

# TWO MOST VALUABLE PICTURES IN WASHINGTON GALLERIES WORKS OF MEN WHO REPRESENT SCHOOLS WIDELY SEPARATED

## ONE IS A "MADONNA" BY LUINI, THE OTHER A COROT LANDSCAPE

The Painting of Mother and Child Which Hangs in the National Gallery Belongs to the Italian Renaissance and is Painted on Wood—"The Wood-Gatherers," by Corot, Which is in the Corcoran Was Signed by that French Artist as He Lay on His Deathbed in 1875.

By Victor Flambeau.

WHICH are the two most valuable paintings owned by public galleries in Washington?

Almost every one would give a different guess, as he mentally ran over the list of favorite pictures in the National Gallery of Art and the Corcoran.

The two which probably would be adjudged by a critic as most valuable in these large collections, and likely to bring the highest prices at a sale, are not American works.

Artists of our own country have as yet painted few, if any, pictures that would fetch dollars around the hundred thousand mark.

Some of Blake's, and others by Inness and Fuller, have ranged from \$15,000 to \$30,000, but that is about the limit as yet for an American painting, and then only when the artist is dead, and no more pictures will come from his brush.

"If only I could drop off tomorrow," sighed an American sculptor the other day, "the prices for my work would soar. But I fear I am to be here for some time yet."

In the case of John Singer Sargent who received the \$50,000 commission for a portrait of President Wilson, and a similar order for two of Rockefeller, as exhibited here a year or two ago, these were canvases executed as special war work for the Red Cross, to whom these \$50,000 donations were contributed. American paintings by living artists have not yet reached the fifty thousand dollar mark.

### THE TWO ARTISTS ARE WIDELY SEPARATED.

The artists represented by the two most valuable pictures in question are not related in any way. In fact, they belong to schools widely separated and curiously unlike, though both have had a very wide influence.

The Corcoran picture is one that is typical of the Corcoran Gallery, while the other, from the National, somewhat typifies also the character of that collection, but this fact is a mere accident in the case of our National Gallery, which is made up of unrelated bequests and loans.

The Corcoran collection was, of course, very largely the grouping of one man, the late W. W. Corcoran, whose first gathering has been continued by an able staff of officers of the gallery since his demise in 1888.

One of the greatest things that a man can do for his age is to leave a fine art gallery for the public to enjoy. It is the grandest monument he could have. So with Mr. Walters in Baltimore, Mr. Corcoran in Washington, Mr. Freer in the great Freer Gallery of Art soon to be opened here to the public, and the half-dozen important collections of the National Gallery of Art.

### ONE IN NATIONAL GALLERY BELONGS TO ITALIAN SCHOOL.

But to select the two pictures of probably greatest monetary value in our two leading art institutes. The one in the National Gallery belongs to the Italian Renaissance. It is a Madonna, and a very beautiful one; Mother and Child, by Bernardino Luini, a North Italian artist and a student of the great Leonardo.

Ruskin places Luini even ahead of Leonardo, but that is probably extravagant praise. Still there is

great sweetness and softness about his painting. One never forgets the impression received from it.

In the Brera, in Milan, one may compare Leonardo and Luini, the former in the fresco of the Saviour's head for "The Last Supper" (generally attributed to Leonardo), and the latter in another "Madonna and Child," and a relationship in their styles may be observed.

Luini was born about 1460 in one of those Swiss Italian lake districts, the town of Luino, Lago Maggiore. A visit there is never forgotten, for the whole atmosphere is a harmony of warmth and color and one who has had even a glimpse of the region in a hasty European trip always feels again that quality in Luini's "Madonna and Child" in the National Gallery.

### NEW YORK'S PICTURES NOT AS INTERESTING.

The value of this large picture, fifty-six inches high and forty-nine wide, painted on wood, a genuine primitive? Oh, it is impossible to set a price on it.

Hundreds of thousands would not be too much to pay for such a work. The most costly picture in the Metropolitan in New York is not half so interesting from some points of view, that Van Dyke Stuart portrait for which \$750,000 was paid.

