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ANCIENT PRINTS.



VOL. I.





Cristofon facem die spaam qz viens-⁴ millesima cccc^o
 Manemp diem cae mala nou mouet³ lxx^o tano

THE BUXHEIM SAINT CHRISTOPHER OF 1423.

AN INTRODUCTION

TO

THE STUDY & COLLECTION

OF

ANCIENT PRINTS.

BY

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Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged.

‘ Nil dictum quod non prius dictum, methodus solus artificem ostendit.’

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

ON submitting a second edition of his work to the public, the author expresses the hope that its appearance in two volumes instead of as one volume, will meet with approval. It had attained before probably the limits of convenient use, but had it not the addition of the new matter in the present issue would surely have made its employment as a single volume of seven hundred pages incommodious to a reader.

As contributing to the augmentation referred to, the changes, etc., which the articles on Dürer, Jacopo di Barbarj, Leonardo da Vinci, Van Dyck, Claude, Ostade, Ribera, Faithorne junior and others of the English School of Engraving have undergone, may be particularly instanced. To the same end the notices also of Ludwig Krug, Dirk van Staren, Zeeman, Bakhuizen, Thomas of Ypres, and of Le Blon and his followers have assisted. To more general additions and changes

it is unnecessary to allude, as these along with the illustrations and cuts in the second volume can hardly escape the attention of the reader.

In the preface to the first edition the author has sufficiently expressed himself on the general intention and method of his work as to render it needless to dwell upon them here. To one point alone of detail is it advisable he should refer. This relates to the discrepancies which may be found occasionally, between the manner in which the names of various Masters and other persons are spelt in quotations and that which is adopted in regard to them in the text. Such contrasts are due to the circumstance that the writers quoted have chosen to spell particular names in a particular manner, and not to oversight on the author's part. The latter deemed it on the whole preferable and more just to allow all proper names to continue under the forms bestowed on them by the writers from whom quotations are made.

September, 1876.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE present compilation—the work not deserving any other title—was undertaken with a twofold purpose. In the first place, it was desired to supply the Student of Ancient Prints with a systematic summary of our knowledge on a subject the literature of which had gradually become too extensive and widely scattered to be available by every one at a moment's notice. Secondly, it was intended to furnish the inexperienced collector with certain instruction which might be *practically* useful to him at the beginning of his career.

Leaving out of view such early writers as Van Mander, Sandrart, Marolles, Christ and others; and taking Papillon and Heineken (1766–1771) as sufficient for our aim, it may be said that the century passed since their time has been productive of much and important information on the subjects discussed in the following pages.

Well-known contributors to this literature are to be found among our own writers. The names of Strutt, Bryan, Ottley, Dibdin, Chelfum, Wilson, Cumberland, Chatto, Sotheby, and of others, are familiar to most persons, though but superficially acquainted with archæology or art. But it is to Germany and France that we are indebted, not only for the chief systematic treatises, but for most of the monographs which relate to de-

scriptions of Ancient Prints. The works of Bartsch, Robert-Dumefnil, Nagler, Duchesne, Blanc, Passavant, and Delaborde, with the writings of Alvin, Heller, Galichon, Meaume, Parthey, and Weber, may be referred to in proof.

There is one drawback connected with iconography—common, it is true, to all knowledge obtained in recent years—viz. the literature of particular subjects and of Masters is so widely spread through ephemeral publications as to render it frequently difficult both to know what has been written on any given topic, and to procure special information when we are conscious that it exists. Fugitive tracts, reviews long demised, and out-of-the-way journals, are obtainable often only with much trouble, and sometimes not at all. Such a library even as our own National one may not be able always to satisfy the wants of those engaged in working out a particular subject.

The belief that under such circumstances a concentration in one volume of the knowledge commanded by the author relative to the History of Engraving and of Ancient Prints, might be acceptable to a certain, though small, circle of readers, likewise prompted to the present undertaking. It was supposed there existed both room and necessity for offering to such as were desirous of investigating this department of art a manual and guide like the present. It was not forgotten that there might be found the works of Gilpin, Cumberland, and Maberly. But they were regarded as either too limited in range or out of date, or as not easily procurable, while the volumes of Ottley were too ponderous and expensive to be generally available, even should they be deemed adequate—which they could hardly be—to the objects in view. On first thought the English translation of M. Duplessis' 'Merveilles,' etc. appeared to fulfil what was necessary, but after review of the question it became apparent that there were topics with which the novice should be ac-

quainted that had been left untouched by the French writer. The 'Print Collector' of Mr. Maberly came nearer to the author's first idea of his own undertaking than did either of the works mentioned. But thirty years had passed since it was written, and the book was not readily attainable. Though not commensurate then with the purpose in hand, it is but right to state that to Mr. Maberly's little treatise this volume is indebted for its general design as are its pages for some interesting information.

Notwithstanding the endeavours made to render the present 'Introduction' complete and satisfactory, as far as its scope permitted, it is not without misgivings that it is placed before the public; not that much condemnation is expected from those for whom it is especially intended, viz. the superficially informed on iconography and the inexperienced collector; but it is feared that the well-read iconophilist, who should chance to examine it, may regard it with a more critical eye than may be advantageous to its reputation. The work might be condemned as a mere compilation, or as not containing anything that is new. To such judgment the author would submit, calling to mind, however, that since he wrote for the novice, and not for the experienced amateur,—an elementary guide, and not a history of original researches,—his volume may be, nevertheless, of service to him who is about commencing the study of that department of art reviewed in its pages.

Except in one or two instances, the author has refrained from strongly obtruding his own opinions, choosing rather to hint and suggest them while offering the conclusions at which others have arrived. He has preferred, likewise, generally giving direct quotations with references, to weaving the judgments of various authorities into a web of such uniformity as might force the whole to appear as though it were the weaver's own pro-

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ANCIENT PRINTS.

CHAPTER I.

ON ENGRAVING IN ANCIENT TIMES.

IF the student refer to the word ΓΡΑΨΩ, in his ‘Liddell and Scott,’ he will find it stated that the word implies ‘in Homer only to GRAVE, scratch, *σήματα γράψας ἐν πίνακι*, having scratched marks or figures on tablets.’ From ἐν and γράφω our term *engrave* is derived.

The question may be asked, How long has such a process of engraving, or scratching on tablets of some kind, been practised? It might be replied, From time immemorial—since it was made use of by Aholiab and Bezaleel in ornamenting the dress of Aaron: ‘They made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, like to the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.’ (Exod. xxxix. 30.) Reference might be made also to engraved metal plates which have been found in the coffins of mummies, and to the bronze vases, or *situlæ*, marked 5302-3, *et seq.* in the room of Egyptian Antiquities at the British Museum, a glance at which will afford ample illustration of the practice of engraving at a very remote period. In Mr. Salt’s collection of Egyptian antiquities, there was a small axe—probably a model—the head of which, tied, or rather bandaged, to the helve with slips of cloth, was formed of sheet-copper. On this head certain characters were engraved in such a manner

that, if the head had been inked and submitted to the action of the rolling-press, impressions might have been obtained as from a modern copper-plate. On reference to the 'History of Wood Engraving' by Messrs. Jackson and Chatto (Bibl. 38), full illustration may be found of the use, among the early Egyptians, of stamps of wood having hieroglyphic characters rudely cut in *intaglio*; also of the employment, by the Romans, of stamps of brass having letters hollowed or cut into the metal. Herodotus, alluding to a period about five hundred years before the Christian era, writes,—

'Ariftagoras (who was a native of Cuma) exhibited to the King of Sparta a tablet or plate of brass, on which was inscribed every part of the habitable world, the seas and the rivers—in other words, Ariftagoras had in his possession a metallic map.' (Ure's 'Dictionary.')

In India, likewise, engraving on metal plates was practised long prior to the Christian epoch. It was there customary to ratify grants of land by deeds of transfer traced on copper. A copy, with a translation in English, of such a relic is given by Mr. Williams in the first volume of the 'Asiatic Researches,' p. 123.

That the ancient Greeks and Romans were accustomed to engrave metal, is proved by a particular ornamentation of certain *pateræ*, and like utensils which have come down to us. In the cabinet of Roman Antiquities at the British Museum, the case of the Mirrors contains some very beautiful examples of engraving on metal. We would instance particularly No. 1, the mirror having the Birth of Minerva worked on it. Here, the rich varicoloured patina, or oxydation, has the power to make quite a picture of the design. Mirror No. 16 has a fine engraving of Hercules, aided by Minerva, attacking the Hydra; and the adjacent mirrors, Nos. 17 and 18, are well worthy of remark. But it may be that pre-eminence should be given to Mirror 20 in case D, on which is a rich engraving of Menelaos seizing Helen at the shrine of Aphrodite. Close to No. 20 is a votive disc which should not be overlooked. The metal thus ornamented often received a kind of enamel or *nigellum* within the engraved lines, the producers of such work among the Romans being called

crustarii; their shops, *tabernæ crustariæ*; and Pliny praises Teucer and Pythias in particular, as able practisers of the art. (Janfen, Bibl. 39.)

The Greeks and Romans engraved laws, treatises, contracts, and other important documents on metal plates; it is stated that a fire which broke out in the Capitol during the reign of Vespasian, destroyed above 3000 bronze muniments of the above description. (*Traité de Diplomatie*, t. i. p. 451.) Dr. Dibdin remarks (*Bibliographical Tour*, vol. iii. p. 455), that he saw in the Imperial Library at Vienna a *Senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus coercendis*—a sort of police ordonnance on a metal plate supposed to have been hung up in some of the public offices at Rome nearly 200 years before the birth of Christ.

At one time the Roman slaves were branded by means of metal stamps. By an early law of Constantine this practice was abolished, and instead was substituted an engraved metal-plate attached to the collar usually worn by the slave. Fabretti (*Inscrip.* 522) gives the following inscription as taken from an engraved bronze plate,—

TENE ME QUIA FUG-ET REBOCA ME VICTORI-
ACOLITO // A DOMINICV CLEMENTIS, P

i. e. ‘Hold me fast, for I am a runaway, and return me to Victor the Acolyte of the *dominicum* of Clement.’ (Dublin Review, Oct. 1871.)

Sir Charles Eastlake, in his ‘Materials for a History of Oil Painting’ (vol. i. p. 149), referring to the *encaustic*, or burning-in method of painting, practised by the ancients, writes,—

‘The process, according to the words of Pliny, was not originally restricted to wax-painting, but comprehended the engraving, by means of encaustic, of outlines on ivory and other substances with a metal point. In this instance, again, the expression need not be taken literally; forms burnt on ivory could not have been very delicate works of art. It may rather be supposed that the outlines first drawn on waxed ivory (for the facility of

correcting them where necessary) were afterwards engraved in the substance, and that the finished and shadowed design was filled in with one or more colours, being ultimately covered with a wax varnish by the aid of heat. Works so produced must have resembled the *nielli*, or on a small scale the *sgraffiti*, of the Italians, and were no doubt quite as excellent.'

Duchefne and others have ridiculed the notion of seeking the origin of engraving in such operations of the ancients as we have mentioned, regarding the workmen of old rather as carvers and chasers than as engravers. It must be admitted that the terms used in the Mosaic writings, *e. g.*, apply equally well to carving and chasing as to engraving, and that many of the metal representations of the hieroglyphic figures and talismans of the ancient Egyptians, found in the coffins of mummies, would be better regarded as carvings in relief, though in some cases the flat part or ground of the relief, with the lower edges and back of it, are ornamented with figures and symbolic characters executed with a 'graver' only. But an examination of some of the Roman antiquities to which we have referred will show, we believe, that the term 'engraving,' so far as its simple denotation goes, is as fairly applicable to their ornamentation as it is to that which receives it at the present day. In Strutt's Dictionary (Bibl. 67) may be found a representation of an ancient Etrurian *patera*, and part of a sheath for a sword or dagger, brought from Italy by Sir W. Hamilton. Of the former the author writes,—

'It has every external mark of great antiquity, and the mixed manner of workmanship which appears upon it, consisting of carving and engraving, Homer and Hesiod seem to have been well acquainted with. . . . The figures [on the sheath] are exceedingly rude, and seem to indicate the very infancy of the art of engraving, for they are executed with the graver only upon a flat surface, and need only to be filled with ink, and run through a printing-press (provided the plate could endure the operation), to produce a fair and perfect impression.'

M. D'Ankerville, who drew up a descriptive catalogue of Sir W. Hamilton's collection, observes, in reference to a supposed impression so taken, that it—

'Would certainly be the most ancient of all that are preserved in the

collections of the curious, and demonstrate to us how near the ancients approached to the discovery of this admirable art. . . . We may, indeed, say, that they did discover it, for it is evident, from the valuable relic of antiquity before us, that they only wanted the idea of *multiplying representations* of the same engraving.'

Direct impressions from the earliest engraved metal plates that we are aware of are those which were taken from the *corona luminaria* of F. Barbarossa in the Cathedral of Aix la Chapelle. This lustre was executed during the third quarter of the twelfth century, and some of its ornamental and engraved pieces have been made to yield impressions of great interest. These will be further alluded to when we treat of the *Manière Criblée* (vol. ii.).

At page 90 of Mr. Singer's treatise (Bibl. 65), may be found what he designates 'impressions from some of the original stamps' of metal in use among the Romans. Mr. Chatto states, however, that these illustrations are only 'impressions copied from stamps' similar to those he himself has given. (Bibl. 38, p. 9.)

In the remark of M. D'Ankerville, that the ancients 'wanted only the idea of multiplying representations' from the one engraved metal plate, lies the point of the question before us, viz. the essential difference between what we now term engraving and a process often practised by the ancients. They made the first step; but then they halted. They were arrested by an obstacle, which was not surmounted until many centuries after their time, and hence engraving in the present acceptation of the term cannot be said to have been practised by them.

The word 'engraving' now very generally implies something far beyond its simple denotation. It connotes in addition, in the greater number of cases, that such 'scratching or cutting into tablets,' blocks, or plates, be done for, or be capable of being readily applied to, the purpose of yielding upon a more delicate texture, or on fabrics like parchment and paper, facsimile impressions in some ink or colour of the original design worked out on the tablet. It is true that we speak of having our names 'engraved' on silver spoons, door-plates, &c.; of 'engraving' complimentary addresses,

and dedications on presentation ornaments, and we 'engrave' monumental brasses. These we do without intending or expecting that such engravings will be used for the purpose of producing impressions on any other surfaces. For such purpose, no doubt, they could be employed under certain conditions, but it was not intended that they should be so used when the metal was incised.

Should it be asked how long engraving has been practised for the purpose of giving off an impression in black or colour to another and more yielding substance than that which has been engraved—the answer must be guarded. That the ancients engraved in the one sense of the word, we are certain; whether they ever engraved in its other and modern meaning, is perhaps scarcely doubtful. They did not—most persons would answer—and they used such of their engraved tablets as were in the guise of either *intaglio* or relief stamps, to produce solely a *change of form* by indentation in another object, and not as charged with ink or colour, for the purpose of stamping parchment, such kind of paper as then existed, and other like substances little or not at all capable of marked and permanent indentation. But *all* are not of this opinion.

'It would certainly be very difficult,' writes Mr. Chatto, 'if not impossible, to produce a piece of paper, parchment, or cloth, of the age of the Romans, impressed with letters in ink or other colouring matter; but the existence of such stamps as the preceding—and there are others in the British Museum of the same kind, containing more letters of a smaller size—renders it very probable that they were used for the purpose of marking cloth, paper, and similar substances with ink, as well as for being impressed in wax or clay.' (Bibl. 38, p. 9.)

Deleutre affirms, and his German translator Fester supports the affirmation (see Dr. R. F. Bock's Essay in Weigel's work, Bibl. 70), that the Eastern nations of old were acquainted with the process of impressing from wooden blocks designs in colour on stuffs, cloths, and analogous fabrics, and that the Ptolemys founded in Alexandria extensive workshops for this purpose. But we may ask, with Bock, who or what are the authorities for such statements?

