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NOGRAPHS

ON ARTISTS

# DÜRER

BY

H. KNACKFUSS

134 ILLUSTRATIONS

Ex Libris



John M. Cameron





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MONOGRAPHS ON ARTISTS

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# MONOGRAPHS ON ARTISTS

EDITED, AND WRITTEN IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHER AUTHORS,

BY

H. KNACKFUSS

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V.

DÜRER

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BIELEFELD AND LEIPZIG  
VELHAGEN & KLASING

1900

# DÜRER

BY

H. KNACKFUSS

TRANSLATED BY

CAMPBELL DODGSON

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WITH 134 ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PICTURES, WOODCUTS,  
ENGRAVINGS AND DRAWINGS



BIELEFELD AND LEIPZIG  
VELHAGEN & KLASING

1900

PRINTED BY FISCHER & WITTIG, LEIPZIG



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Fig. 1. CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS. Sketch by Dürer for a frieze, in the British Museum.

## ALBRECHT DÜRER.



Fig. 2. LETTER FROM AN ALPHABET ATTRIBUTED TO DÜRER.

AS early as the fifteenth century the buds were swelling and making ready for that burst of blossom, which gives the art of Germany in the sixteenth century a right to a place of honour in the general history of art. Painting, in Germany, found its great masters sooner than the other arts. The powers of the greatest of German artists were matured on the soil of Nuremberg, a free town of the Empire and busy centre of trade, where the old traditions of the craft were conscientiously kept up in the painters' workshops. Albrecht Dürer was born at Nuremberg on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 1471. His

father was a goldsmith of Hungarian origin, who had spent a long time in his youth with the great artists in the Netherlands, had then come to Nuremberg in 1455 and obtained a situation in the workshop of the goldsmith Hieronymus Holper; in 1467 he had married the latter's daughter Barbara, only fifteen years of age, and had become a "master" and citizen of Nuremberg in the following year. Young Albrecht, at whose baptism the famous painter and bookseller, Anton Koburger, stood godfather, was intended for his father's trade. When his schooling was over, he learnt the art of the goldsmith from his father. But he fancied painting more than goldsmith's work; and when he made representations accordingly to his father, the latter gave way, although he regretted the time which his son had wasted as a goldsmith's apprentice. We owe this information to Dürer's own memoranda.



Fig. 3. DÜRER'S PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF IN THE YEAR 1484. Silver-point drawing in the Albertina, Vienna.

The note in Dürer's handwriting in the upper right-hand corner of the drawing reads as follows: "I did this counterfeit of myself from a mirror in 1484, when I was still a child. Albrecht Dürer."

(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

Two proofs are preserved to us of the astonishingly early development of Albrecht Dürer's talent. The collection of prints and drawings in the palace of the Archduke Albert at Vienna, famous under the name of the Albertina, possesses a portrait of the goldsmith's apprentice drawn by himself in silver-point, with the inscription added later in his own hand: "I did this counterfeit of myself from a mirror in the year 1484, when I was still a child. Albrecht Dürer" (Fig. 3). The other drawing, which is a no less astonishing performance than the first, considering the youth of its author, and which, at the same time, makes it clear that a very respectable instruction in drawing was given in the goldsmiths' work-shops, is in the Print-room at the Berlin Museum; it is a pen-

drawing of the year 1485 and represents the Mother of God, enthroned, between two angels. The figures, as was only to be expected, betray an imperfect knowledge of the human body, and the drapery, with its scheme of outline learnt by rote, shows the angular and sharply broken folds which were peculiar to the late-Gothic art of Southern Germany, and were connected not only with the preference of the period for light velvet fabrics, but also with the predominance of wood-carving among the plastic arts. But, at the same time, there is more than an amiable and childlike simplicity in the structure of the composition. There is a very good notion of filling spaces and distributing masses harmoniously, and, before all, our eyes are gladdened by a heartiness and sincerity of feeling which show a thorough artist. And the strokes, so delicate and yet already so certain, with which the boy has done his drawing, foretell the steadiness and vigour of the man's hand (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4. THE VIRGIN AND CHILD.

Pen-drawing of 1485 in the Royal Print-Cabinet, Berlin.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> November 1486 Albrecht Dürer was entered as a pupil of Michael Wolgemut, the time for which he was to "serve" being fixed at three years. To this 'prentice-period of Dürer's belongs a portrait of his father which is preserved in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence (Fig. 5). Even in this early work the young artist can be recognised as a master of portrait-painting. The serious, intelligent features of the man, whose piety is indicated by the rosary in his hands, are portrayed with great vivacity and refinement; we see that the portrait must have been a speaking likeness. In the present state of the picture we can only divine the loving care which the young painter bestowed on the execution of this first portrait, for it was in very bad preservation and had, in consequence, to undergo a "restoration"; in this process everything has come to look harder than



Fig. 5. DÜRER'S FATHER. Painting of 1490 in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.  
(From a photograph by Giacomo Brogi, Florence.)



it did even a few years ago, before it was restored; the face, especially, now seems older, because the features are coarser, than was formerly the case. It is here that the well-known monogram of Albrecht Dürer, which he retained throughout his life, appears for the first time on a picture. On the back of the panel Dürer has painted a coat of arms. Still more seriously damaged by the misusage of years than the front, this first specimen of Dürer's taste in heraldry in its present repainted condition shows hardly a touch that is by his hand. But it remains interesting as regards its contents. The arms are those of a married couple. Accordingly, of the two shields united under one helmet, the sinister, with a ram, must be that of Dürer's maternal ancestors; the dexter shield, that of the Dürer family, is a "canting" coat, as it is called — one, that is, derived from the name — and displays an open door (Dürer, Thüre, door) (Fig. 6).

When Albrecht had served his time as a pupil, his father sent him off on his travels. He set out after Easter in 1490, and found his way about the world for four years. He was kindly received at Colmar and Basle by the brothers of Martin Schongauer, then lately deceased. Thence he appears to have wandered across the Alps and to have gone as far as



Fig. 6. THE ARMS OF DÜRER'S PARENTS.

Painted on the back of the picture reproduced in Fig. 5.

(From a photograph by Giacomo Brogi, Florence.)

Venice. On the way, he took many landscape-sketches, which were sometimes most carefully finished in water-colours. Dürer was probably the first painter who grasped the importance of landscape as an independent thing, and the poetry which landscape can suggest. He was able, too, to reproduce the forms and colours of nature with absolute fidelity. Many of his earlier and later studies of foreign lands and of his own home are landscapes in the most modern and realistic sense possible (Fig. 7).

In addition to studies and sketches of various kinds, dating from the time of his travels, we have a careful portrait of Dürer by himself in oils, painted in 1493 (in the Felix Collection at Leipzig). Goethe has given



Fig. 7. THE WIRE-MILL. Sketch from nature in water-colours. In the Royal Print-Cabinet, Berlin.

a description of it in the following words: "An inestimable treasure is Albrecht Dürer's portrait by himself, dated 1493, and painted accordingly in his twenty-second year, half life-size, half-length, showing both hands, but not the whole of the elbows, a crimson cap with a short tuft of little strings, the throat bare to below the collar-bone, an embroidered hem to the shirt, the folds of the sleeves tied with peach-coloured ribands, a greyish-blue mantle with a border of yellow braid, to show that he was a young man of fashion who liked gay dress, a blue-flowered eryngium ('Mannestreue' is its German name) held significantly in his hand, the face of a serious young man, with the beard sprouting round mouth and chin, the whole splendidly drawn, rich yet unaffected, harmonious in all its parts, finished in the highest degree, completely worthy of Dürer,



Fig. 8. DÜRER'S PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF IN 1493. Oil-painting in the Felix Collection, Leipzig.

though painted with very thin pigments." The inscription in ornamental letters in the background reads: "Mein Sach die geht, wie es oben steht." (Fig. 8.)

When Dürer came home after Whitsuntide in 1494, his father had already arranged a match for him. The bride was Agnes Frey, the daughter of a man of respectable family, "artistic and experienced in all things". The marriage soon took place, on the 14<sup>th</sup> July in the same year.

One would have thought that Dürer would have made haste to paint a portrait of his young wife, who passed for a good-looking woman. There is, however, no record extant of the first period of their married life except quite a slight pen-drawing (in the Albertina), which is more of a joke than a portrait, showing the young wife, half-length, leaning her arm on the table and her chin on a hand, just about to take a nap. Dürer has written on it: "My Agnes." Dame Agnes appears here with her apron on and



Fig. 9. THE VIRGIN WITH THE MONKEY. One of Dürer's earliest engravings.



Fig. 10. THE PRODIGAL SON. One of Dürer's earliest engravings.

her hair uncovered and not particularly tidy. We are enabled, most likely, to form an idea of her appearance in her best clothes from three little costume-drawings (also in the Albertina), done with the pen and then tinted with water-colours, which Dürer made in the year 1500, and on which he set the inscriptions: "This is the dress worn in the house at Nuremberg",



Fig. 11. PORTRAIT SUPPOSED TO BE THAT OF FREDERICK THE WISE, ELECTOR OF SAXONY.

Painted in tempera. In the Royal Museum, Berlin.

(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

"This is the dress worn for going to church at Nuremberg", and "This is the dress worn by the women of Nuremberg for dancing". An actual portrait of "Albrecht Dürerin" was drawn by Dürer in silver-point in 1504. It is now in a private collection at Brunswick, but is, unfortunately, very much effaced. The face under the large coif is not endowed with remarkable charms, but looks open and sensible.

Dürer's marriage was a childless one. Notwithstanding, he had soon to provide for the maintenance of a biggish family. In 1502 Dürer's



Fig. 12. ST. ANTHONY AND ST. SEBASTIAN. Wings of the altarpiece in the Dresden Gallery.  
(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

father passed away; he had "spent his life in great toil and hard, grievous work". In Dürer's short memoir he has honoured in simple, heartfelt words the memory of the man who had brought him up from earliest childhood to piety and righteous conduct. Now, after his father's death, the young artist had to provide not only for his dearly loved mother, whom



Fig. 13. KATHARINA FÜRLEGER. Portrait, painted probably as a study for a madonna, 1497. In the Augsburg Gallery.

he took to his own home, but also for a troop of younger brothers and sisters. To all appearance, his circumstances were for some time by no means brilliant; but by indefatigable industry and restless energy he attained by degrees to a very fair amount of prosperity.

Soon after his marriage Dürer opened an independent studio. For this no "masterpiece", in the literal sense of the term, or any other formality was required. For at Nuremberg, in contrast to the other towns of Germany,



painting was reckoned a "free" art, and was not subject to the regulations of any guild. That was advantageous to the position of a painter who was a true artist; Albrecht Dürer has never been regarded as a mere journeyman-painter. The first large commissions, indeed, which fell to the share of the young artist, for altarpieces and memorial pictures, had to be produced in the customary way with the assistance of apprentices. Yet even in these works the creative energy of the master and his sure command of form were clearly revealed, and he impressed on many of the pictures the unmistakable traces of his own artist's hand.

In Dürer's character as an artist two main features

are especially prominent; he has a scientific and an imaginative side. Dürer declared the yearning after knowledge to be the only one among the appetites and energies of the soul of man which could never be appeased and satiated. Thus his attitude even to his own art was that of a scientific inquirer. He wanted to increase his powers of perception, in order to perfect himself ever more and more. The search after the nature of beauty led him, it is true, to the acknowledgment, in the language of a true artist: "Beauty! what it is, I know not." But from youth to old age he never desisted from examining with rule and compass the form of man, and that of the creature which comes next to man in beauty, the horse; not that he supposed that beauty was to be attained by measure and number, but because he was determined to fathom the laws on which the harmony of the visible shape must needs rest. By way of compensation for this meditative and critical bent in his intelligence, he was endowed with a soaring and ardent fancy. Whilst one side of his mind sought for what was in accordance with law, the other loved the unusual and strange; it urged him to clothe in visible shape the phantoms of his dreams. The passion for knowledge and the force of imagination alike led him to see in nature the best of all teachers of art. This was the great step which



Fig. 14. PORTRAIT FORMERLY CALLED DÜRER'S FATHER.  
Charcoal drawing in the British Museum.

parted Dürer's art from that of his predecessors. Dürer clung affectionately to nature. He got as close to reality as it is conceivable that anyone could do. But with all his extreme fidelity to nature he did not make the least surrender of his aims as an artist. His own words are the best to characterize the loftiness of his view of art: "Most true is it that art lies hid in nature; he who can pluck it out thence hath made it his." No one must think, Dürer continues, following out the thought, that he can make anything better than God has created it. A man will never be able to make a beautiful picture out of his own head; but when one has well stored his mind by much copying of nature, then art will sow its seed and grow up and bring forth fruit after its kind: "hence the treasure of the heart, gathered in secrecy, is made manifest by the work, and the new creature which a man makes in his own heart takes the form of a thing."— Even in the works of his youth Dürer has shown how rich a treasure he had gathered in his heart.

The earliest altarpiece from Dürer's studio which has been preserved is in the Dresden Gallery. It consists of three pictures painted in tempera on canvas, and represents the Mother of God in the centre, with S.S. Antony and Sebastian on the wings. The work of Dürer's own hand is everywhere perceptible, and his inventive spirit visibly controls every detail, however small. The three pictures are quite novel in treatment, and independent of any earlier manner of dealing with the subject before us. In the central picture we see the Virgin Mary, less than half-length, behind a parapet on which the Infant Jesus lies sleeping on a pillow. She has been reading a book of devotions, which lies with its pages open on a little desk at one end of the parapet, and now turns towards the child, to whom she addresses, with folded hands, the continuation of her prayer. Over her are poised two little angels swinging censers, the smoke of which rising upwards denotes, according to the ancient symbolism of the Church, prayer which is well-pleasing to God. Two other little angels hold a splendid crown over the Virgin's head. Other angel children again have descended to the floor of the chamber which forms the background and are making themselves useful by doing little bits of house-work, both here and in Joseph's workshop, which is visible through an opening. One of the little things blows the flies away with a fan from the face of the sleeping Jesus. All this is most charming in idea, and the execution is careful in the extreme, from the pictures which are recognisable in the ornamentation of the prayer-book in the foreground to the tiny figures which we perceive quite in the distance on the street, which is visible through the window of the room. The central picture is, however, less artistically important than the narrow paintings in the wings, which show the two saints also as half-lengths behind parapets, with little angels hovering round their heads (Fig. 12). The hermit saint, Antony, is a peaceable old man; he keeps his shrunken, bony hands laid on the book which supplies the subject of his contemplation, and is no longer vexed by the hideous fiendish faces which flutter round



Fig. 15. DÜRER'S PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF IN 1493. In the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.  
(From a photograph by Giacomo Brogi, Florence.)

his head, and which the little angels endeavour to put to flight. The idea of youthfulness is no less perfectly rendered in the case of St. Sebastian than that of venerable old age in the hermit; it is expressed by the soft modelling of the head, the curly locks of the hair, and the powerful sinews of the bare body, and, in another way, by the animated expression with which he prays, and even by the very way in which he folds his hands. Of the little angels which fly gaily about, some are engaged in laying a purple covering on the bare shoulders of the witness to the Faith; two others, one of whom carries under his arm a bundle of arrows in token of the martyrdom which he suffered, hold a golden circlet, the crown of sanctity, in readiness for him. In the picture of St. Antony, also, one of the angels brings a similar slight crown to the saint. These circlets and the royal crown which corresponds to them in the central picture were substituted by Dürer for the traditional form of the nimbus, which, perhaps, he thought it difficult to reconcile with the honest truth to nature with which he carried out the figures. The effort after the most complete fidelity to nature, inwardly in the character and expression of the persons, outwardly in their form, is already very clearly expressed in these pictures. Undraped bodily forms so finely wrought and so true to nature as the upper portion of the figure of this St. Sebastian had never been painted before in Germany.—The Dresden altarpiece comes from the Castle church at Wittenberg. There can be hardly any doubt that it was carried out by the orders of the Elector Frederick of Saxony, who stayed at Nuremberg repeatedly between 1494 and 1501, and employed Dürer in various ways. Several altarpieces and single pictures, carried out about this time or a little later under Dürer's direction and from his designs, plainly betray the handiwork of pupils. Others, again, declare with full energy the master's gifted individuality, and his forcible realism, which triumphed over every revolution in the taste of different periods. This is particularly true of an altarpiece in the Old Pinakothek at Munich, consisting, once more, of a central picture with two wings, which is usually described as the Paumgärtner altarpiece because it was painted by order of some members of the Nuremberg family of Paumgärtner (Fig. 25—27). The central panel of this work represents the Nativity. We behold the interior of a picturesque ruin, the columns and arches of which belong to the Romanesque style; this is very characteristic of the Renaissance, which sought out and imitated the old, whereas mediæval art, in representing architecture, always followed with the greatest accuracy the style of building which prevailed at the time; Dürer had not yet become acquainted with monuments of ancient architecture, and so the tendency of the time expressed itself in him by his representing, in place of the antique, the most antiquated style which was within his reach, namely the Romanesque. The ruin serves as a stable. A roof of board is built out in front of the side-room which shelters the ox and ass, and under this lean-to lies the new-born babe, surrounded by angels who express their childish joy. Mary kneels and contemplates her child with glad emotion.

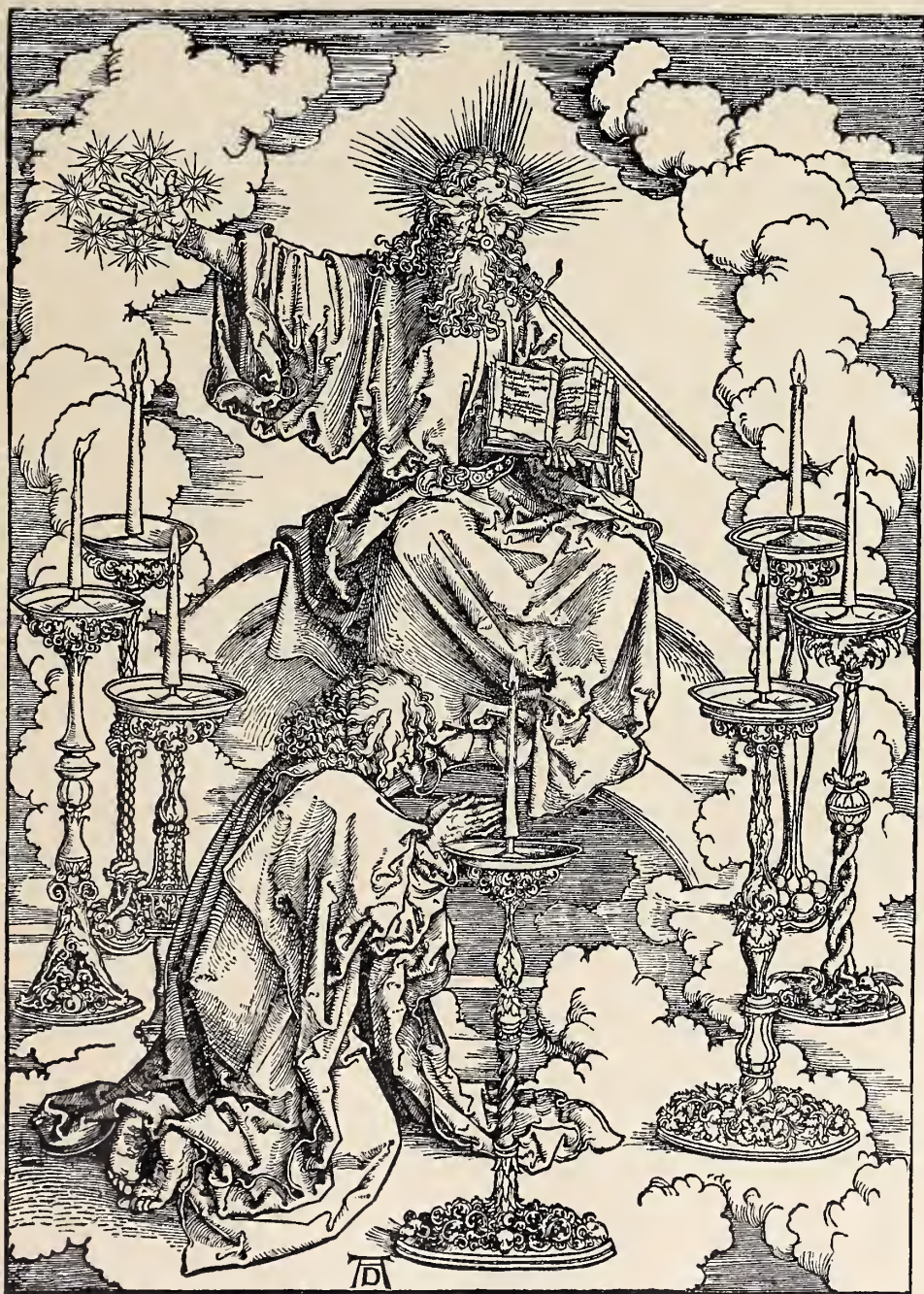


Fig. 16. A woodcut from the "Apocalypse", 1498.  
ST. JOHN IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ALMIGHTY (REV. I. 12-17).



Fig. 17. A woodcut from the "Apocalypse", 1498. THE FOUR HORSEMEN (Rev. VI. 2-8).



Fig. 18. A woodcut from the "Apocalypse", 1498.  
THE BLOWING OF THE SIXTH TRUMPET (REV. IX. 13—19).

Joseph, also deeply moved, kneels down on the other side of the child, outside the shelter of the roof. Some shepherds, to whom the angel, who is still seen hovering in the air, has announced the tidings, are already entering from without the walls (Fig. 25). The finest parts, however, of the Paumgärtner altarpiece are the two wings. In each of these we behold the splendid, lifelike form of a warrior in armour, who stands beside his horse in a wild landscape (Fig. 26, 27). Presumably these men with their sharply characterised, portrait-like faces introduce us to the donors of the altarpiece. The one who stands to the right of the central picture is generally described as Lucas Paumgärtner, the other as his brother Stephen. It was, certainly, not an uncommon thing for the donors of an altarpiece to have their portraits introduced into it, and the Paumgärtners may have had some special motive for having themselves represented in warlike gear. But it is as contrary to the church's custom and to natural feeling for earthly personages to be represented, in portraits of donors as such, otherwise than in the attitude of reverence and adoration prescribed by their situation, so near to the Divine Being. For this reason it must be assumed that the two men in armour, even if they bear the features of the Paumgärtners, represent at the same time two knightly saints, perhaps George and Eustace. The absence of the halo is no argument against this assumption, for Dürer always omitted this traditional token of sanctity in his finished pictures. Even the slight aureole of golden rays, which the school of Van Eyck introduced in place of the mediaeval nimbus, was incompatible with the forcible and realistic way in which Dürer painted his figures and their surroundings.

There are two altarpieces, each on a single panel, carried out for the most part by the hands of pupils, though, as compositions, they are notable works of the master, which represent the Lamentation over the Body of Christ. One is dated 1500, while the other was obviously painted about the same time. The first of these two pictures, in the Pinakothek at Munich, takes us to the foot of the cross. The sacred Body, resting on a winding-sheet, has just been laid on the ground; Joseph of Arimathea holds the head and the upper portion of the body in a raised position, while Nicodemus, with a large jar of spices under his arm, has laid hold of the lower end of the shroud. Beside Nicodemus stands one of the Maries, deeply enveloped in a dark mantle, with a second jar of ointment. The other women have placed themselves on the ground beside the Dead; between two matrons who utter their lamentations the Virgin Mother wrings her hands in silent grief; Mary Magdalene holds caressingly the limp right hand of the Saviour. The disciple John has withdrawn reverentially behind the women; his hands are folded, and he looks aside, into empty space. In the distance we behold in a bright evening-light the town and citadel of Jerusalem with a rocky chain of mountains rising over them. The picture as a whole arrests the spectator's attention at first sight by the marvellous freedom and naturalness of the composition, carefully balanced as it is, and





Fig. 19. PORTRAIT OF OSWALD KRELL. Oil-painting of 1499, in the Pinakothek, Munich.  
(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)



Fig. 20. HANS TUCHER. Oil-painting of 1499, in the Grand-ducal Museum, Weimar.  
(From the first annual issue of the Society for Publishing Photographs to Illustrate the History of Art.)



Fig. 21. FELICITAS TUCHERIN, wife of Hans Tucher. Oil-painting of 1499, in the Grand-ducal Museum, Weimar.  
(From the first annual issue of the Society for Publishing Photographs to Illustrate the History of Art.)

the longer we look searchingly at it, the more striking is the utterance of heart-felt grief which it conveys (Fig. 24). The other picture comes very near it in feeling. It was painted by order of the Holzschuher family, and is now in the Germanic Museum at Nuremberg. The scene of the action is laid here before the opening of the tomb in the rock; it is the moment of a brief, final halt on the way from Golgatha, which is seen in the distance, to the sepulchre. The family of the donors is represented in the lower margin of the picture, as a row of diminutive figures kneeling in prayer, according to a very frequent custom in early art, which we meet with nowhere else among Dürer's works.

Dürer limits the functions of painting as follows, according to the ideas of his time: "The art of painting is employed in the service of the church . . . It preserves also the shape of men after they have passed away." Paintings ought, therefore, to be either sacred pictures or portraits. Yet he ventured for once, in 1500, on a field hitherto almost entirely unknown to northern art, that of mythology, when he painted Hercules killing the Stymphalian birds (in the Germanic Museum, Nuremberg). This picture, painted with thin colours on canvas, is very remarkable as an evidence of the thorough conscientiousness with which Dürer was endeavouring to make himself acquainted with the human body. As regards this department of knowledge Dürer stands very far above any of his predecessors in Germany. The treatment of the Body of Christ in the two pictures mentioned above is enough, of itself, to prove this. Here, however, he has studied the problem of observing and reproducing the play of the muscles in violent motion. The fine landscape with the large outlines of mountain and sea is also remarkable; Dürer may have seen such forms as these on his travels on the Southern slopes of the Alps (Fig. 23). Far more important, however, than this picture, which has also suffered very much from misuse, are the portraits which Dürer painted at that period, in addition to his altarpieces. A portrait painted in tempera of a man in rich costume, which has become the property of the Berlin Museum, is regarded with great probability as the portrait of the Elector Frederick ("the Wise") of Saxony. If this supposition is correct, the portrait may perhaps have been produced at the same time as the Dresden altarpiece and this princely patron may very probably have been the first who gave Dürer an order for a portrait (Fig. 11). The picture of a maiden praying, with splendid golden hair hanging loose, and a very thin transparent veil lying over it on the brow and on the crown of the head, in the Picture-gallery at Augsburg, passes for the portrait of a daughter of the Fürleger family of Nuremberg. This charming portrait of a girl, which looks like a study from nature for a Madonna, show us that Dürer's sharp eye for the characteristic was not blind to the charm of feminine grace and virginal delicacy (Fig. 13). A portrait of Dürer's father which dates from the same year as the lady of the Fürleger family, viz. 1497, belongs to the Duke of Northumberland; the fine charcoal drawing which is preserved in the British Museum, is



Fig. 22. DÜRER'S PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF IN 1500. Oil-painting in the Pinakothek, Munich.

The inscription reads: *Albertus Durerus Noricus ipsum se propriis hic effingebam coloribus aetatis anno XXVIII* (I, Albert Dürer of Nuremberg, painted my own portrait here in the proper colours at the age of twenty-eight).

