

## CHAPTER IV.

## OTTAVIANO NELLI.

If, retrospectively, we cast a glance upon the field over which the influence of Siennese art was felt, we shall perceive that its expanse in the fourteenth century was considerable, and that its centre was Sienna. During the subsequent period, in which some choice talents illustrated Cortona and Borgo S. Sepolero by introducing Florentine blood into the Umbrian stock, the point of radiation was displaced. We trace an imaginary line from Gubbio over the Appennine to S. Severino and Camerino, recrossing the hills to Foligno and Gualdo. The spiral thus drawn centres in Perugia. Along that line the Umbrian school developed itself on the old Siennese basis; and, with hardly any dependence on Florence, silently and slowly grew. On the track of Palmerucci and Nuzi, Ottaviano Martini, and Gentile da Fabriano inherited and kept alive the traditions of Oderisio. Impassive, and averse from change like their cotemporaries of Sienna, following the vein of thought and technical method, opened and bequeathed to them by their precursors, they continued to neglect the scientific innovations originated in Florence, and still imagined that perfection consisted in bright contrast of colours, copiousness and delicacy of ornament, minuteness of design and tender fusion of flesh tints. Composition, perspective form, or relief by light and shade, were as nothing compared to the aim of delineating a languid tenderness or affected grace.