

The Inferno is completely repainted,<sup>1</sup> and the student can only judge, by the Dantesque arrangement of "bolge", what Orcagna intended to represent. For the rest, he seems to have expended much fancy in the conception of the figures.<sup>2</sup>

The time when all these works were completed cannot, as has been said, be accurately defined, but they were probably produced previous to 1354, when Tommaso di Rossello Strozzi ordered of Orcagna the altarpiece of the chapel, on condition that it should be finished in a year and eight months. The knowledge of this fact has been preserved in a record of the family, wherein it is declared, that Orcagna failed to complete his contract in the given time;<sup>3</sup> and, in truth, the altarpiece, as it now

immediately beneath these have been damaged by retouching of the most sweeping kind. On the right hand foreground not a dress of the numerous saints standing on the clouds has remained unrepainted. On the left side, many heads are discoloured, some retouched and others new. The central foreground group has been so completely changed that, where of old possibly interesting contemporary likenesses were to be found, nothing remains but the outlines of some heads.

<sup>1</sup> According to Ghiberti, Second Comment. in Vas. Vol. I. p. XXIII, this Inferno is by Bernardo. The modest Richa (Chiese. Vol. III. p. 71), is shocked at the representation of so many waggeries (baie) and nudities, which, he says, ill suit the sanctity of the place and the terrible nature of the story.

<sup>2</sup> The ceiling divided, as usual, by diagonals is adorned in the centre with the arms of the Strozzi around which the symbols of the four evangelists are distributed. In the ornaments are emblematical figures of virtues, and in 4 medallions in the centres of the triangles are dominican monks, amongst which S. Thomas Aquinas

stands preeminent, with figures near them, of faith, hope, charity, fortitude, justice. The head of S. Thomas, the all but obliterated figure of S. Augustin above him, S.S. Jerom and Dominick (much damaged by restoring), a fine S. Ambrose and S. Gregory decorate the pilasters of the entrance arch, in the key of which is a painted root of the Strozzi family. The three principal frescos of the interior rest on a painted cornice imitating white marble, supported by feigned pilasters, inclosing rectangular slabs, in the centre of which are heads in medallions in dead colour. In the painted glass of the window, is S. Thomas Aquinas, holding a head from which rays are projected on a model of a church in his hand. Time has deprived this figure of its colour, but the design is worthy of Orcagna, and was doubtless his. Above the figure and the arms of the Strozzi, is a representation, on the glass, of the Virgin and child likewise probably by Orcagna.

<sup>3</sup> See the original doc. in its mutilated state in Baldinucci. u b. sup. Vol. IV. p.p. 392. 393.