We know from a passage in Quintilian that the Romans were acquainted with the method of tracing letters by means of a piece of thin wood, in which the characters were pierced or cut through on a principle like that on which the present art of stencilling is founded. But M. Firmin Didot expresses the opinion that it is just possible the Romans went so far as to employ—tentatively at least—the process of graving in relief for the purpose of multiplying the portraits of eminent men. Such a process was known, says M. Didot, to the ancients, and was employed by them in the production of the painted cloths, common to the Orientals from great antiquity. M. Didot further suggests, however, that their procedure may have had—

‘Some analogy to that which the Chinese formerly employed to reproduce in a very simple manner the portraits of their sovereigns and celebrated men, viz. the graving in *intaglio* on a polished surface, generally on stone, the contours of the forms, and then covering the surface with a black tint in such a way that the hollows graven in the stone remained untouched by the ink, and were thus enabled to appear *white* on the paper.’ (Bibl. 18, col. 9.)

The promptings to these surmises may be found in an allusion of Pliny (Hist. Nat. lxxxv. c. 2) to a certain invention of Varro, by which the latter could multiply the portraits of illustrious personages, reproducing them in his book* of *Imagines*, so that they could become one as it were with it (‘ut præsentem esse ubique et *claudi* possent’). As M. Didot remarks, it is greatly to be regretted that Pliny did not give us a simple description of Varro’s process, instead of treating us to the pompous praises he so lavishly bestows on it. For, continues M. Didot,—

‘To be able to reproduce in great number these portraits of seven hundred personages, and insert them in books, Varro must have had recourse to impressions, either from “relief” (wood-engraving?) or from “in-

* The *books* of the ancients were ‘rolls,’ until the square form like that of our own books was introduced. The period which may be assigned for the general adoption of the squared form for certain books at first distinguished as *libri quadrati* is probably not earlier than that of the fourth century. (Noel Humphreys’ ‘History of Printing.’) (Bibl. 36.)

taglio" (copperplate or niello?) But impressing from the latter would offer still more difficulty than doing so from graving in relief. In fact, impressing from *intaglio* necessitates very powerful pressure, and this would have crushed the texture of the papyrus. . . . The skins of animals or cloth would have offered likewise more difficulties to this kind of impressing than they would have opposed to that from relief. Notwithstanding all the admiration of Pliny for the process in question, it would appear that the difficulties attendant upon its execution soon caused it to be abandoned, as it is not alluded to by any one afterwards. If the substances intended to receive the impressions had possessed the advantages offered by our papers this *wonderful* procedure would have been perpetuated in books, since we are aware of the passionate taste of the Romans for all that related to the fine arts and letters, as well as for the reproduction of the likenesses of the illustrious personages who were dear to them.' (Op. cit.)

M. Quatremère de Quincy has broached the opinion that these portraits had been engraved on ivory, impressions from which were obtained afterwards by the use of the cylinder, while M. Leon Delaborde unhesitatingly refers them to the medium of stencils. On the other hand, M. Letronne considers the eulogy of Pliny relates simply to the novel idea of Varro, of uniting together in his works the lives of illustrious men, which until then had remained hidden in the libraries. (See Note 75, p. 15 in Leon Delaborde's 'Débuts de l'Imprimerie à Mayence et à Bamberg, &c.' Paris, 1840.)

In reference to this matter, Mr. Chatto thinks that the grounds for the conjecture of Varro having invented a process analogous to *our* engraving,—

'Are extremely slight, and will not without additional support sustain the superstructure which De Pauw—an ingenious guesser, but a superficial inquirer—has so plausibly raised. A prop for this theory has been sought for by men of greater research than the original propounder, but hitherto without success.'

The point in question is decided in the negative by Rode, Böttiger, and Fea.

Though it would be difficult to offer any satisfactory proofs of the ancient Egyptians and Romans having practised an opera-

tion like that which we now understand as engraving, it is thought by some that the Chinese exercised the art, at least so far as their method might correspond to that which gave rise in the fifteenth century to what we know as Block Book printing or Xylography. Klaproth, in his treatise on the Compaſs, ſtated that, in 932 A.D., it was propoſed to the Academy Konetſen-Kien, ‘to reviſe the nine-king or canonical books, and to cauſe them to be engraved on blocks, in order that they might be printed and fold;’ but it was not until 952 A.D. that the engraving of the ‘nine-king books’ was accompliſhed. Other writers have gone far beyond Klaproth, and maintained that the art of wood-engraving had been practiſed in the reign of the renowned Emperor We-wung, who flouriſhed 1120 years before the birth of Chriſt; while others have affirmed that not only the xylographic, but the lithographic art was known more than 1600 years ago, and that Marco Polo brought theſe arts with him on his return from China to Venice in the year 1295. But though the more extreme views here mentioned are on a level with thoſe which aſcribe the practice of engraving — as we now underſtand it — to the Egyptians and Romans, there appears to be fair warrant for believing that it was in uſe by the Chineſe at leaſt as early as the ſixth century A.D. If reference be made to the ‘Athenæum’ for January 8, 1870, further illuſtration of this part of the queſtion may be found baſed on the reſearches of MM. Stanislas Julien and Champion. The latter authorities exceed Klaproth’s ſtatements, and if what they ſay be true, engraving on wood in China for the reproduction of text and drawings is of very ancient date.

‘It appears indeed that it was already known and in uſe before the year 593, for in that year the Emperor ordered certain things to be printed without anything being ſaid about the art being new.’ (Op. cit.)

But Chineſe inventions and chronology are, like the myſteries of the Egyptians, difficult things to deal with ſatisfactorily; hence we may leave without much loſs a territory on which it is ſo hazardous to tread, referring thoſe deſirous of further information to the treatiſe of Singer (Bibl. 65, p. 77, *et ſeq.*).

Could it be proved that the ſignatures under the form of mono-

grams of the Carolingians, of Pope Adrian the First, and of other persons, were executed really with stamps of wood, and not with stencil plates, as were the signatures of Justin and Theodoric, nor with the pen, as appears probable to Passavant (Bibl. 56, vi. p. 17), we might believe that the art of producing impressions by means of engravings on metal and wood was known at any rate in the seventh century. But there is wanting satisfactory evidence that such was the case, nor have we any until much later, when we find such stamping was employed for the signatures of princes, and was practised by the notaries of Italy and Germany from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries.*

We know from the extant will of Charlemagne that he possessed plans of Rome, of Constantinople, and of three parts of the world, engraved on silver, but we have not any evidence to show that impressions were ever taken from these plates. If the statement of Liebenau, quoted by Passavant, vol. i. p. 18, be accepted, it must follow that impressing from engraved stamps was in use in the twelfth century.

‘I have discovered,’ writes Liebenau to Boehmer, in the continuation of the Necrology of Einfielden (Cod. N. 305), ‘that Frowin, at the time he wrote there had established the first printing-office known, by which I mean to say that he there executed initials with the aid of stamps. I cannot tell whether the fact be recorded that this art was already practised in the twelfth century. I had already surmised that it was from the inspection of a great number of MSS. of Engelberg, in which all the initials resemble each other, even in their most trivial details, and where their size is not in proportion to the rest of the writing, an F, for example, being too large for the other letters.

In support of Liebenau’s views, Passavant refers to archives of the fifteenth century as often having seals engraved on wood in lieu of seals of wax. Heller, in his ‘Geschichte der Holzschneide-Kunst’ (Bibl. 31), gives a copy of the seal of the Rector of St. Maurice at Augsberg, of the date 1407, which is by some critics asserted to be evidently an impression from either engraved metal or wood: Murr believes it to be from the former. The subject of immediate interest, here, however, is the fact of

* See Delaborde’s ‘Débuts de l’Imprimerie à Mayence et à Bamberg,’ p. 15.

impressions in black having been obtained from designs cut on other surfaces at an early period, irrespective of the nature of the material on which the designs were engraved. Of such impressions Aretin, as far back as 1801, published facsimiles of several which he had met with in the convents of Bavaria.

About the commencement of the thirteenth century a somewhat mixed method of engraving, in which the forms were indicated by intagliate and relief work, according to circumstances, was practised on metal plates known as Monumental Brasses and Slabs. The metal employed was termed *latten*, *laten*, and *laton*, and appears to have been a compound, somewhat resembling brass, but far more durable and costly than that alloy. It was manufactured exclusively on the Continent, previous to the middle of the 17th century, and from thence imported into England (Boutell).

The Pays-bas and England particularly were famous for these sepulchral ornaments. The earliest recorded example in this country has now disappeared. It was the brass of Simon de Beauchamp, Earl of Bedford, of the year 1208, and was placed at the foot of the high altar of St. Paul's Church at Bedford. The most ancient specimens existing when Mr. Boutell wrote (Bibl. 8), were the brasses of Sir John D'Aubernoun, A.D. 1277 (5th of Edward I.), and of Sir Roger de Trumpington, A.D. 1289. Authentic records, from 1208 to 1289, exist of several brasses now no longer to be found. After the close of the thirteenth century brasses rapidly increase in frequency, but the earlier examples offer a higher degree of artistic excellence than do the specimens of a later date.

These old monumental plates were cut with the graver, the shadows being expressed by lines or strokes, strengthened in proportion to the required depth of shade, occasionally crossed with other lines a second or even a third time, precisely in the same manner as a copper-plate is engraved that is intended for giving off impressions. Whether the latter were ever taken from the brasses by the artists who executed them it is not possible to ascertain. It should, however, Mr. Boutell remarks,—

‘Be borne in mind that “brasses,” to be available as engraven plates for printing, require to be in the state in which we now generally find them,

having, that is to say, their incised lines clear and open for the reception of the printer's ink, whereas originally the work was considered to be incomplete until the lines were filled with some black or coloured composition, and thus before leaving the artist's hands in the first instance, these engravings were restored to an unbroken uniformity of surface, and, consequently, while in that state, they were deprived of their faculty of producing impressions.'

In the modern practice of taking rubbings from sepulchral slabs, the bright parts in relief of the plate answer to the dark marks of the heel-ball on the paper.

CHAPTER II.

ON ENGRAVING IN GENERAL FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE
THIRTEENTH TO THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

LEAVING the doubts and difficulties of ancient times, let us place ourselves at the end of the twelfth, or at the commencement of the thirteenth century, and consider whether we possess any positive data which prove when engraving was first executed for the *purpose of yielding impressions*; and if we do not, what, let us ask, is the earliest period at which we are certain that such engraving was practised? It must be at once admitted, that although we are justified in believing the art was followed between the early date—presently to be alluded to—at which we know engraving was employed, and the period included in the previous chapter, yet we cannot exhibit the actual dates of the production of such examples as appear to warrant this belief. Able men have fought, with much ingenious reasoning, to date definitely various examples which they consider link the time of surety to that of unresolvable doubt; but, after all, they have left the matter in each individual case one of opinion only. All we are sure of is, that the earliest print which has come down to us with a date attached to it bears that of the year 1423. This print is the one well known from facsimiles and reduced copies as the ‘Buxheim Saint Christopher.’ It is true there does exist another woodcut—the ‘Brussels Print’—which has an earlier date (*viz.* 1418) marked on it; but as there are doubts as to whether there has not been some tampering with the inscription, we leave this example out of consideration for the present. Of this print, as also of the Saint Christopher, we shall have presently much to say.

Here, then, in 1423, we have a veritable starting-point. But

are there not any prints existing which were executed before this time? There is much reason to believe there are, nevertheless we cannot name the exact dates when they were produced. We may think we hold a chain which connects 1423 to 1200, but of the strength and character of its links we are very uncertain.

There have been several archæologists who have looked with less suspicion on the data we possess, and have sought to determine a definite connexion between the two periods mentioned. A remarkable attempt to antedate before the fifteenth century the practice of engraving is that known by the title of 'The Story of the Cunios.' It owes its origin to Papillon, a wood-engraver of some repute, and writer on his art, who brought it forward in his 'Traité de la Gravure en Bois,' 1766, vol. i. p. 89. According to the strange account therein given, he was, when a young man, engaged with his father in papering the rooms of a Swiss captain of antiquarian habits. Having got into conversation with the latter, Papillon was shown by him some old books containing the 'chivalrous deeds in figures of the great and magnanimous Macedonian King, the courageous and valiant Alexander.' The work was dedicated to Pope Honorius IV., by its authors, Alexander Alberic Cunio, Knt., and Isabella Cunio, twin brother and sister. The 'figures,' Papillon was informed by his antiquarian friend, had been 'executed in relief with a little knife on blocks of wood smoothed and joined together.' There were eight prints and a *cartouche*, or ornamented title-page. The figures were considered to have been fairly designed, and, though somewhat Gothic in feeling, well characterized and draped. The impressions were on rather brown paper (*papier bis*), and printed off in pale 'Indian blue,' apparently by means of gentle friction with the hand on the back of the paper. Such text as there was seemed to be in bad Latin or ancient Gothic-Italian, and had been coarsely engraved on the same blocks.

Pope Honorius IV. is stated by some authorities to have sat two years only—1284, 1285—in the papal chair, while others aver that he wore the triple crown from 1285 to 1287. Now since no one else ever heard of such a book as this illustrated volume of the achievements of Alexander, dedicated to Honorius, and, as Mr. Chatto observes, not any mention is made of such a work by

any old writer, and as no other copy has been discovered in any of the libraries of Italy, the sole evidence of its ever having existed is the account given of it by Papillon. Nevertheless, Ottley, Singer, and the author of the article Wood Engraving in the 'Encyclopædia Metropolitana,' though admitting the uncertainty connected with the story, regard the latter with favour, while Heineken, Huber, and Bartsch, turn away from it, and Chatto treats it with contempt. Mr. Ottley's words are :—

'The objections which oppose themselves to our belief of this story are, it must be allowed, sufficiently formidable in their appearance, but they are not conclusive or unanswerable . . . in all probability the romantic story of the two Cunios, as recorded by Papillon, is, in the main, true.'

Cumberland (Bibl. 14, p. 43) is 'inclined to afford entire credit to the narrative, however extraordinary.' M. Ph. Berjeau alludes (Bibl. Pauperum Fac-similed, p. 12) to the Cunio story as 'probably perfectly true, and would carry back the first attempt of wood-engraving in Italy to 1285, about the time when Luger was *formschneider* in Nördlingen.' On the other hand, Lanzi considered the tale to be 'mixed up with so many assertions to which it is difficult to give credit' that he declined to bestow on it further consideration.

Zani thought it possible the xylographic productions of the Cunios might yet be found in the Library of the Vatican, and that research should be made there; while Passavant, though not giving Papillon's account any decided support, does not—so it seems to us—absolutely doubt its veracity, for when alluding (vol. i. p. 128, note) to certain fragments of tapestry recently found described by Keller as of the thirteenth century, and as representing, by means of impressions from wooden blocks, scenes from the story of *Œdipus*, he observes :—

'This discovery, a knowledge of which we have only recently acquired, is of a character to re-direct our attention to the story of the Cunios by Papillon . . . it is remarkable that the subjects now before us are like the others drawn from ancient Grecian history, that they are accompanied by inscriptions, and that they owe their origin to Upper Italy; and

though we perfectly agree with Zani in his doubts concerning the authenticity of the statements of Papillon, it has seemed right to draw attention to the coincidence, so that it may induce to further researches in connexion with a point so interesting in the history of early wood-engraving in Italy.'

Mr. Noel Humphreys, in the Appendix to his 'History of the Art of Printing,' writes,—

'I have met with some evidence that the old French historian or wood-engraving had fair grounds for his assertions regarding the existence of such a work as the one he describes and which he asserts that he actually saw. After weighing all the facts and probabilities of the case, I must confess that I arrived at the conclusion that M. Papillon's judgment had been sadly at fault in assigning the work in question to the thirteenth century, even if his memory had not deceived him as to its existence. I have, however, since the first issue of this work, seen a letter from a well-known bibliophile of Moscow, in which he states that on reading in my work the account of the woodcuts described by Papillon, he referred to a memorandum-book kept during a tour in 1861, and found that on the 9th of September in that year he had seen in Nuremberg, in the possession of the antiquary Herdegen, seven pages out of the eight described by Papillon, for which M. Herdegen asked a very high price. The same letter contains an interesting account of a xylographic block discovered in Spain, and from which impressions had been recently taken, the execution of the block being assigned on pretty sure grounds to the year 1232.'