(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)

perhaps to be regarded as the preliminary drawing for this portrait (Fig. 14).<sup>1)</sup> For lack of orders for portraits, Dürer again sat to himself as a model, after painting his father. His brown locks now hung down luxuriantly upon his shoulders, and his features expressed a seriousness beyond his years. That is how he appears in the picture now in the Prado gallery at Madrid, in a black and white costume of the most fashionable cut, with an expression about the mouth and eyes which may almost be called dejected. The portrait is dated 1498 and bears the inscription:

"Das malt ich nach meiner gestalt  
Ich war sex und zwanzig Jar alt."<sup>2)</sup>

Albrecht Dürer",

and under these lines it is signed with the monogram as well. A repetition of the same portrait, in which the expression of the head is somewhat weakened and the features are made more tranquil and cheerful, is in the collection of portraits of painters in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence (Fig. 15). The following year brought him commissions from the citizens of Nuremberg. Three portraits of the Tucher family bear the date 1499. They are busts, half the size of life. Two of them, Hans Tucher and his wife Felicitas (Fig. 20 and 21), are in the Weimar Museum; the third, Dame Elsbeth Tucherin, wife of Niklas Tucher (whose portrait too, no doubt, existed once upon a time), is in the Cassel Gallery. All three pictures are carried out quite uniformly. The faces are drawn with a hard precision, and give, no doubt, a perfect likeness of the sitters. The backgrounds consist partly of damask curtains, partly of views of the open country, in which bushes and clouds are indicated in a curiously boyish way.

One would almost think that Dürer had felt a certain embarrassment at being required to paint persons of such a distinguished family; the painting is smooth and neat, but without any lively charm of colour. A far better picture is the splendid and lifelike portrait of Oswald Krell, of the same year, in the Pinakothek at Munich. Black velvet, brown fur, a wall covered with red material and the blue and green of a delightful landscape in the distance compose a striking scheme of colour round the head of the young man with its wavy light-brown locks (Fig. 19). Then in 1500 Dürer painted the best-known and most beautiful of his portraits of himself, which is now in the Pinakothek at Munich (in a condition, unfortunately, by no means free from damage); he looks us straight in the face, with his noble countenance surrounded by an abundance of locks, grown still more luxuriant and beautifully kept; his expression is tranquil and there is a clear, observant look in his shining open eyes (Fig. 22).

<sup>1)</sup> The drawing in question, though it bears the traditional name of "Dürer's father", has no resemblance to the authenticated portraits of the goldsmith. It is much later in date than 1497, and is now regarded by the best authorities as a characteristic work of the Augsburg painter, Hans Burgkmair. C. D.

<sup>2)</sup> I painted this from my visage;  
I was six and twenty years of age.

It was not his portraits, however, nor his religious pictures, but a series of woodcuts, which made Albrecht Dürer famous far and wide at quite an early age. The pictures were fastened in their places over the altar of a church or in the dwelling of a patron. It was only a more or less limited number of people that ever saw them. But woodcuts, which, thanks to the economical way in which they were printed off, could be offered at extremely low prices, went out into the wide world as "broadsides". By this means at that period, even more than by printed literature, food for the

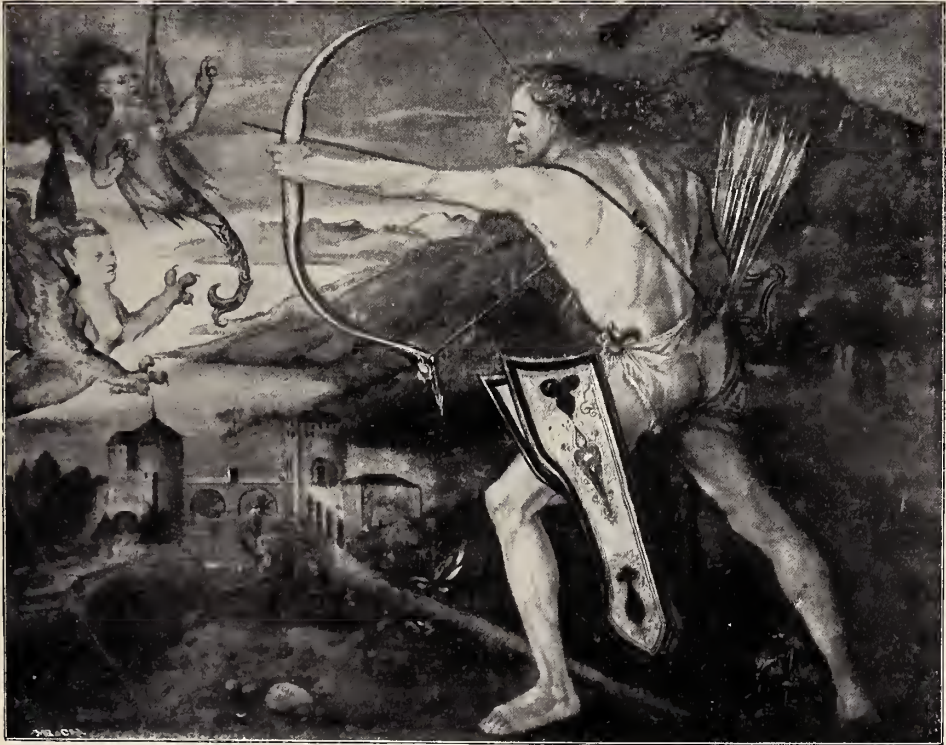


Fig. 23. HERCULES IN COMBAT WITH THE STYMPHALIAN BIRDS.  
Painting in tempera of 1500, in the Germanic Museum, Nuremberg.

mind was brought within the reach of thousands and thousands, and consumed with avidity. In 1498 Dürer published the Revelations of St. John the Divine with Latin and with German text and fifteen woodcuts of large dimensions ( $15\frac{1}{2}$  by  $11\frac{1}{4}$  inches). In the choice of this subject he fell in with the mood of the age. The excited spirits of that period, a period disquieted within itself, still striving, without a definite aim, for something new, had a peculiar love for the study of the mysterious prophecies of the Apocalypse, so diversely interpreted.

But to him, the artist fired with the creative impulse, this book offered the richest field for his inexhaustible imagination. As a draughtsman he



Fig. 24. THE LAMENTATION BENEATH THE CROSS. Oil-painting of 1500, in the Pinakothek, Munich.  
(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)





Fig. 25. THE NATIVITY. Central portion of the Paumgärtner altarpiece in the Pinakothek, Munich.  
(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)



Fig. 26. ONE OF THE WINGS OF THE PAUMGÄRTNER ALTARPIECE  
(supposed to be a portrait of Lucas Paumgärtner)  
in the Pinakothek, Munich.

(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)

could follow the author in his fantastic visions with a flight of fancy no less bold than his. Thus he put into visible shape the obscure prophetic utterances of the Evangelist in such a masterly and pregnant style as the world had never seen or dreamed of until then. His work was something perfectly new, a "revelation" of art. Even at the present day these designs with their tremendous energy and spiritual significance can never fail to be impressive. He must be a Philistine indeed, who is content with trivial fault-finding, with calling the drawing inaccurate or harsh, in these masterpieces of superb invention, instead of letting himself be carried away by the downright power of the grand compositions. There is certainly no lack of harshness or of violation of the external rules of correct draughtmanship, and superficial beauty of form was never the aim of

Dürer's effort in art. Dürer used the pictorial language which he had learnt, the language of his time, in order to express what he had to say. This pictorial language at first strikes the man of the present day as very quaint, accustomed as he is to a different mode of expression in art, just as the written language of that time is quaint. It seems odd in a still higher degree in his designs for woodcuts because Dürer wished here to be plainly intelligible to the multitude, and because he was bound to aim at the most forcible and harsh insistence on details to prevent their character from disappearing beneath the knife of the wood-engraver; whereas in his paintings his study of the actual look of nature gives to his artistic language a turn which brings it nearer to the mode of expression of the present day, which has returned

once more to nature. But anyone, who takes the trouble, can learn Dürer's language for himself. For Germans especially it is not so hard as it may seem, perhaps, at first to some; for every stroke which Dürer drew is German. Whoever seriously studies the pages of the Apocalypse, which are not very common, indeed, in original impressions, but are accessible everywhere in various reproductions which render them with perfect accuracy by means of the technical resources of the present day, will discover new artistic beauties and derive fresh enjoyment from them every time he gazes at them. We see everywhere in them the deepest thoughts expressed with striking power, whether the composition consist of a few figures only or of a countless number which cover the surface of the design; whether the exultation of the blessed or some mo-



Fig. 27. ONE OF THE WINGS OF THE PAUMGÄRTNER ALTARPIECE (supposed to be a portrait of Stephan Paumgärtner, in the Pinakothek, Munich.

(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)

ment of sheer horror form the subject of the page. — The first of the series of cuts serves as an introduction and relates to the person of the writer of the Revelations; it depicts St. John the Evangelist being tortured with boiling oil, as a legend relates, under the Emperor Domitian, without taking harm. Then the series of the apocalyptic designs begins with the appearance of God to the Evangelist (Fig. 16). How magnificently the remoteness from all contact with earth is suggested here by a layer of clouds which suggests the idea of limitless space! In the midst of the sea of clouds the Lord is enthroned, surrounded by seven golden candlesticks, and St. John has fallen down at His feet at His appearance, and is listening to His words with folded hands. The vision of God is represented



Fig. 28. THE THREE PEASANTS. Engraving.

in the strictest agreement with the words of the text: His head is surrounded by sunbeams; flames of fire dart forth from His eyes; a sword proceeds out of His mouth. The effect of the whole is so powerful that anything quaint disappears in the magnificence of the impression which it makes. The force of Dürer's art has surmounted even apparent impossibilities in the way of symbolical representation; how majestic is the gaze of the eyes among the flames which dart out from them, and what a sublime grandeur there is in the stretched-out right hand, on which seven glittering stars are set!—In the following illustration we

see the gate of heaven thrown open, above the earth, which is suggested by a rich and varied landscape. In the ring of clouds, from which lightning flames break out, with heads between them blowing forth a sound as of thunder, sit the four-and-twenty elders with crowns and harps. Within the circle which they form appears at the top the Lord on the throne encircled by the rainbow, surrounded by the seven lamps and the four living beings. An angel flies down before his feet to ask who is worthy to open the book with seven seals which lies in God's lap; and St. John, who kneels in the lowest place on the ring of clouds, receives from the elder nearest to him the answer to this question: the Lamb of God is even now rising on the step of the throne, to open the book.—The next cut, which has always been admired most of the whole series, is the picture of the vision beheld by the seer on the opening of the four first seals (Fig. 17). In masses of cloud, driven by a hurricane, with flashes of fire darting across them, the riders pursue their way, dealing destruction as they go. The crowned rider with the bow, the one with the sword and the one with the balances seem like triumphant warriors, mounted on fierce and powerful steeds under whose hoofs men fall in heaps. The fourth of the company is Death, an uncanny, spectral form, who gallops after them on a lean jade. "And hell followed with him": this is signified by the open jaws of hell, which are just swallowing one of the mighty ones of the earth. The horror of inevitable doom is

expressed in this composition with a force to which there is hardly a parallel to be found in the art of any period. There follows the opening of the fifth and sixth seal. At an altar up in the cloudy heights those who have borne witness by their blood are being clothed by an angel with white raiment. Beneath, we see the sun and moon, with faces, in mediaeval style; this mode of representing them is not, as a rule, in Dürer's manner, but here it has its significance; the heavenly lights look down on the earth with horror and dread. The fringe of heaven which descends to earth is rolled together, so that the edges of the clouds are parted to either side like a curtain. In the space between them the stars fall down flaming on mankind. Men and women shriek in despair; crowned heads and ecclesiastics of every rank, from Pope to monk, are huddled together in helpless masses. Every earthly power and force is at an end. The clefts of the earth offer no protection; we see how the rocks themselves are tottering.—The next illustration is, once more, a composition of extraordinary grandeur. At the top flies an angel, who bears a cross, "the sign of the living God", and gives a command to the four angels who have power over the winds. These four angels, men with strong, bony frames, armed with mighty swords, receive the order; they check the winds, which move tumultuously among the clouds, in the shape of heads of wild features, blowing with their mouths. A group of slender trees, laden with fruit, rises motionless into the tempestuous air. There is a look of peace and sunshine over the landscape on one side, where a kindly angel steps forward and makes the sign of the cross with a reed-pen on the foreheads of the elect, who kneel on the ground in compact array. Thereupon follows the opening of the seventh seal. The seven angels have received their seven



Fig. 29. LANDSKNECHT WITH THE STANDARD OF THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN. Engraving.



Fig. 30. THE CRUCIFIXION. Drawing heightened with white on a dark ground, 1502. Basle Museum.  
(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)



Fig. 31. THE ARMS OF DEATH. Engraving of 1503.

trumpets from God, and the terrors which accompany the blowing of the first four trumpets are let loose upon the earth. It is astonishing how here again the draughtsman has managed to convey to our eyes the devastations described in the text by a perfectly ingenuous but absolutely clear style of expression.—Then follows the representation of the sounding of the sixth trumpet and its effect. The call sounds from the four corners of the golden altar which stands before the face of God, and the four angels of the Euphrates, hard, fierce-looking figures, ruthlessly discharge their office of slaying the third part of mankind; the mighty and the humble, the armed warrior and the young wife, fall before the tremendous stroke of their swords. The host of horsemen rushes forward over them in the clouds, once more in literal illustration of the text, destroying mankind with fire, smoke and brimstone (Fig. 18).—Then comes a woodcut which surpasses all in sheer audacity of treatment. The angel, clothed with clouds, whose

face, crowned with a rainbow, is like the sun, and whose feet are pillars of fire, stands with one foot on the sea, the other on the earth, and whilst he raises his right hand in adjuration above the clouds, offers the open book with his left hand to St. John, who swallows the book at the bidding of a celestial messenger. Odd as this subject may appear, the extraordinary, giant form of the angel is so solemn, as conceived by Dürer, that a magnificent impression is produced even here.—The next page shows Heaven in the act of rejoicing, for the son of the woman, clothed with the sun and crowned with stars, who stands upon the moon, is being carried by little angels up to God. The stars, sprinkled over the sky like flowers on a meadow, glitter and beam with festal radiance. Over against the woman, to whom eagle's wings are given that she may escape, the seven-headed dragon creeps out from the depths of the earth, striking the stars with its tail and spitting out a torrent of water at the woman. Even in the form of this dragon Dürer's remarkable creative power is displayed; the frightful monster assumes, one might almost say, a living and credible shape.—Next to this comes the subject of Michael and his angels flinging down



Fig. 32. ADAM AND EVE. Indian ink drawing. Albertina, Vienna.





Fig. 33. ADAM AND EVE. Engraving, 1504.

Satan and his crew—beings of awful and fantastic shape—with irresistible force to the earth, which lies with its fields all unaware of the conflict, bathed in sunshine. Then the seven-headed beast appears on the earth, adored of men, and its comrade, the beast with the lamb's horns, which is thrown down by fire from heaven. Over them, in a shining light between the clouds, surrounded by angels, the Lord appears with a sickle.—In



Fig. 34. THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI. Oil-painting of 1504, in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.  
(From a photograph by Giacomo Brogi, Florence.)

contrast to the homage offered to the evil one, the following cut shows the endless multitude of the elect singing praises to the Lamb which appears in radiant splendour between the four living creatures.—After this we see Babylon the Great, sitting as a bedizened woman on the seven-headed beast and holding out to princes and peoples the cup of fornication, and we see, at the same time, the visitation of her sin with punishment; besides the mighty angel who makes ready to hurl the mill-stone into the sea, troops of heavenly warriors pour out of the clouds, and in the distance the smoke and flame of the city of Babylon go up to heaven.—The concluding illustration

shows the angel forcing the Devil to descend in chains into the pit, of which he holds the key. These two large figures occupy the foreground of the splendid design. Further back, St. John stands on the summit of a mountain, crowned with woods, and an angel points out to him the New Jerusalem, which lies, an opulent and spacious city, on the slope of a well-wooded mountain.

It is not only the unprecedented and unsurpassed grandeur and boldness of invention that give their great importance to Dürer's designs for the Apocalypse. To the artistic value of these woodcuts must be added the special place which they occupy in the history of art. They signify the most important turning-point in the development of wood-engraving. Hitherto woodcuts had had to be coloured before they could pass for finished pictures. Dürer made his drawings which were intended for cutting in such a way that there was no need of any such addition; he was the first to introduce contrast of light and shade into drawings on wood by using close cross-hatching, and by this method of drawing with a certain degree of "colour" he produced the effect of a finished picture in a way which rendered any reinforcement with actual colouring quite superfluous. This certainly increased to a large extent the difficulties of the work of the wood-engraver, who had to follow his lines with the knife in such a way as to leave them as raised ridges standing out above the lowered spaces of the block. But Dürer helped the wood-engravers to overcome the obstacles of the task which he set them, by choosing a very large size of cuts and by making his lines very definite and full of meaning. There can be no doubt that he gave close personal attention to the process of cutting. On the whole it must be said that the illustrations to the Apocalypse are really well cut, considering that the wood-engravers had never before had an opportunity of proving their dexterity on work of such high artistic pretensions; in the finer parts, indeed, especially



Fig. 35. ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.  
Wing of an unfinished altarpiece, 1504.  
In the Kunsthalle, Bremen.



Fig. 36. THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. Pen-drawing, sketch for the drawing of the same subject in the "Green Passion". Uffizi Collection, Florence.

the faces and hands, the engraver's knife has often done violence to the master's line.

Dürer paid the same attention to engraving on copper as he did to wood-cutting. We do not know when he began to occupy himself with this artistic process. Perhaps while he was still with his father something may have suggested his taking it up, for it was in the goldsmith's shop that the art of engraving had its birth. The tradition that he was instructed in this branch of art by Wolgemut is far from probable, for there is no evidence that Wolgemut worked as an engraver at all. Among Dürer's earliest engravings, carried out with a certain timidity of hand, there are some which agree more or less exactly with engravings by a more practised hand which are signed with a W. The W has been interpreted as Wolgemut, and it has been believed that when Dürer was making his first experiments with the burin he copied works by the older master for practice



Fig. 37. THE CRUCIFIXION. Drawing of 1504, belonging to the "Green Passion", in the Albertina, Vienna.  
(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

in engraving. However, the assumption that W means Wolgemut has been disproved by the weightiest arguments; and for the unprejudiced observer Dürer's spirit is so plainly expressed by the prints in question that one is bound to regard him as the inventor and the master W, whoever he may be<sup>1</sup>), as the copyist. Among these engravings is the print of the Virgin here reproduced (Fig. 9), which bears the title of "The Virgin with the Monkey", on account of the little long-tailed ape introduced beside the figure—an idle addition such as the artists of that period were fond of making, to show the varied range of their accomplishment. Want of practice in technical procedure betrays itself in many places, but the whole breathes the true poetry of Dürer's art. We feel in the landscape the atmosphere of a cool summer evening in Germany; clouds rise in round masses, but the wind, which bows the tops of the old willows, drives them away. A cold shiver passes through nature, and the mind wanders into a gentle melancholy. The young mother gazes with silent, foreboding sorrow at her child, who plays with a bird and has no thought of suffering. For the landscape, which gives to the print that accent in which its finest artistic value lies, Dürer made use of a sketch from nature in the vicinity of Nuremberg, which is still extant. This drawing is in the British Museum, and bears the inscription "Weier Haus" in Dürer's hand. It is one of his landscape fragments, painted in water-colours, with absolute fidelity to nature.—It is in the realistic surroundings, again, that the charm consists—a charm which makes such a direct appeal to us to-day—in another of Dürer's early engravings, "The Prodigal Son". Irregular and, in part, dilapidated cottages and cattle-sheds, a damp soil, a dung-heap on which a cock is pecking—such is the scene, in which the complete want of poetry is precisely the poetical element in the picture. In the dirt of this farm-yard, among the pigs, large and small, which jostle one another round the feeding-trough, kneels a forlorn being, clasping his fingers together in fervent prayer and resolving to repent and mend his ways. No doubt, many a beholder's first look will be caught by the awkward drawing of the smock-frock, tied round the waist like an apron, under the folds of which no connexion is made out between the trunk of the figure and the legs: but, instead of that, only look at the head and the hands, and see with what contrition and ardour the man is praying! (Fig. 10).

"A good painter", Dürer once wrote, "is full of figures within, and, even if it were possible that he should live for ever, he would always have some new thing from his inward stock of ideas to pour forth through his works." Woodcuts and engravings gave him the opportunity of pouring out from the abundance of his ideas more than would have been possible in finished paintings. Even more than woodcuts, in which there was always a certain limitation, because the subject had to be treated in a peculiar way, his engravings on copper allowed him to follow out his ideas in art and to

<sup>1</sup>) Wenzel von Olmütz. C. D.



Fig. 38. THE ENTOMBMENT. Drawing of 1504, belonging to the "Green Passion", in the Albertina, Vienna.  
(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

handle subjects which did not appear to him sufficiently important to make a pretext for a picture, or whose nature did not admit of their being carried out in painting, restricted as the latter always is to a certain range of materials; or which, according to the general views of the period, were not suitable subjects for pictures. We see the same master who in the illustrations to the Apocalypse could depict the most sublime and supernatural themes with such penetration—we see him, occasionally, mixing with the full tide of human life, and reproducing in art the most ordinary matters of daily experience. Dürer published a number of true genresubjects and groups or single figures from daily life, full of striking truth to nature and sometimes delightfully humorous (Fig. 28, 29). He also published engravings with mythological, allegorical and fantastic motives, in addition to his numerous religious prints.

As in his woodcuts, so in his engravings Dürer produced effects like those of painting, and, in fact, much more so, in the latter case because here the execution was all the work of his own hand. In his early engravings the effect of light and shade did not exceed in any essential degree what was involved in the shading necessary to bring the forms into relief. That was the method of all engraving in copper which was done at that period. Dürer, however, in proportion as his dexterity improved with practice, set himself tasks of ever-increasing difficulty in handling the burin or graver, and he soon had such a command over this tool that he was able to produce with it the strongest as well as the most delicate tones. Whilst he made his name known far and wide to the masses by his powerful designs for woodcuts, his delicate engravings made him the favourite of admirers and collectors of works of art.—The masterpiece of Dürer's engraved work of this period, when he was approaching maturity, and, technically, one of the most perfect productions of the art of engraving altogether, is the "Coat-of-arms with the Skull" of 1503, which is at once a pattern of heraldic design and, with its melancholy suggestiveness, an outcome of the sincerest artistic feeling (Fig. 31).—The first engraving carried out in light and dark masses so as to produce the full effect of a picture was the "Adam and Eve", which appeared in 1504. A fine preliminary drawing for this print, in the Albertina at Vienna, shows the two figures on a perfectly black background (Fig. 32). In the engraving, however, as carried out, Dürer produced a richer and more natural effect by the dark masses of the landscape in the shady Garden of Eden (Fig. 33). In another respect, also, this print is a landmark in the history of German art. Dürer has made a praiseworthy attempt to bring out the natural beauty of the human form, and we should not fail to recognise how far he reached in this respect as the first in the field, with no predecessor to fall back upon for support, since it was the habit, before his time, to represent the nude figure as a thing of no loveliness. With well-grounded self-consciousness he introduced into the print, instead of the mere monogram, a tablet for an inscription, in which he gave the information in Latin, then the universal language of the learned world, that Albrecht Dürer of Nuremberg was the



maker of the work. It must, indeed, be supposed, that in shaping the figures of Adam and Eve the master got suggestions and help from seeing works of Italian art. It was, in fact, the art of engraving that spread the knowledge of Italian art on this side of the Alps by its readily portable productions. It was especially the engravings of the artist of Mantua, Mantegna, that made a great impression on Dürer, so much so that he was occasionally induced actually to copy them.

Meanwhile Dürer was again called upon to act in the capacity of painter at the desire of the Elector of Saxony. The date 1502 on a drawing in the Basle Museum, a composition with very numerous figures representing the Crucifixion of Our Lord, determines the time at which an altarpiece was produced for this prince, which is now in the palace of the Prince-Archbishop of Vienna at St. Veit near Vienna. The central panel of this work displays the Crucifixion in almost exact agreement with the Basle drawing. The wings, which are very narrow in consequence of the tall shape of the central picture which they are intended to close, contain the Bearing of the Cross and the Risen Lord appearing to Mary Magdalene; the inconvenient shape is very happily utilised, in one case, for the beautiful wooded landscape, in the other for the gate of the town and the foreshortened walls. The wings have on the outside the large figures of St. Sebastian and St. Roch. Dürer left this altarpiece to be carried out by the hands of assistants. On the other hand, in 1504, he painted an altarpiece ordered by the Elector of Saxony for the castle church at Wittenberg, representing the Adoration of the Magi, entirely with his own hand. This wonderful painting, which now adorns the group of selected masterpieces assembled in the Tribune of the Uffizi Gallery at Florence, is so excellently preserved that all the original charm of the colouring and the loving care of the master's hand, which extends to the minutest details, can be fully recognised and admired. No one who is German at heart can fail to find himself drawn, again and again, even among all the splendid creations of the antique and of the Italian renaissance which are united in this single room, to this most charming picture of a German Madonna, watching in simple dignity and silent motherly happiness while the princes from strange lands offer reverential homage to the naked child upon her knee (Fig. 34).

The same year, 1504, is the date of two wings of an altarpiece, never quite finished, in the Kunsthalle at Bremen, which show the hermit Saint Onuphrius and St. John the Baptist (Fig. 35) in landscapes which suit the figures admirably in composition.

At the same period Dürer was working once more at two long series of woodcuts, one of which deals with the Passion of Christ, the other with the Life of the Virgin Mary. In these two works, which go by the name of the "Great Passion" and the "Life of the Virgin", Dürer depicted with equal mastery the most impressive tragic actions and the most charming scenes of domestic peace. Neither series, however, was not finished and published till a later time. The series of scenes from the Passion is of the



Fig. 39. Woodcut from the "Life of the Virgin": THE MARRIAGE OF JOSEPH AND MARY (1504).



Fig. 40. Woodcut from the 'Life of the Virgin': REPOSE OF THE HOLY FAMILY IN EGYPT (1504-5).



Fig. 41. Woodcut from the "Life of the Virgin": CHRIST TAKING LEAVE OF HIS MOTHER (1504-5).

same size and shape as the Apocalypse, and Dürer probably took it up soon after he finished his first work on wood. Seven of the prints agree completely in the style of the drawing with the designs of the Apocalypse. With a striking pathos he represents first the Saviour kneeling in prayer on the Mount of Olives and stretching out his hands as if with an in-



Fig. 42. THE FEAST OF THE ROSE-GARLANDS. Oil-painting of 1506, in the Premonstratensian Monastery of Strahow at Prague. (Photographed from the damaged and partly re-painted original.)

voluntary gesture of self-defence towards the cup of his Passion, whilst in the foreground the disciples sleep and in the distance the betrayer is already passing through the gate of the garden; then Christ bound to a column to be scourged, exposed to the cruelty of the savage torturers and the scorn of the onlookers, as rough as they; then the same form, now lamentably bowed, in mantle and crown of thorns, shown by Pilate to the pitiless mob.

