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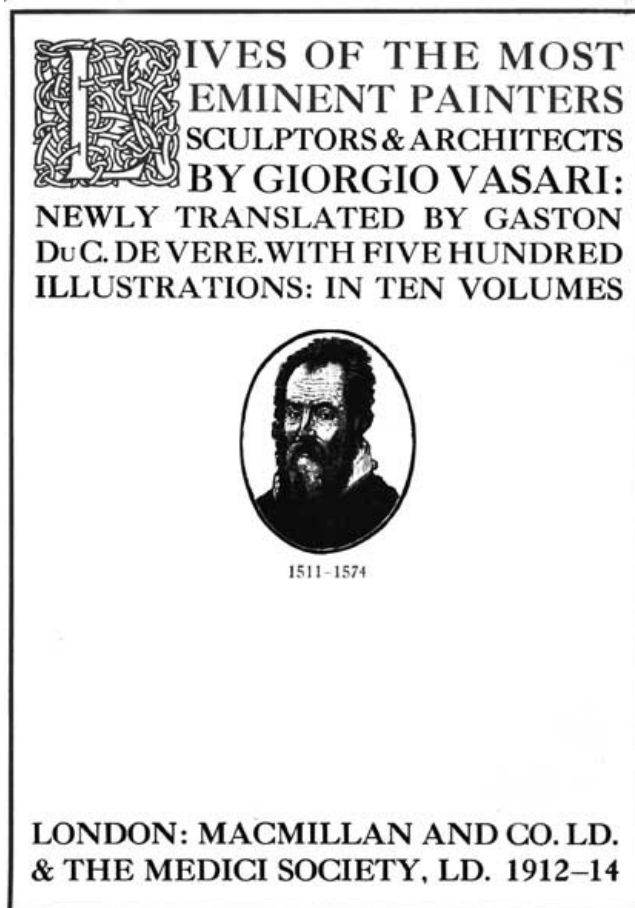
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SCULPTORS AND ARCHITECTS, VOL. 01 (OF 10) ***



**LIVES OF THE MOST EMINENT PAINTERS
SCULPTORS & ARCHITECTS**

1912

BY GIORGIO VASARI:

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Transcriber's Note:

The CORRIGENDA have been applied to this etext.

CORRIGENDA

[Pg x]

Page 49, lines 1, 27, *for* "Apollonius" *read* "Apollonio."

" 120, line 10, *for* "which tabernacle is quite round" *read* "which tabernacle is in the round."

" 127, lines 11, 12, *for* "oval spaces" *read* "mandorle."

" 196, line 18, *for* "an oval space" *read* "a mandorla."

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE TO THIS EDITION

Vasari introduces himself sufficiently in his own prefaces and introduction; a translator need concern himself only with the system by which the Italian text can best be rendered in English. The style of that text is sometimes laboured and pompous; it is often ungrammatical. But the narrative is generally lively, full of neat phrases, and abounding in quaint expressions—many of them still recognizable in the modern Florentine vernacular—while, in such Lives as those of Giotto, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michelagnolo, Vasari shows how well he can rise to a fine subject. His criticism is generally sound, solid, and direct; and he employs few technical terms, except in connection with architecture, where we find passages full of technicalities, often so loosely used that it is difficult to be sure of their exact meaning. In such cases I have invariably adopted the rendering which seemed most in accordance with Vasari's actual words, so far as these could be explained by professional advice and local knowledge; and I have included brief notes where they appeared to be indispensable.

In Mrs. Foster's familiar English paraphrase—for a paraphrase it is rather than a translation—all Vasari's liveliness evaporates, even where his meaning is not blurred or misunderstood. Perhaps I have gone too far towards the other extreme in relying upon the Anglo-Saxon side of the English language rather than upon the Latin, and in taking no liberties whatever with the text of 1568. My intention, indeed, has been to render my original word for word, and to err, if at all, in favour of literalness. The very structure of Vasari's sentences has usually been retained, though some freedom was necessary in the matter of the punctuation, which is generally bewildering. As Mr. Horne's only too rare translation of the Life of Leonardo da Vinci has proved, it is by some such method that we can best keep Vasari's sense and Vasari's spirit—the one as important to the student of Italian art as is the other to the general reader. Such an attempt, however, places an English translator of the first volume at a conspicuous disadvantage. Throughout the earlier Lives Vasari seems to be feeling his way. He is not sure of himself, and his style is often awkward. The more faithful the attempted rendering, the more plainly must that awkwardness be reproduced.

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Vasari's Introduction on Technique has not been included, because it has no immediate connection with the Lives. In any case, there already exists an adequate translation by Miss Maclehose. All Vasari's other prefaces and introductions are given in the order in which they are found in the edition of 1568.

With this much explanation, I may pass to personal matters, and record my thanks to many Florentine friends for help in technical and grammatical questions; to Professor Baldwin Brown for the notes on technical matters printed with Miss Maclehose's translation of "Vasari on Technique"; and to Mr. C. J. Holmes, of the National Portrait Gallery, for encouragement in a task which has proved no less pleasant than difficult.

G. DU C. DE V.

LONDON,
March 1912.

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TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS AND MOST EXCELLENT

SIGNOR COSIMO DE' MEDICI, DUKE OF FLORENCE

MY MOST HONOURED LORD,

Seeing that your Excellency, following in this the footsteps of your most Illustrious ancestors, and incited and urged by your own natural magnanimity, ceases not to favour and to exalt every kind of talent, wheresoever it may be found, and shows particular favour to the arts of design, fondness for their craftsmen,^[1] and understanding and delight in their beautiful and rare works; I think that you cannot but take pleasure in this labour which I have undertaken, of writing down the lives, the works, the manners, and the circumstances of all those who, finding the arts already dead, first revived them, then step by step nourished and adorned them, and finally brought them to that height of beauty and majesty whereon they stand at the present day. And because these masters have been almost all Tuscans, and most of these Florentines, of whom many have been incited and aided by your most Illustrious ancestors with every kind of reward and honour to put themselves to work, it may be said that in your state, nay, in your most blessed house the arts were born anew, and that through the generosity of your ancestors the world has recovered these most beautiful arts, through which it has been ennobled and embellished.

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Wherefore, through the debt which this age, these arts, and these craftsmen owe to your ancestors, and to you as the heir of their virtue and of their patronage of these professions, and through that debt which I, above all, owe them, seeing that I was taught by them, that I was their subject and their devoted servant, that I was brought up under Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, and under Alessandro, your predecessor, and that, finally, I am infinitely attached to the blessed memory of the Magnificent Ottaviano de' Medici, by whom I was supported, loved and protected while he lived; for all these reasons, I say, and because from the greatness of your worth and of your fortunes there will come much favour for this work, and from your understanding of its subject there will come a better appreciation than from any other for its usefulness and for the labour and the diligence that I have given to its execution, it has seemed to me that to your Excellency alone could it be fittingly dedicated, and it is under your most honoured name that I have wished it to come to the hands of men.

Deign, then, Excellency, to accept it, to favour it, and, if this may be granted to it by your exalted thoughts, sometimes to read it; having regard to the nature of the matter therein dealt with and to my pure intention, which has been, not to gain for myself praise as a writer, but as craftsman to praise the industry and to revive the memory of those who, having given life and adornment to these professions, do not deserve to have their names and their works wholly left, even as they were, the prey of death and of oblivion. Besides, at the same time, through the example of so many able men and through so many observations on so many works that I have gathered together in this book, I have thought to help not a little the masters of these exercises and to please all those who therein have taste and pleasure. This I have striven to do with that accuracy and with that good faith which are essential for the truth of history and of things written. But if my writing, being unpolished and as artless as my speech, be unworthy of your Excellency's ear and of the merits of so many most illustrious intellects; as for them, pardon me that the pen of a draughtsman, such as they too were, has no greater power to give them outline and shadow; and as for yourself, let it suffice me that your Excellency should deign to approve my simple labour, remembering that the necessity of gaining for myself the wherewithal to live has left me no time to exercise myself with any instrument but the brush. Nor even with that have I reached that goal to which I think to be able to attain, now that Fortune promises me so much favour, that, with greater ease and greater credit for myself and with greater satisfaction to others, I may perchance be able, as well with the pen as with the brush, to unfold my ideas to the world, whatsoever they may be. For besides the help and protection for which I must hope from your Excellency, as my liege lord and as the protector of poor followers of the arts, it has pleased the goodness of God to elect as His Vicar on earth the most holy and most blessed Julius III, Supreme Pontiff and a friend and patron of every kind of excellence and of these most excellent and most difficult arts in particular, from whose exalted liberality I expect recompense for many years spent and many labours expended, and up to now without fruit. And not only I, who have dedicated myself to the perpetual service of His Holiness, but all the gifted craftsmen of this age, must expect from him such honour and reward and opportunities for practising the arts so greatly, that already I rejoice to see these arts arriving in his time at the greatest height of their perfection, and Rome adorned by craftsmen so many and so noble that, counting them with those of Florence, whom your Excellency is calling every day into activity, I hope that someone after our time will have to write a fourth part to my book, enriching it with other masters and other masterpieces than those described by me; in which company I am striving with every effort not to be among the last.

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Meanwhile, I am content if your Excellency has good hope of me and a better opinion than that which, by no fault of mine, you have perchance conceived of me; beseeching you not to let me be undone in your estimation by the malignant tales of other men, until at last my life and my works shall prove the contrary to what they say.

Now with that intent to which I hold, always to honour and to serve your Excellency, dedicating to you this my rough labour, as I have dedicated to you every other thing of mine and my own self, I implore you not to disdain to grant it your protection, or at least to appreciate the devotion of him who offers it to you; and recommending myself to your gracious goodness, most humbly do I kiss your hand.

[Pg xvi]

**TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS AND MOST EXCELLENT
SIGNOR COSIMO DE' MEDICI, DUKE OF FLORENCE AND
SIENA**

MY MOST HONOURED LORD,

Behold, seventeen years since I first presented to your most Illustrious Excellency the Lives, sketched so to speak, of the most famous painters, sculptors and architects, they come before you again, not indeed wholly finished, but so much changed from what they were and in such wise adorned and enriched with innumerable works, whereof up to that time I had been able to gain no further knowledge, that from my endeavour and in so far as in me lies nothing more can be looked for in them.

Behold, I say, once again they come before you, most Illustrious and truly most Excellent Lord Duke, with the addition of other noble and right famous craftsmen, who from that time up to our own day have passed from the miseries of this life to a better, and of others who, although they are still living in our midst, have laboured in these professions to such purpose that they are most worthy of eternal memory. And in truth it has been no small good-fortune for many that I, by the goodness of Him in whom all things have their being, have lived so long that I have almost rewritten this book; seeing that, even as I have removed many things which had been included I know not how, in my absence and without my consent, and have changed others, so too I have added many, both useful and necessary, that were lacking. And as for the likenesses and portraits of so many men of worth which I have placed in this work, whereof a great part have been furnished by the help and co-operation of your Excellency, if they are sometimes not very true to life, and if they all have not that character and resemblance which the vivacity of colours is wont to give them, that is not because the drawing and the lineaments have not been taken from the life and are not characteristic and natural; not to mention that a great part of them have been sent me by the friends that I have in various places, and they have not all been drawn by a good hand. Moreover, I have suffered no small inconvenience in this from the distance of those who have engraved these heads, because, if the engravers had been near me, it might perchance have been possible to use in this matter more diligence than has been shown. But however this may be, our lovers of art and our craftsmen, for the convenience and benefit of whom I have put myself to so great pains, must be wholly indebted to your most Illustrious Excellency for whatever they may find in it of the good, the useful, and the helpful, seeing that while engaged in your service I have had the opportunity, through the leisure which it has pleased you to give me and through the management of your many, nay, innumerable treasures, to put together and to give to the world everything which appeared to be necessary for the perfect completion of this work; and would it not be almost impiety, not to say ingratitude, were I to dedicate these Lives to another, or were the craftsmen to attribute to any other than yourself whatever they may find in them to give them help or pleasure? For not only was it with your help and favour that they first came to the light, as now they do again, but you are, in imitation of your ancestors, sole father, sole lord, and sole protector of these our arts. Wherefore it is very right and reasonable that by these there should be made, in your service and to your eternal and perpetual memory, so many most noble pictures and statues and so many marvellous buildings in every manner.

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But if we are all, as indeed we are beyond calculation, most deeply obliged to you for these and for other reasons, how much more do I not owe to you, who have always had (would that my brain and my hand had been equal to my desire and right good will) so many valuable opportunities to display my little knowledge, which, whatsoever it may be, fails by a very great measure to counterbalance the greatness and the truly royal magnificence of your mind? But how may I tell? It is in truth better that I should stay as I am than that I should set myself to attempt what would be to the most lofty and noble brain, and much more so to my insignificance, wholly impossible.

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Accept then, most Illustrious Excellency, this my book, or rather indeed your book, of the Lives of the craftsmen of design; and like the Almighty God, looking rather at my soul and at my good intentions than at my work, take from me with right good will not what I would wish and ought to give, but what I can.

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Your most Illustrious Excellency's most indebted servant,
GIORGIO VASARI.

FLORENCE,
January 9, 1568.

[Pg xxi]

Motu proprio (et cet.). Cum, sicut accepimus, dilectus filius Philippus Junta, typographus Florentinus, ad communem studiosorum utilitatem, sua impensa, Vitas Illustrium Pictorum et Sculptorum Georgii Vasarii demum auctas et suis imaginibus exornatas, Statuta Equitum Melitensium in Italicam linguam translata, Receptariumque Novum pro Aromatariis, aliaque opera tum Latina, tum Italica, saneque utilia et necessaria, imprimi facere intendat, dubitetque ne hujusmodi opera postmodum ab aliis sine ejus licentia et in ejus grave præjudicium imprimantur; nos propterea, illius indemnitati consulere volentes, motu simili et ex certa scientia, eidem Philippo concedimus et indulgemus ne prædicta opera, dummodo prius ab Inquisitore visa et approbata fuerint, per ipsum imprimenda, infra decennium a quoquo sine ipsius licentia imprimi aut vendi vel in apothecis teneri possint; inhibentes omnibus et singulis Christi fidelibus tam in Italia quam extra Italiam existentibus, sub excommunicationis lata sententia, in terris vero S.R.E. mediate vel immediate subjectis, etiam ducentorum ducatorum auri Cameræ Apostolicæ applicandorum et amissionis librorum pœnis, totiens ipso facto et absque alia declaratione incurrendis quotiens contraventum fuerit, ne intra decennium præfatum dicta opera sine ejusdem Philippi expressa licentia imprimere, seu ab ipsis aut aliis impressa vendere, vel venalia habere; mandantes universis veneralibus fratribus nostris Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, eorumque Vicariis in spiritualibus generalibus, et in Statu S.R.E. etiam Legatis, Vicelegatis, Præsidiis et Gubernatoribus, ut quoties pro ipsius Philippi parte fuerint requisiti, vel eorum aliquis fuerit requisitus, eidem, efficacis defensionis præsidio assistentes, præmissa contra inobedientes et rebelles, per censuras ecclesiasticas, etiam sæpius aggravando, et per alia juris remedia, auctoritate Apostolica exequantur; invocato etiam ad hoc, si opus fuerit, auxilio brachii sæcularis. Volumus autem quod præsentis motus proprii nostri sola signatura sufficiat, et ubique fidem faciat in judicio et extra, regula contraria non obstante et officii sanctissimæ Inquisitionis Florentinæ.

[Pg xxii]

Placet motu proprio M.

Datum Romæ apud Sanctum Petrum, quintodecimo Cal. Maij,
anno secundo.

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PREFACE TO THE WHOLE WORK

It was the wont of the finest spirits in all their actions, through a burning desire for glory, to spare no labour, however grievous, in order to bring their works to that perfection which might render them impressive and marvellous to the whole world; nor could the humble fortunes of many prevent their energies from attaining to the highest rank, whether in order to live in honour or to leave in the ages to come eternal fame for all their rare excellence. And although, for zeal and desire so worthy of praise, they were, while living, highly rewarded by the liberality of Princes and by the splendid ambition of States, and even after death kept alive in the eyes of the world by the testimony of statues, tombs, medals, and other memorials of that kind; none the less, it is clearly seen that the ravening maw of time has not only diminished by a great amount their own works and the honourable testimonies of others, but has also blotted out and destroyed the names of all those who have been kept alive by any other means than by the right vivacious and pious pens of writers.

Pondering over this matter many a time in my own mind, and recognizing, from the example not only of the ancients but of the moderns as well, that the names of very many architects, sculptors, and painters, both old and modern, together with innumerable most beautiful works wrought by them, are going on being forgotten and destroyed little by little, and in such wise, in truth, that nothing can be foretold for them but a certain and wellnigh immediate death; and wishing to defend them as much as in me lies from this second death, and to preserve them as long as may be possible in the memory of the living; and having spent much time in seeking them out and used the greatest diligence in discovering the native city, the origin, and the actions of the craftsmen, and having with great labour drawn them from the tales of old men and from various records and writings, left by their heirs a prey to dust and food for worms; and finally, having received from this both profit and pleasure, I have judged it expedient, nay rather, my duty, to make for them whatsoever memorial my weak talents and my small judgment may be able to make. In honour, then, of those who are already dead, and for the benefit, for the most part, of all the followers of these three most excellent arts, Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, I will write the Lives of the craftsmen of each according to the times wherein they lived, step by step from Cimabue down to our own time; not touching on the ancients save in so far as it may concern our subject, seeing that no more can be said of them than those so many writers have said who have come down to our own age. I will treat thoroughly of many things that appertain to the science of one or other of the said arts; but before I come to the secrets of these, or to the history of the craftsmen, it seems to me right to touch a little on a dispute, born and bred between many without reason, as to the sovereignty and nobility, not of architecture, which they have left on one side, but of sculpture and painting; there being advanced, on one side and on the other, many arguments whereof many, if not all, are worthy to be heard and discussed by their craftsmen.

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I say, then, that the sculptors, as being endowed, perchance by nature and by the exercise of their art, with a better habit of body, with more blood, and with more energy, and being thereby more hardy and more fiery than the painters, in seeking to give the highest rank to their art,

argue and prove the nobility of sculpture primarily from its antiquity, for the reason that God Almighty made man, who was the first statue; and they say that sculpture embraces many more arts as kindred, and has many more of them subordinate to itself than has painting, such as low-relief, working in clay, wax, plaster, wood, and ivory, casting in metals, every kind of chasing, engraving and carving in relief on fine stones and steel, and many others which both in number and in difficulty surpass those of painting. And alleging, further, that those things which stand longest and best against time and can be preserved longest for the use of men, for whose benefit and service they are made, are without doubt more useful and more worthy to be held in love and honour than are the others, they maintain that sculpture is by so much more noble than painting as it is more easy to preserve, both itself and the names of all who are honoured by it both in marble and in bronze, against all the ravages of time and air, than is painting, which, by its very nature, not to say by external accidents, perishes in the most sheltered and most secure places that architects have been able to provide. Nay more, they insist that the small number not merely of their excellent but even of their ordinary craftsmen, in contrast to the infinite number of the painters, proves their greater nobility; saying that sculpture calls for a certain better disposition, both of mind and of body, that are rarely found together, whereas painting contents itself with any feeble temperament, so long as it has a hand, if not bold, at least sure; and that this their contention is proved by the greater prices cited in particular by Pliny, by the loves caused by the marvellous beauty of certain statues, and by the judgment of him who made the statue of sculpture of gold and that of painting of silver, and placed the first on the right and the second on the left. Nor do they even refrain from quoting the difficulties experienced before the materials, such as the marbles and the metals, can be got into subjection, and their value, in contrast to the ease of obtaining the panels, the canvases, and the colours, for the smallest prices and in every place; and further, the extreme and grievous labour of handling the marbles and the bronzes, through their weight, and of working them, through the weight of the tools, in contrast to the lightness of the brushes, of the styles, and of the pens, chalk-holders, and charcoals; besides this, that they exhaust their minds together with all the parts of their bodies, which is something very serious compared with the quiet and light work of the painter, using only his mind and hand. Moreover, they lay very great stress on the fact that things are more noble and more perfect in proportion as they approach more nearly to the truth, and they say that sculpture imitates the true form and shows its works on every side and from every point of view, whereas painting, being laid on flat with most simple strokes of the brush and having but one light, shows but one aspect; and many of them do not scruple to say that sculpture is as much superior to painting as is truth to falsehood. But as their last and strongest argument, they allege that for the sculptor there is necessary a perfection of judgment not only ordinary, as for the painter, but absolute and immediate, in a manner that it may see within the marble the exact whole of that figure which they intend to carve from it, and may be able to make many parts perfect without any other model before it combines and unites them together, as Michelagnolo has done divinely well; although, for lack of this happiness of judgment, they make easily and often some of those blunders which have no remedy, and which, when made, bear witness for ever to the slips of the chisel or to the small judgment of the sculptor. This never happens to painters, for the reason that at every slip of the brush or error of judgment that might befall them they have time, recognizing it themselves or being told by others, to cover and patch it up with the very brush that made it; which brush, in their hands, has this advantage over the sculptor's chisels, that it not only heals, as did the iron of the spear of Achilles, but leaves its wounds without a scar.

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To these things the painters, answering not without disdain, say, in the first place, that if the sculptors wish to discuss the matter on the ground of the Scriptures the chief nobility is their own, and that the sculptors deceive themselves very grievously in claiming as their work the statue of our first father, which was made of earth; for the art of this performance, both in its putting on and in its taking off, belongs no less to the painters than to others, and was called "plastice" by the Greeks and "fictoria" by the Latins, and was judged by Praxiteles to be the mother of sculpture, of casting, and of chasing, a fact which makes sculpture, in truth, the niece of painting, seeing that "plastice" and painting are born at one and the same moment from design. And they say that if we consider it apart from the Scriptures, the opinions of the ages are so many and so varied that it is difficult to believe one more than the other; and that finally, considering this nobility as they wish it, in one place they lose and in the other they do not win, as may be seen more clearly in the Preface to the Lives.

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After this, in comparison with the arts related and subordinate to sculpture, they say that they have many more than the sculptors, because painting embraces the invention of history, the most difficult art of foreshortening, all the branches of architecture needful for the making of buildings, perspective, colouring in distemper, and the art of working in fresco, an art different and distinct from all the others; likewise working in oils on wood, on stone, and on canvas; illumination, too, an art different from all the others; the staining of glass, mosaics in glass, the art of inlaying and making pictures with coloured woods, which is painting; making sgraffito^[2] work on houses with iron tools; niello^[3] work and printing from copper, both members of painting; goldsmith's enamelling, and the inlaying of gold for damascening; the painting of glazed figures, and the making on earthenware vessels of scenes and figures to resist the action of water; weaving brocades with figures and flowers, and that most beautiful invention, woven tapestries, that are both convenient and magnificent, being able to carry painting into every place, whether savage or civilized; not to mention that in every department of art that has to be practised, design, which is our design, is used by all; so that the members of painting are more numerous and more useful than those of sculpture. They do not deny the eternity, for so the others call it, of sculpture, but they say that this is no privilege that should make the art more

noble than it is by nature, seeing that it comes simply from the material, and that if length of life were to give nobility to souls, the pine, among the plants, and the stag, among the animals, would have a soul more noble beyond compare than that of men; although they could claim a similar immortality and nobility in their mosaics, seeing that there may be seen some as ancient as the most ancient sculptures that are in Rome, and that they used to be made of jewels and fine stones. And as for their small or smaller number, they declare that this is not because the art calls for a better habit of body and greater judgment, but that it depends wholly on the poverty of their resources and on the little favour, or avarice, as we would rather call it, of rich men, who give them no supply of marble and no opportunity to work; in contrast with what may be believed, nay, seen to have happened in ancient times, when sculpture rose to its greatest height. Indeed, it is manifest that he who cannot use and waste a small quantity of marble and hard stone, which are very costly, cannot have that practice in the art that is essential; he who does not practise does not learn it; and he who does not learn it can do no good. Wherefore they should rather excuse with these arguments the imperfection and the small number of their masters, than seek to deduce nobility from them under false colours. As for the higher prices of sculptures, they answer that, although theirs might be much less, they have not to share them, being content with a boy who grinds their colours and hands them their brushes or their cheap stools, whereas the sculptors, besides the great cost of their material, require many aids and spend more time on one single figure than they themselves do on very many; wherefore their prices appear to come from the quality and the durability of the material itself, from the aids that it requires for its completion, and from the time that is taken in working it, rather than from the excellence of the art itself. And although that does not suffice and no greater price is found, as would be easily seen by anyone who were willing to consider it diligently, let them find a greater price than the marvellous, beautiful, and living gift that Alexander the Great made in return for the most splendid and excellent work of Apelles, bestowing on him, not vast treasures or high estate, but his own beloved and most beautiful Campaspe; let them observe, in addition, that Alexander was young, enamoured of her, and naturally subject to the passions of love, and also both a King and a Greek; and then, from this, let them draw what conclusion they please. As for the loves of Pygmalion and of those other rascals no more worthy to be men, cited as proof of the nobility of the art, they know not what to answer, if, from a very great blindness of intellect and from a licentiousness unbridled beyond all natural bounds, there can be made a proof of nobility. As for the man, whosoever he was, alleged by the sculptors to have made sculpture of gold and painting of silver, they are agreed that if he had given as much sign of judgment as of wealth, there would be no disputing it; and finally, they conclude that the ancient Golden Fleece, however celebrated it may be, none the less covered nothing but an unintelligent ram; wherefore neither the testimony of riches nor that of dishonest desires, but those of letters, of practice, of excellence, and of judgment are those to which we must pay attention. Nor do they make any answer to the difficulty of obtaining the marbles and the metals, save this, that it springs from their own poverty and from the little favour of the powerful, as has been said, and not from any degree of greater nobility. To the extreme fatigues of the body and to the dangers peculiar to them and to their works, laughing and without any ado they answer that if greater fatigues and dangers prove greater nobility, the art of quarrying the marbles from the bowels of mountains by means of wedges, levers, and hammers must be more noble than sculpture, that of the blacksmith must surpass the goldsmith's, and that of masonry must be superior to architecture.

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They say, next, that the true difficulties lie rather in the mind than in the body, wherefore those things that from their nature call for more study and knowledge are more noble and excellent than those that avail themselves rather of strength of body; and they declare that since the painters rely more on the worth of the mind than the others, this highest honour belongs to painting. For the sculptors the compasses and squares suffice to discover and apply all the proportions and measurements whereof they have need; for the painters there is necessary, besides the knowledge how to make good use of the aforesaid instruments, an accurate understanding of perspective, for the reason that they have to provide a thousand other things beyond landscapes and buildings, not to mention that they must have greater judgment by reason of the quantity of the figures in one scene, wherein more errors can come than in a single statue. For the sculptor it is enough to be acquainted with the true forms and features of solid and tangible bodies, subordinate on every side to the touch, and moreover of those only that have something to support them. For the painter it is necessary to know the forms not only of all the bodies supported and not supported, but also of all those transparent and intangible; and besides this they must know the colours that are suitable for the said bodies, whereof the multitude and the variety, so absolute and admitting of such infinite extension, are demonstrated better by the flowers, the fruits, and the minerals than by anything else; and this knowledge is supremely difficult to acquire and to maintain, by reason of their infinite variety. They say, moreover, that whereas sculpture, through the stubbornness and the imperfection of the material, does not represent the emotions of the soul save with motion, which does not, however, find much scope therein, and with the mere shape of the limbs and not even of all these; the painters demonstrate them with all the forms of motion, which are infinite, with the shape of the limbs, however subtle they may be, and even with breath itself and the spiritual essence of sight; and that, for greater perfection in demonstrating not only the passions and emotions of the soul but also the events of the future, as living men do, they must have, besides long practice in the art, a complete understanding of physiognomy, whereof that part suffices for the sculptor which deals with the quantity and the quality of the members, without troubling about the quality of colours, as to the knowledge of which anyone who judges by the eye knows how useful and necessary it is for the true imitation of nature, whereunto the closer a man approaches the more perfect he is.

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After this they add that whereas sculpture, taking away bit by bit, at one and the same time gives depth to and acquires relief for those things that have solidity by their own nature, and makes use of touch and sight, the painters, in two distinct actions, give relief and depth to a flat surface with the help of one single sense; and this, when it has been done by a person intelligent in the art, has caused many great men, not to speak of animals, to stand fast in the most pleasing illusion, which has never been seen to be done by sculpture, for the reason that it does not imitate nature in a manner that may be called as perfect as their own. And finally, in answer to that complete and absolute perfection of judgment which is required for sculpture, by reason of its having no means to add where it takes away; declaring, first, that such mistakes are irreparable, as the others say, and not to be remedied save by patches, which, even as in garments they are signs of poverty of wardrobe, so too both in sculpture and in pictures are signs of poverty of intellect and judgment; and saying, further, that patience, at its own leisure, by means of models, protractors, squares, compasses, and a thousand other devices and instruments for enlarging, not only preserves them from mistakes but enables them to bring their whole work to its perfection; they conclude, then, that this difficulty which they put down as the greater is nothing or little when compared to those which the painters have when working in fresco, and that the said perfection of judgment is in no way more necessary for sculptors than for painters, it being sufficient for the former to execute good models in wax, clay, or something else, even as the latter make their drawings on corresponding materials or on cartoons; and that finally, the quality that little by little transfers their models to the marble is rather patience than aught else.

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But let us consider about judgment, as the sculptors wish, and see whether it is not more necessary to one who works in fresco than to one who chisels in marble. For here not only is there no place for patience or for time, which are most mortal enemies to the union of the plaster and the colours, but the eye does not see the true colours until the plaster is well dry, nor can the hand judge of anything but of the soft or the dry, in a manner that anyone who were to call it working in the dark, or with spectacles of colours different from the truth, would not in my belief be very far wrong. Nay, I do not doubt at all that such a name is more suitable for it than for intaglio, for which wax serves as spectacles both true and good. They say, too, that for this work it is necessary to have a resolute judgment, to foresee the end in the fresh plaster and how the work will turn out on the dry; besides that the work cannot be abandoned so long as the plaster is still fresh, and that it is necessary to do resolutely in one day what sculpture does in a month. And if a man has not this judgment and this excellence, there are seen, on the completion of his work or in time, patches, blotches, corrections, and colours superimposed or retouched on the dry, which is something of the vilest, because afterwards mould appears and reveals the insufficiency and the small knowledge of the craftsmen, even as the pieces added in sculpture lead to ugliness; not to mention that when it comes about that the figures in fresco are washed, as is often done after some time to restore them, what has been worked on the fresh plaster remains, and what has been retouched on the dry is carried away by the wet sponge.

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They add, moreover, that whereas the sculptors make two figures together, or at the most three, from one block of marble, they make many of them on one single panel, with all those so many and so varied aspects which the sculptors claim for one single statue, compensating with the variety of their postures, foreshortenings, and attitudes, for the fact that the work of the sculptors can be seen from every side; even as Giorgione da Castelfranco did once in one of his pictures, wherein a figure with its back turned, having a mirror on either side, and a pool of water at its feet, shows its back in the painting, its front in the pool, and its sides in the mirrors, which is something that sculpture has never been able to do. In addition to this, they maintain that painting leaves not one of the elements unadorned and not abounding with all the excellent things that nature has bestowed on them, giving its own light and its own darkness to the air, with all its varieties of feeling, and filling it with all the kinds of birds together; to water, its clearness, the fishes, the mosses, the foam, the undulations of the waves, the ships, and all its various moods; and to the earth, the mountains, the plains, the plants, the fruits, the flowers, the animals, and the buildings; with so great a multitude of things and so great a variety of their forms and of their true colours, that nature herself many a time stands in a marvel thereat; and finally, giving to fire so much of its heat and light that it is clearly seen burning things, and, almost quivering with its flames, rendering luminous in part the thickest darkness of the night. Wherefore it appears to them that they can justly conclude and declare that contrasting the difficulties of the sculptors with their own, the labours of the body with those of the mind, the imitation of the mere form with the imitation of the impression, both of quantity and of quality, that strikes the eye, the small number of the subjects wherein sculpture can and does demonstrate its excellence with the infinite number of those which painting presents to us (not to mention the perfect preservation of them for the intellect and the distribution of them in those places wherein nature herself has not done so); and finally, weighing the whole content of the one with that of the other, the nobility of sculpture, as shown by the intellect, the invention, and the judgment of its craftsmen, does not correspond by a great measure to that which painting enjoys and deserves. And this is all that on the one side and on the other has come to my ears that is worthy of consideration.

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But because it appears to me that the sculptors have spoken with too much heat and the painters with too much disdain, and seeing that I have long enough studied the works of sculpture and have ever exercised myself in painting, however small, perhaps, may be the fruit that is to be seen of it; none the less, by reason of that which it is worth, and by reason of the undertaking of these writings, judging it my duty to demonstrate the judgment that I have ever made of it in my own mind (and may my authority avail the most that it can), I will declare my opinion surely and briefly over such a dispute, being convinced that I will not incur any charge of presumption or of

ignorance, seeing that I will not treat of the arts of others, as many have done before to the end that they might appear to the crowd intelligent in all things by means of letters, and as happened, among others, to Phormio the Peripatetic of Ephesus, who, in order to display his eloquence, lecturing and making disputation about the virtues and parts of the excellent captain, made Hannibal laugh not less at his presumption than at his ignorance.

I say, then, that sculpture and painting are in truth sisters, born from one father, that is, design, at one and the same birth, and have no precedence one over the other, save inasmuch as the worth and the strength of those who maintain them make one craftsman surpass another, and not by reason of any difference or degree of nobility that is in truth to be found between them. And although by reason of the diversity of their essence they have many different advantages, these are neither so great nor of such a kind that they do not come exactly into balance together and that we do not perceive the infatuation or the obstinacy, rather than the judgment, of those who wish one to surpass the other. Wherefore it may be said with reason that one and the same soul rules the bodies of both, and by reason of this I conclude that those do evil who strive to disunite and to separate the one from the other. Heaven, wishing to undeceive us in this matter and to show us the kinship and union of these two most noble arts, has raised up in our midst at various times many sculptors who have painted and many painters who have worked in sculpture, as will be seen in the Life of Antonio del Pollaiuolo, of Leonardo da Vinci, and of many others long since passed away. But in our own age the Divine Goodness has created for us Michelagnolo Buonarroti, in whom both these arts shine forth so perfect and appear so similar and so closely united, that the painters marvel at his pictures and the sculptors feel for the sculptures wrought by him supreme admiration and reverence. On him, to the end that he might not perchance need to seek from some other master some convenient resting-place for the figures that he wrought, nature has bestowed so generously the science of architecture, that without having need of others he has strength and power within himself to give to this or the other image made by himself an honourable and suitable resting-place, in a manner that he rightly deserves to be called the king of sculptors, the prince of painters, and the most excellent of architects, nay rather, of architecture the true master. And indeed we can affirm with certainty that those do in no way err who call him divine, seeing that he has within his own self embraced the three arts most worthy of praise and most ingenious that are to be found among mortal men, and that with these, after the manner of a God, he can give us infinite delight. And let this suffice for the dispute raised between the factions, and for our own opinion.

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Now, returning to my first intention, I say that, wishing in so far as it lies within the reach of my powers to drag from the ravaging maw of time, the names of the sculptors, painters, and architects, who, from Cimabue to the present day, have been of some notable excellence in Italy, and desiring that this my labour may be no less useful than it has been pleasant to me in the undertaking, it appears to me necessary, before we come to the history, to make as briefly as may be an introduction to these three arts, wherein those were valiant of whom I am to write the Lives, to the end that every gracious spirit may first learn the most notable things in their professions, and afterwards may be able with greater pleasure and benefit to see clearly in what they were different among themselves, and how great adornment and convenience they give to their countries and to all who wish to avail themselves of their industry and knowledge.

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I will begin, then, with architecture, as the most universal and the most necessary and useful to men, and as that for the service and adornment of which the two others exist; and I will expound briefly the varieties of stone, the manners or methods of construction, with their proportions, and how one may recognize buildings that are good and well-conceived. Afterwards, discoursing of sculpture, I will tell how statues are wrought, the form and the proportion that are looked for in them, and of what kind are good sculptures, with all the most secret and most necessary precepts. Finally, treating of painting, I will speak of draughtsmanship, of the methods of colouring, of the perfect execution of any work, of the quality of the pictures themselves, and of whatsoever thing appertains to painting; of every kind of mosaic, of niello, of enamelling, of damascening, and then, lastly, of the printing of pictures. And in this way I am convinced that these my labours will delight those who are not engaged in these pursuits, and will both delight and help those who have made them a profession. For not to mention that in the Introduction they will review the methods of working, and that in the Lives of the craftsmen themselves they will learn where their works are, and how to recognize easily their perfection or imperfection and to discriminate between one manner and another, they will also be able to perceive how much praise and honour that man deserves who adds upright ways and goodness of life to the excellencies of arts so noble. Kindled by the praise that those so constituted have obtained, they too will aspire to true glory. Nor will little fruit be gathered from the history, true guide and mistress of our actions, in reading of the infinite variety of innumerable accidents that befell the craftsmen, sometimes by their own fault and very often by chance.

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It remains for me to make excuse for having on occasion used some words of indifferent Tuscan, whereof I do not wish to speak, having ever taken thought to use rather the words and names particular and proper to our arts than the delicate or choice words of precious writers. Let me be allowed, then, to use in their proper speech the words proper to our craftsmen, and let all content themselves with my good will, which has bestirred itself to produce this result not in order to teach to others what I do not know myself, but through a desire to preserve this memory at least of the most celebrated craftsmen, seeing that in so many decades I have not yet been able to see one who has made much record of them. For I have wished with these my rough labours, adumbrating their noble deeds, to repay to them in some measure the debt that I owe to their works, which have been to me as masters for the learning of whatsoever I know, rather

PREFACE TO THE LIVES

I have no manner of doubt that it is with almost all writers a common and deeply-fixed opinion that sculpture and painting together were first discovered, by the light of nature, by the people of Egypt, and that there are certain others who attribute to the Chaldæans the first rough sketches in marble and the first reliefs in statuary, even as they also give to the Greeks the invention of the brush and of colouring. But I will surely say that of both one and the other of these arts the design, which is their foundation, nay rather, the very soul that conceives and nourishes within itself all the parts of man's intellect, was already most perfect before the creation of all other things, when the Almighty God, having made the great body of the world and having adorned the heavens with their exceeding bright lights, descended lower with His intellect into the clearness of the air and the solidity of the earth, and, shaping man, discovered, together with the lovely creation of all things, the first form of sculpture; from which man afterwards, step by step (and this may not be denied), as from a true pattern, there were taken statues, sculptures, and the science of pose and of outline; and for the first pictures (whatsoever they were), softness, harmony, and the concord in discord that comes from light and shade. Thus, then, the first model whence there issued the first image of man was a lump of clay, and not without reason, seeing that the Divine Architect of time and of nature, being Himself most perfect, wished to show in the imperfection of the material the way to add and to take away; in the same manner wherein the good sculptors and painters are wont to work, who, adding and taking away in their models, bring their imperfect sketches to that final perfection which they desire. He gave to man that most vivid colour of flesh, whence afterwards there were drawn for painting, from the mines of the earth, the colours themselves for the counterfeiting of all those things that are required for pictures. It is true, indeed, that it cannot be affirmed for certain what was made by the men before the Flood in these arts in imitation of so beautiful a work, although it is reasonable to believe that they too carved and painted in every manner; seeing that Belus, son of the proud Nimrod, about 200 years after the Flood, caused to be made that statue wherefrom there was afterwards born idolatry, and his son's wife, the very famous Semiramis, Queen of Babylon, in the building of that city, placed among its adornments not only diverse varied kinds of animals, portrayed and coloured from nature, but also the image of herself and of Ninus, her husband, and, moreover, statues in bronze of her husband's father, of her husband's mother, and of the mother of the latter, as Diodorus relates, calling them by the Greek names (that did not yet exist), Jove, Juno, and Ops. From these statues, perchance, the Chaldæans learnt to make the images of their gods, seeing that 150 years later Rachel, in flying from Mesopotamia together with Jacob her husband, stole the idols of Laban her father, as is clearly related in Genesis. Nor, indeed, were the Chaldæans alone in making sculptures and pictures, but the Egyptians made them also, exercising themselves in these arts with that so great zeal which is shown in the marvellous tomb of the most ancient King Osimandyas, copiously described by Diodorus, and proved by the stern commandment made by Moses in the Exodus from Egypt, namely, that under pain of death there should be made to God no image whatsoever. He, on descending from the mountain, having found the golden calf wrought and adored solemnly by his people, and being greatly perturbed to see Divine honours paid to the image of a beast, not only broke it and reduced it to powder, but for punishment of so great a sin caused many thousands of the wicked sons of Israel to be slain by the Levites. But because not the making of statues but their adoration was a deadly sin, we read in Exodus that the art of design and of statuary, not only in marble but in every kind of metal, was bestowed by the mouth of God on Bezaleel, of the tribe of Judah, and on Aholiab, of the tribe of Dan, who were those that made the two cherubim of gold, the candlesticks, the veil, the borders of the priestly vestments, and so many other most beautiful castings for the Tabernacle, for no other reason than to bring the people to contemplate and to adore them.

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From the things seen before the Flood, then, the pride of men found the way to make the statues of those for whom they wished that they should remain famous and immortal in the world. And the Greeks, who think differently about this origin, say that the Ethiopians invented the first statues, as Diodorus tells; that the Egyptians took them from the Ethiopians, and, from them, the Greeks; for by Homer's time sculpture and painting are seen to have been perfected, as it is proved, in discoursing of the shield of Achilles, by that divine poet, who shows it to us carved and painted, rather than described, with every form of art. Lactantius Firmianus, by way of fable, attributes it to Prometheus, who, in the manner of Almighty God, shaped man's image out of mud; and from him, he declares, the art of statuary came. But according to what Pliny writes, this came to Egypt from Gyges the Lydian, who, being by the fire and gazing at his own shadow, suddenly, with some charcoal in his hand, drew his own outline on the wall. And from that age, for a time, outlines only were wont to be used, with no body of colour, as the same Pliny confirms; which method was rediscovered with more labour by Philocles the Egyptian, and likewise by Cleanthes and Ardices of Corinth and by Telephanes of Sicily.

Cleophantes of Corinth was the first among the Greeks who used colours, and Apollodorus the first who discovered the brush. There followed Polygnotus of Thasos, Zeuxis, and Timagoras of Chalcis, with Pythias and Aglaophon, all most celebrated; and after these the most famous Apelles, so much esteemed and honoured by Alexander the Great for his talent, and the most

ingenious investigator of slander and false favour, as Lucian shows us; even as almost all the excellent painters and sculptors were endowed by Heaven, in nearly every case, not only with the adornment of poetry, as may be read of Pacuvius, but with philosophy besides, as may be seen in Metrodorus, who, being as well versed in philosophy as in painting, was sent by the Athenians to Paulus Emilius to adorn his triumph, and remained with him to read philosophy to his sons.

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The art of sculpture, then, was greatly exercised in Greece, and there appeared many excellent craftsmen, and, among others, Pheidias, an Athenian, with Praxiteles and Polycletus, all very great masters, while Lysippus and Pyrgoteles were excellent in sunk reliefs, and Pygmalion in reliefs in ivory, of whom there is a fable that by his prayers he obtained breath and spirit for the figure of a virgin that he made. Painting, likewise, was honoured and rewarded by the ancient Greeks and Romans, seeing that to those who made it appear marvellous they showed favour by bestowing on them citizenship and the highest dignities. So greatly did this art flourish in Rome that Fabius gave renown to his house by writing his name under the things so beautifully painted by him in the temple of Salus, and calling himself Fabius Pictor. It was forbidden by public decree that slaves should exercise this art throughout the cities, and so much honour did the nations pay without ceasing to the art and to the craftsmen that the rarest works were sent among the triumphal spoils, as marvellous things, to Rome, and the finest craftsmen were freed from slavery and recompensed with honours and rewards by the commonwealths.

The Romans themselves bore so great reverence for these arts that besides the respect that Marcellus, in sacking the city of Syracuse, commanded to be paid to a craftsman famous in them, in planning the assault of the aforesaid city they took care not to set fire to that quarter wherein there was a most beautiful painted panel, which was afterwards carried to Rome in the triumph, with much pomp. Thither, having, so to speak, despoiled the world, in course of time they assembled the craftsmen themselves as well as their finest works, wherewith afterwards Rome became so beautiful, for the reason that she gained so great adornment from the statues from abroad more than from her own native ones; it being known that in Rhodes, the city of an island in no way large, there were more than 30,000 statues counted, either in bronze or in marble, nor did the Athenians have less, while those at Olympia and at Delphi were many more and those in Corinth numberless, and all were most beautiful and of the greatest value. Is it not known that Nicomedes, King of Lycia, in his eagerness for a Venus that was by the hand of Praxiteles, spent on it almost all the wealth of his people? Did not Attalus the same, who, in order to possess the picture of Bacchus painted by Aristides, did not scruple to spend on it more than 6,000 sesterces? Which picture was placed by Lucius Mummius in the temple of Ceres with the greatest pomp, in order to adorn Rome.

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But for all that the nobility of these arts was so highly valued, it is none the less not yet known for certain who gave them their first beginning. For, as has been already said above, it appears most ancient among the Chaldæans, some give it to the Ethiopians, and the Greeks attribute it to themselves; and it may be thought, not without reason, that it is perchance even more ancient among the Etruscans, as our Leon Batista Alberti testifies, whereof we have clear enough proof in the marvellous tomb of Porsena at Chiusi, where, no long time since, there were discovered underground, between the walls of the Labyrinth, some terracotta tiles with figures on them in half-relief, so excellent and in so beautiful a manner that it can be easily recognized that the art was not begun precisely at that time, nay rather, by reason of the perfection of these works, that it was much nearer its height than its beginning. To this, moreover, witness is likewise borne by our seeing every day many pieces of those red and black vases of Arezzo, made, as may be judged from the manner, about those times, with the most delicate carvings and small figures and scenes in low-relief, and many small round masks wrought with great subtlety by masters of that age, men most experienced, as is shown by the effect, and most excellent in that art. It may be seen, moreover, by reason of the statues found at Viterbo at the beginning of the pontificate of Alexander VI, that sculpture was in great esteem and in no small perfection among the Etruscans; and although it is not known precisely at what time they were made, it may be reasonably conjectured, both from the manner of the figures and from the style of the tombs and of the buildings, no less than from the inscriptions in those Etruscan letters, that they are most ancient and were made at a time when the affairs of this country were in a good and prosperous state. But what clearer proof of this can be sought? seeing that in our own day—that is, in the year 1554—there has been found a bronze figure of the Chimæra of Bellerophon, in making the ditches, fortifications, and walls of Arezzo, from which figure it is recognized that the perfection of that art existed in ancient times among the Etruscans, as may be seen from the Etruscan manner and still more from the letters carved on a paw, about which—since they are but few and there is no one now who understands the Etruscan tongue—it is conjectured that they may represent the name of the master as well as that of the figure itself, and perchance also the date, according to the use of those times. This figure, by reason of its beauty and antiquity, has been placed in our day by the Lord Duke Cosimo in the hall of the new rooms in his Palace, wherein there have been painted by me the acts of Pope Leo X. And besides this there were found in the same place many small figures in bronze after the same manner, which are in the hands of the said Lord Duke.

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But since the dates of the works of the Greeks, the Ethiopians, and the Chaldæans are as doubtful as our own, and perhaps more, and by reason of the greater need of founding our judgment about these works on conjectures, which, however, are not so feeble that they are in every way wide of the mark, I believe that I strayed not at all from the truth (and I think that everyone who will consent to consider this question discreetly will judge as I did), when I said above that the origin of these arts was nature herself, and the example or model, the most

beautiful fabric of the world, and the master, that divine light infused by special grace into us, which has not only made us superior to the other animals, but, if it be not sin to say it, like to God. And if in our own times it has been seen (as I trust to be able to demonstrate a little later by many examples) that simple children roughly reared in the woods, with their only model in the beautiful pictures and sculptures of nature, and by the vivacity of their wit, have begun by themselves to make designs, how much more may we, nay, must we confidently believe that these primitive men, who, in proportion as they were less distant from their origin and divine creation, were thereby the more perfect and of better intelligence, that they, by themselves, having for guide nature, for master purest intellect, and for example the so lovely model of the world, gave birth to these most noble arts, and from a small beginning, little by little bettering them, brought them at last to perfection? I do not, indeed, wish to deny that there was one among them who was the first to begin, seeing that I know very well that it must needs be that at some time and from some one man there came the beginning; nor, also, will I deny that it may have been possible that one helped another and taught and opened the way to design, to colour, and relief, because I know that our art is all imitation, of nature for the most part and then, because a man cannot by himself rise so high, of those works that are executed by those whom he judges to be better masters than himself. But I say surely that the wishing to affirm dogmatically who this man or these men were is a thing very perilous to judge, and perchance little necessary to know, provided that we see the true root and origin wherefrom art was born. For since, of the works that are the life and the glory of the craftsmen, the first and step by step the second and the third were lost by reason of time, that consumes all things, and since, for lack of writers at that time, they could not, at least in that way, become known to posterity, their craftsmen as well came to be forgotten. But when once the writers began to make record of things that were before their day, they could not speak of those whereof they had not been able to have information, in a manner that there came to be first with them those of whom the memory had been the last to be lost. Even as the first of the poets, by common consent, is said to be Homer, not because there were none before him, for there were, although not so excellent, which is seen clearly from his own works, but because of these early poets, whatever manner of men they were, all knowledge had been lost quite 2,000 years before. However, leaving behind us this part, as too uncertain by reason of its antiquity, let us come to the clearer matters of their perfection, ruin, and restoration, or rather resurrection, whereof we will be able to discourse on much better grounds.