There are in various galleries and private collections throughout the United States a few Luini pictures one or two other Madonnas by him, but none of them, so far as seen, has seemed so interesting in composition as ours in Washington, with the Child just escaping from the Mother's arms, taking the first steps, beginning that long journey to the Cross, which she already dimly feels in her gently anxiety for Him.

Pilgrims may well journey from all over the land to see in our National Gallery this wonderful "Madonna" by Luini, painted no doubt four years ago, for the uncertain date of Luini's death is placed at about 1536.

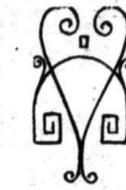
Is our Luini a genuine original, or is by chance a copy?

That question Dr. William H. Holmes, director of the National Gallery of Art, is unable to answer positively, but he explains that there is almost every reason to believe this to be an original Luini.

It is painted on wood, a rich harmony of color, and we know that a copy of even a little later time would be on canvas.

See the Raphael "Holy Family," a loan in the same room, though not belonging like the Luini to the Harriet Lane Johnson collection, the nucleus about which has grown the entire National Gallery of Art. The Raphael, though very beautiful and having some actual character of the original, is proved by internal evidence too detailed to be considered now, to be an early copy of

## WASHINGTON'S MOST CELEBRATED PAINTINGS



These pictures are termed by critics the best works of art in Washington. "The Madonna and Child" is by Luini, and the "Wood Gatherers" is by Corot.



the Raphael in the Munich Gallery, and this is one on canvas.

But the Luini may well be an original, and one of the strongest proofs seems to be this: No one, so far as we know, has ever discovered a duplicate of our Luini "Madonna." If there were in some European gallery another like it, we should have an interesting problem as to which was first.

"The only question, to my mind," adds Dr. Holmes, "is the solid background. Those early Madonnas usually have the details of the background well defined. The Holy City, Jerusalem, you remember, is generally represented by a delineation some Italian city, often Florence, which is the favorite background. This is a characteristic of most Madonna pictures of the Italian or the Flemish schools. But here we have a solid background, the only doubtful question."

### THE BARBISON SCHOOL WAS NOT APPRECIATED.

The Barbison School, in France, was young and almost unappreciated in its own country when Mr. Walters, of Baltimore, and Mr. Corcoran, of Washington, were so fortunate as to acquire their fine collection of pictures from the artists of Fontainebleau, whose works later became so greatly in demand.

It has been said that many faked Corots and Milletts have been sold in America, but there is no question about the genuineness of the Corcoran Corot, "The Wood-Gatherers." This lovely landscape was among the last pictures painted by the artist, and it was signed while he lay on his deathbed. Even then he was painting, as he died, moving his hands about the wall and murmuring: "Oh, they are so beautiful, such beautiful pictures."

Most of us who look at this canvas, dated 1875, think first of the foliage of the trees against the sky, so filmy and characteristic of Corot.

Madonnas, all of them exceedingly beautiful and of historic importance. The Rubens "Holy Family" in that room is possibly the most interesting one, as it portrays the members of the artist's own family and the painter himself, and in this picture, which is, of course, from a much later period, the background is carefully detailed.

But if we stop too long with these entrancing paintings in the National Gallery we shall not get to the Corcoran, with its most precious picture, a landscape.

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Then we see the two women gathering wood, and in the distance the old house and the clouds. But a little boy of three, taken by his mother to visit the gallery for the first time, saw none of these, but he did at once glimpse the man on horseback, and

the dog, riding away into the wood. That was the touch that appealed to him.

"Corot," we read, "was inspired to use for the motive of this picture an old study from Morvan representing a landscape with St. Jerome at

something that belongs not to one class of society, but rather it is universal in its appeal.

And it is a noteworthy fact that the greatest artists in all ages have sprung from the people, not from the nobility.

## Mental Cures Stir Dispute of M. D.'s. In British Isles

LONDON, Sept. 17.

ONLY a few years ago any British doctor who professed faith in "mental" cures was labeled "charlatan" or "quack." Today a violent controversy is raging in the medical press, with some of Britain's leading physicians announcing that not only nerve trouble, but even pneumonia benefit by "mind treatment," auto-suggestion and hypnotism.