The next print, magnificent in idea, shows the Redeemer, fallen on his knee beneath the weight of the Cross, turning his head towards Veronica, who makes ready to wipe his brow, wrung with anguish and streaming with blood; the rough soldier, who leads the patient sufferer by a cord made fast to his girdle, ceases at this moment from pulling, but one of the officers who accompany the march gives a merciless thrust with his staff at the neck of the fallen victim. Then follows the Crucifixion—a crowded composition: on one side of the cross the Virgin Mary fainting in the arms of St. John and of one of the other Maries, on the other side the centurion with an attendant on horseback; angels catch the blood from the wounds of the Redeemer, and sun and moon appear here, too, with pained and sympathising faces, for this print, generally speaking, departs least of all from the traditional mode of treatment. The next print represents the lamentation over the sacred body laid down under a withered tree before the entrance of the sepulchre, and next to this comes the composition in which the body of the Saviour, accompanied by an escort which has become larger in the meantime, is borne to the grave, while Mary still lies helpless, supported by St. John. The landscape is admirable in these two subjects, and indeed in others, its lines and masses forming an essential part of the composition.



Fig. 43. AN OLD COPY OF DÜRER'S FEAST OF THE ROSE-GARLANDS, in the Imperial Gallery, Vienna.



Fig. 44. CHRIST ON THE CROSS. Oil-painting of 1506, in the Dresden Gallery.  
(Reproduced with the permission of the Berlin Photographic Company.)

The cutting is, unfortunately, less successfully executed in the Passion than in the Apocalypse designs; in some cases the engraver's knife has visibly spoilt and coarsened the master's line.

It is not improbable that it was the loss which his creations had suffered at the hands of the wood-engraver that induced Dürer immediately to treat the Passion of Christ once more in independent drawings in which he was not hampered by any consideration of what was possible or not possible



Fig. 45. STUDY OF A HEAD.  
For the picture of Christ among the Doctors.  
Drawing in the Albertina, Vienna.

for the wood-engraver. In 1504 he drew the splendid series of twelve designs, named from the colour of the paper the "Green Passion" (in the Albertina, Vienna). The subjects of the series are the Kiss of Judas, Christ before Herod, Christ before Caiaphas, the Scourging, the Crowning with Thorns, the Presentation to the People, Christ bearing the Cross, Christ being nailed to the Cross, the Death on the Cross, the Descent from the Cross, the Entombment and the Resurrection. Dürer did not do these drawings for the purpose of publication, but for himself; he treated them, however, as a finished work of art, the execution of which was based on preliminary designs (Fig. 36). One is in-

clined to think that he wished to make amends to himself for the dissatisfaction which the woodcut compositions gave him. His artistic independence asserts itself much more freely here. He has taken a delight in throwing himself as completely as possible into the problem of representing the historical events in the most natural manner. Consequently all unnatural circumstances adopted with a symbolical significance in earlier art, like the halo of rays and the personification of sun and moon, are now omitted. Truth to nature in representing the incidents, which are brought before the eye in a surprisingly unaffected and simple way, may be said of itself to have led the artist to the choice of more pure and natural forms. In preparing these drawings Dürer was unmistakably guided by a desire for a more refined and picturesque effect than was attainable by the coarse open strokes of the drawing on wood. It is astonishing, what effects of colour he has attained with very slight expenditure of means, just drawing with the brush in black and white on toned paper. The happily chosen greenish tone of the paper is itself expressive and contributes essentially to the peculiar, mournful feeling of the designs (Fig. 37, 38).

The greater part of the woodcuts in which Dürer narrated the Life of the Virgin Mary, as told in the Gospels and in the current legend, seems to have been finished in the years 1503 to 1505. The keynote of these delightful designs is very different from that of the Apocalypse and the



Passion. A true instinct has led Dürer to choose a smaller scale for subjects which do not aim at grandeur of effect, but rely on the poetry which is inseparable from them; and a greater delicacy of drawing corresponds to the reduced size. In spite of the special difficulties which this occasioned to the engraver, the majority of the designs are, once more, quite well cut. Dürer must either have found more skilful and practised hands for this task, or else have spent more time in personally superintending the cutting



Fig. 46. CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS IN THE TEMPLE.  
 Painting of 1506, in the Picture-gallery of the Palazzo Barberini at Rome.  
 (From a photograph by Braun, Clement & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

of the blocks. The story in pictures begins, according to the old legend of the parents of the Virgin, with the scene in which the victim, which Joachim intends to offer in the temple, is refused by the high-priest, because his childlessness after twenty years of marriage with Anne is taken to be a sign that God's curse rests on the couple. Then there appears to Joachim, who has parted from his wife and taken refuge with the shepherds in the wilderness in sorrow at this disgrace, an angel who foretells to him the birth of a daughter. The landscape is magnificent in this scene: a long slope, on which the sheep are feeding, at the edge of a wild forest with

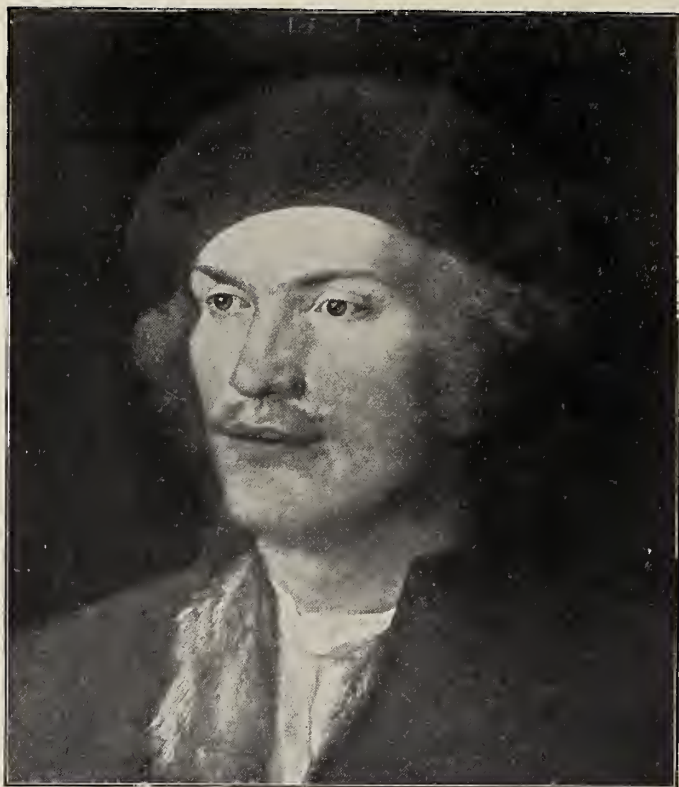


Fig. 47. PORTRAIT OF A MAN UNKNOWN, 1505. In the Imperial Gallery, Vienna.  
(From a photograph by J. Löwy, Vienna.)

a view of the sea, with its rocky coast, lying far below in the distance. On returning to the city after receiving this promise, Joachim meets Anne again under the Golden Gate of the Temple, which is an arch of late Gothic design, forming a frame to the picture; while the two greet one another with a hearty embrace, the neighbours who stand at a certain distance—an admirable group—make their remarks on the encounter, and a beggar hastens up to profit by the glad excitement into which the husband and wife are thrown by it. Then we enjoy a view of the bed-chamber in which Anne's new-born babe is being bathed, while a servant carries the broth to the mother's bedside, by which the old midwife has fallen asleep, and a number of gossips celebrate the event with cake and ale. It is just a scene of Nuremberg life in Dürer's own day. There is only the beautiful figure of an angel, who hovers aloft on a cloud and kneels to do homage to the child below him, to inform us that this child, Mary, is a being of no common order. The following scene is laid in the outer court of the Temple, where the money-changers who desecrate the house of prayer are not forgotten. The growing child steps forth from the group of kinsfolk who assist at the ceremony, and mounts the steps which lead to the

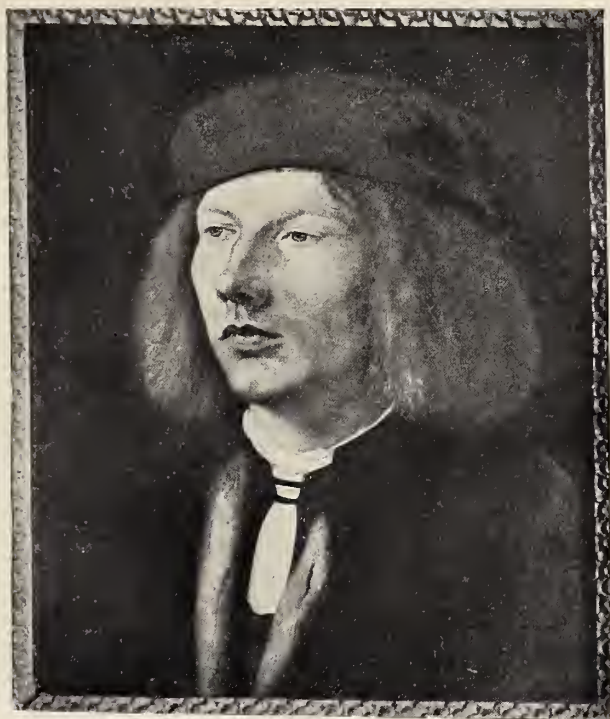


Fig. 48. PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN. In the collection of pictures at Hampton Court.  
(From the first annual issue of the Society for Publishing Photographs to Illustrate the History of Art.)

Sanctuary, in order to dedicate herself to the service of God, while the priests wait for her at the top. In the architecture of the Temple and its court Dürer has endeavoured to produce something in "antique" style—that was the term in those days for what we now call Renaissance. The church architecture is rather Gothic than antique in the simple and beautiful design which represents the betrothal of Mary, now a full-grown maiden, to Joseph in the presence of the high-priest (Fig. 39). The next page shows Mary sitting by her *prie-dieu* in a spacious chamber, the ceiling of which is supported by handsome vaulting; she receives the message of the angel with a lowly bearing. Then there follows a perfect masterpiece, the salutation of Mary and Elizabeth before the door of Elizabeth's dwelling, on the threshold of which Zacharias appears, courteously greeting the visitor. Mary has come across the mountains, and we see far off, behind the shady pines and forest-trees of the middle distance, the mountain range soaring ever higher with varying outlines, in a clear atmosphere and brilliant light; a white ball of cloud has detached itself from the most distant and lofty summit and fades slowly away into the deep hue of the summer sky. One does not know what to admire most, the splendid effect of the landscape or the keen observation of the feminine heart which the figures reveal. Then we see Mary kneeling in a ruined stable before the

babe to whom she has given birth; little angels contemplate the newly born with childish joy and curiosity, and other angels chant his praises in the air; from one side Joseph enters with hasty step, carrying the lantern which he has been to fetch — we see that he was not present at the mystery of Nativity—and through the other door the shepherds are already approaching with bagpipes and shawms to salute the child. In the next scene Mary and Joseph are present at the circumcision of the infant Jesus, which is performed by the priests in a kind of chapel. After this they use the ruins of a castle-wall, which now serve as a stable, as a place in which to receive the homage offered to the child by the three Kings or Magi who have come with a mounted escort. In the following print Mary presents the offering for her purification in the portico of the Temple, curiously but grandly conceived, the remoter part of which is filled with gloom. Then Joseph leads Mary, who sits with the child on the saddled ass, along a path which leads into an endless forest, to which a date-palm, drawn true to nature, imparts an oriental character; a light cloud, filled with small cherubim, glides over the



Fig. 49. ADAM. Oil-painting of 1507, in the Prado Museum, Madrid.  
(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co.,  
Dornach and Paris.)



Fig. 50. EVE. Oil-painting of 1507, in the Prado Museum, Madrid.  
(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co.,  
Dornach and Paris.)

fugitives through the tops of the trees. Then follows a print, delightfully conceived, which symbolizes the sojourn of the Holy Family in undisturbed peace in Egypt. The fugitives have found shelter in a place, evidently out of the world, where ruinous and sound buildings lean one against another. They are in the open air, busied about their daily work, not far from the steps of an abandoned, half dilapidated house, with a jet of water plashing into a tank close by. Joseph is hewing a piece of timber into shape with the adze; Mary sits, in the quiet enjoyment of a mother's happiness, beside the cradle, spinning. Three tall angels and one little one are grouped round the head of the cradle; a troop of little angels busy themselves with childlike energy in picking up and clearing away the splinters which drop from Joseph's carpentry; others, as part of their own game, bring toys to amuse the infant Jesus when he wakes from his sleep. Up in the sky God the Father and the Holy Spirit look down on the idyllic scene, which gladdens the heart of everyone who beholds it (Fig. 40). Then follows at once the picture of the event which first makes it known that Mary's Son must quit the narrow circle of home

life, to fulfil his calling. Mary and Joseph find Jesus, aged twelve, among the Doctors in the Temple. All the nameless agony that the mother has to suffer during her Son's passion has been simply suggested by Dürer in a single composition of penetrating force and expressiveness. Jesus is pre-



Fig. 51. THE MARTYRDOM OF THE TEN THOUSAND CHRISTIANS IN PERSIA. Painting of 1508.  
In the Imperial Gallery, Vienna.

(From a photograph by J. Löwy, Vienna.)

paring to tread the way which leads to suffering and death. He has taken leave of his mother and now turns round once more and blesses her, while she falls on her knees and is only prevented from sinking to the ground by the careful support of a friend; she wrings her hands in anxiety and torment of soul and her gaze seems to be rivetted on her son's eyes (Fig. 41).

After these sixteen prints had been finished, there was but little wanting to complete the series of the Life of the Virgin. Circumstances, however, prevented this little from being accomplished till several years later.

The fact that unauthorised copies of Dürer's woodcuts were engraved at Venice, and that the German master wished on that account to petition the Venetian government for the protection of his rights as their inventor, is said to have been the first occasion of a journey to Venice, which Dürer undertook in 1505, and of his prolonged stay there.

His most important occupation at Venice, however, was in carrying out an altarpiece which he painted on commission for the resident German merchants to be placed in their church of San Bartolommeo. This was the "Feast of the Rose-Garlands", now in the Premonstratensian monastery of Strahow at Prague. In a composition of rich and festal grandeur, the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus are represented as the dispensers of the rosary: they adorn the heads of the Emperor Maximilian I., and the Pope Julius II. with wreaths of natural roses; on either side a number of other persons are being crowned in the same way by St. Dominic and a company of angels. In the background the painter himself appears, together with his dearest and most faithful friend, the famous humanist Wilibald Pirckheimer; the artist holds a sheet of paper in his hand on which we may read, "The German, Albrecht Dürer, carried out this work in 1506 in the space of five months" (Fig. 42). This much admired picture led the Doge and Patriarch of Venice, even before it was finished, to visit the German painter in his studio. It was subsequently bought by the Emperor Rudolph II. for a very large sum, and conveyed to Prague with extraordinary precautions. In later and more careless times, unfortunately, it suffered severe injury, and was still more ruined by the heads of Mary

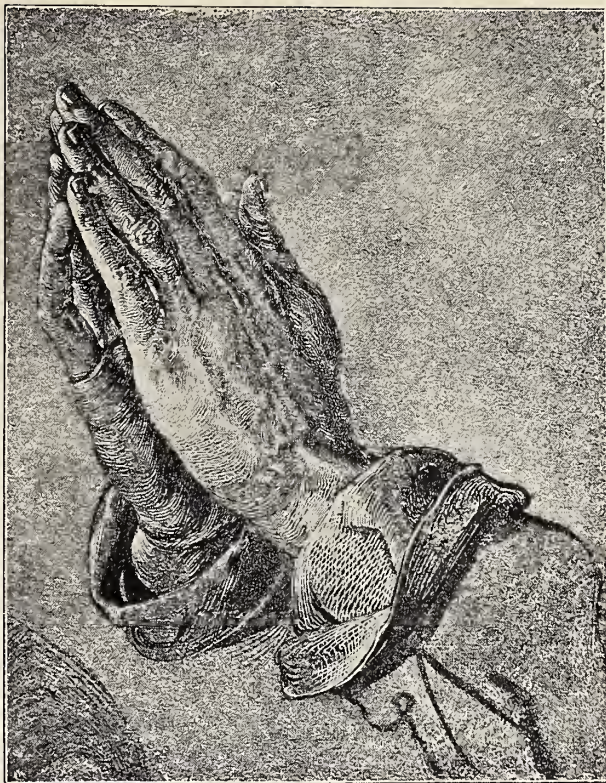


Fig. 52. STUDY for the hands of a praying Apostle in the Heller Altarpiece (1508).  
Brush-drawing in the Albertina, Vienna.

and the infant Jesus, as well as the sky and some other parts, being re-painted and modernised with an utter want of feeling. We can still admire the beauty of the figures and the composition, and in the majority of the persons even the character and expression of the heads and hands; but the charm of colouring and of the masterly execution, once so highly applauded, preserves its effect only here and there, to make us doubly regret the havoc which has been wrought. We derive a better idea of the original brilliancy of the picture and especially of the head of the Virgin from an old copy in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna, although this copy is far from doing justice to Dürer's delicate execution, especially in the heads (Fig. 43).



Fig. 53. STUDY for the head of an Apostle looking upwards in the Heller Altarpiece. Indian ink drawing, heightened with white, in the Print-cabinet at the Berlin Museum.

Dürer painted a number of portraits and small pictures of minor importance during his stay at Venice. The best of these is the Crucifixion in the Dresden Gallery, a fine and impressive painting and a truly great work; in spite of the diminutive scale on which it is executed. Darkness descends on the earth; only on the horizon, over the sea, there flames a yellow streak of light. The wind tosses the hair and the loincloth of the Crucified, whose body appears as light out of darkness in its strong relief. There is no convulsive movement in his frame to betray the agony which he is enduring; peace has come over the sufferer, he raises his noble face with an expression of inflexible confidence, and we almost hear the words:





Fig. 54. STUDY OF DRAPERY for an Apostle in the Heller Altarpiece.  
Indian ink drawing, heightened with white, in the Print-cabinet at the Berlin Museum.

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Fig. 44). In the Barberini Collection at Rome there is a picture, painted, according to the inscription, in five days, representing Jesus, aged twelve, engaged in disputing with the Doctors. It is the rapid record, though based on preparatory studies (Fig. 45), of an idea which may have been suggested to Dürer by the sight of Leonardo da Vinci's characteristic heads. The whole thing really consists merely of heads and hands, but these are without exception full of expression (Fig. 46). He may possibly have painted at Venice the portrait of a fair-haired young man, dated 1507, in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna, which informs us how Dürer had learnt by looking at Italian works of art to put into a face all the sharp precision of characterisation which was peculiar to him, without painting the features as hardly as he had done in his earlier portraits (Fig. 47). There is a very curious thing about this picture. On the back of the panel, which has this agreeable-looking young man in front, Dürer has painted Avarice in the shape of an ugly, lean old woman, holding a bag of gold coins and laughing scornfully at the beholder. No doubt the young man gave Dürer an order for his portrait and then refused to pay for it, and the artist gave vent to his annoyance by the allegory which he painted in a broad style and strong colours on the back of the portrait, which was now left on his hands. Of about the same date, in all probability, is the excellent portrait at Hampton Court, the head of another young man with fair, wool-like hair hanging down, a hitherto unnoticed work of Dürer's, which has only recently received attention, and is remarkable for its excellent preservation (Fig. 48).<sup>1)</sup>

From Venice Dürer made an excursion to Bologna and Ferrara. He began a journey to Mantua, but abandoned it again because its object, to make the personal acquaintance of Mantegna, for whom he had so high a respect, was frustrated by the latter's death.

We have information about Dürer's life at Venice in a number of letters, still extant, which the master wrote to his friend Pirckheimer. We learn that the German painter excited the curiosity and the envy of the native artists; that many of the nobility, but few of the painters, were well-disposed towards him; but that among these few was the great master Giovanni Bellini, now an old man of eighty. We watch the gradual growth of the altarpiece; we hear Dürer's complaint that this work takes up too much of his time and compels him to decline a number of more remunerative orders; and we share his joy in the final success of the picture and the approval which it met with. We see him roaming through the alleys of the city on the lagoons, to carry out all kinds of commissions for his friend. We learn how contented he is with his life abroad, though he does not forget his affectionate care for his own folk at home, and reckons up his profits and earnings like a careful manager. He answers his friend's

<sup>1)</sup> This picture, which was in Charles I.'s collection, is proved to be of the time of Dürer's residence at Venice by the date 1506, which, together with Dürer's usual monogram, is on the panel, though concealed by the frame.

rough jests in high spirits, and when he thinks of going back he cannot suppress the words: "How I shall shiver after this sunshine!"

It was not till the beginning of 1507 that Dürer returned to Nuremberg. His residence at Venice had been of great importance for his education in art. Contact with Italian art had helped him to advance in his own art, without making him pay for the gain by the least self-surrender. His views had become wider, his sense of form more refined; but his manner of expression remained, like his sentiment, thoroughly German. It is one of Dürer's highest titles to fame that the manly consciousness of his skill in art and his joy and pride in feeling himself to be a German, prevented him from making any attempt to give up his own

firm footing and become dependent on foreign art. It was imitation of the Italians that was the ruin of German art after his time.

After his return Dürer produced several pictures of fairly large dimensions in quick succession. The first was a representation of Adam and Eve, life-sized figures, on two panels. Dürer had seen in Italy with what beauty an artist can clothe the nude human figure. In these two figures of man and woman, which display a perfection of form which had been unattainable till then in northern art, he gave, as it were, public proof of the new views of art which had been revealed to him in the country of long artistic tradition. But it would be very unjust to Dürer to look at these two figures merely with a view to form, in which they are still by no means free from the defects of the north. The best thing in the pictures, really, is the delicacy of feeling with which the emotions of the two persons are divined and expressed. The expression is not contained merely in the heads. In one case there is a mixture of feminine reserve with cajolery and seductiveness; in the other timidity and hesitation are reconciled with a lack



Fig. 55. CHRIST ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES (1508).  
From the engraved Passion.



Fig. 56. THE KISS OF JUDAS (1508). From the engraved Passion.

of force to resist; and these qualities are brought to view in their whole figures, even to the feet and the tips of the fingers, with a mastery which is almost unrivalled in its way (Fig. 49 and 50). We can imagine what an immense sensation these two panels must have made on their first appearance. They were copied at an early date. Two collections, the Pitti Palace at Florence and the Prado Gallery at Madrid, lay rival claims to the possession of the originals. The dispute is, perhaps, superfluous. We cannot but suppose that the master himself resolved to repeat this work, in which he had achieved a success without precedent. That the execution is by his own hand is undisputed in the case of the Madrid version; but in the case of that at Florence also, though its

state of preservation is, unfortunately, not so good, there can hardly be a doubt of the originality of the work. The figures in both versions agree exactly with one another. In other respects the two works differ in the same manner as the engraving of 1504 and the drawing. At Florence the figures stand out, as they would naturally do according to the subject, from a landscape background enlivened by animals. At Madrid they are painted in relief against a plain black background, in order that they may suffer no diminution of their full effect; even the trunk of the tree with the serpent at Eve's side is not fully carried out as part of the painting, but merely suggested. On the lower branch of the tree in the Madrid picture of Eve there hangs a tablet on which we read that "the German Albrecht Dürer painted the picture in 1507" (*Albertus Durer alemanus faciebat post virginis partum 1507*).

The two life-sized single figures did not give the master so much trouble as a picture with countless small figures for which he received an order from the Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony, viz. "The ten thousand



Fig. 57. THE VIRGIN AND CHILD. Pen-drawing tinted with water-colour, 1509. Basle Museum.  
(From a photograph by Braun, Clément and Co., Dornach and Paris.)

KNACKFUSS, Albrecht Dürer.



Fig. 58. THE MAN OF SORROWS.  
Frontispiece to the Engraved Passion, 1509.

Martyrs" (the Persian Christians put to death by King Sapor). Dürer employed the vast amount of industry which he possessed in painting this picture, at which he worked for over a year, finishing it in the summer of 1508 (Fig. 51). It is now in the collection of pictures in the Imperial Museum at Vienna. Here we have to admire before all things Dürer's masterly skill in getting a picturesque effect out of the great masses of figures, in which the landscape, piled up in bold outlines, plays a prominent part, and his inventiveness in details which give a certain attractiveness even to so gruesome a subject. The painting is carried out with incredible delicacy, but the original harmony of the colouring has unfortunately been spoilt by

the fact that the *lapis lazuli* blue which was liberally used has in course of time come through the colours with which it was mixed and risen to the surface, so that it now tells much more strongly than it ought to do according to the master's intention.

Dürer then proceeded to paint with the same scrupulous care the central panel of an altarpiece of considerable dimensions, for which he had received a commission in 1507 from the wealthy merchant of Frankfort, Jakob Heller. He wrote himself to his patron that he had never begun a piece of work in all his life which pleased him more, and even after the work had been delivered in August, 1509, he was anxious that it should be carefully treated. A number of studies from nature, delicately drawn with the brush, bear witness to his diligent and conscientious preparation for this task (Fig. 52—54). The subject of the picture was the Assumption of the Virgin. Below, the Apostles stand round the empty grave, and above in the clouds, in which hosts of little angels are flying, the Virgin

is crowned Queen of Heaven by God the Father and by Christ. The master himself regarded this picture as his best work and it combined a grand unity of picturesque effect with the most devoted elaboration of detail. We can only form a faint idea of its beauty from the sight of an old copy which is preserved in the Historical Museum at Frankfort, together with six of the paintings on the wings, which were carried out by pupils. The



Fig. 59. FRONTISPIECE TO THE "LIFE OF THE VIRGIN" (1510).

original, for which the Emperor Rudolph II. in vain offered 10000 florins to the Dominicans of Frankfort, in whose church the altarpiece was placed, was acquired subsequently by Duke Maximilian of Bavaria, and fell a victim to the flames in 1674 at the burning of the Palace at Munich.

The next large picture which Dürer painted has met with a better fate. This is the picture of "All Saints", also called the Holy Trinity, finished in 1511, which he painted for the chapel of the Landauer Cloister, or House of the Twelve Brethren, at Nuremberg, a charitable institution founded by two citizens of that town. When the chapel was dedicated, it was named

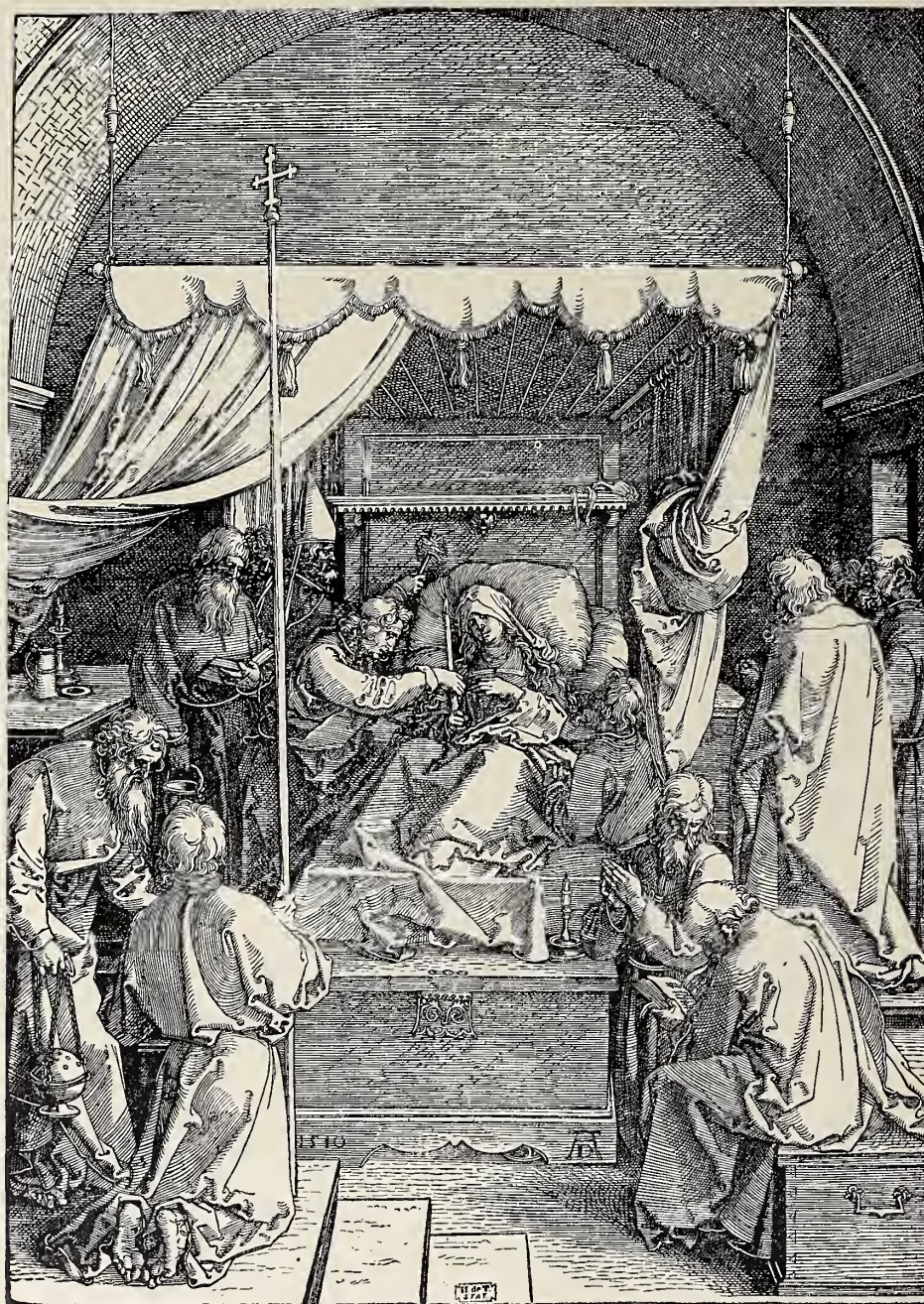


Fig. 60. THE DEATH OF THE VIRGIN, woodcut (1510) from the "Life of the Virgin".