When first we read the above we felt quite giddy.

To Firmin Didot, Papillon's account is but a '*recit romanesque*;' and while remarking on the refutation, '*fort et long*,' of it by Jackson and Chatto, he observes that these critics have forgotten the chief objection to the story, viz., that in 1284 paper was not manufactured at Ravenna, nor anywhere else in Italy.

'The first papers made in Italy, France, and Germany, were remarkable for their whiteness. In fact, as the manufacture was then very restricted, rags of the finest fabrics alone were employed. This paper (of Papillon) of a grey tint, could it have come from China? It is not impossible, for Marco Polo, who travelled in China and Persia in 1278, alludes at this epoch to a kind of bank-note made with paper from the

mulberry-tree. But had Papillon really seen these prints this fact would have struck him, and surely he would have alluded to it in the long description which he gives concerning printing in China, and of the paper there manufactured.' (Bibl. 18, col. xi.)

The story of the Cunios has, we think, received its death-blow at the hands of Mr. Chatto, independently of the matter of the paper, which latter might have been, it must be fairly allowed, of cotton, though not of linen. Considering that Papillon had been once insane, we abide by that writer's conclusion. He sums up a careful analysis of the argument in stating that upon 'this question, affirmed by Papillon, and maintained as true by Zani and Ottley, contemporary authorities are silent, and not one solitary fact bearing distinctly upon the point has been alleged in support of Papillon's narrative.'—(Bibl. 38, p. 39.)

Playing Cards.—The history of Playing Cards has been appealed to by some writers as showing that the introduction of these agents into Europe before the fifteenth century would almost necessarily involve the coetaneous practice of wood-engraving. Cards could never, say they, have become *general* in any European country until engraving was had recourse to in their manufacture, as the time and labour required to design and colour them by hand, must have rendered them too expensive a source of amusement, except for the more opulent classes of society, and consequently would have acted as a prohibition against their common use.

A general opinion has prevailed since the time of Covelluzzo (*obit* 1480) that playing-cards had their origin in the East, and that the Saracens or Arabs introduced them into Europe by way of Spain. Some persons have looked to Egypt, some to India, others to China, as the particular locality of their ancient source. The Gipsies also have been considered as having brought them with them from the East for the purpose of divination or fortune-telling. The Oriental origin of cards has been disputed, however, and their European one maintained, Italy being regarded as their birth-place. It is not our intention to discuss this topic here, as the entire subject of playing-cards has been treated by the author

in another volume,* to which the reader is referred for abundant details.

Suffice it now to say, that as far as can be made out, playing-cards made their first appearance in Europe and in Italy probably about the year 1350, though it must be admitted direct proof is wanting to establish their use before 1379, when they seem to have been known to the Italian *Condottieri*. But their *positive* history does not begin before the year 1392, the date of the record of the production of the so-called 'Gringonneur,' or 'Charles the Sixth's' cards.

In 1418, 1423, and 1435, card-makers and card-painters were recorded in the civic archives of Nürnberg. Before 1463 cards were not only known and imported into England, but were most likely made here, and by 1484 they formed a common amusement at Christmas time, at least among the richer classes.

The most ancient cards which have come down to us are generally considered to have been the work of the hand, and may be regarded somewhat in the same light as are the productions of the *Miniatori*. As to the mode in which the cards of the ensuing epoch were produced there are differences of opinion. Though it be admitted that cards were in use and well known in Germany before the date of the St. Christopher (1423), or that, as Lacroix observes, 'in the interval between 1392 and 1454 means had been discovered of making playing-cards at a cheap rate, and of converting them into an object of commerce,' it is not by any means clear how these cards were produced. In other words, we are not sure that they were first engraved on wood-blocks or metal plates, from which impressions were taken afterwards.

According to Mr. Chatto, the oldest cards he had ever seen, and which appeared to be of date as early as 1440, had evidently been executed by means of stencils. These cards we have frequently examined, and we accord in Mr. Chatto's opinion. The full evidence of this method of production is apparent only when the cards themselves are examined, since the facsimile representations of them which have been published are far from affording it. Merlin doubts (Bibl. 90, pp. 68, 69) whether the early cards mentioned by Singer, Stukely, and Chatto, have been

* A Descriptive Catalogue of Playing and other Cards in the British Museum. Printed by order of the Trustees. London, 1876.

executed in the manner stated. So far from doubting that early playing-cards, and early wood-cuts so called, were frequently stencilled, we believe that we possess examples of both thus produced in our cabinet.

The old French cards, known as the 'Courfube' cards, and the cards of Charles the Seventh, the outlines on which are undoubtedly from wood-blocks, are considered by Chatto not to be earlier than A.D. 1480, though others have assigned them to about 1425. Passavant admitted that he was ignorant of any examples of the fourteenth century, whether derived from stencils or wood-blocks; the oldest cards he had seen belonged to the first half of the fifteenth century, and were from stencils. The cards of the Royal Cabinet at Berlin, and of the Ambrasian collection at Vienna, are supposed to be from engraved wood-blocks, the impressions having been afterwards painted. They belong to the fifteenth century.

'As there are no cards,' writes Mr. Chatto, 'engraved on wood, to which so early a date as 1423 can be fairly assigned, and as at that period there were professional card-makers established at Augsburg, it would appear that wood-engraving was employed in the execution of Helgen (Saints of the class of prints to which the St. Christopher belongs), before it was applied to cards, and that there were stencilled cards before there were wood-engravings of Saints.' (Bibl. II, p. 87.)

While Breitkopf, Ottley, and Merlin agree with the opinion that engraving on wood was applied to the production of popular imagery before it was to that of cards, Heineken and others ascribe the invention of the art itself directly to the necessities the production of playing-cards entailed.

Lacroix somewhat vaguely attributes the earliest engraved cards to *circa* 1420-1440, while Planché assigns them, as illustrated by the Courfube examples, to about 1460, or 'close upon that date.'

Among the rarer and more valued *incunabula* of the copper-plate engravings of Italy are fifty pieces of emblematic figures with their attributes, known as a series to iconophiles as the Tarocchi of Mantegna, Carte di Baldini, Early Venetian Tarots, &c. The earlier version of the series is thought to have been executed

about the year 1470. In a fine and perfect state, it is extremely rare and costly; M. Galichon's example selling in 1875 for 17,000 fr. or 680*l.* plus the commissions and duty. (Bartsch, xiii. p. 120, n. 18-67. Pass. v. p. 119.)

The student of ancient prints will do well to study the various treatises which have been published on playing-cards, or at least such as are noticed in the Bibliography at the end of this work. Much curious information on cognate topics indispensable to the well-informed iconophile may be found therein. Their perusal will be in fact the true propædeutic to an understanding of such early engravings as are recorded in Bartsch, vol. ix. p. 282; vol. x. pp. 70-120; vol. xiii. p. 120. Passavant, vol. i. p. 12; vol. ii. pp. 66-70, 80, 176, 205, 246-251; vol. v. pp. 119-134. It will happen, no doubt, that when pieces of these series shall be met with by the tyro, he may be puzzled frequently as to their signification. Study of the works before mentioned alone can clear up the matter satisfactorily.

It may readily be inferred from what has been stated, that although playing-cards were in use before the date of the St. Christopher (1423), not any conclusive evidence exists to prove that they were produced through the instrumentality of engraving. But this must be allowed, that, as it is probable *some* of the earlier specimens of so-called woodcuts were themselves after all produced by stencils and handwork, it is likely that these stencilled cuts were, considering their several histories, direct descendants of the stencilled cards; but of the exact connexion of the two we have not any authentic records.

Between the years 1808 and 1816 a German, the Baron von Derfchau, assisted by a Dr. Becker, astonished the antiquarian world by publishing a series of impressions taken, as was stated, from original blocks of the earlier masters of wood-engraving. By dint of research and trouble these old blocks had been ferreted out and bought up by the Baron, who straightway had impressions taken from them. Some of these blocks, it was affirmed, were evidently older than the cut of the Saint Christopher, many of the date of the latter and up to the time of Dürer, several were the well-known works of this master and of his con-

temporaries, while others were of the sixteenth century. Some *conoscanti* were influenced by the character of these prints and the statements of Derfchau. Singer, *e.g.*, adduced several of the cuts as showing a manifest claim to precedence in respect to the Saint Christopher. No doubt some of them were from *bonâ fide* early blocks, but the latter were not so early as Derfchau insinuated.

It is pretty clear that not only was the Baron himself deceived, but that he was also the intentional source of deception to others. He was himself deceived in mistaking mere *rudeness* of execution for great age, that which he thought very *old* was after all only very *bad*. But still worse, the Baron is believed to have passed off 'modern antiques' for genuine articles. 'The first cut in the collection, and which Derfchau and Becker regarded as of an earlier date than the Saint Christopher, is considered by Chatto (Bibl. 38, p. 226) as of comparatively modern manufacture, not to mention others of the same character. Passavant, though not going so far as this belief, yet observes, 'The engravings on wood of the "Fol amoureux," and "Chat avec la fouris," are of a more recent period (than the second half or the fifteenth century), and certainly do not belong, as is supposed, to the earliest epoch of wood-engraving in Germany.' (v. i. p. 35.) According to Mr. Chatto, it is not unlikely that two or three of the old class A may have been executed previous to 1500, 'but there are others in which bad drawing and rude engraving have been mistaken for indubitable proofs of antiquity. There are also two or three in the same class, which I strongly suspect to be modern forgeries.' (Bibl. 38, p. 226.)

Under any circumstances the Baron's evidence cannot be received in court; since, as Dr. Dibdin showed in his 'Bibliographical Tour,' Derfchau was in all probability a self-producing source of ancient engraving. For example, he sold a rare specimen of copperplate engraving to Dr. Dibdin, which had the date MCCCCXXX on it, and sold another impression likewise from the same plate to Mr. John Payne. 'There is no doubt,' says Chatto (p. 236), 'of their being gross forgeries, and it is not unlikely that the plate was in the Baron's possession.' Further, Von Murr (whom Dibdin suspects of having forged the French Saint

Christopher) described, in his 'Journal für Kunstgeschichte,' impressions from the blocks of the 'Cat' and the 'Fool,' as old woodcuts in the possession of Dr. Silberrad. Now it is certainly very singular, as Mr. Chatto observes, that the identical blocks from which Dr. Silberrad's scarce wood-engravings were taken should afterwards happen to be discovered and come into the possession of Baron von Derfchau. Of course it *might* so occur legitimately, but the history of Dr. Dibdin's plate, and the intrinsic characters of the cuts themselves, combined with the statement of Murr, render the matter of the Baron's choicer rarities more than suspicious. Doubts as to the genuineness of some of these cuts were expressed soon after their publication, for we find their editor, Dr. Becker, in his second volume, writing,—

'There are certain Aristarchs who have doubted the authenticity of our blocks, supposing that they have been engraved recently. To such persons we give full liberty to imitate them in their turn, and to sell their impressions at the same price as that at which we vend ours. Such connoisseurs as have seen ancient impressions of our engravings will dispense with any further explication of the subject from me.'

Interesting details connected with the Baron von Derfchau and his rarities may be found in Dr. Dibdin's 'Bibliographical Tour.' Vol. 3, Supplement, page xxxii.

Early Prints and Dates of Production.—The most ancient direct documents relating to engraving on wood are, according to some authorities,—1st, those stated to have been found by Ducange in a charter of 1233, and in which occur the terms '*incisor lignorum*;' 2ndly, those found by Beischlag recorded in the Necrology of the Convent of Franciscans at Nördlingen. This Necrology, which finishes at the commencement of the fifteenth century, contains the following entry: '*VII. Id. Augusti, obiit Frater. h. Luger, laycus, optimus incisor lignorum.*' On the above we have only to remark that it has yet to be proved that '*incisor lignorum*' means an engraver on, and not a carver or sculptor of, wood.

During the year 1844 a volume was issued at Lyons in which was given the facsimile of a woodcut said to be indisputably of

the date of 1384, *i.e.* older than the Saint Christopher by almost half a century. It was the portrait of a physician of Nürnberg, and was of coarse execution. 'This cut,' writes Mr. Ottley, 'appears, I know not why, to have been suspected.' Suspected, indeed, it has been; according to Sotheby, it was probably the work of Jobst Amman, who was at Nürnberg in 1584, following the occupation of a wood-engraver.

In the collection at the British Museum is a coloured cut of Saint Anna enthroned, having the Virgin and infant Christ on her lap; likewise cuts of the Raising of Lazarus, Christ before Pilate, and the Mass of Saint Gregory, all these are considered both by Renouvier and Waagen as of the end of the fourteenth, or of the beginning of the fifteenth century.

In the Imperial Library at Paris is a print of the Virgin and Child, which, according to Lacroix, is probably of an earlier date than the Saint Christopher. It is printed on unfized cotton paper, into which the impression has sunk so deeply that it may be seen nearly as well on the *verso* as on the *recto* of the piece.

One of the most noteworthy attempts to give a systematic account of single prints presumed to have been executed before the Saint Christopher is that of Weigel, Zeffermann, and Passavant. To the first writer, in combination with Zeffermann, we are indebted for an able voluminous work, illustrated with numerous facsimiles, on the presumed earliest productions known from engraved wooden blocks and metal plates. These facsimiles are accompanied by a good preliminary discussion on early 'pre-press-printing,' and by copious analytical disquisitions on the characters and imports of each print. Taking the work (Bibl. 70), and its statements as a whole, we do not see any reason why we should not accept it as affording many fairly probable conclusions in respect to a confessedly difficult and obscure subject. The views of Messrs. Weigel and Zeffermann are clearly expressed, and the satisfactory facsimile copies speak for themselves as not having been wrought up for the occasion. The peculiar doctrines taught in the work relative to the use of engraved metal plates instead of wood-blocks, in the production of many of the earliest specimens of engraving, may be accepted or not without reference to the intrinsic evidence the art-characters of the prints

themselves offer as to the probable date of the execution of the latter.

We are not disposed to doubt the correctness of the views of Weigel and Zeffermann in regard to the early employment of metal, but this is a topic which will have to be discussed in another place. Suffice it now to say, that the valuable collection of M. Weigel was recently dispersed, and that a portfolio of rare *incunabula* derived from it enriches our National Collection. These we have had the opportunity of carefully studying, and have been likewise fortunate in securing one or two specimens for our own cabinet, among which is the large Saint Christopher (No. 184, Weigel's Cat.), the original of one of the more prominent facsimiles in the work to which allusion has been made. Some notion may be formed of the nature and value of the materials upon which that work was based, when we state that the Weigel cabinet sold for 81,992 thalers, or above 12,000*l.*

According to Weigel and Passavant there cannot be any doubt that engraved blocks were employed towards the close of the twelfth century for giving off impressions in colour on to the smooth surfaces of silk and like fabrics. In Weigel's work is figured a portion of a band of taffetas, of a reddish brown colour, having impressed on it a flowing ornament in the shape of an S, with flower-buds attached, the blackish contour of which ornament has evidently been printed and not painted. This is the earliest specimen known to Weigel and Passavant; they believe it had its origin in Saracenic Sicily, towards the close of the twelfth century, and from its appearance not to have been the first of its kind. Such would at once be shown to be the case, could Fiorillo's statement—that a specimen existed having the date 1031 upon it—be accepted; but Weigel himself has proved that Fiorillo was mistaken. Fiorillo had stated ('Geschichte der Zeichnenden Künste in Deutschland,' B. i. s. 1239) that in the Spiritual Treasury Chamber at Vienna there existed a cœrulean blue silk *casula* formerly belonging to the holy King Stephen of Hungary, which had been made up by his wife, and the figures and inscriptions upon which had been produced by pressure from engraved blocks and movable wooden type. Weigel, in his search for this specimen of 1031, was foiled at Vienna, but at

last met with the vesture in the Benedictine Abbey of Martinberg, near Raab, in Hungary. This same *casula*, proved to have been made out of the finest gauze-like byssus, and the numerous figures of saints with inscriptions could be seen at once to have been produced by the accomplished hand of the court painter of Queen Gisela. Indeed the artist had done his work so determinately that the colour had penetrated the delicate fabric, allowing the painting to be seen on the other side of the gauzy byssus. Of imprints from blocks and movable types on this precious garment, not a trace could be perceived. Though Fiorillo's specimen must be displaced, there does not appear any sufficient reason for doubting either the genuineness, age, or mode of production of the several examples which are given in Weigel and Zestermann's treatise. Not less than ten illustrations are afforded of printing from wooden blocks on coverlets and garment fabrics from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. Such imprints on analogous textures increased considerably during the thirteenth century, when liturgical vestments and choice draperies were often elaborately adorned. Linen, silk, satin, and in the fourteenth century leather, received such impressions generally in red, or dark blue, or black colours, and sometimes in gold. For such work we are indebted—in the earlier periods at least—to Italy, though in Weigel's collection there were two specimens of German imprints in black on a strong linen ground. They are thought to have belonged to *antependii* of the middle of the fifteenth century. One represented a Crucifixion with Mary and John on an ornamental ground, the whole requiring three blocks for its perfection. The other was the Blessed Virgin holding the infant Jesus in her arms beneath a rich Gothic tabernacle, flanked by two columns, each column supporting a Prophet. Below was the name Maria; all being on a dark ground.