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I say, then, it being true indeed, that they began late in Rome, if the first figure was, as is said, the image of Ceres made of metal from the treasure of Spurius Cassius, who, for conspiring to make himself King, was put to death by his own father without any scruple; and that although the arts of sculpture and of painting continued up to the end of the twelve Cæsars, they did not, however, continue in that perfection and excellence which they had enjoyed before, for it may be seen from the edifices that the Emperors built in succession one after the other that these arts, decaying from one day to another, were coming little by little to lose their whole perfection of design. And to this clear testimony is borne by the works of sculpture and of architecture that were wrought in the time of Constantine in Rome, and in particular the triumphal arch raised for him by the Roman people near the Colosseum, wherein it is seen that in default of good masters they not only made use of marble groups made at the time of Trajan, but also of the spoils brought from various places to Rome. And whosoever knows that the votive offerings in the medallions, that is, the sculptures in half-relief, and likewise the prisoners, and the large groups, and the columns, and the mouldings, and the other ornaments, whether made before or from spoils, are excellently wrought, knows also that the works which were made to fill up by the sculptors of that time are of the rudest, as also are certain small groups with little figures in marble below the medallions, and the lowest base wherein there are certain victories, and certain rivers between the arches at the sides, which are very rude and so made that it can be believed most surely that by that time the art of sculpture had begun to lose something of the good. And there had not yet come the Goths and the other barbarous and outlandish peoples who destroyed, together with Italy, all the finer arts. It is true, indeed, that in the said times architecture had suffered less harm than the other arts of design had suffered, for in the bath that Constantine erected on the Lateran, in the entrance of the principal porch it may be seen, to say nothing of the porphyry columns, the capitals wrought in marble, and the double bases taken from some other place and very well carved, that the whole composition of the building is very well conceived; whereas, on the contrary, the stucco, the mosaics, and certain incrustations on the walls made by masters of that time are not equal to those that he caused to be placed in the same bath, which were taken for the most part from the temples of the heathen gods. Constantine, so it is said, did the same in the garden of Æquitiuſ, in making the temple which he afterwards endowed and gave to the Christian priests. In like manner, the magnificent Church of S. Giovanni Laterano, erected by the same Emperor, can bear witness to the same—namely, that in his day sculpture had already greatly declined; for the image of the Saviour and the twelve Apostles in silver that he caused to be made were very debased sculptures, wrought without art and with very little design. Besides this, whosoever examines with diligence the medals of Constantine and his image and other statues made by the sculptors of that time, which are at the present day in the Campidoglio, may see clearly that they are very far removed from the perfection of the medals and statues of the other Emperors; and all this shows that long before the coming of the Goths into Italy sculpture had greatly declined.

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Architecture, as has been said, continued to maintain itself, if not so perfect, in a better state; nor is there reason to marvel at this, seeing that, as the great edifices were made almost wholly of spoils, it was easy for the architects, in making the new, to imitate in great measure the old,

which they had ever before their eyes, and that much more easily than the sculptors could imitate the good figures of the ancients, their art having wholly vanished. And that this is true is manifest, because the Church of the Prince of the Apostles on the Vatican was not rich save in columns, bases, capitals, architraves, mouldings, doors, and other incrustations and ornaments, which were all taken from various places and from the edifices built most magnificently in earlier times. The same could be said of S. Croce in Gierusalemme, which Constantine erected at the entreaty of his mother Helena, of S. Lorenzo without the walls of Rome, and of S. Agnesa, built by him at the request of Constantia, his daughter. And who does not know that the font which served for the baptism of both her and her sister was all adorned with works wrought long before, and in particular with the porphyry basin carved with most beautiful figures, with certain marble candlesticks excellently carved with foliage, and with some boys in low-relief that are truly most beautiful? In short, for these and many other reasons it is clear how much, in the time of Constantine, sculpture had already declined, and together with it the other finer arts. And if anything was wanting to complete this ruin, it was supplied to them amply by the departure of Constantine from Rome, on his going to establish the seat of the Empire at Byzantium; for the reason that he took with him not only all the best sculptors and other craftsmen of that age, whatsoever manner of men they were, but also an infinite number of statues and other works of sculpture, all most beautiful.

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After the departure of Constantine, the Cæsars whom he left in Italy, building continually both in Rome and elsewhere, exerted themselves to make their works as fine as they could; but, as may be seen, sculpture, as well as painting and architecture, went ever from bad to worse, and this perchance came to pass because, when human affairs begin to decline, they never cease to go ever lower and lower until such time as they can grow no worse. So, too, it may be seen that although at the time of Pope Liberius the architects of that day strove to do something great in constructing the Church of S. Maria Maggiore, they were yet not happy in the success of the whole, for the reason that although that building, which is likewise composed for the greater part of spoils, was made with good enough proportions, it cannot be denied any the less, not to speak of certain other parts, that the frieze made right round above the columns with ornaments in stucco and in painting is wholly wanting in design, and that many other things which are seen in that great church demonstrate the imperfection of the arts.

Many years after, when the Christians were persecuted under Julian the Apostate, there was erected on the Cœlian Mount a church to S. John and S. Paul, the martyrs, in a manner so much worse than those named above, that it is seen clearly that the art was at that time little less than wholly lost. The buildings, too, that were erected at the same time in Tuscany, bear most ample testimony to this; and not to speak of many others, the church that was built outside the walls of Arezzo to S. Donatus, Bishop of that city (who, together with the monk Hilarian, suffered martyrdom under the said Julian the Apostate), was in no way better in architecture than those named above. Nor can it be believed that this came from anything else but the absence of better architects in that age, seeing that the said church (as it has been possible to see in our own day), which is octagonal and constructed from the spoils of the Theatre, the Colosseum and other edifices that had been standing in Arezzo before it was converted to the faith of Christ, was built without thought of economy and at the greatest cost, and adorned with columns of granite, of porphyry, and of many-coloured marbles, which had belonged to the said buildings. And for myself I do not doubt, from the expense which was clearly bestowed on that church, that if the Aretines had had better architects they would have built something marvellous; for it may be seen from what they did that they spared nothing if only they might make that work as rich and as well designed as they possibly could, and since, as has been already said so many times, architecture had lost less of its perfection than the other arts, there was to be seen therein some little of the good. At this time, likewise, was enlarged the Church of S. Maria in Grado, in honour of the said Hilarian, for the reason that he had been for a long time living in it when he went, with Donatus, to the crown of martyrdom.

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But because Fortune, when she has brought men to the height of her wheel, is wont, either in jest or in repentance, to throw them down again, it came about after these things that there rose up in various parts of the world all the barbarous peoples against Rome; whence there ensued after no long time not only the humiliation of so great an Empire but the ruin of the whole, and above all of Rome herself, and with her were likewise utterly ruined the most excellent craftsmen, sculptors, painters, and architects, leaving the arts and their own selves buried and submerged among the miserable massacres and ruins of that most famous city. And the first to fall into decay were painting and sculpture, as being arts that served more for pleasure than for use, while the other—namely, architecture—as being necessary and useful for bodily weal, continued to exist, but no longer in its perfection and excellence. And if it had not been that the sculptures and pictures presented, to the eyes of those who were born from day to day, those who had been thereby honoured to the end that they might have eternal life, there would soon have been lost the memory of both; whereas some of them survived in the images and in the inscriptions placed in private houses, as well as in public buildings, namely, in the amphitheatres, the theatres, the baths, the aqueducts, the temples, the obelisks, the colossi, the pyramids, the arches, the reservoirs, the public treasuries, and finally, in the very tombs, whereof a great part was destroyed by a barbarous and savage race who had nothing in them of man but the shape and the name. These, among others, were the Visigoths, who, having created Alaric their King, assailed Italy and Rome and sacked the city twice without respect for anything whatsoever. The same, too, did the Vandals, having come from Africa with Genseric, their King, who, not content with his booty and prey and all the cruelties that he wrought there, carried away her people into slavery, to their exceeding great misery, and among them Eudoxia, once the wife of the Emperor

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Valentinian, who had been slaughtered no long time before by his own soldiers. For these, having fallen away in very great measure from the ancient Roman valour, for the reason that all the best had gone a long time before to Byzantium with the Emperor Constantine, had no longer any good customs or ways of life. Nay more, there had been lost at one and the same time all true men and every sort of virtue, and laws, habits, names, and tongues had been changed; and all these things together and each by itself had caused every lovely mind and lofty intellect to become most brutish and most base.

But what brought infinite harm and damage on the said professions, even more than all the aforesaid causes, was the burning zeal of the new Christian religion, which, after a long and bloody combat, with its wealth of miracles and with the sincerity of its works, had finally cast down and swept away the old faith of the heathens, and, devoting itself most ardently with all diligence to driving out and extirpating root and branch every least occasion whence error could arise, not only defaced or threw to the ground all the marvellous statues, sculptures, pictures, mosaics, and ornaments of the false gods of the heathens, but even the memorials and the honours of numberless men of mark, to whom, for their excellent merits, the noble spirit of the ancients had set up statues and other memorials in public places. Nay more, it not only destroyed, in order to build the churches for the Christian use, the most honoured temples of the idols, but in order to ennoble and adorn S. Pietro (to say nothing of the ornaments which had been there from the beginning) it also robbed of its stone columns the Mausoleum of Hadrian, now called the Castello di S. Angelo, and many other buildings that to-day we see in ruins. And although the Christian religion did not do this by reason of hatred that it bore to the arts, but only in order to humiliate and cast down the gods of the heathens, it was none the less true that from this most ardent zeal there came so great ruin on these honoured professions that their very form was wholly lost. And as if aught were wanting to this grievous misfortune, there arose against Rome the wrath of Totila, who, besides razing her walls and destroying with fire and sword all her most wonderful and noble buildings, burnt the whole city from end to end, and, having robbed her of every living body, left her a prey to flames and fire, so that there was not found in her in eighteen successive days a single living soul; and he cast down and destroyed so completely the marvellous statues, pictures, mosaics, and works in stucco, that there was lost, I do not say only their majesty, but their very form and essence. Wherefore, it being the lower rooms chiefly of the palaces and other buildings that were wrought with stucco, with painting, and with statuary, there was buried by the ruins from above all that good work that has been discovered in our own day, and those who came after, judging the whole to be in ruins, planted vines thereon, in a manner that, since the said lower rooms remained under the ground, the moderns have called them grottoes, and "grotesque" the pictures that are therein seen at the present day.

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After the end of the Ostrogoths, who were destroyed by Narses, men were living among the ruins of Rome in some fashion, poorly indeed, when there came, after 100 years, Constantine II, Emperor of Constantinople, who, although received lovingly by the Romans, laid waste, robbed, and carried away all that had remained, more by chance than by the good will of those who had destroyed her, in the miserable city of Rome. It is true, indeed, that he was not able to enjoy this booty, because, being carried by a sea-tempest to Sicily and being justly slain by his own men, he left his spoils, his kingdom, and his life a prey to Fortune. But she, not yet content with the woes of Rome, to the end that the things stolen might never return, brought thither for the ruin of the island a host of Saracens, who carried off both the wealth of the Sicilians and the spoils of Rome to Alexandria, to the very great shame and loss of Italy and of Christendom. And so all that the Pontiffs had not destroyed (and above all S. Gregory, who is said to have decreed banishment against all the remainder of the statues and of the spoils of the buildings) came finally, at the hands of that most rascally Greek, to an evil end; in a manner that, there being no trace or sign to be found of anything that was in any way good, the men who came after, although rude and boorish, and in particular in their pictures and sculptures, yet, incited by nature and refined by the air, set themselves to work, not according to the rules of the aforesaid arts, which they did not know, but according to the quality of their own intelligence.

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The arts of design, then, having been brought to these limits both before and during the lordship of the Lombards over Italy and also afterwards, continued gradually to grow worse, although some little work was done, insomuch that nothing could have been more rudely wrought or with less design than what was done, as bear witness, besides many other works, certain figures that are in the portico of S. Pietro in Rome, above the doors, wrought in the Greek manner in memory of certain holy fathers who had made disputation for Holy Church in certain councils. To this, likewise, bear witness many works in the same manner that are to be seen in the city and in the whole Exarchate of Ravenna, and in particular some that are in S. Maria Rotonda without that city, made a little time after the Lombards had been driven out of Italy. In this church, as I will not forbear to say, there may be seen a thing most notable and marvellous, namely, the vault, or rather cupola, that covers it, which, although it is ten braccia wide and serves for roof and covering to that building, is nevertheless of one single piece, so great and ponderous that it seems almost impossible that such a stone, weighing more than 200,000 libbre,^[4] could have been set into place so high. But to return to our subject; there issued from the hands of the masters of these times those puppet-like and uncouth figures that are still to be seen in the works of old. The same thing happened to architecture, seeing that, since it was necessary to build, and since form and the good method were completely lost by reason of the death of the craftsmen and the destruction and ruin of their works, those who applied themselves to this exercise built nothing that either in ordering or in proportion showed any grace, or design, or reason

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whatsoever. Wherefore there came to arise new architects, who brought from their barbarous races the method of that manner of buildings that are called by us to-day German; and they made some that are rather a source of laughter for us moderns than creditable to them, until better craftsmen afterwards found a better style, in some measure similar to the good style of the ancients, even as that manner may be seen throughout all Italy in the old churches (but not the ancient), which were built by them, such as a palace of Theodoric, King of Italy, in Ravenna, and one in Pavia, and another in Modena; all in a barbarous manner, and rather rich and vast than well-conceived or of good architecture. The same may be affirmed of S. Stefano in Rimini, of S. Martino in Ravenna, and of the Church of S. Giovanni Evangelista, erected in the same city by Galla Placidia about the year of our salvation 438; of S. Vitale, which was erected in the year 547, of the Abbey of Classi di Fuori, and in short of many other monasteries and churches erected after the Lombard rule. All these buildings, as has been said, are both large and magnificent, but of the rudest architecture, and among them are many abbeys in France erected to S. Benedict, the Church and Monastery of Monte Casino, and the Church of S. Giovanni Battista at Monza, built by that Theodelinda, Queen of the Goths, to whom S. Gregory the Pope wrote his Dialogues; in which place that Queen caused to be painted the story of the Lombards, wherein it was seen that they shaved the back of their heads, and in front they had long locks, and they dyed themselves as far as the chin. Their garments were of ample linen, as was the use of the Angles and Saxons, and below a mantle of diverse colours; their shoes open as far as the toes and tied above with certain straps of leather. Similar to the aforesaid churches were the Church of S. Giovanni in Pavia, erected by Gondiberta, daughter of the aforesaid Theodelinda, and in the same city the Church of S. Salvatore, built by the brother of the said Queen, Aribert, who succeeded to the throne of Rodoald, husband of Gondiberta; and the Church of S. Ambrogio in Pavia, erected by Grimoald, King of the Lombards, who drove Bertrid, son of Aribert, from his throne. This Bertrid, being restored to his throne after the death of Grimoald, erected, also in Pavia, a monastery for nuns called the Monasterio Nuovo, in honour of Our Lady and of S. Agatha; and the Queen erected one without the walls, dedicated to the "Virgin Mary in Pertica." Cunibert, likewise, son of that Bertrid, erected a monastery and church after the same manner to S. Giorgio, called di Coronate, on the spot where he had gained a great victory over Alahi. Not unlike to these, too, was the church that the King of the Lombards, Luitprand (who lived in the time of King Pepin, father of Charlemagne), built in Pavia, which is called S. Pietro in Cieldauro; nor that one, likewise, that Desiderius built, who reigned after Astolf—namely, S. Pietro Clivate, in the diocese of Milan; nor the Monastery of S. Vincenzo in Milan, nor that of S. Giulia in Brescia, seeing that they were all built at the greatest cost, but in the most ugly and haphazard manner.

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Later, in Florence, architecture made some little progress, and the Church of S. Apostolo, that was erected by Charlemagne, although small, was most beautiful in manner; for not to mention that the shafts of the columns, although they are of separate pieces, show much grace and are made with beautiful proportion, the capitals, also, and the arches turned to make the little vaulted roofs of the two small aisles, show that in Tuscany there had survived or in truth arisen some good craftsman. In short, the architecture of this church is such that Filippo di Ser Brunellesco did not disdain to avail himself of it as a model in building the Church of S. Spirito and that of S. Lorenzo in the same city. The same may be seen in the Church of S. Marco in Venice, which (to say nothing of S. Giorgio Maggiore, erected by Giovanni Morosini in the year 978) was begun under the Doge Giustiniano and Giovanni Particiaco, close by S. Teodosio, when the body of that Evangelist was sent from Alexandria to Venice; and after many fires, which greatly damaged the Doge's palace and the church, it was finally rebuilt on the same foundations in the Greek manner and in that style wherein it is seen to-day, at very great cost and under the direction of many architects, in the year of Christ 973, at the time of Doge Domenico Selvo, who had the columns brought from wheresoever he could find them. And so it continued to go on up to the year 1140, when the Doge was Messer Piero Polani, and, as has been said, with the design of many masters, all Greeks. In the same Greek manner and about the same time were the seven abbeys that Count Ugo, Marquis of Brandenburg, caused to be built in Tuscany, as can be seen in the Badia of Florence, in that of Settimo, and in the others; which buildings, with the remains of those that are no longer standing, bear testimony that architecture was still in a measure holding its ground, although greatly corrupted and far removed from the good manner of the ancients. To this can also bear witness many old palaces built in Florence after the ruin of Fiesole, in Tuscan workmanship, but with barbaric ordering in the proportions of those doors and windows of immense length, in the curves of the pointed quarter-segments, and in the turning of the arches, after the wont of the foreign architects of those times.

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The year afterwards, 1013, it is clear that the art had regained some of its vigour from the rebuilding of that most beautiful church, S. Miniato in Sul Monte, in the time of Messer Alibrando, citizen and Bishop of Florence; for the reason that, besides the marble ornaments that are seen therein both within and without, it may be seen from the façade that the Tuscan architects strove as much as they could in the doors, the windows, the columns, the arches, and the mouldings, to imitate the good order of the ancients, having in part recovered it from the most ancient temple of S. Giovanni in their city. At the same time painting, which was little less than wholly spent, may be seen to have begun to win back something, as the mosaic shows that was made in the principal chapel^[5] of the said Church of S. Miniato.

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From such beginnings, then, these arts commenced to grow better in design throughout Tuscany, as is seen in the year 1016, from the commencement made by the people of Pisa for the building of their Duomo, seeing that in those times it was a great thing for men to put their hands to the

construction of a church made, as this was, with five naves, and almost wholly of marble both within and without. This church, which was built under the direction and design of Buschetto, a Greek of Dulichium, an architect of rarest worth for those times, was erected and adorned by the people of Pisa with innumerable spoils brought by sea (for they were at the height of their greatness) from diverse most distant places, as is well shown by the columns, bases, capitals, cornices, and all the other kinds of stonework that are therein seen. And seeing that these things were some of them small, some large, and some of a middle size, great was the judgment and the talent of Buschetto in accommodating them and in making the distribution of all this building, which is very well arranged both within and without; and besides other work, he contrived the frontal slope of the façade very ingeniously with a great number of columns, adorning it besides with columns carved in diverse and varied ways, and with ancient statues, even as he also made the principal doors in the same façade, between which—that is, beside that of the Carroccio—there was afterwards given an honourable burial-place to Buschetto himself, with three epitaphs, whereof this is one, in Latin verses in no way dissimilar to others of those times:

QUOD VIX MILLE BOUM POSSENT JUGA JUNCTA MOVERE,
ET QUOD VIX POTUIT PER MARE FERRE RATIS,
BUSCHETTI NISU, QUOD ERAT MIRABILE VISU,
DENA PUELLARUM TURBA LEVAVIT ONUS.

And seeing that there has been made mention above of the Church of S. Apostolo in Florence, I will not forbear to say that on a marble slab therein, on one side of the high-altar, there may be seen these words: [Pg lv]

VIII. V. DIE VI. APRILIS IN RESURRECTIONE DOMINI, KAROLUS FRANCORUM
REX A ROMA REVERTENS, INGRESSUS FLORENTIAM, CUM MAGNO GAUDIO
ET TRIPUDIO SUSCEPTUS, CIVIUM COPIAM TORQUEIS AUREIS DECORAVIT ...
ECCLESIA SANCTORUM APOSTOLORUM ... IN ALTARI INCLUSA EST LAMINA
PLUMBEA, IN QUA DESCRIPTA APPARET PRÆFATA FUNDATIO ET
CONSECRATIO FACTA PER ARCHIEPISCOPUM TURPINUM, TESTIBUS
ROLANDO ET ULIVERIO.

The aforesaid edifice of the Duomo in Pisa, awaking the minds of many to fair enterprises throughout all Italy, and above all in Tuscany, was the cause that in the city of Pistoia, in the year 1032, a beginning was made for the Church of S. Paolo, in the presence of the Blessed Atto, Bishop of that city, as may be read in a contract made at that time, and, in short, for many other buildings whereof it would take too long to make mention at present. I cannot forbear to say, however, following the course of time, that afterwards, in the year 1060, there was erected in Pisa the round church of S. Giovanni, opposite the Duomo and in the same square. And something marvellous and almost wholly incredible is to be found recorded in an old book of the Works of the said Duomo, namely, that the columns of the said S. Giovanni, the pillars, and the vaulting were raised and completed in fifteen days and no more. In the same book, which anyone can see who has the wish, it may be read that for the building of this church there was imposed a tax of one danaio for each fire, but it is not said therein whether of gold or of small coin; and at that time there were in Pisa, as may be seen in the same book, 34,000 fires. Truly this work was vast, of great cost, and difficult to execute, and above all the vaulting of the tribune, made in the shape of a pear and covered without with lead. The outer side is full of columns, carvings, and groups, and on the frieze of the central door is a Jesus Christ with the twelve Apostles in half-relief, after the Greek manner.

The people of Lucca, about the same time—that is, in the year 1061—as rivals of the people of Pisa, began the Church of S. Martino in Lucca from the design of certain disciples of Buschetto, there being then no other architects in Tuscany. Attached to the façade of this church there may be seen a marble portico with many ornaments and carvings made in memory of Pope Alexander II, who had been, a short time before he was elected to the Pontificate, Bishop of that city. Of this construction and of Alexander himself everything is fully told in nine Latin verses, and the same may be seen in certain other ancient letters engraved on the marble under the portico, between the doors. On the said façade are certain figures, and under the portico many scenes in marble from the life of S. Martin, in half-relief, and in the Greek manner. But the best, which are over one of the doors, were made 170 years after by Niccola Pisano and finished in 1233, as will be told in the proper place; the Wardens, when these were begun, being Abellenato and Aliprando, as it may be clearly seen from certain letters carved in marble in the same place. These figures by the hand of Niccola Pisano show how much improvement there came from him to the art of sculpture. Similar to these were most, nay, all of the buildings that were erected in Italy from the times aforesaid up to the year 1250, seeing that little or no acquisition or improvement can be seen to have been made in the space of so many years by architecture, which stayed within the same limits and went on ever in that rude manner, whereof many examples are still to be seen, of which I will at present make no mention, for the reason that they will be spoken of below according to the occasions that may come before me. [Pg lvi]

In like manner the good sculptures and pictures which had been buried under the ruins of Italy remained up to the same time hidden from or not known to the men boorishly reared in the rudeness of the modern use of that age, wherein no other sculptures or pictures existed than those which a remnant of old Greeks were making either in images of clay or stone, or painting monstrous figures and covering only the bare lineaments with colour. These craftsmen, as the best, being the only ones in these professions, were summoned to Italy, whither they brought sculpture and painting, together with mosaic, in that style wherein they knew them; and even so [Pg lvii]

they taught them rudely and roughly to the Italians, who afterwards made use of them, as has been told and will be told further, up to a certain time. And the men of those times, not being used to see other excellence or greater perfection in any work than that which they themselves saw, marvelled and took these for the best, for all that they were vile, until the spirits of the generation then arising, helped in some places by the subtlety of the air, became so greatly purged that about 1250, Heaven, moved to pity for the lovely minds that the Tuscan soil was producing every day, restored them to their first condition. And although those before them had seen remains of arches, of colossi, of statues, of urns, and of storied columns in the ages that came after the sackings, the destructions, and the burnings of Rome, and never knew how to make use of them or draw from them any benefit, up to the time mentioned above, the minds that came after, discerning well enough the good from the bad and abandoning the old manners, turned to imitating the ancient with all their industry and wit.

But in order that it may be understood more clearly what I call "old" and what "ancient," the "ancient" were the works made before Constantine in Corinth, in Athens, in Rome, and in other very famous cities, until the time of Nero, the Vespasians, Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus; whereas those others are called "old" that were executed from S. Silvester's day up to that time by a certain remnant of Greeks, who knew rather how to dye than how to paint. For since the excellent early craftsmen had been killed in these wars, as has been said, to the remainder of these Greeks, old but not ancient, there had been left nothing but elementary outlines on a ground of colour; and to this at the present day witness is borne by an infinity of mosaics, which, wrought throughout all Italy by these Greeks, are to be seen in every old church in any city whatsoever of Italy, and above all in the Duomo of Pisa, in S. Marco at Venice, and in other places as well; and so, too, they kept making many pictures in that manner, with eyes staring, hands outstretched, and standing on tiptoe, as may still be seen in S. Miniato without Florence, between the door that leads into the sacristy and that which leads into the convent; and in S. Spirito in the said city, the whole side of the cloister opposite the church; and in like manner at Arezzo, in S. Giuliano and S. Bartolommeo and in other churches; and in Rome, in the old Church of S. Pietro, scenes right round between the windows—works that have more of the monstrous in their lineaments than of likeness to whatsoever they represent. Of sculptures, likewise, they made an infinity, as may still be seen in low-relief over the door of S. Michele in the Piazza Padella of Florence, and in Ognissanti; and tombs and adornments in many places for the doors of churches, wherein they have certain figures for corbels to support the roof, so rude and vile, so misshapen, and of such a grossness of manner, that it appears impossible that worse could be imagined.

[Pg lviii]

Thus far have I thought fit to discourse from the beginning of sculpture and of painting, and peradventure at greater length than was necessary in this place, which I have done, indeed, not so much carried away by my affection for art as urged by the common benefit and advantage of our craftsmen. For having seen in what way she, from a small beginning, climbed to the greatest height, and how from a state so noble she fell into utter ruin, and that, in consequence, the nature of this art is similar to that of the others, which, like human bodies, have their birth, their growth, their growing old, and their death; they will now be able to recognize more easily the progress of her second birth and of that very perfection whereto she has risen again in our times. And I hope, moreover, that if ever (which God forbid) it should happen at any time, through the negligence of men, or through the malice of time, or, finally, through the decree of Heaven, which appears to be unwilling that the things of this earth should exist for long in one form, that she falls again into the same chaos of ruin; that these my labours, whatsoever they may be worth (if indeed they may be worthy of a happier fortune), both through what has been already said and through what remains to say, may be able to keep her alive or at least to encourage the most exalted minds to provide them with better assistance; so much so that, what with my good will and the works of these masters, she may abound in those aids and adornments wherein, if I may freely speak the truth, she has been wanting up to the present day.

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But it is now time to come to the Life of Giovanni Cimabue, and even as he gave the first beginning to the new method of drawing and painting, so it is just and expedient that he should give it to the Lives, in which I will do my utmost to observe, the most that I can, the order of their manners rather than that of time. And in describing the forms and features of the craftsmen I will be brief, seeing that their portraits, which have been collected by me with no less cost and fatigue than diligence, will show better what sort of men the craftsmen themselves were in appearance than describing them could ever do; and if the portrait of any one of them should be wanting, that is not through my fault but by reason of its being nowhere found. And if the said portraits were not peradventure to appear to someone to be absolutely like to others that might be found, I wish it to be remembered that the portrait made of a man when he was eighteen or twenty years old will never be like to the portrait that may have been made fifteen or twenty years later. To this it must be added that portraits in drawing are never so like as are those in colours, not to mention that the engravers, who have no draughtsmanship, always rob the faces (being unable or not knowing how to make exactly those minutenesses that make them good and true to life) of that perfection which is rarely or never found in portraits cut in wood. In short, how great have been therein my labour, expense, and diligence, will be evident to those who, in reading, will see whence I have to the best of my ability unearthed them.

**CONCERNING THE LIVES OF THE PAINTERS,
SCULPTORS, AND ARCHITECTS, WHO HAVE LIVED FROM
CIMABUE TO THE PRESENT DAY. WRITTEN BY MESSER
GIORGIO VASARI, PAINTER OF AREZZO**

[Pg 1]

GIOVANNI CIMABUE



Alinari

MADONNA, CHILD AND ANGELS
(After the painting by Cimabue. Paris: Louvre, 1260)

[View larger image](#)

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**LIFE OF GIOVANNI CIMABUE,
PAINTER OF FLORENCE**

By the infinite flood of evils which had laid prostrate and submerged poor Italy there had not only been ruined everything that could truly claim the name of building, but there had been blotted out (and this was of graver import) the whole body of the craftsmen, when, by the will of God, in

the city of Florence, in the year 1240, there was born, to give the first light to the art of painting, Giovanni, surnamed Cimabue, of the family, noble in those times, of Cimabue. He, while growing up, being judged by his father and by others to have a beautiful and acute intelligence, was sent, to the end that he might exercise himself in letters, to a master in S. Maria Novella, his relative, who was then teaching grammar to the novices of that convent; but Cimabue, in place of attending to his letters, would spend the whole day, as one who felt himself led thereto by nature, in drawing, on books and other papers, men, horses, houses, and diverse other things of fancy; to which natural inclination fortune was favourable, for certain Greek painters had been summoned to Florence by those who then governed the city, for nothing else but to restore to Florence the art of painting, which was rather out of mind than out of fashion, and they began, among the other works undertaken in the city, the Chapel of the Gondi, whereof to-day the vaulting and the walls are little less than eaten away by time, as may be seen in S. Maria Novella beside the principal chapel, where it stands. Wherefore Cimabue, having begun to take his first steps in this art which pleased him, playing truant often from school, would stand the livelong day watching these masters at work, in a manner that, being judged by his father and by these painters to be in such wise fitted for painting that there could be hoped for him, applying himself to this profession, an honourable success, to his own no small satisfaction he was apprenticed by the said father to these men; whereupon, exercising himself without ceasing, in a short time nature assisted him so greatly that he surpassed by a long way, both in drawing and in colouring, the manner of the masters who were teaching him. For they, giving no thought to making any advance, had made those works in that fashion wherein they are seen to-day—that is, not in the good ancient manner of the Greeks but in that rude modern manner of those times; and because, although he imitated these Greeks, he added much perfection to the art, relieving it of a great part of their rude manner, he gave honour to his country with his name and with the works that he made, to which witness is borne in Florence by the pictures that he wrought, such as the front of the altar in S. Cecilia, and in S. Croce a panel with a Madonna, which was and still is placed against a pilaster on the right within the choir. After this, he made a S. Francis on a small panel on a gold ground, and portrayed him from nature (which was something new in those times) as best he knew, and round him all the stories of his life, in twenty small pictures full of little figures on a gold ground.

[Pg 4]

Having next undertaken to make a large panel for the monks of Vallombrosa, in the Abbey of S. Trinita in Florence, he showed in that work (using therein great diligence, so as to rise equal to the esteem which had already been conceived of him) better inventions and a beautiful method in the attitude of a Madonna, whom he made with the Child in her arms and with many angels round her in adoration, on a gold ground; which panel, being finished, was placed by these monks over the high-altar of the said church, and being afterwards removed, in order to give that place to the panel by Alesso Baldovinetti which is there to-day, it was placed in a smaller chapel in the left-hand aisle of the said church.

Working next in fresco on the Hospital of the Porcellana, at the corner of the Via Nuova which goes into the Borg' Ognissanti, on the façade which has in the middle the principal door, and making on one side the Annunciation of the Virgin by the Angel, and on the other Jesus Christ with Cleophas and Luke, figures as large as life, he swept away that ancient manner, making the draperies, the vestments, and everything else in this work, a little more lively and more natural and softer than the manner of these Greeks, all full of lines and profiles both in mosaic and in painting; which manner, rough, rude, and vulgar, the painters of those times, not by means of study, but by a certain convention, had taught one to the other for many and many a year, without ever thinking of bettering their draughtsmanship, of beauty of colouring, or of any invention that might be good.

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Cimabue, being summoned again after this work by the same Prior who had caused him to make the works in S. Croce, made him a large Crucifix on wood, which is still seen to-day in the church; which work was the reason, it appearing to the Prior that he had been well served, that he took him to S. Francesco in Pisa, their convent, in order to make a S. Francis on a panel, which was held by these people to be a most rare work, there being seen therein a certain greater quality of excellence, both in the air of the heads and in the folds of the draperies, than had been shown in the Greek manner up to that time by anyone who had wrought anything, not only in Pisa, but in all Italy. Cimabue having next made for the same church on a large panel the image of Our Lady, with the Child in her arms and with many angels round her, also on a ground of gold, it was after no long time removed from where it had been set up the first time, in order to make there the marble altar that is there at present, and was placed within the church beside the door on the left hand; and for this work he was much praised and rewarded by the people of Pisa. In the same city of Pisa, at the request of the then Abbot of S. Paolo in Ripa d'Arno, he made a S. Agnes on a little panel, and round her, with little figures, all the stories of her life; which little panel is to-day over the altar of the Virgins in the said church.

By reason of these works, then, the name of Cimabue being very famous everywhere, he was brought to Assisi, a city of Umbria, where, in company with certain Greek masters, in the lower Church of S. Francesco, he painted part of the vaulting, and on the walls the life of Jesus Christ and that of S. Francis. In these pictures he surpassed by a long way those Greek painters; wherefore, growing in courage, he began by his own self to paint the upper church in fresco, and in the chief apse, over the choir, on four sides, he made certain stories of Our Lady—namely, her death; when her soul is borne by Christ to Heaven upon a throne of clouds; and when, in the midst of a choir of angels, He crowns her, with a great number of saints below, both male and female, now eaten away by time and by dust. Next, in the sections of the vaulting of the said

[Pg 6]

church, which are five, he painted in like manner many scenes. In the first, over the choir, he made the four Evangelists, larger than life, and so well that to-day there is still recognized in them much that is good, and the freshness of the colours in the flesh shows that painting began to make great progress in fresco work through the labours of Cimabue. The second section he made full of golden stars on a ground of ultramarine. In the third he made in certain medallions Jesus Christ, the Virgin His mother, S. John the Baptist, and S. Francis—namely, in every medallion one of these figures, and in every quarter segment of the vaulting a medallion. And between this and the fifth section he painted the fourth with golden stars, as above, on a ground of ultramarine. In the fifth he painted the four Doctors of the Church, and beside each one of these one of the four chief Religious Orders—a work truly laborious and executed with infinite diligence. The vaulting finished, he wrought, also in fresco, the upper walls of the whole left-hand side of the church, making towards the high-altar, between the windows and right up to the vaulting, eight scenes from the Old Testament, commencing from the beginning of Genesis and following the most notable events. And in the space that is round the windows, up to the point where they end in the gallery that encircles the interior of the wall of the church, he painted the remainder of the Old Testament in eight other scenes. And opposite this work, in sixteen other scenes corresponding to these, he painted the acts of Our Lady and of Jesus Christ. And on the end wall over the principal door, and round the rose window of the church, he made her Ascension into Heaven and the Holy Spirit descending on the Apostles. This work, truly very great and rich and most excellently executed, must have, in my judgment, amazed the world in those times, seeing, above all, that painting had lain so long in such great darkness; and to me, who saw it again in the year 1563, it appeared very beautiful, thinking how in so great darkness Cimabue could see so great light. But of all these pictures (and to this we should give consideration), those on the roof, as being less injured by dust and by other accidents, have been preserved much better than the others. These works finished, Giovanni put his hand to painting the lower walls—namely, those that are from the windows downwards—and made certain works upon them, but being called to Florence on some business of his own, he did not carry this work further; but it was finished, as will be told in the proper place, by Giotto, many years afterwards.

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Anderson

"ISAAC'S BLESSING"
(After the fresco of the Roman School.
Assisi: Upper Church of S. Francesco)

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Anderson

THE DEPOSITION FROM THE CROSS
(After the fresco by Pietro Laurati [Lorenzetti].
Assisi: Lower Church of S. Francesco)

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Having returned, then, to Florence, Cimabue painted in the cloister of S. Spirito (wherein there is painted in the Greek manner, by other masters, the whole side facing the church) three small arches by his own hand, from the life of Christ, and truly with much design. And at the same time he sent certain works wrought by himself in Florence to Empoli, which works are still held to-day in great veneration in the Pieve of that township. Next, he made for the Church of S. Maria Novella the panel of Our Lady that is set on high between the Chapel of the Rucellai and that of the Bardi da Vernia; which work was of greater size than any figure that had been made up to that time. And certain angels that are round it show that, although he still had the Greek manner, he was going on approaching in part to the line and method of the modern. Wherefore this work caused so great marvel to the people of that age, by reason of there not having been seen up to then anything better, that it was borne in most solemn procession from the house of Cimabue to the church, with much rejoicing and with trumpets, and he was thereby much rewarded and honoured. It is said, and it may be read in certain records of old painters, that while Cimabue was painting the said panel in certain gardens close to the Porta S. Pietro, there passed through Florence King Charles the Elder of Anjou, and that, among the many signs of welcome made to him by the men of this city, they brought him to see Cimabue's panel; whereupon, for the reason that it had not yet been seen by anyone, in the showing it to the King there flocked together to it all the men and all the women of Florence, with the utmost rejoicing and in the greatest crowd in the world. Wherefore, by reason of the joy that the neighbours had thereby, they called that place the Borgo Allegri; which place, although enclosed in time within the walls, has ever after retained the same name.

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In S. Francesco in Pisa, where he wrought, as has been said above, certain other works, there is in the cloister, beside the door that leads into the church, in a corner, a small panel in distemper by the hand of Cimabue, wherein is a Christ on the Cross, with certain angels round Him, who, weeping, are taking with their hands certain words that are written round the head of Christ and are presenting them to the ears of a Madonna who stands weeping on the right, and on the other side to S. John the Evangelist, who is on the left, all grieving. And the words to the Virgin are: MULIER, ECCE FILIUS TUUS; and those to S. John: ECCE MATER TUA; and those that an angel standing apart holds in his hand, say: EX ILLA HORA ACCEPIT EAM DISCIPULUS IN SUAM. Wherein it is to be observed that Cimabue began to give light and to open the way to invention, assisting art with words in order to express his conception; which was certainly something whimsical and new.

Now because, by means of these works, Cimabue had acquired a very great name, together with much profit, he was appointed as architect, in company with Arnolfo Lapi, a man then excellent in architecture, for the building of S. Maria del Fiore in Florence. But at length, having lived sixty years, he passed to the other life in the year 1300, having little less than resurrected painting. He left many disciples, and among others Giotto, who was afterwards an excellent painter; which Giotto dwelt, after Cimabue, in his master's own house in the Via del Cocomero. Cimabue was buried in S. Maria del Fiore, with that epitaph made for him by one of the Nini:

CREDIT UT CIMABOS PICTURÆ CASTRA TENERE,
 SIC TENUIT, VIVENS: NUNC TENET ASTRA POLI.



Anderson

THE CRUCIFIXION
(After the fresco by Cimabue. Assisi: Upper Church of S. Francesco)

[View larger image](#)

I will not refrain from saying that if to the glory of Cimabue there had not been contrasted the greatness of Giotto, his disciple, his fame would have been greater, as Dante demonstrates in his *Commedia*, wherein, alluding in the eleventh canto of the *Purgatorio* to this very inscription on the tomb, he said:

Credette Cimabue nella pittura
Tener lo campo, ed hora ha Giotto il grido,
Si che la fama di colui s' oscura.

In explanation of these verses, a commentator of Dante, who wrote at the time when Giotto was alive and ten or twelve years after the death of Dante himself—that is, about the year of Christ 1334—says, speaking of Cimabue, precisely these words: "Cimabue was a painter of Florence in the time of the author, very noble beyond the knowledge of man, and withal so arrogant and so disdainful that if there were found by anyone any failing or defect in his work, or if he himself had seen one (even as it comes to pass many times that the craftsman errs, through a defect in the material whereon he works, or through some lack in the instrument wherewith he labours), incontinently he would destroy that work, however costly it might be. Giotto was and is the most exalted among the painters of the same city of Florence, and his works bear testimony for him in Rome, in Naples, in Avignon, in Florence, in Padua, and in many parts of the world." This commentary is now in the hands of the Very Reverend Don Vincenzo Borghini, Prior of the Innocenti, a man not only most famous for his nobility, goodness, and learning, but also endowed with such love and understanding for all the finer arts that he has deserved to be elected by the Lord Duke Cosimo, most properly, as his Lieutenant in our Academy of Design.

But to return to Cimabue: Giotto, truly, obscured his fame not otherwise than as a great light does the splendour of one much less, for the reason that although Cimabue was, as it were, the first cause of the renovation of the art of painting, yet Giotto, his pupil, moved by laudable ambition and assisted by Heaven and by nature, was he who, rising higher with his thought, opened the gate of truth to those who have brought her to that perfection and majesty wherein we see her in her own century, which, being used to see every day the marvels, the miracles, nay, the impossibilities wrought by the craftsmen in that art, is now brought to such a pitch that nothing that men do, be it even more Divine than human, causes it in any way to marvel. Well is it with those whose labours deserve all praise, if, in place of being praised and admired, they do not thereby incur blame and many times even disgrace.

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The portrait of Cimabue, by the hand of Simone Sanese, is to be seen in the Chapter-house of S. Maria Novella, made in profile in the story of the Faith, in a figure that has the face thin, the beard small, reddish, and pointed, with a cap according to the use of those times—that is, wound round and round and under the throat in lovely fashion. He who is beside him is Simone himself, the author of that work, who portrayed himself with two mirrors in order to make his head in profile, placing the one opposite to the other. And that soldier clad in armour who is between them is said to be Count Guido Novello, then Lord of Poppi. There remains for me to say of Cimabue that in the beginning of our book, where I have put together drawings from the own hand of all those who have made drawings from his time to ours, there are to be seen certain small things made by his hand in the way of miniature, wherein, although to-day perchance they appear rather rude than otherwise, it is seen how much excellence was given by his work to



CIMABUE: MADONNA AND CHILD
(Florence: Accademia 102 Panel)

[View larger image](#)

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ARNOLFO DI LAPO

LIFE OF ARNOLFO DI LAPO,

ARCHITECT OF FLORENCE

[NOTICE TO READERS IN THE LIFE OF ARNOLFO.—The said Arnolfo began, in S. Maria Maggiore in Rome, the tomb of Pope Honorius III, of the house of Savelli; which tomb he left imperfect, with the portrait of the said Pope, which was afterwards placed with his design in the principal chapel of mosaic of S. Paolo in Rome, with the portrait of Giovanni Gaetano, Abbot of that monastery. And the marble chapel, wherein is the Manger of Jesus Christ, was one of the last pieces of sculpture in marble that Arnolfo ever made; and he made it at the instance of Pandolfo Ippotecorvo, in the year twelve (?), as an epitaph bears witness that is on the wall beside the chapel; and likewise the chapel and tomb of Pope Boniface VIII, in S. Pietro in Rome, whereon is carved the same name of Arnolfo, who wrought it.]

Having discoursed, in the Preface to the Lives, of certain buildings in a manner old but not ancient, and having been silent, for the reason that I did not know them, about the names of the architects who had charge of their construction, I will make mention, in the Preface to this Life of Arnolfo, of certain other edifices built in his time or a little before, whereof in like manner it is not known who were the masters; and then of those that were built in the same times, whereof it is known who were the architects, either because the manner of the edifices themselves is recognized very well, or because we have had information about them by means of the writings

and memorials left by them in the works that they made. Nor will this be outside our subject, seeing that, although they are neither in a beautiful nor in a good manner but only vast and magnificent, they are worthy none the less of some consideration.

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There were built, then, in the time of Lapo and of Arnolfo his son, many edifices of importance both in Italy and abroad, whereof I have not been able to find the architects, such as the Abbey of Monreale in Sicily, the Piscopio of Naples, the Certosa of Pavia, the Duomo of Milan, S. Pietro and S. Petronio in Bologna, and many others which are seen throughout all Italy, built at incredible cost. Having seen all these buildings for myself and studied them, and likewise many sculptures of those times, particularly in Ravenna, and not having ever found, I do not say any memorials of the masters, but even many times the date when they were built, I cannot but marvel at the rudeness and little desire for glory of the men of that age. But returning to our subject; after the buildings named above, there began at last to arise men of a more exalted spirit, who, if they did not find, sought at least to find something of the good. The first was Buono, of whom I know neither the country nor the surname, for the reason that in making record of himself in some of his works he put nothing but simply his name. He, being both sculptor and architect, first made many palaces and churches and some sculptures in Ravenna, in the year of our salvation 1152; and having become known by reason of these works, he was called to Naples, where he founded (although they were finished by others, as will be told) the Castel Capuano and the Castel dell' Uovo; and afterwards, in the time of Domenico Morosini, Doge of Venice, he founded the Campanile of S. Marco with much consideration and judgment, having caused the foundation of that tower to be so well fixed with piles that it has never moved a hair's-breadth, as many buildings constructed in that city before his day have been seen and still are seen to have done. And from him, perchance, the Venetians learnt to found, in the manner in which they do it to-day, the very beautiful and very rich edifices that every day are being built so magnificently in that most noble city. It is true, indeed, that this tower has nothing else good in it, neither manner, nor ornament, nor, in short, anything that might be worthy of much praise. It was finished under Anastasius IV and Adrian IV, Pontiffs, in the year 1154. In architecture, likewise, Buono made the Church of S. Andrea in Pistoia, and in sculpture he made an architrave of marble that is over the door, full of figures made in the manner of the Goths, on which architrave his name is carved, with the date when this work was made by him, which was the year 1166. Next, being summoned to Florence, he gave the design for enlarging, as was done, the Church of S. Maria Maggiore, which was then without the city, and held in great veneration for the reason that Pope Pelagius had consecrated it many years before, and because, as to size and manner, it was a very fair body of a church.

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Being then summoned by the Aretines to their city, Buono built the old habitation of the Lords of Arezzo, namely, a palace in the manner of the Goths, and beside it a bell-tower. This edifice, which for that manner was good enough, was thrown to the ground, because it was opposite and very near to the fortress of that city, in the year 1533. Afterwards, the art making some little improvement through the works of one Guglielmo, German (I believe) in origin, there were built certain edifices of the greatest cost and in a slightly better manner; for this Guglielmo, so it is said, in the year 1174, together with Bonanno, a sculptor, founded in Pisa the Campanile of the Duomo, where there are certain words carved that say: A.D. MCLXXIV, CAMPANILE HOC FUIT FUNDATUM, MENSE AUG. But these two architects not having much practice of founding in Pisa and therefore not supporting the platform with piles, as they ought, before they had gone halfway with that building it inclined to one side and bent over to the weakest part, in a manner that the said campanile leans six and a half braccia^[6] out of the straight, according as the foundation sank on this side; and although in the lower part this is not much, up above it shows clear enough to make men stand fast in a marvel how it can be that it has not fallen down and has not thrown out cracks. The reason is that this edifice is round both without and within and built in the shape of a hollow well, and bound together with the stones in a manner that it is well-nigh impossible that it should fall; and it is assisted, above all, by the foundations, which have an outwork three braccia wide outside the tower, made, as it is seen, after the sinking of the campanile, in order to support it. I am convinced that if it had been square it would not have been standing to-day, for the reason that the corner-stones of the square sides, as is often seen to happen, would have forced them out in a manner that it would have fallen down. And if the Garisenda, a tower in Bologna, although square, leans and does not fall, that comes to pass because it is slender and does not lean so much, not being burdened by so great a weight, by a great measure, as is this campanile, which is praised, not because it has in it any design or beautiful manner, but simply for its extravagance, it appearing impossible to anyone who sees it that it can in any wise keep standing. And the same Bonanno, while the said campanile was building, made, in the year 1180, the royal door of bronze for the said Duomo of Pisa, wherein are seen these letters:

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EGO BONANNUS PIS. MEA ARTE HANC PORTAM UNO ANNO PERFECI,
TEMPORE BENEDICTI OPERARII.

Next, from the walls that were made from ancient spoils at S. Giovanni Laterano in Rome, under Lucius III and Urban III, Pontiffs, when the Emperor Frederick was crowned by this Urban, it is seen that the art was going on continually improving, because certain little temples and chapels, built, as has been said, of spoils, have passing good design and certain things in them worthy of consideration, and among others this, that in order not to overburden the walls of these buildings the vaulting was made of small tubes and with partitions of stucco, praiseworthy enough for these times. And from the mouldings and other parts it is seen that the craftsmen were going on striving in order to find the good way.