Fig. 61. THE ASSUMPTION AND CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN (1510), from the "Life of the Virgin".



Fig. 62. CHRIST APPEARING TO ST. MARY MAGDALENE, from the "Little Passion".

in honour of All Saints; this circumstance determined the choice of the subject for the altarpiece, the assembly of the saints united in adoration of the Triune God (Fig. 66). This picture, well preserved and unscathed, adorns the Imperial Gallery at Vienna. The harmony of the colouring has alone suffered to some extent by the blue coming through, as well as by the fading of the shadows in the green drapery. But we can still admire in all their original splendour the most perfect drawing and execution of this incomparable masterpiece. There is probably no other product of German painting in which magnificence and poetry are united to the same extent. We need not hesitate to assert that this masterly creation of Dürer's is the most sublime work of sacred art produced on this side of the Alps. If he who beholds it is himself a believer, it transports his spirit to the abodes of the blessed. The Holy Trinity appears amidst radiant clouds, surrounded by angelic choirs, the circles of which vanish into im-

measurable distance. God the Father, in crown and kingly mantle, enthroned upon the double rainbow, holds in his hands the Cross on which God the Son offers himself for mankind, and over his head the Holy Ghost hovers in the form of a dove. On either side kneel the elect of the Old Testament and the saints of Christendom, with the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist at their head. Next to them are ranged on a lower circle of clouds the unnumbered host



Fig. 63. THE MAN OF SORROWS. Frontispiece to the "Great Passion".

of the nameless saints of all ranks, from emperor and pope to peasant and beggar-woman. Far below lies the earth, a wide landscape lighted with rosy beams from heaven. The donor of the picture, Matthäus Landauer, is represented among the Saints in a humble attitude, near the left side of the picture, close to the Cardinal who turns round with a gesture of encouragement. Albrecht Dürer himself stands on the ground below, withdrawn modestly to a distance as compared with the inhabitants of heaven, but gazing with just self-consciousness towards the mortal beholder, to whom he names himself as the author of the picture. Both in the picture of the Ten Thousand Martyrs and in the Heller altarpiece, as first of all in the Feast of the Rose-Garlands, he had painted himself in the background, and in patriotic pride added to his name the epithet "German". On the tablet which bears the inscription in the All Saints' altarpiece he named himself, with pride in his native place, as a son of the town in which the picture was to be kept. The All Saints' altarpiece, which is on a very small scale in proportion to its mighty subject, was exhibited, in the place for which it was intended, in a splendidly carved wooden frame, for which Dürer himself had made the design. At a time in which the people of Nuremberg had forgotten to value their great fellow-citizen as he deserved, that zealous Dürer-collector, the Emperor Rudolph II., succeeded in acquiring the picture. The empty frame was left behind at Nuremberg, and is now in the Germanic Museum, unfortunately disfigured by a coat of grey paint. It is a structure composed of a richly decorated base, ornamental columns



Fig. 64. CHRIST TAKEN PRISONER (1510), from the "Great Passion".



Fig. 65. THE RESURRECTION (1510), from the "Great Passion".

at the sides, an entablature supported by the latter, and above this a semicircular headpiece. In the tympanum of the arch at the top and in the frieze which covers the entablature there is a representation of the Last Judgment with carved figures; on the sides of the headpiece there are detached figures of angels with trumpets and on the summit of the whole there is an angel with a cross.

In the invention of this rich architectural setting to his picture Dürer declared himself a true Renaissance artist in the sense that he replaced late Gothic decoration by the revived forms of classical antiquity. He had seen works of art at Venice in which the motives of antique architecture and decorative art were reflected and he did homage to the predominant taste of his own day in attempting to introduce similar motives in his own creations. Even before his visit to Venice he had occasionally—especially in the *Life of the Virgin*—endeavoured to compose out of his confused ideas buildings intended to resemble the antique. He now possessed, if not an actual understanding, at least some sort of knowledge of the architecture of antiquity, obtained by the sight of the productions of the Renaissance in North Italy. Perhaps the prettiest example of his attempts to make an independent application of the knowledge which he had acquired in this connexion is a drawing of the year 1509 preserved in the Basle Museum. It is a pen-drawing slightly washed with water-colours, representing the Virgin and the infant Jesus in a composition full of charm and grace, watching the play of little child-angels, while the foster-father, Joseph, tired out with work, has fallen asleep at the table behind them; above this lovely group is an arched portico, open at the sides, the rich forms of which occupy the larger part of the sheet. In this case Dürer has designed with evident pleasure and with a refined sense of beauty a piece of architecture in antique style, with Corinthian columns and a coffered barrel-roof (Fig. 57).

In the year in which he finished the picture of the Trinity Dürer published his "three large books" as a connected work, that is to say the two series, the *Life of the Virgin* and the *Great Passion*, which he had completed in the meantime, and a new edition of the *Apocalypse* with a frontispiece added to it.

In front of this great collection of woodcuts stands the newly drawn frontispiece to the *Life of the Virgin*. In this charming design, which fills only a portion of the page, in order to leave room for the title, we see the Virgin Mary with the child at her breast, represented, at the same time, as the woman of the *Apocalypse*, with the moon under her feet, surrounded by the sun, and having a crown of twelve stars over her head. It is wonderful what an impression of radiant light Dürer has managed to produce with black lines (Fig. 59). Next to the title are placed the sixteen cuts which have already been mentioned. After these come two splendid designs, added in 1510, in which we see clearly, when we compare them with the earlier ones, how much Dürer had perfected his style in the meantime. The first of the two represents the death-chamber of the Virgin. We are



Fig. 66. THE ADORATION OF THE TRINITY BY ALL SAINTS. Altarpiece, 1511. In the Imperial Gallery, Vienna.  
(From a photograph by J. Löwy, Vienna.)

conscious of the solemn silence, in which all voices are hushed and no footstep is heard, in the circle of the Apostles round the bed, on which the Mother of Christ, with her countenance beautified by death and an expression of blissful peace upon it, has just drawn her last breath (Fig. 60). Then comes the Assumption of the Virgin, a composition which in its general arrangement resembles the Heller altarpiece, though in all details it is freshly thought out. Below, the Apostles are assembled round the stone coffin which was to have contained the body of the Virgin and look up to heaven full of astonishment at the incomprehensible event. Above, she who has been released from the grave kneels in a space full of radiant beams, over clouds and rainbow, with her form transfigured and made



Fig. 67 THE HOLY TRINITY. Woodcut of 1511.





Fig. 68. THE MASS OF ST. GREGORY. Woodcut of 1511.

younger, and receives the crown of heaven from the Triune God (Fig. 61). After this there follows yet another and extremely delightful concluding design, which must have been produced, by the style of the drawing, before the visit to Venice, and which forms, as it were, an epilogue to the story of Our Lady's life. The Virgin sits as Queen of Heaven, with the child Jesus on her lap, worshipped by angels and saints, but she sits not on a



Fig. 69. THE HOLY FAMILY. Woodcut of 1511.

celestial throne but in a familiar, earthly chamber, as a gracious intercessor whom mortals dare to approach.

On the title-page which Dürer designed for the Passion, after he had made up his mind to publish this work which had been put on one side for so long, Christ appears as the Man of Sorrows, a mode of representation which had come into use in the late middle ages, as a compendium of all the Saviour's sufferings: stripped, scourged, crowned with thorns,

mocked, with his hands and feet pierced with nails, brought down even to the grave, the Saviour fixes a look filled with profound agony on the beholder (Fig. 63). In the Passion the difference between the older compositions and the four new ones dated 1510, in which the cutting has been successfully done, is very great. One of these pages, the Last Supper, forms the commencement of the series. The saying, "One of you shall betray me", causes an excitement among the apostles; Judas cowers, hides his money-bag and makes as if he were the last one whom the words could concern. The next of the cuts of 1510 represents the Betrayal



Fig. 70. THE VIRGIN WITH THE PEAR CUT OPEN.  
Oil-painting of 1512, in the Imperial Gallery, Vienna.  
(From a photograph by J. Löwy, Vienna.)

of Christ, a scene full of animation and passionate movement. The hand and lips of the betrayer still touch the head of the Betrayed, and the latter is already bound with cords, while the fierce, tumultuous throng make ready to drag off the victim, who, in this fearful moment, in which his destiny of suffering is being accomplished in fact, sends a look of human terror to implore help from heaven. The fierce anger of Peter, who brandishes the sword over the servant Malchus, thrown violently to the ground, is as easy to understand as it is ineffectual in result (Fig. 64). The two other new compositions form the conclusion of the Passion, Christ's Descent into Hell and his Resurrection. The draughtsman carries us by the force of his imagination into Limbo, where Christ delivers the Souls of the Patriarchs out of a deep dungeon amidst the ineffectual raging of hideous devilish shapes. Behind those who have been set free we see the open gate of Hell, which discloses to the eye nothing but a boundless sea of ever-burning flames, the heat of which, as it rises, makes a draught in which the Redeemer's flag of victory is seen to flutter. No less magnificent is the picture of the

Resurrection. A strong guard of armed men surrounds the sepulchre. Some of them are asleep; an old warrior gives a rough shake to one of these who are forgetting their duty; one is just waking, and opens his eyes with a yawn, seeing without yet comprehending what he sees; others, however, are aware of the miracle which is taking place. Over the closed stone lid of the grave, on which are seen the seals placed by those in authority still intact, the Saviour ascends, received into a cloud and greeted by hosts of cherubim. He raises his countenance, with the threefold glory of rays surrounding it which betokens his Divinity, towards heaven; in his left hand he holds the banner of victory, with his right hand he blesses the world which he has redeemed by the accomplishments of his Passion (Fig. 65).

The drawing which Dürer prefixed as a frontispiece to the Apocalypse represents St. John the Evangelist, to whom the Mother of God appears as the "Woman clothed with the Sun" of Revelations.

It is remarkable that in printing the text of the Life of the Virgin and of the Passion—Latin verses composed by his friend Chelidonium, a Benedictine monk—Dürer adopted the newly introduced Renaissance type, the so-called Latin type, which the Italian printers had invented in imitation of the old Roman handwriting. For the text of the Apocalypse he retained the late Gothic characters of the first edition.

In the same year, 1511, Dürer published a small book which contains a pictorial narrative of the Passion of Christ in yet another version, accompanied by the poems of Chelidonium. This book also bears the title of a "Passion" (*Passio Christi*), and it has long been usual to distinguish this series of cuts from those of the large book by the names of the "Little" and "Great Passion". The Little Passion consists of thirty-seven woodcuts, a design for the title-page of Christ as Man of Sorrows sitting on a stone, and thirty-six cuts of the small size of about five by four inches, which tell the story of the act of Redemption in detail and in a more popular manner, in compositions mostly of a few figures only. All the small designs, some of which are dated 1509, others 1510, seem to have been drawn quickly, one after another. The narrative begins with the Fall and the Expulsion from Paradise, as the events which gave occasion for the Redemption. After the Incarnation of the Redeemer has been set forth by the Annunciation and Nativity, the Farewell of Jesus to his Mother forms the introduction to the events of the week of suffering, which begin with the Entry into Jerusalem. Before and after the Last Supper, the Expulsion of the Money-changers from the Temple and the Washing of the Apostles' feet are inserted. The Prayer on the Mount of Olives, in which Christ, in conflict within his soul, holds up his hands before his brow and presses them together, exceeds in grandeur and impressive depth of conception the corresponding design of the Great Passion. The occurrences which intervene between the arrest and the condemnation are depicted in full detail, from the confrontation with Annas to the scene of Pilate washing his hands. After the Bearing of the Cross, Verónica, standing, with the



Fig. 71. CHARLEMAGNE. Oil-painting of 1512, in the Germanic Museum, Nuremberg.

imprint of Christ's countenance on her napkin, between St. Peter and St. Paul, follows as a subject apart. We see Christ being nailed to the Cross, and uttering the Last Words as he hangs upon it; then his descent to the lower world, his body being taken down from the Cross, wept over at the foot of the Cross, and laid in the sepulchre. The Resurrection is followed by the appearance of the Risen Saviour to his Mother, to Mary Magdalene—a very poetical composition (Fig. 62)—to the disciples at Emmaus and to St. Thomas. Then follows the Ascension, in which the vanishing of Christ is symbolized in a curious, but effective manner, by nothing remaining visible except his feet. The Descent of the Holy Ghost, and the Second Coming of Christ at the Last Day, conclude the series.

Nothing says more of the inexhaustible fertility of Dürer's imagination than the fact that he was occupied at the same time in finishing his work upon a series of line-engravings which also dealt with the Passion of the Saviour, in yet another series of compositions.

In addition to the four books, Dürer brought into the market quite a number of single woodcuts. In 1510 he also published a few woodcuts with a rhyming text of some length which he had composed himself and marked as his intellectual property by adding his monogram at the end; he wrote maxims of conduct, admonitions to prepare for death, and meditations on the Passion of Christ.

The date 1511 is found on several single woodcuts of special beauty. Before all, there is the large cut of the Holy Trinity, an outcome of his studies for the Landauer Altarpiece, and itself a sublime picture, wonderfully superhuman in feeling. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son", is the theme of the composition. Above the clouds, in which the winds are blowing in four directions, God the Father is enthroned in infinite space, filled with the radiance which emanates from the Godhead. He holds the Son upon his lap, in the figure of the victim who has suffered martyrdom and death, and a shudder of pain passes through the angelic hosts, who bear among them the emblems of Christ's suffering and death (Fig. 67). This cut is a masterpiece of the wood-engraver's art, giving full effect and clearness to every stroke of the draughtsman. Dürer had now so trained the forces which he employed in cutting his designs on wood, that he was able to entrust them with tasks which, like this print, attained the full effect and all the delicacy of line of an engraving on copper.

Another large woodcut of the same year, "The Mass of St. Gregory", is also one of the most magnificent creations of Dürer's poetical imagination. We see how before the eyes of Pope Gregory, as he is saying Mass, the retable of the altar turns to a coffin, from which the Man of Sorrows rises, surrounded by the instruments of torture and the other familiar emblems of his Passion; lamenting angels bow before the touching figure, which gazes at the spectator with a look of unspeakable sorrow. In the background everything is lost in a dark vapour, which comes like a veil in front



Fig. 72. ST. JEROME WITH THE WILLOW-TREE. Dry-point, 1512.

of the ministering bishops, gathers into thick masses of cloud, and mingles with the smoke of the incense. It is astonishing how perfectly the visionary character of an apparition is brought to view: the phantom stands before the beholder as if in tangible and corporeal shape, but in the next moment it will vanish, the mist will melt away, and the converted recipient of this mark of divine favour will perceive nothing but the real people about him who have had no share in it (Fig. 68).

There is the genuine poetry of a holy life on earth in the print of the Holy Family surrounded by their kinsfolk. Every one of these persons is a character, and a few tree-trunks and the ridge of a hill conjure up the



Fig. 73. CHRIST BEFORE CAIAPHAS (1512).  
From the engraved Passion.

impression of outdoor comfort and a charming landscape (Fig. 69).

The paintings which Dürer carried out in succession to the Landauer altarpiece demanded no such immense degree of industry as the master with his delicate and conscientious style of execution had spent upon the altarpictures of the last few years. They are works on a large scale and yet of considerably smaller dimensions. The Picture-Gallery at Vienna possesses a charming little Madonna of the year 1512, which is usually named after a pear cut open which the infant Jesus holds in his little hand as he rests upon his mother's arms (Fig. 70). Dürer's Italian contemporaries, like the artists of classical antiquity, saw in sensuous beauty a means

of expressing spiritual perfection, and the beauty which they presented to the eye in their Madonnas was far beyond anything which lay in the power of the German master to produce. But not one of them is his equal in portraying maidenly holiness. No beauty of form could produce so lasting an effect on the beholder as the undefinable charm of perfect purity of heart which dwells in the sweet girlish face of this Madonna of Dürer's.

Dürer, further, painted in 1512, as a commission for his native town, which had honoured him in 1509 by making him a member of the council, two life-sized portraits of emperors to adorn the "relic chamber", an apartment devoted to the custody of the imperial jewels. The emperors to be represented were Charles the Great as founder of the Empire and Sigismund as the Emperor who had entrusted the "relics" to the care of the loyal town of Nuremberg. For the latter, Dürer made use of an older portrait; in his Charles the Great he created the ideal picture of the mighty ruler, which has lived ever since in the ideas of the German people (Fig. 71). The town never parted with these pictures, and they are now,



very largely re-painted, in the Germanic Museum.

After that, Dürer abandoned oil-painting almost entirely for several years in succession. Comparatively short as the time might be in which he produced the pictures which he had spent the greatest pains on preparing, and which he had wrought out with the utmost detail, he could not get on fast enough for his own satisfaction with the "laborious pegging away", as he complained even in 1509 in a letter to Heller; he much preferred "attending to his engraving".

The prints which were most on his mind when he wrote those words were the Passion series already mentioned. He had already carried out part of this task whilst he was working at the Heller

altarpiece, as is proved by the dates 1508 and 1509 on several of the prints. The majority of the engravings which belonged to the series were completed in 1512, and in the following year he published the entire set, which consisted of sixteen small prints. The Passion on copper begins with a frontispiece representing the Man of Sorrows standing by the column of the Flagellation, with streams of the redeeming blood pouring from his wounded side on the heads of Mary and John, who stand here as representatives of all redeemed mankind (Fig. 58). Then it relates the story of Christ's suffering, death and victory over death in little prints of delicate execution, the special character of which is a profound sympathy with the subject represented—a subject well suited to the devoted and concentrated labour of the engraver on copper. If the Little Passion on wood may be called a popular narrative, the Passion on copper may be compared to a series of poems of deep emotion (Fig. 55, 56, 73, 74, 75). If you look at these little prints with a devotion similar to that which went to their production, you will find in them a source of never-ending enjoyment.



Fig. 74. CHRIST DESCENDING INTO HELL (1512).  
From the engraved Passion.



Fig. 75. THE ENTOMBMENT (1512), from the engraved Passion.

The prints of the Passion on copper produced in 1512, a year in which Dürer was able to give himself up to this work with more abundant leisure, considerably surpass in delicacy those which were engraved earlier. Generally speaking, it was at this period that Dürer made the most rapid and important advances in handling the burin. Engraving was now decidedly his favourite occupation, and constant practice and the untiring effort to attain something fresh led him to extraordinary success. Prints like the splendid composition, engraved in 1513, of the two lamenting angels who hold up before the eyes of the whole world the picture of the Saviour, crowned with thorns (Fig. 76), are so

beautiful also in respect of the technique that one would think a higher degree of perfection in their manner of engraving hardly possible. And yet Dürer went even further, while he sought in engraving the means of giving current expression in perfect form to his innermost feelings. In the years 1513 and 1514 he produced the three prints which mark the culminating point of German engraving, and belong, at the same time, to Dürer's most finished works from a purely artistic point of view, as utterances from the depths of the artist's soul, in which thought and form are one. These are the three prints which at all periods have met with unanimous admiration, "The Knight, Death and the Devil", "Melancholy" and "St. Jerome in his Cell".

There is an old tradition which explains "The Knight, Death and the Devil" with reference to a story told in Dürer's days about a knight named Philip Rink. But the composition needs no explanation to interfere with the direct and striking force of its poetical power and beauty. The scene is a road through a wild ravine, with slippery ground. A knight is

riding with his spear laid on his shoulder. It is evening; the clearness of the atmosphere after sunset makes itself felt in the cloudless piece of sky visible above the wall of rock and intersected by the irregular lines of the bushes which grow out of the cliff; the waning light falls softly on the castle which stands on the summit of a distant hill. In the awful gorge



Fig. 76. TWO ANGELS WITH ST. VERONICA'S NAPKIN. Engraving of 1513.

itself it is cool and dark. An expiring ray of evening light which rests on the cliff on one side, yields to the gathering darkness. The road grows narrower every moment as it leads, between walls which rise higher and higher, into the uncanny gloaming. Does it lead to destruction? By the sight of the knight rides a pale spectre, Death, and behind him slinks a horrible Devil, raising its clawed hand to seize him, with a look of hideous greed in its glowing eyes. The knight's horse and dog feel an alarming

presence, but he himself knows no fear; he rides forward, looking neither to right nor to left, with a firm and unshaken bearing. Every German heart will comprehend the knight who persists in spite of Death and the Devil in the course on which he has entered (Fig. 117). Such a man of resolute action is not tormented by the subtle doubts to which the fantastic print of "Melancholy" makes allusion. Here is a seated figure which personifies the power of the human intellect, crowned with the laurel of fame, surrounded by all kinds of symbols of human knowledge and power, such as tools and figures of solid geometry. This mighty being may soar far away on her stalwart pinions, yet at last she sinks exhausted in the consciousness of her imperfection. She is like the child which sits on the millstone doing sums and exercises on a tablet. She almost envies the brute which has no yearning after knowledge to mar its slumber. The crucible of the alchemist, by which the ultimate elements of things refuse to be revealed, and the sphere, the content of which cannot be expressed in numbers, are symbols of the limitation of the human spirit and counterparts of the ladder leaning against the tower, in mockery of the tiny height above the earth to which man is able to raise himself. Space and time set limits to the human intellect. The hour-glass and the bell on the wall of the tower, where a square frame of numbers tells of the aimless trifling of human ingenuity, proclaim that time is fleeting and that its hours are numbered. And over the vanishing horizon of the ocean the enigmatical apparition of a comet gleams through the infinite space of the heavens, adorned with the intangible shape of a rainbow. Conscious of her own nothingness in the presence of the universe, the genius gazes before her, dejected, with drooping pinions, and her hand rests idly on the book, in which the incomprehensible mystery is not told, and on the compasses with which she cannot measure the unattainable (Fig. 79). The beholder may think, perhaps, that the composition is overladen with far-fetched and scarcely intelligible allusions. But their interpretation in detail is not an indispensable condition for the enjoyment of the print; the whole speaks to us in a perfectly intelligible way by suggesting one thought—that we can know nothing. Dürer has somewhere even written the confession: "The falsehood is in our apprehension, and the darkness is so thick within us that even our groping is a failure." There is a perfect contrast to this in the type of a seeker after truth who finds complete satisfaction in his work, exemplified in the person of St. Jerome. Altogether absorbed in his work, the great father of the church sits in his comfortable scholar's chamber; we feel the genial warmth which the sunlight brings into the room, subdued as it is by the panes of bottle-glass in the casement; the Saint's lion rests in peaceful slumber, with a little dog beside it (Fig. 81). In these two prints Dürer is again German to the core. One need possess no so-called understanding for art; it is enough to have a German heart, to sympathize with the moods which they evoke.



Fig. 77. THE KNIGHT, DEATH AND THE DEVIL. Engraving of 1513.



Fig. 78. DÜRER'S MOTHER.  
Charcoal-drawing of 1514, in the Royal Print-Cabinet, Berlin.

The note in Dürer's hand in the right-hand upper corner may be translated: "1514 on Oculi Sunday (March 19th). This is Albrecht Dürer's mother; she was 63 years of age." After her death he added in ink: "And departed this life in the year 1514 on Tuesday before Holy Cross Day (May 16th) at two o'clock in the night."

The years in which Dürer was bringing such jewels of perfect imaginative art from the inmost treasure-chamber of his heart, brought upon him the greatest sorrow of his life, the illness and death of his mother. He has given a striking and explicit narrative of this in a special memorandum. The pious, gentle and benevolent woman died, after an illness of more than a year, on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 1514. A few weeks before her death on "Oculi Sunday" Dürer had drawn her portrait of the size of life in charcoal. The Print-Cabinet at Berlin now possesses this touching likeness; an emaciated, furrowed countenance with an expression of patient resignation, beholding death close at hand (Fig. 78). Dürer certainly never threw his heart more completely

into a piece of work than when he made this evidently rapid drawing. In her ceaseless activity as a busy, careful housewife, his mother in former days had very likely never found an hour to spare to sit to her son, who now preserved the sad likeness of the invalid in her enforced leisure. It may have been pain and grief to him to follow line by line the ravages which imminent death had wrought on the beloved countenance, but he spared himself no jot of the distressing task: the relaxation of the muscles of the eye, which causes the two pupils to diverge; the sinking-in of the cartilage of the nose; the dreadful emaciation which causes the bones and the separate muscles of the neck to stand out with frightful distinctness under the shrunken skin—nothing is passed over. Such is the love and reverence which Dürer had for nature. If he had to copy anything actually existing, simply for its own sake, he copied it exactly as it was. His fidelity and honesty were then so absolutely complete, that his realism cannot be surpassed even by a hair's breadth by any of our modern artists.



Fig. 79. MELANCHOLY. Engraving of 1514.

Dürer's studies offer numerous instances of this. A specially telling example is the portrait, rapidly drawn with the pen, reproduced as Fig. 80, a sketch of a woman whose good-natured face, disfigured by an enlargement of the right eyelid, occurs more than once among Dürer's drawings—probably a person connected with the family.

