

CHAPTER XVI.

THE POLLAIUOLI.

We have reason to believe that the lives of Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo have been, to some extent, falsely interwoven; and that, whilst history assigns the largest share of fame to Antonio as a goldsmith and painter, the claims of Piero to attention have been somewhat neglected.

Antonio and Piero were the first and last born of four children. Their father Jacopo d'Antonio was a goldsmith at Florence, the same perhaps whose name is recorded among the assistants of Bartoluccio and Ghiberti in the first gate of the Baptistery at Florence.¹ They were born severally in 1433 and 1443,² Antonio being articled to his father, and closing his apprenticeship in 1459,³ Piero entering at tender years, if at all, the atelier of Andrea del Castagno, and joining his brother a little later.⁴

¹ It is not certain that Jacopo d'Antonio who worked under Ghiberti, and whose name in records bears the addition of "da Bologna" (vide commentary Vas. Vol. III. p. 128), is the same as Jacopo d'Antonio, the father of the Pollaiuoli, but the identity of name and of profession suggest that they are one person. We might presume, if this were once admitted, that what Vasari relates as to the connection of Antonio Pollaiuolo with Bartoluccio and Ghiberti applies to his father, Jacopo. At all events,

Antonio could not have taken part in the work of the Baptistery gates; as he was but 14 years of age when the last of them was completed. (Vas. Vol. V. p. 91.)

² These dates are given by Jacopo d'Antonio in his return to the Catasto in 1457, and may naturally be preferred to those given by Antonio in his own return of 1480. (Vide Gaye, Carteggio, ub. sup., Vol. I. p. 265.)

³ This fact is stated by Antonio himself in the return of 1480. (Ibid.)

⁴ Besides Antonio and Piero,