ANGELICO'S NATIVITY

THEOPHANE O'BRIEN, O.P.

Here is new beginning, second creation,
Death to sinners' sinning; life, salvation.
Angelico, Angelico tilted his palette
And bade it, lo, invent
Coloured harmonies all intent
Upon swaddling the Child Incarnate:—
Deep rich, blood red of wine,
Wheatened white, black of penitents,
Green verdure of the vine,
Leather brown of shepherd tents.

Angelico, Angelico, artist born,
Dipped his brush and passed it o'er
One sweet moment of earth—time shorn:
The Christ Child's birth, his stable floor.
Angelico, Angelico limned his vision,
Capturing in colour Christmas morn:—
Virgin Mother's maiden care,
Angel shadows, heaven hovering,
Foster Father kneeling in prayer,
Dominic's saint in preacher covering.

Angelico, Angelico, saw you no danger
Placing us within the manger,
The ox and the ass, figures rare?
Angelico, Angelico, saw you no danger
In painting us there?