Innocent III afterwards caused two palaces to be built on the Vatican Hill, which were passing good, in so far as it has been possible to discover; but since they were destroyed by other Popes, and in particular by Nicholas V, who pulled down and rebuilt the greater part of one palace, there will be nothing said of them but this, that a part of them is to be seen in the great Round Tower and part in the old sacristy of S. Pietro. This Innocent III, who ruled for nineteen years and took much delight in building, made many edifices in Rome; and in particular, with the design of Marchionne Aretino, both architect and sculptor, the Conti Tower, so called from his own surname, seeing that he was of that family. The same Marchionne, in the year when Innocent III died, finished the building of the Pieve of Arezzo and likewise the campanile, making in sculpture, for the façade of the said church, three rows of columns one above the other, with great variety not only in the fashion of the capitals and the bases but also in the shafts of the columns, some among them being thick, some slender, some joined together two by two, and others four by four. In like manner there are some twined in the manner of vines, and some made in the shape of figures acting as supports, with diverse carvings. He also made therein many animals of diverse sorts that support on the middle of their backs the weights of those columns, and all with the most strange and extravagant inventions that can possibly be imagined, and not only wide of the good order of the ancients but almost wide of all just and reasonable proportion. But with all this, whosoever sets out well to consider the whole sees that he went on striving to do well, and thought peradventure to have found it in that method of working and in that whimsical variety. The same man made in sculpture, on the arch that is over the door of the said church, in barbaric manner, a God the Father with certain angels, in half-relief and rather large; and in the arch he carved the twelve months, placing his own name underneath in round letters, as was the custom, and the date—namely, the year 1216. It is said that Marchionne built in the Borgo Vecchio in Rome, for the same Pope Innocent III, the ancient edifice of the Hospital and Church of S. Spirito in Sassia, where there is still seen something of the old; and the ancient church was still standing in our own day, when it was rebuilt in modern fashion, with greater ornament and design, by Pope Paul III of the house of Farnese.

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And in S. Maria Maggiore, also in Rome, he built the marble chapel where there is the Manger of Jesus Christ; here he portrayed from the life Pope Honorius III, whose tomb, also, he made, with ornaments some little better than and different enough from the manner that was then in universal use throughout all Italy. About the same time Marchionne also made the side door of S. Pietro in Bologna, which was truly for those times a work of the greatest mastery, by reason of the many carvings that are seen therein, such as lions in the round that sustain columns, and men in the use of porters, and other animals that support weights; and in the arch above he made the twelve months in full relief, with various fancies, and for each month its celestial sign; which work must have been held marvellous in those times.

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RECLINING FEMALE FIGURE FROM A TOMB
(After the School of Arnolfo di Lapo. Florence: Collection Bardini)

[View larger image](#)

About the same time there was founded the Order of the Friars Minor of S. Francis, which was confirmed by the said Innocent III, Pontiff, in the year 1206; and there came such growth, not only in Italy but in all the other parts of the world, both to the devoutness and to the number of the Friars, that there was scarce a city of account that did not erect for them churches and convents of the greatest cost, each according to its power. Wherefore, Frate Elia having erected, two years before the death of S. Francis (while the Saint himself, as General, was abroad preaching, and he, Prior in Assisi), a church with the title of Our Lady, and S. Francis having died, and all Christendom flocking together to visit the body of the Saint, who, in life and in death, had been known as so much the friend of God, and every man making offering to the holy place according to his power, it was ordained that the said church begun by Frate Elia should be

built much greater and more magnificent. But there being a dearth of good architects, and the work which was to be done having need of an excellent one, seeing that it had to be built upon a very high hill at the foot of which there runs a torrent called Tescio, there was brought to Assisi, after much consideration, as the best of all that were then to be found, one Maestro Jacopo Tedesco. He, having considered the site and grasped the wishes of the fathers, who held thereunto a general Chapter in Assisi, designed a very beautiful body of a church and convent, making in the model three tiers, one to be made underground and the others for two churches, one of which, on the lower level, should serve as a court, with a fairly large portico round it, and the other for a church; planning that from the first one should climb to the second by a most convenient flight of steps, which should wind round the principal chapel, opening out into two parts in order to lead more easily into the second church, to which he gave the form of a T, making it five times as long as it is broad and dividing one bay from another with great piers of stone, on which he afterwards threw very bold arches, with groined vaulting between one and another. From a model so made, then, was built this truly very great edifice, and it was followed in every part, save in the buttresses above that had to surround the apse and the principal chapel, and in making the vaulting groined, because they did not make it as has been said, but barrel-shaped, in order that it might be stronger. Next, in front of the principal chapel of the lower church, they placed the altar, and under that, when it was finished, they laid, with most solemn translation, the body of S. Francis. And because the true sepulchre which holds the body of the glorious Saint is in the first—that is, in the lowest church—where no one ever goes, and the doors are walled up, round the said altar there are very large gratings of iron, with rich ornaments in marble and mosaic, that look down therein. This building is flanked on one of the sides by two sacristies, and by a very high campanile, namely, five times as high as it is broad. It had on top a very high octagonal spire, but this was removed because it threatened to fall. This whole work was brought to a finish in the space of four years, and no more, by the genius of Maestro Jacopo Tedesco and by the solicitude of Frate Elia, after whose death, to the end that such a pile might never through any lapse of time fall into ruin, there were built round the lower church twelve very stout towers, and in each of these a spiral staircase that climbs from the ground up to the summit. And in time, afterwards, there were made therein many chapels and other very rich ornaments, whereof there is no need to discourse further, since this is enough on this subject for the present, and above all because everyone can see how much of the useful, the ornamental, and the beautiful has been added to this beginning of Maestro Jacopo's by many supreme Pontiffs, Cardinals, Princes, and other people of importance throughout all Europe.

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Now, to return to Maestro Jacopo; by means of this work he acquired so great fame throughout all Italy that he was summoned by those who then governed the city of Florence, and afterwards received with the greatest possible friendliness; although, according to the use that the Florentines have, and had still more in ancient times, of abbreviating names, he was called not Jacopo but Lapo throughout all the course of his life; for he dwelt ever with his whole family in that city. And although he went at diverse times to erect many buildings throughout Tuscany, such as the Palace of Poppi in the Casentino, for that Count who had had for wife the beautiful Gualdrada, and for her dower, the Casentino; and for the Aretines, the Vescovado,^[7] and the Palazzo Vecchio of the Lords of Pietramala; none the less his home was always in Florence, where, having founded in the year 1218 the piers of the Ponte alla Carraja, which was then called the Ponte Nuovo, he delivered them finished in two years; and a little time afterwards the rest was finished of wood, as was then the custom. And in the year 1221 he gave the design for the Church of S. Salvatore del Vescovado, which was begun under his direction, and that of S. Michele in Piazza Padella, where there are certain sculptures in the manner of those times. Next, having given the design for draining the waters of the city, having caused the Piazza di S. Giovanni to be raised, having built, in the time of Messer Rubaconte da Mandella, a Milanese, the bridge that retains the same man's name, and having discovered that most useful method of paving streets, which before were covered with bricks, he made the model of the Palace, to-day of the Podestà, which was then built for the Anziani. And finally, having sent the model of a tomb to Sicily, to the Abbey of Monreale, for the Emperor Frederick and by order of Manfred, he died, leaving Arnolfo, his son, heir no less to the talent than to the wealth of his father.

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This Arnolfo, from whose talent architecture gained no less betterment than painting had gained from that of Cimabue, being born in the year 1232, was thirty years of age when his father died, and was held in very great esteem, for the reason that, having not only learnt from his father all that he knew, but having also given attention under Cimabue to design in order to make use of it in sculpture, he was held by so much the best architect in Tuscany, that not only did the Florentines found the last circle of the walls of their city under his direction, in the year 1284, and make after his design the Loggia and the piers of Or San Michele, where the grain was sold, building them of bricks and with a simple roof above, but by his counsel, in the same year when the Poggio de' Magnuoli collapsed, on the brow of S. Giorgio above S. Lucia in the Via de' Bardi, they determined by means of a public decree that there should be no more building on the said spot, nor should any edifice be ever made, seeing that by the sinking of the stones, which have water trickling under them, there would be always danger in whatsoever edifice might be made there. That this is true has been seen in our own day from the ruin of many buildings and magnificent houses of noblemen. In the next year, 1285, he founded the Loggia and Piazza de' Priori, and built the principal chapel of the Badia of Florence, and the two that are on either side of it, renovating the church and the choir, which at first had been made much smaller by Count Ugo, founder of that abbey; and for Cardinal Giovanni degli Orsini, Legate of the Pope in Tuscany, he built the campanile of the said church, which, according to the works of those times, was much praised, although it did not have its completion of grey-stone until afterwards, in the

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year 1330.

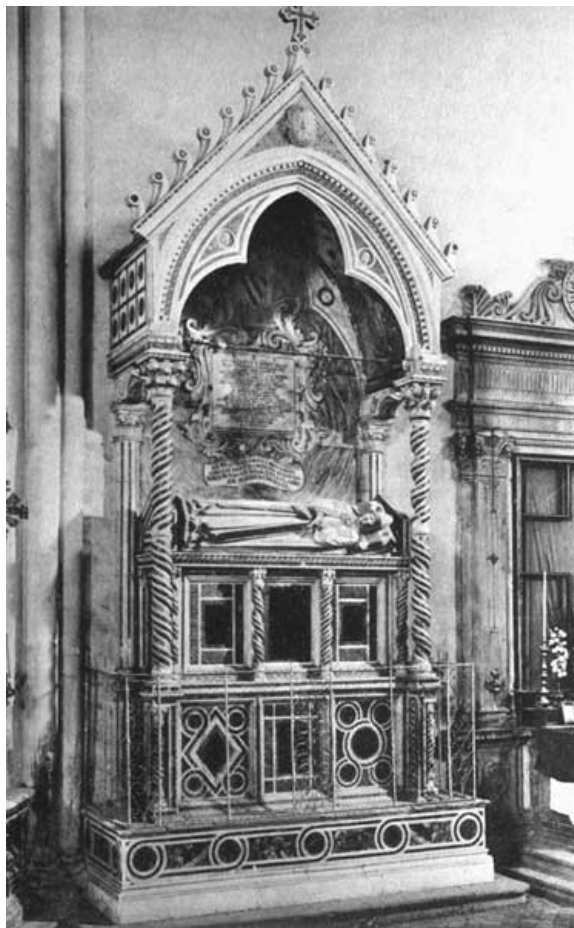
After this there was founded with his design, in the year 1294, the Church of S. Croce, where the Friars Minor have their seat. What with the middle nave and the two lesser ones Arnolfo constructed this so wide, that, being unable to make the vaulting below the roof by reason of the too great space, he, with much judgment, caused arches to be made from pier to pier, and upon these he placed the roofs on a slope, building stone gutters over the said arches in order to carry away the rain-water, and giving them so much fall as to make the roofs secure, as they are, from the danger of rotting; which device was not only new and ingenious then, but is equally useful and worthy of being considered to-day. He then gave the design for the first cloisters of the old convent of that church, and a little time after he caused to be removed from round the Church of S. Giovanni, on the outer side, all the arches and tombs of marble and grey-stone that were there, and had part of them placed behind the campanile on the façade of the Canon's house, beside the Company of S. Zanobi; and then he incrustrated with black marble from Prato all the eight outer walls of the said S. Giovanni, removing the grey-stone that there had been before between these ancient marbles. The Florentines, in the meanwhile, wishing to build walls in the Valdarno di Sopra round Castello di San Giovanni and Castel Franco, for the convenience of the city and of their victualling by means of the markets, Arnolfo made the design for them in the year 1295, and satisfied them in such a manner, as well in this as he had done in the other works, that he was made citizen of Florence.

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After these works, the Florentines determined, as Giovanni Villani relates in his History, to build a principal church in their city, and to build it such that in point of greatness and magnificence there could be desired none larger or more beautiful from the industry and knowledge of men; and Arnolfo made the design and the model of the never to be sufficiently praised Church of S. Maria del Fiore, ordering that it should be all incrustrated, without, with polished marbles and with the so many cornices, pilasters, columns, carved foliage, figures, and other ornaments, with which to-day it is seen brought, if not to the whole, to a great part at least of its perfection. And what was marvellous therein above everything else was this, that incorporating, besides S. Reparata, other small churches and houses that were round it, in making the site, which is most beautiful, he showed so great diligence and judgment in causing the foundations of so great a fabric to be made broad and deep, filling them with good material—namely, with gravel and lime and with great stones below—wherefore the square is still called "Lungo i Fondamenti," that they have been very well able, as is to be seen to-day, to support the weight of the great mass of the cupola which Filippo di Ser Brunellesco raised over them. The laying of such foundations for so great a church was celebrated with much solemnity, for on the day of the Nativity of Our Lady, in 1298, the first stone was laid by the Cardinal Legate of the Pope, in the presence not only of many Bishops and of all the clergy, but of the Podestà as well, the Captains, Priors, and other magistrates of the city, nay, of the whole people of Florence, calling it S. Maria del Fiore. And because it was estimated that the expenses of this fabric must be very great, as they afterwards were, there was imposed a tax at the Chamber of the Commune of four danari in the lira on everything that was put out at interest, and two soldi per head per annum; not to mention that the Pope and the Legate granted very great indulgences to those who should make them offerings thereunto. I will not forbear to say, moreover, that besides the foundations, very broad and fifteen braccia deep, much consideration was shown in making those buttresses of masonry at every angle of the eight sides, seeing that it was these afterwards that emboldened the mind of Brunellesco to superimpose a much greater weight than that which Arnolfo, perchance, had thought to impose thereon. It is said that while the two first side-doors of S. Maria del Fiore were being begun in marble Arnolfo caused some fig-leaves to be carved on a frieze, these being the arms of himself and of Maestro Lapo, his father, and that therefore it may be believed that from him the family of the Lapi had its origin, to-day a noble family in Florence. Others say, likewise, that from the descendants of Arnolfo there descended Filippo di Ser Brunellesco. But leaving this, seeing that others believe that the Lapi came from Ficaruolo, a township on the mouth of the Po, and returning to our Arnolfo, I say that by reason of the greatness of this work he deserves infinite praise and an eternal name, above all because he caused it to be all incrustrated, without, with marbles of many colours, and within, with hard stone, and made even the smallest corners of that same stone. But in order that everyone may know the exact size of this marvellous fabric, I say that from the door up to the end of the Chapel of S. Zanobi the length is 260 braccia, and the breadth across the transepts 166; across the three naves it is 66 braccia. The middle nave alone is 72 braccia in height; and the other two lesser naves, 48 braccia. The external circuit of the whole church is 1,280 braccia. The cupola, from the ground up to the base of the lantern, is 154 braccia; the lantern, without the ball, is 36 braccia in height; the ball, 4 braccia in height; the cross, 8 braccia in height. The whole cupola, from the ground up to the summit of the cross, is 202 braccia.

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Alinari

TOMB OF ADRIAN V
(After the School of Arnolfo di Lapo.
Viterbo: Church of S. Francesco)

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But returning to Arnolfo, I say that being held, as he was, excellent, he had acquired so great trust that nothing of importance was determined without his counsel; wherefore, in the same year, the Commune of Florence having finished the foundation of the last circle of the walls of the city, even as it was said above that they were formerly begun, and so too the towers of the gates, and all being in great part well advanced, he made a beginning for the Palace of the Signori, designing it in resemblance to that which his father Lapo had built in the Casentino for the Counts of Poppi. But yet, however magnificent and great he designed it, he could not give it that perfection which his art and his judgment required, for the following reason: the houses of the Uberti, Ghibellines and rebels against the people of Florence, had been pulled down and thrown to the ground, and a square had been made on the site, and the stupid obstinacy of certain men prevailed so greatly that Arnolfo could not bring it about, through whatsoever arguments he might urge thereunto, that it should be granted to him to put the Palace on a square base, because the governors had refused that the Palace should have its foundations in any way whatsoever on the ground of the rebel Uberti. And they brought it about that the northern aisle of S. Pietro Scheraggio should be thrown to the ground, rather than let him work in the middle of the square with his own measurements; not to mention that they insisted, moreover, that there should be united and incorporated with the Palace the Tower of the Foraboschi, called the "Torre della Vacca," in height fifty braccia, for the use of the great bell, and together with it some houses bought by the Commune for this edifice. For which reasons no one must marvel if the foundation of the Palace is awry and out of the square, it having been necessary, in order to incorporate the tower in the middle and to render it stronger, to bind it round with the walls of the Palace; which walls, having been laid open in the year 1561 by Giorgio Vasari, painter and architect, were found excellent. Arnolfo, then, having filled up the said tower with good material, it was afterwards easy for other masters to make thereon the very high campanile that is to be seen there to-day; for within the limits of two years he finished only the Palace, which has subsequently received from time to time those improvements which give it to-day that greatness and majesty that are to be seen.

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After all these works and many more that Arnolfo made, no less convenient and useful than beautiful, he died at the age of seventy, in 1300, at the very time when Giovanni Villani began to write the Universal History of his times. And because he not only left S. Maria del Fiore founded, but its three principal tribunes, which are under the cupola, vaulted, to his own great glory, he well deserved that there should be made a memorial of him on the corner of the church opposite the Campanile, with these verses carved in marble in round letters:

ANNIS · MILLENIS · CENTUM · BIS · OCTO · NOGENIS ·

VENIT · LEGATUS · ROMA · BONITATE · DOTATUS ·
QUI · LAPIDEM · FIXIT · FUNDO · SIMUL · ET · BENEDIXIT ·
PRÆSULE · FRANCISCO · GESTANTE · PONTIFICATUM ·
ISTUD · AB · ARNOLFO · TEMPLUM · FUIT · ÆDIFICATUM ·
HOC · OPUS · INSIGNE · DECORANS · FLORENTIA · DIGNE ·
REGINÆ · CÆLI · CONSTRUXIT · MENTE · FIDELI ·
QUAM · TU · VIRGO · PIA · SEMPER · DEFENDE · MARIA ·

Of this Arnolfo we have written the Life, with the greatest brevity that has been possible, for the reason that, although his works do not approach by a great measure the perfection of the things of to-day, he deserves, none the less, to be celebrated with loving memory, having shown amid so great darkness, to those who lived after him, the way to walk to perfection. The portrait of Arnolfo, by the hand of Giotto, is to be seen in S. Croce, beside the principal chapel, at the beginning of the story, where the friars are weeping for the death of S. Francis, in one of two men that are talking together. And the picture of the Church of S. Maria del Fiore—namely, of the outer side with the cupola—by the hand of Simone Sanese, is to be seen in the Chapter-house of S. Maria Novella, copied from the original in wood that Arnolfo made; wherein it is noticeable that he had thought to raise the dome immediately over the walls, at the edge of the first cornice, whereas Filippo di Ser Brunellesco, in order to relieve them of weight and to make it more graceful, added thereto, before he began to raise it, all that height wherein to-day are the round windows; which circumstance would be even clearer than it is, if the little care and diligence of those who have directed the Works of S. Maria del Fiore in the years past had not left the very model that Arnolfo made to go to ruin, and afterwards those of Brunellesco and of the others.

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NICCOLA AND GIOVANNI OF PISA

LIFE OF NICCOLA AND GIOVANNI OF PISA, [*NICCOLA PISANO AND GIOVANNI PISANO*], SCULPTORS AND ARCHITECTS

Having discoursed of design and of painting in the Life of Cimabue and of architecture in that of Arnolfo di Lapo, in this one concerning Niccola and Giovanni of Pisa we will treat of sculpture, and also of the most important buildings that they made, for the reason that their works in sculpture and in architecture truly deserve to be celebrated, not only as being large and magnificent but also well enough conceived, since both in working marble and in building they swept away in great part that old Greek manner, rude and void of proportion, showing better invention in their stories and giving better attitudes to their figures.

Niccola Pisano, then, chancing to be under certain Greek sculptors who were working the figures and other carved ornaments of the Duomo of Pisa and of the Church of S. Giovanni, and there being, among many marble spoils brought by the fleet of the Pisans, certain ancient sarcophagi that are to-day in the Campo Santo of that city, there was one of them, most beautiful among them all, whereon there was carved the Chase of Meleager after the Calydonian Boar, in very beautiful manner, seeing that both the nude figures and the draped were wrought with much mastery and with most perfect design. This sarcophagus was placed by the Pisans, by reason of its beauty, in the side of the Duomo opposite S. Rocco, beside the principal side-door, and it served for the body of the mother of Countess Matilda, if indeed these words are true that are to be read carved in the marble:

A.D. MCXVI. IX KAL. AUG. OBIT D. MATILDA FELICIS MEMORIÆ COMITISSA,
QUÆ PRO ANIMA GENETRICIS SUÆ DOMINÆ BEATRICIS COMITISSÆ
VENERABILIS, IN HAC TUMBA HONORABILI QUIESCENTIS, IN MULTIS
PARTIBUS MIRIFICE HANC DOTAVIT ECCLESIAM; QUARUM ANIMÆ
REQUIESCANT IN PACE

And then:

A.D. MCCCIII. SUB DIGNISSIMO OPERARIO D. BURGUNDIO TADI, OCCASIONE
GRADUUM FIENDORUM PER IPSUM CIRCA ECCLESIAM, SUPRADICTA TUMBA
SUPERIUS NOTATA BIS TRANSLATA FUIT, TUNC DE SEDIBUS PRIMIS IN
ECCLESIAM, NUNC DE ECCLESIA IN HUNC LOCUM, UT CERNITIS,

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Alinari

**THE PULPIT OF THE BAPTISTERY OF PISA
(After Niccolò Pisano. Pisa)**

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Niccola, pondering over the beauty of this work and being greatly pleased therewith, put so much study and diligence into imitating this manner and some other good sculptures that were in these other ancient sarcophagi, that he was judged, after no long time, the best sculptor of his day; there being in Tuscany in those times, after Arnolfo, no other sculptor of repute save Fuccio, an architect and sculptor of Florence, who made S. Maria sopra Arno in Florence, in the year 1229, placing his name there, over a door, and in the Church of S. Francesco in Assisi he made the marble tomb of the Queen of Cyprus, with many figures, and in particular a portrait of her sitting on a lion, in order to show the strength of her soul; which Queen, after her death, left a great sum of money to the end that this fabric might be finished. Niccola, then, having made himself known as a much better master than was Fuccio, was summoned to Bologna in the year 1225, after the death of S. Domenico Calagora, first founder of the Order of Preaching Friars, in order to make a marble tomb for the said Saint; wherefore, after agreement with those who had the charge of it, he made it full of figures in that manner wherein it is to be seen to-day, and delivered it finished in the year 1231 with much credit to himself, for it was held something remarkable, and the best of all the works that had been wrought in sculpture up to that time. He made, likewise, the model of that church and of a great part of the convent. Afterwards Niccola, returning to Tuscany, found that Fuccio had departed from Florence and had gone to Rome in those days when the Emperor Frederick was crowned by Honorius, and from Rome with Frederick to Naples, where he finished the Castel di Capuana, to-day called the Vicaria, wherein are all the tribunals of that kingdom, and likewise the Castel dell' Uovo; and where he likewise founded the towers he also made the gates over the River Volturno for the city of Capua, and a park girt with walls, for fowling, near Gravina, and another for sport in winter at Melfi; besides many other things that are not related, for the sake of brevity. Niccola, meanwhile, busying himself in Florence, was going on exercising himself not only in sculpture but in architecture as well, by means of the buildings that were going on being made with some little goodness of design throughout all Italy, and in particular in Tuscany; wherefore he occupied himself not a little with the building of the Abbey of Settimo, which had not been finished by the executors of Count Ugo of Brandenburg, like the other six, as was said above. And although it is read in a marble epitaph on the campanile of the said abbey, GUGLIELM. ME FECIT, it is known, nevertheless, by the manner, that it was directed with the counsel of Niccola. About the same time he made the Palazzo Vecchio of the Anziani in Pisa, pulled down in our day by Duke Cosimo, in order to make the magnificent Palace and Convent of the Knights of S. Stephen on the same spot, using some part of the old, from the design and model of Giorgio Vasari, painter and

architect of Arezzo, who has accommodated himself to those old walls as well as he has been able in fitting them into the new. Niccola made, likewise in Pisa, many other palaces and churches, and he was the first, since the loss of the good method of building, who made it the custom to found edifices in Pisa on piers, and on these to raise arches, piles having first been sunk under the said piers; because, with any other method, the solid base of the foundation cracked and the walls always collapsed, whereas the sinking of piles renders the edifice absolutely safe, even as experience shows. With his design, also, was made the Church of S. Michele in Borgo for the Monks of Camaldoli. But the most beautiful, the most ingenious, and the most whimsical work of architecture that Niccola ever made was the Campanile of S. Niccola in Pisa, where is the seat of the Friars of S. Augustine, for the reason that it is octagonal on the outer side and round within, with stairs that wind in a spiral and lead to the summit, leaving the hollow space in the middle free, in the shape of a well, and on every fourth step are columns that have the arches above them on a slant and wind round and round; wherefore, the spring of the vaulting resting on the said arches, one goes climbing to the summit in a manner that he who is on the ground always sees all those who are climbing, those who are climbing see those who are on the ground, and those who are halfway up see both the first and the second—that is, those who are above and those who are below. This fanciful invention, with better method and more just proportions, and with more adornment, was afterwards put into execution by the architect Bramante in the Belvedere in Rome, for Pope Julius II, and by Antonio da San Gallo in the well that is at Orvieto, by order of Pope Clement VII, as will be told when the time comes.

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But returning to Niccola, who was no less excellent as sculptor than as architect; in the façade of the Church of S. Martino in Lucca, under the portico that is above the lesser door, on the left as one enters into the church, where there is seen a Christ Deposed from the Cross, he made a marble scene in half-relief, all full of figures wrought with much diligence, having hollowed out the marble and finished the whole in a manner that gave hope to those who were previously working at the art with very great difficulty, that there soon should come one who, with more facility, would give them better assistance. The same Niccola, in the year 1240, gave the design for the Church of S. Jacopo in Pistoia, and put to work there in mosaic certain Tuscan masters who made the vaulting of the choir-niche, which, although in those times it was held as something difficult and of great cost, moves us to-day rather to laughter and to compassion than to marvel, and all the more because such confusion, which comes from lack of design, existed not only in Tuscany but throughout all Italy, where many buildings and other works, that were being wrought without method and without design, give us to know no less the poverty of their talents than the unmeasured riches wasted by the men of those times, by reason of their having had no masters who might execute in a good manner any work that they might do.

Niccola, then, by means of the works that he was making in sculpture and in architecture, was going on ever acquiring a greater name than the sculptors and architects who were then working in Romagna, as can be seen in S. Ippolito and S. Giovanni of Faenza, in the Duomo of Ravenna, in S. Francesco, in the houses of the Traversari, and in the Church of Porto; and at Rimini, in the fabric of the public buildings, in the houses of the Malatesti, and in other buildings, which are all much worse than the old edifices made about the same time in Tuscany. And what has been said of Romagna can be also said with truth of a part of Lombardy. A glance at the Duomo of Ferrara, and at the other buildings made by the Marquis Azzo, will give us to know that this is the truth and how different they are from the Santo of Padua, made with the model of Niccola, and from the Church of the Friars Minor in Venice, both magnificent and honoured buildings. Many, in the time of Niccola, moved by laudable envy, applied themselves with more zeal to sculpture than they had done before, and particularly in Milan, whither there assembled for the building of the Duomo many Lombards and Germans, who afterwards scattered throughout Italy by reason of the discords that arose between the Milanese and the Emperor Frederick. And so these craftsmen, beginning to compete among themselves both in marble and in building, found some little of the good. The same came to pass in Florence after the works of Arnolfo and Niccola had been seen; and the latter, while the little Church of the Misericordia was being erected from his design in the Piazza di S. Giovanni, made therein in marble, with his own hand, a Madonna with S. Dominic and another Saint, one on either side of her, which may still be seen on the outer façade of the said church.

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Alinari

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI
(Detail, after Niccola Pisano, from the Pulpit of the Baptistery, Pisa)

[View larger image](#)

The Florentines had begun, in the time of Niccola, to throw to the ground many towers made formerly in barbaric manner throughout the whole city, in order that the people might be less hurt by reason of these in the brawls that were often taking place between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, or in order that there might be greater security for the State, and it appeared to them that it would be very difficult to pull down the Tower of Guardamorto, which was in the Piazza di S. Giovanni, because the walls had been made so stoutly that they could not be pulled to pieces with pickaxes, and all the more because it was very high. Wherefore, Niccola causing the foot of the tower to be cut away on one side and supporting it with wooden props a braccio and a half in length, and then setting fire to them, as soon as the props were burnt away it fell and was almost entirely shattered; which was held something so ingenious and useful for such affairs that later it passed into use, insomuch that, when there is need, any building is destroyed in very little time with this most easy method. Niccola was present at the first foundation of the Duomo of Siena, and designed the Church of S. Giovanni in the same city; then, having returned to Florence in the same year that the Guelphs returned, he designed the Church of S. Trinita, and the Convent of the Nuns of Faenza, destroyed in our day in order to make the citadel. Being next summoned to Naples, in order not to desert the work in Tuscany he sent thither Maglione, his pupil, a sculptor and architect, who afterwards made, in the time of Conradin, the Church of S. Lorenzo in Naples, finished part of the Piscopio, and made there certain tombs, wherein he imitated closely the manner of Niccola, his master.

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Niccola, meanwhile, being summoned by the people of Volterra, in the year 1254 (when they came under the power of the Florentines), in order that their Duomo, which was small, might be enlarged, he brought it to better form, although it was very irregular, and made it more magnificent than it was before. Then, having returned finally to Pisa, he made the pulpit of S. Giovanni, in marble, putting therein all diligence in order to leave a memorial of himself to his country; and among other things, carving in it the Universal Judgment, he made therein many figures, if not with perfect design, at least with infinite patience and diligence, as can be seen. And because it appeared to him, as was true, that he had done a work worthy of praise, he carved at the foot of it these verses:

ANNO MILLENO BIS CENTUM BISQUE TRIDENO
 HOC OPUS INSIGNE SCULPSIT NICOLA PISANUS.

The people of Siena, moved by the fame of this work, which greatly pleased not only the Pisans but everyone who saw it, gave to Niccola the making of the pulpit of their Duomo, in which there is sung the Gospel; Guglielmo Mariscotti being Prætor. In this Niccola made many stories of Jesus Christ, with much credit to himself, by reason of the figures that are there wrought and with great difficulty almost wholly detached from the marble. Niccola likewise made the design of the Church and Convent of S. Domenico in Arezzo for the Lords of Pietramala, who erected it. And at the entreaty of Bishop Ubertini he restored the Pieve of Cortona, and founded the Church of S. Margherita for the Friars of S. Francis, on the highest point of that city.

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Alinari

THE VISITATION AND THE NATIVITY
(Detail, after Niccola Pisano, from the Pulpit of the Baptistery,
Siena)

[View larger image](#)

Wherefore, the fame of Niccola ever growing greater by reason of so great works, he was summoned in the year 1267, by Pope Clement IV, to Viterbo, where, besides many other works, he restored the Church and Convent of the Preaching Friars. From Viterbo he went to Naples to King Charles I, who, having routed and slain Conradin on the plain of Tagliacozzo, caused to be made on that spot a very rich church and abbey, burying therein the infinite number of bodies slain on that day, and ordaining afterwards that there should be prayers offered by many monks, day and night, for their souls; in which building King Charles was so well pleased with the work of Niccola that he honoured and rewarded him very greatly. Returning from Naples to Tuscany, Niccola stayed in Orvieto for the building of S. Maria, and working there in company with some Germans, he made in marble, for the façade of that church, certain figures in the round, and in particular two scenes of the Universal Judgment containing Paradise and Hell; and even as he strove, in the Paradise, to give the greatest beauty that he knew to the souls of the blessed, restored to their bodies, so too in the Hell he made the strangest forms of devils that can possibly be seen, most intent on tormenting the souls of the damned; and in this work he surpassed not merely the Germans who were working there but even his own self, to his own great credit. And for the reason that he made therein a great number of figures and endured much fatigue, it has been nothing but praised up to our own times by those who have had no more judgment than this much in sculpture.

Niccola had, among others, a son called Giovanni, who, because he ever followed his father and applied himself under his teaching to sculpture and to architecture, in a few years became not only equal to his father but in some ways superior; wherefore Niccola, being now old, retired to Pisa, and living there quietly left the management of everything to his son. Pope Urban IV having died at that time in Perugia, a summons was sent to Giovanni, who, having gone there, made a tomb of marble for that Pontiff, which, together with that of Pope Martin IV, was afterwards thrown to the ground when the people of Perugia enlarged their Vescovado, in a manner that there are seen only a few relics of it scattered throughout the church. And the people of Perugia, at the same time, having brought a very great body of water through leaden pipes from the hill of Pacciano, two miles distant from the city, by means of the genius and industry of a friar of the Silvestrines, it was given to Giovanni Pisano to make all the ornaments of the fountain, both in bronze and in marble; wherefore he put his hand thereto and made three tiers of basins, two of marble and one of bronze. The first is placed above twelve rows of steps, each with twelve sides; the other on some columns that stand on the lowest level of the first basin—that is, in the middle; and the third, which is of bronze, rests on three figures, and has in the middle certain griffins, also of bronze, that pour water on every side; and because it appeared to Giovanni that he had done very well in this work, he put on it his name. About the year 1560, the arches and the conduits of this fountain (which cost 160,000 ducats of gold) having become in great part spoilt and ruined, Vincenzo Danti, a sculptor of Perugia, without rebuilding the arches, which would have been a thing of the greatest cost, very ingeniously reconducted the water to the fountain in the way that it was before, with no small credit to himself.

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This work finished, Giovanni, desiring to see again his old and ailing father, departed from Perugia in order to return to Pisa; but, passing through Florence, he was forced to stay, to the end that he might apply himself, together with others, to the work of the Mills on the Arno, which

were being made at S. Gregorio near the Piazza de' Mozzi. But finally, having had news that his father Niccola was dead, he went to Pisa, where, by reason of his worth, he was received by the whole city with great honour, every man rejoicing that after the loss of Niccola there still remained Giovanni, as heir both of his talents and of his wealth. And the occasion having come of making proof of him, their opinion was in no way disappointed, because, there being certain things to do in the small but most ornate Church of S. Maria della Spina, they were given to Giovanni to do, and he, putting his hand thereunto, with the help of some of his boys brought many ornaments in that oratory to that perfection that is seen to-day; which work, in so far as we can judge, must have been held miraculous in those times, and all the more that he made in one figure the portrait of Niccola from nature, as best he knew.

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Seeing this, the Pisans, who long before had had the idea and the wish to make a place of burial for all the inhabitants of the city, both noble and plebeian, either in order not to fill the Duomo with graves or for some other reason, caused Giovanni to make the edifice of the Campo Santo, which is on the Piazza del Duomo, towards the walls; wherefore he, with good design and with much judgment, made it in that manner and with those ornaments of marble and of that size which are to be seen; and because there was no consideration of expense, the roof was made of lead. And outside the principal door there are seen these words carved in marble:

A.D. MCCLXXVIII. TEMPORE DOMINI FREDERIGI ARCHIEPISCOPI PISANI, ET
DOMINI TARLATI POTESTATIS, OPERARIO ORLANDO SARDELLA, JOHANNE
MAGISTRO ÆDIFICANTE.

This work finished, in the same year, 1283, Giovanni went to Naples, where, for King Charles, he made the Castel Nuovo of Naples; and in order to have room and to make it stronger, he was forced to pull down many houses and churches, and in particular a convent of Friars of S. Francis, which was afterwards rebuilt no little larger and more magnificent than it was before, far from the castle and under the title of S. Maria della Nuova. These buildings being begun and considerably advanced, Giovanni departed from Naples, in order to return to Tuscany; but arriving at Siena, without being allowed to go on farther he was caused to make the model of the façade of the Duomo of that city, and afterwards the said façade was made very rich and magnificent from this model. Next, in the year 1286, when the Vescovado of Arezzo was building with the design of Margaritone, architect of Arezzo, Giovanni was brought from Siena to Arezzo by Guglielmino Ubertini, Bishop of that city, where he made in marble the panel of the high-altar, all filled with carvings of figures, of foliage, and other ornaments, distributing throughout the whole work certain things in delicate mosaic, and enamels laid on plates of silver, let into the marble with much diligence. In the middle is a Madonna with the Child in her arms, and on one side S. Gregory the Pope, whose face is the portrait from life of Pope Honorius IV; and on the other side is S. Donatus, Bishop and Protector of that city, whose body, with those of S. Antilla and of other Saints, is laid under that same altar. And because the said altar stands out by itself, round it and on the sides there are small scenes in low-relief from the life of S. Donatus, and the crown of the whole work are certain tabernacles full of marble figures in the round, wrought with much subtlety. On the breast of the said Madonna is a bezel-shaped setting of gold, wherein, so it is said, were jewels of much value, which have been carried away in the wars, so it is thought, by soldiers, who have no respect, very often, even for the most holy Sacrament, together with some little figures in the round that were on the top of and around that work; on which the Aretines spent altogether, according to what is found in certain records, 30,000 florins of gold. Nor does this seem anything great, seeing that at that time it was something as precious and rare as it could well be; wherefore Frederick Barbarossa, returning from Rome, where he had been crowned, and passing through Arezzo, many years after it had been made, praised it, nay, admired it infinitely; and in truth with great reason, seeing that, besides everything else, the joinings of this work, made of innumerable pieces, are cemented and put together so well that the whole work is easily judged, by anyone who has not much practice in the matters of the art, to be all of one piece. In the same church Giovanni made the Chapel of the Ubertini, a most noble family, and lords of castles, as they still are to-day and were formerly even more; with many ornaments of marble, which to-day have been covered over with other ornaments of grey-stone, many and fine, which were set up in that place with the design of Giorgio Vasari in the year 1535, for the supporting of an organ of extraordinary excellence and beauty that stands thereon.

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Lombardi

A SYBIL
(Detail, after Giovanni Pisano, from the
façade of the Duomo, Siena)

[View larger image](#)

Giovanni Pisano likewise made the design of the Church of S. Maria de' Servi, which to-day has been destroyed, together with many palaces of the most noble families of the city, for the reasons mentioned above. I will not forbear to say that Giovanni made use, in working on the said marble altar, of certain Germans who had apprenticed themselves to him rather for learning than for gain; and under his teaching they became such that, having gone after this work to Rome, they served Boniface VIII in many works of sculpture for S. Pietro, and in architecture when he made Cività Castellana. Besides this, they were sent by the same man to S. Maria in Orvieto, where, for its façade, they made many figures in marble which were passing good for those times. But among others who assisted Giovanni in the work of the Vescovado in Arezzo, Agostino and Agnolo, sculptors and architects of Siena, surpassed in time all the others, as will be told in the proper place. But returning to Giovanni; having departed from Orvieto, he came to Florence, in order to see the fabric of S. Maria del Fiore that Arnolfo was making, and likewise to see Giotto, of whom he had heard great things spoken abroad; and no sooner had he arrived in Florence than he was charged by the Wardens of the said fabric of S. Maria del Fiore to make the Madonna which is over that door of the church that leads to the Canon's house, between two little angels; which work was then much praised. Next, he made the little baptismal font of S. Giovanni, wherein are certain scenes in half-relief from the life of that Saint. Having then gone to Bologna, he directed the building of the principal chapel of the Church of S. Domenico, wherein he was charged by Bishop Teodorigo Borgognoni of Lucca, a friar of that Order, to make an altar of marble; and in the same place he afterwards made, in the year 1298, the marble panel wherein are the Madonna and eight other figures, reasonably good.

In the year 1300, Niccola da Prato, Cardinal Legate of the Pope, being in Florence in order to accommodate the dissensions of the Florentines, caused him to make a convent for nuns in Prato, which is called S. Niccola from his name, and to restore in the same territory the Convent of S. Domenico, and so too that of Pistoia; in both the one and the other of which there are still seen the arms of the said Cardinal. And because the people of Pistoia held in veneration the name of Niccola, father of Giovanni, by reason of that which he had wrought in that city with his talent, they caused Giovanni himself to make a pulpit of marble for the Church of S. Andrea, like to the one which he had made in the Duomo of Siena; and this he did in order to compete with one which had been made a little before in the Church of S. Giovanni Evangelista by a German, who was therefore much praised. Giovanni, then, delivered his finished in four years, having divided this work into five scenes from the life of Jesus Christ, and having made therein, besides this, a Universal Judgment, with the greatest diligence that he knew, in order to equal or perchance to surpass the one of Orvieto, then so greatly renowned. And round the said pulpit, on the architrave, over some columns that support it, thinking (as was the truth, according to the

knowledge of that age) that he had done a great and beautiful work, he carved these verses:

HOC OPUS SCULPSIT JOANNES, QUI RES NON EGIT INANES,
NICOLI NATUS MELIORA BEATUS,
QUEM GENUIT PISA, DOCTUM SUPER OMNIA VISA.

At the same time Giovanni made the holy-water font, in marble, of the Church of S. Giovanni Evangelista in the same city, with three figures that support it—Temperance, Prudence, and Justice; which work, by reason of its having then been held very beautiful, was placed in the centre of that church as something remarkable. And before he departed from Pistoia, although the work had not up to then been begun, he made the model of the Campanile of S. Jacopo, the principal church of that city; on which campanile, which is on the square of the said S. Jacopo and beside the church, there is this date: A.D. 1301.



Alinari

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

(Detail, after Giovanni Pisano, from the Pulpit of the Church of S. Andrea, Pistoia)

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Afterwards, Pope Benedict IX having died in Perugia, a summons was sent to Giovanni, who, having gone to Perugia, made a tomb of marble for that Pontiff in the old Church of S. Domenico, belonging to the Preaching Friars; the Pope, portrayed from nature and robed in his pontifical habits, is lying at full length on the bier, with two angels, one on either side, that are holding up a curtain, and above there is a Madonna with two saints in relief, one on either side of her; and many other ornaments are carved round that tomb. In like manner, in the new church of the said Preaching Friars he made the tomb of Messer Niccolò Guidalotti of Perugia, Bishop of Recanati, who was founder of the Sapienza Nuova of Perugia. In this new church, which had been founded before this by others, he executed the central nave, which was founded by him with much better method than the remainder of the church had been; for on one side it leans and threatens to fall down, by reason of having been badly founded. And in truth, he who puts his hand to building and to doing anything of importance should ever take counsel, not from him who knows little but from the best, in order not to have to repent after the act, with loss and shame, that where he most needed good counsel he took the bad.

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Giovanni, having dispatched his business in Perugia, wished to go to Rome, in order to learn from those few ancient things that were to be seen there, even as his father had done; but being hindered by good reasons, this his desire did not take effect, and the rather as he heard that the Court had just gone to Avignon. Returning, then, to Pisa, Nello di Giovanni Falconi, Warden, caused him to make the great pulpit of the Duomo, which is on the right hand going towards the high-altar, attached to the choir; and having made a beginning with this and with many figures in the round, three braccia high, that were to serve for it, little by little he brought them to that form that is seen to-day, placing the pulpit partly on the said figures and partly on some columns sustained by lions; and on the sides he made some scenes from the life of Christ. It is a pity, truly, that so great cost, so great diligence, and so great labour should not have been accompanied by good design and should be wanting in perfection and in excellence of invention, grace, and manner, such as any work of our own times would show, even if made with much less cost and labour. None the less, it must have caused no small marvel to the men of those times, used to seeing only the rudest works. This work was finished in the year 1320, as appears in certain verses that are round the said pulpit, which run thus:

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LAUDO DEUM VERUM, PER QUEM SUNT OPTIMA RERUM,
QUI DEDIT HAS PURAS HOMINEM FORMARE FIGURAS;
HOC OPUS HIS ANNIS DOMINI SCULPSERE JOHANNIS
ARTE MANUS SOLE QUONDAM, NATIQUE NICOLE,
CURSIS VENTENIS TERCENTUM MILLEQUE PLENIS;

with other thirteen verses, which are not written, in order not to weary the reader, and because these are enough not only to bear witness that the said pulpit is by the hand of Giovanni, but also that the men of these times were in all things made thus. A Madonna of marble, also, that is seen between S. John the Baptist and another Saint, over the principal door of the Duomo, is by the hand of Giovanni; and he who is at the feet of the Madonna, on his knees, is said to be Piero Gambacorti, Warden of Works. However this may be, on the base whereon stands the image of Our Lady there are carved these words:

SUB PETRI CURA HÆC PIA FUIT SCULPTA FIGURA,
NICOLI NATO SCULPTORE JOHANNE VOCATO.

In like manner, over the side door that is opposite the campanile, there is a Madonna of marble by the hand of Giovanni, having on one side a woman kneeling with two babies, representing Pisa, and on the other the Emperor Henry. On the base whereon stands the Madonna are these words:

AVE GRATIA PLENA, DOMINUS TECUM;

and beside them:

NOBILIS ARTE MANUS SCULPSIT JOHANNES PISANUS
SCULPSIT SUB BURGUNDIO TADI BENIGNO....

And round the base of Pisa:

VIRGINIS ANCILLA SUM PISA QUIETA SUB ILLA.

And round the base of Henry:

IMPERAT HENRICUS QUI CHRISTO FERTUR AMICUS.



Alinari

MADONNA AND CHILD
(After Giovanni Pisano. Padua: Arena Chapel)

[View larger image](#)

In the old Pieve of the territory of Prato, under the altar of the principal chapel, there had been kept for many years the Girdle of Our Lady, which Michele da Prato, returning from the Holy [Pg 43]

Land, had brought to his country in the year 1141 and consigned to Uberto, Provost of that church, who placed it where it has been said, and where it had been ever held in great veneration; and in the year 1312 an attempt was made to steal it by a man of Prato, a fellow of the basest sort, and as it were, another Ser Ciappelletto; but having been discovered, he was put to death for sacrilege by the hand of justice. Moved by this, the people of Prato determined to make a strong and suitable resting-place, in order to hold the said Girdle more securely; wherefore, having summoned Giovanni, who was now old, they made with his counsel, in the greater church, the chapel wherein there is now preserved the said Girdle of Our Lady. And next, with the same man's design, they made the said church much larger than it was before, and encrusted it without with white and black marbles, and likewise the campanile, as may be seen. Finally, being now very old, Giovanni died in the year 1320, after having made, besides those that have been mentioned, many other works in sculpture and in architecture. And in truth there is much owed to him and to his father Niccola, seeing that, in times void of all goodness of design, they gave in so great darkness no small light to the matters of these arts, wherein they were, for that age, truly excellent. Giovanni was buried in the Campo Santo, with great honour, in the same grave wherein had been laid Niccola, his father. There were as disciples of Giovanni many who flourished after him, but in particular Lino, sculptor and architect of Siena, who made in the Duomo of Pisa the chapel all adorned with marble wherein is the body of S. Ranieri, and likewise the baptismal font that is in the said Duomo, with his name.

Nor let anyone marvel that Niccola and Giovanni did so many works, because, not to mention that they lived very long, being the first masters that were in Europe at that time, there was nothing done of any importance in which they did not have a hand, as can be seen in many inscriptions besides those that have been mentioned. And seeing that, while touching on these two sculptors and architects, there has been something said of matters in Pisa, I will not forbear to say that on the top of the steps in front of the new hospital, round the base that supports a lion and the vase that rests on the porphyry column, are these words:

THIS IS THE MEASURE WHICH THE EMPEROR CÆSAR GAVE TO PISA,
WHEREWITH THERE WAS MEASURED THE TRIBUTE THAT WAS PAID TO HIM;
WHICH HAS BEEN SET UP OVER THIS COLUMN AND LION, IN THE TIME OF
GIOVANNI ROSSO, WARDEN OF THE WORKS OF S. MARIA MAGGIORE IN PISA,
A.D. MCCCXIII., IN THE SECOND INDICTION, IN MARCH.

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ANDREA TAFI

LIFE OF ANDREA TAFI, PAINTER OF FLORENCE

Even as the works of Cimabue awakened no small marvel (he having given better design and form to the art of painting) in the men of those times, used to seeing nothing save works done after the Greek manner, even so the works in mosaic of Andrea Tafi, who lived in the same times, were admired, and he thereby held excellent, nay, divine; these people not thinking, being unused to see anything else, that better work could be done in such an art. But not being in truth the most able man in the world, and having considered that mosaic, by reason of its long life, was held in estimation more than all the other forms of painting, he went from Florence to Venice, where some Greek painters were working in S. Marco in mosaic; and becoming intimate with them, with entreaties, with money, and with promises he contrived in such a manner that he brought to Florence Maestro Apollonio, a Greek painter, who taught him to fuse the glass for mosaic and to make the cement for putting it together; and in his company he wrought the upper part of the tribune of S. Giovanni, where there are the Powers, the Thrones, and the Dominions; in which place Andrea, when more practised, afterwards made, as will be said below, the Christ that is over the side of the principal chapel. But having made mention of S. Giovanni, I will not pass by in silence that this ancient temple is all wrought, both without and within, with marbles of the Corinthian Order, and that it is not only designed and executed perfectly in all its parts and with all its proportions, but also very well adorned with doors and with windows, and enriched with two columns of granite on each wall-face, each eleven braccia high, in order to make the three spaces over which are the architraves, that rest on the said columns in order to support the whole mass of the double vaulted roof, which has been praised by modern architects as something remarkable, and deservedly, for the reason that it showed the good which that art already had in itself to Filippo di Ser Brunellesco, to Donatello, and to the other masters of those times, who learnt the art by means of this work and of the Church of S. Apostolo in Florence, a work so good in manner that it casts back to the true ancient goodness, having all the columns in

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sections, as it has been said above, measured and put together with so great diligence that much can be learnt by studying it in all its parts. But to be silent about many things that could be said about the good architecture of this church, I will say only that there was a great departure from this example and from this good method of working when the façade of S. Miniato sul Monte without Florence was rebuilt in marble, in honour of the conversion of the Blessed S. Giovanni Gualberto, citizen of Florence and founder of the Order of the Monks of Vallombrosa; because that and many other works that were made later were in no way similar in beauty to those mentioned. The same, in like manner, came to pass in the works of sculpture, for all those that were made in Italy by the masters of that age, as has been said in the Preface to the Lives, were very rude, as can be seen in many places, and in particular in S. Bartolommeo at Pistoia, a church of the Canons Regular, where, in a pulpit very rudely made by Guido da Como, there is the beginning of the life of Jesus Christ, with these words carved thereon by the craftsman himself in the year 1199:

SCULPTOR LAUDATUR, QUOD DOCTUS IN ARTE PROBATUR,
GUIDO DE COMO ME CUNCTIS CARMINE PROMO.

