

bends over the form of the infant Christ, held by the Virgin on her lap. Her face is cast in Signorelli's well-known mould, and expresses kindly softness, whilst that of the operator is on the model of those of Piero della Francesca and Leonardo. A graceful female to the left of the high-priest touches the Virgin's shoulder, and offers to the spectator a form of Umbrian character. S. Joseph, on the same side, a grandiose apparition in full drapery, contemplates the ceremony and supports himself with the right hand on a short staff. Tender care is expressed in his looks. Behind him a female of sweet features, with an air recalling to mind a creation by Giovanni Santi, is accompanied by a turbaned male. To the right of the principal group, a man in converse enforces his speech by the touches of his fingers upon each other, explaining something with force to a young female in front, who pauses in the act of departing, and turns her head towards the infant Christ. It would be difficult to find a better Umbro-Florentine work of Signorelli's good period than this.¹

But Volterra boasts of other portable works by him, one of which, an Annunciation, dated 1491, in the Cappella S. Carlo of the Duomo, is reminiscent of a similar piece by Giovanni Santi in the Brera at Milan. The Virgin has been reading under a colonnade, and in her surprise at the appearance of the angel in the court, she has dropped her book, the Eternal in glory appearing as usual in the heavens to the left. The perspective is good, the colour powerful, and the handling masterly, but the types and character of the figures, and the cast of the drapery are more than usually Umbrian, and the pic-

¹ The picture is signed on the base "Lucas Cortonensis pinxit." The scene is laid within the niche of a temple with yellow ornament on a blue ground in the borders. A prophet in a medallion fills the angles of the niche. A ribband, vase and book are on the floor. The annotators of Vas. (VI. 138)

say that MS. records by Ormanni in the library of Volterra mention the existence of a circumcision by Luca de Cortona — on panel in S. Francesco and the same subject on panel in the company del nome di Gesù. The panels forming the surface are laid transversely and have slightly bulged outwards.