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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 tightly 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:

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

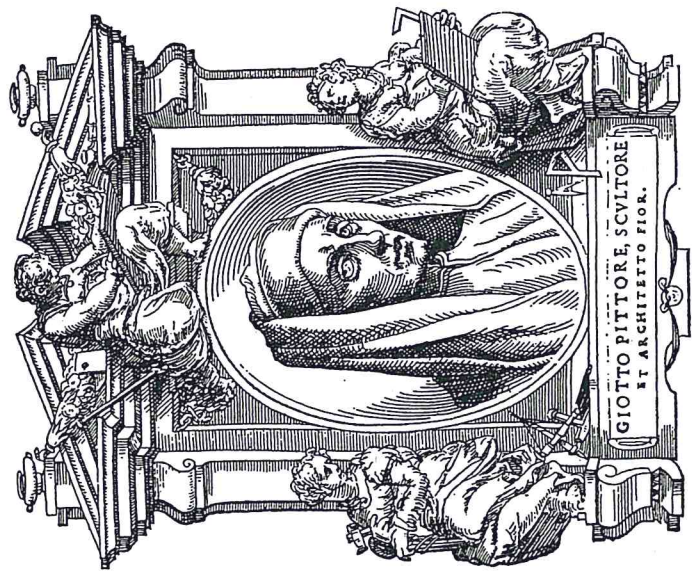
The portrait of Margaritone, by the hand of Spinello, is in the Story of the Magi, in the said Duomo, and was copied by me before that church was pulled down.

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

GIORGIO
VASARI

Lives of the painters,
Sculptors and architects (1550-68)



(transl. Gaston Du C. de Vere)

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.

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.

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 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.

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 dissatisfied and doubting that he had been fooled. All the same, sending to the Pope the other 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.

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 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 Vesco-vado, 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.

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 Inconata; 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.

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.

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.

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,* he made a S. Louis for Paolo di Lotto Ardighelli, 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

* See note on p. 90.

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.

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* 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, 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

* See note on p. 90.

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.

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:

‘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 Beate Virginis Mariæ, opus Joci pictoris egregii, quæ mihi ab amico meo Michæle Vannis de Florentia missa est, in cujus pulchritudinem ignorantem 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 Petrarca, 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 Portico, 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* 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

* See note on p. 90.

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.

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.

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 Dusanam 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.'

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.

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.

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 Pistoia, 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