

CLAIMS TO HAVE FOUND A RARE RAPHAEL HERE

ARTHUR DAWSON, the artist, whose work as a renewer, rejuvenator, and transferrer of old paintings attracted some attention in a recent lawsuit, has again come forward with what he claims to be the discovery of an old master.

In short, Mr. Dawson claims to have identified, in the course of treating it with his restoring arts, a painting supposed to have been by Sebastian del Piombo, as the work of Raphael at the time when he was under the influence of Michelangelo.

This painting is a portrait of Julius II, who was Pope between 1503 and 1513. It is known that there are no less than nine portraits of Julius II. In existence, all apparent copies of one original. Grave doubt has been thrown upon the authentic originality of each of those portraits, and for a number of years there has been quite a controversy over the matter, particularly between the Julius II of the Pitti Palace in Florence and the Julius II of the Uffizi Palace.

But now comes Mr. Dawson with the assertion that, while up to the present it seemed that one of those two portraits was the original, it is certain that neither of them can be, for the simple reason that the original of the many Julius II. portraits is in his studio at 234 West Forty-fourth Street. And Mr. Dawson offers to prove the authenticity of the portrait in his possession from the face of the picture itself, aside from historical evidences.

Some facts about Julius II. are necessary to an understanding of the circumstances surrounding the famous portrait, and some facts are also necessary to an understanding of Mr. Dawson's claims for the painting which he says is the only original, and by Raphael himself.

Julius II., previously known as Cardinal della Rovere, was elected to the papal chair in 1503 and remained in it ten years. It was Pope Julius II. who commenced the present Church of St. Peter at Rome. In the year 1512, the year before Pope Julius's death, he commissioned Raphael to paint his portrait.

This portrait, when finished, was copied many times by disciples of the Raphaelite school, and at least nine copies are known to exist to-day. There is one in the National Gallery in London, one in the Pitti Palace, one in the Uffizi, and there are several privately owned, among them a very fine one by an English collector, Mr. Miles. Whether the one that Arthur Dawson has identified here in New York is also a copy, or, as he claims, the original, is the question.

Mr. Dawson's Past Experience.

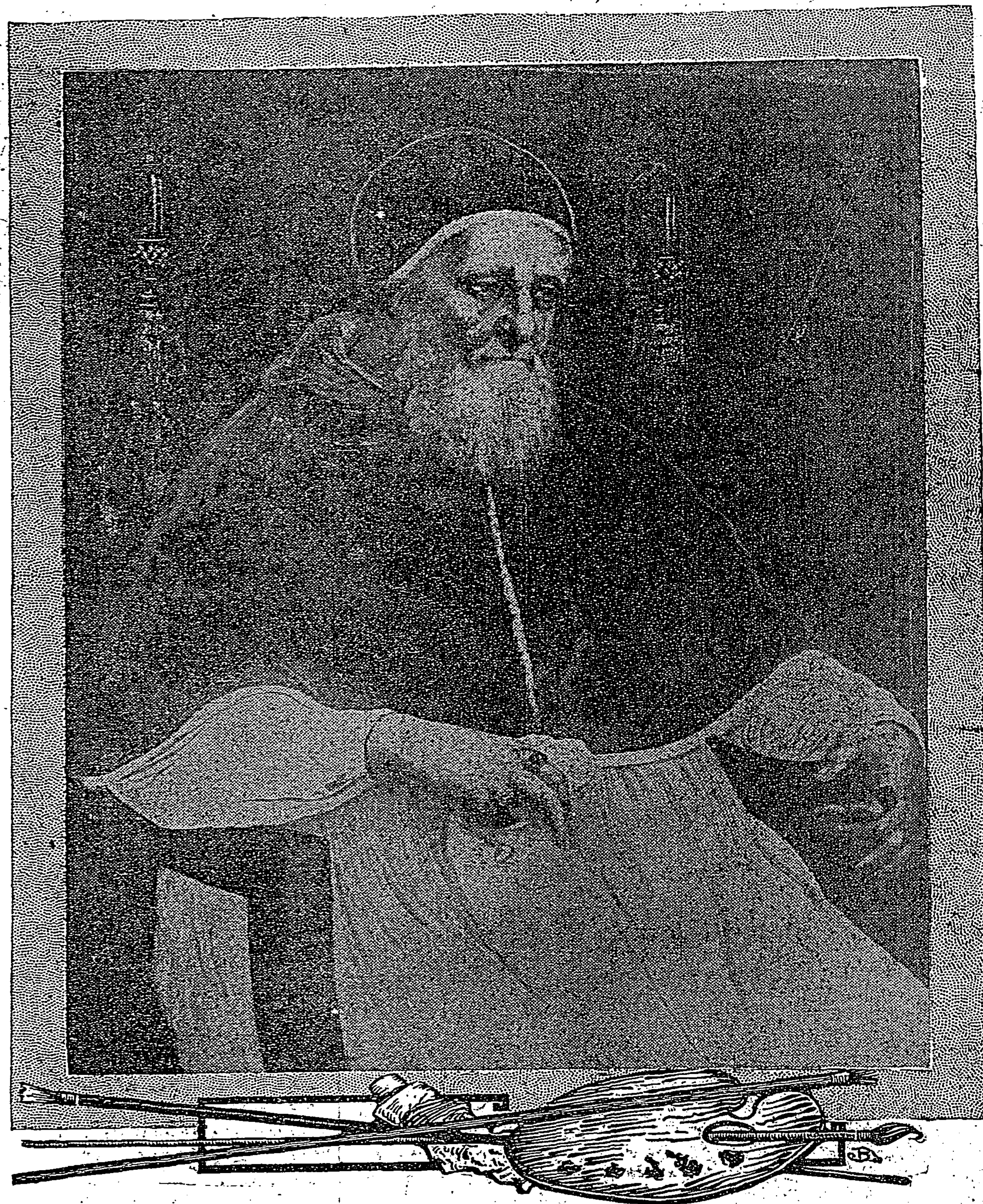
Arthur Dawson is an Englishman. Having made a study of the Hacquins methods of transferring old paintings from disintegrating panels to canvas, and having discovered some compositions, gums, and varnishes whereby a painting could be restored to a pristine freshness that is almost newness, he has been engaged for a number of years in the business of restoring old paintings.