But to return to the Church of S. Giovanni; forbearing to relate its origin, by reason of its having been described by Giovanni Villani and by other writers, and having already said that from this church there came the good architecture that is to-day in use, I will add that the tribune was made later, so far as it is known, and that at the time when Alesso Baldovinetti, succeeding Lippo, a painter of Florence, restored those mosaics, it was seen that it had been in the past painted with designs in red, and all worked on stucco.

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Andrea Tafi and Apollonio the Greek, then, in order to cover this tribune with mosaics, made therein a number of compartments, which, narrow at the top beside the lantern, went on widening as far as the level of the cornice below; and they divided the upper part into circles of various scenes. In the first are all the ministers and executors of the Divine Will, namely, the Angels, the Archangels, the Cherubim, the Seraphim, the Powers, the Thrones, and the Dominions. In the second row, also in mosaic, and after the Greek manner, are the principal works done by God, from the creation of light down to the Flood. In the circle that is below these, which goes on widening with the eight sides of that tribune, are all the acts of Joseph and of his twelve brethren. Below these, then, there follow as many other spaces of the same size that circle in like manner onward, wherein there is the life of Jesus Christ, also in mosaic, from the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb up to the Ascension into Heaven. Then, resuming the same order, under the three friezes there is the life of S. John the Baptist, beginning with the appearing of the Angel to Zacharias the priest, up to his beheading and to the burial that his disciples gave him. All these works, being rude, without design and without art, I do not absolutely praise; but of a truth, having regard to the method of working of that age and to the imperfection that the art of painting then showed, not to mention that the work is solid and that the pieces of the mosaic are very well put together, the end of this work is much better—or to speak more exactly, less bad—than is the beginning, although the whole, with respect to the work of to-day, moves us rather to laughter than to pleasure or marvel. Finally, over the side of the principal chapel in the said tribune, Andrea made by himself and without the help of Apollonio, to his own great credit, the Christ that is still seen there to-day, seven braccia high. Becoming famous for these works throughout all Italy, and being reputed in his own country as excellent, he well deserved to be largely honoured and rewarded. It was truly very great good-fortune, that of Andrea, to be born at a time when, all work being rudely done, there was great esteem even for that which deserved to be esteemed very little, or rather not at all. This same thing befell Fra Jacopo da Turrita, of the Order of S. Francis, seeing that, having made the works in mosaic that are in the recess behind the altar of the said S. Giovanni, notwithstanding that they were little worthy of praise he was remunerated for them with extraordinary rewards, and afterwards, as an excellent master, summoned to Rome, where he wrought certain things in the chapel of the high-altar of S. Giovanni Laterano, and in that of S. Maria Maggiore. Next, being summoned to Pisa, he made the Evangelists in the principal apse of the Duomo, with other works that are there, assisted by Andrea Tafi and by Gaddo Gaddi, and using the same manner wherein he had done his other works; but he left them little less than wholly imperfect, and they were afterwards finished by Vicino.

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The works of these men, then, were prized for some time; but when the works of Giotto, as will be said in its own place, were set in comparison with those of Andrea, of Cimabue, and of the others, people recognized in part the perfection of the art, seeing the difference that there was between the early manner of Cimabue and that of Giotto, in the figures of the one and of the other and in those that their disciples and imitators made. From this beginning the others sought step by step to follow in the path of the best masters, surpassing one another happily from one day to another, so that from such depths these arts have been raised, as is seen, to the height of their perfection.

Andrea lived eighty-one years, and died before Cimabue, in 1294. And by reason of the reputation and the honour that he gained with his mosaic, seeing that he, before any other man, introduced and taught it in better manner to the men of Tuscany, he was the cause that Gaddo Gaddi, Giotto, and the others afterwards made the most excellent works of that craft which have acquired for them fame and an eternal name. After the death of Andrea there was not wanting one to magnify him with this inscription:

QUI GIACE ANDREA, CH' OPRE LEGGIADRE E BELLE
FECE IN TUTTA TOSCANA, ED ORA E ITO

A disciple of Andrea was Buonamico Buffalmacco, who, being very young, played him many tricks, and had from him the portrait of Pope Celestine IV, a Milanese, and that of Innocent IV, both one and the other of whom he portrayed afterwards in the pictures that he made in S. Paolo a Ripa d' Arno in Pisa. A disciple and perhaps a son of the same man was Antonio d'Andrea Tafi, who was a passing good painter; but I have not been able to find any work by his hand. There is only mention made of him in the old book of the Company of the Men of Design.

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Deservedly, then, did Andrea Tafi gain much praise among the early masters, for the reason that, although he learnt the principles of mosaic from those whom he brought from Venice to Florence, he added nevertheless so much of the good to the art, putting the pieces together with much diligence and executing the work smooth as a table, which is of the greatest importance in mosaic, that he opened the way to good work to Giotto, among others, as will be told in his Life; and not only to Giotto, but to all those who have exercised themselves in this sort of painting from his day up to our own times. Wherefore it can be truly affirmed that those marvellous works which are being made to-day in S. Marco at Venice, and in other places, had their first beginning from Andrea Tafi.

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GADDO GADDI

LIFE OF GADDO GADDI,

PAINTER OF FLORENCE

Gaddo, painter of Florence, displayed at this same time more design in his works, wrought after the Greek manner, than did Andrea Tafi and the other painters that were before him, and this perchance arose from the intimate friendship and intercourse that he held with Cimabue, seeing that, by reason either of their conformity of blood or of the goodness of their minds, finding themselves united one to the other by a strait affection, from the frequent converse that they had together and from their discoursing lovingly very often about the difficulties of the arts there were born in their minds conceptions very beautiful and grand; and this came to pass for them the more easily inasmuch as they were assisted by the subtlety of the air of Florence, which is wont to produce spirits both ingenious and subtle, removing continually from round them that little of rust and grossness that most times nature is not able to remove, together with the emulation and with the precepts that the good craftsmen provide in every age. And it is seen clearly that works concerted between those who, in their friendship, are not veiled with the mask of duplicity (although few so made are to be found), arrive at much perfection; and the same men, conferring on the difficulties of the sciences that they are learning, purge them and render them so clear and easy that the greatest praise comes therefrom. Whereas some, on the contrary, diabolically working with profession of friendship, and using the cloak of truth and of lovingness to conceal their envy and malice, rob them of their conceptions, in a manner that the arts do not so soon attain to that excellence which they would if love embraced the minds of the gracious spirits; as it truly bound together Gaddo and Cimabue, and in like manner Andrea Tafi and Gaddo, who was taken by Andrea into company with himself in order to finish the mosaics of S. Giovanni, where that Gaddo learnt so much that afterwards he made by himself the Prophets that are seen round that church in the square spaces beneath the windows; and having wrought these by his own self and with much better manner, they brought him very great fame. Wherefore, growing in courage and being disposed to work by himself, he applied himself continually to studying the Greek manner together with that of Cimabue. Whence, after no long time, having become excellent in the art, there was allotted to him by the Wardens of Works of S. Maria del Fiore the lunette over the principal door within the church, wherein he wrought in mosaic the Coronation of Our Lady; which work, when finished, was judged by all the masters, both foreign and native, the most beautiful that had yet been seen in all Italy in that craft, there being recognized therein more design, more judgment, and more diligence than in all the rest of the works in mosaic that were then to be found in Italy.

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Wherefore, the fame of this work spreading, Gaddo was called to Rome in the year 1308 (which was the year after the fire that burnt down the Church and the Palaces of the Lateran) by Clement V, for whom he finished certain works in mosaic left imperfect by Fra Jacopo da Turrita. He then wrought certain works, also in mosaic, in the Church of S. Pietro, both in the principal chapel and throughout the church, and in particular a large God the Father, with many other figures, on the façade; and helping to finish some scenes in mosaic that are in the façade of S.

Maria Maggiore, he somewhat improved the manner, and departed also a little from that manner of the Greeks, which had in it nothing whatever of the good.

Next, having returned to Tuscany, he wrought in the Duomo Vecchio without the city of Arezzo, for the Tarlati, Lords of Pietramala, certain works in mosaic on a vault that was all made of sponge-stone and served for roof to the middle part of that church, which, being too much burdened by the ancient vault of stone, fell down in the time of Bishop Gentile of Urbino, who had it afterwards all rebuilt with bricks. Departing from Arezzo, Gaddo went to Pisa, where, in the niche over the Chapel of the Incoronata in the Duomo, he made a Madonna who is ascending into Heaven, and, above, a Jesus Christ who is awaiting her and has a rich chair prepared as a seat for her; which work, for those times, was wrought so well and with so great diligence that it has been very well preserved, even to our own day. After this Gaddo returned to Florence, in mind to rest; wherefore, undertaking to make little panels in mosaic, he executed some with egg-shells, with incredible diligence and patience, as can be seen, among others, in some that are still to-day in the Church of S. Giovanni in Florence. It is read, also, that he made two of them for King Robert, but nothing more is known of these. And let this be enough to have said of Gaddo Gaddi with regard to work in mosaic.

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In painting he made many panels, and among others that which is in S. Maria Novella, in the tramezzo^[8] of the church, in the Chapel of the Minerbetti, and many others that were sent into diverse parts of Tuscany. And working thus, now in mosaic and now in painting, he made both in the one and in the other exercise many passing good works, which maintained him ever in good credit and reputation. I could here enlarge further in discoursing of Gaddo, but seeing that the manners of the painters of those times cannot, for the most part, render great assistance to the craftsmen, I will pass this over in silence, reserving myself to be longer in the Lives of those who, having improved the arts, can give some measure of assistance.

Gaddo lived seventy-three years, and died in 1312, and was given honourable burial in S. Croce by his son Taddeo. And although he had other sons, Taddeo alone, who was held at the baptismal font by Giotto, applied himself to painting, learning at first the principles from his father and then the rest from Giotto. A disciple of Gaddo, besides Taddeo his son, was Vicino, painter of Pisa, who wrought very well certain works in mosaic in the principal apse of the Duomo of Pisa, as these words demonstrate, that are still seen in that apse:

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TEMPORE DOMINI JOANNIS ROSSI, OPERARII ISTIUS ECCLESIAE, VICINUS PICTOR INCEPIT ET PERFECIT HANC IMAGINEM BEATAE MARIÆ; SED MAJESTATIS, ET EVANGELISTÆ, PER ALIOS INCEPTÆ, IPSE COMPLEVIT ET PERFECIT, A.D. 1321, DE MENSE SEPTEMBRIS. BENEDICTUM SIT NOMEN DOMINI DEI NOSTRI JESU CHRISTI. AMEN.

In the Chapel of the Baroncelli, in the same Church of S. Croce, there is a portrait of Gaddo by the hand of his son Taddeo, in a Marriage of Our Lady, and beside him is Andrea Tafi. And in our aforesaid book there is a drawing by the hand of Gaddo, made in miniature, like that of Cimabue, wherein it is seen how strong he was in draughtsmanship.

Now, seeing that in an old book, from which I have drawn these few facts that have been related about Gaddo Gaddi, there is also an account of the building of S. Maria Novella, the Church of the Preaching Friars in Florence, a building truly magnificent and highly honoured, I will not pass by in silence by whom and at what time it was built. I say, then, that the Blessed Dominic being in Bologna, and there being conceded to him the property of Ripoli without Florence, he sent thither twelve friars under the care of the Blessed Giovanni da Salerno; and not many years afterwards these friars came to Florence to occupy the church and precincts of S. Pancrazio, and they were settled there, when Dominic himself came to Florence, whereupon they left that place and went to settle in the Church of S. Paolo, according to his pleasure. Later, there being conceded to the said Blessed Giovanni the precincts of S. Maria Novella, with all its wealth, by the Legate of the Pope and by the Bishop of the city, they were put in possession and began to occupy the said precincts on the last day of October, 1221. And because the said church was passing small and faced westward, with its entrance on the Piazza Vecchia, the friars, being now grown to a good number and having great repute in the city, began to think of increasing the said church and convent. Wherefore, having got together a very great sum of money, and having many in the city who were promising every assistance, they began the building of the new church on St. Luke's Day, in 1278; the first stone of the foundations being most solemnly laid by Cardinal Latino degli Orsini, Legate of Pope Nicholas III to the Florentines. The architects of the said church were Fra Giovanni, a Florentine, and Fra Ristoro da Campi, lay-brothers of the same Order, who rebuilt the Ponte alla Carraja and that of S. Trinita, destroyed by the flood of 1264 on October 1. The greater part of the site of the said church and convent was presented to the friars by the heirs of Messer Jacopo, Cavaliere de' Tornaquinci. The cost, as has been said, was met partly by alms and partly by the money of diverse persons who assisted gallantly, and in particular with the assistance of Frate Aldobrandino Cavalcanti, who was afterwards Bishop of Arezzo and is buried over the door of the Virgin. Some say that, besides everything else, he got together by his own industry all the labour and material that went into the said church, which was finished when the Prior of this convent was Fra Jacopo Passavanti, who was therefore deemed worthy of a marble tomb in front of the principal chapel, on the left hand. This church was consecrated in the year 1420, by Pope Martin V, as is seen in an inscription on marble on the righthand pillar of the principal chapel, which runs thus:

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A.D. 1420. DIE SEPTIMA SEPTEMBRIS, DOMINUS MARTINUS DIVINA

Of all these things and of many others there is an account in a chronicle of the building of the said church, which is in the hands of the fathers of S. Maria Novella, and in the History of Giovanni Villani likewise; and I have not wished to withhold these few facts regarding this church and convent, both because it is one of the most important and most beautiful churches in Florence, and also because they have therein, as will be said below, many excellent works made by the most famous craftsmen that have lived in the years past.

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MARGARITONE

LIFE OF MARGARITONE,

PAINTER, SCULPTOR, AND ARCHITECT, OF AREZZO

Among the old painters who were much alarmed by the praises rightly given by men to Cimabue and to his disciple Giotto, whose good work in painting was making their glory shine throughout all Italy, was one Margaritone, painter of Arezzo, who, with the others who in that unhappy century were holding the highest rank in painting, recognized that their works were little less than wholly obscuring his own fame. Margaritone, then, being held excellent among the other painters of these times who were working after the Greek manner, wrought many panels in distemper at Arezzo, and he painted in fresco—in even more pictures, but in a long time and with much fatigue—almost the whole Church of S. Clemente, Abbey of the Order of Camaldoli, which is to-day all in ruins and thrown down, together with many other buildings and a strong fortress called S. Chimenti, for the reason that Duke Cosimo de' Medici, not only on that spot but right round that city, pulled down many buildings and the old walls (which were restored by Guido Pietramalesco, formerly Bishop and Patron of that city); in order to rebuild the latter with connecting wings and bastions, much stronger and smaller than they were, and in consequence more easy to guard and with few men. There were, in the said pictures, many figures both small and great, and although they were wrought after the Greek manner, it was recognized, none the less, that they had been made with good judgment and lovingly; to which witness is borne by works by the same man's hand which have survived in that city, and above all a panel that is now in S. Francesco, in the Chapel of the Conception, with a modern frame, wherein is a Madonna held by these friars in great veneration. He made in the same church, also after the Greek manner, a great Crucifix which is now placed in that chapel where there is the Office of the Wardens of Works; this is wrought on the planking, with the Cross outlined, and of this sort he made many in that city. For the Nuns of S. Margherita he wrought a work that is to-day set up against the tramezzo^[9] of the church—namely, a canvas fixed on a panel, wherein are scenes with small figures from the life of Our Lady and of S. John the Baptist, in considerably better manner than the large, and executed with more diligence and grace. This work is notable, not only because the said small figures are so well made that they look like miniatures, but also because it is a marvel to see that a work on canvas has been preserved for three hundred years. He made throughout the whole city an infinity of pictures, and at Sargiano, a convent of the Frati de' Zoccoli, a S. Francis portrayed from nature on a panel, whereon he placed his name, as on a work, in his judgment, wrought better than was his wont. Next, having made a large Crucifix on wood, painted after the Greek manner, he sent it to Florence to Messer Farinata degli Uberti, a most famous citizen, for the reason that he had, among other noble deeds, freed his country from imminent ruin and peril. This Crucifix is to-day in S. Croce, between the Chapel of the Peruzzi and that of the Giugni. In S. Domenico in Arezzo, a church and convent built by the Lords of Pietramala in the year 1275, as their arms still prove, he wrought many works, and then returned to Rome (where he had already been held very dear by Pope Urban IV), to the end that he might do certain works in fresco at his commission in the portico of S. Pietro; these were in the Greek manner, and passing good for those times.

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Mansell

**THE VIRGIN AND CHILD, WITH SCENES FROM THE LIVES OF
THE SAINTS
(After the painting by Margaritone. London: National Gallery,
5040)**

[View larger image](#)

Next, having made a S. Francis on a panel at Ganghereto, a place above Terra Nuova in Valdarno, his spirit grew exalted and he gave himself to sculpture, and that with so much zeal that he succeeded much better than he had done in painting, because, although his first sculptures were in Greek manner, as four wooden figures show that are in a Deposition from the Cross in the Pieve, and some other figures in the round placed in the Chapel of S. Francesco over the baptismal font, none the less he adopted a better manner after he had seen in Florence the works of Arnolfo and of the other then most famous sculptors. Wherefore, having returned to Arezzo in the year 1275, in the wake of the Court of Pope Gregory, who passed through Florence on his return from Avignon to Rome, there came to him opportunity to make himself more known, for the reason that this Pope died in Arezzo, after having presented thirty thousand crowns to the Commune to the end that there might be finished the building of the Vescovado, formerly begun by Maestro Lapo and little advanced, and the Aretines, besides making the Chapel of S. Gregorio (where Margaritone afterwards made a panel) in the Vescovado, in memory of the said Pontiff, also ordained that a tomb of marble should be made for him by the same man in the said Vescovado. Putting his hand to the work, he brought it to completion, including therein the portrait of the Pope from nature, done both in marble and in painting, in a manner that it was held the best work that he had ever yet made. Next, work being resumed on the building of the Vescovado, Margaritone carried it very far on, following the design of Lapo; but he did not, however, deliver it finished, because a few years later, in the year 1289, the wars between the Florentines and the Aretines were renewed, by the fault of Guglielmino Ubertini, Bishop and Lord of Arezzo, assisted by the Tarlati da Pietramala and by the Pazzi di Valdarno, although evil came to them thereby, for they were routed and slain at Campaldino; and there was spent in that war all the money left by the Pope for the building of the Vescovado. And therefore the Aretines ordained that in place of this there should serve the impost paid by the district (thus do they call a tax), as a particular revenue for that work; which impost has lasted up to our own day, and continues to last.

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Now returning to Margaritone: from what is seen in his works, as regards painting, he was the first who considered what a man must do when he works on panels of wood, to the end that they may stay firm in the joinings, and that they may not show fissures and cracks opening out after they have been painted; for he was used to put over the whole surface of the panels a canvas of linen cloth, attached with a strong glue made from shreds of parchment and boiled over a fire; and then over the said canvas he spread gesso, as is seen in many panels by him and by others. He wrought, besides, on gesso mingled with the same glue, friezes and diadems in relief and other ornaments in the round; and he was the inventor of the method of applying Armenian bole, and of spreading gold-leaf thereon and burnishing it. All these things, never seen before, are seen in many of his works, and in particular in the Pieve of Arezzo, in an altar-front wherein are stories of S. Donatus, and in S. Agnesa and S. Niccolò in the same city.

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Finally, he wrought many works in his own country, which went abroad; some of which are at Rome, in S. Giovanni and in S. Pietro, and some at Pisa, in S. Caterina, where, in the tramezzo^[10] of the church, there is set up over an altar a panel with S. Catherine on it, and many scenes from her life with little figures, and a S. Francis with many scenes on a panel, on a ground of gold. And in the upper Church of S. Francesco d'Assisi there is a Crucifix by his hand, painted in the Greek manner, on a beam that crosses the church. All which works were in great esteem among the people of that age, although to-day by us they are not esteemed save as old things, good when art was not, as it is to-day, at its height. And seeing that Margaritone applied himself also to architecture, although I have not made mention of any buildings made with his design, because they are not of importance, I will yet not forbear to say that he, according to what I find, made the design and model of the Palazzo de' Governatori in the city of Ancona, after the Greek manner, in the year 1270; and what is more, he made in sculpture, on the principal front, eight windows, whereof each one has, in the space in the middle, two columns that support in the

middle two arches, over which each window has a scene in half-relief that reaches from the said small arches up to the top of the window; a scene, I say, from the Old Testament, carved in a kind of stone that is found in that district. Under the said windows, on the façade, there are certain words that are understood rather at discretion than because they are either in good form or rightly written, wherein there is read the date and in whose time this work was made. By the hand of the same man, also, was the design of the Church of S. Ciriaco in Ancona. Margaritone died at the age of seventy-seven, disgusted, so it is said, to have lived so long, seeing the age changed and the honours with the new craftsmen. He was buried in the Duomo Vecchio without Arezzo, in a tomb of travertine, now gone to ruin in the destruction of that church; and there was made for him this epitaph:

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HIC JACET ILLE BONUS PICTURA MARGARITONUS,
CUI REQUIEM DOMINUS TRADAT UBIQUE PIUS.

The portrait of Margaritone, by the hand of Spinello, is in the Story of the Magi, in the said Duomo, and was copied by me before that church was pulled down.

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GIOTTO



Anderson

THE DEATH OF S. FRANCIS
(After the fresco by Giotto. Florence: S. Croce)

[View larger image](#)

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GIOTTO

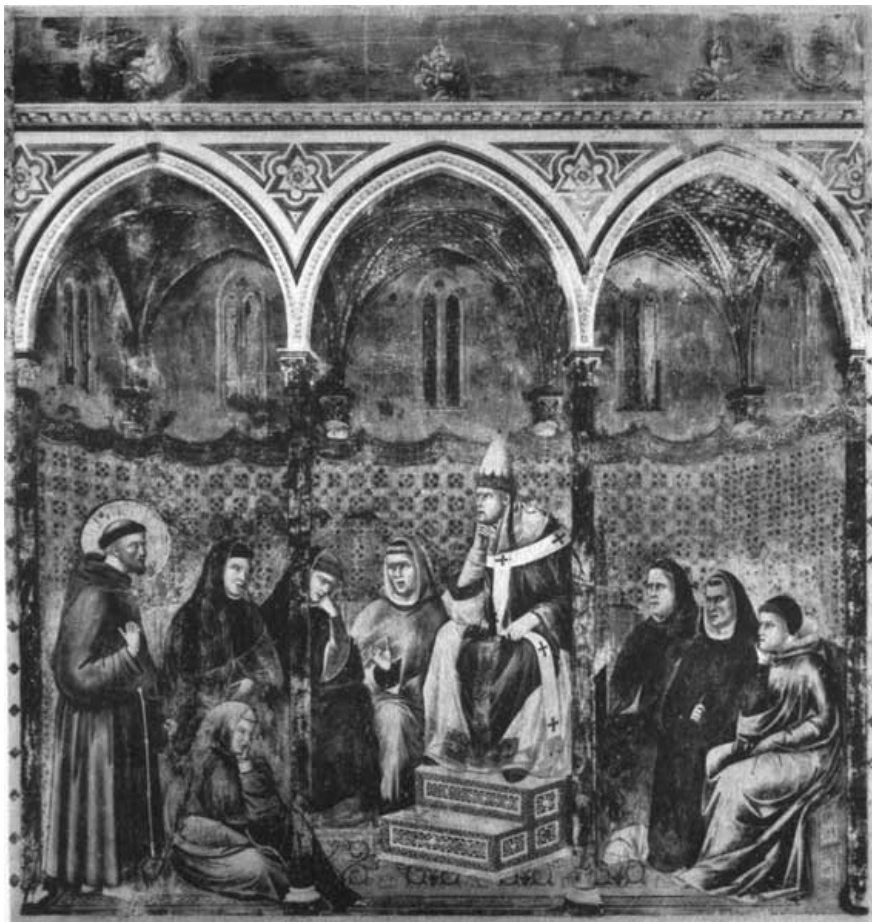
LIFE OF GIOTTO,

PAINTER, SCULPTOR, AND ARCHITECT, OF FLORENCE

That very obligation which the craftsmen of painting owe to nature, who serves continually as model to those who are ever wresting the good from her best and most beautiful features and

striving to counterfeit and to imitate her, should be owed, in my belief, to Giotto, painter of Florence, for the reason that, after the methods of good paintings and their outlines had lain buried for so many years under the ruins of the wars, he alone, although born among inept craftsmen, by the gift of God revived that art, which had come to a grievous pass, and brought it to such a form as could be called good. And truly it was a very great miracle that that age, gross and inept, should have had strength to work in Giotto in a fashion so masterly, that design, whereof the men of those times had little or no knowledge, was restored completely to life by means of him. And yet this great man was born at the village of Vespignano, in the district of Florence, fourteen miles distant from that city, in the year 1276, from a father named Bondone, a tiller of the soil and a simple fellow. He, having had this son, to whom he gave the name Giotto, reared him conformably to his condition; and when he had come to the age of ten, he showed in all his actions, although childish still, a vivacity and readiness of intelligence much out of the ordinary, which rendered him dear not only to his father but to all those also who knew him, both in the village and beyond. Now Bondone gave some sheep into his charge, and he, going about the holding, now in one part and now in another, to graze them, and impelled by a natural inclination to the art of design, was for ever drawing, on stones, on the ground, or on sand, something from nature, or in truth anything that came into his fancy. Wherefore Cimabue, going one day on some business of his own from Florence to Vespignano, found Giotto, while his sheep were browsing, portraying a sheep from nature on a flat and polished slab, with a stone slightly pointed, without having learnt any method of doing this from others, but only from nature; whence Cimabue, standing fast all in a marvel, asked him if he wished to go to live with him. The child answered that, his father consenting, he would go willingly. Cimabue then asking this from Bondone, the latter lovingly granted it to him, and was content that he should take the boy with him to Florence; whither having come, in a short time, assisted by nature and taught by Cimabue, the child not only equalled the manner of his master, but became so good an imitator of nature that he banished completely that rude Greek manner and revived the modern and good art of painting, introducing the portraying well from nature of living people, which had not been used for more than two hundred years. If, indeed, anyone had tried it, as has been said above, he had not succeeded very happily, nor as well by a great measure as Giotto, who portrayed among others, as is still seen to-day in the Chapel of the Palace of the Podestà at Florence, Dante Alighieri, a contemporary and his very great friend, and no less famous as poet than was in the same times Giotto as painter, so much praised by Messer Giovanni Boccaccio in the preface to the story of Messer Forese da Rabatta and of Giotto the painter himself. In the same chapel are the portraits, likewise by the same man's hand, of Ser Brunetto Latini, master of Dante, and of Messer Corso Donati, a great citizen of those times.

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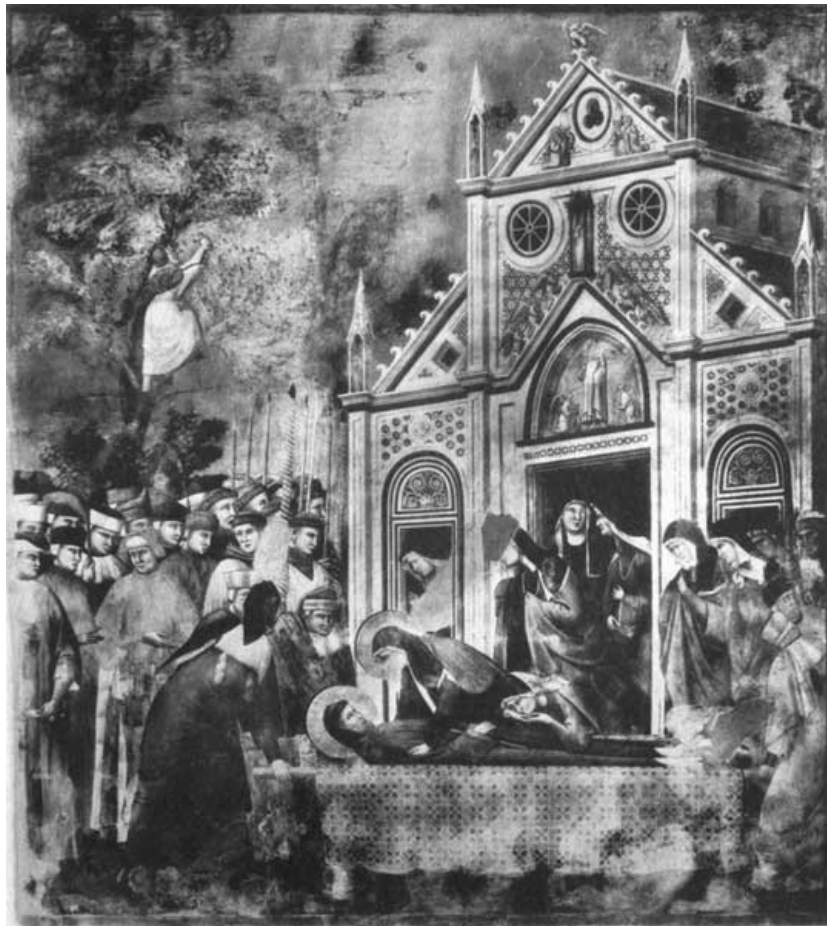
Anderson

S. FRANCIS PREACHING BEFORE POPE HONORIUS III
(After the fresco of the Roman School. Assisi: Upper Church of S. Francesco)

The first pictures of Giotto were in the chapel of the high-altar in the Badia of Florence, wherein he made many works held beautiful, but in particular a Madonna receiving the Annunciation, for the reason that in her he expressed vividly the fear and the terror that the salutation of Gabriel inspired in Mary the Virgin, who appears, all full of the greatest alarm, to be wishing almost to turn to flight. By the hand of Giotto, likewise, is the panel on the high-altar of the said chapel, which has been preserved there to our own day, and is still preserved there, more because of a certain reverence that is felt for the work of so great a man than for any other reason. And in S. Croce there are four chapels by the same man's hand: three between the sacristy and the great chapel, and one on the other side. In the first of the three, which is that of Messer Ridolfo de' Bardi, and is that wherein are the bell-ropes, is the life of S. Francis, in the death of whom a good number of friars show very naturally the expression of weeping. In the next, which is that of the family of Peruzzi, are two stories of the life of S. John the Baptist, to whom the chapel is dedicated; wherein great vivacity is seen in the dancing and leaping of Herodias, and in the promptness of some servants bustling at the service of the table. In the same are two marvellous stories of S. John the Evangelist—namely, when he brings Drusiana back to life, and when he is carried off into Heaven. In the third, which is that of the Giugni, dedicated to the Apostles, there are painted by the hand of Giotto the stories of the martyrdom of many of them. In the fourth, which is on the other side of the church, towards the north, and belongs to the Tosinghi and to the Spinelli, and is dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady, Giotto painted her Birth, her Marriage, her Annunciation, the Adoration of the Magi, and when she presents Christ as a little Child to Simeon, which is something very beautiful, seeing that, besides a great affection that is seen in that old man as he receives Christ, the action of the child, stretching out its arms in fear of him and turning in terror towards its mother, could not be more touching or more beautiful. Next, in the death of the Madonna herself, there are the Apostles, and a good number of angels with torches in their hands, all very beautiful. In the Chapel of the Baroncelli, in the said church, is a panel in distemper by the hand of Giotto, wherein is executed with much diligence the Coronation of Our Lady, with a very great number of little figures and a choir of angels and saints, very diligently wrought. And because in that work there are written his name and the date in letters of gold, craftsmen who will consider at what time Giotto, with no glimmer of the good manner, gave a beginning to the good method of drawing and of colouring, will be forced to hold him in the highest veneration. In the same Church of S. Croce, over the marble tomb of Carlo Marsuppini of Arezzo, there is a Crucifix, with the Madonna, S. John, and Magdalene at the foot of the Cross; and on the other side of the church, exactly opposite this, over the burial-place of Lionardo Aretino, facing the high-altar, there is an Annunciation, which has been recoloured by modern painters, with small judgment on the part of him who has had this done. In the refectory, on a Tree of the Cross, are stories of S. Louis and a Last Supper by the same man's hand; and on the wardrobes in the sacristy are scenes with little figures from the life of Christ and of S. Francis. He wrought, also, in the Church of the Carmine, in the Chapel of S. Giovanni Battista, all the life of that Saint, divided into a number of pictures; and in the Palace of the Guelph party, in Florence, there is a story of the Christian Faith, painted perfectly in fresco by his hand; and therein is the portrait of Pope Clement IV, who created that magisterial body, giving it his arms, which it has always held and holds still.

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Anderson

THE BODY OF S. FRANCIS BEFORE THE CHURCH OF S. DAMIANO

(After the fresco of the Roman School. Assisi: Upper Church of S. Francesco)

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After these works, departing from Florence in order to go to finish in Assisi the works begun by Cimabue, in passing through Arezzo he painted in the Pieve the Chapel of S. Francesco, which is above the place of baptism; and on a round column, near a Corinthian capital that is both ancient and very beautiful, he portrayed from nature a S. Francis and a S. Dominic; and in the Duomo without Arezzo he painted the Stoning of S. Stephen in a little chapel, with a beautiful composition of figures. These works finished, he betook himself to Assisi, a city of Umbria, being called thither by Fra Giovanni di Muro della Marca, then General of the Friars of S. Francis; where, in the upper church, he painted in fresco, under the gallery that crosses the windows, on both sides of the church, thirty-two scenes of the life and acts of S. Francis—that is, sixteen on each wall—so perfectly that he acquired thereby very great fame. And in truth there is seen great variety in that work, not only in the gestures and attitudes of each figure but also in the composition of all the scenes; not to mention that it enables us very beautifully to see the diversity of the costumes of those times, and certain imitations and observations of the things of nature. Among others, there is one very beautiful scene, wherein a thirsty man, in whom the desire for water is vividly seen, is drinking, bending down on the ground by a fountain with very great and truly marvellous expression, in a manner that it seems almost a living person that is drinking. There are also many other things there most worthy of consideration, about which, in order not to be tedious, I do not enlarge further. Let it suffice that this whole work acquired for Giotto very great fame, by reason of the excellence of the figures and of the order, proportion, liveliness, and facility which he had from nature, and which he had made much greater by means of study, and was able to demonstrate clearly in all his works. And because, besides that which Giotto had from nature, he was most diligent and went on ever thinking out new ideas and wresting them from nature, he well deserved to be called the disciple of nature and not of others. The aforesaid scenes being finished, he painted in the same place, but in the lower church, the upper part of the walls at the sides of the high-altar, and all the four angles of the vaulting above in the place where lies the body of S. Francis; and all with inventions both fanciful and beautiful. In the first is S. Francis glorified in Heaven, surrounded by those virtues which are essential for him who wishes to be perfectly in the grace of God. On one side Obedience is placing a yoke on the neck of a friar who is before her on his knees, and the bands of the yoke are drawn by certain hands towards Heaven; and, enjoining silence with one finger to her lips, she has her eyes on Jesus Christ, who is shedding blood from His side. And in company with this virtue are Prudence and Humility, in order to show that where there is true obedience there are ever humility and prudence, which enable us to carry out every action well. In the second angle is Chastity, who, standing in a very strong fastness, is refusing to be conquered either by kingdoms or crowns or palms that some are presenting to her. At her feet is Purity, who is washing naked figures; and

Force is busy leading people to wash and purify themselves. Near to Chastity, on one side, is Penitence, who is chasing Love away with a Discipline, and putting to flight Impurity. In the third space is Poverty, who is walking with bare feet on thorns, and has a dog that is barking at her from behind, and about her a boy who is throwing stones at her, and another who is busy pushing some thorns with a stick against her legs. And this Poverty is seen here being espoused by S. Francis, while Jesus Christ is holding her hand, there being present, not without mystic meaning, Hope and Compassion. In the fourth and last of the said spaces is a S. Francis, also glorified, in the white tunic of a deacon, and shown triumphant in Heaven in the midst of a multitude of angels who are forming a choir round him, with a standard whereon is a Cross with seven stars; and on high is the Holy Spirit. Within each of these angles are some Latin words that explain the scenes. In like manner, besides the said four angles, there are pictures on the side walls which are very beautiful and truly to be held in great price, both by reason of the perfection that is seen in them and because they were wrought with so great diligence that up to our own day they have remained fresh. In these pictures is the portrait of Giotto himself, very well made, and over the door of the sacristy, by the same man's hand and also in fresco, there is a S. Francis who is receiving the Stigmata, so loving and devout that to me it appears the most excellent picture that Giotto made in these works, which are all truly beautiful and worthy of praise.

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Having finished, then, for the last, the said S. Francis, he returned to Florence, where, on arriving there, he painted, on a panel that was to be sent to Pisa, a S. Francis on the tremendous rock of La Vernia, with extraordinary diligence, seeing that, besides certain landscapes full of trees and cliffs, which was something new in those times, there are seen in the attitude of a S. Francis, who is kneeling and receiving the Stigmata with much readiness, a most ardent desire to receive them and infinite love towards Jesus Christ, who, being surrounded in the sky by seraphim, is granting them to him with an expression so vivid that anything better cannot be imagined. In the lower part of the same panel there are three very beautiful scenes of the life of the same Saint. This panel, which to-day is seen in S. Francesco in Pisa on a pillar beside the high-altar, and is held in great veneration as a memorial of so great a man, was the reason that the Pisans, having just finished the building of the Campo Santo after the design of Giovanni, son of Niccola Pisano, as has been said above, gave to Giotto the painting of part of the inner walls, to the end that, since this so great fabric was all incrustated on the outer side with marbles and with carvings made at very great cost, and roofed over with lead, and also full of sarcophagi and ancient tombs once belonging to the heathens and brought to Pisa from various parts of the world, even so it might be adorned within, on the walls, with the noblest painting. Having gone to Pisa, then, for this purpose, Giotto made in fresco, on the first part of a wall in that Campo Santo, six large stories of the most patient Job. And because he judiciously reflected that the marbles of that part of the building where he had to work were turned towards the sea, and that, all being saline marbles, they are ever damp by reason of the south-east winds and throw out a certain salt moisture, even as the bricks of Pisa do for the most part, and that therefore the colours and the paintings fade and corrode, he caused to be made over the whole surface where he wished to work in fresco, to the end that his work might be preserved as long as possible, a coating, or in truth an intonaco or incrustation—that is to say, with lime, gypsum, and powdered brick all mixed together; so suitably that the pictures which he afterwards made thereon have been preserved up to the present day. And they would be still better if the negligence of those who should have taken care of them had not allowed them to be much injured by the damp, because the fact that this was not provided for, as was easily possible, has been the reason that these pictures, having suffered from damp, have been spoilt in certain places, and the flesh-colours have been blackened, and the intonaco has peeled off; not to mention that the nature of gypsum, when it has been mixed with lime, is to corrode in time and to grow rotten, whence it arises that afterwards, perforce, it spoils the colours, although it appears at the beginning to take a good and firm hold. In these scenes, besides the portrait of Messer Farinata degli Uberti, there are many beautiful figures, and above all certain villagers, who, in carrying the grievous news to Job, could not be more full of feeling nor show better than they do the grief that they felt over the lost cattle and over the other misadventures. Likewise there is amazing grace in the figure of a man-servant who is standing with a fan beside Job, who is covered with ulcers and almost abandoned by all; and although he is well done in every part, he is marvellous in the attitude that he strikes in chasing the flies from his leprous and stinking master with one hand, while with the other he is holding his nose in disgust, in order not to notice the stench. In like manner, the other figures in these scenes and the heads both of the males and of the women are very beautiful; and the draperies are wrought to such a degree of softness that it is no marvel if this work acquired for him so great fame, both in that city and abroad, that Pope Benedict IX of Treviso sent one of his courtiers into Tuscany to see what sort of man was Giotto, and of what kind his works, having designed to have some pictures made in S. Pietro. This courtier, coming in order to see Giotto and to hear what other masters there were in Florence excellent in painting and in mosaic, talked to many masters in Siena. Then, having received drawings from them, he came to Florence, and having gone into the shop of Giotto, who was working, declared to him the mind of the Pope and in what way it was proposed to make use of his labour, and at last asked him for some little drawing, to the end that he might send it to His Holiness. Giotto, who was most courteous, took a paper, and on that, with a brush dipped in red, holding his arm fast against his side in order to make a compass, with a turn of the hand he made a circle, so true in proportion and circumference that to behold it was a marvel. This done, he smiled and said to the courtier: "Here is your drawing." He, thinking he was being derided, said: "Am I to have no other drawing but this?" "'Tis enough and to spare," answered Giotto. "Send it, together with the others, and you will see if it will be recognized." The envoy, seeing that he could get nothing else, left him, very ill-satisfied and doubting that he had been fooled. All the same, sending to the Pope the other

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drawings and the names of those who had made them, he also sent that of Giotto, relating the method that he had followed in making his circle without moving his arm and without compasses. Wherefore the Pope and many courtiers that were versed in the arts recognized by this how much Giotto surpassed in excellence all the other painters of his time. This matter having afterwards spread abroad, there was born from it the proverb that is still wont to be said to men of gross wits: "Tu sei più tondo che l' O di Giotto!" ("Thou art rounder than Giotto's circle"). This proverb can be called beautiful not only from the occasion that gave it birth, but also for its significance, which consists in the double meaning; tondo being used, in Tuscany, both for the perfect shape of a circle and for slowness and grossness of understanding.

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Anderson

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS
(After the fresco by Giotto and his Pupils. Assisi: Lower Church of S. Francesco)

[View larger image](#)

The aforesaid Pope then made him come to Rome, where, honouring him much and appreciating his talents, he made him paint five scenes from the life of Christ in the apse of S. Pietro, and the chief panel in the sacristy, which were all executed by him with so great diligence that there never issued from his hands any more finished work in distemper. Wherefore he well deserved that the Pope, holding himself to have been well served, should cause to be given to him six hundred ducats of gold, besides granting him so many favours that they were talked of throughout all Italy.

About this time—in order to withhold nothing worthy of remembrance in connection with art—there was in Rome one Oderigi d'Agobbio, who was much the friend of Giotto and an excellent illuminator for those days. This man, being summoned for this purpose by the Pope, illuminated many books for the library of the palace, which are now in great part eaten away by time. And in my book of ancient drawings are some remains from the very hand of this man, who in truth was an able man; although a much better master than Oderigi was Franco Bolognese, who wrought a number of works excellently in that manner for the same Pope and for the same library, about the same time, as can be seen in the said book, wherein I have designs by his hand both in painting and in illumination, and among them an eagle very well done, and a very beautiful lion that is tearing a tree. Of these two excellent illuminators Dante makes mention in the eleventh canto of the *Purgatorio*, where he is talking of the vainglorious, in these verses:

O, dissi a lui, non se' tu Oderigi,
 L'onor d'Agobbio, e l'onor di quell'arte
 Che alluminare è chiamata in Parigi?
 Frate, diss'egli, più ridon le carte
 Che pennelleggia Franco Bolognese;
 L'onor è tutto suo, e mio in parte.

The Pope, having seen these works, and the manner of Giotto pleasing him infinitely, ordered him to make scenes from the Old Testament and the New right round S. Pietro; wherefore, for a beginning, Giotto made in fresco the Angel that is over the organ, seven braccia high, and many other paintings, whereof part have been restored by others in our own days, and part, in founding the new walls, have been either destroyed or removed from the old edifice of S. Pietro, up to the space below the organ; such as a Madonna on a wall, which, to the end that it might not be

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thrown to the ground, was cut right out of the wall and made fast with beams and iron bars and thus removed, and afterwards built in, by reason of its beauty, in the place that pleased the pious love that is borne towards everything excellent in art by Messer Niccolò Acciaiuoli, doctor of Florence, who richly adorned this work of Giotto with stucco-work and also with modern paintings. By his hand, also, was the Navicella in mosaic that is over the three doors of the portico in the court of S. Pietro, which is truly marvellous and deservedly praised by all beautiful minds, because in it, besides the design, there is the grouping of the Apostles, who are travelling in diverse manners through the sea-tempest, while the winds are blowing into a sail, which has so high a relief that a real one would not have more; and moreover it is difficult to have to make with those pieces of glass a unity such as that which is seen in the lights and shadows of so great a sail, which could only be equalled by the brush with great difficulty and by making every possible effort; not to mention that in a fisherman, who is fishing from a rock with a line, there is seen an attitude of extreme patience proper to that art, and in his face the hope and the wish to make a catch. Under this work are three little arches in fresco, of which, since they are for the greater part spoilt, I will say no more. The praises universally given by craftsmen to this work are well deserved.

Giotto, having afterwards painted on a panel a large Crucifix coloured in distemper, for the Minerva, a church of the Preaching Friars, returned to his own country, having been abroad six years. But no long time after, by reason of the death of Pope Benedict IX, Clement V was created Pope in Perugia, and Giotto was forced to betake himself with that Pope to the place where he brought his Court, to Avignon, in order to do certain works there; and having gone there, he made, not only in Avignon but in many other places in France, many very beautiful panels and pictures in fresco, which pleased the Pontiff and the whole Court infinitely. Wherefore, the work dispatched, the Pope dismissed him lovingly and with many gifts, and he returned home no less rich than honoured and famous; and among the rest he brought back the portrait of that Pope, which he gave afterwards to Taddeo Gaddi, his disciple. And this return of Giotto to Florence was in the year 1316. But it was not granted to him to stay long in Florence, because, being summoned to Padua by the agency of the Signori della Scala, he painted a very beautiful chapel in the Santo, a church built in those times. From there he went to Verona, where, for Messer Cane, he made certain pictures in his palace, and in particular the portrait of that lord; and a panel for the Friars of S. Francis. These works completed, in returning to Tuscany he was forced to stay in Ferrara, and he painted at the behest of those Signori d'Este, in their palace and in S. Agostino, some works that are still seen there to-day. Meanwhile, it coming to the ears of Dante, poet of Florence, that Giotto was in Ferrara, he so contrived that he brought him to Ravenna, where he was living in exile; and he caused him to make round the Church of S. Francesco, for the Signori da Polenta, some scenes in fresco that are passing good. Next, having gone from Ravenna to Urbino, there too he wrought some works. Then, chancing to pass through Arezzo, he could not but comply with the wish of Piero Saccone, who had been much his friend; wherefore he made for him in fresco, on a pillar in the principal chapel of the Vescovado, a S. Martin who has cut his cloak in half and is giving one part of it to a beggar, who is standing before him almost wholly naked. Then, having made for the Abbey of S. Fiore a large Crucifix painted in distemper on wood, which is to-day in the middle of that church, he returned finally to Florence, where, among many other works, he made some pictures in the Convent of the Nuns of Faenza, both in fresco and in distemper, that are not in existence to-day, by reason of the destruction of that convent. In the year 1322, likewise—Dante, very much his friend, having died in the year before, to his great sorrow—he went to Lucca, and at the request of Castruccio, then Lord of that city, his birthplace, he made a panel in S. Martino with a Christ in air and four Saints, Protectors of that city—namely, S. Peter, S. Regulus, S. Martin, and S. Paulinus—who appear to be recommending a Pope and an Emperor, who, according to what is believed by many, are Frederick of Bavaria and the Anti-Pope Nicholas V. Some, likewise, believe that Giotto designed the castle and fortress of Giusta, which is impregnable, at San Frediano, in the same city of Lucca.

Afterwards, Giotto having returned to Florence, Robert, King of Naples, wrote to Charles, King of Calabria, his first-born son, who chanced to be in Florence, that he should send him Giotto to Naples at all costs, for the reason that, having finished the building of S. Chiara, a convent of nuns and a royal church, he wished that it should be adorned by him with noble paintings. Giotto, then, hearing himself summoned by a King so greatly renowned and famous, went more than willingly to serve him, and, on arriving, painted many scenes from the Old Testament and the New in some chapels of the said convent. And the scenes from the Apocalypse that he made in one of the said chapels are said to have been inventions of Dante; and this may be also true of those at Assisi, so greatly renowned, whereof there has been enough said above. And although Dante at that time was dead, they may have held discourse on these matters, as often comes to pass between friends.

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GIOTTO: MADONNA AND CHILD
(Florence: Accademia 103. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

But to return to Naples; Giotto made many works in the Castel dell'Uovo, and in particular the chapel, which much pleased that King, by whom he was so greatly beloved that many times, while working, Giotto found himself entertained by the King in person, who took pleasure in seeing him at work and in hearing his discourse. And Giotto, who had ever some jest on his tongue and some witty repartee in readiness, would entertain him with his hand, in painting, and with pleasant discourse, in his jesting. Wherefore, the King saying to him one day that he wished to make him the first man in Naples, Giotto answered, "And for that end am I lodged at the Porta Reale, in order to be the first in Naples." Another time, the King saying to him, "Giotto, an I were you, now that it is hot, I would give over painting for a little;" he answered, "And I, i' faith, an I were you." Being then very dear to the King, he made for him a good number of pictures in a hall (that King Alfonso I pulled down in order to make the Castle), and also in the Incoronata; and among others in the said hall were the portraits of many famous men, and among them that of Giotto himself. Now the King having one day out of caprice besought him to paint his realm for him, Giotto, so it is said, painted for him an ass saddled, that had at its feet a new pack-saddle, and was sniffing at it and making semblance of desiring it; and on both the old pack-saddle and the new one were the royal crown and the sceptre of sovereignty; wherefore Giotto, being asked by the King what such a picture signified, answered that such were his subjects and such the kingdom, wherein every day a new lord was desired.

