

Alunno was now modifying to a certain extent the earlier impress of Benozzo; and beginning to infuse new elements into his great composite pictures. Of these he completed one in 1471 for the church at Gualdo, where we already find some of the grimace of Crivelli; one at Nocera (1483), at Aquila (1486), at S. Niccolò of Foligno (1492), and La Bastia (1499). The majority of these may be catalogued together with others of less authenticity; but that of S. Niccolò deserves more than a passing notice. It is one of those collections of panels within an architectural frame, of which we possess so many by Siennese, Umbrian, and Venetian artists. Its chief subject is a Nativity, in which the Virgin's tender action somewhat compensates for defect of form, in which S. Joseph is drawn in classic attitude, but with repulsive face. The infant on the ground before his mother is a stuffed doll; and a crowded landscape recalls the Venetian school, and even Palmezzano. Amongst the saints in a triple course above and at the sides of the Nativity, some are almost caricatures; more are vulgar, grim, mouthing or affected; but the Resurrection of Christ in the gable is one of Alunno's most successful efforts. The movement of the Redeemer, as he steps out of the tomb, reminds one of Benozzo's creations, and at the same time of the Mantegnesque in Crivelli; and this not only as regards character and drawing, but as regards mould which remains, at the same time, Umbrian and almost a counterpart of that usual in Fiorenzo di Lorenzo. The Saviour's naked body is dry in bone and muscle, the head regular. The guard sleeping by the tomb is boldly foreshortened in imitation of the Mantegnesques, after the fashion adopted by Giovanni Santi at Cagli; nor would it be presumptuous to suppose that Niccolò had had oc-

of the mantle and tunic of the Virgin, and of the veil on the infant. S. Francis is the best figure of the series, but the altarpiece as a whole is of an inferior quality,

even for Alunno. On the border, above the predella, are the words:

“Nicolaus Fulginas pinxit.
MCCCCLXVIII.”