

and the country of Capernaum is a hilly landscape interspersed with trees and bushes.<sup>1</sup> By the sea-shore to the left, Peter has cast his cloak on the ground and draws the piece from the fish's jaws, whilst to the right, by the porch of the house, he pays it to "him that receives tribute-money".<sup>2</sup> Masaccio here reveals in the fullest measure his grasp of the maxims which Giotto had immutably declared. But, whilst he thus worthily closes a great period, he opens a new one. One hand unites him to Giotto; the other is extended to Raphael. The distribution of the subjects is made exactly on the principle which guided the first of Florentine artists in the resurrection of S. John Evangelist at S. Croce. No more grand or majestic air was ever simulated by a painter than that given to the youthful Redeemer, whose elastic movement as he addresses Peter is nature itself. What character, readiness of action, and intelligence of expression; what firmness of tread and gravity of form, what massive breadth of drapery can be imparted in the best and most varied manner to a series of figures, is here demonstrated. Nor are these the proportions or frames of humble mortals so much as of men conscious of a mission. The mind of the painter seems to have been abstracted, at the time of production, from all sublunary concerns, like that of Michael Angelo who forgot the world, its cares and its pleasures, when, with one hand, he wielded the chisel, and with the other the hammer. The same spirit and feeling which, in spite of the mutation of time, are to be found in the apostles and prophets of the Baptistery of Ravenna and in those of Giotto, are visible in those of Masaccio and re-appear afterwards in Raphael. They have all a common principle; because though the sublime and beautiful may vary as regards the mode in which they are produced, in the essentials they are ever alike. In S. Peter, who stoops for the money in

<sup>1</sup> This distance, painted as usual in tempera and not in buon fresco, has suffered.    <sup>2</sup> Mathew. Cap. XVII. v. 24.