

allusion has been made was transferred, from the old basilica of S. Peter to the sacristy of S. Maria in Cosmedin and was executed in the first years of the eighth century. The face of the Virgin, although it betrayed a gross neglect of form, was not without an expression of quiet repose. The eyes were natural, the attitude equally so; the shadowless draperies, sculptural in their mass, were indicated by few straight and parallel lines, and seemed to cling flatly to the frame. The form of the infant was defective, that of an angel, of antique type and regular features. The absence of shadow, the blue lines in the white draperies, the red lines in the flesh contours, the thinness and length of the figures, gave this fragment a peculiar appearance, yet one which characterized more or less the art of the whole century. The execution was in every respect rude.<sup>1</sup>

Time, which dealt unsparingly with the monuments of this period, did not respect those of Leo the Third, whose activity appears as remarkable in art as in politics. Leo who invited Charlemagne to Italy, not only built edifices, but caused many churches to be repaired; and amongst them S. Apollinare of Ravenna, whose roof already threatened to fall in. Yet of the mosaics which he caused to be executed in the Triclinium of S. Giovanni Laterano,<sup>2</sup> to illustrate the victories and the power of Charlemagne, nothing remains but two heads in the Vatican museum which recal the art of the eighth century, and a copy of the lost apsis mosaic representing the apotheoses of Charlemagne and S. Sylvester, and the Last supper.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Virgin, seated on a cushioned chair, is in the usual red tunic and blue mantle, the infant on her knee in a gold tunic, the angel to the right behind the Virgin in white robes, S. Joseph on the left of paltry form. An arm with a present is all that appears of the Magi. This fragment is on gold ground. The Saviour has a cruciform nimbus. S. Joseph without one. The mosaic has been restored and some of the outlines are overpainted,

cubes large and rough. The date of the mosaic about 705.

<sup>2</sup> A. D. 795—816.

<sup>3</sup> In the Vatican museum is a figure, crowned with a diadem, aged and bearded, in white tunic and purple mantle, inscribed "Caroli M. Imperator effigies nongentos ante annos lectorio depicta. S.S. Benedicto XIV. P. M. A. clericis regularibus devotis nomini majestatique ejus oblata". The figure seems to be a fresco of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.