Besides referring to these examples brought forward by Weigel, we may direct attention to the fragments of tapestry described by Dr. Keller, and belonging to *avocat* Odet of Sion, in the Valais. These tapestries are formed of a raw hempen cloth, now become of the colour of leather. They are divided into compartments, with ornamental borders, within which are represented subjects

from the history of the *Odyfsey*, the figures being detached light off a dark ground. (*Paff.* i. p. 127.)

Early as some of these imprints may be, they serve to show only that blocks were engraved for the purpose of stamping woven fabrics as early as the tenth or eleventh centuries. The great desideratum is to know when blocks were first engraved and used for the purpose of giving off their designs to parchment or paper. On this point Weigel and Passavant strive to assist us.

One of the most remarkable and interesting of the facsimiles in the work of the former is that marked No. XI. It represents a Crucifixion, the original being on parchment. Weigel conducts an ingenious argument to prove that it was executed during the twelfth century. It was found in Upper Germany fixed in a hollow of the binding of an ancient volume of MSS. Christ is seen on the cross, having on the left the Virgin, erect and supporting with the right hand her left arm, on which she rests her chin. On the right is Saint John, also erect, and holding a book. Above, on each side of the cross, are represented—according to ancient custom—in two disks, half-figures of the Sun and Moon crying, and with handkerchiefs to the eyes. The lower part is occupied by a horizontal ornament, of a red colour, the ground in the upper portion above the transverse beam of the cross being coloured deep blue. The whole is surrounded by a border, having at the corners the symbols of the four Evangelists, between which, on a ground of cinnabar, are half figures of the Prophets. It is noteworthy that the transverse lines of the cross are seen to pass right through the figure of our Saviour, proving, according to Weigel, that two plates (the imprint is supposed to be from metal) were employed in the production of the impression. Part of the work, however, is clearly due to the hand alone. The circles of the medallions containing the figures have been struck by compasses, the point-holes in the centres being yet to be seen, while on the back there is not any evidence of pressure having been used. Other indications of hand-work are not wanting. But we must allow M. Weigel to speak for himself:—

‘The central figure with the lines alluded to, as well as the borde

with the straight lines and figures, have been undoubtedly *printed*. The depressions caused by the pressure can be seen on the upper face of the sheet, but the effects of the pressure are still more plainly visible on the back of it. This printed representation was found—as far as is known to us—on the upper cover of the binding of a book, into which it was firmly fixed after the manner in which at the same period of time designs carved in metal and ivory are to be found on book-covers. On the back of the parchment the glue can yet be seen by which the former was fixed to the book-cover, and in this glue can be discovered even the effects of the pressure by which the engraved metal plate was forced down upon the parchment so fixed on the binding. . . . We now pass to the question, What was the mechanical process through which our imprint was effected? We at once reply, that we believe it was produced from the pressure of a metallic plate. We expect the objection which will be advanced, viz. that not any plates for printing from, nor traces of a press, have hitherto been found as belonging to the twelfth century; nevertheless, we may fairly remind the objectors that it has been recently admitted that “initials” were produced by means of pressure from stamps at Einsiedlen (Canton Schwyz), already in the twelfth century. Further that impressions were taken from metal plates which originally were never intended to be applied to such purpose, but were meant for the decoration of some particular object. Impressions, for example, from “dotted plates” (*Schrotblätter*) are to be found having reversed inscriptions and round white spots at the corners, showing that the plates from which such impressions had been taken had holes in their corners, through which they might be screwed and fixed. Similar plates were adopted in the middle ages for the decoration of altars, pulpits, and church seats, they being engraved and adorned with figures. Such plates also were used in particular for the adornment of book-covers. In reference to this subject, Theophilus Presbyter (iii. 71) writes: “Eodem modo (*i. e.* ciselirt) fiunt tabulæ et laminæ cupreæ et sodiuntur et denigrantur et raduntur. Ex his ligantur cathedræ pictæ et sedilia atque lecti ornantur etiam libri pauperum.” From this it would appear that two kinds of plates were used for ornamentation; one kind in which the forms were represented in *relief*, producing their effects by their elevated contours, and another in which the forms were in *intaglio* or engraved, the intended effects of which were produced as soon as a black colour, (*nigellum*), and hard-folder, were rubbed into them. It is easy to see that it was but to make one step more, namely, to carry the black matter over the plates cut in relief, as well as over the other kind, and then to press them on to parchment, so as to allow of the less wealthy being

supplied with a substitute for the metal plates themselves for the decoration of their books. We, therefore, look on our own impression as having proceeded from such a plate, engraved in relief during the twelfth century. We agree with Passavant (Peintre-Graveur) that the plate was either of copper or brass, since the gritty-like way in which the colour has imparted itself to the parchment could have resulted from the employment of plates of these metals only. Passavant is of opinion that the plate must have been warmed before pressure was used, as proved by the strong union still existing between the glue and the parchment.

‘To the great age advanced for our impression the further objection may be taken, viz. that at the period involved a sufficiently strong press like a printing-press did not exist by which the necessary pressure could have been exerted. This objection may be met by the statement that the pieces of boarding of altars and doors were brought into conjunction by means of the joiner’s press or screw, and that such could be readily employed for the pressure of books. But we may assume, too, that where books, particularly those of parchment, were bound as in our still existing form (see the book held by St. John in the piece now under consideration), a bookbinder’s press could not have been wanting, and which might have been also applied to the pressure of plates. Thus both plates and presses would be present for the purpose of printing.’ (Bibl. 70.)

The particular manner in which this Christ on the Cross is treated, or its *symbolism*, if we may so term it, as shown in the want of nails in the wounds, the absence of the crown of thorns, the form of the eyes, &c., lead Weigel and Passavant to place its origin in the twelfth century. The latter writer, who published his observations on this relic before Weigel’s work made its appearance, remarked,—

‘The style of the drawing is perfectly conformable to that of the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century. We see the elongated forms, the tranquil attitudes, and the expressions of the compositions of the twelfth century. The arms of Christ—whose head is slightly inclined towards the left—are not stretched out horizontally, the feet are turned a little outwards, and beneath is seen a chalice. A red drapery which encircles the waist falls in very simple folds, and the draperies of the other figures are well cast without having anything conventional or resembling the peculiarities of the Byzantine style of the end of the thirteenth century. The engraving is fine and sharp, and illuminated with

care. The different parts of the body have each their proper flesh tints. The mantle of the Virgin is red, the tunic originally blue appears almost green at present. The dress of St. John is of a yellowish brown colour, and the ornaments are yellow on a brown ground.' (Pass. i. p. 20.)

Berjeau observes in the introduction to his facsimile of the 'Canticum Cantorum' (p. 27), that 'the style of the drawing of the Christ on the Cross may very well belong to the twelfth century, though this drawing may not have been engraved before the latter part of the fifteenth century.'

This relic, which under any circumstances is of high interest in the history of early art, belonged to a Brother of one of the cloisters of Upper Germany. We have before said in respect to it that portions of the design are pointed out by Weigel as having been clearly the result of hand-work alone. It is proper to add that some persons have thought the whole may have been so. Mr. Noel Humphreys remarks on this example,—

'MM. Weigel and Zeffermann have doubtless been very careful in arriving at their conclusion in favour of the work being a print from an engraved metal plate, otherwise the loose freedom and occasional irregularity of the lines precisely similar to those found in the illustrations drawn by hand of the MSS. of the twelfth century, might lead a cautious critic to a conclusion of completely opposite character.' (Gentleman's Magazine, 1866.)

Following this Christ on the Cross in Weigel's book, we find a Saint Christopher, presumed to belong to between 1375 and 1400. It is considered to be from metal, and is noteworthy on account of the blackness of the impressed forms arising apparently from the use of a colour having oil or varnish in its composition, as may be inferred from the yellowish appearance which exists around the black lines. This piece is on paper.

Between these examples and the Saint Christopher of 1423, several prints are placed and facsimiles given by Weigel and Zeffermann. One of the earliest cuts from wood here illustrated is a Christ in the Press, thought to be of from 1380 to 1390. There is likewise a Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane of from 1420 to 1430. The rest do not now concern us, as they relate to periods after the date of the Saint Christopher.

In the first volume of Passavant (p. 27) may be found detailed descriptions of some of the earlier woodcuts he had met with in his researches through the libraries and convents of Germany. Of these it may be enough to refer to the prints found in 1845, pasted within the covers of a missal belonging to the library of the Church of St. Jacques, at Bruenn in Moravia, which prints are supposed to have had their birth within the fourteenth century.

Munich is rich in such antique remains of art, and Nürnberg possesses a relic of much consideration in the form of an altar tabernacle, curiously ornamented with woodcuts of various dates, the earlier of which are considered by Passavant to belong to the fourteenth century.

No person, of course, can shut his eyes to the truths that not one of the examples brought forward by Weigel, Zestermann, and Passavant, has a date engraved on it, and therefore that the periods which have been assigned to the production of the prints in question can be regarded as matters of opinion only, and not as facts. However well we may think of the ingenious arguments by which the dates laid down have been arrived at, and of perhaps their approximative truth, we look in vain for certitude. We think it not at all unlikely that several of the examples mentioned did actually precede the Buxheim Saint Christopher, but that positive proof can be shown that they did so we cannot admit to be the case. Indeed, we have been told that it was a general opinion among those present at the Leipzig auction of May 1872, that M. Weigel had not unfrequently deceived himself in assigning, as he had done, such early dates, to some of the prints in his collection.

The latest attempt made, that we are aware of, to anticipate the engraving of the Buxheim Saint Christopher, by the production of a print supported by a demonstrably early date, is that of M. H. Delaborde. In the 'Gazette des Beaux-Arts,' for March 1869, appeared a 'Notice sur Deux Estampes de 1406 et sur les commencements de la Gravure en criblé, par Henri Delaborde,' of which the following is a short abstract:—

Early in 1869, the *Conservateur* of the Print Department of the Bibliothèque Impériale at Paris, was requested to purchase a Latin MS. of the fifteenth century,—a MS. apparently without

importance as regarded the text, but containing towards the middle of the volume two prints engraved in *la manière criblée*. As the *Conserveur* glanced over the leaves he was struck by one or two dates on them, and by the circumstance that the engravings had been printed on the pages before the latter had been touched by the pen of the scribe, in lieu of being pasted on the MS. after it had been written, which is usually the case in like instances. That the illustrations had been so printed seemed proved by the fact of the lines of the MS. having been written *around* each print on the recto, and very distant and loose on the verso in order that as little detriment as possible should occur to the engravings. If therefore the precise date of the MS. could be settled, the period of the execution of the engravings would be determined so far at least that it might be stated to have preceded the writing of the manuscript.

The latter became the national property, and the chief of the print department at once summoned to his aid MM. Natalis de Wailly and Leopold Delisle, his learned *confrères* of the department of MSS. It is observable [say they] that at p. 10 of the MS., a description of kalendar is given beginning at the year 1394, and written in black ink down to 1413, when the remainder is written in red ink as if the copyist desired to make a distinction between the years already passed and those to come. At line 10 is written, 'Quod erit anno Domini 1413,' and at line 26, 'donec elabentur 1413 anni.' The date of the MS. ought to correspond to some year therefore between 1394 and 1413, in harmony with *erit* and *elabentur*. But unfortunately the first 1413 just referred to is written in the numerals of the time, 1473 (1473). This, however, is only a *lapsus calami*, and can be easily rectified. If corrected, and the golden number, the number of the solar cycle, and the dominical letter of the kalendar be read in conformity with the correction, a concordance with the year 1406 is arrived at. If the correction be not allowed then 1349 must be adopted. There is not any choice between the two dates, and the latter year is out of the question considering the style of the writing and the character of the text.

It remained to be seen whether among the various texts transcribed by the copyist there was not one of a more recent date

than 1406, for if a single page had been taken from a treatise posterior to this year the argument advanced would be negatived, but on the contrary would receive great support should extracts be found taken only from writings whose origin was anterior to the fifteenth century.

On examination the greater part of the volume is found to be made up of extracts from the early fathers and scholastics of the middle ages, together with some allusions to Henry VII. [of Luxemburg ?] who died in 1313, and to the Empress Margaret, his wife, who died two years earlier. So far then there is not any opposition to the theory advanced, yet there are two citations which at first sight appear to justify hesitation to its acceptance. There is, namely, a quotation from the 'Opus Tripartitum' of Jean Gerson, and some extracts from the third and fourth books of 'De Imitatione Christi.' But the precise date of the production of the 'Opus tripartitum' is not known, nor is that of the earliest MS. of the 'De Imitatione.' With respect to the first work it may be said to have been written *probably* before 1392; and in regard to the second there are according to Mabillon MSS. of it, apparently belonging to the end of the fourteenth century, while MM. Ampere and Sainte-Beuve agree in thinking that the whole treatise was written before the fifteenth century, and therefore that its author was not Thomas à Kempis. Consequently, while there is *quoad* the MS. every reason for believing that it was written in 1406, there is not anything which can be fairly advanced against this opinion; and as regards the character of the two engravings in the volume, both their archæologic and artistic qualities bear out the view of such early production. Since the prints, as is clearly the case, were impressed on the pages of the volume before the MS. was written, the plates from which such impressions were derived must have been engraved before the date of the writing. Hence it follows,—

'First, that engraving, or rather the reproduction by printing of engraved work, was known and practised before the epoch which bequeathed us the Flemish Virgin of 1418, the German Saint Christopher of 1423, and the other prints bearing authentic dates, which have been hitherto regarded as the most ancient examples.

‘Secondly, that the process of engraving in relief on metal called engraving *en criblé* was in all probability the first method prosecuted in Europe, since from the beginning of the fifteenth century (*i.e.* from the year 1406), this process furnished specimens for impressions, while up to the present time there is not anything to prove that engraving on wood was practised at the same period.’

M. Delaborde’s memoir (of which the preceding two pages are a *résumé*) is accompanied by facsimiles of the two engravings. One is a Christ bearing the Cross, the other a Sudarium. Both the originals are executed in the method known as the *manière criblée*, or the ‘style of the dotted prints,’ and are slightly coloured.

In reference to the statements and views of M. Delaborde and his colleagues, we would first recall to mind the fact of the supposed error in the kalendar in which 1473 is distinctly written in lieu of 1413, and ask if it be really a mistake. In the second place, we would urge attention to the doubts which exist as to the time when Gerson wrote the ‘Opus Tripartitum,’ and to the darkness which envelopes both the author and the time of production of the ‘De Imitatione Christi.’ Further, we cannot lose sight of the difficulties which—except in particular cases—are connected with the determination of the date of a MS. from its technical execution. But while demanding attention to these circumstances, it would be unjust to M. Delaborde not to insist on the unprejudiced, careful, and ingenious manner in which the question has been discussed by him. To many it may appear to have been so satisfactorily treated, that they will consider M. Delaborde has made out his case. The conclusion we ourselves came to, however, after weighing the matter, was that of the Scotch verdict—Not proven. Time has satisfied us with our judgment, as what we have yet to state will prove it should have done.