By way of paintings, the year 1514 has nothing to show but a head of Christ, of doubtful genuineness, in the Kunsthalle at Bremen. To 1515 belongs a Virgin as "Mater Dolorosa", supposed to be standing under the



Fig. 80. PEN-DRAWING FROM LIFE (1514), probably representing Dürer's sister-in-law, Katharina Frey. In the Royal Print-Cabinet, Berlin.

or Gate of Honour, and the Triumphal Procession. The Emperor's friend and faithful attendant, the historian, poet and mathematician Johannes Stabius, undertook the planning of the work, and composed the inscriptions. The Gate of Honour and the Triumphal Procession were each to appear as a gigantic sheet of woodcuts, and Dürer received a commission to prepare first of all the design of the Gate of Honour. In 1515 he had completed the great mass of pictures of which this curious structure is composed. He had been working at it for three years. Ninety-two woodblocks, the cutting of which was carried out by the Nuremberg wood-engraver, Hieronymus Andreä, were required to make up the sheet, which, when put together complete, is more than nine feet high and very nearly as wide. The whole represents a building which bears a very distant resemblance to a Roman triumphal arch, covered all over with scenes from the Emperor's life (Fig. 82—85), historical and emblematic figures, arms, ornament of all kinds, and inscriptions. In the place of his usual monogram Dürer has here introduced his family arms, the shield with the open door.

Cross, in the Pinakothek at Munich. Both works are of minor importance. Most of Dürer's time was now taken up by commissions given to him by the Emperor.

The Emperor Maximilian, who delighted in exalting his own person, without being vain for all that—a trait in accordance with the spirits of that age and evidenced even in Dürer's case by his numerous portraits of himself—the Emperor had himself conceived the idea of a magnificent series of designs for the glorification of his own life. The whole was to represent a Triumph, and was to consist of two parts, the Triumphal Arch



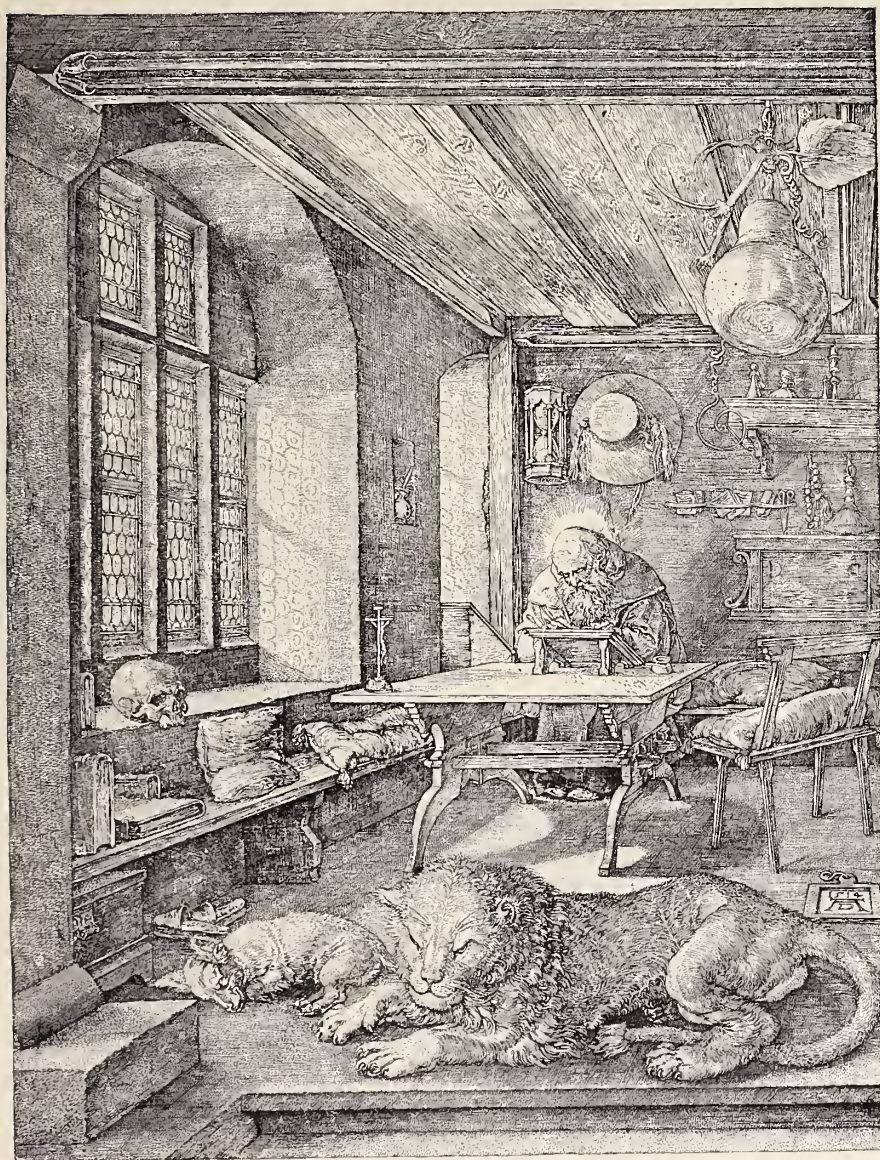


Fig. 81. ST. JEROME IN HIS CELL. Engraving of 1514.

In this gigantic woodcut we cannot fail to be astonished at the vivacity of Dürer's imagination even under the restraint of precise and binding directions, and at the way in which he always contrived to introduce variety into the numerous representations of battles and sieges. It is not so attractive, however, as another piece of work which he carried out in 1515 for the Emperor, and in which he was able to follow to his heart's desire the suggestions of his fancy and the world of forms which filled it. Maximilian had had a book of prayers printed for his personal use. In a

copy of this book, which is now in the Royal Library at Munich, Dürer decorated forty-five leaves with marginal ornaments drawn with the pen. The wealth of artistic invention here displayed baffles all description. Now with immediate reference to the prayers, now digressing to follow up an idea suggested by a clause or a single word, at times yielding apparently to a suggestion of the merest caprice, the master has drawn on the wide margins of the vellum leaves the most sublime and heavenly shapes, as well as figures from life in jest and earnest; fabulous monsters and beasts of all kind, natural and fictitious, are introduced; the most exquisite ornament of wonderful twining plants shoots out and luxuriates in all directions; bold strokes of the pen compose curious marks or figures of animals, or are entwined into symmetrical ornaments, or allowed to run riot in twists and flourishes. The marginal drawings fit the rectangle of printed text just as closely or loosely as their subjects do the words themselves; in one place they form a complete frame to it, in another they form a strip of decoration on one side only; or they enclose it on both sides, or, again, they make a cluster in one corner only; it is only in a few cases, at the end of a section, that they are confined to a vignette at the foot of the



Fig. 82. A single subject from the great sheet of woodcuts, "Triumphal Arch":  
THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN AND HIS BRIDE, MARY OF BURGUNDY.



Fig. 83. A single cut from the "Triumphal Arch":  
TROOPS ENTERING A TOWN AFTER A SIEGE.

page. Their charm is inexhaustible and every page has an effect of its own to suggest. The first of the pages decorated by Dürer displays, as the accompaniment of a prayer which contains a confident committal to the divine protection, a bright and cheerful ornament of roses among which animals are playing, whilst in the upper branches there sits a man blowing a pipe and expressing in his attitude and countenance a mood of absolute contentment. Then there are prayers in which St. Barbara, St. Sebastian and St. George are mentioned and the figures of these Saints are introduced beside them: Barbara as a lovely young princess, standing on a flower; Sebastian, pierced by arrows, bound to a tree, under the roots of which the evil serpent hisses in impotent rage and lashes its tail; George, a fine knight in armour, standing inflexible as iron with uplifted spear in his right hand, while his left hand closes on the neck of the vanquished dragon, which he holds up as if it were the spoils of the chase. Further on, the ornament accompanying a prayer which speaks of the fragility of man



Fig. 84. A single cut from the "Triumphal Arch":  
THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN RECEIVING THE SUBMISSION OF A BESIEGED CITY.

contains the humorous figure of a physician who gazes through his spectacles with a self-important air at the glass in which he is diagnosing his patient's malady; beneath him sits a hare, and over him hangs a thrush caught in a springe. For a prayer which speaks of the conversion of bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood, Dürer has drawn the Saviour as the bleeding Man of Sorrows. On the occasion of a prayer to be said in the agony of death, he has drawn a subject of the Dance of Death; Death, not in the form of a wild man as in the engraving of 1503, nor a strange, weird phantom as in the famous print of 1513, but represented as a corpse shrunken almost to a skeleton, advances with his hour-glass to meet a warrior in gorgeous attire, who tries in vain to draw his sword against the apparition; a thunder-cloud and a heron struck by a falcon are seen over-



Fig. 85. A single cut from the "Triumphal Arch":  
THE INVESTITURE OF THE DUKE OF MILAN.

head. The prayer for benefactors has suggested to the master two emblems of beneficence, the pelican which tears open its own bosom to feed its young, and a well-dressed man who gives alms to a half-naked beggar. Beside the prayer for the departed, he draws an angel carrying a soul out of the flames of purgatory into the glory of God, while little angels send a refreshing blast on those who have yet further penance to endure; there is a companion picture of the Evil One who is seizing souls for torment; at the foot there shoots out of the flames a scheme of lines which shapes itself into a dragon which catches a fluttering butterfly with its long tongue. Then follows in the text the 129<sup>th</sup> (130<sup>th</sup>) Psalm, and here King David is

kneeling with his harp before the Father in Heaven. After the Psalm follow the opening verses of St. John's Gospel. Here the Evangelist is represented sitting in the wilderness with his writing materials about him and gazing up at the radiant vision of the Queen of Heaven with the Infant Christ. After the 50<sup>th</sup> (51<sup>st</sup>) Psalm has been accompanied by designs in which ornament predominates, there is an invocation of the Holy Trinity with a picture of the Triune God; a troop of Cherubim hovers above, and, below, the stem of the cross, on which God the Son is displayed, is transformed into a vine bearing grapes. Along with the meditations on various Saints, which follow next, we see St. George as a knight on horseback in full armour, setting the shaft of his spear, the banner with the sign of the cross waving from it, on the dragon which lies beaten under the horse's hoofs; then St. Apollonia, the Apostles Matthias and Andrew and St. Maximilian, all these with the addition of other small decorative pictures which serve to fill the space, some of which contain very remarkable drawings of animals. Then there follows a splendid composition for the 56<sup>th</sup> (57<sup>th</sup>) Psalm, superscribed with the words "Against the mighty". Christ stands in the cloud with the orb in his left hand, and his right hand raised to bless; the words: "He shall send from heaven and save me" are represented by the Archangel Michael swooping down and overthrowing Satan; "and giveth over unto shame my oppressors" by a King on a Triumphal car drawn by a goat, led by the beard by a child riding on a hobby-horse. There the artist has not omitted a political allusion which characterizes the oppressor more precisely; the king has the crescent instead of the cross upon his orb. With the two succeeding psalms, which bear the common heading, "To be said when a war is to be begun",—they are the 90<sup>th</sup> (91<sup>st</sup>) and the 34<sup>th</sup> (35<sup>th</sup>) Psalms—there is a furious combat represented in each case below, whilst above, on the side margin, an angel hovers praying in heavenly peace. On the next page decorated by Dürer occur the words "As the Jews fell in terror to the earth". Here the artist illustrates the verse of St. John's Gospel, "As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground". And since in representing the Betrayal his thoughts pass to the whole Passion of Christ, he draws also at the side the Virgin as Mater Dolorosa. Further on, the word "temptation" occurring in a prayer gives the draughtsman his subject for the border of the page in question: a soldier walking through a tangle of vegetation listens, half suspiciously, half eagerly, to the note of a strange bird, and the fox of the fable decoys the poultry by playing the flute. With the prayers in honour of the Virgin, the Annunciation is spread over two opposite pages; the wrath of the Devil, who curses with a loud voice and angry gestures, is contrasted with the joy of the angels who are planting a tree. Then by the side of a hymn we see a knight galoping along, pursued by Death with his scythe and menaced by a demon which drops from the foliage. With the 8<sup>th</sup> Psalm go shepherds making music, and birds rejoicing on flowery sprays accompany the words: "O Lord, our governour, how excellent

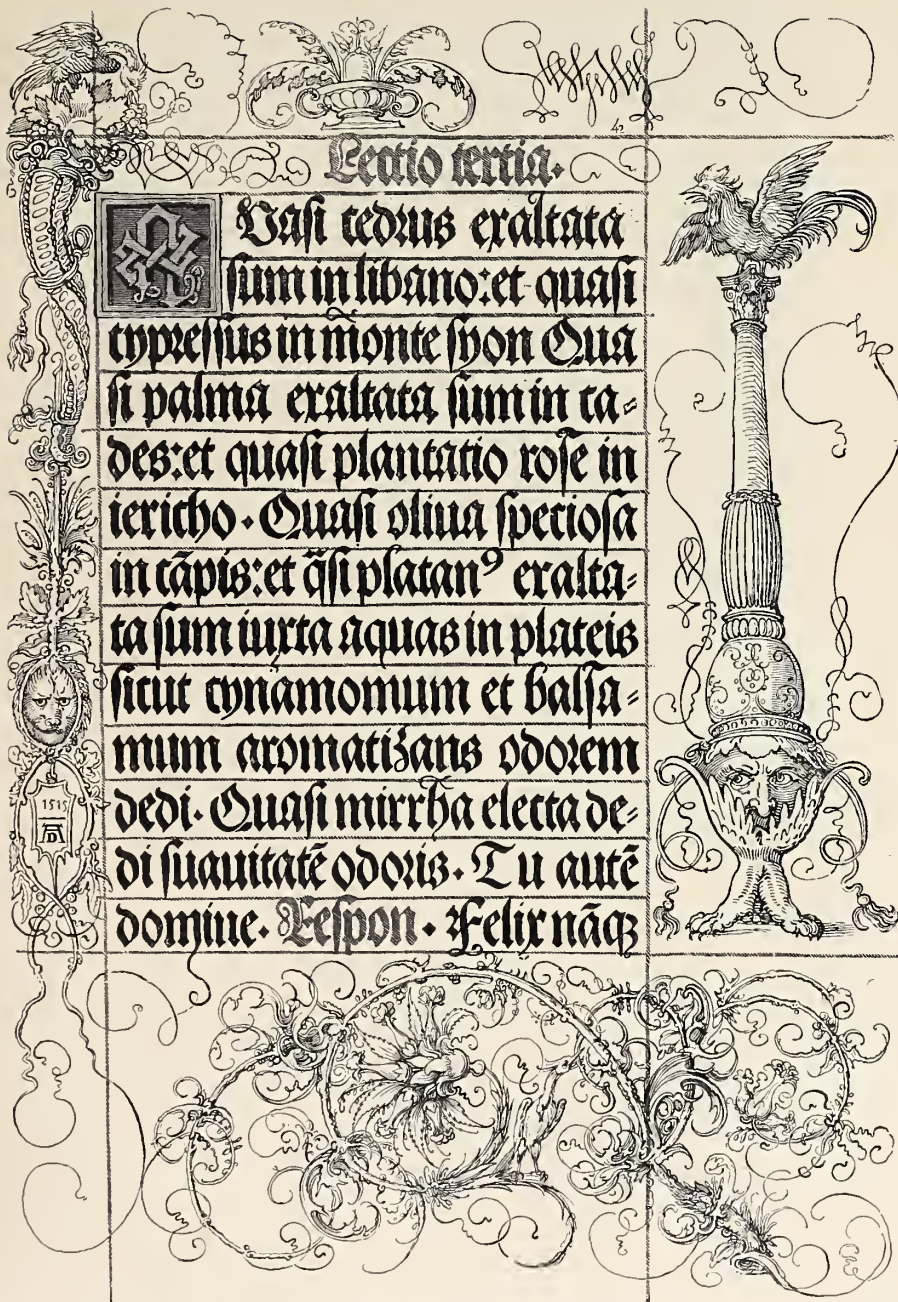


Fig. 86. A PAGE FROM THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN'S PRAYER-BOOK, WITH DÜRER'S DRAWINGS IN THE MARGIN (1515).  
In the Royal Library, Munich.

is thy name in all the world!", whilst a lion devoting his whole attention to a buzzing insect, under the eyes of a hermit, betokens the subjection of the brutes to man. But what can have induced the draughtsman to draw Hercules in his combat with the Stymphalian birds on the margin

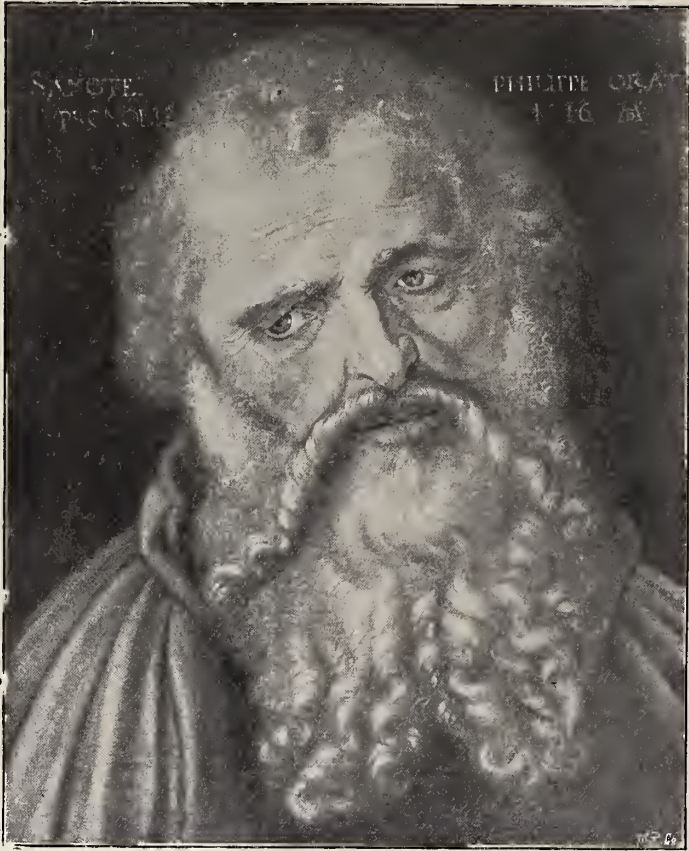


Fig. 87. ST. PHILIP. Tempera painting, 1516. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.  
(From a photograph by Giacomo Brogi, Florence.)

of the 18<sup>th</sup> (19<sup>th</sup>) Psalm? Perhaps only the words "Delighted as a giant". More easy to explain are the motives of the next illustrations to the Psalms. The 23<sup>rd</sup> (24<sup>th</sup>) Psalm has an Indian warrior, suggested to the artist's imagination by the words, "The compass of the world, and they that dwell therein", which made him think of the countries beyond the ocean which were but lately still unknown. An oriental with a camel, belonging to the 44<sup>th</sup> (45<sup>th</sup>) Psalm, may have arisen from the thought of "the rich among the people" offering their gifts. A column, a child-angel with fruit, a dog at play, birds in the branches, a man sleeping comfortably—all these are woven together into a design suggestive of security and peace which frames in the words of the 45<sup>th</sup> (46<sup>th</sup>) Psalm: "Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved." After a page decorated merely with fanciful designs, there follow two pictures which symbolize the contrast between strength and weakness, though it is difficult to find precise places to which they refer in the text of the psalms which they enclose; on one page is Hercules, with a drunken man lying on the ground; on another is a soldier in armour, with an old woman who has gone to sleep over her work.





Fig. 88. ST. JAMES THE GREATER. Tempera painting, 1516. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.  
(From a photograph by Giacomo Brogi, Florence.)

There is a delightful drawing for the 97<sup>th</sup> (98<sup>th</sup>) Psalm: "O sing unto the Lord a new song." A whole band has assembled to make solemn music on the meadow outside the town, and there is an echo of their joyous mood in the curves of the rising foliage which sprouts from the trunks of trees which grow on the meadow. In the text there now follows another set of prayers of various kinds. On the Virgin Mary being mentioned, Dürer has drawn her on the margin in quite a youthful shape, folding her hands for prayer in childlike piety; over her head an angel holds the crown of heaven and at her feet an enchanting little angel sings to the accompaniment of the lute. In contrast to this symbol of pure religious bliss, there appears on the next page worldly folly in the shape of a woman laden with her purchases in the market, who steps with both feet into a vessel full of eggs, while a goose flaps its wings on her head. In the next design a similar contrast of effect is arrived at by the juxtaposition of a Silenus tippling under a vine, with a faun playing to him on the Pan's pipes, and an angel praying in the clouds. Then there follows another page which contains nothing but ornament (Fig. 86). Then comes a very

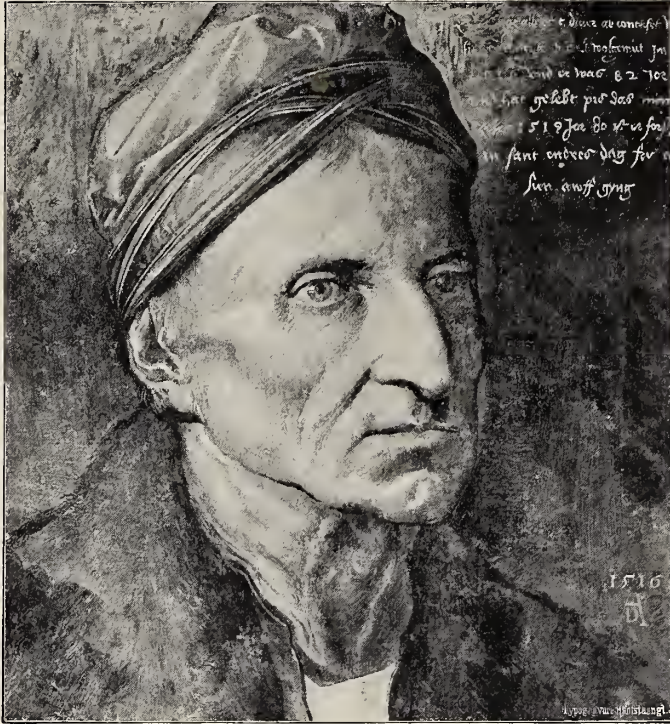


Fig. 89. PORTRAIT OF MICHAEL WOLGEMUT. Oil-painting, 1516.  
In the Pinakothek, Munich.

The inscription in the upper right-hand corner may be translated: "Albrecht Dürer took this likeness of his master, Michael Wolgemut, in the year 1516, and he was 82 years of age, and lived till the year 1519, and then departed on Saint Andrew's Day, very early before sunrise."

(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)

beautiful design at the beginning of the *Te Deum*. On one side stands St. Ambrose, as author of the hymn, a bishop of dignified figure; while, below, the child Christ rides over the earth, with an angel to prepare his way. The next design shows an angel fervently uttering the prayer, "O Lord make haste to help me", for a knight in armour who is assailing a fierce warrior who meets his attack with a halberd. The knight cannot but remind one of the Emperor Maximilian himself, who doubtless superintended in person the entire arrangement of the prayers. The following page, on which Psalms begin again, has a magnificent head of Christ on the napkin of St. Veronica. On the next page Dürer's marginal drawings conclude with a picture full of joy and gladness in every line, with couples dancing to the sound of the pipe, translating into form the opening words of the 99<sup>th</sup> (100<sup>th</sup>) Psalm, "O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands; serve the Lord with gladness."—All this variety of subjects strikes the eye of the beholder as a series of improvisations, full of wit, tact and taste, set down on the inspiration of the moment. The light play of the artist's hand has made a masterly work of every page. If we are justified in comparing



Fig. 90. DESIGN FOR A TOMB (drawn for Peter Vischer). Pen-drawing of 1517.  
In the Uffizi Collection, Florence.

Dürer's All Saints' Altarpiece to Raphael's Disputa, we have quite as much right to call the marginal drawings in the Emperor's prayer-book the German counterpart of the Loggie of the Vatican. Their figure-subjects contain an inexhaustible store of artistic beauty. Their ornament is completely free and original, just as independent of late Gothic decoration as it is of that of the contemporary Italian Renaissance. The purity of the fine, curving lines reveals a lightness and certainty of hand which almost pass comprehension. We are reminded of the old story of Apelles, who never let a day pass without some practice in drawing lines—"nulla dies sine linea". Dürer is said to have been so accomplished a draughtsman as to have been able to draw a circle with a line as fine as a hair without the least departure from mathematical accuracy. Nobody who has seen the marginal drawings in the Emperor Maximilian's prayer-book need doubt that this was a fact.

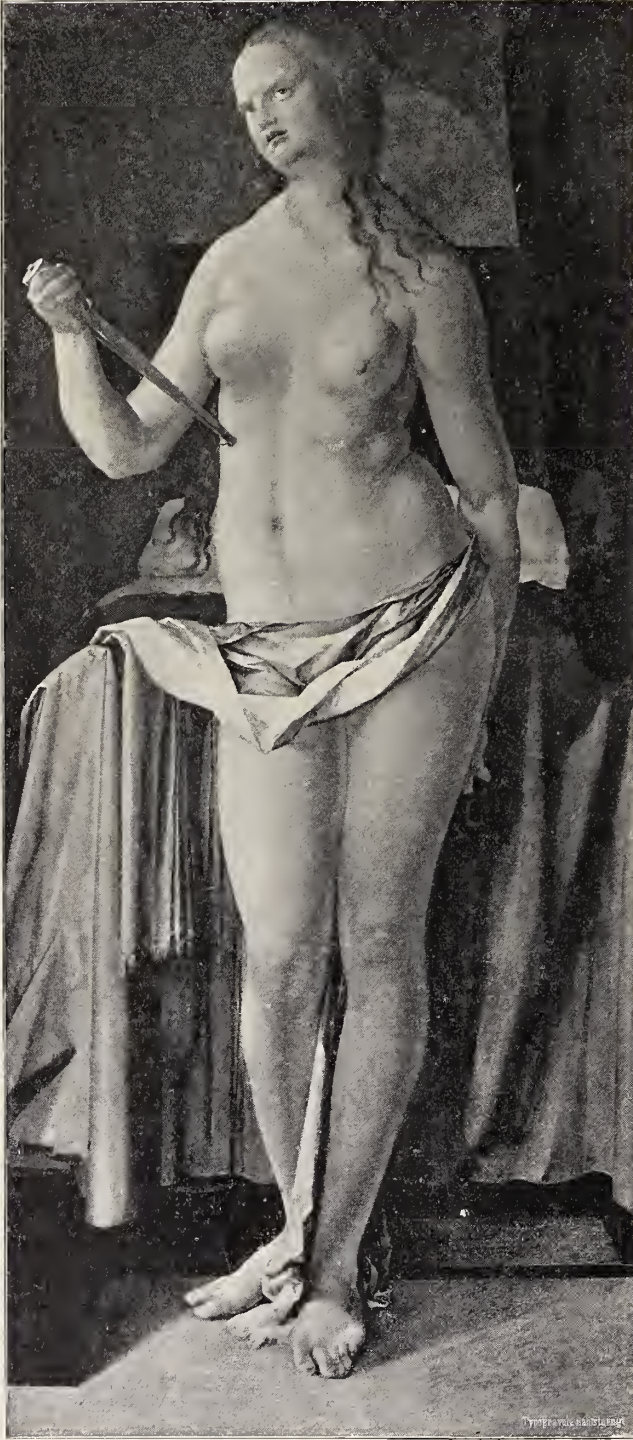


Fig. 91. LUCRETIA. Oil-painting of 1518 in the Pinakothek, Munich.  
(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)

In 1516 Dürer once more carried out some pictures. These are all of small size, partly portraits, partly pictures of saints. One of the portraits is that of Dürer's master, Wolgemut. The venerable painter, who still looks vigorous enough in spite of his advanced age, and whose keen eyes have kept the brightness of youth, is presented to us so vividly that his whole personality seems to be conveyed in the portrait (Fig. 89). Wolgemut had never been a great artist, but an estimable painter who produced altarpieces rich in colour, sound in composition and diligent in execution. Dürer had received from him thoroughly good instruction in the mechanical part of his art, and preserved a grateful respect for him.

