

the fifteenth century, of his wealth and of the wonders which he created. He erected churches and edifices of the most sumptuous kind in his adopted country, and employed, it is clear, the best artists that could be found in Florence.¹ It has not been possible to ascertain what Masolino did for him during the time which he spent in Hungary; but it is on record that he had earned and was to receive from the heirs of Pippo Spano no less than 360 florins of the common Florentine currency.² The trade of Hungary in the middle ages was in the hands of the Florentines and Genoese. Many of the wealthiest families of Tuscany had branches in the chief cities, and the exchanges were made by way of Ragusa on the Adriatic, or by the Danube through the Straits and Black Sea. The communications were for the time comparatively rapid and secure; and Masolino returned to Italy very shortly after the death of Pippo. But instead of settling again at Florence, he accepted from Cardinal Branda Castiglione the commission to paint the choir of the church which that prelate had just brought to completion at Castiglione di Olona. Thus if Masolino painted at all in the Brancacci chapel, he must have done so previous to 1427 and therefore previous to the time when the Castiglione frescos were completed. But any one who can compare the two series of paintings will doubt the possibility of this. The characteristic features of Masolino's style at Castiglione are not to be found in the Brancacci, and it may well be

¹ See for particulars of Pippo Spano, (in *Archivio Storico Ital.* ub. sup. Vol. IV. Vite, I), a life by an anonymous cotemporary, another by Jacopo di Messer Poggio, with the notes of C. Canestrini and F. L. Polidori.

² The following documents (published in *Giornale Storico*, ub. sup. 3rd quarter 1860, p.p. 16. 17. 18) refer to Masolino: "Portata al Catasto, quartiere S. Croce, Gonfalone Bue, by Cristoforo di Fino 1427:"

"Tommaso mio figliuolo sta in Ungheria; dicesi dovere avere certa quantita di danari da le rede di Messer Filippo Scholari. Non e chiarito il che; e pero non vi si da. Sono fiorini 360 di moneta comune ch' erano iscritti in Simone Milanese, e Simone e Tommaso Corsi." Cristoforo Fini in the same document states that his son Tommaso is 43 years of age. Cristoforo himself is an "imbiancatore".