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Departing from Naples in order to go to Rome, Giotto stopped at Gaeta, where he was forced to paint some scenes from the Old Testament in the Nunziata, which are now spoilt by time, but yet not so completely that there may not be seen in them very well the portrait of Giotto himself, near a large and very beautiful Crucifix. This work finished, not being able to refuse this to Signor Malatesta, he first occupied himself in his service for some days in Rome, and afterwards he betook himself to Rimini, of which city the said Malatesta was lord; and there, in the Church of S. Francesco, he made very many pictures, which were afterwards thrown to the ground and destroyed by Gismondo, son of Pandolfo Malatesta, who rebuilt the whole said church anew. In the cloisters of the said place, also, opposite to the wall of the church, he painted in fresco the story of the Blessed Michelina, which was one of the most beautiful and excellent works that Giotto ever made, by reason of the many and beautiful ideas that he had in working thereon; for besides the beauty of the draperies, and the grace and vivacity of the heads, which are miraculous, there is a young woman therein as beautiful as ever a woman can be, who, in order to clear herself from the false charge of adultery, is taking oath over a book in a most wonderful attitude, holding her eyes fixed on those of her husband, who was making her take the oath by reason of mistrust in a black son born from her, whom he could in no way bring himself to believe to be his. She, even as the husband is showing disdain and distrust in his face, is making clear with the purity of her brow and of her eyes, to those who are most intently gazing on her, her innocence and simplicity, and the wrong that he is doing to her in making her take oath and in proclaiming her wrongly as a harlot.

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In like manner, very great feeling was that which he expressed in a sick man stricken with certain sores, seeing that all the women who are round him, overcome by the stench, are making certain grimaces of disgust, the most gracious in the world. The foreshortenings, next, that are seen in another picture among a quantity of beggars that he portrayed, are very worthy of praise and should be held in great price among craftsmen, because from them there came the first beginning and method of making them, not to mention that it cannot be said that they are not passing good for early work. But above everything else that is in this work, most marvellous is the gesture that the aforesaid Blessed Michelina is making towards certain usurers, who are disbursing to her the money from the sale of her possessions for giving to the poor, seeing that in her there is shown contempt of money and of the other things of this earth, which appear to disgust her, and, in them, the personification of human avarice and greed. Very beautiful, too, is the figure of one who, while counting the money, appears to be making sign to the notary who is writing, considering that, although he has his eyes on the notary, he is yet keeping his hands on the money, thus revealing his love of it, his avarice, and his distrust. In like manner, the three figures that are upholding the garments of S. Francis in the sky, representing Obedience, Patience, and Poverty, are worthy of infinite praise, above all because there is in the manner of the draperies a natural flow of folds that gives us to know that Giotto was born in order to give light to painting. Besides this, he portrayed Signor Malatesta on a ship in this work, so naturally that he appears absolutely alive; and some mariners and other people, in their promptness, their expressions, and their attitudes—and particularly a figure that is speaking with some others and spits into the sea, putting one hand up to his face—give us to know the excellence of Giotto. And certainly, among all the works of painting made by this master, this may be said to be one of the best, for the reason that there is not one figure in so great a number that does not show very great craftsmanship, and that is not placed in some characteristic attitude. And therefore it is no marvel that Signor Malatesta did not fail to reward him magnificently and to praise him.

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Having finished his labours for that lord, he complied with the request of a Prior of Florence who was then at S. Cataldo d'Arimini, and made a S. Thomas Aquinas, reading to his friars, without the door of the church. Departing thence, he returned to Ravenna and painted a chapel in fresco in S. Giovanni Evangelista, which is much extolled. Having next returned to Florence with very great honour and ample means, he painted a Crucifix on wood and in distemper for S. Marco, larger than life and on a ground of gold, which was placed on the right hand in the church. And he made another like it in S. Maria Novella, whereon Puccio Capanna, his pupil, worked in company with him; and this is still to-day over the principal door, on the right as you enter the church, over the tomb of the Gaddi. And in the same church, over the tramezzo,^[11] he made a S. Louis for Paolo di Lotto Ardinghelli, and at the foot thereof the portrait of him and of his wife, from the life.

Afterwards, in the year 1327, Guido Tarlati da Pietramala, Bishop and Lord of Arezzo, died at Massa di Maremma in returning from Lucca, where he had been to visit the Emperor, and after his body had been brought to Arezzo and the most magnificent funeral honours had been paid to it, Piero Saccone and Dolfo da Pietramala, the brother of the Bishop, determined that there should be made for him a tomb in marble worthy of the greatness of so notable a man, who had been a lord both spiritual and temporal, and head of the Ghibelline party in Tuscany. Wherefore, having written to Giotto that he should make the design of a tomb very rich and with all possible adornment, and having sent him the measurements, they prayed him afterwards that he should place at their disposal the sculptor who was the most excellent, according to his opinion, of all that were in Italy, because they were relying wholly on his judgment. Giotto, who was most courteous, made the design and sent it to them; and after this design, as will be told in the proper place, the said tomb was made. And because the said Piero Saccone had infinite love for the talent of this man, having taken Borgo a San Sepolcro no long time after he had received the said design, he brought from there to Arezzo a panel with little figures by the hand of Giotto, which afterwards fell to pieces; and Baccio Gondi, nobleman of Florence, a lover of these noble arts and of every talent, being Commissary of Arezzo, sought out the pieces of this panel with great diligence, and having found some brought them to Florence, where he holds them in great veneration, together with some other works that he has by the hand of the same Giotto, who wrought so many that their number is almost beyond belief. And not many years ago, chancing to be at the Hermitage of Camaldoli, where I have wrought many works for those reverend Fathers, I saw in a cell, whither it had been brought by the Very Reverend Don Antonio da Pisa, then General of the Congregation of Camaldoli, a very beautiful little Crucifix on a ground of gold, with the name of Giotto in his own hand; which Crucifix, according to what I hear from the Reverend Don Silvano Razzi, monk of Camaldoli, is kept to-day in the cell of the Superior of the Monastery of the Angeli, as being a very rare work and by the hand of Giotto, in company with a most beautiful little picture by Raffaello da Urbino.

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For the Frati Umiliati of Ognissanti in Florence, Giotto painted a chapel and four panels, in one of which there was the Madonna, with many angels round her and the Child in her arms, and a large Crucifix on wood, whereof Puccio Capanna took the design and wrought many of them afterwards throughout all Italy, having much practice in the manner of Giotto. In the tramezzo^[12] of the said church, when this book of the Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects was printed the first time, there was a little panel in distemper painted by Giotto with infinite diligence, wherein was the death of Our Lady, with the Apostles round her and with a Christ who is receiving her soul into His arms. This work was much praised by the craftsmen of painting, and in particular by Michelagnolo Buonarroti, who declared, as was said another time, that the quality of this painted story could not be more like to the truth than it is. This little panel, I say,

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having come into notice from the time when the book of these Lives was first published, was afterwards carried off by someone unknown, who, perhaps out of love for art and out of piety, it seeming to him that it was little esteemed, became, as said our poet, impious. And truly it was a miracle in those times that Giotto had so great loveliness in his painting, considering, above all, that he learnt the art in a certain measure without a master.

After these works, in the year 1334, on July 9, he put his hand to the Campanile of S. Maria del Fiore, whereof the foundation was a platform of strong stone, in a pit sunk twenty braccia deep from which water and gravel had been removed; upon this platform he made a good mass of concrete, that reached to the height of twelve braccia above the first foundation, and the rest—namely, the other eight braccia—he caused to be made of masonry. And at this beginning and foundation there officiated the Bishop of the city, who, in the presence of all the clergy and all the magistrates, solemnly laid the first stone. This work, then, being carried on with the said model, which was in the German manner that was in use in those times, Giotto designed all the scenes that were going into the ornamentation, and marked out the model with white, black, and red colours in all those places wherein the marbles and the friezes were to go, with much diligence. The circuit round the base was one hundred braccia—that is, twenty-five braccia for each side—and the height, one hundred and forty-four braccia. And if that is true, and I hold it as of the truest, which Lorenzo di Cione Ghiberti has left in writing, Giotto made not only the model of this campanile, but also part of those scenes in marble wherein are the beginnings of all the arts, in sculpture and in relief. And the said Lorenzo declares that he saw models in relief by the hand of Giotto, and in particular those of these works; which circumstance can be easily believed, design and invention being father and mother of all these arts and not of one alone. This campanile was destined, according to the model of Giotto, to have a spire, or rather a pyramid, four-sided and fifty braccia high, as a completion to what is now seen; but, for the reason that it was a German idea and in an old manner, modern architects have never done aught but advise that it should not be made, the work seeming to be better as it is. For all these works Giotto was not only made citizen of Florence, but was given a pension of one hundred florins yearly by the Commune of Florence, which was something very great in those times; and he was made overseer over this work, which was carried on after him by Taddeo Gaddi, for he did not live so long as to be able to see it finished.

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Alinari

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT
(After the fresco by Giotto. Padua: Arena Chapel)

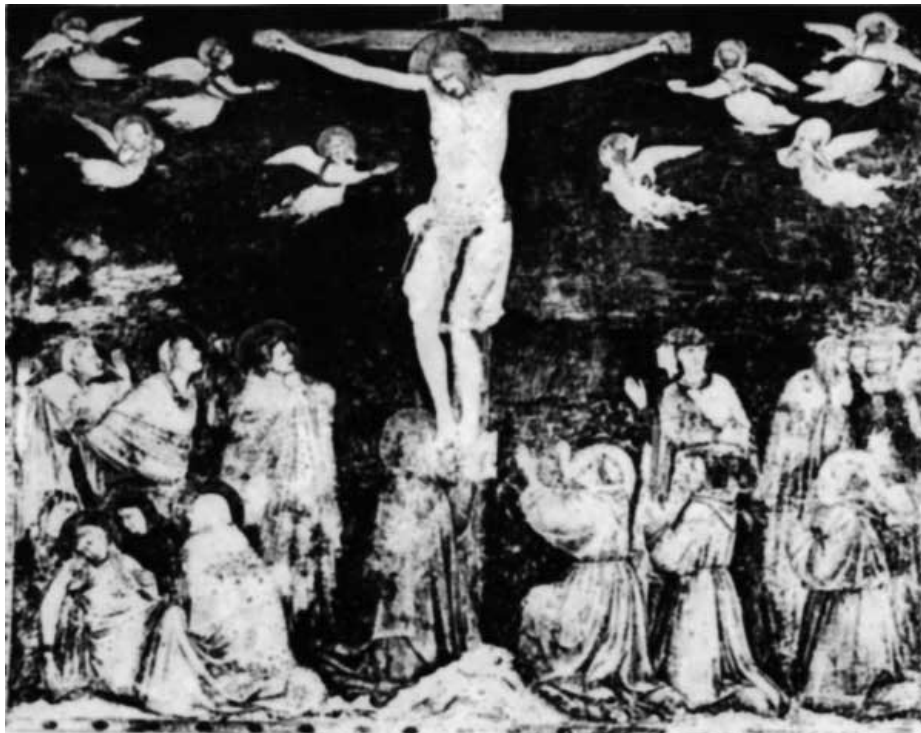
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Now, while this work continued to be carried forward, he made a panel for the Nuns of S. Giorgio, and three half-length figures in an arch over the inner side of the door of the Badia in Florence, now covered with whitewash in order to give more light to the church. And in the Great Hall of the Podestà of Florence he painted the Commune (an idea stolen by many), representing

it as sitting in the form of Judge, sceptre in hand, and over its head he placed the balanced scales as symbol of the just decisions administered by it, accompanying it with four Virtues, that are, Strength with courage, Wisdom with the laws, Justice with arms, and Temperance with words; this work is beautiful as a picture, and characteristic and appropriate in invention.

Afterwards, having gone again to Padua, besides many other works and chapels that he painted there, he made a Mundane Glory in the precincts of the Arena, which gained him much honour and profit. In Milan, also, he wrought certain works, that are scattered throughout that city and held most beautiful even to this day. Finally, having returned from Milan, no long time passed before he gave up his soul to God, having wrought so many most beautiful works in his life, and having been no less good as Christian than he was excellent as painter. He died in the year 1336, to the great grief of all his fellow-citizens—nay, of all those who had known him or even only heard his name—and he was buried, even as his virtues deserved, with great honour, having been loved by all while he lived, and in particular by the men excellent in all the professions, seeing that, besides Dante, of whom we have spoken above, he was much honoured by Petrarca, both he and his works, so greatly that it is read in Petrarca's testament that he left to Signor Francesco da Carrara, Lord of Padua, among other things held by him in the highest veneration, a picture by the hand of Giotto containing a Madonna, as something rare and very dear to him. And the words of that clause in the testament run thus:

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THE CRUCIFIXION
(After the fresco of the School of Giotto.
Assisi: Lower Church of S. Francesco)

[View larger image](#)

"Transeo ad dispositionem aliarum rerum; et prædicto igitur domino meo Paduano, quia et ipse per Dei gratiam non eget, et ego nihil aliud habeo dignum se, mitto tabulam meam sive historiam Beatæ Virginis Mariæ, opus Jocti pictoris egregii, quæ mihi ab amico meo Michæle Vannis de Florentia missa est, in cujus pulchritudinem ignorantes non intelligunt, magistri autem artis stupent; hanc iconam ipsi domino lego, ut ipsa Virgo benedicta sibi sit propitia apud filium suum Jesum Christum."

And the same Petrarch, in a Latin epistle in the fifth book of his *Familiar Letters*, says these words:

"Atque (ut a veteribus ad nova, ab externis ad nostra transgrediar) duos ego novi pictores egregios, nec formosos, Joctum Florentinum civem, cujus inter modernos fama ingens est, et Simonem Senensem. Novi scultores aliquot," etc.

Giotto was buried in S. Maria del Fiore, on the left side as you enter the church, where there is a slab of white marble in memory of so great a man. And, as was told in the Life of Cimabue, a commentator of Dante, who lived at the same time as Giotto, said: "Giotto was and is the most eminent among painters in the same city of Florence, and his works bear testimony for him in Rome, in Naples, in Avignon, in Florence, in Padua, and in many other parts of the world."

His disciples were Taddeo Gaddi, held by him at baptism, as has been said, and Puccio Capanna of Florence, who, working at Rimini in the Church of S. Cataldo, belonging to the Preaching Friars, painted perfectly in fresco the hull of a ship which appears to be sinking in the sea, with

men who are throwing things into the sea, one of whom is Puccio himself portrayed from life among a good number of mariners. The same man painted many works after the death of Giotto in the Church of S. Francesco at Assisi, and in the Church of S. Trinita in Florence, near the side-door towards the river, he painted the Chapel of the Strozzi, wherein is the Coronation of the Madonna in fresco, with a choir of angels which draw very much to the manner of Giotto; and on the sides are stories of S. Lucia, very well wrought. In the Badia of Florence he painted the Chapel of S. Giovanni Evangelista, belonging to the family of Covoni, beside the sacristy; and in Pistoia he wrought in fresco the principal chapel of the Church of S. Francesco and the Chapel of S. Lodovico, with the stories of those Saints, passing well painted. In the middle of the Church of S. Domenico, in the same city, there are a Crucifix, a Madonna, and a S. John, wrought with much sweetness, and at their feet a complete human skeleton, wherein (and this was something unusual in those times) Puccio showed that he had sought to find the foundations of art. In this work there is read his name, written by himself in this fashion: PUCCIO DI FIORENZA ME FECE. In the arch over the door of S. Maria Nuova in the said church there are three half-length figures by his hand, Our Lady with the Child in her arms, and S. Peter on one side, and on the other S. Francis. He also painted in the aforesaid city of Assisi, in the lower Church of S. Francesco, some scenes of the Passion of Jesus Christ in fresco, with good and very resolute mastery, and in the chapel of the Church of S. Maria degli Angeli he wrought in fresco a Christ in Glory, with the Virgin praying to Him for the Christian people; this work, which is passing good, has been all blackened by the smoke of the lamps and the candles that are burning there continually in great quantity. And in truth, in so far as it can be judged, Puccio had the manner and the whole method of working of his master Giotto, and knew how to make good use of it in the works that he wrought, even if, as some have it, he did not live long, having fallen sick and died by reason of labouring too much in fresco. By his hand, in so far as is known, is the Chapel of S. Martino in the same church, with the stories of that Saint, wrought in fresco for Cardinal Gentile. There is seen, also, in the middle of the street called Portica, a Christ at the Column, and in a square picture there is Our Lady, with S. Catherine and S. Clara, one on either side of her. There are works by his hand scattered about in many other places, such as a panel with the Passion of Christ, and stories of S. Francis, in the tramezzo^[13] of the church in Bologna; and many others, in short, that are passed by for the sake of brevity. I will say, indeed, that in Assisi, where most of his works are, and where it appears to me that he assisted Giotto in painting, I have found that they hold him as their fellow-citizen, and that there are still to-day in that city some of the family of the Capanni. Wherefore it may easily be believed that he was born in Florence, having written so himself, and that he was a disciple of Giotto, but that afterwards he took a wife in Assisi, that there he had children, and that now he has descendants there. But because it is of little importance to know this exactly, it is enough to say that he was a good master.

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Likewise a disciple of Giotto and a very masterly painter was Ottaviano da Faenza, who painted many works at Ferrara in S. Giorgio, the seat of the Monks of Monte Oliveto; and in Faenza, where he lived and died, he painted, in the arch over the door of S. Francesco, a Madonna, S. Peter and S. Paul, and many other works in his said birthplace and in Bologna.

A disciple of Giotto, also, was Pace da Faenza, who stayed with him long and assisted him in many works; and in Bologna there are some scenes in fresco by his hand on the façade of S. Giovanni Decollato. This Pace was an able man, particularly in making little figures, as can be seen to this day in the Church of S. Francesco at Forlì, in a Tree of the Cross, and in a little panel in distemper, wherein is the life of Christ, with four little scenes from the life of Our Lady, all very well wrought. It is said that he wrought in fresco, in the Chapel of S. Antonio at Assisi, some stories of the life of that Saint, for a Duke of Spoleto who is buried in that place together with his son, both having died fighting in certain suburbs of Assisi, according to what is seen in a long inscription that is on the sarcophagus of the said tomb. In the old book of the Company of Painters it is found that the same man had another disciple, Francesco, called di Maestro Giotto, of whom I have nothing else to relate.

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Guglielmo of Forlì was also a disciple of Giotto, and besides many other works he painted the chapel of the high-altar in S. Domenico at Forlì, his native city. Disciples of Giotto, also, were Pietro Laurati and Simon Memmi of Siena, Stefano, a Florentine, and Pietro Cavallini, a Roman; but, seeing that of all these there is account in the Life of each one of them, let it suffice to have said in this place that they were disciples of Giotto, who drew very well for his time and for that manner, whereunto witness is borne by many sheets of parchment drawn by his hand in water-colour, outlined with the pen, in chiaroscuro, with the high lights in white, which are in our book of drawings, and are truly a marvel in comparison with those of the masters that lived before him.

Giotto, as it has been said, was very ingenious and humorous, and very witty in his sayings, whereof there is still vivid memory in that city; for besides that which Messer Giovanni Boccaccio wrote about him, Franco Sacchetti, in his three hundred Stories, relates many of them that are very beautiful. Of these I will not forbear to write down some with the very words of Franco himself, to the end that, together with the story itself, there may be seen certain modes of speech and expressions of those times. He says in one, then, to give it its heading:

"To Giotto, a great painter, is given a buckler to paint by a man of small account. He, making a jest of it, paints it in such a fashion that the other is put to confusion."

The story: "Everyone must have heard already who was Giotto, and how great a painter he was above every other. A clownish fellow, having heard his fame and having need, perchance for doing watch and ward, to have a buckler of his painted, went off incontinent to the shop of

Giotto, with one who carried his buckler behind him, and, arriving where he found Giotto, said, 'God save thee, master, I would have thee paint my arms on this buckler.' Giotto, considering the man and the way of him, said no other word save this, 'When dost thou want it?' And he told him; and Giotto said, 'Leave it to me'; and off he went. And Giotto, being left alone, ponders to himself, 'What meaneth this? Can this fellow have been sent to me in jest? Howsoever it may be, never was there brought to me a buckler to paint, and he who brings it is a simple manikin and bids me make him his arms as if he were of the blood-royal of France; i' faith, I must make him a new fashion of arms.' And so, pondering within himself, he put the said buckler before him, and, having designed what seemed good to him, bade one of his disciples finish the painting, and so he did; which painting was a helmet, a gorget, a pair of arm-pieces, a pair of iron gauntlets, a cuirass and a back-piece, a pair of thigh-pieces, a pair of leg-pieces, a sword, a dagger, and a lance. The great man, who knew not what he was in for, on arriving, comes forward and says, 'Master, is it painted, that buckler?' Said Giotto, 'Of a truth, it is; go, someone, and bring it down.' The buckler coming, that would-be gentleman begins to look at it and says to Giotto, 'What filthy mess is this that thou hast painted for me?' Said Giotto, 'And it will seem to thee a right filthy business in the paying.' Said he, 'I will not pay four farthings for it.' Said Giotto, 'And what didst thou tell me that I was to paint?' And he answered, 'My arms.' Said Giotto, 'And are they not here? Is there one wanting?' Said the fellow, 'Well, well!' Said Giotto, 'Nay, 'tis not well, God help thee! And a great booby must thou be, for if one asked thee, "Who art thou?" scarce wouldst thou be able to tell; and here thou comest and sayest, "Paint me my arms!" An thou hadst been one of the Bardi, that were enough. What arms dost thou bear? Whence art thou? Who were thy ancestors? Out upon thee! Art not ashamed of thyself? Begin first to come into the world before thou pratest of arms as if thou wert Dusnam of Bavaria. I have made thee a whole suit of armour on thy buckler; if there be one piece wanting, name it, and I will have it painted.' Said he, 'Thou dost use vile words to me, and hast spoilt me a buckler;' and taking himself off, he went to the justice and had Giotto summoned. Giotto appeared and had him summoned, claiming two florins for the painting, and the other claimed them from him. The officers, having heard the pleadings, which Giotto made much the better, judged that the other should take his buckler so painted, and should give six lire to Giotto, since he was in the right. Wherefore he was constrained to take his buckler and go, and was dismissed; and so, not knowing his measure, he had his measure taken."

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It is said that Giotto, while working in his boyhood under Cimabue, once painted a fly on the nose of a figure that Cimabue himself had made, so true to nature that his master, returning to continue the work, set himself more than once to drive it away with his hand, thinking that it was real, before he perceived his mistake. Many other tricks played by Giotto and many witty retorts could I relate, but I wish that these, which deal with matters pertinent to art, should be enough for me to have told in this place, leaving the rest to the said Franco and others.

Finally, seeing that there remained memory of Giotto not only in the works that issued from his hands, but in those also that issued from the hand of the writers of those times, he having been the man who recovered the true method of painting, which had been lost for many years before him; therefore, by public decree and by the effort and particular affection of the elder Lorenzo de' Medici, the Magnificent, in admiration of the talent of so great a man his portrait was placed in S. Maria del Fiore, carved in marble by Benedetto da Maiano, an excellent sculptor, together with the verses written below, made by that divine man, Messer Angelo Poliziano, to the end that those who should become excellent in any profession whatsoever might be able to cherish a hope of obtaining, from others, such memorials as these that Giotto deserved and obtained in liberal measure from his goodness:

Ille ego sum, per quem pictura extincta revixit,
Cui quam recta manus, tam fuit et facilis.
Naturæ deerat nostræ quod defuit arti;
Plus licuit nulli pingere, nec melius.
Miraris turrim egregiam sacro ære sonantem?
Hæc quoque de modulo crevit ad astra meo.
Denique sum Jottus, quid opus fuit illa referre?
Hoc nomen longi carminis instar erit.

And to the end that those who come after may be able to see drawings by the very hand of Giotto, and from these to recognize all the more the excellence of so great a man, in our aforesaid book there are some that are marvellous, sought out by me with no less diligence than labour and expense.

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AGOSTINO AND AGNOLO OF SIENA

LIFE OF AGOSTINO AND AGNOLO OF SIENA,

SCULPTORS AND ARCHITECTS

Among others who exercised themselves in the school of the sculptors Giovanni and Niccola of Pisa, Agostino and Agnolo, sculptors of Siena, of whom we are at present about to write the Life, became very excellent for those times. These, according to what I find, were born from a father and mother of Siena, and their forefathers were architects, seeing that in the year 1190, under the rule of the three Consuls, they brought to perfection the Fontebranda, and afterwards, in the following year, under the same Consulate, the Customs-house of that city and other buildings. And in truth it is clear that very often the seeds of talent germinate in the houses where they have lain for some time, and throw out shoots which afterwards produce greater and better fruits than the first plants had done. Agostino and Agnolo, then, adding great betterment to the manner of Giovanni and Niccola of Pisa, enriched the art with better design and invention, as their works clearly demonstrate. It is said that the aforesaid Giovanni, returning from Naples to Pisa in the year 1284, stayed in Siena in order to make the design and foundation for the façade of the Duomo, wherein are the three principal doors, to the end that it might be all adorned very richly with marbles; and that then Agostino, being no more than fifteen years of age, went to be with him in order to apply himself to sculpture, whereof he had learnt the first principles, being no less inclined to this art than to the matters of architecture. And so, under the teaching of Giovanni, by means of continual study he surpassed all his fellow-disciples in design, grace, and manner, so greatly that it was said by all that he was the right eye of his master. And because, between people who love each other, there is no gift, whether of nature, or of soul, or of fortune, that is mutually desired so much as excellence, which alone makes men great and noble, and what is more, most happy both in this life and in the other, therefore Agostino, seizing this occasion of assistance from Giovanni, drew his brother Agnolo into the same pursuit. Nor was it a great labour for him to do this, seeing that the intercourse of Agnolo with Agostino and with the other sculptors had already, as he saw the honour and profit that they were drawing from such an art, fired his mind with extreme eagerness and desire to apply himself to sculpture; nay, before Agostino had given a thought to this, Agnolo had wrought certain works in secret.

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Agostino, then, being engaged in working with Giovanni on the marble panel of the high-altar in the Vescovado of Arezzo, whereof there has been mention above, contrived to bring there the said Agnolo, his brother, who acquitted himself in this work in such a manner that when it was finished he was found to have equalled Agostino in the excellence of his art. Which circumstance, becoming known to Giovanni, was the reason that after this work he made use of both one and the other in many other works of his that he wrought in Pistola, in Pisa, and in other places. And seeing that he applied himself not only to sculpture but to architecture as well, no long time passed before, under the rule of the Nine in Siena, Agostino made the design of their Palace in Malborghetto, which was in the year 1308. In the making of this he acquired so great a name in his country, that, returning to Siena after the death of Giovanni, they were made, both one and the other, architects to the State; wherefore afterwards, in the year 1317, there was made under their direction the front of the Duomo that faces towards the north, and in the year 1321, with the design of the same men, there was begun the construction of the Porta Romana in that manner wherein it stands to-day, and it was finished in the year 1326; which gate was first called Porta S. Martino. They rebuilt, also, the Porta a Tufi, which at first was called Porta di S. Agata all'Arco. In the same year, with the design of the same Agostino and Agnolo, there was begun the Church and Convent of S. Francesco in the presence of Cardinal di Gaeta, Apostolic Legate. No long time after, by the action of some of the Tolomei who were living as exiles at Orvieto, Agostino and Agnolo were summoned to make certain sculptures for the work of S. Maria in that city; wherefore, going there, they carved some prophets in marble which are now, in comparison with the other statues in that façade, the finest and best proportioned in that so greatly renowned work.

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Now it came to pass in the year 1326, as it has been said in his Life, that Giotto was called by means of Charles, Duke of Calabria, who was then staying in Florence, to Naples, in order to make some things for King Robert in S. Chiara and other places in that city; wherefore Giotto, passing by way of Orvieto on his way to Naples, in order to see the works that had been made and were still being made there by so many men, wished to see everything minutely. And because the prophets of Agostino and Agnolo of Siena pleased him more than all the other sculptures, it came about therefore that Giotto not only commended them and held them, much to their contentment, among his friends, but also presented them to Piero Saccone da Pietramala as the best of all the sculptors then living, for the making of the tomb of Bishop Guido, Lord and Bishop of Arezzo, which has been mentioned in the Life of Giotto himself. And so then Giotto having seen in Orvieto the works of many sculptors and having judged the best to be those of Agostino and Agnolo of Siena, this was the reason that the said tomb was given to them to make—in that manner, however, wherein he had designed it, and according to the model which he himself had sent to the said Piero Saccone. Agostino and Agnolo finished this tomb in the space of three years, executing it with much diligence, and built it into the Church of the Vescovado of Arezzo, in the Chapel of the Sacrament. Over the sarcophagus, which rests on certain great consoles carved more than passing well, there is stretched the body of that Bishop in marble, and at the sides are some angels that are drawing back certain curtains very gracefully. Besides this, there are carved in half-relief, in compartments, twelve scenes from the life and actions of that Bishop, with an infinite number of little figures. I will not grudge the labour of describing the contents of these scenes, to the end that it may be seen with what great patience they were wrought, and

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how zealously these sculptors sought the good manner.

In the first is the scene when, assisted by the Ghibelline party of Milan, which sent him money and four hundred masons, he is rebuilding the walls of Arezzo all anew, making them much longer than they were and giving them the form of a galley. In the second is the taking of Lucignano di Valdichiana. In the third, that of Chiusi. In the fourth, that of Fronzoli, then a strong castle above Poppi, and held by the sons of the Count of Battifolle. The fifth is when the Castle of Rondine, after having been many months besieged by the Aretines, is surrendering finally to the Bishop. In the sixth is the taking of the Castle of Bucine in Valdarno. The seventh is when he is taking by storm the fortress of Caprese, which belonged to the Count of Romena, after having maintained the siege for several months. In the eighth the Bishop is having the Castle of Laterino pulled down and the hill that rises above it cut into the shape of a cross, to the end that it may no longer be possible to build a fortress thereon. In the ninth he is seen destroying Monte Sansovino and putting it to fire and flames, chasing from it all the inhabitants. In the eleventh is his coronation, wherein are to be seen many beautiful costumes of soldiers on foot and on horseback, and of other people. In the twelfth, finally, his men are seen carrying him from Montenero, where he fell sick, to Massa, and thence afterwards, now dead, to Arezzo. Round this tomb, also, in many places, are the Ghibelline insignia, and the arms of the Bishop, which are six square stones "or," on a field "azure," in the same ordering as are the six balls in the arms of the Medici; which arms of the house of the Bishop were described by Frate Guittone, chevalier and poet of Arezzo, when he said, writing of the site of the Castle of Pietramala, whence that family had its origin:

Dove si scontra il Giglion con la Chiassa
Ivi furono i miei antecessori,
Che in campo azurro d'or portan sei sassa.

Agnolo and Agostino of Siena, then, executed this work with better art and invention and with more diligence than there had been shown in any work executed in their times. And in truth they deserve nothing but infinite praise, having made therein so many figures and so great a variety of sites, places, towers, horses, men, and other things, that it is indeed a marvel. And although this tomb was in great part destroyed by the Frenchmen of the Duke of Anjou, who sacked the greater part of that city in order to take revenge on the hostile party for certain affronts received, none the less it shows that it was wrought with very good judgment by the said Agostino and Agnolo, who cut on it, in rather large letters, these words:

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HOC OPUS FECIT MAGISTER AUGUSTINUS ET MAGISTER ANGELUS DE
SENIS.

After this, in the year 1329, they wrought an altar-panel of marble for the Church of S. Francesco at Bologna, in a passing good manner; and therein, besides the carved ornamentation, which is very rich, they made a Christ who is crowning Our Lady, and on each side three similar figures—S. Francis, S. James, S. Dominic, S. Anthony of Padua, S. Petronius, and S. John the Evangelist, with figures one braccio and a half in height. Below each of the said figures is carved a scene in low-relief from the life of the Saint that is above; and in all these scenes is an infinite number of half-length figures, which make a rich and beautiful adornment, according to the custom of those times. It is seen clearly that Agostino and Agnolo endured very great fatigue in this work, and that they put into it all diligence and study in order to make it, as it truly was, a work worthy of praise; and although they are half eaten away, yet there are to be read thereon their names and the date, by means of which, it being known when they began it, it is seen that they laboured eight whole years in completing it. It is true, indeed, that in that same time they wrought many other small works in diverse places and for various people.

Now, while they were working in Bologna, that city, by the mediation of a Legate of the Pope, gave herself absolutely over to the Church; and the Pope, in return, promised that he would go to settle with his Court in Bologna, saying that he wished to erect a castle there, or truly a fortress, for his own security. This being conceded to him by the Bolognese, it was immediately built under the direction and design of Agostino and Agnolo, but it had a very short life, for the reason that the Bolognese, having found that the many promises of the Pope were wholly vain, pulled down and destroyed the said fortress, with much greater promptness than it had been built.

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It is said that while these two sculptors were staying in Bologna the Po issued in furious flood from its bed and laid waste the whole country round for many miles, doing incredible damage to the territory of Mantua and Ferrara and slaying more than ten thousand persons; and that they, being called on for this reason as ingenious and able men, found a way to put this terrible river back into its course, confining it with dykes and other most useful barriers; which was greatly to their credit and profit, because, besides acquiring fame thereby, they were recompensed by the Lords of Mantua and by the D'Este family with most honourable rewards.

After this they returned to Siena, and in the year 1338, with their direction and design, there was made the new Church of S. Maria, near the Duomo Vecchio, towards Piazza Manetti; and no long time after, the people of Siena, remaining much satisfied with all the works that these men were making, determined with an occasion so apt to put into effect that which had been discussed many times, but up to then in vain—namely, the making of a public fountain on the principal square, opposite the Palagio della Signoria. Wherefore, this being entrusted to Agostino and Agnolo, they brought the waters of that fountain through pipes of lead and of clay, which was very difficult, and it began to play in the year 1343, on the first day of June, with much pleasure and contentment to the whole city, which remained thereby much indebted to the talent of these its two citizens.

About the same time there was made the Great Council Chamber in the Municipal Palace; and so too, with the direction and design of the same men, there was brought to its completion the tower of the said Palace, in the year 1344, and there were placed thereon two great bells, whereof they had one from Grosseto and the other was made in Siena. Finally, while Agnolo chanced to be in the city of Assisi, where he made a chapel and a tomb in marble in the lower Church of S. Francesco for a brother of Napoleone Orsino, a Cardinal and a friar of S. Francis, who had died in that place—Agostino, who had remained in Siena in the service of the State, died while he was busy making the design for the adornments of the said fountain in the square, and was honourably buried in the Duomo. I have not yet found, and cannot therefore say anything about the matter, either how or when Agnolo died, or even any other works of importance by their hand; and therefore let this be the end of their Life.

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Now, seeing that it would be without doubt an error, in following the order of time, not to make mention of some who, although they have not wrought so many works that it is possible to write their whole life, have none the less contributed betterment and beauty to art and to the world, I will say, taking occasion from that which has been said above about the Vescovado of Arezzo and about the Pieve, that Pietro and Paolo goldsmiths of Arezzo, who learnt design from Agnolo and Agostino of Siena, were the first who wrought large works of some excellence with the chasing-tool, since, for an arch-priest of the said Pieve of Arezzo, they executed a head in silver as large as life, wherein was placed the head of S. Donatus, Bishop and Protector of that city; which work was worthy of nothing but praise, both because they made therein some very beautiful figures in enamel and other ornaments, and because it was one of the first works, as it has been said, that were wrought with the chasing-tool.

About the same time, the Guild of Calimara in Florence caused Maestro Cione, an excellent goldsmith, to make the greater part, if not the whole, of the silver altar of S. Giovanni Battista, wherein are many scenes from the life of that Saint embossed on a plate of silver, with passing good figures in half-relief; which work, both by reason of its size and of its being something new, was held marvellous by all who saw it. In the year 1330 after the body of S. Zanobi had been found beneath the vaults of S. Reparata, the same Maestro Cione made a head of silver to contain a piece of the head of that Saint, which is still preserved to-day in the same head of silver and is borne in processions; which head was then held something very beautiful and gave a great name to its craftsman, who died no long time after, rich and in great repute.

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Maestro Cione left many disciples, and among others Forzore di Spinello of Arezzo, who wrought every kind of chasing very well but was particularly excellent in making scenes in silver enamelled over fire, to which witness is borne by a mitre with most beautiful adornments in enamel, and a very beautiful pastoral staff of silver, which are in the Vescovado of Arezzo. The same man wrought for Cardinal Galeotto da Pietramala many works in silver that remained after his death with the friars of La Vernia, where he wished to be buried. There, besides the wall that was erected in that place by Count Orlando, Lord of Chiusi, a small town below La Vernia, the Cardinal built the church, together with many rooms in the convent and throughout that whole place, without putting his arms there or leaving any other memorial. A disciple of Maestro Cione, also, was Leonardo di Ser Giovanni, a Florentine, who wrought many works in chasing and soldering, with better design than the others before him had shown, and in particular the altar and panel of silver in S. Jacopo at Pistoia; in which work, besides the scenes, which are numerous, there was much praise given to a figure in the round that he made in the middle, representing S. James, more than one braccio in height, and wrought with so great finish that it appears rather to have been made by casting than by chasing. This figure is set in the midst of the said scenes on the panel of the altar, round which is a frieze of letters in enamel, that run thus:

AD HONOREM DEI ET SANCTI JACOBI APOSTOLI, HOC OPUS FACTUM FUIT
TEMPORE DOMINI FRANC. PAGNI DICTÆ OPERÆ OPERARII SUB ANNO 1371
PER ME LEONARDUM SER JO. DE FLOREN. AURIFIC.

Now, returning to Agostino and Agnolo: they had many disciples who, after their death, wrought many works of architecture and of sculpture in Lombardy and other parts of Italy, and among others Maestro Jacopo Lanfrani of Venice, who founded S. Francesco of Imola and wrought the principal door in sculpture, where he carved his name and the date, which was the year 1343. And at Bologna, in the Church of S. Domenico, the same Maestro Jacopo made a tomb in marble for Giovanni Andrea Calduino, Doctor of Laws and Secretary to Pope Clement VI; and another, also in marble and in the said church, very well wrought, for Taddeo Peppoli, Conservator of the people and of Justice in Bologna. And in the same year, which was the year 1347, or a little before, this tomb being finished, Maestro Jacopo went to his native city of Venice and founded the Church of S. Antonio, which was previously of wood, at the request of a Florentine Abbot of the ancient family of the Abati, the Doge being Messer Andrea Dandolo. This church was finished in the year 1349. Jacobello and Pietro Paolo, also, Venetians and disciples of Agostino and Agnolo, made a tomb in marble for Messer Giovanni da Lignano, Doctor of Laws, in the year 1383, in the Church of S. Domenico at Bologna.

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All these and many other sculptors went on for a long space of time following one and the same method, in a manner that with it they filled all Italy. It is believed, also, that the Pesarese, who, besides many other works, built the Church of S. Domenico in his native city, and made in sculpture the marble door with the three figures in the round, God the Father, S. John the Baptist, and S. Mark, was a disciple of Agostino and Agnolo; and to this the manner bears

witness. This work was finished in the year 1385. But, seeing that it would take too long if I were to make mention minutely of the works that were wrought by many masters of those times in that manner, I wish that this, that I have said of them thus in general, should suffice me for the present, and above all because there is not any benefit of much account for our arts from such works. Of the aforesaid it has seemed to me proper to make mention, because, if they do not deserve to be discussed at length, yet, on the other hand, they were not such as to need to be passed over completely in silence.

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STEFANO AND UGOLINO SANESE

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LIFE OF STEFANO, PAINTER OF FLORENCE, AND OF UGOLINO SANESE

[UGOLINO DA SIENA]

Stefano, painter of Florence and disciple of Giotto, was so excellent, that he not only surpassed all the others who had laboured in the art before him, but outstripped his own master himself by so much that he was held, and deservedly, the best of all the painters who had lived up to that time, as his works clearly demonstrate. He painted in fresco the Madonna of the Campo Santo in Pisa, which is no little better in design and in colouring than the work of Giotto; and in Florence, in the cloister of S. Spirito, he painted three little arches in fresco. In the first of these, wherein is the Transfiguration of Christ with Moses and Elias, imagining how great must have been the splendour that dazzled them, he fashioned the three Disciples with extraordinary and beautiful attitudes, and enveloped in draperies in a manner that it is seen that he went on trying to do something that had never been done before—namely, to suggest the nude form of the figures below new kinds of folds, which, as I have said, had not been thought of even by Giotto. Under this arch, wherein he made a Christ delivering the woman possessed, he drew a building in perspective, perfectly and in a manner then little known, executing it in good form and with better knowledge; and in it, working with very great judgment in modern fashion, he showed so great art and so great invention and proportion in the columns, in the doors, in the windows, and in the cornices, and so great diversity from the other masters in his method of working, that it appears that there was beginning to be seen a certain glimmer of the good and perfect manner of the moderns. He invented, among other ingenious ideas, a flight of steps very difficult to make, which, both in painting and built out in relief—wrought in either way, in fact—is so rich in design and variety, and so useful and convenient in invention, that the elder Lorenzo de' Medici, the Magnificent, availed himself of it in making the outer staircase of the Palace of Poggio a Cajano, now the principal villa of the most Illustrious Lord Duke. In the other little arch is a story of Christ when he is delivering S. Peter from shipwreck, so well done that one seems to hear the voice of Peter saying: "Domine, salva nos, perimus." This work is judged much more beautiful than the others, because, besides the softness of the draperies, there are seen sweetness in the air of the heads and terror in the perils of the sea, and because the Apostles, shaken by diverse motions and by phantoms of the sea, have been represented in attitudes very appropriate and all most beautiful. And although time has eaten away in part the labours that Stefano put into this work, it may be seen, although but dimly, that the Apostles are defending themselves from the fury of the winds and from the waves of the sea with great energy; which work, being very highly praised among the moderns, must have certainly appeared a miracle in all Tuscany in the time of him who wrought it. After this he painted a S. Thomas Aquinas beside a door in the first cloister of S. Maria Novella, where he also made a Crucifix, which was afterwards executed in a bad manner by other painters in restoring it. In like manner he left a chapel in the church begun and not finished, which has been much eaten away by time, wherein the angels are seen raining down in diverse forms by reason of the pride of Lucifer; where it is to be noticed that the figures, with the arms, trunks, and legs foreshortened much better than any foreshortenings that had been made before, give us to know that Stefano began to understand and to demonstrate in part the difficulties that those men had to reduce to excellence, who afterwards, with greater science, showed them to us, as they have done, in perfection; wherefore the surname of "The Ape of Nature" was given him by the other craftsmen.

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Next, being summoned to Milan, Stefano made a beginning for many works for Matteo Visconti, but was not able to finish them, because, having fallen sick by reason of the change of air, he was forced to return to Florence. There, having regained his health, he made in fresco, in the tramezzo^[14] of the Church of S. Croce, in the Chapel of the Asini, the story of the martyrdom of

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S. Mark, when he was dragged to death, with many figures that have something of the good. Being then summoned to Rome by reason of having been a disciple of Giotto, he made some stories of Christ in S. Pietro, in the principal chapel wherein is the altar of the said Saint, between the windows that are in the great choir-niche, with so much diligence that it is seen that he approached closely to the modern manner, surpassing his master Giotto considerably in draughtsmanship and in other respects.

After this, on a pillar on the left-hand side of the principal chapel of the Araceli, he made a S. Louis in fresco, which is much praised, because it has in it a vivacity never displayed up to that time even by Giotto. And in truth Stefano had great facility in draughtsmanship, as can be seen in our said book in a drawing by his hand, wherein is drawn the Transfiguration (which he painted in the cloister of S. Spirito), in such a manner that in my judgment he drew much better than Giotto.

Having gone, next, to Assisi, he began in fresco a scene of the Celestial Glory in the niche of the principal chapel of the lower Church of S. Francesco, where the choir is; and although he did not finish it, it is seen from what he did that he used so great diligence that no greater could be desired. In this work there is seen begun a circle of saints, both male and female, with so beautiful variety in the faces of the young, the men of middle age, and the old, that nothing better could be desired. And there is seen a very sweet manner in these blessed spirits, with such great harmony that it appears almost impossible that it could have been done in those times by Stefano, who indeed did do it; although there is nothing of the figures in this circle finished save the heads, over which is a choir of angels who are hovering playfully about in various attitudes, appropriately carrying theological symbols in their hands, and all turned towards a Christ on the Cross, who is in the middle of this work, over the head of a S. Francis, who is in the midst of an infinity of saints. Besides this, in the border of the whole work, he made some angels, each of whom is holding in his hand one of those Churches that S. John the Evangelist described in the Apocalypse; and these angels are executed with so much grace that I am amazed how in that age there was to be found one who knew so much. Stefano began this work with a view to bringing it to the fullest perfection, and he would have succeeded, but he was forced to leave it imperfect and to return to Florence by some important affairs of his own.

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During that time, then, that he stayed for this purpose in Florence, in order to lose no time he painted for the Gianfigliuzzi, by the side of the Arno, between their houses and the Ponte alla Carraja, a little shrine on a corner that is there, wherein he depicted a Madonna sewing, to whom a boy dressed and seated is handing a bird, with such diligence that the work, small as it is, deserves to be praised no less than do the works that he wrought on a larger and more masterly scale.

This shrine finished and his affairs dispatched, being called to Pistoia by its Lords in the year 1346, he was made to paint the Chapel of S. Jacopo, on the vaulting of which he made a God the Father with some Apostles, and on the walls the stories of that Saint, and in particular when his mother, wife of Zebedee, asks Jesus Christ to consent to place her two sons, one on His right hand and the other on His left hand, in the Kingdom of the Father. Close to this is the beheading of the said Saint, a very beautiful work.

It is reputed that Maso, called Giottino, of whom there will be mention below, was the son of this Stefano; and although many, by reason of the suggestiveness of the name, hold him the son of Giotto, I, by reason of certain records that I have seen, and of certain memoirs of good authority written by Lorenzo Ghiberti and by Domenico del Ghirlandajo, hold it as true that he was rather the son of Stefano than of Giotto. Be this as it may, returning to Stefano, it can be credited to him that he did more than anyone after Giotto to improve painting, for, besides being more varied in invention, he was also more harmonious, more mellow, and better blended in colouring than all the others; and above all he had no peer in diligence. And as for those foreshortenings that he made, although, as I have said, he showed a faulty manner in them by reason of the difficulty of making them, none the less he who is the pioneer in the difficulties of any exercise deserves a much greater name than those who follow with a somewhat more ordered and regular manner. Truly great, therefore, is the debt that should be acknowledged to Stefano, because he who walks in darkness and gives heart to others, by showing them the way, brings it about that its difficult steps are made easy, so that with lapse of time men leave the false road and attain to the desired goal. At Perugia, too, in the Church of S. Domenico, he began in fresco the Chapel of S. Caterina, which remained unfinished.

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Berlin Photo. Co.

SS. PAUL, PETER AND JOHN THE BAPTIST
(After the painting by Ugineto Sanese [da Siena]. Berlin: K. Friedrich Museum, 1635)

[View larger image](#)

There lived about the same time as Stefano a man of passing good repute, Ugineto, painter of Siena, very much his friend, who painted many panels and chapels throughout all Italy, although he held ever in great part to the Greek manner, as one who, grown old therein, had wished by reason of a certain obstinacy in himself to hold rather to the manner of Cimabue than to that of Giotto, which was so greatly revered. By the hand of Ugineto, then, is the panel of the high-altar of S. Croce, on a ground all of gold, and also a panel which stood many years on the high-altar of S. Maria Novella and is to-day in the Chapter-house, where the Spanish nation every year holds most solemn festival on the day of S. James, with other offices and funeral ceremonies of its own. Besides these, he wrought many other works with good skill, without departing, however, from the manner of his master. The same man made, on a brick-pier in the Loggia that Lapo had built on the Piazza d'Orsanmichele, that Madonna which worked so many miracles, not many years later, that the Loggia was for a long time full of images, and is still held in the greatest veneration. Finally, in the Chapel of Messer Ridolfo de' Bardi, which is in S. Croce, where Giotto painted the life of S. Francis, he painted a Crucifix in distemper on the altar-panel, with a Magdalene and a S. John weeping, and two friars, one on either side. Ugineto passed away from this life, being old, in the year 1349, and was buried with honour in Siena, his native city.

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But returning to Stefano, of whom they say that he was also a good architect, which is proved by what has been said above, he died, so it is said, in the year when there began the jubilee, 1350, at the age of forty-nine, and was laid to rest in the tomb of his fathers, in S. Spirito, with this epitaph:

STEPHANO FLORENTINO PICTORI, FACIUNDIS IMAGINIBUS AC COLORANDIS
 FIGURIS NULLI UNQUAM INFERIORI, AFFINES MOESTISS. POS. VIX.
 AN. XXXXIX.