Whilst in this picture Dürer's realistic art appears in all its fulness, a small picture of the Virgin in the Augsburg Gallery—called the "Madonna with

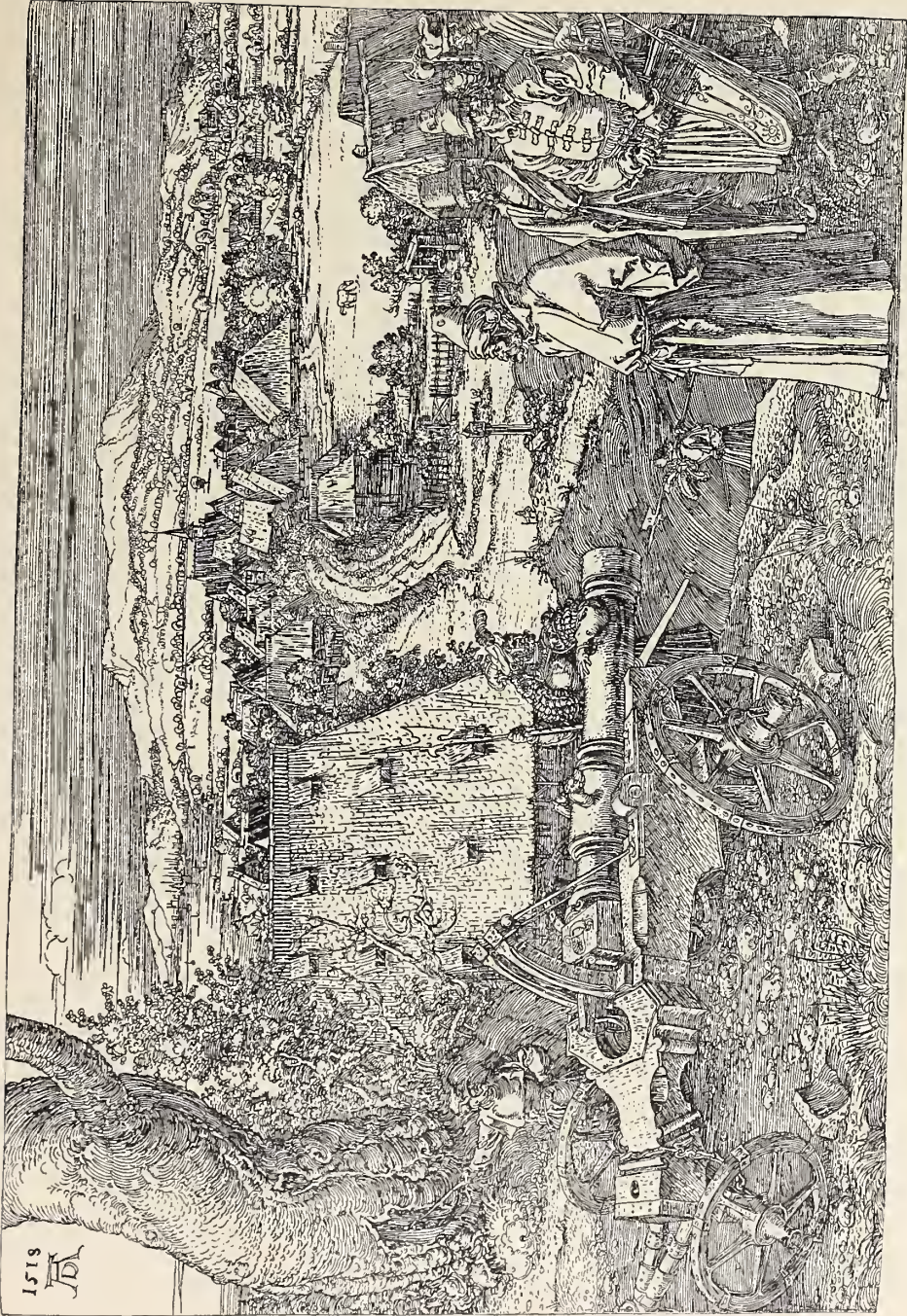


Fig. 92. THE GREAT CANNON. Etching, 1518.



Fig. 93. THE VIRGIN AND TWO ANGELS. Engraving, 1518.



Fig. 94. THE VIRGIN AND CHILD SURROUNDED BY ANGELS. Woodcut, 1518.

the carnation"—consisting of little more than the heads of the Virgin and the Infant Jesus, shows an attempt at idealisation which is rare with Dürer. It may be that a special wish on the part of his patron led him to approximate to the tradition of the old style of art; he has even painted a nimbus round each of the heads, quite against his habit. But the unnatural narrowing of the nose and reduction of the size of the mouth strike one as strange and out of place in a work of Dürer's. Yet in the expression of soul, in the infinite kindness of this virgin mother, the picture is quite worthy of the great master.

The two pictures of apostles in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence may also, perhaps, be described as ideal heads. But in these splendid old men's heads, which represent Philip and James, two emissaries who had travelled far in the service of the faith, the ideal is not sought for by any supposed ennobling of the form, but developed out of the inmost being of the two



Fig. 95. SKETCH FOR THE IMPERIAL CHARIOT in the "Triumphal Procession of Maximilian".  
Pen-drawing in the Albertina, Vienna.

(From a photograph by Braun, Clément and Co., Dornach and Paris.)

personalities; to produce pictures of character was the task which Dürer had set himself (Fig. 87 and 88).

In 1517 Dürer seems again to have put painting quite on one side. At least, this date is not to be found on any of his pictures. In the following year he once more made an attempt to paint an undraped figure of the size of life. He went back to a sketch which he had drawn ten years before, and took the motive from Roman history, in which every educated man took an interest at the time of the Renaissance. He painted Lucretia, leaning against her bed, standing, in the very act of thrusting the dagger into her side (Fig. 91). This picture is important as evidence of Dürer's unremitting labour for his own improvement. For it can hardly be supposed that he had any other motive for painting this picture than the intention of getting practice in overcoming the difficulties of painting the nude human figure. However, he has not succeeded nearly so well in overcoming the difficulties as he did in the earlier pictures of Adam and Eve, to which the Lucretia is inferior in respect of painting and colour,



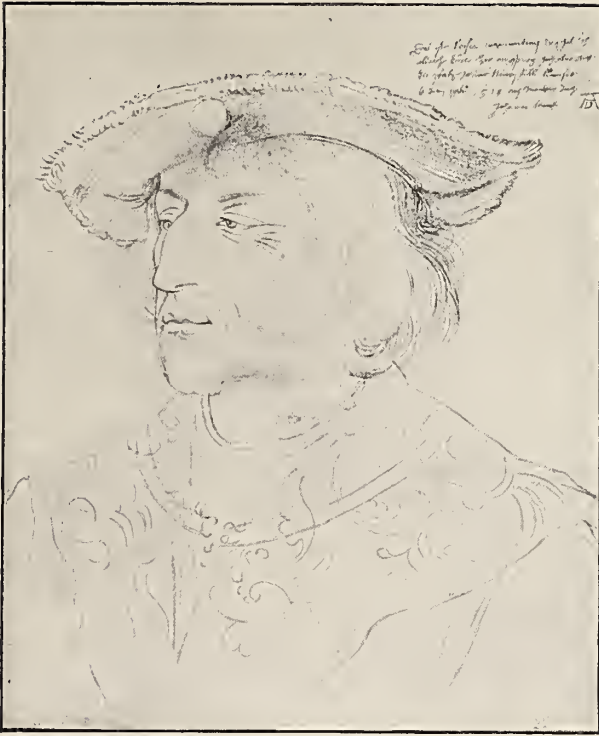


Fig. 96. THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN. Charcoal drawing from the life.  
In the Albertina, Vienna.

Note: "This is the Emperor Maximilian, whose likeness I, Albrecht Dürer, have taken, at Augsburg high up in the palace in his little chamber, in the year of Grace 1518 on Monday after St. John the Baptist's Day."

no less, than in expression. For all that, both the finished modelling of the form, which gives complete roundness to the body, and the beauty of the limbs themselves, deserve recognition.

In his favourite art, that of engraving, Dürer was always busy with fresh efforts. To reach a greater perfection than he had attained in the masterpieces of 1513 and 1514 was impossible to him within the limits of the method of production which he practised. Now, however, he bethought himself of a new technical process which was to procure him the means of multiplying his ideas more easily and with more freshness than the labour of engraving on the plate with the burin would permit. Experiments made still earlier, from about 1510 onwards, with the "dry-point", a sharp instrument which scratches quite delicate lines upon the copper, had not led to any satisfactory result. The chief print of this kind is the "St. Jerome with the willow" of 1512. It is only the very limited number of quite early impressions that can convey any idea of the extraordinary charm and picturesque effect which Dürer aimed at and achieved by drawing with the dry-point as if with an extremely fine pen. In these first impressions the wonderful feeling of the print is fully realised, a feeling



Fig. 97. WOODCUT PORTRAIT OF THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN, 1519.

of the deepest solitude, of seclusion from the outer world and from the great city, of which a narrow cleft in the rock gives the merest glimpse in the distance, a feeling of being alone with God, in whom the Father of the Church is absorbed, as he sits in this remote, rocky nook, where only some meagre grass and a stunted willow-tree find scanty nourishment (Fig. 72). The later impressions are so worn and dull as to convey no idea at all of this feeling and of the vigour of the drawing. After his

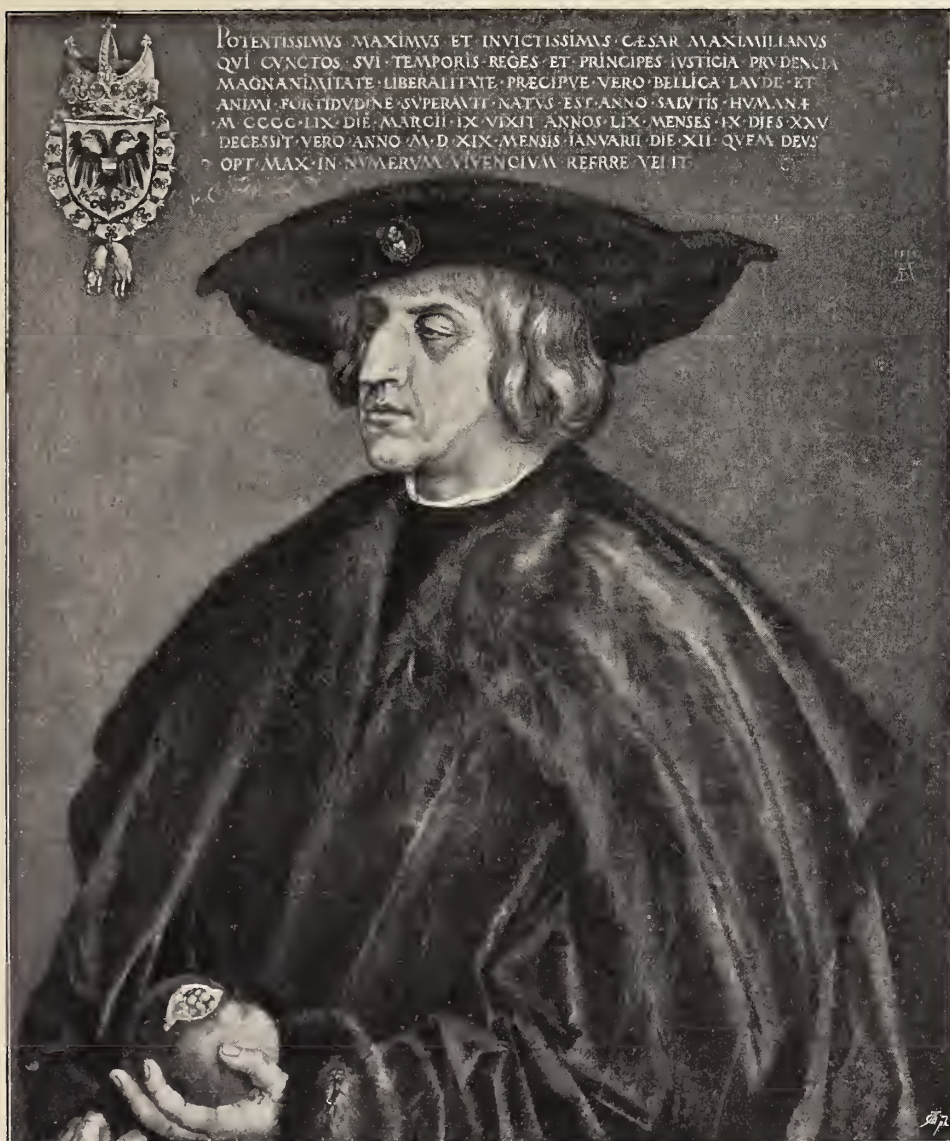


Fig. 98. THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN. Oil-painting of 1519, in the Imperial Gallery, Vienna.

(From a photograph by J. Löwy, Vienna.)

imperfect success with the dry-point, Dürer took to etching, of which he may almost be regarded as the inventor, at least in the sense of making an artistic use of the process. Instead of engraving the design with the burin on the polished metal plate, he scratched it with the needle or etching-point on a ground laid upon the plate, and then etched it into the plate itself with acid, which could not act upon the material of the ground, and therefore attacked the metal only where it was exposed by the lines and dots of the design. Since copper presented difficulties with the process

of etching known to Dürer, he employed plates of iron for this purpose. Dürer's etchings all belong, apparently, to the years 1514 to 1518. At a later time he returned to the burin as the instrument which gave him the most satisfaction. The most celebrated of Dürer's etchings is "the Great Cannon", the view of a piece of ordnance belonging to Nuremberg, mounted on a hill which commands a wide landscape, under the care of a gunner and guarded by a set of sturdy landsknechts, while a group of Turks look on with an expression of anything but approval. The print was directed against the prevailing dread of the Turks (Fig. 92).

A delightful line-engraving of the same year as the etching of the Great Cannon, 1518, is the lovely print of the Madonna, in which two

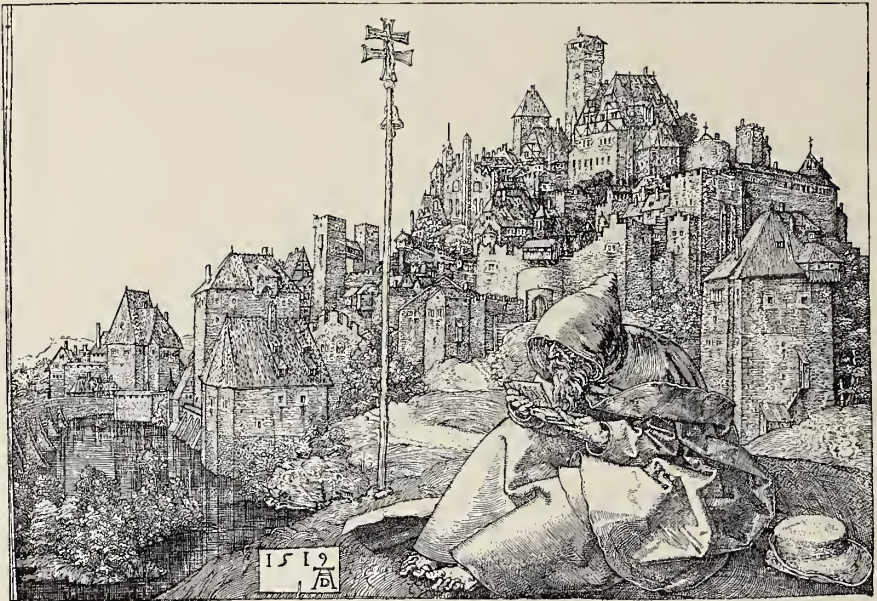


Fig. 99. ST. ANTHONY. Engraving, 1519.

flying angels hold a rich crown over the Virgin's head, while she sits in quiet motherly happiness, and looks away past the child to the spectator, with a serious expression in her face. In the landscape background an extremely commonplace motive is introduced, a simple fence; but with what an exquisite beauty do the lines of this landscape, the distant part of which is seen through the posts of the fence, harmonize with the whole design (Fig. 93).

Dürer continued to publish single woodcuts, in which there was much fine work. What an enchanting tone of childlike, hearty feeling he gave to the delightful poem in honour of the Virgin which he drew on wood in the year 1518! (Fig. 94).

Paintings, etchings, broadsides and woodcuts were simply works of minor importance during this year. Dürer's time and energy were fully

occupied by the task which the Emperor set him to perform. It is true that several other painters besides Dürer were employed on the designs for the huge woodcut of the Triumphal Procession, which was planned on a still more extensive scale than the Triumphal Arch and required, in consequence, a still greater number of blocks. But Dürer's share was quite considerable enough. It was his business to prepare the most important



Fig. 100. PORTRAIT OF FELIX HUNGERSPERG, CAPTAIN OF THE IMPERIAL FORCES.  
A leaf from Dürer's Sketch-book, in the Albertina, Vienna.

"This is Captain Felix the delightful lute-player. Done at Antwerp, 1520."

sections of the long series of pictures, composed of all sorts of groups on foot, on horseback and on cars, for which the Emperor himself had furnished the most precise directions. Amongst other things, Dürer carried out the section which represented the wars of Maximilian. Here, according to the Emperor's original draft, landsknechts were to march along in the procession, carrying boards with pictures of the various wars. This appeared to the master too monotonous, and he followed his own taste in inventing



Fig. 101. COSTUME drawing from the Netherlands Sketch-book.  
 (Note, "a citizen's wife")  
 In the Ambrosiana Library at Milan.  
 (From a photograph by Braun, Clément and Co.,  
 Dornach and Paris.)

ingenious pieces of mechanism, moving stages handsomely decorated, on which the representations of battles, fortresses and the like are given, either in the form of pictures or of groups of sculpture. An especially splendid composition was the car on which the Marriage of Maximilian to Mary of Burgundy was shown. The great Triumphal chariot on which the Emperor and his whole family appeared was to form the central feature of the long procession. The first design sketched by Dürer for this chariot is preserved in a pen-drawing which belongs to the Albertina at Vienna (Fig. 95). But Dürer's friend Wilibald Pirkheimer, who felt himself called upon to take part in working out the subject matter of the Triumphal Procession, thought this design inadequate, for he wanted all the Emperor's virtues, personified, to be visible upon the car or by its side. Pirkheimer ac-

cordingly sent to the Emperor in March, 1518, a new detailed design on this plan. Meanwhile, before this important part of the woodcut was engraved, the whole undertaking was suddenly checked by the death of Maximilian on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1519. Before this happened, Dürer had had the privilege of taking a portrait from life of his imperial master and well-wisher. Dürer was present with the representatives of the town of Nuremberg at the diet convoked by Maximilian at Augsburg in 1518. On the 28<sup>th</sup> June the Emperor sat to him "in his little room at the top of the Palace". Here it was that he produced, evidently in a very short time, the fine charcoal drawing in the Albertina which has handed down to posterity such a speaking likeness of the last of the knights. (Fig. 96).



Fig. 102. STUDIES OF THE HEADS OF TWO WOMEN OF ZEELAND, drawn during the journey in the Netherlands.  
In the collection of the late Duke of Anmale (Musée Condé) at Chantilly.



Fig. 103. CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS. Drawing of 1520. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.



Fig. 104. THE ENTOMBMENT. Drawing of 1521. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.





Fig. 105. DÜRER'S WIFE, drawn in 1521 on the Netherlands journey.  
 "This is a likeness which Albrecht Dürer drew of his wife at Antwerp in the Netherlands  
 dress in the year 1521, when they had been man and wife XXVII years."

Print Cabinet, Berlin.

From this drawing Dürer published the Emperor's likeness on the same scale, rather less than the size of life, in two large woodcuts. One print gives the bust without any accessories except a scroll on which the name and title of the Emperor are inscribed. The other, which appeared after the Emperor's death, shows the bust in a rich frame with ornamental columns, on which stand two griffins as supporters of the imperial arms and of the insignia of the Golden Fleece (Fig. 97). Then Dürer further used the same drawing for the purposes of two painted portraits. One of these, painted in water-colour on canvas and greatly impaired by the lapse of time, is in the Germanic Museum at Nuremberg, the other, carried out in oils,



Fig. 106. A study drawn at Antwerp (1521).  
THE NEGRESS OF THE PORTUGESE CONSUL BRANDAN.  
In the Uffizi Collection, Florence.

is in the Vienna Gallery. In the first the Emperor is represented in a mantle with white fur, with the collar of the Golden Fleece; in the second he wears a plain costume. In each case he holds a pomegranate in his hand, in allusion to a symbolical meaning which the Emperor connected with this fruit. From the inscriptions which Dürer put upon the Emperor's portraits it may be felt how profoundly the latter's decease affected him.

At the Diet of Augsburg Dürer also took the portrait of Cardinal Albert of Brandenburg, Primate and Elector of the Empire, Archbishop of Mainz and Magdeburg. The original likeness in charcoal of the prince

of the church, then only twenty-eight years of age, is also in the Albertina collection. In the following year Dürer carried out the portrait as an engraving, the cardinal being a well-known and popular personage, whose likeness many people would like to possess. This splendid print was the first of Dürer's series of engraved portraits. From this time onwards portrait-painting was in fact his foremost occupation. It seems as if the master had directed the whole accumulated force of his years of maturity to the one goal, of penetrating the expression of character in the human face. Among works of a different kind which proceeded from his never resting hand, one of the productions of the year 1519 is remarkable: the small, delicate engraving with a delightful view of a fortified town, which reminds one of the "Burg" at Nuremberg, and, in the foreground, St. Anthony the Hermit; the town, standing out in varied outlines from the cloudless sky, harmonises in a curious, romantic way with the figure of the hermit,

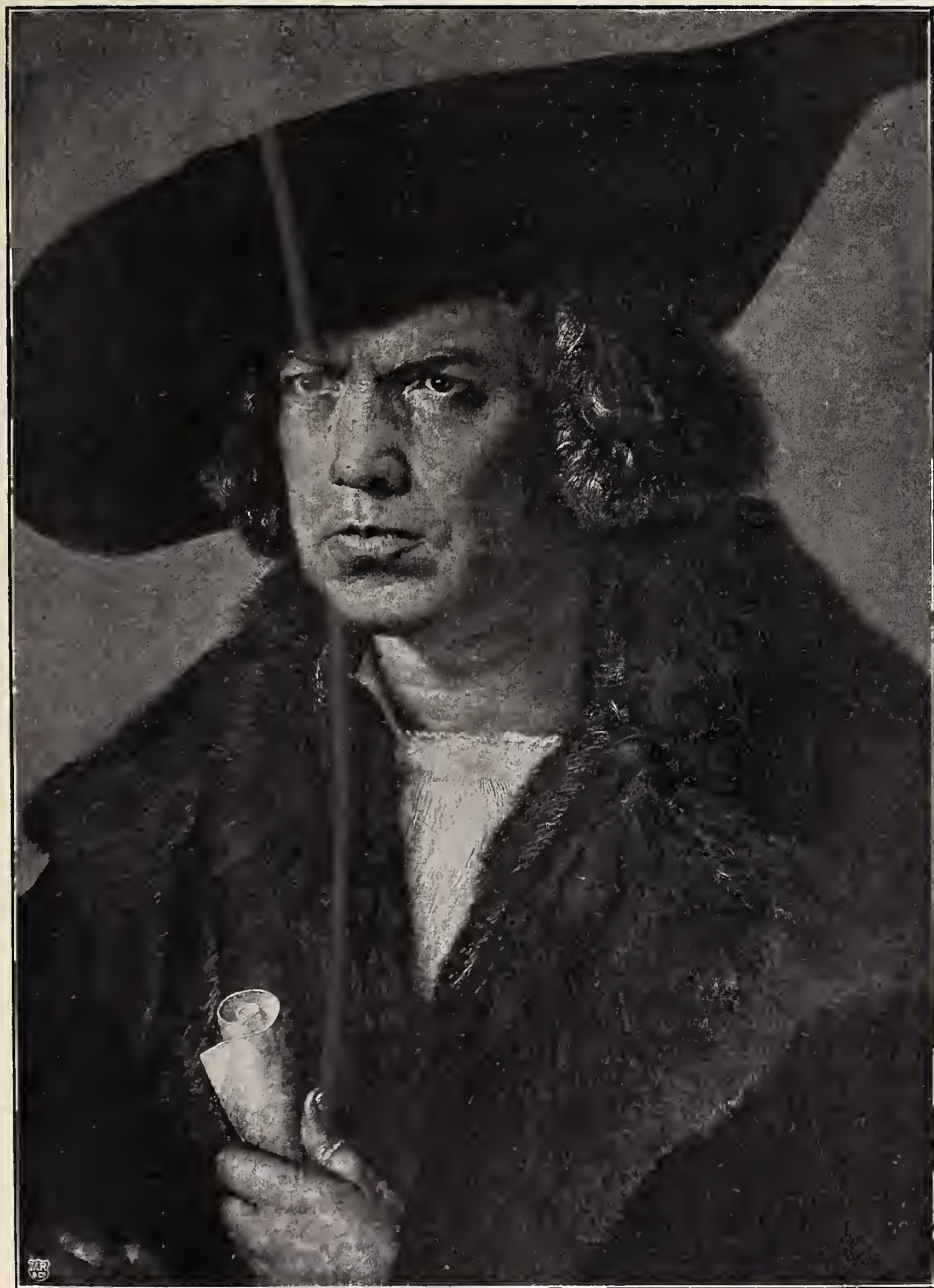


Fig. 107. PORTRAIT, SUPPOSED TO BE THAT OF THE NUREMBERG PATRICIAN HANS IMHOF THE ELDER.  
Oil-painting of 1521. In the Prado Gallery, Madrid.

(From a photograph by Braun, Clément and Co., Dornach and Paris.)

completely absorbed in his devotion, who has planted his staff with the double cross in the ground beside him (Fig. 99).

In the summer of 1520 Dürer entered on a journey to the Netherlands which extended over more than a year. The motive for this enterprise was, no doubt, his desire to meet Maximilian's successor, Charles V., who was to land shortly at Antwerp. For, in consequence of the death of Maximilian, the continuance of a pension of one hundred florins a year, which that sovereign had bestowed upon him, was rendered doubtful. The town-council of Nuremberg refused to pay a charge of two hundred florins upon the taxes of the city, assigned to him by the Emperor, in spite of the imperial receipt already drawn up in due form, and in spite of every effort on Dürer's part. In this state of affairs he hoped for assistance from the new Emperor, if he could succeed in gaining personal access to him and securing his good will. Another motive, we may be sure, was his desire to become acquainted at first hand with the art of the Netherlands.

Dürer set out on the 12<sup>th</sup> July, accompanied by his wife and a maid. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> August he reached Antwerp. Towards the end of the month he betook himself to Brussels, to be introduced to the Governor of the Netherlands, the Emperor Maximilian's daughter Margaret, in order that the latter might interest herself in securing the favour of her nephew, the young Emperor. On his return to Antwerp, he assisted at the brilliant entry of Charles V. Then, in order to find an opportunity of presenting his petition to the Emperor, he followed the latter on his progress to Aix-la-Chapelle for the coronation, and on to Cologne. Here he obtained on the 12<sup>th</sup> November the Emperor's formal confirmation of the continuance of his yearly pension. He was obliged, however, to relinquish the payment of Maximilian's debt to him, which had been charged upon the taxes of the city of Nuremberg. He returned to Antwerp by way of Nymwegen and Bois-le-Duc. From Antwerp he made an excursion in December to Zeeland; in the spring of 1521 he visited Bruges and Ghent, and in June Malines. In July he started on his return journey.