The row started at the annual meeting of the British Medical Association. A large part of the association's time was devoted to debating the value of mental cures, and the discussion is continuing in the press.

Prof. Robertson, of Edinburgh, a well-known physician, declared that wounds could not only be cured by mere suggestions, but could be inflicted in the same way. He asserted that he knew of one case where blisters were raised on a man's body simply by telling him he was being seared with the iron.

"I am not urging that we abandon the use of medicine," said Prof. Robertson, "but doctors should learn that there is something besides pills. In their mental cures they could throw many a bottle of medicine into the sea."

Dr. Barnard Hollander, who advocated successfully the use of hypnotism and auto-suggestion in curing cases of shell shock and nervousness during the war, said that the drink and drug habits yielded easily to psychic healing.

## Prince of Wales Calls Cheerfulness a Duty

LONDON, SEPT. 15.

IN a recent address to the London Chamber of Commerce, the Prince of Wales declared that "cheerfulness is a national duty." His slogan might not be inapt for Americans. The heir to the British throne, whose tour of the United States won him many friends because of his democratic attitude, sounded other keynotes of interest to American business men.

"For a moment, I know that business depression is hanging over us," said the Prince, "but I am daring to hope that experts already can detect rifts in the clouds. I shall always remember the unquenchable cheerfulness which carried us through the war."

"Perhaps the reminder to give today is that we are really a people of great sense, and common sense. I think, implies a frank recognition of facts, a spirit of give and take, and making the best of things."

## Chicago Aldermen to Have Shower Baths

CHICAGO, Sept. 17.—The strivings of four years on the part of Chicago's aldermen is to be rewarded. The aldermen at last are to be enabled to take a bath.

In the days before the war, Chicago's aldermen began a movement to have shower baths installed in the city hall building, making it possible for the fathers of the city to refresh themselves after a stormy and heated session of the council. But the war came and with it the vision of baths vanished, for the time at least.

A few days ago plumbers went to work in the aldermen's locker room, and it was formally announced that the dreamed-of shower baths are soon to be a reality.

## Can't Find Anyone to Run For Town Mayor

FARMINGTON, W. Va., Sept. 17.—H. L. Morgan has resigned as mayor here and cannot be induced to serve until a successor is named. The town council is in a quandary for it cannot find anybody who will have the job.

The town government is running along after a fashion without a head. There is the case of the officer of the army who was killed by the falling of a canopy over a sidewalk in front of one of New York's theaters. The legal department instituted action against the owners of the theater as representatives of the officer's widow and collected a good round sum.

## TAKES CARE OF ACE.

In another case, which happened in France, an officer was killed in an automobile accident on the streets of Paris. The legal department sued the owner of the automobile in the French courts and secured a verdict which resulted in the sum of 3,000 francs being paid the widow of the officer in cash and a further decree allowing her 5,000 francs per year for the remainder of her life.

Claims against railroads, steamship lines, etc., are made by the legal department and settlements in amounts all the way from \$100 to \$50,000 have been obtained.

The head of the legal bureau is Charles C. Case, general counsel and also president of the attorney general of the United States. He has a staff of expert attorneys and assistants.

# MOST EXTENSIVE DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT IN WORLD IS HERE

UNCLE SAM, well known and internationally heralded humanitarian, awakened to the fact that the sisters and cousins and aunts, as well as the wives, fathers, mothers, etc., of his disabled soldiers, have sources of considerable worth, has just established what is in effect the most extensive domestic relations court in the world.

Its home is in Washington. Its potential customers are the relations, more or less domestic, of the wounded and disabled soldiers under the War Risk Bureau's keeping as well as the beneficiaries of soldiers who gave their lives to their country on the battlefield or died during the time they were wearing their country's uniform.

### MATTER OF CONCERN.

The domestic relations of the gallant men who entered the service of the country have been a matter of considerable interest to the authorities ever since the United States entered the great war. The enactment of the war risk insurance law gave the men in the service cer-

tain rights and also conferred on their dependents, heirs and assigns certain benefits.

At least half a dozen agencies of the Government pondered and red-taped and investigated the various classes of claims that were filed under the insurance act. And up to the present time these different and widely diverse agencies have continued to handle these cases, making for delay, misunderstanding and considerable profanity and hard feelings.