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PIETRO LAURATI



Alinari

THE MADONNA ENTHRONED
(*After the polyptych by Pietro Laurati [Lorenzetti]. Arezzo: S. Maria della Pieve*)

[View larger image](#)

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LIFE OF PIETRO LAURATI

[PIETRO LORENZETTI],

PAINTER OF SIENA

Pietro Laurati, an excellent painter of Siena, proved in his life how great is the contentment of the truly able, who feel that their works are prized both at home and abroad, and who see themselves sought after by all men, for the reason that in the course of his life he was sent for and held dear throughout all Tuscany, having first become known through the scenes that he painted in fresco for the Scala, a hospital in Siena, wherein he imitated in such wise the manner of Giotto, then spread throughout all Tuscany, that it was believed with great reason that he was destined, as afterwards came to pass, to become a better master than Cimabue and Giotto and the others had been; for the figures that represent the Virgin ascending the steps of the Temple, accompanied by Joachim and Anna, and received by the priest, and then in the Marriage, are so beautifully adorned, so well draped, and so simply wrapped in their garments, that they show majesty in the air of the heads, and a most beautiful manner in their bearing. By reason of this work, which was the first introduction into Siena of the good method of painting, giving light to the many beautiful intellects which have flourished in that city in every age, Pietro was invited to Monte Oliveto di Chiusuri, where he painted a panel in distemper that is placed to-day in the portico below the church. In Florence, next, opposite to the left-hand door of the Church of S. Spirito, on the corner where to-day there is a butcher, he painted a shrine which, by reason of the softness of the heads and of the sweetness that is seen in it, deserves the highest praise from every discerning craftsman.

Going from Florence to Pisa, he wrought in the Campo Santo, on the wall that is beside the principal door, all the lives of the Holy Fathers, with expressions so lively and attitudes so beautiful that he equalled Giotto and gained thereby very great praise, having expressed in certain heads, both with drawing and with colour, all that vivacity that the manner of those times was able to show. From Pisa he went to Pistoia, where he made a Madonna with some angels round her, very well grouped, on a panel in distemper, for the Church of S. Francesco; and in the predella that ran below this panel, in certain scenes, he made certain little figures so lively and so vivid that in those times it was something marvellous; wherefore, since they satisfied himself no less than others, he thought fit to place thereon his name, with these words: PETRUS LAURATI DE SENIS.

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**PIETRO LORENZETTI: MADONNA AND CHILD WITH S.S.
FRANCIS AND JOHN**
(Assisi: Lower Church of S. Francesco. Fresco)

[View larger image](#)

Pietro was summoned, next, in the year 1355, by Messer Guglielmo, arch-priest, and by the Wardens of Works of the Pieve of Arezzo, who were then Margarito Boschi and others; and in that church, built long before with better design and manner than any other that had been made in Tuscany up to that time, and all adorned with squared stone and with carvings, as it has been said, by the hand of Margaritone, he painted in fresco the apse and the whole great niche of the chapel of the high-altar, making there twelve scenes from the life of Our Lady with figures large as life, beginning with the expulsion of Joachim from the Temple, up to the Nativity of Jesus Christ. In these scenes, wrought in fresco, may be recognized almost the same inventions (the lineaments, the air of the heads, and the attitudes of the figures) which had been characteristic of and peculiar to Giotto, his master. And although all this work is beautiful, what he painted on the vaulting of this niche is without doubt better than all the rest, for in representing the Madonna ascending into Heaven, besides making the Apostles each four braccia high, wherein he showed greatness of spirit and was the first to try to give grandness to the manner, he gave so beautiful an air to the heads and so great loveliness to the vestments that in those times nothing more could have been desired. Likewise, in the faces of a choir of angels who are flying in the air round the Madonna, dancing with graceful movements, and appearing to sing, he painted a gladness truly angelic and divine, above all because he made the angels sounding diverse instruments, with their eyes all fixed and intent on another choir of angels, who, supported by a cloud in the form of an almond, are bearing the Madonna to Heaven, with beautiful attitudes and all surrounded by rainbows. This work, seeing that it rightly gave pleasure, was the reason that he was commissioned to make in distemper the panel for the high-altar of the aforesaid Pieve; wherein, in five parts, with figures as far as the knees and large as life, he made Our Lady with the Child in her arms, and S. John the Baptist and S. Matthew on the one side, and on the other the Evangelist and S. Donatus, with many little figures in the predella and in the border of the panel above, all truly beautiful and executed in very good manner. This panel, after I had rebuilt the high-altar of the aforesaid Pieve completely anew, at my own expense and with my own hand, was set up over the altar of S. Cristofano at the foot of the church. Nor do I wish to grudge the labour of saying in this place, with this occasion and not wide of the subject, that I, moved by Christian piety and by the affection that I bear towards this venerable and ancient collegiate church, and for the reason that in it, in my earliest childhood, I learnt my first lessons, and that it contains the remains of my fathers: moved, I say, by these reasons, and by it appearing to me that it was wellnigh deserted, I have restored it in a manner that it can be said that it has returned from death to life; for besides changing it from a dark to a well-lighted church by increasing the windows that were there before and by making others, I have also removed the choir, which, being in front, used to occupy a great part of the church, and to the great satisfaction of those reverend canons I have placed it behind the high-altar. This new altar, standing by itself, has on the panel in front a Christ calling Peter and Andrew from their nets, and on the side towards the choir it has, on another panel, S. George slaying the Dragon. On the sides are four pictures, and in each of these are two saints as large as life. Then above, and below in the predella, there is an infinity of other figures, which, for brevity's sake, are not enumerated. The ornamental frame of this altar is thirteen braccia high, and the predella is two braccia high. And because within it is hollow, and one ascends to it by a staircase through an iron wicket very conveniently arranged, there are preserved in it many venerable relics, which can be seen from without through two gratings that are in the front part; and among others there is the head of S. Donatus, Bishop and Protector of that city, and in a coffer of variegated marble, three braccia long, which I have had restored, are the bones of four Saints. And the predella of the altar, which surrounds it all right round in due proportion, has in front of it the tabernacle, or rather ciborium, of the Sacrament, made of carved wood and all gilt, about three braccia high; which tabernacle is in the round and can be seen as well from the side of the choir as from in front. And because I have spared no labour and no expense, considering myself bound to act thus in honour of God, this work, in my judgment, has in all those ornaments of gold, of carvings, of paintings, of marbles, of travertines, of variegated marbles, of porphyries, and of other stones, the best that could be got together by me in that place.

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But returning now to Pietro Laurati; that panel finished whereof there has been talk above, he wrought in S. Pietro at Rome many works which were afterwards destroyed in making the new building of S. Pietro. He also wrought some works in Cortona and in Arezzo, besides those that have been mentioned, and some others in the Church of S. Fiora e Lucilla, a monastery of Black Friars, and in particular, in a chapel, a S. Thomas who is putting his hand on the wound in the breast of Christ.

A disciple of Pietro was Bartolommeo Bologhini of Siena, who wrought many panels in Siena and other places in Italy, and in Florence there is one by his hand on the altar of the Chapel of S. Silvestro in S. Croce. The pictures of these men date about the year of our salvation 1350; and in my book, so many times cited, there is seen a drawing by the hand of Pietro, wherein a shoemaker who is sewing, with simple but very natural lineaments, shows very great expression and the characteristic manner of Pietro, the portrait of whom, by the hand of Bartolommeo Bologhini, was in a panel in Siena, when I copied it from the original in the manner that is seen above.



Anderson

THE DEPOSITION FROM THE CROSS
(After the fresco of the Roman School. Assisi: Upper Church of S. Francesco)

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ANDREA PISANO

LIFE OF ANDREA PISANO, SCULPTOR AND ARCHITECT

The art of painting never flourished at any time without the sculptors also pursuing their exercise

with excellence, and to this the works of all ages bear witness for the close observer, because these two arts are truly sisters, born at one and the same time, and fostered and governed by one and the same soul. This is seen in Andrea Pisano, who, practising sculpture in the time of Giotto, made so great improvement in this art, that both in practice and in theory he was esteemed the greatest man that the Tuscans had had up to his times in this profession, and above all in casting in bronze. Wherefore his works were honoured and rewarded in such a manner by all who knew him, and above all by the Florentines, that it was no hardship to him to change country, relatives, property and friends. He received much assistance from the difficulties experienced in sculpture by the masters who had lived before him, whose sculptures were so uncouth and worthless that whosoever saw them in comparison with those of this man judged the last a miracle. And that these early works were rude, witness is borne, as it has been said elsewhere, by some that are over the principal door of S. Paolo in Florence and some in stone that are in the Church of Ognissanti, which are so made that they move those who view them rather to laughter than to any marvel or pleasure. And it is certain that the art of sculpture can recover itself much better, in the event of the essence of statuary being lost (since men have the living and the natural model, which is wholly rounded, as that art requires), than can the art of painting; it being not so easy and simple to recover the beautiful outlines and the good manner, in order to bring the art to the light, for these are the elements that produce majesty, beauty, grace and adornment in the works that the painters make. In one respect fortune was favourable to the labours of Andrea, because there had been brought to Pisa, as it has been said elsewhere, by means of the many victories that the Pisans had at sea, many antiquities and sarcophagi that are still round the Duomo and the Campo Santo, and these brought him such great assistance and gave him such great light as could not be obtained by Giotto, for the reason that the ancient paintings had not been preserved as much as the sculptures. And although statues are often destroyed by fires and by the ruin and fury of war, and buried or transported to diverse places, nevertheless it is easy for the experienced to recognize the difference in the manner of all countries; as, for example, the Egyptian is slender and lengthy in its figures, the Greek is scientific and shows much study in the nudes, while the heads have almost all the same expression, and the most ancient Tuscan is laboured in the hair and somewhat uncouth. That of the Romans (I call Romans, for the most part, those who, after the subjugation of Greece, betook themselves to Rome, whither all that there was of the good and of the beautiful in the world was carried)—that, I say, is so beautiful, by reason of the expressions, the attitudes, and the movements both of the nude and of the draped figures, that it may be said that they wrested the beautiful from all the other provinces and moulded it into one single manner, to the end that it might be, as it is, the best—nay, the most divine of all.

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All these beautiful manners and arts being spent in the time of Andrea, that alone was in use which had been brought by the Goths and by the uncivilized Greeks into Tuscany. Wherefore he, having studied the new method of design of Giotto and those few antiquities that were known to him, refined in great part the grossness of so miserable a manner with his judgment, in such wise that he began to work better and to give much greater beauty to statuary than any other had yet done in that art up to his times. Therefore, his genius and his good skill and dexterity becoming known, he was assisted by many in his country, and while still young he was commissioned to make for S. Maria a Ponte some little figures in marble, which brought him so good a name that he was sought out with very great insistence to come to work in Florence for the Office of Works of S. Maria del Fiore, which, after a beginning had been made with the façade containing the three doors, was suffering from a dearth of masters to make the scenes that Giotto had designed for the beginning of the said fabric. Andrea, then, betook himself to Florence, for the service of the said Office of Works. And because the Florentines desired at that time to gain the friendship and love of Pope Boniface VIII, who was then Supreme Pontiff of the Church of God, they wished that, before anything else, Andrea should make a portrait in marble of the said Pontiff, from the life. Wherefore, putting his hand to this work, he did not rest until he had finished the figure of the Pope, with a S. Peter and a S. Paul who are one on either side of him; which three figures were placed in the façade of S. Maria del Fiore, where they still are. Andrea then made certain little figures of prophets for the middle door of the said church, in some shrines or rather niches, from which it is seen that he had brought great betterment to the art, and that he was in advance, both in excellence and design, of all those who had worked up to then on the said fabric. Wherefore it was resolved that all the works of importance should be given to him to do, and not to others; and so, no long time after, he was commissioned to make the four statues of the principal Doctors of the Church, S. Jerome, S. Ambrose, S. Augustine, and S. Gregory. And these being finished and acquiring for him favour and fame with the Wardens of Works—nay, with the whole city—he was commissioned to make two other figures in marble of the same size, which were S. Stephen and S. Laurence, now standing in the said façade of S. Maria del Fiore, at the outermost corners. By the hand of Andrea, likewise, is the Madonna in marble, three braccia and a half high, with the Child in her arms, which stands on the altar of the little Church of the Company of the Misericordia, on the Piazza di S. Giovanni in Florence; which was a work much praised in those times, and above all because he accompanied it with two angels, one on either side, each two braccia and a half high. Round this work there has been made in our own day a frame of wood, very well wrought by Maestro Antonio, called Il Carota; and below, a predella full of most beautiful figures coloured in oil by Ridolfo, son of Domenico Ghirlandajo. In like manner, that half-length Madonna in marble that is over the side door of the same Misericordia, in the façade of the Cialdonai, is by the hand of Andrea, and it was much praised, because he imitated therein the good ancient manner, contrary to his wont, which was ever far distant from it, as some drawings testify that are in our book, wrought by his hand, wherein are drawn all the stories of the Apocalypse.

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Now, seeing that Andrea had applied himself in his youth to the study of architecture, there came occasion for him to be employed in this by the Commune of Florence; for Arnolfo being dead and Giotto absent, he was commissioned to make the design of the Castle of Scarperia, which is in the Mugello, at the foot of the mountains. Some say, although I would not indeed vouch for it as true, that Andrea stayed a year in Venice, and there wrought, in sculpture, some little figures in marble that are in the façade of S. Marco, and that at the time of Messer Piero Gradenigo, Doge of that Republic, he made the design of the Arsenal; but seeing that I know nothing about it save that which I find to have been written by some without authority, I leave each one to think in his own way about this matter. Andrea having returned from Venice to Florence, the city, fearful of the coming of the Emperor, caused a part of the walls to be raised with lime post-haste to the height of eight braccia, employing in this Andrea, in that portion that is between San Gallo and the Porta al Prato; and in other places he made bastions, stockades, and other ramparts of earth and of wood, very strong.



Alinari

**SALOME AND THE BEHEADING OF S. JOHN THE BAPTIST
(Details, after Andrea Pisano, from the Gates of the Baptistery,
Florence)**

[View larger image](#)

Now because, three years before, he had shown himself to his own great credit to be an able man in the casting of bronze, having sent to the Pope in Avignon, by means of Giotto, his very great friend, who was then staying at that Court, a very beautiful cross cast in bronze, he was commissioned to complete in bronze one of the doors of the Church of S. Giovanni, for which Giotto had already made a very beautiful design; this was given to him, I say, to complete, by reason of his having been judged, among so many who had worked up to then, the most able, the most practised and the most judicious master not only of Tuscany but of all Italy. Wherefore, putting his hand to this, with a mind determined not to consent to spare either time, or labour, or diligence in executing a work of so great importance, fortune was so propitious to him in the casting, for those times when the secrets were not known that are known to-day, that within the space of twenty-two years he brought it to that perfection which is seen; and what is more, he also made during that same time not only the shrine of the high-altar of S. Giovanni, with two angels, one on either side of it, that were held something very beautiful, but also, after the design of Giotto, those little figures in marble that act as adornment for the door of the Campanile of S. Maria del Fiore, and round the same Campanile, in certain mandorle, the seven planets, the seven virtues, and the seven works of mercy, little figures in half-relief that were then much praised. He also made during the same time the three figures, each four braccia high, that were set up in the niches of the said Campanile, beneath the windows that face the spot where the Orphans now are—that is, towards the south; which figures were thought at that time more than passing good. But to return to where I left off: I say that in the said bronze door are little scenes in low relief of the life of S. John the Baptist, that is, from his birth up to his death, wrought happily and with much diligence. And although it seems to many that in these scenes there do not appear that beautiful design and that great art which are now put into figures, yet Andrea deserves nothing but the greatest praise, in that he was the first to put his hand to the complete execution of such a work, which afterwards enabled the others who lived after him to make whatever of the beautiful, of the difficult and of the good is to be seen at the present day in the other two doors and in the external ornaments. This work was placed in the middle door of that church, and stood there until the time when Lorenzo Ghiberti made that one which is there at the present day; for then it was removed and placed opposite the Misericordia, where it still stands. I will not forbear to say that Andrea was assisted in making this door by Nino, his son, who was afterwards a much better master than his father had been, and that it was completely finished in the year 1339, that is, not only made smooth and polished all over, but also gilded by fire; and it

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is believed that it was cast in metal by some Venetian masters, very expert in the founding of metals, and of this there is found record in the books of the Guild of the Merchants of Calimara, Wardens of the Works of S. Giovanni.

While the said door was making, Andrea made not only the other works aforesaid but also many others, and in particular the model of the Church of S. Giovanni at Pistoia, which was founded in the year 1337. In that same year, on January 25, in excavating the foundations of this church, there was found the body of the Blessed Atto, once Bishop of that city, who had been buried in that place one hundred and thirty-seven years. The architecture, then, of this church, which is round, was passing good for those times. In the principal church of the said city of Pistoia there is also a tomb of marble by the hand of Andrea, with the body of the sarcophagus full of little figures, and some larger figures above; in which tomb is laid to rest the body of Messer Cino d' Angibolgi, Doctor of Laws, and a very famous scholar in his time, as Messer Francesco Petrarca testifies in that sonnet:

Piangete, donne, e con voi pianga Amore;

and also in the fourth chapter of the *Triumph of Love*, where he says:

Ecco Cin da Pistoia, Guitton d'Arezzo,
Che di non esser primo par ch'ira aggia.

In that tomb there is seen the portrait of Messer Cino himself in marble, by the hand of Andrea; he is teaching a number of his scholars, who are round him, with an attitude and manner so beautiful that, although to-day it might not be prized, in those days it must have been a marvellous thing.



Alinari

THE CREATION OF MAN
(After a relief, by Andrea Pisano, on the Campanile,
Florence)

[View larger image](#)

Andrea was also made use of in matters of architecture by Gualtieri, Duke of Athens and Tyrant of the Florentines, who made him enlarge the square, and caused him, in order to safeguard himself in his palace, to secure all the lower windows on the first floor (where to-day is the Sala de' Dugento) with iron bars, square and very strong. The said Duke also added, opposite S. Pietro Scheraggio, the walls of rustic work that are beside the palace, in order to enlarge it; and in the thickness of the wall he made a secret staircase, in order to ascend and descend unseen. And at the foot of the said wall of rustic work he made a great door, which serves to-day for the Customs-house, and above that his arms, and all with the design and counsel of Andrea; and although these arms were chiselled out by the Council of Twelve, which took pains to efface

every memorial of that Duke, there remained none the less in the square shield the form of the lion rampant with two tails, as anyone can see who examines it with diligence. For the same Duke Andrea built many towers round the walls of the city, and he not only made a magnificent beginning for the Porta a S. Friano and brought it to the completion that is seen, but also made the walls for the vestibules of all the gates of the city, and the lesser gates for the convenience of the people. And because the Duke had it in his mind to make a fortress on the Costa di S. Giorgio, Andrea made the model for it, which afterwards was not used, for the reason that the work was never given a beginning, the Duke having been driven out in the year 1343. Nevertheless, there was effected in great part the desire of that Duke to bring the palace to the form of a strong castle, because, to that which had been made originally, he added the great mass which is seen to-day, enclosing within its circuit the houses of the Filipetri, the tower and the houses of the Amidei and Mancini, and those of the Bellalberti. And because, having made a beginning with so great a fabric and with the thick walls and barbicans, he had not all the material that was essential equally in readiness, he held back the construction of the Ponte Vecchio, which was being worked on with all haste as a work of necessity, and availed himself of the stone hewn and the wood prepared for it, without the least scruple. And although Taddeo Gaddi was not perhaps inferior in the matters of architecture to Andrea Pisano, the Duke would not avail himself of him in these buildings, by reason of his being a Florentine, but only of Andrea. The same Duke Gualtieri wished to pull down S. Cecilia, in order to see from his palace the Strada Romana and the Mercato Nuovo, and likewise to destroy S. Pietro Scheraggio for his own convenience, but he had not leave to do this from the Pope; and meanwhile, as it has been said above, he was driven out by the fury of the people.

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Deservedly then did Andrea gain, by the honourable labours of so many years, not only very great rewards but also the citizenship; for he was made a citizen of Florence by the Signoria, and was given offices and magistracies in the city, and his works were esteemed both while he lived and after his death, there being found no one who could surpass him in working, until there came Niccolò Aretino, Jacopo della Quercia of Siena, Donatello, Filippo di Ser Brunellesco, and Lorenzo Ghiberti, who executed the sculptures and other works that they made in such a manner that people recognized in how great error they had lived up to that time; for these men recovered with their works that excellence which had been hidden and little known by men for many and many a year. The works of Andrea date about the year of our salvation 1340.

Andrea left many disciples; among others, Tommaso Pisano, architect and sculptor, who finished the Chapel of the Campo Santo and added the finishing touch to the Campanile of the Duomo—namely, that final part wherein are the bells. Tommaso is believed to have been the son of Andrea, this being found written in the panel of the high-altar of S. Francesco in Pisa, wherein there is, carved in half-relief, a Madonna, with other Saints made by him, and below these his name and that of his father.



Alinari

MADONNA AND CHILD
(After Nino Pisano. Orvieto: Museo dell'Opera)

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Andrea was survived by Nino, his son, who applied himself to sculpture; and his first work was in S. Maria Novella, where he finished a Madonna in marble begun by his father, which is within the side door, beside the Chapel of the Minerbetti. Next, having gone to Pisa, he made in the Spina a half-length figure in marble of Our Lady, who is suckling an infant Jesus Christ wrapped in certain delicate draperies. For this Madonna an ornamental frame of marble was made in the year 1522, by the agency of Messer Jacopo Corbini, and another frame, much greater and more beautiful, was made then for another Madonna of marble, which was of full length and by the hand of the same Nino; in the attitude of which Madonna the mother is seen handing a rose with much grace to her Son, who is taking it in a childlike manner, so beautiful that it may be said that Nino was beginning to rob the stone of its hardness and to reduce it to the softness of flesh, giving it lustre by means of the highest polish. This figure is between a S. John and a S. Peter in marble, the head of the latter being a portrait of Andrea from the life. Besides this, for an altar in S. Caterina, also in Pisa, Nino made two statues of marble—that is, a Madonna, and an Angel who is bringing her the Annunciation, wrought, like his other works, with so great diligence that it can be said that they are the best that were made in those times. Below this Madonna receiving the Annunciation Nino carved these words on the base: ON THE FIRST DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1370; and below the Angel: THESE FIGURES NINO MADE, THE SON OF ANDREA PISANO. He also made other works in that city and in Naples, whereof it is not needful to make mention.

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Andrea died at the age of seventy-five, in the year 1345, and was buried by Nino in S. Maria del Fiore, with this epitaph:

INGENTI ANDREAS JACET HIC PISANUS IN URNA,
MARMORE QUI POTUIT SPIRANTES DUCERE VULTUS,
ET SIMULACRA DEUM MEDIIS IMPONERE TEMPLIS
EX ÆERE, EX AURO CANDENTI, ET PULCRO ELEPHANTO.

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BUONAMICO BUFFALMACCO

LIFE OF BUONAMICO BUFFALMACCO, **PAINTER OF FLORENCE**

Buonamico di Cristofano, called Buffalmacco, painter of Florence, who was a disciple of Andrea Tafi, and celebrated for his jokes by Messer Giovanni Boccaccio in his *Decameron*, was, as is known, a very dear companion of Bruno and Calandrino, painters equally humorous and gay; and as may be seen in his works, scattered throughout all Tuscany, he was a man of passing good judgment in his art of painting. Franco Sacchetti relates in his three hundred Stories (to begin with the things that this man did while still youthful), that Buffalmacco lived, while he was a lad, with Andrea, and that this master of his used to make it a custom, when the nights were long, to get up before daylight to labour, and to call the lads to night-work. This being displeasing to Buonamico, who was made to rise out of his soundest sleep, he began to think of finding a way whereby Andrea might give up rising so much before daylight to work, and he succeeded; for having found thirty large cockroaches, or rather blackbeetles, in a badly swept cellar, with certain fine and short needles he fixed a little taper on the back of each of the said cockroaches, and, the hour coming when Andrea was wont to rise, he lit the tapers and put the animals one by one into the room of Andrea, through a chink in the door. He, awaking at the very hour when he was wont to call Buffalmacco, and seeing those little lights, all full of fear began to tremble and in great terror to recommend himself under his breath to God, like the old gaffer that he was, and to say his prayers or psalms; and finally, putting his head below the bedclothes, he made no attempt for that night to call Buffalmacco, but stayed as he was, ever trembling with fear, up to daylight. In the morning, then, having risen, he asked Buonamico if he had seen, as he had himself, more than a thousand demons; whereupon Buonamico said he had not, because he had kept his eyes closed, and was marvelling that he had not been called to night-work. "To night-work!" said Tafo, "I have had something else to think of besides painting, and I am resolved at all costs to go and live in another house." The following night, although Buonamico put only three of them into the said room of Tafo, none the less, what with terror of the past night and of those few devils that he saw, he slept not a wink; nay, no sooner was it daylight than he rushed from the house, meaning never to return, and a great business it was to make him change his mind. At last

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Buonamico brought the parish priest, who consoled him the best that he could. Later, Tafo and Buonamico discoursing over the affair, Buonamico said: "I have ever heard tell that the greatest enemies of God are the demons, and that in consequence they must also be the most capital adversaries of painters; because, besides that we make them ever most hideous, what is worse, we never attend to aught else than to making saints, male and female, on walls and panels, and to making men more devout and more upright thereby, to the despite of the demons; wherefore, these demons having a grudge against us for this, as beings that have greater power by night than by day they come and play us these tricks, and worse tricks will they play if this use of rising for night-work is not given up completely." With these and many other speeches Buffalmacco knew so well how to manage the business, being borne out by what Sir Priest kept saying, that Tafo gave over rising for night-work, and the devils ceased going through the house at night with little lights. But Tafo beginning again, for the love of gain, not many months afterwards, having almost forgotten all fear, to rise once more to work in the night and to call Buffalmacco, the cockroaches too began again to wander about; wherefore he was forced by fear to give up the habit entirely, being above all advised to do this by the priest. Afterwards this affair, spreading throughout the city, brought it about that for a time neither Tafo nor other painters made a practice of rising to work at night. Later, and no long time after this, Buffalmacco, having become a passing good master, took leave of Tafo, as the same Franco relates, and began to work for himself; and he never lacked for something to do.

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Now, Buffalmacco having taken a house, to work in and to live in as well, that had next door a passing rich woolworker, who, being a simpleton, was called Capodoca (Goosehead), the wife of this man would rise every night very early, precisely when Buffalmacco, having up to then been working, would go to lie down; and sitting at her wheel, which by misadventure she had planted opposite to the bed of Buffalmacco, she would spend the whole night spinning her thread; wherefore Buonamico, being able to get scarce a wink of sleep, began to think and think how he could remedy this nuisance. Nor was it long before he noticed that behind a wall of brickwork, that divided his house from Capodoca's, was the hearth of his uncomfortable neighbour, and that through a hole it was possible to see what she was doing over the fire. Having therefore thought of a new trick, he bored a hole with a long gimlet through a cane, and, watching for a moment when the wife of Capodoca was not at the fire, he pushed it more than once through the aforesaid hole in the wall and put as much salt as he wished into his neighbour's pot; wherefore Capodoca, returning either for dinner or for supper, more often than not could not eat or even taste either broth or meat, so bitter was everything through the great quantity of salt. For once or twice he had patience and only made a little noise about it; but after he saw that words were not enough, he gave blows many a time for this to the poor woman, who was in despair, it appearing to her that she was more than careful in salting her cooking. She, one time among others that her husband was beating her for this, began to try to excuse herself, wherefore Capodoca, falling into even greater rage, set himself to thrash her again in a manner that the woman screamed with all her might, and the whole neighbourhood ran up at the noise; and among others there came up Buffalmacco, who, having heard of what Capodoca was accusing his wife and in what way she was excusing herself, said to Capodoca: "I' faith, comrade, this calls for a little reason; thou dost complain that the pot, morning and evening, is too much salted, and I marvel that this good woman of thine can do anything well. I, for my part, know not how, by day, she keeps on her feet, considering that the whole night she sits up over that wheel of hers, and sleeps not, to my belief, an hour. Make her give up this rising at midnight, and thou wilt see that, having her fill of sleep, she will have her wits about her by day and will not fall into such blunders." Then, turning to the other neighbours, he convinced them so well of the grave import of the matter, that they all said to Capodoca that Buonamico was speaking the truth and that it must be done as he advised. He, therefore, believing that it was so, commanded her not to rise in the night, and the pot was then reasonably salted, save when perchance the woman on occasion rose early, for then Buffalmacco would return to his remedy, which finally brought it about that Capodoca made her give it up completely.

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Buffalmacco, then, among the first works that he made, painted with his own hand the whole church of the Convent of the Nuns of Faenza, which stood in Florence on the site of the present Cittadella del Prato; and among other scenes that he made there from the life of Christ, in all which he acquitted himself very well, he made the Massacre that Herod ordained of the Innocents, wherein he expressed very vividly the emotions both of the murderers and of the other figures; for in some nurses and mothers who are snatching the infants from the hands of the murderers and are seeking all the assistance that they can from their hands, their nails, their teeth, and every movement of the body, there is shown on the surface a heart no less full of rage and fury than of woe.

Of this work, that convent being to-day in ruins, there is to be seen nothing but a coloured sketch in our book of drawings by diverse masters, wherein there is this scene drawn by the hand of Buonamico himself. In the doing of this work for the aforesaid Nuns of Faenza, seeing that Buffalmacco was a person very eccentric and careless both in dress and in manner of life, it came to pass, since he did not always wear his cap and his mantle, as in those times it was the custom to do, that the nuns, seeing him once through the screen that he had caused to be made, began to say to the steward that it did not please them to see him in that guise, in his jerkin; however, appeased by him, they stayed for a little without saying more. But at last, seeing him ever in the same guise, and doubting whether he was not some knavish boy for grinding colours, they had him told by the Abbess that they would have liked to see the master at work, and not always him. To which Buonamico answered, like the good fellow that he was, that as soon as the master was there, he would let them know; taking notice, none the less, of the little confidence that they had

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in him. Taking a stool, therefore, and placing another above it, he put on top of all a pitcher, or rather a water-jar, and on the mouth of that he put a cap, hanging over the handle, and then he covered the rest of the jar with a burgher's mantle, and finally, putting a brush in suitable fashion into the spout through which the water is poured, he went off. The nuns, returning to see the work through an opening where the cloth had slipped, saw the supposititious master in full canonicals; wherefore, believing that he was working might and main and was by way of doing different work from that which the untidy knave was doing, they left it at that for some days, without thinking more about it. Finally, having grown desirous to see what beautiful work the master had done, fifteen days having passed, during which space of time Buonamico had never come near the place, one night, thinking that the master was not there, they went to see his paintings, and remained all confused and blushing by reason of one bolder than the rest discovering the solemn master, who in fifteen days had done not one stroke of work. Then, recognizing that he had served them as they merited and that the works that he had made were worthy of nothing but praise, they bade the steward recall Buonamico, who, with the greatest laughter and delight, returned to the work, having given them to know what difference there is between men and pitchers, and that it is not always by their clothes that the works of men should be judged. In a few days, then, he finished a scene wherewith they were much contented, it appearing to them to be in every way satisfactory, except that the figures appeared to them rather wan and pallid than otherwise in the flesh-tints. Buonamico, hearing this, and having learnt that the Abbess had some Vernaccia, the best in Florence, which was used for the holy office of the Mass, said to them that in order to remedy this defect nothing else could be done but to temper the colours with some good Vernaccia; because, touching the cheeks and the rest of the flesh on the figures with colours thus tempered, they would become rosy and coloured in most lifelike fashion. Hearing this, the good sisters, who believed it all, kept him ever afterwards furnished with the best Vernaccia, as long as the work lasted; and he, rejoicing in it, from that time onwards made the figures fresher and more highly coloured with his ordinary colours.

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This work finished, he painted some stories of S. James in the Abbey of Settimo, in the chapel that is in the cloister, and dedicated to that Saint, on the vaulting of which he made the four Patriarchs and the four Evangelists, among whom S. Luke is doing a striking action in blowing very naturally on his pen, in order that it may yield its ink. Next, in the scenes on the walls, which are five, there are seen beautiful attitudes in the figures, and the whole work is executed with invention and judgment. And because Buonamico was wont, in order to make his flesh-colour better, as is seen in this work, to make a ground of purple, which in time produces a salt that becomes corroded and eats away the white and other colours, it is no marvel if this work is spoilt and eaten away, whereas many others that were made long before have been very well preserved. And I, who thought formerly that these pictures had received injury from the damp, have since proved by experience, studying other works of the same man, that it is not from the damp but from this particular use of Buffalmacco's that they have become spoilt so completely that there is not seen in them either design or anything else, and that where the flesh-colours were there has remained nothing else but the purple. This method of working should be used by no one who is anxious that his pictures should have long life.

Buonamico wrought, after that which has been described above, two panels in distemper for the Monks of the Certosa of Florence, whereof one is where the books of chants are kept for the use of the choir, and the other below in the old chapels. He painted in fresco the Chapel of the Giochi and Bastari in the Badia of Florence, beside the principal chapel; which chapel, although afterwards it was conceded to the family of the Boscoli, retains the said pictures of Buffalmacco up to our own day. In these he made the Passion of Christ, with effects ingenious and beautiful, showing very great humility and sweetness in Christ, who is washing the feet of His Disciples, and ferocity and cruelty in the Jews, who are leading Him to Herod. But he showed talent and facility more particularly in a Pilate, whom he painted in prison, and in Judas hanging from a tree; wherefore it is easy to believe what is told about this gay painter—namely, that when he thought fit to use diligence and to take pains, which rarely came to pass, he was not inferior to any painter whatsoever of his times. And to show that this is true, the works in fresco that he made in Ognissanti, where to-day there is the cemetery, were wrought with so much diligence and with so many precautions, that the water which has rained over them for so many years has not been able to spoil them or to prevent their excellence from being recognized, and that they have been preserved very well, because they were wrought purely on the fresh plaster. On the walls, then, are the Nativity of Jesus Christ and the Adoration of the Magi—that is, over the tomb of the Aliotti. After this work Buonamico, having gone to Bologna, wrought some scenes in fresco in S. Petronio, in the Chapel of the Bolognini—that is, on the vaulting; but by reason of some accident, I know not what, supervening, he did not finish them.

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It is said that in the year 1302 he was summoned to Assisi, and that in the Church of S. Francesco, in the Chapel of S. Caterina, he painted all the stories of her life in fresco, which have been very well preserved; and there are therein some figures that are worthy to be praised. This chapel finished, on his passing through Arezzo, Bishop Guido, by reason of having heard that Buonamico was a gay fellow and an able painter, desired him to stop in that city and paint for him, in the Vescovado, the chapel where baptisms are now held. Buonamico, having put his hand to the work, had already done a good part of it when there befell him the strangest experience in the world, which was, according to what Franco Sacchetti relates, as follows. The Bishop had an ape, the drollest and the most mischievous that there had ever been. This animal, standing once on the scaffolding to watch Buonamico at work, had given attention to everything, and had never taken his eyes off him when he was mixing the colours, handling the flasks, beating the eggs for making the distempers, and in short when he was doing anything else whatsoever. Now,

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Buonamico having left off working one Saturday evening, on the Sunday morning this ape, notwithstanding that he had, fastened to his feet, a great block of wood which the Bishop made him carry in order that thus he might not be able to leap wherever he liked, climbed on to the scaffolding whereon Buonamico was used to stand to work, in spite of the very great weight of the block of wood; and there, seizing the flasks with his hands, pouring them one into another and making six mixtures, and beating up whatever eggs there were, he began to daub over with the brushes all the figures there, and, persevering in this performance, did not cease until he had repainted everything with his own hand; and this done, he again made a mixture of all the colours that were left him, although they were but few, and, getting down from the scaffolding, went off. Monday morning having come, Buonamico returned to his work, where, seeing the figures spoilt, the flasks all mixed up, and everything upside down, he stood all in marvel and confusion. Then, having pondered much in his own mind, he concluded finally that some Aretine had done this, through envy or through some other reason; wherefore, having gone to the Bishop, he told him how the matter stood and what he suspected, whereat the Bishop became very much disturbed, but, consoling Buonamico, desired him to put his hand again to the work and to repaint all that was spoilt. And because the Bishop had put faith in his words, which had something of the probable, he gave him six of his men-at-arms, who should stand in hiding with halberds while he was not at work, and, if anyone came, should cut him to pieces without mercy. The figures, then, having been painted over again, one day that the soldiers were in hiding, lo and behold! they hear a certain rumbling through the church, and a little while after the ape climbing on to the scaffolding; and in the twinkling of an eye, the mixtures made, they see the new master set himself to work over the saints of Buonamico. Calling him, therefore, and showing him the culprit, and standing with him to watch the beast at his work, they were all like to burst with laughter; and Buonamico in particular, for all that he was vexed thereby, could not keep from laughing till the tears came. Finally, dismissing the soldiers who had mounted guard with their halberds, he went off to the Bishop and said to him: "My lord, you wish the painting to be done in one fashion, and your ape wishes it done in another." Then, relating the affair, he added: "There was no need for you to send for painters from elsewhere, if you had the true master at home. But he, perhaps, knew not so well how to make the mixtures; now that he knows, let him do it by himself, since I am no more good here. And his talent being revealed, I am content that there should be nothing given to me for my work save leave to return to Florence." The Bishop, hearing the affair, although it vexed him, could not keep from laughing, and above all as he thought how an animal had played a trick on him who was the greatest trickster in the world. However, after they had talked and laughed their fill over this strange incident, the Bishop persuaded Buonamico to resume the work for the third time, and he finished it. And the ape, as punishment and penance for the crime committed, was shut up in a great wooden cage and kept where Buonamico was working, until this work was entirely finished; and no one could imagine the contortions which that creature kept making in this cage with his face, his body, and his hands, seeing others working and himself unable to take part.

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The work in this chapel finished, the Bishop, either in jest or for some other reason known only to himself, commanded that Buffalmacco should paint him, on one wall of his palace, an eagle on the back of a lion which it had killed. The crafty painter, having promised to do all that the Bishop wished, had a good scaffolding made of planks, saying that he refused to be seen painting such a thing. This made, shutting himself up alone inside it, he painted, contrary to what the Bishop wished, a lion that was tearing to pieces an eagle; and, the work finished, he sought leave from the Bishop to go to Florence in order to get some colours that he was wanting. And so, locking the scaffolding with a key, he went off to Florence, in mind to return no more to the Bishop, who, seeing the business dragging on and the painter not returning, had the scaffolding opened, and discovered that Buonamico had been too much for him. Wherefore, moved by very great displeasure, he had him banished on pain of death, and Buonamico, hearing this, sent to tell him to do his worst; whereupon the Bishop threatened him to a fearful tune. But finally, remembering that he had begun the playing of tricks and that it served him right to be tricked himself, he pardoned Buonamico for his insult and rewarded him liberally for his labours. Nay, what is more, summoning him again no long time after to Arezzo, he caused him to make many works in the Duomo Vecchio, which are now destroyed, treating him ever as his familiar friend and very faithful servant. The same man painted the niche of the principal chapel in the Church of S. Giustino, also in Arezzo.

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Some writers tell that Buonamico being in Florence and often frequenting the shop of Maso del Saggio with his friends and companions, he was there, with many others, arranging the festival which the men of the Borgo San Friano held on May 1 in certain boats on the Arno; and that when the Ponte alla Carraia, which was then of wood, collapsed by reason of the too great weight of the people who had flocked to that spectacle, he did not die there, as many others did, because, precisely at the moment when the bridge collapsed on to the structure that was representing Hell on the boats in the Arno, he had gone to get some things that were wanting for the festival.

Being summoned to Pisa no long time after these events, Buonamico painted many stories of the Old Testament in the Abbey of S. Paolo a Ripa d'Arno, then belonging to the Monks of Vallombrosa, in both transepts of the church, on three sides, and from the roof down to the floor, beginning with the Creation of man, and continuing up to the completion of the Tower of Nimrod. In this work, although it is to-day for the greater part spoilt, there are seen vivacity in the figures, good skill and loveliness in the colouring, and signs to show that the hand of Buonamico could very well express the conceptions of his mind, although he had little power of design. On the wall of the right transept which is opposite to that wherein is the side door, in some stories of S.

Anastasia, there are seen certain ancient costumes and head-dresses, very charming and beautiful, in some women who are painted there with graceful manner. Not less beautiful, also, are those figures that are in a boat, with well-conceived attitudes, among which is the portrait of Pope Alexander IV, which Buonamico had, so it is said, from Tafo his master, who had portrayed that Pontiff in mosaic in S. Pietro. In the last scene, likewise, wherein is the martyrdom of that Saint and of others, Buonamico expressed very well in the faces the fear of death and the grief and terror of those who are standing to see her tortured and put to death, while she stands bound to a tree and over the fire.

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A companion of Buonamico in this work was Bruno di Giovanni, a painter, who is thus called in the old book of the Company; which Bruno (also celebrated as a gay fellow by Boccaccio), the said scenes on the walls being finished, painted the altar of S. Ursula with the company of virgins, in the same church. He made in one hand of the said Saint a standard with the arms of Pisa, which are a white cross on a field of red, and he made her offering the other hand to a woman who, rising between two mountains and touching the sea with one of her feet, is stretching both her hands to her in the act of supplication; which woman, representing Pisa, and having on her head a crown of gold and over her shoulders a mantle covered with circlets and eagles, is seeking assistance from that Saint, being much in travail in the sea. Now, for the reason that in painting this work Bruno was bewailing that the figures which he was making therein had not the same life as those of Buonamico, the latter, in his waggish way, in order to teach him to make his figures not merely vivacious but actually speaking, made him paint some words issuing from the mouth of that woman who is supplicating the Saint, and the answer of the Saint to her, a device that Buonamico had seen in the works that had been made in the same city by Cimabue. This expedient, even as it pleased Bruno and the other thick-witted men of those times, in like manner pleases certain boors to-day, who are served therein by craftsmen as vulgar as themselves. And in truth it seems extraordinary that from this beginning there should have passed into use a device that was employed for a jest and for no other reason, insomuch that even a great part of the Campo Santo, wrought by masters of repute, is full of this rubbish.

The works of Buonamico, then, finding much favour with the Pisans, he was charged by the Warden of the Works of the Campo Santo to make four scenes in fresco, from the beginning of the world up to the construction of Noah's Ark, and round the scenes an ornamental border, wherein he made his own portrait from the life—namely, in a frieze, in the middle of which, and on the corners, are some heads, among which, as I have said, is seen his own, with a cap exactly like the one that is seen above. And because in this work there is a God, who is upholding with his arms the heavens and the elements—nay, the whole body of the universe—Buonamico, in order to explain his story with verses similar to the pictures of that age, wrote this sonnet in capital letters at the foot, with his own hand, as may still be seen; which sonnet, by reason of its antiquity and of the simplicity of the language of those times, it has seemed good to me to include in this place, although in my opinion it is not likely to give much pleasure, save perchance as something that bears witness as to what was the knowledge of the men of that century:

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Voi che avisate questa dipintura
Di Dio pietoso, sommo creatore,
Lo qual fe' tutte cose con amore,
Pesate, numerate ed in misura;
In nove gradi angelica natura,
In ello empirio ciel pien di splendore,
Colui che non si muove ed è motore,
Ciascuna cosa fece buona e pura.
Levate gli occhi del vostro intelletto,
Considerate quanto è ordinato
Lo mondo universale; e con affetto
Lodate lui che l'ha sì ben creato;
Pensate di passare a tal diletto
Tra gli Angeli, dov'è ciascun beato.
Per questo mondo si vede la gloria,
Lo basso e il mezzo e l'alto in questa storia.

And to tell the truth, it was very courageous in Buonamico to undertake to make a God the Father five braccia high, with the hierarchies, the heavens, the angels, the zodiac, and all the things above, even to the heavenly body of the moon, and then the element of fire, the air, the earth, and finally the nether regions; and to fill up the two angles below he made in one, S. Augustine, and in the other, S. Thomas Aquinas. At the head of the same Campo Santo, where there is now the marble tomb of Corte, Buonamico painted the whole Passion of Christ, with a great number of figures on foot and on horseback, and all in varied and beautiful attitudes; and continuing the story he made the Resurrection and the Apparition of Christ to the Apostles, passing well.

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Having finished these works and at the same time all that he had gained Pisa, which was not little, he returned to Florence as poor as he had left it, and there he made many panels and works in fresco, whereof there is no need to make further record. Meanwhile there had been entrusted to Bruno, his great friend (who had returned with him from Pisa, where they had squandered everything), some works in S. Maria Novella, and seeing that Bruno had not much design or invention, Buonamico designed for him all that he afterwards put into execution on a wall in the said church, opposite to the pulpit and as long as the space between column and column, and that was the story of S. Maurice and his companions, who were beheaded for the faith of Jesus

Christ. This work Bruno made for Guido Campese, then Constable of the Florentines, whose portrait he had made before he died in the year 1312; in that work he painted him in his armour, as was the custom in those times, and behind him he made a line of men-at-arms, armed in ancient fashion, who make a beautiful effect, while Guido himself is kneeling before a Madonna who has the Child Jesus in her arms, and is appearing to be recommended to her by S. Dominic and S. Agnes, who are on either side of him. Although this picture is not very beautiful, yet, considering the design and invention of Buonamico, it is worthy to be in part praised, and above all by reason of the costumes, helmets, and other armour of those times. And I have availed myself of it in some scenes that I have made for the Lord Duke Cosimo, wherein it was necessary to represent men armed in ancient fashion, and other similar things of that age; which work has greatly pleased his most Illustrious Excellency and others who have seen it. And from this it can be seen how much benefit may be gained from the inventions and works made by these ancients, although they may not be very perfect, and in what fashion profit and advantage can be drawn from their performances, since they opened the way for us to the marvels that have been made up to our day and are being made continually.

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While Bruno was making this work, a peasant desiring that Buonamico should make him a S. Christopher, they came to an agreement in Florence and arranged a contract in this fashion, that the price should be eight florins and that the figure should be twelve braccia high. Buonamico, then, having gone to the church where he was to make the S. Christopher, found that by reason of its not being more than nine braccia either in height or in length, he could not, either without or within, accommodate the figure in a manner that it might stand well; wherefore he made up his mind, since it would not go in upright, to make it within the church lying down. But since, even so, the whole length would not go in, he was forced to bend it from the knees downwards on to the wall at the head of the church. The work finished, the peasant would by no means pay for it; nay, he made an outcry and said he had been cozened. The matter, therefore, going before the Justices, it was judged, according to the contract, that Buonamico was in the right.

In S. Giovanni fra l'Arcore was a very beautiful Passion of Christ by the hand of Buonamico, and among other things that were much praised therein was a Judas hanging from a tree, made with much judgment and beautiful manner. An old man, likewise, who was blowing his nose, was most natural, and the Maries, broken with weeping, had expressions and aspects so sad, that they deserved to be greatly praised, since that age had not as yet much facility in the method of representing the emotions of the soul with the brush. On the same wall there was a good figure in a S. Ivo of Brittany, who had many widows and orphans at his feet, and two angels in the sky, who were crowning him, were made with the sweetest manner. This edifice and the pictures together were thrown to the ground in the year of the war of 1529.

In Cortona, also, for Messer Aldobrandino, Bishop of that city, Buonamico painted many works in the Vescovado, and in particular the chapel and panel of the high-altar; but seeing that everything was thrown to the ground in renovating the palace and the church, there is no need to make further mention of them. In S. Francesco, however, and in S. Margherita, in the same city, there are still some pictures by the hand of Buonamico. From Cortona going once more to Assisi, Buonamico painted in fresco, in the lower Church of S. Francesco, the whole Chapel of Cardinal Egidio Alvaro, a Spaniard; and because he acquitted himself very well, he was therefore liberally rewarded by that Cardinal. Finally, Buonamico having wrought many pictures throughout the whole March, in returning to Florence he stopped at Perugia, and painted there in fresco the Chapel of the Buontempi in the Church of S. Domenico, making therein stories of the life of S. Catherine, virgin and martyr. And in the Church of S. Domenico Vecchio, on one wall, he painted in fresco the scene when the same Catherine, daughter of King Costa, making disputation, is convincing and converting certain philosophers to the faith of Christ; and seeing that this scene is more beautiful than any other that Buonamico ever made, it can be said with truth that in this work he surpassed himself. The people of Perugia, moved by this, according to what Franco Sacchetti writes, commanded that he should paint S. Ercolano, Bishop and Protector of that city, in the square; wherefore, having agreed about the price, on the spot where the painting was to be done there was made a screen of planks and matting, to the end that the master might not be seen painting; and this made, he put his hand to the work. But before ten days had passed, every passer-by asking when this picture would be finished, as though such works were cast in moulds,

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[15] the matter disgusted Buonamico; wherefore, having come to the end of the work and being distracted with such importunity, he determined within himself to take a gentle vengeance on the impatience of these people. And this came to pass, for, when the work was finished, before unveiling it, he let them see it, and it was entirely to their satisfaction; but on the people of Perugia wishing to remove the screen at once, Buonamico said that for two days longer they should leave it standing, for the reason that he wished to retouch certain parts on the dry; and so it was done. Buonamico, then, having mounted the scaffolding, removed the great diadem of gold that he had given to the Saint, raised in relief with plaster, as was the custom in those times, and made him a crown, or rather garland, right round his head, of roaches; and this done, one morning he settled with his host and went off to Florence. Now, two days having passed, the people of Perugia, not seeing the painter going about as they had been used, asked the host what had become of him, and, hearing that he had returned to Florence, went at once to remove the screen; and finding their S. Ercolano crowned solemnly with roaches, they sent word of it immediately to their governors. But although these sent horsemen post-haste to look for Buonamico, it was all in vain, seeing that he had returned in great haste to Florence. Having determined, then, to make a painter of their own remove the crown of roaches and restore the diadem to the Saint, they said all the evil that can be imagined about Buonamico and the rest of

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the Florentines.