Soon after the acquisition by the British Museum of the early prints purchased at the sale of the Weigel collection in 1872, we had the opportunity, through the kindness of Mr. Reid, of looking through the portfolio. During our examination we came upon the set of eight pieces of a ‘Passion’ in the *manière criblée*, marked No. 338 in the Weigel Sale Catalogue, and in

the larger work (Bibl. 70). These pieces took our special attention, because they were impressed on the backs with typographic text. On reference to the 'Anfänge' (Bibl. 70), we found that both the design and technic of the prints and the character of the text had led M. Weigel to the conclusion that in the pieces of this Passion was to be seen a portion of another edition of the Munich Passion already described by F. X. Stoger. The type on the backs of the prints we had in our hands, though like in a general way to the type of Pfister, was evidently of an older date, and according to Weigel, closely resembled in form, though smaller, the type of the Gutenberg Bible of thirty-six lines. The date of the production of this Passion was considered to be about 1460. As we continued our examination, we thought we had seen one piece at least of the series before—the Bearing the Cross. Is it not, we surmised, very much like the print of the same subject which illustrates the memoir of M. Delaborde? Its design, technic, and size, seemed identical. On being able, through Mr. Reid's assistance, to compare the two prints, we could not come to any other conclusion than that the print in the Paris MS., and that now in the Passion before us, were from the same plate. Some slight differences certainly existed between them, but they were only such as might result from heavier inking, and increased pressure in working off the impression from which M. Delaborde's facsimile had been taken. It was right to bear well in mind, however, that one of the two pieces which we were at the moment comparing, was but a copy after all. As the Weigel set was incomplete, and did not contain the Sudarium, consideration was confined to the piece, The Bearing the Cross.

What explanation may be given of the appearance of the same prints—in the *manière: criblée*—so generally unique, in a MS. assumed to be of the date 1406, in the Munich Passion, and in a Passion of the date, probably of 1460, and associated with text printed from movable metallic type, we hesitate to say.

In his recent work, 'Notice Historique suivie d'un Catalogue des Estampes,' &c. Paris, 1875, M. le Vte Henri Delaborde continues to maintain that these two prints *en criblé*,—

'Selon toute vraisemblance remontent à l'année 1406, par conséquent

à une époque antérieure non-seulement à celle où parurent les premières gravures au burin, mais même au temps où furent imprimées les plus anciennes gravures en bois datées que l'on connait aujourd'hui (*la Vierge de 1418* à la Bibliothèque de Bruxelles, *le Saint Christophe de 1423* dans la bibliothèque de Lord Spencer.) (p. 238, op. cit.)*

With respect to the views of the MM. Delaborde, concerning metal engraving in relief having preceded engraving on wood, we are of opinion that there is much to be said in their favour. This question, however, and further details connected with the Weigel Passion, will come under review hereafter.

In the work of Falkenstein (Bibl. 24), published in 1840, a copy is given of a Mass of Saint Gregory, in the possession of M. Weigel, inferred to have been executed between 1406 and 1415. This conclusion was arrived at from the interpretation of an inscription at the bottom of the cut. The inscription is that of an Indulgence stated to have been granted by Pope Gregory and *two other Popes*. It was assumed that no other pope than Gregory XII. could be meant, since he was the only pontiff who had two false, or anti-popes, opposed to him. M. Leon Delaborde refers in his 'Debut de l'Imprimerie à Mayence et à Bamberg, Paris, 1840,' to this Indulgence; as does likewise M. Holtrop, in the 'Monumens Typographiques.' The former argues against the deductions of Falkenstein and Weigel, and seeks to show that the indulgence was a forgery of the monks; while the latter tells us he had examined the matter more recently with M. Weigel, who finally agreed with him that the date of the piece was not earlier than 1460.

In 1861 M. Proth, 'archiviste' of the Hôtel de Ville of Metz, discovered the remains of three cuts belonging to a series representing the *neuf preux*. The fragments were pasted within a register of accounts of the year 1460. To these remains M. le Comte F. Van der Straten-Pouthez has assigned an origin as early as 1418-20, but as it appears without basing his opinion on testimony satisfactory to others. (Bibl. 19, Cinquième Livr. par E. Fetis.)

* M. Arthur Loth, in his elaborate articles in the 'Revue des Questions Historiques' (t. xiii. p. 527, Paris, 1873, and xv. p. 93, Paris, 1874) supports M. Delaborde's opinion as to the MS. under discussion having been written A.D. 1406.

Block-books.—In the anxiety to determine antecedents to the Saint Christopher of 1423, some persons have discerned in one or two of the earlier ‘Block-books,’ or ‘Books of Images,’ the efforts of wood-engraving at the beginning of the fifteenth century. These antique and precious relics of primitive xylography, in which both text and illustration are combined on the same sheet, and produced from the same block, have been the cause of more disputes relative to early engraving and typography than have even the Saint Christopher and the first Bible of Mainz. The date of their production, the places which gave birth to them, and even the process by which at least one of them was produced, have been since the time of Heineken until recently (see ‘Notes and Queries’ for 1868) warmly debated. Nor can it be said that we are to-day much nearer the truth than we were a century ago. While some investigators, like Berjeau, would carry back the date of the ‘Biblia Pauperum,’ as the oldest of the block-books, to the year 1420, others, like Weigel, would refuse to recognise the work in question as the most ancient of its kind, and would bestow upon it no older birthright than 1460 might imply. According to Schelhorn, Renouvier, Dibdin, and Chatto, the ‘Ars Memorandi’ is one of the earliest xylographs; while Passavant recognises in the ‘Visiones Apocalypticæ’ evidence of its being ‘le plus ancien livre reconnu de ces gravures sur bois,’ and yet gives it to the latter half of the fifteenth century only. To the first edition of the ‘Apocalypse,’ Sotheby allots a date as early as 1415; while Chatto remarks of it, along with the ‘Biblia Pauperum,’ the ‘History of the Virgin,’ and the ‘Speculum Humanæ Salvationis,’ that the first three might have appeared at some time between 1430 and 1450, but that it is in the highest degree improbable that the ‘Speculum,’ the text of which was printed in the first edition from metal type, should have seen the light before 1460.

Van der Linde, on the other hand, is not arrested before 2350 in seeking the cradle of the xylographic art.

‘We are compelled,’ says he, ‘to look for the practice of xylography as early as the second half of the fourteenth century. Its origin is still enveloped in mist, but we know that it was already busily employed be-

tween 1400 and 1450. At that time it was less an art than a trade, and became a means of communication at a time when there was no book or newspaper. . . . All papers of this nature, generally of the size of one leaf, first drawn or painted, afterwards cut on blocks and printed, were called "*briefs*." . . . The printers of these leaves—briefmalers and prenters—with the sculptors, engravers, and the artificers of other connected trades, these printers (prenters) constituted guilds; as for instance, at Augsburg already in 1418, at Nördlingen in 1428, at Ulm in 1441, at Bruges in 1451. The celebrated "Brussels Mary" engraving, with the date 1418, predecessor of the beautiful engraving, of which the only known copy, in the Museum at Berlin, is figured in the "*Monumens typographiques*" of Holtrop, indicates a fairly advanced Flemish art of wood-engraving in the first years of the fifteenth century. . . . Mr. Holtrop says truly on the connexion of these two engravings, '*Ces deux estampes se complètent mutuellement; celle de Berlin annonce leur origine celle de Bruxelles indique leur date, on peut admettre qu'elles ont été gravées dans les Pays Bas, probablement en Flandres, et peut-être à Bruges au commencement du 15 siècle.*' (The Haarlem Legend of the Invention of Printing, &c. From the Dutch by H. Heffels, London, 1872.)

But Mr. F. Holt, 'the persistent and ingenious, if not convincing, arguer that Albert Dürer was the designer of the Fairford windows,' was, he tells us,—

'Prepared to prove that printing preceded engraving, and that no copy of the "*Biblia Pauperum*," existed prior to 1485. . . . the "*Block-book*" was first thought of [1483], and *circa* 1485 the so-called "*Biblia Pauperum*" was produced. It is but proper that I should here declare, that I make this statement with a perfect knowledge of the attribution of the *Biblia* to Coster, 1410-20; Melchior Wohlgemuth, 1450-60; Albert Pfister of Bamberg, 1461; Frederick Walter, 1470; and Hans Sporer, 1475. . . . I utterly deny the real existence of either printed playing-cards or "*Block-books*," with or without text, images of Saints or Donatuses, prior to the invention of printing with movable types; and I submit that, so far from their having induced that invention, they were all without any exception the direct and immediate consequences which resulted from it.' (Notes and Queries, 1868.)

We have stated sufficient to show what divergency of opinion there exists relative to the age of the block-books, and how very little aid of a definite kind they afford in directing our steps

fatisfactorily before 1423. He who depends on these works must be guided mainly by what he considers as the greater or less archaic character of the designs and forms, and here, as in other things, opinions will differ. While Heineken declares the 'History of the Virgin' to be the most Gothic of all the block-books, Mr. Chatto (and we agree with him) writes—

'Though there be great sameness in the subjects, yet the figures generally are more gracefully designed than those of any other block-book that I have seen. Compared with them those of the *Biblia Pauperum* and the *Speculum* might be termed "Gothic" indeed.' (Bibl. 38, p. 70.)

It was the opinion of Ottley that all the block-books described by Heineken, with the exception of the *Biblia Pauperum*, the *Speculum*, and the *Historia*, &c. ex *Cantico Cantorum*, are of a very inferior school; and whether executed in Germany or in the Low Countries, were probably the rude manufacture of the ordinary card-makers. To Lambinet 'ils se ressemblient presque tous . . . tous font grossièrement faites dans le goût gothique;' and Mr. Singer recognises in the *Biblia Pauperum*, *Speculum*, and *Historia Virginis*, but 'rude performances, puerile efforts,' having no distinguishing characters in relation to the art of any particular school. But Mr. Holt comes forward, and with a touch of the enchanter's wand all is changed—the three books last-named exhibit nothing short of the handiwork of the great master Albert Dürer, and of his designing, Mr. Holt declares them to be.

Nearly all the direct testimony to a specific date of the block-books may be summed up as follows.* According to Berjeau, in Hefner's work (plates 18, 20, 21), may be found costumes corresponding respectively to the years 1410 and 1417, and which are faithfully reproduced in the 'Biblia Pauperum.' In Montfaucon's work, also, many of the costumes bear a remarkable affinity to those of the block-books. The form of the *nimbus* which surrounds the head of the Deity is proof of an early date. The plain cruciferous *nimbus* to be seen in the MSS. and paintings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and which is to be found constantly repeated throughout the

* See the account also of the *Spirituale Pomerium* in Chapter VI. *postea*.

'Biblia Pauperum,' becomes modified, or is replaced by rays as we approach the times of Dürer, Lukas van Leyden, Springinklee, and others of their school.

The earlier dates to which we have alluded as having been assigned to the block-books, refer, of course, to a few only of the latter and to their first editions. Other block-books are clearly of more recent origin, and there are editions of some having the dates *printed* on them.

In our own opinion it is not amongst the xylographs of which we have been speaking, that we can look with any confidence for predecessors to the Saint Christopher (1423). We accord rather with that view which regards the block-books as following, instead of preceding, such rude archaic single-sheet figures, or fly-leaves, of faints, as may be seen in Weigel's work, in the British Museum, at Munich, and elsewhere.

We cannot leave this portion of our subject without suggesting a field for investigation which has hitherto remained unexplored. Unfortunately, there are reasons why it should continue to be so; nevertheless we venture to point it out, as chance opportunities might possibly occur for further research. In the July number of 'Le Bibliomane' for 1861 is an interesting paper, 'On the employment of Ancient Xylographs in the books printed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.' In it particular attention is drawn to the circumstance of the books printed upon vellum by the celebrated Parisian printer, Verard, having almost always simple outlines of a woodcut hidden beneath the layers of illumination. Reference is made to a Book of Hours, in which impressions from wood-blocks exist evidently prepared for the illuminator, but which the latter had clearly never touched.

'The non-illuminated prints afford proof, if it were necessary, that all the miniatures of similar works are superimposed on wood-cuts of simple outline. The illuminator has preserved the principal contours, without servilely following the work of the engraver. It clearly results, from this application of miniature to engraving in simple outline, that the "livres xylographiques" were, without exception, intended to pass through the hands of the illuminator on emerging from those of the printer, and that such copies as remain to us disfigured by flat tints

were so prepared simply to receive the bright and brilliant colours entitling them to a place by the side of the richest manuscripts. The "*Figures du Vieux Testament et du Nouvel*," printed by Verard *circa* 1500, in folio, upon vellum, and of which the British Museum possesses the only known copy, formerly in the library of Henry VII., belongs to the most splendid examples of this illumination of engravings in which the painter perfects, according to his taste, the almost formless work of the engraver.' (op. cit.)

Of the value of the suggestion as to the frequency with which engraving may be hidden beneath illuminations in MSS. we have not any doubt. It is true that the works more particularly referred to in 'Le Bibliomane' are not of the earliest character, for the oldest book with a date which we have of Verard is the 'Decameron' of 1485. It is right to add, likewise, that while Verard's cuts were, as has been stated, done evidently for the purpose of being illuminated, those of the chief French master—Simon Vostre, 1488—of *Books of Hours*, were not so worked out.

'I possess,' writes M. F. Didot, 'Books of Hours of Verard, and also of Simon Vostre, both dated 1488; but the style of the drawing and the execution of the engraving completely differ. Those of Verard—the French characteristics of which still permit of the Gothic influence of the art of the stenciller being seen—are intended for colouring, which gives them some resemblance to the first xylographic impressions. In the engravings of Simon Vostre, although the drawing is not less archaic, the style is more precise, and the finish of the execution would render colouring useless, and even hurtful.' (col. 124.)

From a report in the Athenæum for April 1875, it appears that at a meeting (April 2nd) of the Archæological Institute, 'Mr. Ranking exhibited a fine specimen of the early Paris press, an illuminated "Book of Hours" on vellum, Roman use, printed by Philippe Pigouchet in 1488. Mr. Soden Smith made some observations on this book, some of the illuminations in which were thought to be from copper-plates, and the type a reproduction of handwriting.'

In the number of 'Le Bibliomane' before referred to may be seen an illustration of an illuminated figure of Saint Michael, which was found pasted within the cover of a missal printed

at Venice in 1481. The writer, in his remarks on this piece, proceeds to say,—

‘The real question for discussion here is, whether the Saint Michael be a simple miniature, or rather an engraving illuminated in the style of Verard. At first sight one is tempted to decide in favour of miniature, since traces of the brush and of the imposition of colours are to be discerned, but not the lines of the engraving. Yet we might commit a great error in trusting to such appearances. The engravings of Verard are, in like manner, so covered by the painting that it is impossible to discern any of the lines traced by the engraver. In the shadows, for instance, the illuminator never follows the lines indicated. On the contrary, he covers them with a thick layer of colour, and on this layer he marks out the shadows by lines, sometimes more closely, sometimes more distantly arranged than those of the engraver, of whose work at length not a vestige remains.’ (p. 32.)

But we have coloured engravings, not only in books like those of Verard, but likewise in MSS. on vellum, before the time of the printed Books of Hours. Not this alone, for occasionally the engraving is so covered with colour and gold, as in Verard’s works, that the lines of the engraved work are with the greatest difficulty only to be perceived. When recently examining the rare set of twenty-eight prints of a small Passion among the early German masters in the British Museum, we were struck with the manner in which the lines of the engraving were in some of the pieces so overloaded and hidden by the colouring and illumination, that we should not have taken them for illuminated engravings at all had we not been assisted by some of the other pieces in deciding the question. On referring to what Waagen had stated of this series (‘Art Treasures of Great Britain,’ Murray’s edition, Lond. 1857), we read,—

‘In style of art, and in the still soft folds of pure taste, these little prints recall the small Passion by Meister Wilhelm in the Berlin Museum. At the same time the treatment is very simple, and does not extend beyond a pale outline. Most of the compositions have something awkward: on the other hand, single motives are speaking. The powerful colouring applied, and the large glories laid on with leaf-gold, with borders and decorations painted in black, bring these little prints

in close affinity to miniature. Here, evidently, we see a kind of transition from the art of miniature-painting to that of engraving on copper.' (vol. iv. p. 49.)

