

served the master and contributed to his greatness, could not but echo his instructions, copy his conceptions, literally interpret his meaning. But too intimately connected with his ways, they could not rise, or shake off the shackles which held them to the letter of his commands. But by their side, arose others, that were freer participators of the impulse which Giotto had given, fettered by no personal memories of the past, or above the vulgar class of mere imitators. It would be a more pleasing task at once to dilate upon the merits and services of the latter. Yet the deficiencies of the former may have had some influence upon the progress of their age as showing what art had to avoid; and the immediate pupils of Giotto claim naturally the first attention of the student. The melancholy but unquestionable truth respecting these is that they reduced what in Giotto was art, to the dimensions of a trade. Whilst they enjoyed the advantage of his compositions which they copied; whilst they considered themselves freed from the necessity of exercising the gifts of fancy, they were but too obviously induced to devote exclusive attention to ease and rapidity of hand. With boldness, the result of practise and experience, but without the spirit of natural observation, they conventionally copied forms, less with reference to their real appearance than to a false model which had become usual with them. But this system is pernicious insofar, that, as the source of all art which is nature being distant or faintly remembered at first, becomes more so in the evolution of time, not progress but retrogression is certain; — till false forms become so familiar that they are assumed to be exact representatives of the reality. This was the misfortune and the peculiarity of Taddeo Gaddi, whose artistic career seems to have commenced when Giotto left Florence to visit Naples. In that year, as has been previously noticed, the Baroncelli chapel in S. Croce was completed, and Taddeo, after painting, as the style alone warrants the critic in asserting, the Virgin and child between four prophets, on the funeral monument at