A short time ago he was called as a witness in a case where an art collector sought to recover from a dealer for paintings sold as genuine masters, and which, the prosecution claimed, were "made" by Dawson. The defense admitted that the paintings in question had been handled by Dawson, but that they had been treated only by his methods of restoration and not by his brush.

In open court Dawson demonstrated some of his methods, among them one in which, by the application of a secret varnish, an old painting was made to glow as if fresh from the dead master's brush.

If, indeed, Mr. Dawson's business is the restoring of old masters, it is natural enough to suppose that now and then he would make a "find" among the many old pictures sent to him for treatment.

The history of the painting which he claims is the original Julius II. of Raphael is a bit vague. But here it is so far as Arthur Dawson or any one else is ever likely to know it.



The Painting That Arthur Dawson Says Is the Original Raphael of Julius II.

Dawson had been doing a good deal of work for the West Point Military Academy. He says he restored a "Washington" for West Point, and various other pictures of various other American celebrities. Through Col. Larned, a Mrs. Hedwig Essigke, widow of the former hand-master of West Point, sent Dawson an old picture for restoration.

The picture, when it was received by Dawson, was in fairly good condition. It was upon an Italian poplar panel, which was as sound as if it had not been carrying Julius II. for nearly four hundred years. The framework was in poor condition.

It may be mentioned that Mr. Dawson did not draw attention to the painting, which he says he recognized as the original Julius II. of Raphael, until after he had rebuilt the frame and subjected the painting to his methods of restoration. He says, however, that the salient points

upon which he argues the originality of this Raphael were hardly visible until the picture was cleaned.

This was unfortunate, as the painting, when seen by a Sunday Times reporter, bore the same aspect of startling newness which aroused controversy in the matter of the pictures disputed in the recent Clausen case. The salient points, however, upon which Mr. Dawson's claims are based, are the hard outlining of the figure which was characteristic of Perugino, Raphael's master, the anatomical detail which Raphael acquired from Michelangelo and the coloring which Raphael is supposed to have applied in an attempt to vie with his Venetian rival, Sebastian del Piombo.

So vivid and Plombesque is this coloring of the Pope's cape that Dawson claims it was the cause of an error having been made in attributing the work.

With the painting came a certificate

signed by one, Sortois, in which it was stated that this portrait of Julius II. was by Sebastian del Piombo. Dawson says he at first believed it was, but upon examination he came to the conclusion that del Piombo was incapable of producing this work, and that, while the coloring was like Piombo's, in view of all the other Raphaelite evidences, he could only conclude that the work was by Raphael, and that the coloring was Raphael's attempt to outdo del Piombo in his particular forte.

Mrs. Essigke, it is said, came into possession of the painting through the accident of another, a man's financial necessities. Her late husband appears to have loaned money to an instrument maker, Eugene Burceaux, who had a business in Madison Avenue. Burceaux gave Band-master Essigke the painting as security. When Burceaux died, Essigke kept the picture for the debt.