coxie's figures of Mary and St. John the Baptist. It may be recalled that some eight years ago an application was made to the Berlin authorities to lend for a projected van Eyck exhibition in the Musée des Beaux-Arts,

THE ANGELIC CHOIR.  
(From a panel in the Ghent Altar Piece by the van Eycks.)

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