Buonamico, back in Florence and caring little about what the people of Perugia might say, set to work and made many paintings, whereof, in order not to be too long, there is no need to make mention. I will say only this, that having painted in fresco at Calcinaia a Madonna with the Child in her arms, he who had charged him to do it, in place of paying him, gave him words; whence Buonamico, who was not used to being trifled with or being fooled, determined to get his due by hook or by crook. And so, having gone one morning to Calcinaia, he transformed the child that he had painted in the arms of the Virgin into a little bear, but in colours made only with water, without size or distemper. This change being seen, not long after, by the peasant who had given him the work to do, almost in despair he went to find Buonamico, praying him for the sake of Heaven to remove the little bear and to paint another child as before, for he was ready to make satisfaction. This the other did amicably, being paid for both the first and the second labour without delay; and for restoring the whole work a wet sponge sufficed. Finally, seeing that it would take too long were I to wish to relate all the tricks, as well as all the pictures, that Buonamico Buffalmacco made, and above all when frequenting the shop of Maso del Saggio, which was the resort of citizens and of all the gay and mischievous spirits that there were in Florence, I will make an end of discoursing about him.

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He died at the age of seventy-eight, and being very poor and having done more spending than earning, by reason of being such in character, he was supported in his illness by the Company of the Misericordia in S. Maria Nuova, the hospital of Florence; and then, being dead, he was buried in the Ossa (for so they call a cloister, or rather cemetery, of the hospital), like the rest of the poor, in the year 1340. The works of this man were prized while he lived, and since then, for works of that age, they have been ever extolled.

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AMBROGIO LORENZETTI



MADONNA AND CHILD
*(After the painting by Ambrogio Lorenzetti.
Milan: Cagnola Collection)*

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LIFE OF AMBROGIO LORENZETTI, PAINTER OF SIENA

If that debt is great, as without doubt it is, which craftsmen of fine genius should acknowledge to nature, much greater should that be that is due from us to them, seeing that they, with great solicitude, fill the cities with noble and useful buildings and with lovely historical compositions, gaining for themselves, for the most part, fame and riches with their works; as did Ambrogio Lorenzetti, painter of Siena, who showed beautiful and great invention in grouping and placing his figures thoughtfully in historical scenes. That this is true is proved by a scene in the Church of the Friars Minor in Siena, painted by him very gracefully in the cloister, wherein there is represented in what manner a youth becomes a friar, and how he and certain others go to the Soldan, and are there beaten and sentenced to the gallows and hanged on a tree, and finally beheaded, with the addition of a terrible tempest. In this picture, with much art and dexterity, he counterfeited in the travailing of the figures the turmoil of the air and the fury of the rain and of the wind, wherefrom the modern masters have learnt the method and the principle of this invention, by reason of which, since it was unknown before, he deserved infinite commendation. Ambrogio was a practised colourist in fresco, and he handled colours in distemper with great dexterity and facility, as it is still seen in the panels executed by him in Siena for the little hospital called Mona Agnesa, where he painted and finished a scene with new and beautiful composition. And at the great hospital, on one front, he made in fresco the Nativity of Our Lady and the scene when she is going with the virgins to the Temple. For the Friars of S. Augustine in the same city he painted their Chapter-house, where the Apostles are seen represented on the vaulting, with scrolls in their hands whereon is written that part of the Creed which each one of them made; and below each is a little scene containing in painting that same subject that is signified above by the writing. Near this, on the main front, are three stories of S. Catherine the martyr, who is disputing with the tyrant in a temple, and, in the middle, the Passion of Christ, with the Thieves on the Cross, and the Maries below, who are supporting the Virgin Mary who has swooned; which works were finished by him with much grace and with beautiful manner.

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In a large hall of the Palazzo della Signoria in Siena he painted the War of Asinalunga, and after it the Peace and its events, wherein he fashioned a map, perfect for those times; and in the same palace he made eight scenes in terra-verde, highly finished. It is said that he also sent to Volterra a panel in distemper which was much praised in that city. And painting a chapel in fresco and a panel in distemper at Massa, in company with others, he gave them proof how great, both in judgment and in genius, was his worth in the art of painting; and in Orvieto he painted in fresco the principal Chapel of S. Maria. After these works, proceeding to Florence, he made a panel in S. Procolo, and in a chapel he painted the stories of S. Nicholas with little figures, in order to satisfy certain of his friends, who desired to see his method of working; and, being much practised, he executed this work in so short a time that there accrued to him fame and infinite repute. And this work, on the predella of which he made his own portrait, brought it about that in the year 1335 he was summoned to Cortona by order of Bishop Ubertini, then lord of that city, where he wrought certain works in the Church of S. Margherita, built a short time before for the Friars of S. Francis on the summit of the hill, and in particular the half of the vaulting and the walls, so well that, although to-day they are wellnigh eaten away by time, there are seen notwithstanding most beautiful effects in the figures; and it is clear that he was deservedly commended for them.



**AMBROGIO LORENZETTI: MADONNA AND CHILD WITH S.S.
MARY MAGDALENE AND DOROTHY**

(Siena: Pinacoteca 77. Panel)

[View larger image](#)

This work finished, Ambrogio returned to Siena, where he lived honourably the remainder of his life, not only by reason of being an excellent master in painting, but also because, having given attention in his youth to letters, they were a useful and pleasant accompaniment to him in his painting, and so great an ornament to his whole life that they rendered him no less popular and beloved than did his profession of painting; wherefore he was not only intimate with men of learning and of taste, but he was also employed, to his great honour and advantage, in the government of his Republic. The ways of Ambrogio were in all respects worthy of praise, and rather those of a gentleman and a philosopher than of a craftsman; and what most demonstrates the wisdom of men, he had ever a mind disposed to be content with that which the world and time brought, wherefore he supported with a mind temperate and calm the good and the evil that came to him from fortune. And truly it cannot be told to what extent courteous ways and modesty, with the other good habits, are an honourable accompaniment to all the arts, and in particular to those that are derived from the intellect and from noble and exalted talents; wherefore every man should make himself no less beloved with his ways than with the excellence of his art.

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Finally, at the end of his life, Ambrogio made a panel at Monte Oliveto di Chiusuri with great credit to himself, and a little afterwards, being eighty-three years of age, he passed happily and in the Christian faith to a better life. His works date about 1340.

As it has been said, the portrait of Ambrogio, by his own hand, is seen in the predella of his panel in S. Procolo, with a cap on his head. And what was his worth in draughtsmanship is seen in our book, wherein are some passing good drawings by his hand.

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Alinari

MADONNA AND CHILD
(Central panel of the polyptych by
Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Massa Marittima:
Municipio)

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LIFE OF PIETRO CAVALLINI, PAINTER OF ROME

For many centuries Rome had been deprived not only of fine letters and of the glory of arms but also of all the sciences and fine arts, when, by the will of God, there was born therein Pietro Cavallini, in those times when Giotto, having, it may be said, restored painting to life, was holding the sovereignty among the painters in Italy. He, then, having been a disciple of Giotto and having worked with Giotto himself on the Navicella in mosaic in S. Pietro, was the first who, after him, gave light to that art, and he began to show that he had been no unworthy disciple of so great a master when he painted, over the door of the sacristy of the Araceli, some scenes that are to-day eaten away by time, and very many works coloured in fresco throughout the whole Church of S. Maria di Trastevere. Afterwards, working in mosaic on the principal chapel and on the façade of the church, he showed in the beginning of such a work, without the help of Giotto, that he was no less able in the execution and bringing to completion of mosaics than he was in painting. Making many scenes in fresco, also, in the Church of S. Grisogono, he strove to make himself known both as the best disciple of Giotto and as a good craftsman. In like manner, also in Trastevere, he painted almost the whole Church of S. Cecilia with his own hand, and many works in the Church of S. Francesco appresso Ripa. He then made the façade of mosaic in S. Paolo without Rome, and many stories of the Old Testament for the central nave. And painting some works in fresco in the Chapter-house of the first cloister, he put therein so great diligence that he gained thereby from men of judgment the name of being a most excellent master, and was therefore so much favoured by the prelates that they commissioned him to do the inner wall of S. Pietro, between the windows. Between these he made the four Evangelists, wrought very well in fresco, of extraordinary size in comparison with the figures that at that time were customary, with a S. Peter and a S. Paul, and a good number of figures in a ship, wherein, the Greek manner pleasing him much, he blended it ever with that of Giotto; and since he delighted to give relief to his figures, it is recognized that he used thereunto the greatest efforts that can be imagined by man. But the best work that he made in that city was in the said Church of Araceli on the Campidoglio, where he painted in fresco, on the vaulting of the principal apse, the Madonna with the Child in her arms, surrounded by a circle of sunlight, and beneath is the Emperor Octavian, to whom the Tiburtine Sibyl is showing Jesus Christ, and he is adoring Him; and the figures in this work, as it has been said in other places, have been much better preserved than the others, because those that are on the vaulting are less injured by dust than those that are made on the walls.

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After these works Pietro went to Tuscany, in order to see the works of the other disciples of his master Giotto and those of Giotto himself; and with this occasion he painted many figures in S. Marco in Florence, which are not seen to-day, the church having been whitewashed, except the Annunciation, which stands covered beside the principal door of the church. In S. Basilio, also, in the Canto alla Macine, he made another Annunciation in fresco on a wall, so like to that which he had made before in S. Marco, and to another one that is in Florence, that some believe, and not without probability, that they are all by the hand of this Pietro; and in truth they could not be more like, one to another, than they are. Among the figures that he made in the said S. Marco in Florence was the portrait of Pope Urban V from the life, with the heads of S. Peter and S. Paul; from which portrait Fra Giovanni da Fiesole copied that one which is in a panel in S. Domenico, also of Fiesole; and that was no small good-fortune, seeing that the portrait which was in S. Marco and many other figures that were about the church in fresco were covered with whitewash, as it has been said, when that convent was taken from the monks who occupied it before and given to the Preaching Friars, the whole being whitewashed with little attention and consideration.

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Alinari

HEAD OF AN APOSTLE
(Detail from "The Last Judgment," after the fresco
by Pietro Cavallini. Rome: Convent of S. Cecilia)

[View larger image](#)

Passing afterwards, in returning to Rome, through Assisi, not only in order to see those buildings and those notable works made there by his master and by some of his fellow-disciples, but also to leave something there by his own hand, he painted in fresco in the lower Church of S. Francesco—namely, in the transept that is on the side of the sacristy—a Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, with men on horseback armed in various fashions, and with many varied and extravagant costumes of diverse foreign peoples. In the air he made some angels, who, poised on their wings in diverse attitudes, are in a storm of weeping; and some pressing their hands to their breasts, others wringing them, and others beating the palms, they are showing that they feel the greatest grief at the death of the Son of God; and all, from the middle backwards, or rather from the middle downwards, melt away into air. In this work, well executed in the colouring, which is fresh and vivacious and so well contrived in the junctions of the plaster that the work appears all made in one day, I have found the coat of arms of Gualtieri, Duke of Athens; but by reason of there not being either a date or other writing there, I cannot affirm that it was caused to be made by him. I say, however, that besides the firm belief of everyone that it is by the hand of Pietro, the manner could not be more like his than it is, not to mention that it may be believed, this painter having lived at the time when Duke Gualtieri was in Italy, that it was made by Pietro as well as by order of the said Duke. At least, let everyone think as he pleases, the work, as ancient, is worthy of nothing but praise, and the manner, besides the public voice, shows that it is by the hand of this man.

In the Church of S. Maria at Orvieto, wherein is the most holy relic of the Corporal, the same Pietro wrought in fresco certain stories of Jesus Christ and of the Host, with much diligence; and this he did, so it is said, for Messer Benedetto, son of Messer Buonconte Monaldeschi and lord at that time, or rather tyrant, of that city. Some likewise affirm that Pietro made some sculptures, and that they were very successful, because he had genius for whatever he set himself to do, and that he made the Crucifix that is in the great Church of S. Paolo without Rome; which Crucifix, as it is said and may be believed, is the one that spoke to S. Brigida in the year 1370.

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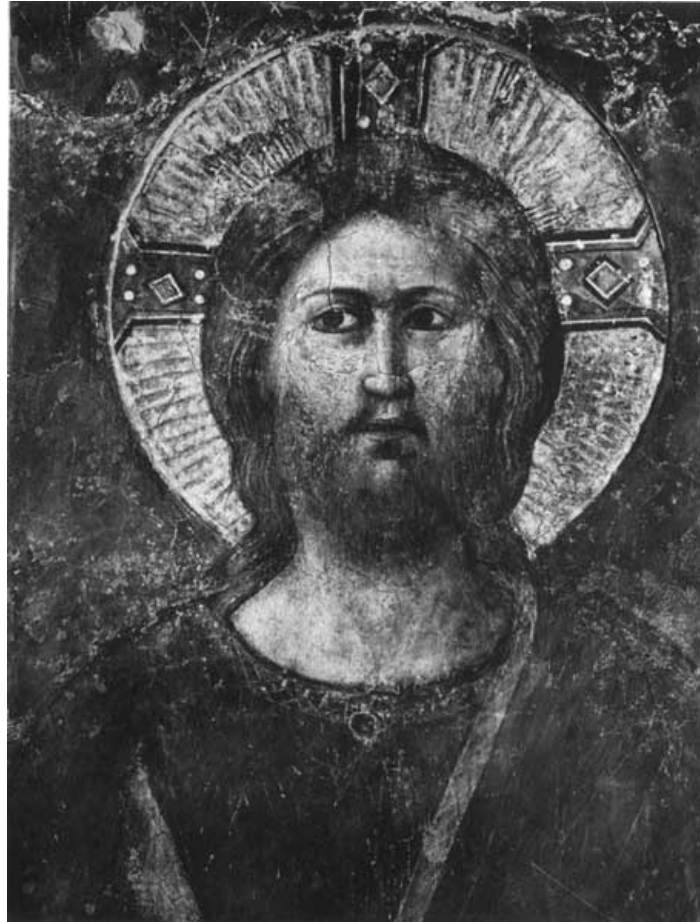
By the hand of the same man were some other works in that manner, which were thrown to the ground when the old Church of S. Pietro was pulled down in order to build the new. Pietro was very diligent in all his works, and sought with every effort to gain honour and to acquire fame in the art. He was not only a good Christian, but most devout and very much the friend of the poor, and he was beloved by reason of his excellence not only in his native city of Rome but by all those who had knowledge of him or of his works. And finally, he devoted himself at the end of his old age to religion, leading an exemplary life, with so much zeal that he was almost held a saint. Wherefore there is no reason to marvel not only that the said Crucifix by his hand spoke to the

Saint, as it has been said, but also that innumerable miracles have been and still are wrought by a certain Madonna by his hand, which I do not intend to call his best, although it is very famous in all Italy and although I know very certainly and surely, by the manner of the painting, that it is by the hand of Pietro, whose most praiseworthy life and piety towards God were worthy to be imitated by all men. Nor let anyone believe, for the reason that it is scarcely possible and that experience continually shows this to us, that it is possible to attain to honourable rank without the fear and grace of God and without goodness of life. A disciple of Pietro Cavallini was Giovanni da Pistoia, who made some works of no great importance in his native city.

Finally, at the age of eighty-five, he died in Rome of a colic caught while working in fresco, by reason of the damp and of standing continually at this exercise. His pictures date about the year 1364, and he was honourably buried in S. Paolo without Rome, with this epitaph:

QUANTUM ROMANÆ PETRUS DECUS ADDIDIT URBI
PICTURA, TANTUM DAT DECUS IPSE POLO.

His portrait has never been found, for all the diligence that has been used; it is therefore not included.



Alinari

HEAD OF THE CHRIST IN GLORY
(Detail from "The Last Judgment," after the fresco
by Pietro Cavallini. Rome: Convent of S. Cecilia)

[View larger image](#)

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SIMONE SANESE



Anderson

**S. LOUIS CROWNING KING ROBERT OF
NAPLES**

**(After the Altarpiece by Simon Sanese [Memmi
or Martini]. Naples: Church of S. Lorenzo)**

[View larger image](#)

LIFE OF SIMONE SANESE

[SIMONE MEMMI OR MARTINI]

PAINTER

Truly happy can those men be called, who are inclined by nature to those arts that can bring to them not only honour and very great profit, but also, what is more, fame and a name wellnigh eternal, and happier still are they who have from their cradles, besides such inclination, courtesy and honest ways, which render them very dear to all men. But happiest of all, finally, talking of craftsmen, are they who not only receive a love of the good from nature, and noble ways from the same source and from education, but also live in the time of some famous writer, from whom, in return for a little portrait or some other similar courtesy in the way of art, they gain on occasion the reward of eternal honour and name, by means of their writings; and this, among those who practise the arts of design, should be particularly desired and sought by the excellent painters, seeing that their works, being on the surface and on a ground of colour, cannot have that eternal life which castings in bronze and works in marble give to sculpture, or buildings to the architects.

Very great, then, was that good-fortune of Simone, to live at the time of Messer Francesco Petrarca and to chance to find that most amorous poet at the Court of Avignon, desirous of having the image of Madonna Laura by the hand of Maestro Simone, because, having received it as beautiful as he had desired, he made memory of him in two sonnets, whereof one begins:

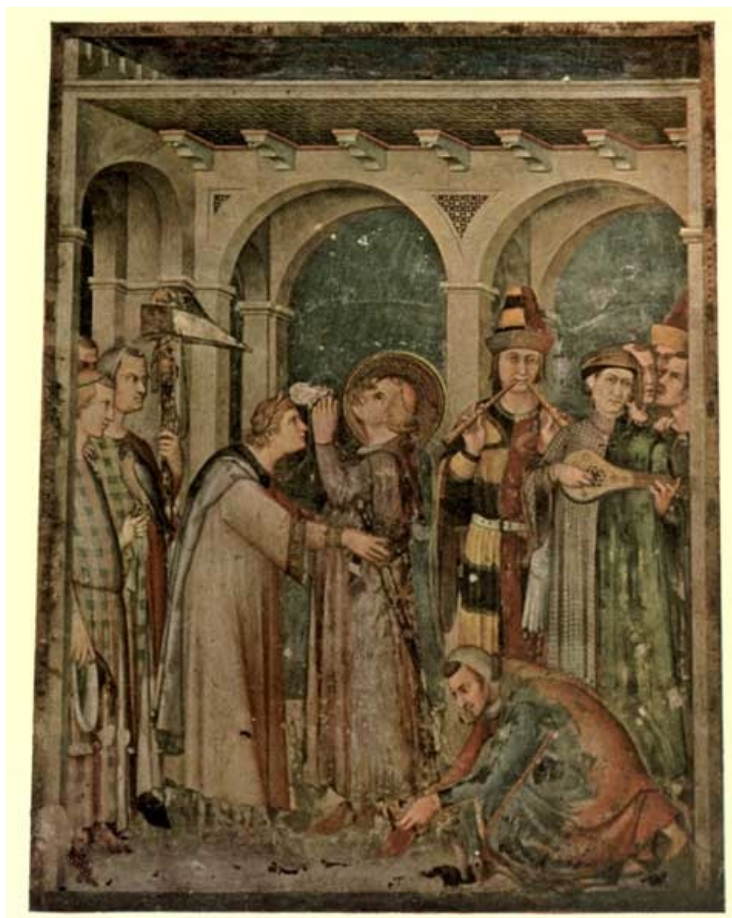
Per mirar Policlete a prova fiso
Con gli altri che ebber fama di quell'arte;

and the second:

Quando giunse a Simon l'alto concetto
Ch'a mio nome gli pose in man lo stile.

These sonnets, in truth, together with the mention made of him in one of his *Familiar Letters*, in the fifth book, which begins: "Non sum nescius," have given more fame to the poor life of

Maestro Simone than all his own works have ever done or ever will, seeing that they must at some time perish, whereas the writings of so great a man will live for eternal ages. Simone Memmi of Siena, then, was an excellent painter, remarkable in his own times and much esteemed at the Court of the Pope, for the reason that after the death of Giotto his master, whom he had followed to Rome when he made the Navicella in mosaic and the other works, he made a Virgin Mary in the portico of S. Pietro, with a S. Peter and a S. Paul, near to the place where the bronze pine-cone is, on a wall between the arches of the portico on the outer side; and in this he counterfeited the manner of Giotto very well, receiving so much praise, above all because he portrayed therein a sacristan of S. Pietro lighting some lamps before the said figures with much promptness, that he was summoned with very great insistence to the Court of the Pope at Avignon, where he wrought so many pictures, in fresco and on panels, that he made his works correspond to the reputation that had been borne thither. Whence, having returned to Siena in great credit and much favoured on this account, he was commissioned by the Signoria to paint in fresco, in a hall of their Palace, a Virgin Mary with many figures round her, which he completed with all perfection to his own great credit and advantage. And in order to show that he was no less able to work on panel than in fresco, he painted in the said Palace a panel which led to his being afterwards made to paint two of them in the Duomo, and a Madonna with the Child in her arms, in a very beautiful attitude, over the door of the Office of the Works of the said Duomo. In this picture certain angels, supporting a standard in the air, are flying and looking down on to some saints who are round the Madonna, and they make a very beautiful composition and great adornment.



SIMONE MARTINI: KNIGHTING OF S. MARTIN
(Assisi: Lower Church of S. Francesco, Chapel of S. Martin. Fresco)

[View larger image](#)

This done, Simone was brought by the General of the Augustinians to Florence, where he painted the Chapter-house of S. Spirito, showing invention and admirable judgment in the figures and the horses that he made, as is proved in that place by the story of the Passion of Christ, wherein everything is seen to have been made by him with ingenuity, with discretion, and with most beautiful grace. There are seen the Thieves on the Cross yielding up their breath, and the soul of the good one being carried to Heaven by the angels, and that of the wicked one going, accompanied by devils and all harassed, to the torments of Hell. Simone likewise showed invention and judgment in the attitudes and in the very bitter weeping of some angels round the Crucifix. But what is most worthy of consideration, above everything else, is to see those spirits visibly cleaving the air with their shoulders, almost whirling right round and yet sustaining the motion of their flight. This work would bear much stronger witness to the excellence of Simone, if, besides the fact that time has eaten it away, it had not been spoilt by those Fathers in the year 1560, when they, being unable to use the Chapter-house, because it was in bad condition from damp, made a vaulted roof to replace a worm-eaten ceiling, and threw down the little that was

left of the pictures of this man. About the same time Simone painted a Madonna and a S. Luke, with some other Saints, on a panel in distemper, which is to-day in the Chapel of the Gondi in S. Maria Novella, with his name.

Next, Simone painted three walls of the Chapter-house of the said S. Maria Novella, very happily. On the first, which is over the door whereby one enters, he made the life of S. Dominic; and on that which follows in the direction of the church, he represented the Religious Order of the same Saint fighting against the heretics, represented by wolves, which are attacking some sheep, which are defended by many dogs spotted with black and white, and the wolves are beaten back and slain. There are also certain heretics, who, being convinced in disputation, are tearing their books and penitently confessing themselves, and so their souls are passing through the gate of Paradise, wherein are many little figures that are doing diverse things. In Heaven is seen the glory of the Saints, and Jesus Christ; and in the world below remain the vain pleasures and delights, in human figures, and above all in the shape of women who are seated, among whom is the Madonna Laura of Petrarca, portrayed from life and clothed in green, with a little flame of fire between her breast and her throat. There is also the Church of Christ, and, as a guard for her, the Pope, the Emperor, the Kings, the Cardinals, the Bishops, and all the Christian Princes; and among them, beside a Knight of Rhodes, is Messer Francesco Petrarca, also portrayed from the life, which Simone did in order to enhance by his works the fame of the man who had made him immortal. For the Universal Church he painted the Church of S. Maria del Fiore, not as it stands to-day, but as he had drawn it from the model and design that the architect Arnolfo had left in the Office of Works for the guidance of those who had to continue the building after him; of which models, by reason of the little care of the Wardens of Works of S. Maria del Fiore, as it has been said in another place, there would be no memorial for us if Simone had not left it painted in this work. On the third wall, which is that of the altar, he made the Passion of Christ, who, issuing from Jerusalem with the Cross on His shoulder, is going to Mount Calvary, followed by a very great multitude. Arriving there, He is seen raised on the Cross between the Thieves, with the other circumstances that accompany this story. I will say nothing of there being therein a good number of horses, of the casting of lots by the servants of the court for the garments of Christ, of the raising of the Holy Fathers from the Limbo of Hell, and of all the other well-conceived inventions, which belong not so much to a master of that age as to the most excellent of the moderns; inasmuch as, taking up the whole walls, with very diligent judgment he made in each wall diverse scenes on the slope of a mountain, and did not divide scene from scene with ornamental borders, as the old painters were wont to do, and many moderns, who put the earth over the sky four or five times, as it is seen in the principal chapel of this same church, and in the Campo Santo of Pisa, where, painting many works in fresco, he was forced against his will to make such divisions, for the other painters who had worked in that place, such as Giotto and Buonamico his master, had begun to make their scenes with this bad arrangement.

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G. H.

THE ANNUNCIATION
(After the painting by Simone Sanese [Memmi or Martini].
Antwerp: Royal Museum, 257, 258)

[View larger image](#)

In that Campo Santo, then, following as the lesser evil the method used by the others, Simone made in fresco, over the principal door and on the inner side, a Madonna borne to Heaven by a choir of angels, who are singing and playing so vividly that there are seen in them all those

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various gestures that musicians are wont to make in singing or playing, such as turning the ears to the sound, opening the mouth in diverse ways, raising the eyes to Heaven, blowing out the cheeks, swelling the throat, and in short all the other actions and movements that are made in music. Under this Assumption, in three pictures, he made some scenes from the life of S. Ranieri of Pisa. In the first scene he is shown as a youth, playing the psaltery and making some girls dance, who are most beautiful by reason of the air of the heads and of the loveliness of the costumes and head-dresses of those times. Next, the same Ranieri, having been reprov'd for such lasciviousness by the Blessed Alberto the Hermit, is seen standing with his face downcast and tearful and with his eyes red from weeping, all penitent for his sin, while God, in the sky, surrounded by a celestial light, appears to be pardoning him. In the second picture Ranieri, distributing his wealth to God's poor before mounting on board ship, has round him a crowd of beggars, of cripples, of women, and of children, all most touching in their pushing forward, their entreating, and their thanking him. And in the same picture, also, that Saint, having received in the Temple the gown of a pilgrim, is standing before a Madonna, who, surrounded by many angels, is showing him that he will repose on her bosom in Pisa; and all these figures have vivacity and a beautiful air in the heads. In the third Simone painted the scene when, having returned after seven years from beyond the seas, he is showing that he has spent thrice forty days in the Holy Land, and when, standing in the choir to hear the Divine offices, he is tempted by the Devil, who is seen driven away by a firm determination that is perceived in Ranieri not to consent to offend God, assisted by a figure made by Simone to represent Constancy, who is chasing away the ancient adversary not only all in confusion but also (with beautiful and fanciful invention) all in terror, holding his hands to his head in his flight, and walking with his face downcast and his shoulders shrunk as close together as could be, and saying, as it is seen from the writing that is issuing from his mouth: "I can no more." And finally, there is also in this picture the scene when Ranieri, kneeling on Mount Tabor, is miraculously seeing Christ in air with Moses and Elias; and all the features of this work, with others that are not mentioned, show that Simone was very fanciful and understood the good method of grouping figures gracefully in the manner of those times. These scenes finished, he made two panels in distemper in the same city, assisted by Lippo Memmi, his brother, who had also assisted him to paint the Chapter-house of S. Maria Novella and other works.

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He, although he had not the excellence of Simone, none the less followed his manner as well as he could, and made many works in fresco in his company for S. Croce in Florence; the panel of the high-altar in S. Caterina at Pisa, for the Preaching Friars; and in S. Paolo a Ripa d' Arno, besides many very beautiful scenes in fresco, the panel in distemper that is to-day over the high-altar, containing a Madonna, S. Peter, S. Paul, S. John the Baptist, and other Saints; and on this Lippo put his name. After these works he wrought by himself a panel in distemper for the Friars of S. Augustine in San Gimignano, and thereby acquired so great a name that he was forced to send to Arezzo, to Bishop Guido de' Tarlati, a panel with three half-length figures which is to-day in the Chapel of S. Gregorio in the Vescovado.

While Simone was at work in Florence, one his cousin, an ingenious architect called Neroccio, undertook in the year 1332 to make to ring the great bell of the Commune of Florence, which, for a period of seventeen years, no one had been able to make to ring without twelve men to pull at it. He balanced it, then, in a manner that two could move it, and once moved one alone could ring it without a break, although it weighed more than six thousand libbre; wherefore, besides the honour, he gained thereby as his reward three hundred florins of gold, which was great payment in those times.



**LIPPO MEMMI: MADONNA
AND CHILD**
**(Berlin: K. Friedrich Museum
1081A. Panel)**
[View larger image](#)

But to return to our two Memmi of Siena; Lippo, besides the works mentioned, wrought a panel in distemper, with the design of Simone, which was carried to Pistoia and placed over the high-altar of the Church of S. Francesco, and was held very beautiful. Finally, both having returned to their native city of Siena, Simone began a very large work in colour over the great gate of Camollia, containing the Coronation of Our Lady, with an infinity of figures, which remained unfinished, a very great sickness coming upon him, so that he, overcome by the gravity of the sickness, passed away from this life in the year 1345, to the very great sorrow of all his city and of Lippo his brother, who gave him honourable burial in S. Francesco.

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Lippo afterwards finished many works that Simone had left imperfect, and among these was a Passion of Jesus Christ over the high-altar of S. Niccola in Ancona, wherein Lippo finished what Simone had begun, imitating that which the said Simone had made and finished in the Chapter-house of S. Spirito in Florence. This work would be worthy of a longer life than peradventure will be granted to it, there being in it many horses and soldiers in beautiful attitudes, which they are striking with various animated movements, doubting and marvelling whether they have crucified or not the Son of God. At Assisi, likewise, in the lower Church of S. Francesco, he finished some figures that Simone had begun for the altar of S. Elizabeth, which is at the entrance of the door that leads into the chapels, making there a Madonna, a S. Louis King of France, and other Saints, in all eight figures, which are only as far as the knees, but good and very well coloured. Besides this, in the great refectory of the said convent, at the top of the wall, Simone had begun many little scenes and a Crucifix made in the shape of a Tree of the Cross, but this remained unfinished and outlined with the brush in red over the plaster, as may still be seen to-day; which method of working was the cartoon that our old masters used to make for painting in fresco, for greater rapidity; for having distributed the whole work over the plaster, they would outline it with the brush, reproducing from a small design all that which they wished to paint, and enlarging in proportion all that they thought to put down. Wherefore, even as this one is seen thus outlined, and many others in other places, so there are many others that had once been painted, from which the work afterwards peeled off, leaving them thus outlined in red over the plaster.

But returning to our Lippo, who drew passing well, as it may be seen in our book in a hermit who is reading with his legs crossed; he lived for twelve years after Simone, executing many works throughout all Italy, and in particular two panels in S. Croce in Florence. And seeing that the manner of these two brothers is very similar, one can distinguish the one from the other by this, that Simone used to sign his name at the foot of his works in this way: SIMONIS MEMMI SENENSIS OPUS; and Lippo, leaving out his baptismal name and caring nothing about a Latinity so rough, in this other fashion: OPUS MEMMI DE SENIS ME FECIT.

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On the wall of the Chapter-house of S. Maria Novella—besides Petrarca and Madonna Laura, as it

has been said above—Simone portrayed Cimabue, the architect Lapo, his son Arnolfo, and himself, and in the person of that Pope who is in the scene he painted Benedetto XI of Treviso, one of the Preaching Friars, the likeness of which Pope had been brought to Simone long before by Giotto, his master, when he returned from the Court of the said Pope, who had his seat in Avignon. In the same place, also, beside the said Pope, he portrayed Cardinal Niccola da Prato, who had come to Florence at that time as Legate of the said Pontiff, as Giovanni Villani relates in his History.

Over the tomb of Simone was placed this epitaph:

SIMONI MEMMIO PICTORUM OMNIUM OMNIS ÆTATIS CELEBERRIMO.
VIXIT ANN. LX, MENS. II, D. III.

As it is seen in our aforesaid book, Simone was not very excellent in draughtsmanship, but he had invention from nature, and he took much delight in drawing portraits from the life; and in this he was held so much the greatest master of his times that Signor Pandolfo Malatesti sent him as far as Avignon to portray Messer Francesco Petrarca, at the request of whom he made afterwards the portrait of Madonna Laura, with so much credit to himself.



M. S.

MADONNA AND CHILD
*(After the painting by Lippo Memmi.
Altenburg: Lindenau Museum, 43)*

[View larger image](#)

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TADDEO GADDI

**LIFE OF TADDEO GADDI,
PAINTER OF FLORENCE**

It is a beautiful and truly useful and praiseworthy action to reward talent largely in every place, and to honour him who has it, seeing that an infinity of intellects which might otherwise slumber, roused by this encouragement, strive with all industry not only to learn their art but to become excellent therein, in order to advance themselves and to attain to a rank both profitable and honourable; whence there may follow honour for their country, glory for themselves, and riches and nobility for their descendants, who, upraised by such beginnings, very often become both very rich and very noble, even as the descendants of the painter Taddeo Gaddi did by reason of his work. This Taddeo di Gaddo Gaddi, a Florentine, after the death of Giotto—who had held him at his baptism and had been his master for twenty-four years after the death of Gaddo, as it is written by Cennino di Drea Cennini, painter of Colle di Valdelsa—remained among the first in the art of painting and greater than all his fellow-disciples both in judgment and in genius; and he wrought his first works, with a great facility given to him by nature rather than acquired by art, in the Church of S. Croce in Florence, in the chapel of the sacristy, where, together with his companions, disciples of the dead Giotto, he made some stories of S. Mary Magdalene, with beautiful figures and with most beautiful and extravagant costumes of those times. And in the Chapel of the Baroncelli and Bandini, where Giotto had formerly wrought the panel in distemper, he made by himself in fresco, on one wall, some stories of Our Lady which were held very beautiful. He also painted over the door of the said sacristy the story of Christ disputing with the Doctors in the Temple, which was afterwards half ruined when the elder Cosimo de' Medici, in making the noviciate, the chapel, and the antechamber in front of the sacristy, placed a cornice of stone over the said door. In the same church he painted in fresco the Chapel of the Bellacci, and also that of S. Andrea by the side of one of the three of Giotto, wherein he made the scene of Jesus Christ taking Andrew and Peter from their nets, and the crucifixion of the former Apostle, a work greatly commended and extolled both then when it was finished and still at the present day. Over the side-door, below the burial-place of Carlo Marsuppini of Arezzo, he made a Dead Christ with the Maries, wrought in fresco, which was very much praised; and below the tramezzo^[16] that divides the church, on the left hand, above the Crucifix of Donato, he painted in fresco a story of S. Francis, representing a miracle that he wrought in restoring to life a boy who was killed by falling from a terrace, together with his apparition in the air. And in this story he portrayed Giotto his master, Dante the poet, Guido Cavalcanti, and, some say, himself. Throughout the said church, also, in diverse places, he made many figures which are known by painters from the manner. For the Company of the Temple he painted the shrine that is at the corner of the Via del Crocifisso, containing a very beautiful Deposition from the Cross.

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In the cloister of S. Spirito he wrought two scenes in the little arches beside the Chapter-house, in one of which he made Judas selling Christ, and in the other the Last Supper that He held with the Apostles. And in the same convent, over the door of the refectory, he painted a Crucifix and some Saints, which give us to know that among the others who worked here he was truly an imitator of the manner of Giotto, which he held ever in the greatest veneration. In S. Stefano del Ponte Vecchio he painted the panel and the predella of the high-altar with great diligence; and on a panel in the Oratory of S. Michele in Orto he made a very good picture of a Dead Christ being lamented by the Maries and laid to rest very devoutly by Nicodemus in the Sepulchre.



Alinari

THE LAST SUPPER
(After the fresco by Taddeo Gaddi, in the Refectory of S. Croce, Florence)

[View larger image](#)

In the Church of the Servite Friars he painted the Chapel of S. Niccolò, belonging to those of the palace, with stories of that Saint, wherein he showed very good judgment and grace in a boat

that he painted, demonstrating that he had complete understanding of the tempestuous agitation of the sea and of the fury of the storm; and while the mariners are emptying the ship and jettisoning the cargo, S. Nicholas appears in the air and delivers them from that peril. This work, having given pleasure and having been much praised, was the reason that he was made to paint the chapel of the high-altar in that church, wherein he made in fresco some stories of Our Lady, and another figure of Our Lady on a panel in distemper, with many Saints wrought in lively fashion. In like manner, in the predella of the said panel, he made some other stories of Our Lady with little figures, whereof there is no need to make particular mention, seeing that in the year 1467 everything was destroyed when Lodovico, Marquis of Mantua, made in that place the tribune that is there to-day and the choir of the friars, with the design of Leon Battista Alberti, causing the panel to be carried into the Chapter-house of that convent; in the refectory of which Taddeo made, just above the wooden seats, the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles, and above that a Crucifix with many saints.

Having given the last touch to these works, Taddeo Gaddi was summoned to Pisa, where, for Gherardo and Bonaccorso Gambacorti, he wrought in fresco the principal chapel of S. Francesco, painting with beautiful colours many figures and stories of that Saint and of S. Andrew and S. Nicholas. Next, on the vaulting and on the front wall is Pope Honorius, who is confirming the Order; here Taddeo is portrayed from the life, in profile, with a cap wrapped round his head, and at the foot of this scene are written these words:

MAGISTER TADDEUS GADDUS DE FLORENTIA PINXIT HANC HISTORIAM
SANCTI FRANCISCI ET SANCTI ANDREÆ ET SANCTI NICOLAI, ANNO DOMINI
MCCCXLII, DE MENSE AUGUSTI.

Besides this, in the cloister also of the same convent he made in fresco a Madonna with her Child in her arms, very well coloured, and in the middle of the church, on the left hand as one enters, a S. Louis the Bishop, seated, to whom S. Gherardo da Villamagna, who had been a friar of this Order, is recommending a Fra Bartolommeo, then Prior of the said convent. In the figures of this work, seeing that they were taken from nature, there are seen liveliness and infinite grace, in that simple manner which was in some respects better than that of Giotto, above all in expressing supplication, joy, sorrow, and other similar emotions, which, when well expressed, ever bring very great honour to the painter.

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Next, having returned to Florence, Taddeo continued for the Commune the work of Orsanmichele and refounded the piers of the Loggia, building them with stone dressed and well shaped, whereas before they had been made of bricks, without, however, altering the design that Arnolfo left, with directions that there should be made over the Loggia a palace with two vaults for storing the provisions of grain that the people and Commune of Florence used to make. To the end that this work might be finished, the Guild of Porta S. Maria, to which the charge of the fabric had been given, ordained that there should be paid thereunto the tax of the square of the grain-market and some other taxes of very small importance. But what was far more important, it was well ordained with the best counsel that each of the Guilds of Florence should make one pier by itself, with the Patron Saint of the Guild in a niche therein, and that every year, on the festival of each Saint the Consuls of that Guild should go to church to make offering, and should hold there the whole of that day the standard with their insignia, but that the offering, none the less, should be to the Madonna for the succour of the needy poor. And because, during the great flood of the year 1333, the waters had swept away the parapets of the Ponte Rubaconte, thrown down the Castle of Altafronte, left nothing of the Ponte Vecchio but the two piers in the middle, and completely ruined the Ponte a S. Trinita except one pier that remained all shattered, as well as half the Ponte alla Carraia, bursting also the weir of Ognissanti, those who then ruled the city determined no longer to allow the dwellers on the other side of the Arno to have to return to their homes with so great inconvenience as was caused by their having to cross in boats. Wherefore, having sent for Taddeo Gaddi, for the reason that Giotto his master had gone to Milan, they caused him to make the model and design of the Ponte Vecchio, giving him instructions that he should have it brought to completion as strong and as beautiful as might be possible; and he, sparing neither cost nor labour, made it with such strength in the piers and with such magnificence in the arches, all of stone squared with the chisel, that it supports to-day twenty-two shops on either side, which make in all forty-four, with great profit to the Commune, which drew from them eight hundred florins yearly in rents. The extent of the arches from one side to the other is thirty-two braccia, that of the street in the middle is sixteen braccia, and that of the shops on either side eight braccia. For this work, which cost sixty thousand florins of gold, not only did Taddeo then deserve infinite praise, but even to-day he is more than ever commended for it, for the reason that, besides many other floods, it was not moved in the year 1557, on September 13, by that which threw down the Ponte a S. Trinita and two arches of that of the Carraia, and shattered in great part the Rubaconte, together with much other destruction that is very well known. And truly there is no man of judgment who can fail to be amazed, not to say marvel, considering that the said Ponte Vecchio in so great an emergency could sustain unmoved the onset of the waters and of the beams and the wreckage made above, and that with so great firmness.

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At the same time Taddeo directed the founding of the Ponte a S. Trinita, which was finished less happily in the year 1346, at the cost of twenty thousand florins of gold; I say less happily, because, not having been made like the Ponte Vecchio, it was entirely ruined by the said flood of the year 1557. In like manner, under the direction of Taddeo there was made at the said time the wall of the Costa a S. Gregorio, with piles driven in below, including two piers of the bridge in

order to gain additional ground for the city on the side of the Piazza de' Mozzi, and to make use of it, as they did, to make the mills that are there.

While all these works were being made by the direction and design of Taddeo, seeing that he did not therefore stop painting, he decorated the Tribunal of the Mercanzia Vecchia, wherein, with poetical invention, he represented the Tribunal of Six (which is the number of the chief men of that judicial body), who are standing watching the tongue being torn from Falsehood by Truth, who is clothed with a veil over the nude, while Falsehood is draped in black; with these verses below:

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LA PURA VERITÀ, PER UBBIDIRE
ALLA SANTA GIUSTIZIA, CHE NON TARDA,
CAVA LA LINGUA ALLA FALSA BUGIARDA.

And below the scene are these verses:

TADDEO DIPINSE QUESTO BEL RIGESTRO;
DISCEPOL FU DI GIOTTO IL BUON MAESTRO.

Taddeo received a commission for some works in fresco in Arezzo, which he carried to the greatest perfection in company with his disciple Giovanni da Milano. Of these we still see one in the Company of the Holy Spirit, a scene on the wall over the high-altar, containing the Passion of Christ, with many horses, and the Thieves on the Cross, a work held very beautiful by reason of the thought that he showed in placing Him on the Cross. Therein are some figures with vivid expressions which show the rage of the Jews, some pulling Him by the legs with a rope, others offering the sponge, and others in various attitudes, such as the Longinus who is piercing His side, and the three soldiers who are gambling for His raiment, in the faces of whom there is seen hope and fear as they throw the dice. The first of these, in armour, is standing in an uncomfortable attitude awaiting his turn, and shows himself so eager to throw that he appears not to be feeling the discomfort; the other, raising his eyebrows, with his mouth and with his eyes wide open, is watching the dice, in suspicion, as it were, of fraud, and shows clearly to anyone who studies him the desire and the wish that he has to win. The third, who is throwing the dice, having spread the garment on the ground, appears to be announcing with a grin his intention of casting them. In like manner, throughout the walls of the church are seen some stories of S. John the Evangelist, and throughout the city other works made by Taddeo, which are recognized as being by his hand by anyone who has judgment in art. In the Vescovado, also, behind the high-altar, there are still seen some stories of S. John the Baptist, which are wrought with such marvellous manner and design that they cause him to be held in admiration. In the Chapel of S. Sebastiano in S. Agostino, beside the sacristy, he made the stories of that martyr, and a Disputation of Christ with the Doctors, so well wrought and finished that it is a miracle to see the beauty in the changing colours of various sorts and the grace in the pigments of these works, which are finished to perfection.

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TADDEO GADDI: THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE
(Florence: Accademia 107. Panel)

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In the Church of the Sasso della Vernia in the Casentino he painted the chapel wherein S. Francis received the Stigmata, assisted in the minor details by Jacopo di Casentino, who became his disciple by reason of this visit. This work finished, he returned to Florence together with Giovanni, the Milanese, and there, both within the city and without, they made very many panels and pictures of importance; and in process of time he gained so much, turning all into capital, that he laid the foundation of the wealth and the nobility of his family, being ever held a prudent and far-sighted man.

He also painted the Chapter-house in S. Maria Novella, being commissioned by the Prior of the place, who suggested the subject to him. It is true, indeed, that by reason of the work being large and of there being unveiled, at that time when the bridges were being made, the Chapter-house of S. Spirito, to the very great fame of Simone Memmi, who had painted it, there came to the said Prior a desire to call Simone to the half of this work; wherefore, having discussed the whole matter with Taddeo, he found him well contented therewith, for the reason that he had a surpassing love for Simone, because he had been his fellow-disciple under Giotto and ever his loving friend and companion. Oh! minds truly noble! seeing that without emulation, ambition, or envy, ye loved one another like brothers, each rejoicing as much in the honour and profit of his friend as in his own! The work was divided, therefore, and three walls were given to Simone, as I said in his Life, and Taddeo had the left-hand wall and the whole vaulting, which was divided by him into four sections or quarters in accordance with the form of the vaulting itself. In the first he made the Resurrection of Christ, wherein it appears that he wished to attempt to make the splendour of the Glorified Body give forth light, as we perceive in a city and in some mountainous crags; but he did not follow this up in the figures and in the rest, doubting, perchance, that he was not able to carry it out by reason of the difficulty that he recognized therein. In the second section he made Jesus Christ delivering S. Peter from shipwreck, wherein the Apostles who are manning the boat are certainly very beautiful; and among other things, one who is fishing with a line on the shore of the sea (a subject already used by Giotto in the mosaics of the Navicella in S. Pietro) is depicted with very great and vivid feeling. In the third he painted the Ascension of Christ, and in the fourth the coming of the Holy Spirit, where there are seen many beautiful attitudes in the figures of the Jews who are seeking to gain entrance through the door. On the wall below are the Seven Sciences, with their names and with those figures below them that are appropriate to each. Grammar, in the guise of a woman, with a door, teaching a child, has the writer Donato seated below her. After Grammar follows Rhetoric, and at her feet is a figure that has two hands on books, while it draws a third hand from below its mantle and holds it to its mouth. Logic has the serpent in her hand below a veil, and at her feet Zeno of Elea, who is reading. Arithmetic is holding the tables of the abacus, and below her is sitting Abraham, its inventor. Music has the musical instruments, and below her is sitting Tubal-Cain, who is beating with two hammers on an anvil and is standing with his ears intent on that sound. Geometry has the square and the compasses, and below, Euclid. Astrology has the celestial globe in her hands, and below her feet, Atlas. In the other part are sitting seven Theological Sciences, and each has below her that estate or condition of man that is most appropriate to her—Pope, Emperor, King, Cardinals, Dukes, Bishops, Marquises, and others; and in the face of the Pope is the portrait of Clement V. In the middle and highest place is S. Thomas Aquinas, who was adorned with all the said sciences, holding below his feet some heretics—Arius, Sabellius, and Averroes; and round him are Moses, Paul, John the Evangelist, and some other figures, that have above them the four Cardinal Virtues and the three Theological, with an infinity of other details depicted by Taddeo with no little design and grace, insomuch that it can be said to have been the best conceived as well as the best preserved of all his works.

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In the same S. Maria Novella, over the tramezzo^[17] of the church, he also made a S. Jerome robed as a Cardinal, having such a devotion for that Saint that he chose him as the protector of his house; and below this, after the death of Taddeo, his son caused a tomb to be made for their descendants, covered with a slab of marble bearing the arms of the Gaddi. For these descendants, by reason of the excellence of Taddeo and of their merits, Cardinal Jerome has obtained from God most honourable offices in the Church—Clerkships of the Chamber, Bishoprics, Cardinalates, Provostships, and Knighthoods, all most honourable; and all these descendants of Taddeo, of whatsoever degree, have ever esteemed and favoured the beautiful intellects inclined to the matters of sculpture and painting, and have given them assistance with every effort.

Finally, having come to the age of fifty and being smitten with a most violent fever, Taddeo passed from this life in the year 1350, leaving his son Agnolo and Giovanni to apply themselves to painting, recommending them to Jacopo di Casentino for ways of life and to Giovanni da Milano for instruction in the art. After the death of Taddeo this Giovanni, besides many other works, made a panel which was placed on the altar of S. Gherardo da Villamagna in S. Croce, fourteen years after he had been left without his master, and likewise the panel of the high-altar of Ognissanti, where the Frati Umiliati had their seat, which was held very beautiful, and the tribune of the high-altar at Assisi, wherein he made a Crucifix, with Our Lady and S. Chiara, and stories of Our Lady on the walls and sides. Afterwards he betook himself to Milan, where he wrought many works in distemper and in fresco, and there finally he died.

Taddeo, then, adhered constantly to the manner of Giotto, but did not better it much save in the

colouring, which he made fresher and more vivacious than that of Giotto, the latter having applied himself so ardently to improving the other departments and difficulties of this art, that although he gave attention to this, he could not, however, attain to the privilege of doing it, whereas Taddeo, having seen that which Giotto had made easy and having learnt it, had time to add something and to improve the colouring.

