

nament growing out of vases; at each side of which stands an angel bearing the host and the labarum. Snakelike the green tracery and foliage on a red ground open out into ellipses filled with cupids, whilst blossoms seem to give birth to horses. In the four spaces of the ceiling, medallions are set, representing the Saviour in the act of benediction, S. John, the Virgin, and S. Francis. Compared with the Redeemer in the apsis of the cathedral of Pisa, or in general with the works of Cimabue, the figure of Christ displays more nature than had heretofore been bestowed upon him, especially in the forms of the features and chiefly of the eyes. The latter indeed were more an imitation of reality than those of Cimabue, who, as before remarked, sought to produce expression by long closed lids and an elliptical iris. The Virgin offers the same peculiarities in the features, united to more regular proportion and better action than was to be found in the altarpiece of the Rucellai, whilst, in the drawing of the hands, the artist abandoned the long pointed forms for small and short ones. But whilst in these and the two remaining figures, a certain progress in the study of nature may be noticed, the sentiment of Cimabue has disappeared and made room for a more spiritless art, but little dissimilar from that which will be found to mark the nerveless and ungenial works of Filippo Rusutti at Rome.

Yet another and a different style is displayed in the ceiling nearest the portal, where, in the intervals of an ornament rising out of vases, supported by cupids, and enlivened with flowers and animals, the four doctors of the church inculcate their lessons to the clerks of the Franciscan order. Sitting in high chairs opposite to the monks who attend to their words, they collect or dictate their thoughts.¹ In the centre of the ceiling, the Saviour, winged, seems to give a heavenly sanction to the spi-

¹ S. Gregory speaks under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which in the usual form of the dove whispers in his ear. S. Ambrose, S. Augustin and S. Jerom, combine or express their ideas in a similar manner.