

CHAPTER XXII.

ANTONIO VENIZIANO.

The merit of having maintained the impulse given to Giottesque art at Florence may be more justly assigned to Antonio Veneziano, than to Agnolo Gaddi. These painters were cotemporaries; and though it might be inferred, from a passage of Vasari, that the former was a pupil of the latter, the test of style decides in favour of Taddeo as the real master of Antonio. Baldinucci, true to his aim of making all great painters in the fourteenth century Florentines, claims Antonio as a Tuscan and supports himself on certain written records in the Strozzi collection;¹ but he seems to have confounded two artists of the same name who lived at different periods.² Our curiosity and surprise may be justly excited when we find that, in spite of Giotto's long stay at Padua in the rise of the century, and that of the Gaddi in Venice at its close, no trace of Florentine art is to be found in the provinces of Venice until Giusto di Giovanni Menabuoi

¹ Which he does not print however. See Vol. IV. p. 376.

² There are indeed in the Academy of the Fine Arts at Venice four figures of S. Philip of Florence, S. Peregrine of Forli, S. Augustin and a Pope executed by one who signs himself "Antonius de Florentia pinxit", a painter of a later manner. Sala IVth. No. 16. 17. 18. 19. The Strozzi records may refer to this Antonio who lived half a century after Antonio Veneziano. Had Baldinucci merely supported his theory by a refe-

rence to the painter's style, and had not records been found to prove that Antonio was a Venetian, no one would have hesitated to believe him. The frescos of Antonio are Florentine in every sense, in feeling, in arrangement and technical execution. Not a trace of the old Venetian manner is to be found in them. On the other hand, it might be asked, was a Florentine style to be obtained at the time of Agnolo Gaddi, in provinces where the influence of Giotto and that of his disciples had not extended?