Now the date marked on one of these little prints impressed on a parchment MS. is 1457. The question is open, then, as to how far back engraved work might be found beneath the illuminated miniatures of MSS. if these miniature-paintings were deprived of their gold and colour. That any person will be found to deliberately undertake such an antiquarian voyage of discovery among valuable early MSS. is, of course, not to be expected; nevertheless, attention being directed to the desired object, some further information may perchance be obtained through peculiar opportunities.

Early prints and places of production.—Having sufficiently discussed what is known relative to the *time* at which it may be said engraving originated, it will not be out of place to glance at those *localities* in which the *incunabula* of our department of art came into being.

Between Italy and Germany a rivalry has long existed as to which country the origin of the engraver's art is due. To this day it continues, though another claimant has appeared, who, in the opinion of many, has the strongest claims: this third candidate is Holland.

The early use of cards in Italy, the story of the *Cunios*, the general opinion common at one time that Italy must necessarily have been the cradle of the fine arts in their totality, together with the belief that such early prints as the *Annunciation* (found accompanying the *Saint Christopher*), and others, betrayed, in their style, drawing, and feeling of the draperies, &c., the spirit of the early Italian schools, though first met with in the north, led to the favouring of the claims of Italy.

'The most probable conjecture,' wrote Ottley, 'as to its wood-engraving] introduction into Europe, appears to be that the secret was first learned by the Venetians from the Chinese at an early period of their commerce with Asia—at length the secret was found out by the artists of Germany.'

As it came to be admitted, however, that the early cards were

not engraved, but were ornamented by hand, that the statement concerning the Cunios was probably a fiction, that Italy could not show any print like the Buxheim Saint Christopher having a date as early as 1423, nor xylographic specimens similar to the *Biblia Pauperum* and *Apocalypse*—not to mention numerous other examples of undoubted Northern work which are in existence—the claims of Italy were gradually discountenanced by the majority of critics, at any rate as far as wood-engraving was concerned. More recently she has had to yield, as respects engraving in *intaglio* or on metal plates, though one or two high authorities yet speak strongly in her favour.

The first person who printed a book in Italy ornamented with wood-engravings (?) was Ulrich Hahn v. Ingoldstadt, who published at Rome, in 1467, the *Meditationes Johannis de Turrecremata*, embellished with thirty-four illustrations. Of this work very few copies are known, and the engravings are, according to some, from metal in *relief*. Zani thought the work due to an Italian, and not to a German, as we have stated. Other writers prefer to regard ‘*Valturius de Re Militari*,’ printed by John of Verona in 1472, as the first dated book with woodcut executed in Italy. Strefs has been laid upon the fact that the edition of the ‘*Popes and Emperors*’ of Petrarch, printed at Florence in 1488, in the monastery of Sto. Giacomo di Ripoli, continued to have the initials drawn with the brush and the portraits of the popes and emperors traced with the pen and slightly coloured, and which would scarcely have been done had wood-engraving been in much use. ‘Even,’ says Passavant, ‘in artistic Florence we do not find, up to the sixteenth century, any example that can prove to us the practice of engraving on wood.’ Yet the partisans of Italy are not very willing to yield. If not any direct proof, say they, can be given by Italy as early as Germany can afford, indirect evidence can be offered that Italy practised wood-engraving far earlier, at any rate, than the Germans are willing to allow. We quote, *e. g.*, from Passavant—not in the least an Italian partisan :

‘The most ancient written document relating to the art of wood-engraving in Italy is the order of the Venetian Senate, of the date

1441, refusing to permit the importation of playing-cards and printed and painted figures. . . . From this we must conclude that engraving on wood was already known and practised through the extent of the Republic at a rather early period; and if not any examples remain of Italian playing-cards or other engravings on wood of this period, we are forced to conclude that the art of wood-engraving had never obtained but a very secondary rank there, and that it soon fell into disuse.' (Vol. i. p. 130.)

Attention was first drawn by Temanza to this document in 1760, if the following reference by Passavant (V. i. p. 11, note 20) be correct, viz., 'Voyez la lettre de H. Temanza à Fr. Algarotti dans les Lettere pittoriche de Bottari, v. p. 321 et 484. Elle est datée du 22 Octobre, 1760.' The desire of the late Mr. Holt to bring discredit on Temanza by affirming that the latter simply worked up to a preconceived theory based on the discovery of Heineken, cannot be responded to, seeing that Temanza preceded Heineken some years in his investigations.

The particular words in this order of the Venetian Senate, which immediately concern us, are 'carte da zugar e figure dipinte stampide fuor di Venezia.' (Pass. i. p. xi.) Now we are aware from the MS. chronicle of the City of Ulm (written by Hylin), terminating in 1474, that numerous card-makers were then established in that town who sent commercially quantities of playing-cards to different parts of Italy in barter for other merchandise. The prohibition may therefore have referred rather to these German cards which got very early into circulation, than to any produced in other parts of Italy, besides the Republic of Venice. Nevertheless, we cannot refuse to admit that in 1441, 'figure stampide' were produced at Venice, since it was for the protection of their trade production that the order of the Senate before mentioned was promulgated.

An important question, however, arises as to the exact interpretation which should be given to the word 'Stampide.' Does it imply, printed with a press—or merely—stamped, or stencilled? As relative to priority of production in the south or in the north, this question has but little weight, since the word 'stampide' is applied to the foreign cards, as well as to those manufactured within the city. The word proves, however, that

previously to 1441, cards—in Italy too—were then ‘stampide.’ Mr. Planché observes:—

‘*Stampere*, according to Florio, signifies to “print, to press, to stamp, to form, to figure,” and “stamp” in like manner, besides a print or impression, is said to be a *marke*, a *shape*, a *figure*. The word existed before printing in its modern sense had been heard of, and the natural application of it to the new art does not in the least determine the question of when that art was invented. “Stampide” in 1441 might simply mean formed, figured, or shaped, by the means of the stencil, a process which we know was adopted at that period, and which being much more rapid than drawing and colouring entirely by hand would doubtless affect very seriously the art of the card-illuminator, similarly as photography at the present day has the art of the miniature-painter.’ (Builder, Nov. 1870. Appendix C.)

Temanza is stated to have possessed certain fragments of woodcuts rudely engraved representing various parts of Venice in its ancient state, which from his knowledge of the several local alterations that had taken place in the city since that period, could not be judged of a later date than the commencement of the fifteenth century. (Lettere Pittoriche xv. p. 322.) But this was mere supposition.

The term ‘stampide’ appears to carry us back to the earlier productions of Italian stamping, or to the making of imprints by means of wooden blocks on silk, satin, linen, and other articles of like fabric before alluded to (pp. 24, 25), which were used in the decoration of ecclesiastical vestments.

Though Italy does not afford us any examples of engraved impressions on parchment or paper, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, we do not see how it can be denied that during this time, if not before, she practised the art of ‘imprinting’ other fabrics, however limited, or that afterwards—as the Venetian decree proves—she still made ‘figure dipinte, stampide.’ The art may never have obtained aught but a secondary position, and may have soon fallen into disuse. In fact, the feeling and genius of Italy tended rather to the development of metal plate engraving, or engraving in *intaglio*, than to that of *relief* on wood.

To the Northern Schools must be awarded the credit of having produced the first established practisers of wood-engraving for the purpose of imprintation on parchment and paper. The results of their art come frequently before us in the shape of single pieces coloured and uncoloured of more or less archaic character, some of which we have seen to be of as early a date as 1423, and thereabouts. We see such results also in the block-books of the Low Countries, in the beautiful initial letters of the Mainz Pfalter of 1457, and in the 'Books of Fables,' printed by Pfister at Bamberg in 1461, the earliest work (with a positive date) printed with movable type, illustrated with figure wood-cuts. In these and like examples there is direct evidence of the early work of the Northern Schools in various directions with which the Italian School cannot compete, whatever praise we may award to the greater beauty of its later productions, as are to be seen, *e. g.*, in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* of 1499, the *Aureum Opus* of Vivaldi of 1503, and in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid by Mazzalis of 1505.

The evidence supporting the claims of Italy for originating impressions from intagliate metal plates has generally been considered more valid than that upon which she bases her demands in respect to wood-engraving. Until a comparatively recent period Italy was considered by many to have clearly forestalled the German schools in respect to engraving on metal. But subsequent research has shown that this was not the case, and has tended to suggest, if not to prove, that while the Germans were first in the field with their actual productions, *i. e.*, dated impressions from copper-plates engraved directly for the purpose of being printed from—the Italians were receiving these works as hints and suggestions, leading them to test their plates in *niello* in a like way, which plates, it must be remembered, though capable of yielding such impressions, were not engraved with the express intention that they should be made to do so. As Mr. Scott, in his *Life of Albert Dürer*, remarks:—

'The art of engraving for the purpose of printing was really a German invention, and this would have been long since confessed, were

it not that the presence of a historian in Italy, has made all the difference between the two countries, and the goldsmith Finiguerra has received all the honours of a discoverer, and Florence the credit of having seen the first-fruits of the art of engraving. The story as recounted by Vafari, with all its interesting details, is constantly reproduced, and will continue to be so as there is no other wherewith to supplant it. Nevertheless, it is long since Strutt showed that the date assigned to the discovery in Florence was really posterior to that on existing prints executed in Upper Germany, and since his time many others have been observed bearing an earlier or contemporary character. We have the Master of Martin Schön, and the Master of Israel van Mechen, with others, working in the same spirit, and even these great and accomplished engravers themselves, who show no sign of having been the pioneers in a new art, carry us back to Vafari's date. Schön died in 1486, leaving a lifetime of engravings behind him, which he must have begun to produce before the date assigned to the Florentine discovery, and his master Zwott, or whoever he was, takes us back to the earlier years of the printing-press.' (p. 3.)

We would observe that the chief points of Vafari's statements appear to be fairly correct with the exception of the assumption that Finiguerra's attempts were the first which had been made. Of course, as far as the question of *priority* is concerned it is a most important one, but so far as an account of the time and manner of the first attempts in the process of taking impressions from metal plates in Italy is considered it has little influence, and Vafari may be relied on. His account is the following:—

'The commencement of the art of engraving (*dell' intagliare*) springs from Maso Finiguerra, a Florentine, about the year of grace 1460, since this artist from all his works, which he engraved on silver to be afterwards filled up with *niello*, obtained from them impressions in clay, and having poured liquid sulphur on these, they became imprinted and charged with smoke. Whence by means of oil they gave out the same effect as did the silver. And this he did again with damp paper, and with the same tint, exerting pressure gently all over it with a round roller, which made it appear not only as if printed, but as though drawn with the pen.' (tomo vii. p. 131.)

Whether Finiguerra took his impression on paper direct from

the metal plate, or from a counter-proof in sulphur derived from an impression in clay, has been disputed, a doubt having arisen on account of the vagueness of Vafari's description. But this matter does not now concern us ; suffice it to say, it is generally admitted that Maso Finiguerra produced, soon after the year 1450, impressions on paper from silver plates engraved for the purpose of being charged with *nigellum*. We have not any evidence earlier than this of metal plates having been made to yield impressions on paper in Italy ; and at this date even such plates were not engraved directly for the purpose of printing from, the impressions being taken for the sake of the artist obtaining an idea of the effects which the completed *nielli* would produce. Ten years had to pass from this time before Baccio Baldini, the oldest of the Italian copper-plate engravers, conceived the idea of applying the procedure practised with *nielli* plates to the indefinite multiplication of impressions obtained from plates engraved specially for the purpose of yielding them. The oldest dated print, a kalendar (Pass. v. p. 31), we have of Baldini, or at least supposed to be his, bears on it 1465, *i.e.*, nearly twenty years later than the earliest date borne by an impression from a German copper-plate (*poslea*, Baldini, Botticelli). It is true attempts have been made to prove that the birth of engraving in *intaglio* on copper-plate in Germany could be traced further back than this, and prints have been stated to exist having the years 1422, 1430, 1440, and 1445, on them ; but such statements cannot be supported by production of the proofs (Bartsch, Bibl. 2, v. 13, p. 5 ; Pass. Bibl. 56, i. p. 192).

The oldest German engraving, *i.e.*, from copper-plate, known up to the present time, bears the date 1446. It is a Flagellation, forming part of a series of seven prints of a Passion, which was in the possession of the late M. Renouvier of Montpellier. These prints are supposed to have been produced by a master of Upper Germany. They are rude and archaic in style, the forms are strongly accentuated, and the shadows in the flesh and architectural details are barely indicated by short and irregular hatchings, while the lines in the draperies are more elongated and fine. The drawing, without being exact or very well expressed, shows nevertheless a certain amount of observation of nature, while the expression of

the heads is true, very lively, though sometimes verging on caricature. (Pass. ii. p. 4.)

We may refer next to a print of some notoriety, viz., the Mary as Queen of Heaven, formerly in the Weigel cabinet, and of which copies may be found in Naumann's 'Archiv. f. die Zeichnenden Kunst,' iv. Jahrgg. 1858; Weigel's 'Drucker Kunst' (Bibl. 70), and Weigel's 'Sale Catalogue.' This print bears the date 1451 and the signature **W**. It is an example of early art far superior to the engraving just alluded to. The drawing is delicate with a certain grandeur of style, and the design not devoid of sentiment and beauty. It has been printed of a fine black colour. It is proper to add, however, that doubts have been cast upon the validity of the date 1451. It is stated to have been tampered with on the impression. At any rate the latter was purchased by good authorities at the sale in 1872 for nearly 600*l.* We shall refer to this print again.

A third precious illustration of early engraving is in our own National Collection. We have before noticed it when alluding to the illumination of engravings in MSS. It is a Last Supper, bearing on it **LVII. JO^r.**, i.e. the year 1457, and occurs as one of a series of twenty-eight pieces. We have several times examined this specimen, and must admit that it is far inferior in every respect to the style, feeling, and execution of the piece last mentioned.

In the library of Danzig is a Decollation of St. Catherine, with the date 1458 on it, which, according to Passavant, is evidently of German origin; while of the Master of 1464, belonging to either Lower Germany or Flanders, sometimes called '*le maître au banderoles*,' several examples are known.

An account with illustration may be found in Dibdin's 'Bibliographical Tour' (vol. iii. p. 277) of 'an impression from a copper-plate of the undoubted date of 1462—and possibly even before 1460,' at least so states the Doctor. The subject is a Dead Christ in the Lap of the Father.

Of the examples adduced some carry us back nearly twenty years before the earliest efforts of Finiguerra, while others approaching yet still keep within the time ere Baccio Baldini substantively established engraving in Italy. Some writers have suggested that even when Italy did begin to work off impressions from her plates,

nielli or otherwise, she directly took the hint from Germany. Thus Mr. Scott remarks,—

‘The truth is, the happy idea of *rubbing* off impressions from plates prepared for *nielli* was probably suggested by the sight or the rumour of engraving printed on paper by pressure. The charts for the Ptolemy published in Rome in 1478 were commenced in 1472, they are therefore the earliest known published copper-plates done in Italy, and they were done by Germans, Conrad Sweynheim and Arnold Buckvick.’ (p. 3.)

The work of Bettini, ‘Il Monte Sancto di Dio,’ containing engravings it is presumed by Botticelli and Baldini, was printed by Niccolo di Lorenzo, in 1477.

