

was at once undertaken by Angelico, and to this day the frescoes remain in wonderful preservation. There are frescoes all about the building, which is not now used as a monastery. In the cloisters are several, one most beautiful, of Christ as a pilgrim, being welcomed by two Dominicans. In the refectory is a large crucifixion and in nearly all the cells of the monks also there are paintings. A large number of easel pictures, altar-pieces, and so forth, from Angelico's hand found their way into the various churches. For these, of course, he received no money, indeed, the labors of a long life bore to him no fruit of that kind; of any profit his order had the benefit.

The great cathedrals and churches of Italy, at this time, were rapidly rising in all quarters. Their decoration afforded the painters a splendid field for the display of artistic power. It was the aim of the religious orders, or cities which built such edifices, to induce the best masters to adorn them and to the artists they became the scenes of the greatest rivalries and triumphs or disappointments. The arenas, someone has called them, where the artistic gladiators of the renaissance met in combat. It was, however, in no such spirit of competition that Angelico wrought, when he undertook a series of frescoes in the cathedral of Orvieto. He hardly did more, however, than begin the work, and it was completed later on by Luca Signorelli, the bold precursor of Michael Angelo.

Later in the life of Angelico, the reigning Pope, Nicholas the Fifth, persuaded him to go to Rome, where, amongst other works, he painted an admirable series of frescoes in a chapel of the Vatican. These may yet be seen in a very good state of preservation. They represent scenes in the life of St. Stephen, and both in narrative and expression are most admirable and full of the naiveté which is one of the peculiar charms of the master. These, the most mature efforts of his genius, are, as are also the pictures in San Marco, genuine fresco, that is, they are not merely pictures on walls, but are painted into the wet plaster, incorporated with its surface,