All that is now passed. The domestic relations department of the well-known United States will now function as one unit. In other words, without any sort of "hell-and-maria" assistance Uncle Sam has decided to work out his war risk troubles on a budget system, and the business of handling all these cases has been turned over to the United States Veterans' Bureau.

And the legal department of this bureau has taken over the care of every type of complaint, exemption claim, or any other sort of action which the Government or any of

the claimants or beneficiaries feel called upon to file. In view of the fact that the work that was formerly handled by the War Risk Bureau, the Public Health Service and the Federal Board for Vocational Training are all consolidated in the United States Veterans' Bureau, the legal department has become the largest depository of real human appeals, genuine sob stories and the tales of gay Lotharios who donned uniforms to escape pressing and unpleasant domestic relations.

### FRIENDS OF FAMILIES.

The legal department is not only the friend of the soldier, but the friend of the soldier's wife and family—and heirs and assigns, as has been stated. And the legal department has been called upon to solve some very queer and some unusually complicated domestic problems.

The procedure is much more informal than that in a court of domestic relations, as it is impossible to get evidence in these thousands of cases scattered all over the United States except by correspondence, and because of the informality

the statements of interested parties are much more acrimonious than they are in a court of domestic relations. Not restrained by being sworn to tell the truth, and not subject to having their testimony shaken by cross-examination as is done in court, there is almost no limit to which mothers-in-law and other relatives of wives who claim their husbands deserted them without cause and of husbands who claimed their wives had been guilty of misconduct, will not go.

Some of the cases are exceedingly pathetic while others are humorous. An example of the former is that of a blind soldier who was married to a woman who misrepresented herself to him as being much younger than she was in fact, and told him all sorts of tales about her owning property. She told him she was an interior decorator, artist, music teacher, wireless telegrapher, and, affecting to be engrossed in soldiers' welfare, induced him to marry her under the pretext that she wanted to take care of him. She took what money the soldier

had and then filed a claim for compulsory allotment and family allowance. Exemption was granted.

### CLAIMED WIFE WAS DEAD.

An instance of the latter was the case of a colored soldier who made affidavit that his wife was dead. During the period of his service, however, they maintained a close correspondence and she constantly sent him good things to eat. Upon learning her rights to compel her husband to support her while in the military service the wife filed an application for Government family allowance and compulsory allotment from her husband, submitting in support of her claim letters she received from her husband.

Many of his letters were written in verse and in one of these letters he wrote her a "poem" entitled "Home," the closing line of which read: "Just kindly remember wherever you roam, that Shakespeare was right, there's no place like home." The wife received her allotment.

Another instance is that of a man who enlisted as single, leaving a

wife and some step-children. After many months of service the wife made claim for compulsory allotment and family allowance. The soldier's commanding officer advised soldier that he make up all back allotments and remain in the service until they were paid, soldier to receive no pay during this period. The soldier immediately got busy and wrote his wife, begging her to release him. From subsequent letters written by him to her it is evident that she did not concur in the arrangement.

### QUOTED THE SCRIPTURES.

He called her by the name of Naomi, a pet name which he invented for the occasion and tried his best to work on her feelings. In conclusion he told her that she "betraided" him and sold him for "thirty pieces of silver." His knowledge of the Scriptures would seem to be somewhat faulty, however, as in conclusion he unconsciously attributed to himself the very evils which he had hoped to persuade

the wife that she herself was guilty of, for he signed himself "Judith." He made the allotment.

In another case the woman wrote Mr. Wood Road Wilson. She told the President that she was exacting and wanted him to take out just what money he needed for his trouble. Exemption was granted in that case. In answer to the bureau's inquiry as to what is the present organization of the soldier, a wife answered "Baptist." Neither of the parties, however, appeared to be very religious from subsequent evidence submitted. A witness argued in behalf of soldier's claim for exemption insisted that the "the quality of mercy is not strange." Shakespeare did say something like this.

Another phase of the work of the department lies in impressing on private firms and corporations that there is no particular reason why they should not pay for carelessness or negligence when it happens that a man in one of Uncle Sam's uniforms suffers thereby. For in-