at Florence ; chief among them were Simone di Martino, Lippo Memmi, and especially Ambrogio Lorenzetti, a

painter of both panels and large frescos, which show rich and noble imaginative power and much technical skill. It is important to

note that Ambrogio

and probably other

painters of his time

were, like the ear­

lier Pisan Niccola,

beginning to study

the then rare ex­

amples of classical

sculpture. Ghiberti,

in his *Commentary,*

speaks with enthu-.

siasm of the beauty

of an antique statue

which he knew only

from a drawing by Ambrogio Lorenzetti. In the second half of the 14th century Siena produced a large

number of more mediocre painters ; but these were suc­ceeded by an abler generation, among whom the chief were

perhaps Sano di Pietro and Matteo di Giovanni, whose grand altarpiece (No. 1155), recently acquired, is one of

the glories of the English National Gallery. Many ex­cellent masters were working at Siena throughout the 15th century and even later; the last names of any real note are those of Peruzzi and Beccafumi. Sodo­ma, though he settled in Siena in 1501, does not belong to the school of Siena ; his early life was passed at Milan, chiefly under the influence of Da Vinci. His talent was developed at Rome among the fol­lowers of Raphael.

On the whole the Florentine school surpasses in import­ance all others throughout Italy. Cimabue, though he

did not emancipate himself from the Byzantine manner, was a painter of real genius (see fig. 2).

Giotto is perhaps the most important painter in the his­tory of the develop­ment of art, for during the whole of the 14th century the painters of Flor­ence may be said to have been his pupils and imitators (see fig. 3). Orcag­na alone developed rather a different line, more richly de­corative in style and brighter in colour,— a link between the art of Giotto and that of Siena. In the 15th century Flor­ence reached its pe­riod of highest artistic splendour and developed an almost