Passavant, referring to the early Italian efforts (vol. i. p. 197), observes,—

‘A rather singular coincidence in connection with this subject is to be remarked in the presence at Florence, precisely in the year 1450 (the year when Maso Finiguerra is thought to have obtained his first impressions), of Roger Van den Weyden, the celebrated pupil of Van Eyck. He was painting a figure of the Virgin for the Medici family. One can scarcely doubt that he paid a visit to the famous goldsmith, Maso Finiguerra, in order to see the beautiful *pax* of the Coronation of the Virgin, upon which the latter was then engaged. It is therefore not unlikely that the Flemish painter, on observing the complicated method followed by the Florentine artist in procuring impressions in sulphur in order to fill them afterwards with black tint and so judge of the effect of his work, would show him the very simple method of obtaining the same result from directly impressing the plate on damp paper. We are confirmed in this opinion by certain very old proofs of *nielli* of Netherlands origin, preserved in the collection at Dresden, and which are of the period of Master Roger.’

The eminent painter, Van Eyck, was at Rome in 1450. It is not easy to understand how it should have happened that if so ingenious and important a process as the German one had been communicated to the Italians, the latter should have allowed ten years to elapse before they decided on its employment; but on this point hereafter.

In the opinion of Passavant a proof of the priority of the Germans to the Italians is shown in the facts that Sandro Botticelli imitated in his prints of the Prophets certain of the peculiarities of

the Master **ES** 1466, already working according to some in 1461, and employed, as did the Master of 1464, the 'dry point' in hatching the shadows in the illustrations to the *Divina Commedia* of Dante.

Strutt fought to show that England had a fair right to claim a good rivalry with, if not actual priority to, other countries in the early practice of metal engraving. He gave, in his well-known 'Dictionary,' an impression direct from a metal plate in his possession, which he thought was as early as any that had been executed in the first epoch of the art. Judging from the style of the figures and text in his illustration we should think that few would agree with him.

Mr. Ottley likewise thought it 'not very improbable' that in England a woodcut had been produced as old as the Saint Christopher! (Bibl. 52, p. 198; *postea*, chap. vii.)

One of the more recent writers in our department, viz., Dupleffis, in 'Les Merveilles de la Gravure'—

'does not hesitate to affirm, though without being able to produce any formal proof in support of this opinion, that the art of impressing paper from engraved metal plates was discovered simultaneously in Italy and Germany.' (p. 181.)

Paper.—Breitkopf, Jansen, and Firmin Didot, have dwelt on the difficulty of arriving at satisfactory conclusions concerning the when and where of the origin of playing-cards and engraving, as long as we are in doubt concerning the time and countries in which paper made from linen rags first appeared. The attempt to solve this problem is rendered difficult by the circumstance of it being no easy matter always to distinguish between paper made from linen rags and that made from cotton;* which latter kind of paper was employed many years before the other description came into use. The difficulty becomes all the greater as we discover that at one time the two fabrics were mixed. It is stated that the most ancient MS. on cotton paper is of the date 1050, and that there is in the Tower a letter to Henry III., which is on strong paper, apparently of mixed materials, while several letters of the follow-

* Weiffely states the reverse. (Bibl. 96, p. 86.)

ing reign have been written evidently on cotton paper. (Herring on Paper and Paper-making.)

That paper made from linen cloth was known in the twelfth century is indirectly proved by the statement of the Arabian physician, Abd l'Hatiph, who, writing an account of his visit to Egypt in the year 1200, remarks, 'that the cloth found in the catacombs and used to envelope the mummies was made into garments or fold to the scribes to make paper for shop-keepers.' Since the mummy cloths were made of linen so must have been such paper. According to Montfaucon (Supp. vi. vol. iii. 117), there had not been any book written on linen-rag paper before St. Louis, who reigned from 1226 to 1270; others assert that the Spaniards had manufactured it, in 1260, in the districts of Catalonia and Valentia. Its use prior even to this latter date has been maintained by Schwandner, for a MS. mandate of Frederick II., dated 1242, found by him in a monastery of Upper Styria, is declared to have been written on paper made from linen rag.

Janfen, during his researches as 'Commissaire Archiviste,' for the department of Mont Tonnerre, found, he tells us, a piece of '*papier du lin*,' used in 1301 for writing an account on, the paper-mark being a circle surmounted by a stalk, bearing at the end a star or five small radiant lines. Breitkopf, rejecting all which he considered as doubtful instances, declared the earliest MS. he could find on paper from linen rag was of the date 1308, while, according to Lacroix, the first genuine article of the kind is a letter from the Sire de Joinville to Louis X., of the date 1315. We believe there is a MS. on linen rag paper in the British Museum, which MS. dates back to 1335. Janfen, who had paid great attention to this subject, came to the conclusion that,—

'After all our researches we cannot determine the precise epoch in commerce, nor the country in which linen rags were first used for the manufacture of paper. It may be said, however, that Italy has better claims for the invention notwithstanding that she continued to employ cotton paper until 1367, and which she had used since 844. The Germans we know used linen paper in 1308; France employed it in 1301; England in 1342; and Spain in 1367.' (Bibl. 39.)

The paper used in England for nearly 150 years after the date

here mentioned must have been imported, as the art of making it is considered not to have been practised among us until the reign of Henry VII. (1485-1509). On this subject reference may be made with advantage to the article by G. Peignot on Paper and Parchment in Lacroix and Serres' 'Le Moyen Age et la Renaissance,' vol. ii.

According to Mr. Gough ('Observations on the Introduction of Cards in England,' Archæologia, vol. viii. p. 158), there may be found in the 'Account of Edward I.'s Expences (A.D. 1272-1307),' a list of the stores given out for the use of Stirling Castle, and amongst which are mentioned one dozen of parchment and one pound of ink (*unam duodenam pergameni et i. lb. atramenti*), but not any allusion is made to paper.

Closely as the general use of paper made from linen rags must have been associated with the primitive annals of engraving, it is yet evident that a review of the early history of the former does little further than show us that the two were, as might have been expected, in close connexion, and that the natural forerunner—paper—after it had come into general use, was followed in from a quarter to half of a century, according to the country, by the practice of taking impressions on it from metal plates and wooden blocks.

Having referred in the preceding pages to all points in connexion with the early history of engraving deemed necessary thus far, it may be well, before we close the chapter to state in a *résumé* the conclusions at which we may arrive. They are as follow :—

1st. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the use of the 'graver' was common and managed with great ability for the purpose of engraving figures and other subjects on plates of metal destined for monumental and sepulchral purposes. The 'point' was used with like efficiency for tracing religious subjects on plates of metal intended for the ornamentation of the binding of books and for the sides of reliquaries, and mordants were employed for the purpose of biting out ornamental figures on the iron and steel of arms.

2ndly. That it is just possible engraving—in the modern acceptance of the term, *i. e.* the receiving impressions on parch-

ment or paper or like material, from metal plates and wooden blocks—was practised by the Northern Schools, though in a very limited way, at the end of the thirteenth or at the beginning of the fourteenth century; and it is probable that in Italy silk and linen fabrics were then imprinted from wooden blocks.

3rdly. That it was not until the beginning of the fifteenth century that engraving became, what we may term in relation to the art and period, well established.

4thly. That probably to Italy is due the credit of first employing wooden blocks for imprinting textile fabrics, and to the Northern Schools that of first taking impressions both from wood and metal on parchment and paper.

5thly. That while in the Northern Schools we can go back, *quoad* wood engraving, positively to 1423, and as respects metal engraving to 1446, we cannot reach in Italy, as regards the first, farther than 1467, and as relates to the second 1450-52, *nielli* proofs, and 1465 for metal plates engraved for the purpose of being printed from.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE VARIOUS PROCESSES OR KINDS OF ENGRAVING.

WE have hitherto employed the term ‘engraving’ in but a very general way, or as implying simply the cutting into wooden blocks and metal plates for the purpose of their being printed off on some paper-like material; but as details rather than generalities have now to come before us, it is necessary that some definite ideas be formed in respect to the different procedures under which engraving is conducted.

Engraving in General.—When a substance is to be engraved for the purpose of being printed from, one or other of two methods is generally followed.* In one method all the parts intended to be white in the impression—and therefore not drawn on the object to be engraved—are cut away or dug out of such object, while all the portions to be dark in the print, and which are drawn on the substance to be engraved, are left intact, uncut, and therefore standing in *relief*. The ridges thus left in relief become the parts which are afterwards inked—the cut-away portions remaining pure—so that when paper is pressed against the engraved substance, these inked ridges in relief give to the paper a facsimile of their own form in the ink they leave on it. This process is called ‘engraving in *relief*.’

In the other method the parts intended to be white in the print are left intact and uncut on the engraved object, while the parts drawn upon the latter, and meant to show black in the impression, are cut away or dug out; in other words, the engraving is in *intaglio*. In such engraving it is the cut-out or intagliated portions which become inked, and which when paper is pressed

* The modified process known as Mezzotinto engraving will be alluded to afterwards.

against, or rather into them, yield a facsimile of the design in the ink transferred to the paper.

In the first instance the inked and *formative* portions are pressed into the paper; in the second case the paper is pressed into the inked and *formative* parts. On examining the back surface, or *verso*, of an impression taken from a block or plate engraved in *relief*, the block lines appear to form projections, while on the front, or *recto*, of the print they appear as indentations. On the other hand, the *verso* of an impression from an engraving in *intaglio* exhibits rather depressions over the blacks, while the latter in front are rough or elevated. The first method here described has been termed by the French '*taille d'épargne*,' because it consists in sparing the outlines and marks of the drawing, and cutting out the whites, while the second process has been called '*gravure en creux*,' since the outlines or drawings are cut away or hollowed out.

In engraving metal plates the process of *intaglio* work is usually followed, and in engraving wooden blocks that of cutting in *relief*. But both in the infancy of the art and recent times metal plates have been cut in relief, and the forms drawn on wooden blocks have been engraved in *intaglio*. In the former case the portions of metal in *relief* are inked, as in the wooden block, but in the latter the parts in *intaglio* are not inked, as they are in the engraved metal plate. In the second case, too, the surface of the block receives ink from a roller, allowing the forms to come off *white* from a black ground, while the surface in metal *intaglio* work would come dark off a light ground if inked and printed in the ordinary way. The latter would occur also in printing from a wood-block on which the forms had been cut and inked in the usual manner. This reversal of colour and formative line to the method generally followed in wood-engraving has likewise been occasionally practised in the case of engraving on metal plates. Concerning this variation, we shall postpone what we have to say until discussing the *manière criblée*, nor do more than mention at present that the early masters occasionally engraved both in *relief* and in *intaglio* upon the same metal plate.

In producing the *intagliate* hollows in metal-plate engraving, different procedures are followed, sometimes the hollows are cut

or ploughed out, sometimes scratched or scraped out, occasionally punched out, and not unfrequently eaten or corroded away by acid mordants. It often happens that more than one process is adopted in respect of the same plate.

It would not be easy to determine whether wood-blocks or metal plates were first used to engrave on, for view them in any aspect we find them had recourse to apparently contemporaneously. If wood was early employed for imprinting textile fabrics, so engraved *interrabile* metal plates, decorating book-covers, altar-tabernacles, reliquaries, &c., were made to yield impressions, and at the same period, *i. e.* from the latter third of the fourteenth to the end of the first quarter of the fifteenth century. It is considered by some good authorities that not a few prints exist of which it is not easy to say whether they have been printed from wooden blocks or metal plates.

Engraving on Wood.—For engraving on wood, pear and crab-tree blocks were employed by the old masters, and they frequently used them of very large size. In some cases their dimensions and character were such as to entitle them to be considered rather as small planks than blocks, while in others several blocks were united together to form a complete engraving, the impression of which may be said to have been *enormous* relative to the art period. H. S. Beham cut some very large single blocks, and in Derschau's work (Bibl. 15) may be seen a cut engraved in 1525, which is more than 34 inches high by 24 wide, and executed in a style as bold and free as its size demanded. Domenico dalle Greche represented Titian's design of Pharaoh and his Host, on several blocks, which when united gave an impression of a woodcut more than six feet in length.

Many blocks have reached our own time, not of course blocks of *incunabula*, but of the time of Dürer, or shortly after him; nevertheless we have a few of the former, and in this country. The library of Earl Spencer, at Althorp, possesses more than one xylographic block; and in the British Museum are preserved most of the original blocks of the Smaller Passion of A. Dürer. The Imperial Library at Vienna is particularly rich in such treasures, the origin of the collection being due to the patronage of the Emperor Maximilian to the engravers of his time. Refer-

ence has been previously made to the publication by Baron Derfchau of numerous impressions worked off at the beginning of the present century from a series of old blocks said to have been collected by him after much trouble, and some of which he maintained had their origin before 1500. Upon many of his examples little or no dependence is to be placed, the blocks from which they were taken being not very *old*, but simply very *bad*, while others are suspiciously like modern impostures. There are others which are original, but not old, and one or two impressions may be from blocks engraved before the time of Dürer.

One hundred and thirty-five blocks connected with the Triumph of Maximilian are to be seen at Vienna, all of pear-wood, and several of them partially worm-eaten. They were engraved between 1516 and 1519 by seventeen engravers whose names (Bartsch, vii. p. 236) are written in full with ink on the backs of many of the blocks.

Blocks of purely xylographic character, *i. e.*, with engraved text only on them, of very early origin, have descended to us, as instanced by the two old blocks of a *Donatus*, first noticed by Heineken, and since more minutely described by Chatto in his History of Wood Engraving.

M. Firmin Didot states that the numerous blocks of wood—all of pear-tree—which he saw in the Museum at Basse, and which were drawn upon with the pen by Brandt for a projected edition of Terence, were all '*bois du fil*,' that is to say, they were blocks cut in the longitudinal way of the wood, and drawn upon in the direction of the woody fibre. In modern times box-wood is the chief material employed, and in the form of '*bois debout*,' or wood cut in the transverse direction, and drawn upon on the same surface.

'Engraving on pear-wood,' says M. Didot, 'where the point of the artist often meeting with the fibre of the wood, causing the former to deviate to the hazard of the continuity of the cutting, presents a difficulty to be surmounted only by great address, extreme attention, and considerable loss of time. . . . In engraving on box and "*bois debout*," greater quickness of execution is attainable, to the extent even of eight or nine times that possible in engraving on pear-wood and "*bois du fil*." We may judge by this of the amount of time

and patience expended on the great number of books illustrated with woodcuts, which were executed in the sixteenth century at Nürnberg, Basle, Paris, and Lyon, bearing in mind that many of them did not contain less than two, three, or even four hundred designs.' (col. 278.)

We may remark, *en passant*, that in the first volume of the Bookworm (London, 1866) may be seen a reproduction engraved on pear-tree wood of one of the pages of the *Biblia Pauperum*, such method having been adopted by M. Berjeau the better to imitate the original cut.

The mode of repairing a block by means of the 'plug' appears to have been practised by the German engravers of the time of Albert Dürer. The plug which they inserted was usually square, and not circular, as at present (Chatto). Upon this point the remarks of Sandars and of Berjeau, in the Bookworm for 1868, 1869, and 1870, may be consulted.

During the first epoch of art the cutting of the wood-block embraced a single figure only and in outline, or perhaps a coat of arms. A name was cut under the former, or above it in a scroll or 'banderole,' then followed often a few lines or a verse, or instead, 'Ora pro nobis' was engraved beneath. Gradually the inscription increased in length, several figures were introduced, with attempts at shading, and perhaps more than half a page of Latin or German text; all being cut on the same piece of wood. The labour and care necessary to produce the text must have far outweighed the cutting of the figures after the transference of the design to the wood. Alluding to an edition of the block-book, the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis*, printed so far as the text is concerned, partly from movable type and partly from blocks, Mr. Chatto observes:—

'The page printed from the wood-block was, in short, a facsimile of the corresponding page, printed from movable types. So completely did they correspond that I have no doubt that an impression of the page printed from movable types had been transferred, as engravers say, to the block.' (p. 104.)

How this was effected in old times we do not know, but at the present day engravers—

'First moisten the back of the paper on which the cut or letterpress is

printed with a mixture of concentrated potash and essence of lavender, in equal quantities, which causes the ink to separate readily from the paper; next, when the paper is nearly dry, the cut or page is placed above a prepared block, and by moderate pressure the ink comes off from the paper, and leaves an impression upon the wood.' (p. 104.)

