which are characteristic of a group of wares now by general consent added to the output of the Tuscan city. It remains only to note

THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE RENDERS COLLECTION
BY ROGER FRY

The picture collector is not always a sympathetic figure to the lover of art. When some millionaire of the aggressive type swoops down upon the picture market and carries off to some remote Western province pictures which the lover of art has long known and admired, the latter is apt to resent the fact that money and works of art should be in any way commensurate. But when a man’s love and understanding of art are strong enough to enable him to engage in the struggle for masterpieces without a big bank balance; when he can pit his industry, good luck and sensibility against the millionaire’s cheque book, he becomes the ideal collector. He adds to our knowledge and understanding of art, since by the very nature of the conflict he is bound to make new discoveries.

This is the case with M. Renders’s Collection, which has been catalogued* under the auspices of M. Hulin de Loo. M. Renders has given hereby a further proof of his devotion to the early art of his own country, since the proceeds of the sale are to be devoted to the difficult task of securing for Belgian Museums works of the Flemish masters. The collection which M. Renders has thus patiently acquired was largely drawn upon for the great exhibition at Burlington House. These pictures had never been shown in public before. They therefore created something of a sensation among students of Flemish art. It so happened, indeed, that the surprise which followed on the revelation of so many hitherto unknown works took a rather unfortunate turn. Dr. Winkler, in criticizing the Burlington House exhibition in the “Kunstwanderer,” expressed the opinion that amongst the exhibits were a number of forgeries from two or three private collections in Belgium. As M. Renders’s Collection was the one which attracted most attention by the surprising quality of its revelations, this phrase was interpreted by several critics and art-historians in this country as applying particularly to that. During the course of the exhibition these suspicions were largely canvassed among those interested in the subject, and the more important pieces in the Renders Collection were singled out as the culprits to which Winkler had alluded.

My suspicions had not been aroused on the occasions of my first two visits to the gallery, and by the time that I was informed of these distressing discoveries the crowds of visitors rendered it hopeless to attempt the kind of examination which is necessary in such cases. Fortunately, on the day after the exhibition closed to the public, facilities were generously afforded to serious amateurs to examine the pictures which had been rendered invisible during the exhibition by reason of the extraordinary success they had obtained. The general result of my examination was astonishment at the powerful effect of suggestion even on the minds of learned and competent students of art history; for I found no evidences in the pictures themselves which could bring them under suspicion of being forged. They were not, of course, all in an equally perfect state —there are very few pictures of this period in which no retouching, no filling of holes has been necessitated—but in all of them the greater part of the surface had that special “crystallization” of the pigment which, so far as I know, has never been perfectly imitated by the forger’s art. It is quite true that there were two pictures at Burlington House in which such authentic craquelures occurred in parts and which were none the less to all intents and purposes forgeries. But in those cases the method of procedure, though highly ingenious, became obvious on a close examination. The method in both these pictures, The Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine (Cat. 86), given to the Master of the Baroncelli Portraits, and The Bird Trap (224), given to Brueghel, the elder—which I can well believe may have come from the same workshop—was, to take some old picture of no value but with genuine craquelures all over, and taking away or rubbing down most of the paint, to paint on this a more important and more desirable composition in the style of some considerable master. Wherever possible the picture was painted in glazes and thin scumbles which allowed the craquelure to persist. But wherever any sort of loading of pigment became necessary this craquelure was inevitably concealed, and left no doubt as to the recent date of the handling. I have every reason to admit that one of these, viz., that ascribed to Pieter Brueghel, was very cleverly done, since I myself was taken in at first and even published it in The Burlington Magazine. But when once

suspicion led to a closer inspection there was to my mind no doubt about the verdict. I cite these cases because they were, I suspect, fabricated by the same hand that, it was whispered, had been at work to produce the pictures of the Renders Collection; but they are of a totally different quality and aspect from the Renders ones.

