

talent which characterized the son of Cione was not conspicuous in the last scion of the Gaddi. At a distance his frescos at Prato are imposing, but they bear no close analysis; and this is a proof that the art in his hands had in a certain sense degenerated and become decorative. Vasari very fairly characterizes the style of Agnolo; and it will be seen in the sequel that the frescos of Prato contain only in germ defects which were developed to a marked extent in the decorations of the choir of S. Croce at Florence where the boldness of a practised hand is allied to defective design.

Prato is at no great distance from Florence, and Agnolo Gaddi has left there traces of considerable labours.¹ There are vestiges of paintings at the corners of many streets, the character of which cannot be safely defined; but in the Via dei Tintori, a tabernacle with shutters in which the Virgin is depicted amongst saints, presents all the character of a fresco by Agnolo. In his style also is a Virgin erect, with the infant Saviour between Saints and angels,² in a tabernacle at the corner of the Strada al Ceppo and Via della Pilota. Similar tabernacles, much damaged by time, are to be seen in the neighbourhood, and are hardly worthy the trouble of examination. But at Filline, three miles from the town, is one appended to a house, belonging to the Pini family, where the manner of Agnolo may be traced with certainty in a Conception between saints,³ a Christ in the act of benediction, and an annunciation. The fresco of the Conception,⁴ though much damaged by exposure, has not been retouched, and affords a favorable example of Agnolo's talent in producing clear and bright transparent colour. The type of the Virgin is peculiarly graceful, that of the angel full

¹ Vasari says, he left works enough in churches of that land. (Vol. II. p. 154.)

² The Magdalen and another saint with 4 angels above.

³ Right and left in niches, S.S. John the Baptist, Stephen and

Anthony the abbot, partly obliterated.

⁴ The subject and arrangement of the figures may be found in a conception given to Masaccio at the Academy of Fine Arts at Florence.