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Taddeo was buried by Agnolo and Giovanni, his sons, in the first cloister of S. Croce, in that tomb which he had made for Gaddo his father, and he was much honoured with verses by the men of culture of that time, as a man who had been greatly deserving for his ways of life and for having brought to completion with beautiful design, besides his pictures, many buildings of great convenience to his city, and besides what has been mentioned, for having carried out with solicitude and diligence the construction of the Campanile of S. Maria del Fiore, from the design left by Giotto his master; which campanile was built in such a manner that stones could not be put together with more diligence, nor could a more beautiful tower be made, with regard either to ornament, or cost, or design. The epitaph that was made for Taddeo was this that is to be read here:

HOC UNO DICI POTERAT FLORENTIA FELIX
VIVENTE; AT CERTA EST NON POTUISSE MORI.

Taddeo was very resolute in draughtsmanship, as it may be seen in our book, wherein is drawn by his hand the scene that he wrought in the Chapel of S. Andrea, in S. Croce at Florence.

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ANDREA DI CIONE ORCAGNA

LIFE OF ANDREA DI CIONE ORCAGNA,

PAINTER, SCULPTOR, AND ARCHITECT, OF FLORENCE

Rarely is a man of parts excellent in one pursuit without being able easily to learn any other, and above all any one of those that are akin to his original profession, and proceed, as it were, from one and the same source, as did the Florentine Orcagna, who was painter, sculptor, architect, and poet, as it will be told below. Born in Florence, he began while still a child to give attention to sculpture under Andrea Pisano, and pursued it for some years; then, being desirous to become abundant in invention in order to make lovely historical compositions, he applied himself with so great study to drawing, assisted by nature, who wished to make him universal, that having tried his hand at painting with colours both in distemper and in fresco, even as one thing leads to another, he succeeded so well with the assistance of Bernardo Orcagna, his brother, that this Bernardo took him in company with himself to paint the life of Our Lady in the principal chapel of S. Maria Novella, which then belonged to the family of the Ricci. This work, when finished, was held very beautiful, although, by reason of the neglect of those who afterwards had charge of it, not many years passed before, the roof becoming ruined, it was spoilt by the rains and thereby brought to the condition wherein it is to-day, as it will be told in the proper place. It is enough for the present to say that Domenico Ghirlandajo, who repainted it, availed himself greatly of the invention put into it by Orcagna, who also painted in fresco in the same church the Chapel of the Strozzi, which is near to the door of the sacristy and of the belfry, in company with Bernardo, his brother. In this chapel, to which one ascends by a staircase of stone, he painted on one wall the glory of Paradise, with all the Saints and with various costumes and head-dresses of those times. On the other wall he made Hell, with the abysses, centres, and other things described by Dante, of whom Andrea was an ardent student. In the Church of the Servites in the same city he painted in fresco, also with Bernardo, the Chapel of the family of Cresci; with a Coronation of Our Lady on a very large panel in S. Pietro Maggiore, and a panel in S. Romeo, close to the side-door. In like manner, he and his brother Bernardo painted the outer façade of S. Apollinare, with so great diligence that the colours in that exposed place have been preserved marvellously vivid and beautiful up to our own day.

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Alinari

**CHRIST WITH THE VIRGIN ENTHRONED
(Detail from the "Paradise," after the fresco by
Bernardo di Cione Orcagna. Florence: S. Maria
Novella)**

[View larger image](#)

Moved by the fame of these works of Orcagna, which were much praised, the men who at that time were governing Pisa had him summoned to work on a portion of one wall in the Campo Santo of that city, even as Giotto and Buffalmacco had done before. Wherefore, putting his hand to this, Andrea painted a Universal Judgment, with some fanciful inventions of his own, on the wall facing towards the Duomo, beside the Passion of Christ made by Buffalmacco; and making the first scene on the corner, he represented therein all the degrees of lords temporal wrapped in the pleasures of this world, placing them seated in a flowery meadow and under the shade of many orange-trees, which make a most delicious grove and have some Cupids in their branches above; and these Cupids, flying round and over many young women (all portraits from the life, as it seems clear, of noble ladies and dames of those times, who, by reason of the long lapse of time, are not recognized), are making a show of shooting at the hearts of these young women, who have beside them young men and nobles who are standing listening to music and song and watching the amorous dances of youths and maidens, who are sweetly taking joy in their loves. Among these nobles Orcagna portrayed Castruccio, Lord of Lucca, as a youth of most beautiful aspect, with a blue cap wound round his head and with a hawk on his wrist, and near him other nobles of that age, of whom we know not who they are. In short, in that first part, in so far as the space permitted and his art demanded, he painted all the delights of the world with exceeding great grace. In the other part of the same scene he represented on a high mountain the life of those who, drawn by repentance for their sins and by the desire to be saved, have fled from the world to that mountain, which is all full of saintly hermits who are serving the Lord, busy in diverse pursuits with most vivacious expressions. Some, reading and praying, are shown all intent on contemplation, and others, labouring in order to gain their livelihood, are exercising themselves in various forms of action. There is seen here among others a hermit who is milking a goat, who could not be more active or more lifelike in appearance than he is. Below there is S. Macarius showing to three Kings, who are riding with their ladies and their retinue and going to the chase, human misery in the form of three Kings who are lying dead but not wholly corrupted in a tomb, which is being contemplated with attention by the living Kings in diverse and beautiful attitudes full of wonder, and it appears as if they are reflecting with pity for their own selves that they have in a short time to become such. In one of these Kings on horseback Andrea portrayed Uguccione della Faggiuola of Arezzo, in a figure which is holding its nose with one hand in order not to feel the stench of the dead and corrupted Kings. In the middle of this scene is Death, who, flying through the air and draped in black, is showing that she has cut off with her scythe the lives of many, who are lying on the ground, of all sorts and conditions, poor and rich, halt and whole, young and old, male and female, and in short a good number of every age and sex. And because he knew that the people of Pisa took pleasure in the invention of Buffalmacco, who gave

speech to the figures of Bruno in S. Paolo a Ripa d'Arno, making some letters issue from their mouths, Orcagna filled this whole work of his with such writings, whereof the greater part, being eaten away by time, cannot be understood. To certain old men, then, he gives these words:

DACCHE' PROSPERITADE CI HA LASCIATI,
O MORTE, MEDICINA D' OGNI PENA,
DEH VIENI A DARNE OMAI L' ULTIMA CENA!

with other words that cannot be understood, and verses likewise in ancient manner, composed, as I have discovered, by Orcagna himself, who gave attention to poetry and to making a sonnet or two. Round these dead bodies are some devils who are tearing their souls from their mouths, and are carrying them to certain pits full of fire, which are on the summit of a very high mountain. Over against these are angels who are likewise taking the souls from the mouths of others of these dead people, who have belonged to the good, and are flying with them to Paradise. And in this scene there is a scroll, held by two angels, wherein are these words:

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ISCHERMO DI SAVERE E DI RICCHEZZA,
DI NOBILTADE ANCORA E DI PRODEZZA,
VALE NIENTE A I COLPI DI COSTEI;

with some other words that are difficult to understand. Next, below this, in the border of this scene, are nine angels who are holding legends both Italian and Latin in some suitable scrolls, put into that place below because above they were like to spoil the scene, and not to include them in the work seemed wrong to their author, who considered them very beautiful; and it may be that they were to the taste of that age. The greater part is omitted by us, in order not to weary others with such things, which are not pertinent and little pleasing, not to mention that the greater part of these inscriptions being effaced, the remainder is little less than fragmentary. After these works, in making the Judgment, Orcagna set Jesus Christ on high above the clouds in the midst of His twelve Apostles, judging the quick and the dead; showing on one side, with beautiful art and very vividly, the sorrowful expressions of the damned who are being dragged weeping by furious demons to Hell, and, on the other, the joy and the jubilation of the good, whom a body of angels guided by the Archangel Michael are leading as the elect, all rejoicing, to the right, where are the blessed. And it is truly a pity that for lack of writers, in so great a multitude of men of the robe, chevaliers, and other lords, that are clearly depicted and portrayed there from the life, there should be not one, or only very few, of whom we know the names or who they were; although it is said that a Pope who is seen there is Innocent IV, friend^[18] of Manfredi.



ANDREA DI CIONE ORCAGNA: CHRIST ENTHRONED
(Florence: S. Maria Novella, Strozzi Chapel. Fresco)

[View larger image](#)

After this work, and after making some sculptures in marble for the Madonna that is on the abutment of the Ponte Vecchio, with great honour for himself, he left his brother Bernardo to execute by himself a Hell in the Campo Santo, which is described by Dante, and which was afterwards spoilt in the year 1530 and restored by Sollazzino, a painter of our own times; and he returned to Florence, where, in the middle of the Church of S. Croce, on a very great wall on the right, he painted in fresco the same subjects that he painted in the Campo Santo of Pisa, in three similar pictures, excepting, however, the scene where S. Macarius is showing to three Kings the misery of man, and the life of the hermits who are serving God on that mountain. Making, then, all the rest of that work, he laboured therein with better design and more diligence than he had done in Pisa, holding, nevertheless, to almost the same plan in the invention, the manner, the

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scrolls, and the rest, without changing anything save the portraits from life, for those in this work were partly of his dearest friends, whom he placed in Paradise, and partly of men little his friends, who were put by him in Hell. Among the good is seen portrayed from life in profile, with the triple crown on his head, Pope Clement VI, who changed the Jubilee in his reign from every hundred to every fifty years, and was a friend of the Florentines, and had some of Orcagna's pictures, which were very dear to him. Among the same is Maestro Dino del Garbo, a most excellent physician of that time, dressed as was then the wont of doctors, with a red bonnet lined with miniver on his head, and held by the hand by an angel; with many other portraits that are not recognized. Among the damned he portrayed Guardi, serjeant of the Commune of Florence, being dragged along by the Devil with a hook, and he is known by three red lilies that he has on his white bonnet, such as were then wont to be worn by the serjeants and other similar officials; and this he did because Guardi once made distraint on his property. He also portrayed there the notary and the judge who had been opposed to him in that action. Near to Guardi is Ceccho d'Ascoli, a famous wizard of those times; and a little above—namely, in the middle—is a hypocrite friar, who, having issued from a tomb, is seeking furtively to put himself among the good, while an angel discovers him and thrusts him among the damned.

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Besides Bernardo, Andrea had a brother called Jacopo, who was engaged in sculpture, but with little profit; and in making on occasion for this Jacopo designs in relief and in clay, there came to him the wish to make something in marble and to see whether he remembered the principles of that art, wherein, as it has been said, he had worked in Pisa; and so, putting himself with more study to the test, he made progress therein in such a fashion that afterwards he made use of it with honour, as it will be told. Afterwards he devoted himself with all his energy to the study of architecture, thinking that at some time or another he would have to make use of it. Nor did his thought deceive him, seeing that in the year 1355, the Commune of Florence having bought some citizens' houses near their Palace (in order to have more space and to make a larger square, and also in order to make a place where the citizens could take shelter in rainy or wintry days, and carry on under cover such business as was transacted on the Ringhiera when bad weather did not hinder), they caused many designs to be made for the building of a magnificent and very large Loggia for this purpose near the Palace, and at the same time for the Mint where the money is struck. Among these designs, made by the best masters in the city, that of Orcagna being universally approved and accepted as greater, more beautiful, and more magnificent than all the others, by decree of the Signori and of the Commune there was begun under his direction the great Loggia of the square, on the foundations made in the time of the Duke of Athens, and it was carried on with squared stone very well put together, with much diligence. And what was something new in those times, the arches of the vaulting were made no longer quarter-acute, as it had been the custom up to that time, but they were turned in half-circles in a new and laudable method, which gave much grace and beauty to this great fabric, which was brought to completion in a short time under the direction of Andrea. And if there had been taken thought to put it beside S. Romolo and to turn the arches with the back to the north, which they did not do, perchance, in order to have it conveniently near to the gate of the Palace, it would have been as useful a building for the whole city as it is beautiful in workmanship; whereas, by reason of the great wind, in winter no one can stand there. In this Loggia, between the arches on the front wall, in some ornamental work by his own hand, Orcagna made seven marble figures in half-relief representing the seven Theological and Cardinal Virtues, as accompaniment to the whole work, so beautiful that they made him known for no less able as sculptor than as painter and architect; not to mention that he was in all his actions as pleasant, courteous, and lovable a man as was ever any man of his condition. And because he would never abandon the study of any one of his professions for that of another, while the Loggia was building he made a panel in distemper with many large figures, with little figures in the predella, for that chapel of the Strozzi wherein he had formerly made some works in fresco with his brother Bernardo; on which panel, it appearing to him that it could bear better testimony to his profession than the works wrought in fresco could do, he wrote his name with these words: ANNO DOMINI MCCCCLVII, ANDREAS CIONIS DE FLORENTIA ME PINXIT.

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Alinari

**THE DEATH AND ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN
 (*Relief on the Tabernacle by Andrea di Cione
 Orcagna, Or San Michele, Florence*)**

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This work completed, he made some pictures, also on panel, which were sent to the Pope in Avignon and are still in the Cathedral Church of that city. A little while afterwards the men of the Company of Orsanmichele, having collected large sums of money from offerings and donations given to their Madonna by reason of the mortality of 1348, resolved to make round her a chapel, or rather shrine, not only very ornate and rich with marbles carved in every way and with other stones of price, but also with mosaic and ornaments of bronze, as much as could possibly be desired, in a manner that both in workmanship and in material it might surpass every other work of so great a size wrought up to that day. Wherefore, the charge of the whole being given to Orcagna as the most excellent of that age, he made so many designs that finally one of them pleased the authorities, as being better than all the others. The work, therefore, being allotted to him, they put complete reliance in his judgment and counsel; wherefore, giving the making of all the rest to diverse master-carvers brought from several districts, he applied himself with his brother to executing all the figures of the work, and, the whole being finished, he had them built in and put together very thoughtfully without mortar, with clamps of copper fixed with lead, to the end that the shining and polished marbles might not become discoloured; and in this he succeeded so well, with profit and honour from those who came after him, that to one who studies that work it appears, by reason of such union and methods of joining discovered by Orcagna, that the whole chapel has been shaped out of one single piece of marble. And although it is in a German manner, for that style it has so great grace and proportion that it holds the first place among the works of those times, above all because its composition of figures great and small, and of angels and prophets in half-relief round the Madonna, is very well executed. Marvellous, also, is the casting of the bands of bronze, diligently polished, which, encircling the whole work, enclose and bind it together in a manner that it is therefore as stout and strong as it is beautiful in all other respects. But how much he laboured in order to show the subtlety of his intellect in that gross age is seen in a large scene in half-relief on the back part of the said shrine, wherein, with figures of one braccio and a half each, he made the twelve Apostles gazing on high at the Madonna, while she, in a mandorla, surrounded by angels, is ascending to Heaven. In one of these Apostles he portrayed himself in marble, old, as he was, with the beard shaven, with the cap wound round the head, and with the face flat and round, as it is seen above in his portrait, drawn from that one. Besides this, he inscribed these words in the marble below: ANDREAS CIONIS, PICTOR FLORENTINUS, ORATORII ARCHIMAGISTER EXTITIT HUIJUS, MCCCLIX.

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It is known that the building of this Loggia and of the marble shrine, with all the master-work, cost ninety-six thousand florins of gold, which were very well spent, for the reason that it is, both in the architecture and in the sculptures and other ornaments, as beautiful as any other work whatsoever of those times, and is such that, by reason of the parts made therein by him, the

name of Andrea Orcagna has been and will be ever living and great.

He used to write in his pictures: FECE ANDREA DI CIONE, SCULTORE; and in his sculptures: FECE ANDREA DI CIONE, PITTORE; wishing that his painting should be known by his sculpture, and his sculpture by his painting. There are throughout all Florence many panels made by him, which are partly known by the name, such as a panel in S. Romeo, and partly by the manner, such as one that is in the Chapter-house of the Monastery of the Angeli. Some of them that he left unfinished were completed by Bernardo, his brother, who survived him, but not for many years. And because, as it has been said, Andrea delighted in making verses and various forms of poetry, when already old he wrote some sonnets to Burchiello, then a youth; and finally, being sixty years of age, he finished the course of his life in 1389, and was borne with honour from his dwelling, which was in the Via Vecchia de' Corazzai, to his tomb.

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There were many men able in sculpture and in architecture at the same time as Orcagna, of whom the names are not known, but their works are to be seen, and these are worthy of nothing but praise and commendation. Among their works is not only the Monastery of the Certosa of Florence, made at the expense of the noble family of the Acciaiuoli, and in particular of Messer Niccola, Grand Seneschal of the King of Naples, but also the tomb of the same man, whereon he is portrayed in stone, and that of his father and one of his sisters, which has a covering of marble, whereon both were portrayed very well from nature in the year 1366. There, too, wrought by the hand of the same men, is the tomb of Messer Lorenzo, son of the said Niccola, who, dying at Naples, was brought to Florence and laid to rest there with the most honourable pomp of funeral obsequies. In like manner, in the tomb of Cardinal Santa Croce of the same family, which is in a choir then built anew in front of the high-altar, there is his portrait on a slab of marble, very well wrought in the year 1390.

Disciples of Andrea in painting were Bernardo Nello di Giovanni Falconi of Pisa, who wrought many panels in the Duomo of Pisa, and Tommaso di Marco of Florence, who, besides many other works, made in the year 1392 a panel that is in S. Antonio in Pisa, set up against the tramezzo^[19] of the church.

After the death of Andrea, his brother Jacopo, occupied himself in sculpture, as it has been said, and in architecture, was employed in the year 1328 on the foundation and building of the Tower and Gate of S. Piero Gattolini, and it is said that he made the four marzocchi^[20] of stone which were placed on the four corners of the Palazzo Principale of Florence, all overlaid with gold. This work was much censured, by reason of there being laid on those places, without necessity, a greater weight than peradventure was expedient; and many would have been pleased to have the marzocchi made rather of plates of copper, hollow within, and then, after being gilded in the fire, set up in the same place, because they would have been much less heavy and more durable. It is said, too, that the same man made the horse, gilded and in full relief, that is in S. Maria del Fiore, over the door that leads to the Company of S. Zanobi, which horse is believed to be there in memory of Piero Farnese, Captain of the Florentines; however, knowing nothing more about this, I could not vouch for it. About the same time Mariotto, nephew of Andrea, made in fresco the Paradise of S. Michele Bisdomini, in the Via de' Servi in Florence, and the panel with an Annunciation that is on the altar; and for Monna Cecilia de' Boscoli he made another panel with many figures, placed near the door of the same church.

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But among all the disciples of Orcagna none was more excellent than Francesco Traini, who made a panel with a ground of gold for a nobleman of the house of Coscia, who is buried at Pisa in the Chapel of S. Domenico, in the Church of S. Caterina; which panel contained a S. Dominic standing two braccia and a half high, with six scenes of his life on either side of him, animated and vivacious and well coloured. And in the same church, in the Chapel of S. Tommaso d'Aquino, he made a panel in distemper with fanciful invention, which is much praised, placing therein the said S. Thomas seated, portrayed from the life: I say from the life, because the friars of that place had an image of him brought from the Abbey of Fossa Nuova, where he died in the year 1323. Below, round S. Thomas, who is placed seated in the air with some books in his hand, which are illuminating the Christian people with their rays and lustre, there are kneeling a great number of doctors and clergy of every sort, Bishops, Cardinals, and Popes, among whom is the portrait of Pope Urban VI. Under the feet of S. Thomas are standing Sabellius, Arius, Averroes, and other heretics and philosophers, with their books all torn; and the said figure of S. Thomas is placed between Plato, who is showing him the *Timæus*, and Aristotle, who is showing him the *Ethics*. Above, a Jesus Christ, in like manner in the air between the four Evangelists, is blessing S. Thomas, and appears to be in the act of sending down upon him the Holy Spirit, and filling him with it and with His grace. This work, when finished, acquired very great fame and praise for Francesco Traini, for in making it he surpassed his master Andrea by a great measure in colouring, in harmony, and in invention. This Andrea was very diligent in his drawings, as it may be seen in our book.

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Alinari

S. THOMAS AQUINAS
(After the painting by Francesco Traini.
Pisa: Church of S. Caterina)

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TOMMASO, CALLED GIOTTINO

LIFE OF TOMMASO, CALLED GIOTTINO, PAINTER OF FLORENCE

When those arts that proceed from design come into competition and their craftsmen work in rivalry, without doubt the good intellects, exercising themselves with much study, discover new things every day in order to satisfy the various tastes of men; and some, speaking for the present of painting, executing works obscure and unusual and demonstrating in them the difficulty of making them, make known by the shadows the brightness of their genius. Others, fashioning the sweet and delicate, thinking these to be likely to be more pleasing to the eyes of all who behold them by reason of their having more relief, easily attract to themselves the minds of the greater part of men. Others, again, painting with unity and lowering the tones of the colours, reducing to their proper places the lights and shades of their figures, deserve very great praise, and reveal the thoughts of the intellect with beautiful dexterity of mind; even as they were ever revealed with a sweet manner in the works of Tommaso di Stefano, called Giotto, who, being born in the year 1324 and having learnt from his father the first principles of painting, resolved while still very young to attempt, in so far as he might be able with assiduous study, to be an imitator of the manner of Giotto rather than of that of his father Stefano. In this attempt he succeeded so well that he gained thereby, besides the manner, which was much more beautiful than that of his master, the surname of Giotto, which never left him; nay, by reason both of the manner and of

the name it was the opinion of many, who, however, were in very great error, that he was the son of Giotto; but in truth it is not so, it being certain, or to speak more exactly, believed (it being impossible for such things to be affirmed by any man) that he was the son of Stefano, painter of Florence.

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He was, then, so diligent in painting and so greatly devoted to it, that, although many of his works are not to be found, those nevertheless that have been found are good and in a beautiful manner, for the reason that the draperies, the hair, the beards, and all the rest of his work were made and harmonized with so great softness and diligence, that it is seen that without doubt he added harmony to this art and had it much more perfect than his master Giotto and his father Stefano. In his youth Giotto painted a chapel near the side-door of S. Stefano al Ponte Vecchio in Florence, wherein, although it is to-day much spoilt by damp, the little that has remained shows the dexterity and the genius of the craftsman. Next, he made the two Saints, Cosimo and Damiano, for the Frati Ermini in the Canto alla Macine, but little is seen of them to-day, for they too have been ruined by time. And he wrought in fresco a chapel in the old S. Spirito in that city, which was afterwards ruined in the burning of that church; and in fresco, over the principal door of the church, the story of the Sending of the Holy Spirit; and on the square before the said church, on the way to the Canto alla Cuculia, on the corner of the convent, he painted that shrine that is still seen there, with Our Lady and other Saints round her, wherein both the heads and the other parts lean strongly towards the modern manner, for the reason that he sought to vary and to blend the flesh-colours, and to harmonize all the figures with grace and judgment by means of a variety of colours and draperies. In like manner he wrought the stories of Constantine with much diligence in the Chapel of S. Silvestro in S. Croce, showing very beautiful ideas in the gestures of the figures; and then, behind an ornament of marble made for the tomb of Messer Bertino de' Bardi, a man who at that time had held honourable military rank, he made this Messer Bertino in armour, after the life, issuing from a sepulchre on his knees, being summoned with the sound of the trumpets of the Judgment by two angels, who are in the air accompanying a beautifully-wrought Christ in the clouds. On the right hand of the entrance of the door of S. Pancrazio the same man made a Christ who is bearing His Cross, and some Saints near Him, that have exactly the manner of Giotto. In S. Gallo (which convent was without the Gate called by the same name, and was destroyed in the siege) in a cloister, there was a Pietà painted in fresco, whereof there is a copy in the aforesaid S. Pancrazio, on a pillar beside the principal chapel. In S. Maria Novella, in the Chapel of S. Lorenzo de' Giuochi, as one enters by the door on the left, on the front wall, he wrought in fresco a S. Cosimo and a S. Damiano, and, in Ognissanti, a S. Christopher and a S. George, which were spoilt by the malice of time, and then restored by other painters by reason of the ignorance of a Provost little conversant with such matters. In the said church there has remained whole the arch that is over the door of the sacristy, wherein there is in fresco a Madonna with the Child in her arms by the hand of Tommaso, which is a good work, by reason of his having wrought it with diligence.

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By means of these works Giotto had acquired so good a name, imitating his master both in design and in invention, as it has been told, that there was said to be in him the spirit of Giotto himself, both because of the vividness of his colouring and of his mastery in draughtsmanship; and in the year 1343, on July 2, when the Duke of Athens was driven out by the people and when he had renounced the sovereignty and restored their liberty to the Florentines, Giotto was forced by the twelve Reformers of the State, and in particular by the prayers of Messer Agnolo Acciaiuoli, then a very great citizen, who had great influence with him, to paint in contempt, on the tower of the Palace of the Podestà, the said Duke and his followers, who were Messer Ceritieri Visdomini, Messer Maladiasse, his Conservator, and Messer Ranieri da San Gimignano, all with the cap of Justice ignominiously on their heads. Round the head of the Duke were many beasts of prey and other sorts, signifying his nature and his character; and one of those his counsellors had in his hand the Palace of the Priors of the city, and was handing it to him, like a disloyal traitor to his country. And all had below them the arms and emblems of their families, and some writings which can hardly be read to-day because they have been eaten away by time. In this work, both by reason of the draughtsmanship and of the great diligence wherewith it was executed, the manner of the craftsman gave universal pleasure to all. Afterwards, at the Campora, a seat of the Black Friars without the Porta a S. Piero Gattolini, he made a S. Cosimo and a S. Damiano, which were spoilt in the whitewashing of the church; and on the bridge of Romiti in Valdarno he painted in fresco the shrine that is built over the middle, with his own hand and in a beautiful manner.

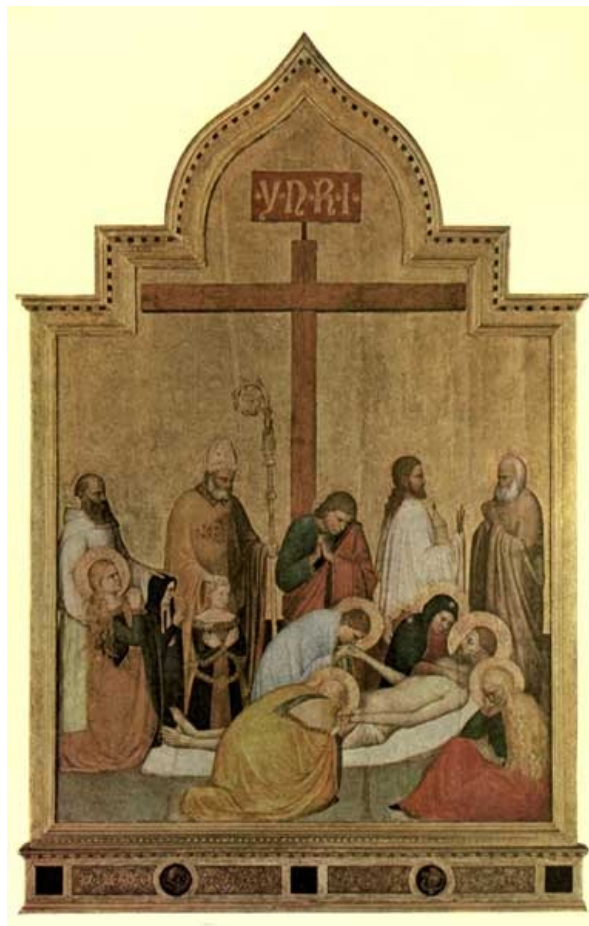
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It is found recorded by many who wrote thereon that Tommaso applied himself to sculpture and wrought a figure in marble on the Campanile of S. Maria del Fiore in Florence, four braccia high and facing the place where the Orphans now dwell. In S. Giovanni Laterano in Rome, likewise, he brought to fine completion a scene wherein he represented the Pope in several capacities, which is now seen to have been eaten away and corroded by time; and in the house of the Orsini he painted a hall full of famous men; with a very beautiful S. Louis on a pillar in the Araceli, on the right hand beside the altar.

In the lower church of S. Francesco at Assisi, in an arch over the pulpit (there being no other space that was not painted) he wrought the Coronation of Our Lady, with many angels round her, so gracious, so beautiful in the expressions of the faces, and so sweet and delicate in manner, that they show, with the usual harmony of colour which was something peculiar to this painter, that he had proved himself the peer of all who had lived up to that time; and round this arch he made some stories of S. Nicholas. In like manner, in the Monastery of S. Chiara in the same city, in the middle of the church, he painted a scene in fresco, wherein is S. Chiara supported in the

air by two angels who appear real; she is restoring to life a child that was dead, while round her are standing many women all full of wonder, with great beauty in the faces and in the very gracious head-dresses and costumes of those times that they are wearing. In the same city of Assisi, over the gate of the city that leads to the Duomo—namely, in an arch on the inner side—he made a Madonna with the Child in her arms, with so great diligence that she appears alive, and a S. Francis and another Saint, both very beautiful; both of which works, although the story of S. Chiara remained unfinished by reason of Tommaso having fallen sick and returned to Florence, are perfect and most worthy of all praise.

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**GIOTTINO: THE DESCENT FROM THE
CROSS**

(Florence: Uffizi 27. Panel)

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It is said that Tommaso was melancholic in temperament and very solitary, but with respect to art devoted and very studious, as it is clearly seen from a panel in the Church of S. Romeo in Florence, wrought by him in distemper with so great diligence and love that there has never been seen a better work on wood by his hand. In this panel, which is placed in the tramezzo^[21] of the church, on the right hand, is a Dead Christ with the Maries and Nicodemus, accompanied by other figures, who are bewailing His death with bitterness and with very sweet and affectionate movements, wringing their hands with diverse gestures, and beating themselves in a manner that in the air of the faces there is shown very clearly their sharp sorrow at the so great cost of our sins. And it is something marvellous to consider, not that he penetrated with his genius to such a height of imagination, but that he could express it so well with the brush. Wherefore this work is consummately worthy of praise, not so much by reason of the subject and of the invention, as because in it the craftsman has shown, in some heads that are weeping, that although the lineaments of those that are weeping are distorted in the brows, in the eyes, in the nose, and in the mouth, this, however, neither spoils nor alters a certain beauty which is wont to suffer much in weeping when the painters do not know well how to avail themselves of the good methods of art. But it is no great thing that Giotto should have executed this panel with so much consideration, since in his labours he ever aimed rather at fame and glory than at any other reward, being free from the greed of gain, that makes our present masters less diligent and good. And even as he did not seek to have great riches, so he did not trouble himself much about the comforts of life—nay, living poorly, he sought to satisfy others rather than himself; wherefore, taking little care of himself and enduring fatigue, he died of consumption at the age of thirty-two, and was given burial by his relatives at the Martello Gate without S. Maria Novella, beside the tomb of Bontura.

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Disciples of Giotto, who left more fame than wealth, were Giovanni Tossicani of Arezzo, Michelino, Giovanni dal Ponte, and Lippo, who were passing good masters of this art, but above all Giovanni Tossicani, who made many works throughout all Tuscany after Tommaso and in the same manner as his, and in particular the Chapel of S. Maria Maddalena, belonging to the

Tuccerelli, in the Pieve of Arezzo, and a S. James on a pillar in the Pieve of the township of Empoli. In the Duomo of Pisa, also, he wrought some panels which have since been removed in order to make room for the modern. The last work that he made was in a chapel of the Vescovado of Arezzo, for the Countess Giovanna, wife of Tarlato da Pietramala—namely, a very beautiful Annunciation, with S. James and S. Philip; which work, by reason of the back of the wall being turned to the north, was little less than completely spoilt by damp, when Maestro Agnolo di Lorenzo of Arezzo restored the Annunciation, and shortly afterwards Giorgio Vasari, still a youth, restored the S. James and S. Philip, to his own great profit, having learnt much, at that time when he had not the advantage of other masters, by studying Giovanni's method of painting and the shadows and colours of that work, spoilt as it was. In this chapel there are still read these words in an epitaph of marble, in memory of the Countess who had it built and painted:

ANNO DOMINI 1335, DE MENSE AUGUSTI, HANC CAPELLAM CONSTITUI
FECIT NOBILIS DOMINA COMITISSA JOANNA DE SANCTA FLORA, UXOR
NOBILIS MILITIS DOMINI TARLATI DE PETRAMALA, AD HONOREM BEATÆ
MARIÆ VIRGINIS.

Of the works of the other disciples of Giotto there is no mention made, seeing that they were but ordinary and little like those of the master and of Giovanni Tossicani, their fellow-disciple. Tommaso drew very well, as it may be seen in our book, in certain drawings wrought by his hand with much diligence.

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GIOVANNI DAL PONTE

LIFE OF GIOVANNI DAL PONTE, PAINTER OF FLORENCE

Although there is no truth and not much confidence to be placed in the ancient proverb that the prodigal's purse is never empty, and although, on the contrary, it is very true that he who does not live a well-ordered life in his own degree lives at the last in want and dies miserably, it is seen, nevertheless, that fortune sometimes aids rather those who squander without restraint than those who are in all things careful and self-restrained; and when the favour of fortune ceases, there often comes death, to make up for her defection and for the bad management of men, supervening at the very moment when such men would begin with infinite dismay to recognize how miserable a thing it is to have squandered in youth and to want in old age, living and labouring in poverty, as would have happened to Giovanni da Santo Stefano a Ponte of Florence, if, after having consumed his patrimony and much gain which had been brought to his hands rather by fortune than by his merits, with some inheritances that came to him from an unexpected source, he had not finished at one and the same time the course of his life and all his means.

This man, then, who was a disciple of Buonamico Buffalmacco, and who imitated him more in attending to the pleasures of life than in seeking to become an able painter, was born in the year 1307, and after being in early youth a disciple of Buffalmacco, he made his first works in the Chapel of S. Lorenzo, in the Pieve of Empoli, painting there in fresco many scenes of the life of that Saint, with so great diligence that he was summoned to Arezzo in the year 1344, a better development being expected after so fine a beginning; and there he painted the Assumption of Our Lady in a chapel in S. Francesco. And a little time afterwards, being in some credit in that city for lack of other painters, he painted the Chapel of S. Onofrio in the Pieve, with that of S. Antonio, which to-day is spoilt by damp. He also made some other pictures that were in S. Giustina and in S. Matteo, but these were thrown to the ground by Duke Cosimo, together with the said churches, in the making of fortifications for that city; and exactly in that place, at the foot of the abutment of an ancient bridge beside the said S. Giustina, where the stream entered the city, there were then found a head of Appius Cæcus and one of his son, both in marble and very beautiful, with an ancient epitaph, likewise very beautiful, which are all now in the guardaroba^[22] of the said Lord Duke.

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Giovanni, having returned to Florence at the time when there was finished the closing of the middle arch of the Ponte a S. Trinita, painted many figures both within and without a chapel built over one pier and dedicated to S. Michelagnolo, and in particular all the front wall; which chapel, together with the bridge, was carried away by the flood of the year 1557. It is by reason of these works that some maintain, besides what has been said about him at the beginning, that he was ever afterwards called Giovanni dal Ponte. In Pisa, also, in the year 1355, he made some scenes

in fresco behind the altar of the principal chapel of S. Paolo a Ripa d'Arno, which are now all spoilt by damp and by time. Giovanni also painted the Chapel of the Scali in S. Trinita in Florence, with another that is beside it, and one of the stories of S. Paul by the side of the principal chapel, where is the tomb of Maestro Paolo, the astrologer. In S. Stefano al Ponte Vecchio he painted a panel, with other pictures in distemper and in fresco both within and without Florence, which brought him considerable credit.

He gave contentment to his friends, but more in his pleasures than in his works, and he was the friend of men of learning, and in particular of all those who pursued the studies of his own profession in order to become excellent therein; and although he had not sought to have in himself that which he desired in others, yet he never ceased to encourage others to work valiantly. Finally, having lived fifty-nine years, Giovanni was seized by pleurisy and in a few days departed this life, wherein, had he survived a little longer, he would have suffered many discomfords, there being left in his house scarce as much as sufficed to give him decent burial in S. Stefano al Ponte Vecchio. His works date about 1365.

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Alinari

S. PETER ENTHRONED
(After the painting by Giovanni dal Ponte. Florence: Uffizi, 1292)

[View larger image](#)

In our book of drawings by diverse ancients and moderns there is a drawing in water-colour by the hand of Giovanni, wherein is a S. George on horseback who is slaying the Dragon, and a skeleton, which bear witness to the method and manner that he had in drawing.

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AGNOLO GADDI

LIFE OF AGNOLO GADDI,

PAINTER OF FLORENCE

How honourable and profitable it is to be excellent in a noble art is manifestly seen in the talent and management of Taddeo Gaddi, who, having acquired very good means as well as fame with his industry and labours, left the affairs of his family so well arranged, when he passed to the other life, that Agnolo and Giovanni, his sons, were easily able to give a beginning to the very great riches and to the exaltation of the house of Gaddi, to-day very noble in Florence and in great repute throughout all Christendom. And in truth it has been very reasonable, seeing that Gaddo, Taddeo, Agnolo, and Giovanni adorned many honoured churches with their talent and their art, that their successors have been since adorned by the Holy Roman Church and by the

Supreme Pontiffs of the same with the greatest ecclesiastical dignities.

Taddeo, then, of whom we have already written the Life, left his sons Agnolo and Giovanni in company with many of his disciples, hoping that Agnolo, in particular, would become very excellent in painting; but he, who in his youth showed promise of surpassing his father by a great measure, did not succeed further in justifying the opinion that had already been conceived of him, for the reason that, being born and bred in easy circumstances, which are often an impediment to study, he was given more to traffic and to trading than to the art of painting; which should not appear a thing new or strange, seeing that avarice very often bars the way to many intellects which would ascend to the greatest height of excellence, if the desire of gain did not impede their path in their earliest and best years. Working as a youth in S. Jacopo tra' Fossi in Florence, Agnolo wrought a little scene, with figures little more than a braccio high, of Christ raising Lazarus on the fourth day after death, wherein, imagining the corruption of that body, which had been dead three days, with much thought he made the grave-clothes which held him bound discoloured by the decay of the flesh, and round the eyes certain livid and yellowish marks in the flesh, that seems half living and half dead; not without stupefaction in the Apostles and in other figures, who, with attitudes varied and beautiful, and with their draperies to their noses in order not to feel the stench of that corrupt body, are no less afraid and awestruck at such a marvellous miracle than Mary and Martha are joyful and content to see life returning to the dead body of their brother. This work was judged so excellent that many deemed the talent of Agnolo to be destined to surpass all the disciples of Taddeo, and even Taddeo himself; but the event proved otherwise, because, even as in youth the will conquers every difficulty in order to acquire fame, so a certain negligence that the years bring with them often causes a man, instead of advancing, to go backwards, as did Agnolo. Having given so great a proof of his talent, he was commissioned by the family of Soderini, who had great hopes of him, to paint the principal chapel of the Carmine, and he painted therein all the life of Our Lady, so much less well than he had done the resurrection of Lazarus, that he gave every man to know that he had little wish to attend with every effort to the art of painting; for the reason that in all that great work there is nothing else of the good save one scene, wherein, round Our Lady, in a room, are many maidens who are wearing diverse costumes and head-dresses, according to the diversity of the use of those times, and are engaged in diverse exercises: this one is spinning, that one is sewing, that other is winding thread, one is weaving, and others working in other ways, all passing well conceived and executed by Agnolo.

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For the noble family of the Alberti, likewise, he painted in fresco the principal chapel of the Church of S. Croce, making therein all that came to pass in the discovery of the Cross, and he executed that work with much mastery of handling but not with much design, for only the colouring is beautiful and good enough. Next, in painting in fresco some stories of S. Louis in the Chapel of the Bardi in the same church, he acquitted himself much better. And because he used to work by caprice, now with more zeal and now with less, working in S. Spirito, also in Florence, within the door that leads from the square into the convent, he made in fresco, over another door, a Madonna with the Child in her arms, and S. Augustine and S. Nicholas, so well that the said figures appear as if made only yesterday.

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THE MARRIAGE OF S. CATHARINE
(After the painting by Agnolo Gaddi. Philadelphia, U.S.A.: J. G. Johnson Collection)

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And because in a certain manner there had come to Agnolo, by way of inheritance, the secret of working in mosaic, and he had at home the instruments and all the materials that his grandfather Gaddo had used in this, he would make something in mosaic when it pleased him, merely to pass time and by reason of that convenience of material, rather than for aught else. Now, seeing that time had eaten away many of those marbles that cover the eight faces of the roof of S. Giovanni, and that the damp penetrating within had therefore spoilt much of the mosaic which Andrea Tafi had wrought there at a former time, the Consuls of the Guild of Merchants determined, to the end that the rest might not be spoilt, to rebuild the greater part of that covering with marble, and in like manner to have the mosaic restored. Wherefore, the direction and commission for the whole being given to Agnolo, he, in the year 1346, had it recovered with new marbles and the pieces laid over each other at the joinings, with unexampled diligence, to the breadth of two fingers, cutting each slab to the half of its thickness; then, joining them together with cement made of mastic and wax melted together, he fitted them with so great diligence that from that time onwards neither the roof nor the vaulting has received any damage from the rains. Agnolo, having afterwards restored the mosaic, brought it about by means of his counsel and of a design very well conceived that there was rebuilt, round the said church, all the upper cornice of marble below the roof, in that form wherein it now remains; which cornice was much smaller than it is and very commonplace. Under direction of the same man there was also made the vaulting of the Great Hall of the Palace of the Podestà, which before was directly under the roof, to the end that, besides the adornment, fire might not again be able to do it damage, as it had done a long time before. After this, by the counsel of Agnolo, there were made round the said Palace the battlements that are there to-day, which before were in no wise there.

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The while that these works were executing, he did not desert his painting entirely, and painted in distemper, in the panel that he made for the high-altar of S. Pancrazio, Our Lady, S. John the Baptist, and the Evangelist, and beside them the Saints Nereus, Archileus, and Pancratius, brothers, with other Saints. But the best of this work—nay, all that is seen therein of the good—is the predella alone, which is all full of little figures, divided into eight stories of the Madonna and of S. Reparata. Next, in 1348, he painted the panel of the high-altar of S. Maria Maggiore, also in Florence, for Barone Cappelli, making therein a passing good dance of angels round a Coronation of Our Lady. A little afterwards, in the Pieve of the district of Prato, rebuilt under direction of Giovanni Pisano in the year 1312, as it has been said above, Agnolo painted in fresco, in the chapel wherein was deposited the Girdle of Our Lady, many scenes of her life; and in other churches of that district, which was full of monasteries and convents held in great honour, he made other works in plenty. In Florence, next, he painted the arch over the door of S. Romeo; and in Orto S. Michele he wrought in distemper a Disputation of the Doctors with Christ in the Temple. And at the same time, many houses having been pulled down in order to enlarge the Piazza de' Signori, and in particular the Church of S. Romolo, this was rebuilt with the design of

Agnolo. There are many panels by his hand throughout the churches in the said city, and many of his works may also be recognized in the domain, which were wrought by him with much profit to himself, although he worked more in order to do as his forefathers had done than for any love of it, having his mind directed on commerce, which brought him better profit; as it is seen when his sons, not wishing any longer to be painters, gave themselves over completely to commerce, holding a house open for this purpose in Venice together with their father, who, from a certain time onward, did not work save for his own pleasure, and, in a certain manner, in order to pass time. Having thus acquired great wealth by means of trading and by means of his art, Agnolo died in the sixty-third year of his life, overcome by a malignant fever which in a few days made an end of him.

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His disciples were Maestro Antonio da Ferrara, who made many beautiful works in S. Francesco at Urbino, and at Città di Castello; and Stefano da Verona, who painted in fresco most perfectly, as it is seen in many places at Verona, his native city, and also in many of his works at Mantua. This man, among other things, was excellent in giving very beautiful expressions to the faces of children, of women, and of old men, as it may be seen in his works, which were all imitated and copied by that Piero da Perugia, illuminator, who illuminated all the books that are in the library of Pope Pius in the Duomo at Siena, and was a practised colourist in fresco. A disciple of Agnolo, also, was Michele da Milano, as was Giovanni Gaddi, his brother, who made, in the cloister of S. Spirito where are the little arches of Gaddo and of Taddeo, the Disputation of Christ in the Temple with the Doctors, the Purification of the Virgin, the Temptation of Christ in the Wilderness, and the Baptism of John; and finally, having created very great expectation, he died. A pupil of the same Agnolo in painting was Cennino di Drea Cennini of Colle di Valdelsa, who, having very great affection for the art, wrote a book describing the methods of working in fresco, in distemper, in size, and in gum, and, besides, how illuminating is done, and all the methods of applying gold; which book is in the hands of Giuliano, goldsmith of Siena, an excellent master and a friend of these arts. And in the beginning of this his book he treated of the nature of colours, both the minerals and the earth-colours, according as he learnt from Agnolo his master, wishing, for the reason perchance that he did not succeed in learning to paint perfectly, at least to know the nature of the colours, the distempers, the sizes, and the application of gesso, and what colours we must guard against as harmful in making the mixtures, and in short many other considerations whereof there is no need to discourse, there being to-day a perfect knowledge of all those matters which he held as great and very rare secrets in those times. But I will not forbear to say that he makes no mention (and perchance they may not have been in use) of some earth-colours, such as dark red earths, cinabrese, and certain vitreous greens. Since then there have been also discovered umber, which is an earth-colour, giallo santo,^[23] the smalts both for fresco and for oils, and some vitreous greens and yellows, wherein the painters of that age were lacking. He treated finally of mosaics, and of grinding colours in oils in order to make grounds of red, blue, green, and in other manners; and of the mordants for the application of gold, but not then for figures. Besides the works that he wrought in Florence with his master, there is a Madonna with certain saints by his hand under the loggia of the hospital of Bonifazio Lupi, coloured in such a manner that it has been very well preserved up to our own day.

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This Cennino, in the first chapter of his said book, speaking of himself, uses these very words: "I, Cennino di Drea Cennini, of Colle di Valdelsa, was instructed in the said art for twelve years by Agnolo di Taddeo of Florence, my master, who learnt the said art from Taddeo, his father, who was held at baptism by Giotto and was his disciple for four-and-twenty years; which Giotto transmuted the art of painting from Greek into Latin, and brought it to the modern manner, and had it for certain more perfected than anyone ever had it." These are the very words of Cennino, to whom it appeared that even as those who translate any work from Greek into Latin confer very great benefit on those who do not understand Greek, so, too, did Giotto in transforming the art of painting from a manner not understood or known by anyone, save perchance as very rude, to a beautiful, facile, and very pleasing manner, understood and known as good by all who have judgment and the least grain of reason.

All these disciples of Agnolo did him very great honour, and he was buried by his sons, to whom it is said that he left the sum of fifty thousand florins or more, in S. Maria Novella, in the tomb that he himself had made for himself and for his descendants, in the year of our salvation 1387. The portrait of Agnolo, made by himself, is seen in the Chapel of the Alberti, in S. Croce, beside a door in the scene wherein, the Emperor Heraclius is bearing the Cross; it is painted in profile, with a little beard, and with a rose-coloured cap on his head according to the use of those times. He was not excellent in draughtsmanship, in so far as is shown by some drawings by his hand that are in our book.

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FOOTNOTES:

- [1] The word "artist" has become impossible as a translation of "artefice." Such words as "artificer," "art-worker," or "artisan," seem even worse. "Craftsman" loses the alliterative connection with "art," but it comes nearest to expressing Vasari's idea of the "artefice" as a practical workman (*cf.* his remark about Ambrogio Lorenzetti: "The ways of Ambrogio were rather those of a 'gentiluomo' than of an 'artefice'").
- [2] The process of sgraffito work is described in Professor Baldwin Brown's notes to "Vasari on Technique" as follows: "A wall is covered with a layer of tinted plaster, and on this is superimposed a thin coating of white plaster. This outer coating is scratched through (with an iron tool), and the colour behind is revealed. Then all the surface outside the design is cut away, and a cameo-like effect is given to the design."
- [3] The process of niello is as follows: A design is engraved on silver or bronze, and the lines of the design are filled with a composition of silver and lead. On the application of fire to the whole, this composition turns black, leaving the design strongly outlined.
- [4] The libbra is twelve ounces of our ordinary pound (avoirdupois).
- [5] It is difficult to find a rendering of "cappella maggiore" that is absolutely satisfactory. There may be a chapel in some churches that is actually larger than the "principal chapel." The principal chapel generally contains the choir, but not always, and when Vasari wants to say "choir" he uses the word "coro." The rendering "principal chapel" has therefore been adopted as the least misleading.
- [6] The braccio is a very variable standard of measurement. As used by Vasari, it may be taken to denote about 23 inches.
- [7] Vescovado includes both the Cathedral and the Episcopal buildings of Arezzo. Vasari generally uses it to denote the Cathedral.
- [8] The literal meaning of tramezzo is "something that acts as a partition between one thing and another." There are cases where it might be translated "rood-screen"; but in general it may be taken to mean transept, which may be said to divide a church into two parts. In all cases where the word occurs, reference will be made to this note.
- [9] See note on p. [57](#).
- [10] See note on p. [57](#).
- [11] See note on p. [57](#).
- [12] See note on p. [57](#).
- [13] See note on p. [57](#).
- [14] See note on p. [57](#).
- [15] Proverbial expression, equivalent to our "twinkling of an eye."
- [16] See note on p. [57](#).
- [17] See note on p. [57](#).
- [18] This is probably a printer's error for "nemico," as that Pope was anything but the friend of Manfredi.
- [19] See note on p. [57](#).
- [20] Lions of stone, emblems of the city of Florence.
- [21] See note on p. [57](#).
- [22] Guardaroba, the room or rooms where everything of value was stored—clothes, linen, art treasures, furniture, etc.
- [23] A yellow-lake made from the unripe berries of the spin cervino, a sort of brier.

END OF VOL. I.

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