The master preserved his impressions on this journey in a small sketch-book, many leaves of which are still preserved in various collections, and in a detailed diary. Dürer's journal is an invaluable legacy, not only on account of the artist's personality, but also for the light which it throws on the life of the period.

The master took with him a large stock of works of art, that is to say of woodcuts and engravings. We learn from his notes how, immediately after starting his journey, he gained the goodwill of the Bishop of Bamberg by presenting him with a painting of the Virgin, two of his large series of woodcuts, and several engravings; how the Bishop, thereupon, had him entertained at the inn as his own guest, and gave him three letters of introduction and an exemption from paying duty, which was to prove very useful to him in the course of his journey. At Frankfort he had wine sent to his inn as a present from Jakob Heller. At many other places



Fig. 108. STUDY OF AN OLD MAN'S HEAD.

Brush drawing on paper with a dark ground, heightened with white.  
Drawn on the journey in the Netherlands, 1521. In the Albertina, Vienna.

Dürer's note near the upper margin is as follows:

"The man was 93 years of age and still healthy and vigorous, at Antwerp."



besides he found acquaintances and admirers, who made a point of showing him friendly attentions. From Frankfort the journey was continued by boat. On the Rhine boat Dame Agnes did her own cooking. Dürer's name was so universally known, that at Boppard the very customs officer let him pass free of toll, although the Bishop of Bamberg's letter of exemption no longer carried any weight. From Cologne the journey was continued by post-chaise along the shortest route to Antwerp. At Antwerp Dürer was invited on the very evening of his arrival to an exquisite dinner by the representative of the Augsburg firm of Fugger. On the following

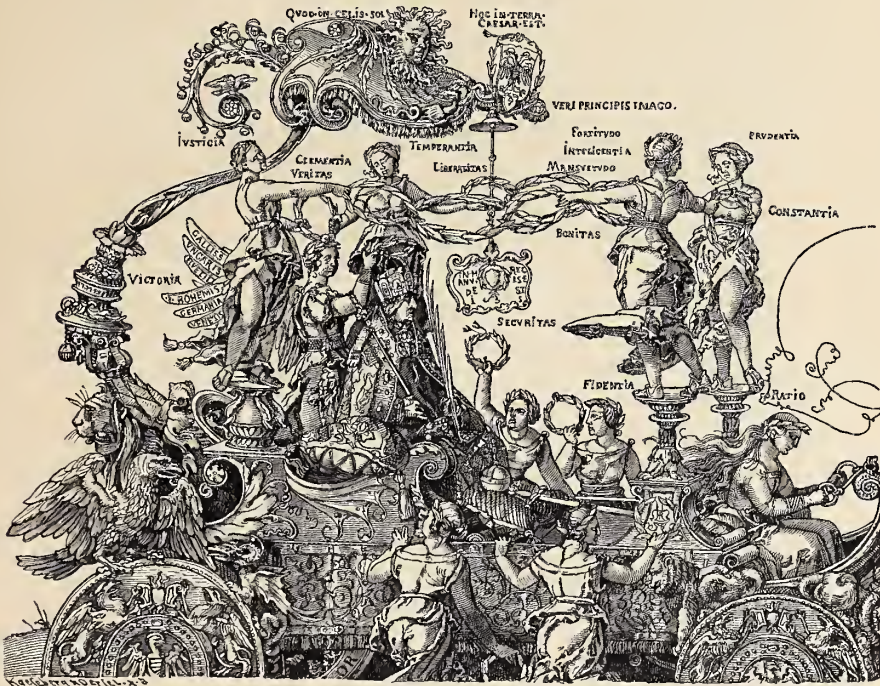


Fig. 109. THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN ON THE TRIUMPHAL CAR, crowned by the figures of the Virtues.  
A section (much reduced) of the large woodcut "Maximilian's Triumphal Chariot" (1522).

Sunday the Antwerp painters gave him a splendid entertainment, at which he was treated with as much honour as a prince, while the town-council of Antwerp sent him a welcome-cup. He visited a day or two after his arrival the painter Quentin Massys and also the learned Erasmus of Rotterdam. In all circles he experienced the greatest kindness, and several wealthy merchants of various nationalities took a special liking to him. He visited the stately buildings of Antwerp and admired the magnificent preparations which were being made for the triumphal entry of the new Emperor. A spectacle which enchanted him was the great procession on the Sunday after the Assumption, with its gorgeous array of cars and boats with living pictures, its riders and varied groups, which Dürer attempted to



Fig. 110. MONKEYS DANCING, drawn with the pen on the back of a letter "1523, on the day after St. Andrew's Day at Nuremberg". Basle Museum.  
(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

describe, but broke off with the remark that he would never be able to write it all down if he gave a whole book to it. At Brussels, where he was most affably received by the Stadtholder, he was astonished at the costly marvels which had been sent for the Emperor from the new Eldorado across the ocean, and his heart rejoiced at the "subtle devices of men in foreign parts". He admired the splendid old town-hall, and the works of the great painters of the preceding century. Here, too, he had friendly intercourse with his living fellow-artists. The painter Bernard van Orley gave a banquet to him and some distinguished gentlemen of the court, the costliness of which astonished the German artist. At the entry of Charles V. into Antwerp the painter's eye was delighted by the Emperor's reception "with shows, great rejoicings and a display of fair maidens". He was present at the





Fig. 111. ENGRAVED PORTRAIT OF CARDINAL ALBRECHT OF BRANDENBURG ("the great Cardinal").  
"1523. So were his eyes, his cheeks, and so his mouth."  
In the thirty-fourth year of his age.

"Albrecht by the Mercy of God Cardinal Priest of the Most Holy Roman Church with the Title of Saint Chrysogonus, Archbishop of Mainz and Magdeburg, Elector, Primate of the Empire, Administrator of Halberstadt, Marquis of Brandenburg."

coronation at Aix-la-Chapelle, and admired "all the costly splendour, the like whereof no man living hath beheld for magnificence". On the journey from Aix-la-Chapelle to Cologne he was the guest of the envoys from Nuremberg, who had conveyed the imperial insignia to Aix for the coronation. At Cologne he attended the brilliant entertainment got up by the city in honour of Charles V., and saw the young emperor dancing at the Gürzenich. Dürer, however, did not omit the remark that it had cost him "great labour and trouble" to obtain the emperor's consent to his petition. Among the sights of Cologne he mentions especially the picture by Meister Stephan in the Cathedral, spending two "white pfennigs" to get it opened.

Dürer undertook the journey to Zeeland in the winter merely for the sake of seeing a stranded whale; notwithstanding, he did not miss the



Fig. 112. ENGRAVED PORTRAIT OF THE ELECTOR FREDERICK THE WISE.

Inscription: "Dedicated to Christ. — This Prince was a pious protector of God's Word, and worthy to be remembered of posterity for ever. — For Frederick, Duke of Saxony, Grand Marshal, Elector of the Holy Roman Empire, done by Albrecht Dürer of Nuremberg. — B · M · F · V · V · (these letters have not been explained). 1524."

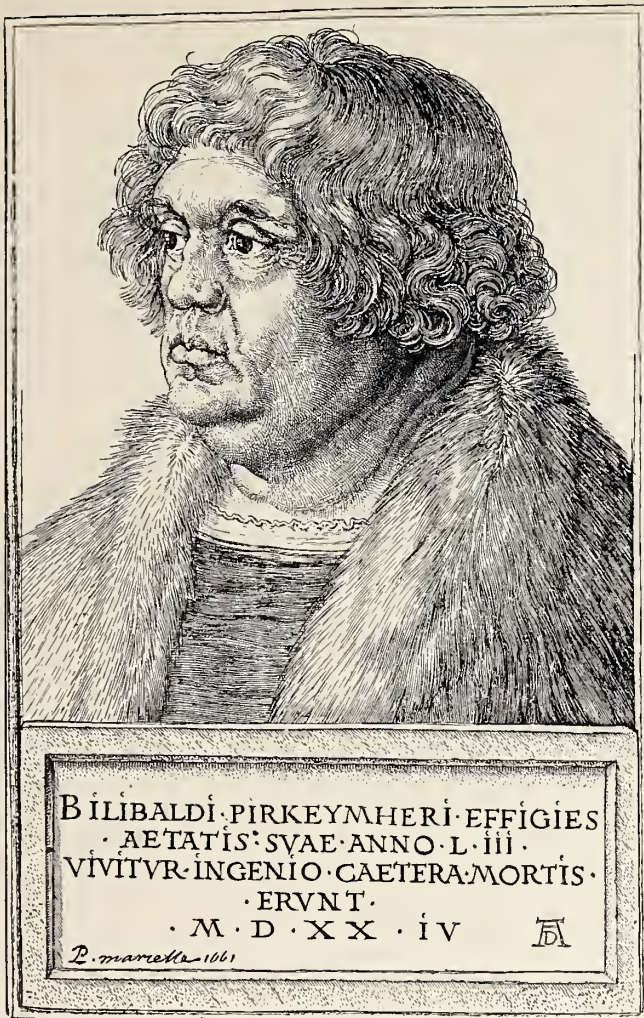


Fig. 113. PORTRAIT OF WILIBALD PIRCKHEIMER AT THE AGE OF 53. Engraving of 1524.

opportunity of looking up works of art. On this journey there was an occasion when his life was in danger. He gives a very graphic account of the occurrence, relating how at Arnemuiden the boat in which he had arrived was driven away from the landing-stage by a large ship just at the moment when the crew and the majority of the passengers had already left it, while he and a fellow-traveller, two old women, a small boy and the captain of the boat were still on board; how the boat thereupon was driven out to sea by a strong wind, and there was a general panic; how he then exhorted the captain not to lose trust in God, and how the whole party managed with their unpracticed hands to rig up a sail sufficiently high for the captain to be able to control the course of the boat to a certain extent, so that it succeeded in reaching land again with the help

of boats which rowed up to its assistance. During the quiet stay of several months at Antwerp, which now ensued, Dürer led a sociable but busy life. At the Carnival he and his wife attended several festivities, and at the beginning of May he was present at the marriage of the "good landscape-painter" Joachim Patenier, at which two plays, the first "very devout and spiritual", were produced. The journey to Bruges and Ghent was solely for the enjoyment of art; the paintings of Van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, Hugo van der Goes and Hans Memling were sufficiently appreciated,



Fig. 114. THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI. Pen-drawing, 1524. In the Albertina, Vienna. (From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

especially the "exceeding precious and skilful painting" of the altarpiece at Ghent; he also went to see the marble statue of the Virgin by Michelangelo at Bruges. In both cities the artists got up banquets in Dürer's honour. He was similarly fêted afterwards at Malines, whither he went mainly with the object of another interview with the Archduchess Margaret; he was very kindly received by the princess, but a portrait of the Emperor which he had drawn for her did not meet with her approval. After his return to Antwerp he made a very interesting acquaintance, that of the Dutch painter Lucas van Leyden, who competed with him as an engraver. At the end of his residence at Antwerp another great honour was shown



Fig. 115. PORTRAIT OF JAKOB MUFFEL, COUNCILLOR OF NUREMBERG.  
Oil-painting of 1526 in the Royal Museum, Berlin.  
(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)

him. King Christian II. of Denmark, Sweden and Norway, who had been expelled from his kingdom and was seeking the help of the Emperor, his brother-in-law, sent for Dürer to have his portrait taken by him. Dürer remarks that the king was an object of admiration to the people of Antwerp as a handsome and spirited man. He drew his likeness in charcoal, dined with His Majesty, and accompanied him to Brussels, where the king was received in state by the Emperor and the Archduchess Margaret. After that, King Christian gave a banquet on his own account to the Emperor and the Archduchess, and Dürer was invited as a guest among the company at the function. During the course of the festivities he borrowed some colours and painted the king's likeness in oils.

Much space is occupied in the diary by the enumeration of the gifts of works of art which Dürer dispensed in all directions, whether in return for something that he had received, or, in the case of persons of eminence, with the object of gaining their goodwill. He remarks in his notes, not without some bitterness of feeling, that "Lady Margaret", the Stadtholder, had given him no present in return for all that she had received from him. In other cases the most various and sometimes valuable presents are set down as received by him; his wife, too, who had made herself quite a home at Antwerp, came in for presents now and then. Dürer shows himself a passionate collector of curiosities. Natural products from abroad, offered by merchants who had traffic with countries beyond the seas, were welcome gifts to him; he also availed himself of several opportunities of acquiring such things by purchase. But he also procured works of art. For instance he exchanged a large number of his own prints for the whole engraved work of Lucas van Leyden. He was fond of buying "Italian art", which means Italian prints, and after he had made the acquaintance of a pupil of Raphael, Vincidor of Bologna, who visited him, he handed to him his complete work on wood and copper with a commission to send him in exchange from Italy "the work of Raphael", that is to say Marcantonio's engravings. On visiting the studio of the famous illuminator of Antwerp, Gerard Horebout, he acquired a miniature painted by the latter's daughter, and remarked on it: "It is a great marvel that a woman can do so much". He did not take about his works of art, however, merely for the purpose of gifts or barter, but he did a busy trade in them as well; and not in his own merely, for he had also undertaken to sell the prints of his friends, among whom he names especially "Grünhans", by whom he means Hans Baldung Grien. We learn from the diary at what low prices Dürer's engravings, which are now so valuable, were sold in those days. For he keeps careful accounts of all items of receipts and expenditure, the last including an immense number of "tips"; he also mentions various small sums that he lost at play, and a loss suffered one day when Dame Agnes had her purse cut off. Accounts were also kept of the proceeds of Dürer's artistic work. He had taken no materials with him for painting, except water-colours, with which he painted both on paper and on canvas. But



Fig. 116. PORTRAIT OF JOHANNES KLEBERGER OF NUREMBERG, in his fortieth year.  
Oil-painting of 1526 in the Imperial Gallery, Vienna.  
(From a photograph by J. Löwy, Vienna).

soon after his first arrival at Antwerp he found himself compelled to borrow oil-colours and an apprentice from Joachim Patenier. His skill in art was in request in every direction, not only for likenesses, drawn or painted, but for many other purposes. For instance, he had to prepare a plan for a house for the Archduchess Margaret's physician; he made designs for jewellery for the goldsmiths at Antwerp, and drew a cartoon for the figure of a Saint, to be carried out in embroidery, for a guild of merchants; he drew armorial bearings for gentlemen of rank, and designed fancy dresses for the carnival masquerade.

Dürer's memoranda are, as a rule, quite brief and concise, and yet the few words sometimes give a vivid picture of a person or an event. Festivities often induce him to give a more detailed account; for instance,



Fig. 117. PHILIP MELANCHTHON. Portrait engraved in 1526.

he had great satisfaction in describing the first great entertainment given in his honour by the artists of Antwerp.

The diary betrays at every point the observation of the painter, whose eyes are always at work. Now it is the sight of a town, now the view from a tower, here a garden, there a building, which fixes the master's attention; at one time it is a pretty face and at another the fine stallions at the horse-fair, that he thinks worth recording. As a true son of the Renaissance he notices directly in the Minster at Aix-la-Chapelle that the antique columns "inwoven" with the building are correctly formed according to the canon of Vitruvius.

Events of historical importance, which were then agitating Germany, also engaged his attention. He is deeply moved by the news of Luther's captivity. On the day when he hears of it he inserts a long and fervent prayer in the midst of his memoranda. He lets it be seen that in all the



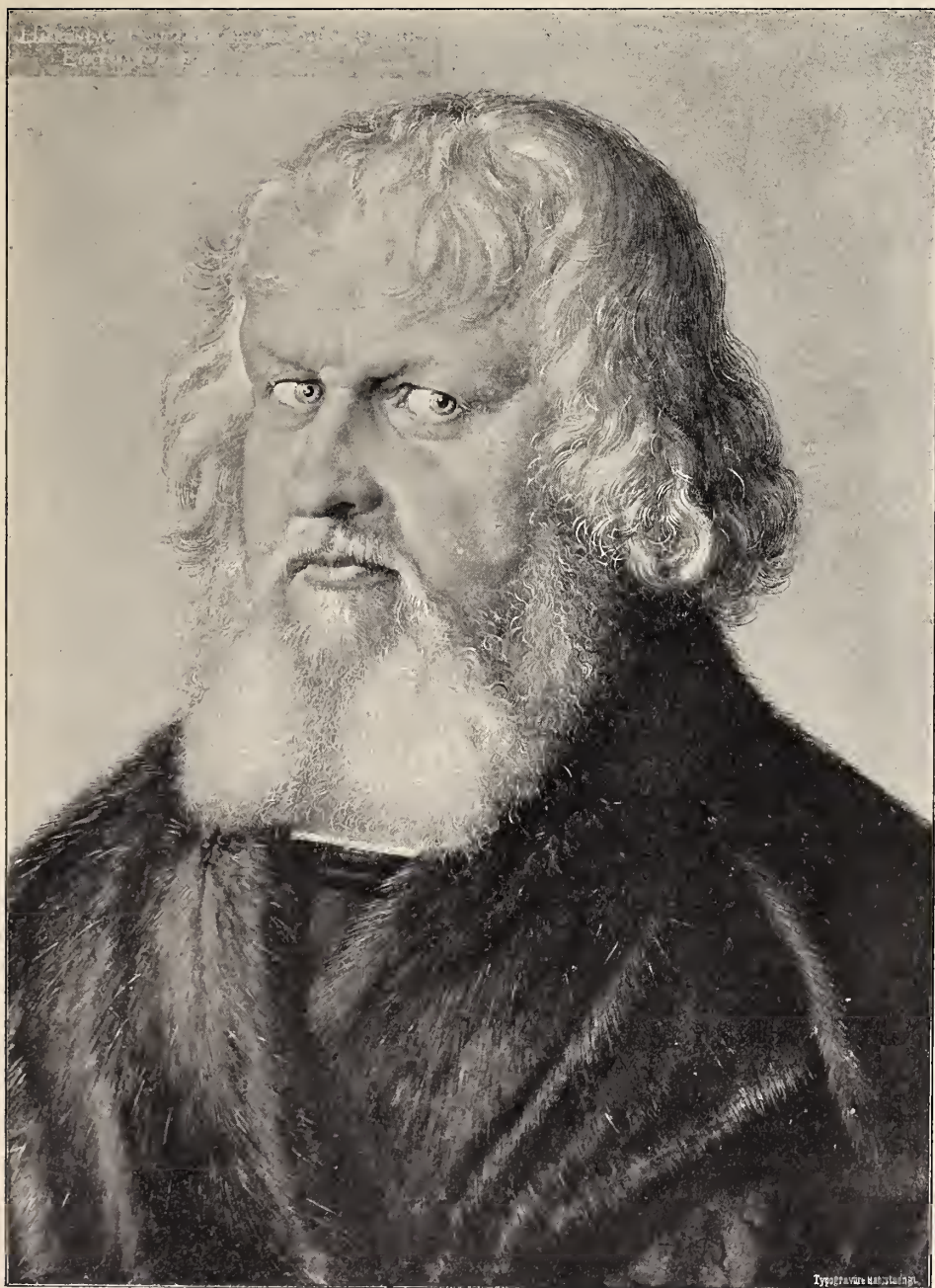


Fig. 118. PORTRAIT OF HIERONYMUS HOLZSCHUHER, COUNCILLOR OF NUREMBERG.  
Oil-painting of 1526 in the Royal Museum, Berlin.  
(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl, Munich.)

candour and profound piety of his heart he is in sympathy with the attempt at a reformation, without having an idea that a schism in the church will be the consequence of it.

When we read what an enormous amount Dürer was drawing and painting, always and everywhere, for others during his sojourn in the Netherlands, in the intervals of all the festivities, the visits to high and low, the inspection of places of interest, the travelling to and fro by post, on horseback or by boat, it seems hardly possible to believe that he still could always find time to think of study on his own account. And yet he brought back with him not only a sketch-book well filled with drawings, a great part of them very careful indeed, but also a number of larger studies carried out with the greatest pains. The drawings reproduced as Fig. 100, 102 and 106 offer excellent specimens of Dürer's industry while on his travels. The first is a sharp and rapid pen-drawing in which Dürer recorded the features of a man whose lute-playing he had admired, and with whom he became closely acquainted, as is proved by a later repetition of the same likeness. The second is a pair of heads, those of an old and a young woman of Zeeland, powerfully drawn on a large scale with a broad metal-point. The third is a delicate silver-point drawing in which he utilized with penetrating observation the rare opportunity of drawing a negress. The crowning achievement in the collection of studies which Dürer formed on his travels is the life-sized head, drawn in black and white, partly with the brush and partly with a crowquill, on grey-toned paper, of an old man of ninety-three who frequently sat to him as a model at Antwerp (Fig. 108). It is characteristic of the master's indefatigable energy, that when nothing else occurred to him, he turned to the subject nearest at hand and drew his wife's portrait. A large silver-point drawing on a dark ground in the Cabinet of Engravings at Berlin shows us Dame Agnes in the Dutch headgear which her husband had brought back for her from his journey to Zeeland (Fig. 105). But it was not only heads that he put into his portfolio of studies; he drew a variety of other objects, such as views of the harbour and cathedral at Antwerp, or remarkable national costumes (Fig. 101), or a lion which he observed in the walled den at Ghent. Even when on board ship he was not idle. A leaf from his sketch-book (in the Berlin Cabinet) shows a view of the high banks near Andernach drawn from the boat on the Rhine, with the bust of a fellow-traveller in front of them; another, drawn off Boppard (in the Imperial Library, Vienna), shows Dame Agnes again, drawn this time with her head muffled in a thick wrapper. Among the pictures which Dürer painted in the Netherlands, the portrait in tempera of an old man with a red cap (in the Louvre) and the portrait in oils of the painter Bernard van Orley (in the Dresden Gallery) are extant.

When Dürer had come home in the summer of 1521, well provided with presents for his friends, he immediately received a commission from his native town. The Council requested him to prepare designs for painting



Fig. 119. THE VIRGIN WITH THE APPLE. Oil-painting of 1526 in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.  
(From a photograph by Giacomo Brogi, Florence.)



Fig. 120. THE APOSTLES JOHN AND PETER.  
Oil-painting of 1522 in the Pinakothek, Munich.  
(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstängl Munich.)

the hall of the Rathaus. The threefold purpose for which the hall was used, for diets, assizes and festivities, determined the choice of subjects. The majesty of the emperor was exalted by the composition of the great "Triumphal Chariot", prepared for Maximilian, which Dürer now altered so far as to let the emperor appear alone, without his family, amidst the allegorical surroundings. He also published the "Triumphal Chariot" in this form as a woodcut in 1522 (for a portion thereof see Fig. 109). For the surface next to this in size of the wall which was to be painted, the master designed a warning against a too hasty judgement, in the shape of an allegory of calumny, from a much-quoted description by Lucian of a picture by Apelles. This design, a finished pen-drawing of the year 1522, is preserved in the Albertina. For the smaller central space between the two large pictures he designed a humorous subject, a group of seven town-musicians and seven other figures of the populace, which was known as the "Pipers' seat" (Pfeiferstuhl). Dürer merely made the sketches for these paintings, which were carried out by other hands. The wall-paintings are still in existence, but coarsely re-painted and in a bad state of preservation.

Dürer's principal works, however, at this time and in the years which followed, were portraits. A bust of an elderly man in a

fur coat and a wide, black hat, which somehow found its way into the possession of Philip IV. of Spain, is dated 1521 (Fig. 107). This splendid

portrait, which has been supposed to represent Hans Imhof the elder of Nuremberg, hangs in the Prado Gallery at Madrid in a place of honour among the most select masterpieces of various nations and centuries, together with Dürer's own portrait of 1498. The energy with which Dürer laboured throughout his life to perfect himself in art is nowhere so apparent as here, where the two portraits, one of which belongs to the first decade of his career as an artist, the other to the last, are seen side by side. The youthful portrait appears very hard to an eye which is spoilt by such pictures as those which surround it, but the portrait of 1521 can hold its own against any neighbour. It is perfect, without any reservation. Its painting is of a quality which renders it superior even to the celebrated portraits which Dürer painted a few years later. In 1522 Dürer published the large and magnificent portrait on wood of the imperial councillor and protonotary of the supreme court, Ulrich Varnbüler, an intimate friend of the master's. Later on there followed a small woodcut-portrait of the humanist Eobanus Hessus. It was probably on the occasion of the diet at Nuremberg, from 1522 to 1523, that Dürer took a second portrait of Cardinal Albert of Brandenburg, and one of his earliest royal patron, Frederick the Wise of Saxony. He engraved both likenesses on copper, the first in 1523 (called "the Great Cardinal" to distinguish it from the small portrait of 1519), the second in 1524 (Fig. 111 and 112).



Fig. 121. ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST AND ST. PAUL.  
Oil-painting of 1526 in the Pinakothek, Munich.  
(From a photograph by Franz Hanfstügl, Munich.)

A worthy companion to these noble engraved portraits is that of his ever faithful friend, Wilibald Pirckheimer (also engraved in 1524, Fig. 113), who had made his name famous not only as a scholar but also as a statesman and commander. In 1526 he produced the engraved portraits of Erasmus of Rotterdam, whom Dürer had twice drawn from life in the Netherlands, and of Melanchthon (Fig. 117), who at that time resided repeatedly at Nuremberg in order to direct the management of the newly founded school, and who was united to Dürer by the ties of mutual admiration and liking. These were the master's last engravings.

The last portraits painted by Dürer also belong to the year 1526. Among them is that of Johann Kleeberger, Wilibald Pirckheimer's son-in-law, in the Imperial Picture-Gallery at Vienna, which is curious for the way in which the subject is posed, according to his own wish, with a pedantic reminiscence of antique precedents. Kleeberger's portrait is conceived as a bust, in ancient Roman style, set in a stone frame, and one sees that Dürer did not quite get over the contradiction of painting a faithful portrait of a living man and making this portrait, at the same time, appear like a piece of carved and painted stone (Fig. 116). The master was all the more glad at having to paint the heads, full of character, of two elderly men who held the highest offices in the City of Nuremberg and were both on friendly terms with himself. These are the two splendid portraits now in the Royal Museum at Berlin; that of Jakob Muffel, a serious, thoughtful man with a clean-shaven face, who looks a little weary of life (Fig. 115) and that of Hieronymus Holzschuher, from whose healthy-looking face, with silvery locks and a white beard, the eyes glance with youthful fire (Fig. 118). Both portraits are great and masterly, but it is evident that the appearance of the old Holzschuher was peculiarly attractive to the painter, so that he produced one of his most excellent works in this portrait, which is overflowing with life, in the fullest sense of the word.