Omitting the beautiful little so-called Meister Wilhelm, which is one of the rarities of the collection, and about which the opinions of the Berlin authorities are highly favourable, since this, naturally, did not appear at Burlington House, let us consider the next earliest work in the collection. This is the Calvary [PLATE C, No. 4 at Burlington House]. It is, to my mind, astonishing that suspicion should have breathed upon this picture. It is not often that one sees a fourteenth-century picture in so nearly perfect a condition. The inimitable craquelure of the gesso ground persists throughout every part. The gilding of the tooled background is almost everywhere the untouched original gilding of the fourteenth century; the colours of the dresses are everywhere singularly brilliant and pure. Though it is possible to assign a probable history to the picture, it fits into no very well-known category. The arms of the Duc de Berry on the breviary carried by St. John indicate a French or Franco-Flemish artist, but the design is based on the Crucifixion on the reverse side of Duccio's great altarpiece at Siena. Most of the figures are taken from that, but the St. John appears to be more in the style of Simone Martini. The closeness with which Sienese methods are followed seems to me to indicate that the artist, whoever he was, had studied under Italian masters and was not merely copying an art which was unfamiliar to him.

Now, the Sienese tradition was carried on at Avignon throughout the fourteenth century, and I should therefore be inclined to think this was by an artist of the Avignonese school, working for the Duc de Berry. The colour also, though definitely non-Italian, seems to me not to belong to any northern or Flemish tradition. M. Renders's catalogue calls attention to the influence of Beauneveu in the draperies. This is not marked enough to associate the artist with the school of André Beauneveu; it may be merely a general influence, but it helps to fix the artist more or less definitely in the French tradition.

To return to the question of authenticity, it will be seen that a forger would have had to be extremely well informed to create a work with no other very similar work in existence from which to borrow his ideas, and to have made a work which yet fits in with what we know of the paintings of the late fourteenth century in France. It would be rash to deny that such ingenuity was impossible in a forger, but what appears to me impossible is the production of such a surface as we see in this picture. It would again be rash to deny that some means may be found to simulate the effect of time on a gesso panel, but up to now, so far as I have seen, nothing at all corresponding to this surface has been so produced. The amateur must always be prepared to be confronted with some new and astonishing discovery of the forger, but he is fairly well armed to meet the inventions of the past. They have become familiar and are easily detected. In this case we have no question of some such new discovery, for this panel was acquired about the year 1865 by Mons. Desiré de la Rue, who left it in 1894 to M. Speyrbrouck, from whom M. Renders acquired it. I have seen copies of the letters which attest this fact.

Now in 1865 the art of forging primitives was still in its infancy and, still more, there was hardly any suspicion of the existence of any considerable school of painting in France at the end of the fourteenth century; so that the imposition of the Berry arms on a Sienese composition at this date is almost unthinkable. However, I return to the capital fact, which is the condition of the picture as it reveals itself to anyone who has an intimate knowledge of the technique of painting.

The next work the authenticity of which was considerably canvassed at Burlington House is a small panel representing the Virgin Nursing the Child, attributed to Rogier van der Weyden [PLATE A. Burlington House Cat., No. 36]. This work was not, indeed, in such perfect condition as the last. There were signs of retouching in the background and the Madonna's drapery, but the flesh painting showed the original craquelure nearly intact throughout, and the hands, which are highly characteristic of van der Weyden, were in a good condition.

There are many replicas of this picture, but in nearly all cases the composition is inserted in a circular frame. The type of the headress and the design of the heavy folds of linen of which it is composed seem to point to Campin as the probable originator of the design. The version that perhaps comes nearest to Campin himself is that in the Johnson Collection at Philadelphia [PLATE B]. My impression, however, is that this is a later version than the Renders one, which is certainly more vital in the quality of its line. In fact I see no reason to doubt the attribution to Rogier van der Weyden which M. Hulin de Loo and Dr. Friedländer have sponsored. In any case, here, too, forgery seems out of the question.
A—*Virgin nursing the Child*, attributed to Rogier van der Weyden. Panel, 25 by 20 cm. (M. E. Renders, Bruges)

B—*Virgin nursing the Child*, probably by Campin. (John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia)

C—*Calvary*, here identified as of the Avignonese School. Panel, 32 by 20 cm. (M. E. Renders, Bruges)

D—*Madonna and Child with Angel*, by Memlinc. Panel, 22 by 13 cm. (M. E. Renders, Bruges)
Whilst admitting the possibility of a pupil’s assistance in places, the same authors attribute also to Rogier the beautiful Virgin and Child (No. 38, Burlington House Cat.). M. Hulin de Loo, in the Burlington Magazine of August, 1923, and April, 1924, has established the correspondence of several such Madonnas by van der Weyden with portrait heads by him which originally were framed together as diptychs. Here again, the corresponding portrait panel is known; it is that of Jehan Gros, now in the Ryerson Collection, Chicago.

