

## CHAPTER XI.

PAOLO UCCELLI.

We have seen the feeling for classic art survive the tentative efforts of the earliest centuries to carry on Christian painting with pagan models; we have traced its existence throughout the decline of the dark ages, and during the period which witnessed a deep religious spirit animate the painters of the revival. We now perceive that the antique, which the most religious of the mystics had not entirely neglected, regained an absolute sway. The worship of the literature and philosophy of Greece, which Savonarola opposed in vain, now filtered into every branch of art, and invaded both sculpture and painting. The artists of this time were probably aware that no attempt to reach the ideal could be successful without a deep and continuous study of nature. At that inexhaustible fountain they might take from each creation that which seemed most perfect, combine these parts into a splendid whole, and revive the greatness of a by-gone age. Some choice spirits may have seen the goal, and tended towards it. They may have entered the road that led thither without considering the obstacles which might stand in their way. It was certainly given to none in the fifteenth century to reach it. There was still too much to be done before an ideal could be attained; and years were spent in an effort to give a forward impulse to the arts or sciences which are the concomitants of perfect painting. Some took up perspective; others, chiaroscuro; many struggled to improve the old mediums. Two