

in the first years of the thirteenth century. The Virgin, of large size, enthroned in a chair, holds on her knee the infant, who grasps the dress at her bosom and is clothed in a red tunic shot with gold. With her left hand she firmly supports him, whilst with her right she seems to draw attention from herself to him, an action common to the early schools. Two small angels wave censers at the upper angles of the chair, at the foot of which are six of the heavenly messengers. The form of the infant, small for that of the Virgin, the diminutive size of the angels, impair the balance of the group. The Madonna is of a slender and not quite ungraceful shape. The head is of a regular outline, but like that of the infant and angels, reveals in the painter a lingering attachment to old forms, and a mixture of the manner still visible in Cimabue with that of the Giottesques. The hands are long, and the fingers slender but coarse at the extremities. The draperies, with gilt embroidered borders, fall with a comparatively easy fold, and are all shot with gold. It is a work which may be classed betwixt those of Sienna and Florence, graceful enough to remind one of the former, without the breadth peculiar to the latter, but not so talented as to explain the high position of Montano at the Neapolitan court at a time when Giotto was already famous. It must however be borne in mind that the whole picture has been rubbed down, so that in the heads of some angels the original drawing may be seen. The gold ground is gone, and the colour, now hard and raw, seems to have been thinly painted on a slightly primed panel. The shadows are still however warm in tone. The fabulous history of the head being a relic of the crusades arose from a very natural desire to increase the reverence due to the shrine, but seemed confirmed by the fact that this part of the panel, being formed of a separate block, projects with its nimbus at an angle to the plane of the picture, a practise common to all the schools of the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But besides the evident presence of the same hand in every part of the work,