Another picture which came in for a good deal of suspicion—unfounded as far as I can see—was the little Madonna and Child with an Angel [Plate D, Burlington House Cat. 43], attributed to Memlinc. Here, again, the surface quality seemed to me to be in the main beyond suspicion though there may have been a few retouches here and there. The picture belonged at one time to the Duc d’Arenberg, from whom it passed to his librarian, and from the librarian’s daughter to the collection of M. Paul de Decker, from whom M. Renders acquired it by exchange. It is to my mind not only a Memlinc, but one of those early works—it is probably earlier than any other known example—on which he has lavished all the qualities of his tenderest, most intimate feeling.

It has, indeed, the special beauties of a young man’s work, the generous devotion which leads him to cherish every part of his composition, to spare nothing in the effort to “fill every rift with ore.” It is thus more intimate in feeling and more discreetly and subtly harmonized than are the works of his later time.

The collection contains a good many other works which are of interest to special students of the Flemish School. The catalogue is a scholarly work, with ample references, and the reproductions are on the whole excellent. One cannot say that those done in colour give the quality of the originals, but these are fortunately repeated in monochrome and they are useful at least as reminiscences.

It is much to be hoped that the Museum of Ghent will reap the benefit of M. Renders’s public spirit in devoting the proceeds derived from this work to the “Société des Amis du Musée de Gand.”

GLASS PANES BY KASPAR LEHMANN AT SOUTH KENSINGTON

BY E. W. BRAUN

Among the earliest extant examples of glass-cutting are the works of Kaspar Lehmann, who was born in Ulzen, in Lüneburg, learned the “art of jewel and glass-cutting” (as he himself relates) under the patronage of the Elector Maximilian of Bavaria, lived in Prague from 1588, and was appointed Jewel Cutter to the Court in 1601 by the Emperor Rudolf II. Soon afterwards, however, he must have taken to cutting glass, since he is described in a deed of 1608 as a glass-cutter, and in his privilege (March 10, 1609), quoted by Sandrart (Teutsche Academie, Nuremberg, 1675 II, p. 345) his activities as a glass-cutter, “of which he has been a champion for several years,” are praised. Besides this, there is a single glass engraved by the artist himself with the signature “C. Leman F. 1605,” which was also made before the issue of the privilege. The decoration shows the allegorical figures of Nobility, Power, and Liberty, after an engraving by Johann Sadeler done in 1597, with the arms of the two Austrian noble families of Rogendorf and Losenstein, besides flowers, insects and fruit. Illustrations of this glass, in the possession of Prince Schwarzenberg in Schloss Frauenberg, Bohemia, can be found, together with a reproduction of Sadeler’s engraving, in the publication of the Prague Kunstgewerbe Museum, “Auswahl von kunstgewerblichen Gegenständen aus der retrospektiven-Ausstellung der allgemeinen Landes- und Jubiläums-Ausstellung in Prag” (Pl. 73-75).

On the strength of the evidence of this engraved glass, Robert Schmidt (in “Das Glas,” Handbook of the Berlin Museums, 2nd edn., 1922, pp. 233 et seq.) has attributed a number of other engraved glasses to the master; for instance, a drinking glass in the G. E. Pazaurek Collection at Stuttgart, and certain glass panes, of which one is in the Prague Kunstgewerbe Museum, and three are in the Victoria and Albert Museum [Plates A, B, C]. On the Prague pane is cut a head and shoulders portrait of the Elector Christian II of Saxony, surrounded by bunches of fruit and trophies.

Two of the London panes with emblematical subjects are dated 1619 and 1620 respectively, while the third and most interesting (see Robert Schmidt, p. 234) shows a splendidly cut picture of upright rectangular shape, of Perseus freeing Andromeda. Above the knightly figure of Perseus descending from the clouds on the monster in the sea is a cartouche-shaped escutcheon bearing the initial “C” under an Elector’s hat, while the corresponding escutcheon over Andromeda shows the letter “H” under a so-called ancient royal crown. The signifi-