

CHAPTER VI.

RISE OF ART AT FLORENCE.

The rise of the Florentine school may be said to date from the period when Jacopo the Franciscan adorned the tribune of the baptistery of S. Giovanni with mosaics; but there are written records of old date to prove the existence of art at Florence as early as the eleventh century. One Rustico "clerk and painter" lived there in 1066. The memory of one Girolamo di Morello, also a "clerk and painter" in 1112, is preserved in a document of the time; and these names not only prove the existence of artists, but that they were chiefly of the religious orders. In 1191 Marchisello of Florence painted a picture which still existed at the time of Cosmo de' Medici on the high altar of the church of S. Tommaso. In 1224, the prior of S. Maria Maggiore of Florence was indebted to one "Magister Fidanza dipintor"¹ and sold a house to satisfy his creditor. In 1236, Bartolommeo, a painter, lived at Florence.² One Lapo di Florentia painted on the front of the cathedral of Pistoia in 1259;³ and as early as 1269, one of the streets of Florence already bore the name of Via de' Pittori.⁴

The earliest artist mentioned by Vasari, is Andrea Tafi, who, according to a doubtful chronology, was born in

¹ Rumohr, *Forschungen*, gives the original record Vol. II. p. 28. 191.

² Gaye. *Carteggio*. Vol. I. p. 423. 8° Flor. 1839. quotes from a record of Aug. 1292. at Florence one Fino, "pictor", who executed work in the "palatium comune".

³ Ciampi, *ub. sup.* Doc. XXI. p. 142. The subjects were the Virgin and child between two saints, half figures.

⁴ See also for these early artists, commentary on the life of Cimabue in Vas. Vol. I. p. 233-4.