Even during his stay in the Netherlands, Dürer had formed a plan of representing the Passion of Christ once more—for the fifth time—as a connected series. The work, destined to be carried out as a series of woodcuts, was never realised in this form; even of the designs, only a small portion was finished. But these designs, pen-drawings of oblong shape, are precious works of art. Like each of the earlier Passions, they are united by a single vein of sentiment and poetry which runs through them all. The numerous repetitions of one and the same subject suggest that he did not find it easy to determine, among all these compositions, which to regard as satisfactory; and it was, perhaps, on that account that he gave up the whole project, feeling that it would be impossible for him to do the work to his complete satisfaction. The earliest of these drawings are two compositions of Christ bearing the Cross, both drawn in 1520, when he was still at Antwerp, and both now at Florence. One of them has a procession of numerous figures, which is just leaving the gate of the city; the staring crowd presses forward on both sides; the roughness of the



Fig. 122. THE LARGE HEAD OF CHRIST. Chiaroscuro wood-cut executed after Dürer's death.

soldiers who make way for the procession, and who are irritated at the standstill occasioned when Christ sinks to the ground, is represented with merciless truth. We perceive clearly the influence of the art of the Netherlands. The other compositions also contains a thick throng of people, so naturally grouped that the mass seems to live and move; but the violence of the first design is avoided. Christ is not represented at the moment of falling, but as treading wearily under the burden of the heavy cross, and the effect is almost more touching in consequence (Fig. 103). There are three drawings of the Entombment, dated 1521 (one at Florence, one at Frankfort, one in the Germanic Museum at Nuremberg), which, while differing greatly from one another, agree in a departure from the usual mode of treating the subject, inasmuch as a regular funeral procession is passing along. In the drawing at Florence, Joseph of Arimathea, with other persons who bear spices and linen, is walking in front of the sacred Body; the small company of relatives and faithful friends who follow, and of whom the Magdalen alone has stepped forward in loud lamentation to the side of the dead Saviour, are succeeded by a crowd of people who, like several men who are watching the procession, have been attracted not so much by respect for the person who is being borne to the grave, as by mere curiosity (Fig. 104). Thus here, too, the emphasis is on a natural incident in the life of the people. In 1523 Dürer drew a sketch for the Last Supper (in the Albertina), which also departs in arrangement from the customary mode of treating the subject: Christ does not sit in the middle, but at the head of the long table. But in a design of the same year, which was engraved on wood, Dürer has arranged the composition in a manner similar to that of Leonardo da Vinci's fresco. By the shape and the style of drawing, the beautiful drawing in the Albertina of the Adoration of the Magi must also belong to this series of subjects from the life of Christ; it is a simple and sincerely-felt composition, yet not without grandeur (Fig. 114). Of all these compositions only one, the Last Supper already mentioned, was carried out as a woodcut.

The last woodcut of a religious subject which Dürer published—in the year 1526—was a Holy Family; a small, delicately drawn and charming print, which depends for its peculiar poetical effect on the haloes surrounding the heads of the mother and child, which fill the whole atmosphere with streams of light.

The years in which the Reformation was being introduced into Nuremberg, bringing with it an uneasy and wavering state of mind, were not favourable to religious painting. A small altarpiece was finished in Dürer's studio in 1523. This work is usually called the Jabach altarpiece, because during the greater part of its existence as a whole it was the ornament of the private chapel of the Jabach family at Cologne. It is now dispersed and the several parts are in the Pinakothek at Munich, the Municipal Museum at Cologne, and the Städel Institute of Frankfort. Dürer himself most likely had no hand in the painting. It may even have been the



order for this altarpiece that occasioned a return to the habit of employing assistants, whom he does not seem to have used in carrying out his works since 1509.

In 1526 Dürer painted another small devotional picture, of the Virgin, nearly half-length and a little less than the size of life, with the Infant Jesus on her arm, holding an apple ready for him. The child, who holds a corn-flower in his little hand, is just a natural baby. The Virgin has a gentle and modest expression which is pleasing enough, but the attempt at idealising the forms is not altogether successful, and doubly surprising at this late period in the master's career. There is a peculiar tone of melancholy about the picture (Fig. 119).

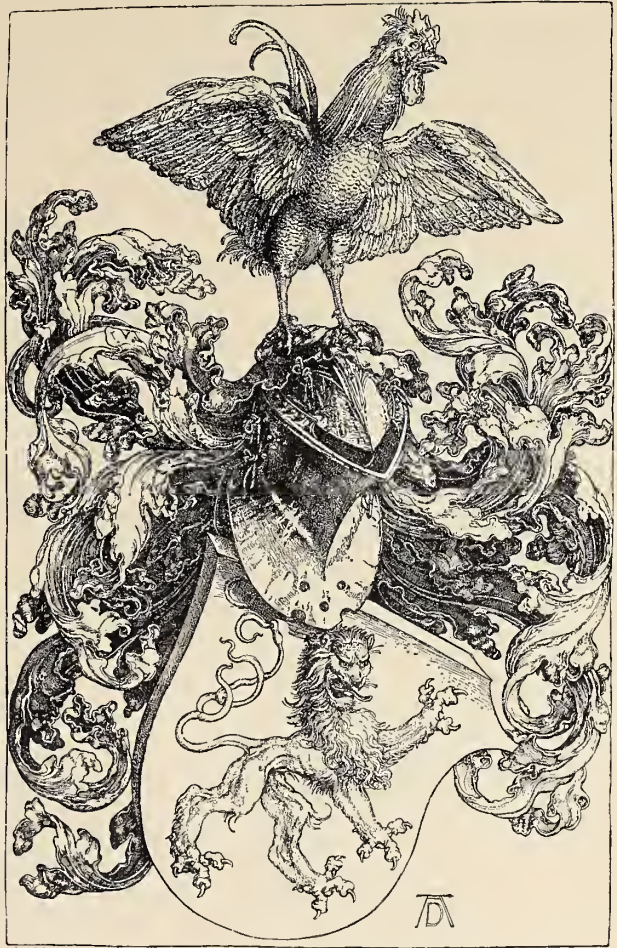


Fig. 123. THE COAT OF ARMS WITH THE COCK. Engraving.

In the same year Dürer completed his last great work in painting, the two pictures with the Apostles St. John and St. Peter on one side, and St. Paul and St. Mark on the other which go by the name of the "Four Apostles" or the "Four Temperaments", and are now one of the treasures of the Pinakothek at Munich. He had been engaged for years in producing characteristic figures of the Apostles. He engraved five such figures between 1514 and 1526, but never finished the series. He was eager to speak the last word of his art, so to speak, in the painting of the Apostles, the studies for which date back to 1523. Dürer had been ailing since December 1520, when he was first seized with a severe attack of illness on the journey to Zeeland. He now felt that the days of his strength for active work were numbered. Before the end came, he wanted to leave a work of art as a legacy to his beloved native city, and for this purpose

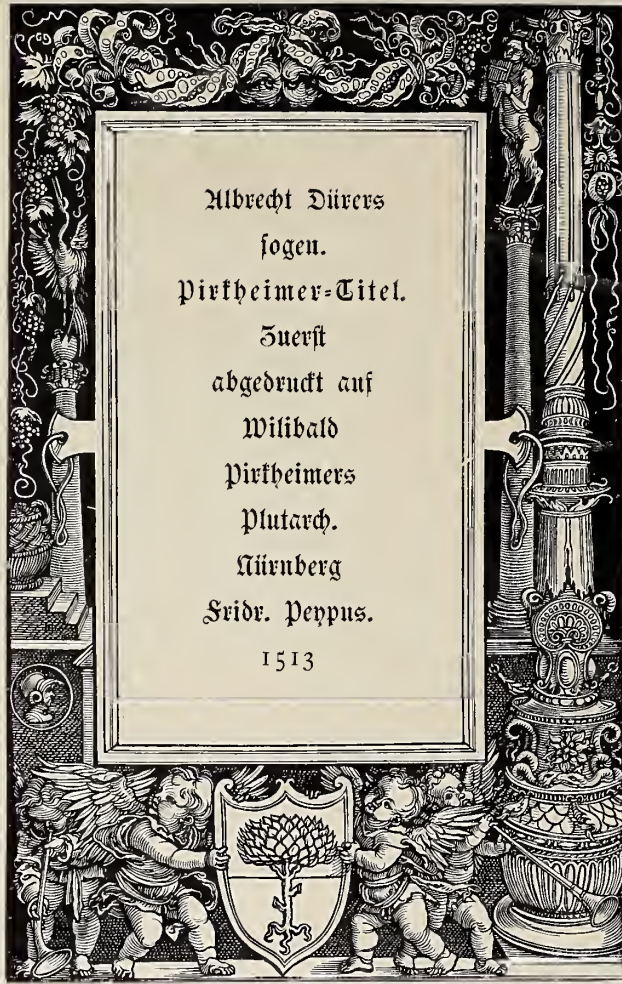


Fig. 124. ALBRECHT DÜRER'S PIRCKHEIMER BORDER.  
 First printed in Wilibald Pirckheimer's Plutarch. Nuremberg, Friedrich Peypus, 1513.

he chose the subject of the Apostles. It was in a deeply serious mood, but with the energy of youth, that he created these majestic life-sized figures, in which his power of depicting character appears at its full height. He devoted to this work all the loving care which he could lavish on the execution, while avoiding anything like pettiness of finish. Here he attained at last that sublime simplicity, which, as he once confessed to Melancthon, full of grief at his shortcomings, he recognised as the highest ornament of art, but had never hoped himself to attain. The figures stand out in majestic grandeur against a plain black ground. The spectator's entire attention is directed to the four heads. The two pieces of drapery which fill the greater part of the surface of the pictures, the white mantle of St. Paul and the red one of St. John, are cast with a grand simplicity which harmonize fully with the grandeur of the heads (Fig. 120 and 121).

The great diversity of the heads gave rise to the opinion, even in Dürer's life-time, that the pictures were also intended to represent the "Four Temperaments". Considering the great significance which the science of those days attached to the so-called "Temperaments", or mixtures of the fluids in the human body, according as the elements of fire, air, water, or earth predominated, it is not at all improbable that Dürer himself may have borne these distinctions in mind. What the meditative St. John, the calm St. Peter, the animated St. Mark and the fiery St. Paul are intended to declare to the beholder, the painter has explained by the inscriptions which he attached to the pictures: "All worldly rulers

must take good heed in these perilous times that they accept no vain doctrine of men instead of the Word of God, for God will have nought added to His Word, nor taken from it. Hear, therefore, these four right worthy man, Peter, John, Paul and Mark." Then, as their "warning", he quotes the passages in the Second Epistle of St. Peter, the First Epistle of St. John, the Second Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy and the twelfth chapter of the Gospel of St. Mark, which contain warnings against false prophets and teachers of heresy, repudiators of the Divinity of Christ, blasphemers and arrogant scribes. Dürer presented the two panels with their admonitory inscriptions to his native city, as a memorial to himself, in the autumn of 1526. There is a touching modesty in the letter to the town-council which accompanied his gift: "Whereas I had long had a desire to present Your Wisdom with a picture of some small worth in remembrance of me, yet must I needs forego the honour by reason of the shortcomings of my own poor work. But since of late I have painted a picture and spent on it more labour than on any other paintings, I deem none more worthy to preserve it for a remembrance than Your Wisdom; wherefore I offer the same herewith to Your Wisdom, praying with all submission that you do think fit graciously to accept this little gift, and to be and remain my gracious lords and benefactors, as you have ever proved yourselves aforetime."

For a century the two paintings hung in the room where the first magistrate of Nuremberg held his court. Then the Elector Maximilian



Fig. 125. PIRCKHEIMER'S BOOK-PLATE. Woodcut. With the arms of Pirkheimer and Rieter, consequently drawn before the death of Pirkheimer's wife, Crescentia Rieter, in 1504.

of Bavaria acquired them. At the instance of the town-council of Nuremberg, the Elector had the somewhat embarrassing inscriptions sawn off the panels and placed beneath the copies which the people of Nuremberg retained instead of the originals.

With the year 1526, which was so rich in first-class works, Dürer's career as an artist was practically at an end.

His achievements as painter, engraver and designer of woodcuts were very numerous and very great. He had given shapes which have remained typical ever since to the sublimest themes of Christian art. His type of the head of Christ, especially when crowned with thorns, majestic even in suffering (Fig. 76), can never be surpassed; a woodcut which did not appear till after Dürer's death, but which undoubtedly is based on a drawing by him, which depicts the anguish of suffering and the victory gained over suffering, suffering changed by purpose into action, in a head of Christ twice the size of life, has not unreasonably been praised as the Christian counterpart of the Olympian Zeus (Fig. 122). He had not disdained withal to apply his great powers to seemingly paltry objects. He drew splendid coats-of-arms, including the finest thing which the Renaissance produced in the way of heraldry (Fig. 123). He designed ornamental title-pages for books and tasteful book-plates ("Ex-libris") for

his friends' libraries (Fig. 125 and 126). He constructed alphabets and contributed by his admirable Roman letters to the reform of type at the Renaissance, a reform which it must be owned, remained incomplete in Germany, which still persists with extraordinary tenacity in ruining its eyes by the use of the late-Gothic type with its angular small letters and its queer and intricate capitals. He drew rarities of natural history to satisfy the curiosity of the public, and produced designs of an architectural and decorative kind, both for the object of general instruction and for special objects on behalf of his friends. Painters and sculptors owed to his generosity designs on which their works were based. For instance, there is a sketch by his hand for a picture carried out by Hans von Kulmbach and another for a



Fig. 126. BOOK-PLATE OF HECTOR POMER, provost of St. Laurence, Nuremberg. Woodcut. Motto: "To the pure all things are pure", in three languages.

sepulchral monument cast by Peter Vischer (Fig. 90). In his readiness to oblige, he met every request which was addressed to him; there is a remarkable example in a drawing of monkeys dancing, which he sent to Martin Felix Frey at Zürich enclosed in a letter (now in the Basle Museum), excusing himself for his inability to make the drawing better, because he had not seen a live monkey for a long time (Fig. 110). Dürer, the keen enquirer, was glad to place the dexterity of his hand at the service of science, not only when it was a question



Fig 127. STUDY OF AN ANGEL. Chalk-drawing heightened with white. British Museum.

of supplementing with illustrations the treaties on special subjects composed by himself; he also drew charts of the celestial and terrestrial globes for his friend Stabius. He also made occasional use of what he had learnt as a boy in his father's goldsmith's shop. Thus he engraved a small gold plate with the group of the Crucifixion to adorn the pommel of a sword for the Emperor Maximilian. The little plate itself has disappeared, and there are only a few impressions of it in existence, which go by the name of the "Degenknopf" (pommel) (Fig. 134). He produced a relief, cast in silver, with a graceful female figure, for a casket which was presented to a young lady of the Imhof family, and is in the possession of that family at Nuremberg to the present day.

In order to know and appreciate Dürer completely, it is necessary to make a study of his drawings. A large number of these are preserved, of all periods of his career. It is true that they are scattered far apart in public and private collections, but the greater part of them have been published in excellent reproductions, the photographs of Messrs. Braun, and others. The master's indefatigable industry, the conscientiousness with which he studied and the wealth of his fancy are equally apparent in these sketches and studies, rapidly thrown off or worked out with loving care, in every imaginable sort of technique. The studies of heads rank highest.

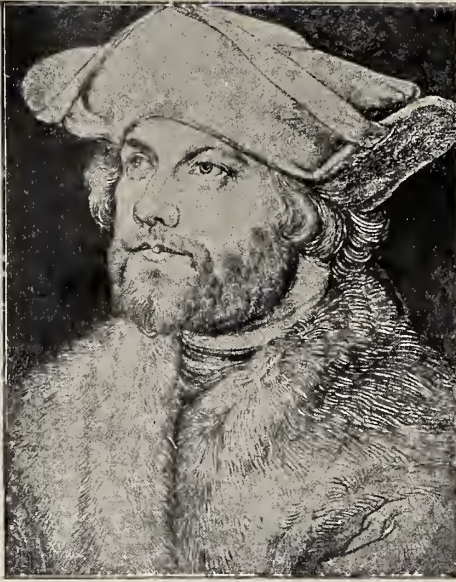


Fig. 128. PORTRAIT OF A MAN UNKNOWN. Charcoal-drawing in the Albertina, Vienna.

(From a photograph by Braun, Clément & Co., Dornach and Paris.)

In these transcripts from nature, be they on a large or a small scale, drawn with brush or pen, with silver-point or charcoal, there is a freshness seldom to be found so completely in the finished pictures. How much was often lost in the transference to painting is shown especially in the heads of children, which generally suffer from a certain hardness in the pictures, whereas they are delightful in the studies (Fig. 127). In addition to the studies made for definite works, the heads of models and the portraits of persons whose names are known, there are a large number of portraits of unknown people, who only survive in the drawings which bring them before us wellnigh with the reality and vigour of life itself

(Fig. 128, a portrait drawing of about 1520). Our attention is held especially by the drawings in which the person represented is not posed as if sitting for his portrait, but is taken in an apparently accidental—but convincingly characteristic—attitude, with a realism which one is inclined to call modern in the extreme (Fig. 129). There are masterpieces of the most scrupulous imitation of nature among the water-colour drawings, studies of plants and animals, which Dürer made apparently for no other reason than because it was a joy to him to study nature with thoroughness and devotion; for instance, a dead roller<sup>1</sup>) and a wing of the same bird, in the Albertina, painted on smooth vellum, with an incomparable rendering of the sheen on the feathers; and a hare in the same collection in which one may almost say that every hair is drawn. There is no less enjoyment to be obtained from the study of the sketches for compositions, which are mostly drawn straight off with the pen with a certain degree of completeness (Fig. 36, 103, 104, 114, 130), but are occasionally confined to a mere rapid indication (Fig. 1, 131), or a few sketchy lines which settle the main structure of a picture (Fig. 132). Even here the first draft of the artist's idea has a freshness and sincerity of expression, the charm of which cannot make itself felt in the same way at first hand after the necessary labour and time have been spent on carrying it out. A large number of Dürer's extant sketches of compositions are drawn without reference

<sup>1</sup>) A bird of blue plumage, *coracia garrula* (German, Mandelkrähe; French, corneille bleue).



Fig. 129. PORTRAIT OF A MAN UNKNOWN.  
Silver-point drawing in the Royal Print-Cabinet, Berlin.

to any proposed work of a more finished character, and are merely done to satisfy the creative impulse of the moment. There are also some which are meant to be considered as elaborate and finished works of art in themselves. The most excellent drawings of this nature, after the "Green Passion", are two compositions which form a pair (in the Albertina and in the Berlin Cabinet), representing the Resurrection of Christ and Samson in combat with the Philistines, drawn with the utmost delicacy and finish in black and white on paper with a dark ground. In each case Dürer thought fit to sign his name in full at the bottom. There is a peculiar class of drawings connected with scientific enquiry, in that they seek to determine the limits of possible variations in the conformation of the human face (Fig. 133), or aim at settling the laws of harmonious proportion by drawing measurements and lines ruled with the compass over figures of men and horses.

From 1526 onwards Dürer was engaged almost exclusively in writing books. As early as 1525 he had published a book on the "Art of Measure-



Fig. 130. ST. CHRISTOPHER. Pen-drawing in a private collection at Paris.

ment" (perspective), with explanatory cuts. He had also written treatises on gymnastics and on music, but these he did not publish. In 1527 the many-sided artist dedicated to King Ferdinand a book, adorned with numerous illustrations and a fine heraldic frontispiece, which he intended to be of service to his fatherland, then menaced by the Turks, and which, in fact, was not without practical importance in the sequel. This was the "Instructions for Fortifying Cities, Castles and Towns". A large woodcut closely connected in subject with this work, representing the siege of a town, was the last purely artistic piece of work which Dürer published.—The master was still anxious to impart to further generations



of artists the experience gained by himself in the field of art. The great artist set but small store by his own art; but he believed that in time the artists of Germany "would not let the prize go to any other nation". He wished to do what in him lay towards attaining this goal, by calling attention to the necessity to the artist of scientific study. He lamented the ignorance of many of his own profession, who had been trained merely as craftsmen and so painted with dexterity, indeed, but without reflection. The "Art of Measurement" was to be merely a part of the comprehensive course of instruction for beginners in art which he had been engaged for a long time in preparing. The principal part of this work was to be a "Doctrine of Proportion" in four books; treatises on painting and other subjects were to follow. He himself, however, was only able to finish definitely the first book of the "Doctrine of Proportion", which was afterwards prepared for the press, and published in its entirety by his friends, and was subsequently translated into many languages.



Fig. 131. MARTYRDOM OF ST. CATHERINE. Sketch for a frieze, pen-drawing in the British Museum.

Dürer passed peacefully away by a sudden and unexpected death before completing his fifty-seventh year. He was buried in the vault of the Frey family in St. John's churchyard at Nuremberg. A Latin inscription of classical brevity composed by Pirkheimer is placed on the bronze plate which covers the grave:

ME. AL. DV.  
 Quicquid Alberti Dureri mortale  
 fuit; sub hoc conditur tumulo.  
 Emigravit VIII Idus Aprilis MDXXXVIII.<sup>1)</sup>

Numerous utterances tell us of the grief with which the news of his death was received by the greatest men of the day.

Highly as Dürer had been honoured on account of his art—he was called "the German Apelles" by his scholar friends—, he had been esteemed and admired still more highly on account of his virtues as a man.

We have a fine sketch of his personality left us by Joachim Camerarius, the first director of the school founded by Melanchthon at Nuremberg, in the preface to the Latin edition of Dürer's "Doctrine of Proportion". "Nature had given him", says Camerarius, "a body of handsome make

1) To the memory of Albrecht Dürer. All that was mortal of Albrecht Dürer is laid within this tomb. He departed on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1528.

and stature, suitable to the beautiful spirit which it contained.—He had an alert head, brilliant eyes, a fine and powerful nose; his neck was slightly too long, his chest broad, his body slim, his thighs sinewy, his legs stalwart. His fingers were so shapely that none more beautiful can ever have been seen. But there was such a music and charm in his utterance, that his listeners could not but be sorry when he ceased to speak.—His soul was filled with ardent desire for all that was honourable in manners and conduct, and he set such an example that he was deservedly esteemed a man of the highest excellence. For all that, he was not stern or sullen,

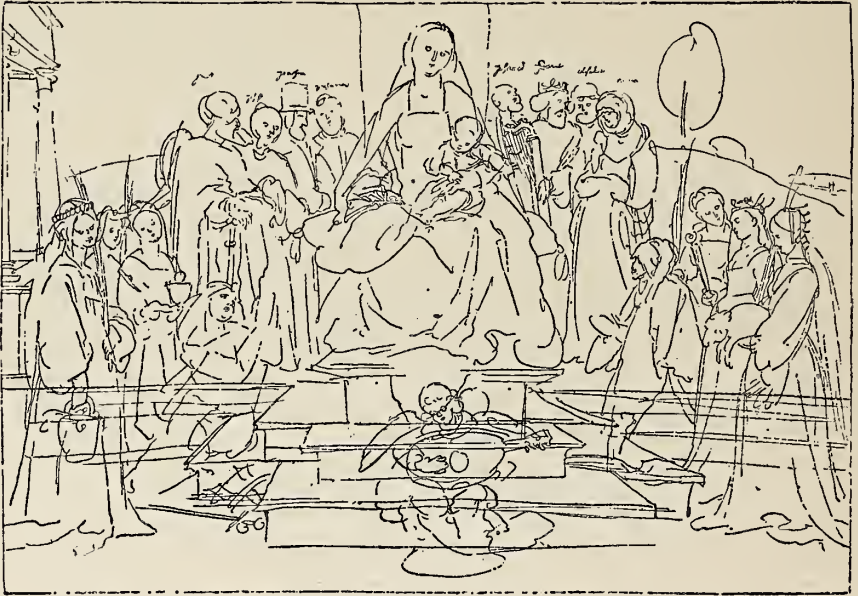


Fig. 132. VIRGIN AND SAINTS. Pen-sketch, apparently of the period following the first journey to Venice. In the Louvre, Paris.

The Saints in the upper row are distinguished by notes in Dürer's hand-writing as James, Joseph, Joachim and Zacharias, John, David, Elizabeth and Anne.

nor of a displeasing seriousness; on the contrary, whatever tends to amenity and cheerfulness, without conflicting with honour and rectitude, he had cultivated himself throughout his life and still approved in his old age, as is proved by the writings which he left on gymnastics and on music. But nature had fashioned him beyond all else for a painter, wherefore he gave himself up to the study of that art with all his might, and was bent on making himself acquainted with the works of famous painters in every country and on learning their theory and practice and making his own so much of it as he thought good.—It is with perfect justice that we admire Albrecht as the most zealous upholder of purity and good morals, and as a man who let it be known by the grandeur of his paintings that he was

conscious of his power, while even his less important works are by no means to be despised. We find in them not a line unconsidered or ill-drawn, not a dot superfluous. What shall I say of the firmness and sureness of his hand? One could almost swear that he had used rule and compass for what he had drawn just with the brush, the pencil or the pen and no other assistance, to the amazement of all beholders. How can I tell of the close correspondence between



Fig. 133. STUDY OF THE VARIETIES OF FACIAL TYPE.  
In a private collection at Paris.

hand and creative spirit, which he displayed when he would draw on paper the counterfeit of anything whatsoever. It will, no doubt, appear incredible to those who read my words hereafter that he sometimes began a drawing of a composition or of a body in different places, wide apart, which yet, when he came to connect them, united so perfectly, that nothing more coherent could be imagined. With the like readiness he carried out the most delicate things on canvas or panel with the brush without a preliminary drawing, and did so without a fault, or rather so as to win the highest praise for it all. This was most admired by the most famous painters, since they best understood the feat and appreciated its difficulty.—High as Albrecht stood, his great and lofty spirit was ever craving for some still higher perfection.—If there was anything at all in this man which resembled a fault, it was his unbounded industry and the keen self-criticism which hardly did justice to his own achievements.—There is nothing impure, nothing unworthy, in his works; for the thoughts of his chaste mind shrank from all such things. How worthy was the artist of his great success!"

Dürer's fame as an artist was undisputed even in his lifetime, not only in Germany and the Netherlands, but also in Italy. At Venice, as well as at Antwerp, an annual pension was offered in order to retain him permanently, and it was only his sense of patriotism that resisted the offers, which were sufficiently good to be tempting. When he travelled from Venice to Bologna, he was greeted by the artists of the latter place with extravagant rejoicings, and at Ferrara poems were composed in his honour.

Raphael exchanged works with the German master, "to shew him his hand". Of the number of drawings which Raphael sent as his present to Dürer, a sheet of studies from a model, authenticated by a note in Dürer's handwriting is still preserved (in the Albertina); the portrait of himself, painted in tempera on canvas, which Dürer sent in return and which astonished Raphael by its execution, has disappeared. The great painter of Urbino had no hesitation in founding one of his most celebrated pictures, that of Christ bearing the Cross, known as "Lo Spasimo di Sicilia", on the corresponding print in Dürer's Great Passion. Other Italian masters also have borrowed from Dürer, to whom they frankly conceded the superiority as regards inventive genius. The inexhaustible fertility of his imagination was revealed to them mainly through the woodcuts, which were circulated both in original impressions and in the Italian engraved imitations. The universal popularity of Dürer's works also made them the prey of copyists and forgers in his own country. The town-council of Nuremberg had to interfere repeatedly in defence of Dürer's copyright in his own creations, not only during his life but also afterwards, when the property in them had passed to his widow, who survived her husband eleven years. Later still, forgeries were produced on quite a large scale. Even works of a kind which Dürer had probably never made at all, small reliefs in lithographic stone and portrait medals, were signed with his monogram and brought into the market as works of Dürer. Allmost all his larger pictures were removed from their original destinations by the zeal of princely collectors, among whom the Emperor Rudolph II took the lead. It was not till the second half of the seventeenth century, when French taste in matters of art became prevalent in Germany, that the admiration for the great master who was so entirely and so truly German began to fall off. The first to recognise his importance again and to appreciate it duly was the young Goethe, who preferred "the most wooden figures" of this masculine artist to the smooth sort of painting in vogue in his own day, and declared, at a time when artists and connoisseurs were doing homage to very different ideals, that Dürer, "when one has learnt to know him thoroughly, has no rival but the first men of the Italian school in truth, in sublimity, and even in grace".



Fig. 134. THE CRUCIFIXION.

Impression from a gold plate engraved for the pommel of a sword.

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