On the authority of Ottley and Berjeau is given the following account of the practice of the old wood-engravers:—

'A block of wood being prepared from a perpendicular cutting of pear-tree, either a drawing was made upon its surface, in which every line was delineated with a pencil or reed-pen exactly as the cut was ultimately to appear, the intervening spaces of plain wood being cut away, or more often, it is thought by some, the design having been drawn on a sheet of paper, the latter was glued, with its face downwards, on the prepared block; the paper was then rendered transparent, perhaps by oiling it, so that every part could be distinctly seen through. They then cut through the paper, hollowing out the block in all those parts where no lines of the pen appeared, which completed the work, the surface of the block then presenting in relief every line and touch of the original drawing.'

The abundance of cross-hatching so constantly found in old woodcuts is explained by the fact of this being the easiest mode for the draughtsman to follow in obtaining his effects of light and shade. The great labour it allots to the engraver—who has to cut down every minute space from each angle of the lines, and clear out the former—was not then taken into account.

In 1568, Jobst Amman designed a series of cuts to illustrate Hans Sachs' description of the various ranks of men, arts, and handicraftsmen, which was published, with verses descriptive of the cuts. Among the latter were figured the 'Formschneider,' or form or figure-cutter, and the 'Briefmaler,' or card-painter, or stenciller, their avocations being spoken of as distinct trades. In Chatto and Jackson (Bibl. 38) may be seen copies of the two cuts. The 'Formschneider,' or wood-engraver proper,

'Is apparently at work on a block which he has before him, but the kind of tool which he employs is not exactly like those used by English wood-engravers of the present day. It seems to resemble a small, long-handled desk knife; while the tool of the modern wood-engraver has a

handle which is rounded at the top, in order to accommodate it to the palm of the hand. It is also never held vertically, as it appears in the hand of the "formschneider." It is, however, certain, from other woodcuts, which will be subsequently noticed, that the wood-engravers of that period were accustomed to use a tool with a handle rounded at the top, similar to the graver used in the present day.' (p. 410.)

In M. Garnier's work (Bibl. 88, p 149) may be found a detailed and trustworthy description of the methods which were adopted by the Dominoitiens of Chartres in the production of popular Imagery. The account given, though relating to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries only, without doubt illustrates the manipulations of a much earlier period, transmitted by craftsmanship and tradition to more recent times.

In order that some of the lines or ridges left standing in relief on the block may be subjected to less pressure in printing than are the other parts, and thus allowed to appear lighter in the impression, modern engravers often practise 'lowering' of the block, *i. e.* they scrape away the surface of the block from the centre towards the sides, or hollow it out in such other places as may be deemed proper. This practice, though claimed as a modern invention, has been shown by Mr. Chatto to have been practised as far back, at least, as 1538; for the Lyons' 'Dance of Death' of that date—

'Affords several instances of blocks lowered in this manner, not only towards the edges, but also in the middle of the cut, whenever it was necessary that certain delicately engraved lines should be lightly printed, and thus have the appearance of gradually diminishing till their extremities should scarcely be distinguishable from the paper on which they are impressed. Numerous instances of this practice are frequent in woodcuts executed from 1540 to the decline of the art in the seventeenth century.' (p. 462.)

It has been commonly supposed that the ink used in taking impressions from the early cuts, and for the block-books, was always of a very pale or light-brown colour, very thin and watery, or distemper-like, and that the age of a print could be approximately arrived at from regarding the character of the ink. That the latter was very frequently as just described is

true, but not always so; for most cabinets rich in *incunabula* will afford examples which have been printed off in a black, solid-like ink; recent researches have proved, also, that specimens of the last quarter of the fifteenth century—particularly from the school of Ulm—were printed off in pale ink, like many much earlier productions. Some prints, supposed to be of the last quarter of the fourteenth century or the commencement of the fifteenth, have been worked off even with a very black ink, prepared with oil or some fatty matter. To these latter belong two examples formerly in the Weigel Collection, facsimiles of which may be seen in the ‘*Anfänge der Druckerkunst.*’ (Bibl. 70.) One is a Christ in the Press, the other a Saint Christopher, of character more archaic than the celebrated print of 1423, and in which the ‘ink of impression has been so charged with the oil that the latter has spread beyond the contours, as may be perceived even now.’ Nevertheless it is true that the majority of early wood-cuts were printed off with a pale bistre, distemper-like colour, which, according to Meerman, was employed for the purpose of better imitating the tint of the original designs.

‘The ink with which the cuts in the “Poor Preacher’s Bible” have been printed is evidently a kind of distemper of the colour of bistre, lighter than in the “History of the Virgin,” and darker than in the “Apocalypse.” In many of the cuts certain portions of the lines appear surcharged with ink—sometimes giving to the whole page rather a blotched appearance—while other portions seem scarcely to have received any. (Schelhorn has noticed a similar appearance in the old block-book entitled “*Ars Memorandi.*”) This appearance is undoubtedly in consequence of the light-bodied ink having, from its want of tenacity, accumulated on the block where the line was thickest or where two lines met, leaving the thinner portions adjacent with scarce any colouring at all. The block must, in my opinion, have been charged with such ink by means of something like a brush, and not by means of a ball. In some parts of the cuts—more especially where there is the greatest portion of text—small white spaces may be perceived, as if a graver had been run through the lines. On first noticing this appearance, I was inclined to think that it was owing to the spreading of the hairs of the brush in inking, whereby certain parts might have been left untouched. The same kind of break in the lines may be observed, however, in some

of the impressions of the old woodcuts published by Becker and Derschau, and which are worked off by means of a press, and with common printers' ink. In these it is certainly owing to minute furrows in the grain of the wood; and I am now of opinion that the same cause has occasioned a similar appearance in the cuts of the "Biblia Pauperum Predicatorum." (Jackson and Chatto, Bibl. 38, p. 92.)

We may say that, as a rule, the paper on which the early woodcuts were printed was relatively thick and coarse, and that, if it had the advantage of great solidity, it was rendered by the latter somewhat repugnant to easy impression. In fact, the papers of the period, being manufactured from hempen rags, which the lye-wash from ashes did not sufficiently disintegrate, offered a considerable resistance, and, further, these old papers were often strongly sized. On the other hand, a certain amount of what artists understand as 'texture' was given with great advantage by these coarse-grained fabrics.

It is generally asserted that the early cuts and xylographic impressions were obtained by means of the 'frotton,' or rubber, and not with a press; that is to say, the paper being laid on the block, *friction* was applied to the back of the former, until sufficient impressions of the design was made on the other face of the paper.

'Considering,' writes Mr. Chatto, 'the thickness of the paper on which the block-books are printed—if I may apply this term to them—and the thin-bodied ink which has been used, I am at a loss to conceive how the early wood-engravers have contrived to take off their impressions so correctly; for in all the block-books which I have seen, where friction has evidently been the means employed to obtain the impression, I have only noticed two subjects in which the lines appeared double, in consequence of the shifting of the paper. From the want of body in the ink, which appears in the "Apocalypse" to have been little more than water-colour, it is not likely the paper could be used in a damp state, otherwise the ink would run or spread; and even if this difficulty did not exist, the paper in a damp state could not have borne the excessive rubbing which it appears to have received in order to obtain the impression. Even with such printer's ink as is used in the present day—which, being tenacious, renders the paper, in taking an impression by means of friction, much less liable to slip or shift—it would be difficult

to obtain clear impressions on thick paper from blocks the size of those which form each page of the "Apocalypse" or the "History of the Virgin." . . . The backs of many of the old woodcuts which have been taken by means of friction still appear bright, in consequence of the rubbing which the paper has sustained in order to obtain the impression. They would not have this appearance if the paper had been used in a damp state.' (Bibl. 38, p. 78.)

Mr. Noel Humphreys, alluding to the page of the 'Speculum,' he had selected for illustration, remarks that the cuts—

'Are still printed from wood, in brown distemper ink, such as was used in the xylographic books, the print or impression of them being produced by rubbing the back of the paper when placed face downwards upon the engraved block; while the text was added by a separate process, being printed in black oleaginous ink from movable types, in some rude kind of press analogous in action to that of the subsequently perfected printing-press. An examination of the original is sufficient to prove these assertions, the back still showing the gloss caused by the rubbing process behind the impression from the wood-engraving, while at the back of the text no gloss of the kind is found. It is scarcely necessary to add, that at the back of the text of the entirely xylographic pages of the "Speculum" the same gloss is found as at the back of the illustrations.' (Bibl. 36, p. 61.)

This appearance of the effects of friction stated to be so plainly perceivable on the backs of old woodcuts is, to say the least, often very doubtful to ourselves. Along the ridges on the back of the paper, formed by the stronger indented black lines of the face of the cut, may no doubt be seen, in many prints, a polish which is wanting on the rest of the paper. But often such polish is not more than might have been produced by the slight and constant friction which the print must have been subjected to, during the course of its transmission to us through four centuries. At any rate, it is nothing like what we should expect to see from the friction we may suppose to have been necessary to have worked off some of the more strongly marked impressions on which this slight polish may be found. We would observe, also, that authorities are themselves occasionally at variance concerning the same print. M. Renouvier, *e. g.*, states that the woodcuts of the 'Spirituale

Pomerium' were '*imprimées au froton*;' while Baron Reiffenberg is of opinion that they were printed by prefs. Moreover, we are not satisfied that it has been proved that the use of a prefs or roller of some kind, by the engraver and xylographic artist, was unknown before Gutenberg's first works appeared; *i.e.* 1450-1460. It is known that he had some sort of printer's prefs by 1439, but we believe that a prefs was employed long before that time. As Weigel well points out, a joiner's or screw-prefs must have been very early in use, and but a slight step onwards would adapt it to the purpose of those who bound together the leaves of MSS.; the volumes of which, when decorated by thick covers, inlaid with carved or chased work, must have been subjected to some description of fixed pressure. We have already referred to a print in the Weigel Collection, which, in the opinion of good judges, distinctly evinces the effects of pressure.

'This print, inserted in a hollow of the cover prepared for it, seems to have been meant to replace the reliefs in ivory which decorated the more costly bindings of church books. It would appear also to have been printed off while *in situ*—the hollow having been previously filled with glue,—the plate being heated for the purpose probably, since the glue still adheres to the back of the parchment, over the contours in relief formed by the cutting, while it is detached from the rest of the surface; on the contrary, that side of the parchment bearing the engraving is very smooth.' (Paff. vol. i. p. 21.)

In fact, the 'prefs' as an instrument by which continuous pressure merely could be obtained, is in the form of the wine-prefs, one of the oldest of instruments, and was constantly represented in ancient engravings. Some of the most venerable of these, representing '*Le Christ sous le preffoir*,' place our Saviour, in many instances, under some form of screw-pressure. The exact nature of the prefs, and its frequency of employment in lieu of friction in taking impressions, are points upon which we have not any certain knowledge; but we cannot help thinking that something like a bookbinder's, or our napkin and table-cloth prefs, existed before the middle of the fifteenth century, and that it was occasionally employed by the chaser on metal and engraver on wood. When

discussing the Saint Christopher of 1423 we shall again touch upon this subject.

An interesting, much-canvassed, and still open question is, Did the old, and at least the greater, masters of art, like Albert Dürer, his contemporaries and immediate followers, actually cut the wood themselves, or only draw their designs on the block, leaving to others the task of engraving them? It is now the general belief that they did not themselves cut the wood. The documents of their times do not tend to support an opposite opinion, an opinion first broached by Van Mander and Sandrart. On the contrary, we have contemporary witnesses to the fact of the existence, in the days of these early masters, of cutters or engravers by profession, who merely worked after these masters' designs. Thus Conrad Peutinger writes from Augsburg to the Emperor Maximilian, to the effect that Stabius had brought from Nürnberg to Augsburg the greater part of the 'Triumph Figures,' by Albert Dürer, in order to have them engraved for the Emperor in the latter city. Schäufelin, in 1512, made the designs for or else drew directly on the wood his figures of the 'Weiss-König' at Augsburg, and then gave them to Jos. Dienecker, a graver of Antwerp living at Augsburg, to cut. We are likewise informed, through the medium of Peutinger, that Burgkmair had to pay others for cutting his own designs. It is clear, also, from various passages of a long letter addressed to the Emperor Maximilian by Dienecker, which the reader may find in Herberger, p. 29, and Pass. vol. i. p. 69, that Albert Dürer, Schäufelin, and Burgkmair, executed the designs only on or for transference to the blocks of the 'Triumph,' which were afterwards handed over to Dienecker and other engravers, as Bartsch had stated, and even told us their names, still to be found on the backs of many of the blocks preserved at Vienna. The latest researches on the subject strongly support, it must be confessed, the conclusion of Passavant, viz., that we are indebted to Master Jerome of Nürnberg, Jobst Dienecker of Augsburg, with his assistants, and Hans Lützelburger of Basle, for *most* that we possess of the engraved designs of Albert Dürer, Schäufelin, Burgkmair, Cranach, Holbein, Springinklee, and H. S. Beham. We say 'most,' because it is by no means clear that we owe to them all the engraved designs of these masters, and there is some

reason for believing that on emergencies Burgkmair himself actually engraved. For instance, while Peutinger was furthering the cutting of the blocks of the 'Genealogy' at Augsburg one of the engravers ran away, bringing the work to a standstill, and leaving Peutinger in despair as to what he should say to the Emperor. However, he informed Maximilian that he would do all he could to get the defaulter back or procure someone else to complete the business, and that 'the painter here is quite *au fait* at it' (der maler alhie ist ganz geschickt darzu). Now, who could this be but Burgkmair? as observed by Herberger.

'We meet with several engravings on wood by German masters of this period, which bear not only the names of their authors, but likewise the addition of *fecit* or *faciebat*, and which would appear to show that such masters themselves engraved them. We have, e.g., two prints of Horses by Hans Baldung Grün (Bartsch, Nos. 57, 58), signed "*Jo. Baldung fecit 1534*," and "*Baldung fecit 1534*;"—and on a portrait of Duke William of Juliers—a reproduction on wood of an engraving on copper by H. Aldegrever—may be seen the signature "Hinricus Aldegrever, Svfatien, Faciebat. Anno MDXLI." However positive a proof such a mode of signature may appear, that the masters it refers to themselves engraved their designs, we have come across another, which has taught us that the word *fecit* relates only to the *drawer* on the wood. We refer to a print representing Christ supported by an Angel bearing two distinct signatures, viz. I. M. f. (*fecit*) and $\frac{T}{VV}$, accompanied by an engraver's tool; thus little doubt can exist that the master of the initials I M. executed the design only. As it was probably about this time that the engravers proper on wood desired to make themselves known by specimens of their art, we may assume that this practice came into use chiefly during the first half of the sixteenth century, as we see in an example by Hans Brosamer on which—a portrait on wood of the Landgrave Philip of Hesse—the artist signs himself, "Hans Brosamer Formschneider zu Erffordt." . . . Among the Swiss artists, like Urfé Graff, Nicolas Manuel Deutsch, and his son Hans Rudolph, we meet with this peculiarity, viz., that they place after their monograms, most frequently the representation of a little dagger, which might be mistaken for a knife for cutting the wood, and so lead to the conclusion that they were likewise engravers on wood. But we have irrefutable evidence, in a design by Nicolas Manuel Deutsch, of Berne, in the collection at Bâle, that the

instrument in question represents really a dagger. Here two soldiers are represented fighting with poignards identical with the instrument added by the artist to his monogram. Ursé Graff himself also has drawn a little "Love," having attached to his girdle the same kind of poignard; which, in fact, was an arm that every soldier or Lanzknecht carried. We may conclude, therefore, that these artists desired to indicate by the dagger that they had rendered military service to a sovereign after the Swiss custom even to the present day, and which we know the painter of Berne had done in reality. We never find with their monograms the engraver's knife, such as Rudolph Wyssenbach and the Master H H., both Swiss, were accustomed to add. We see Ursé Graff only append to his monogram, as a more precise designation, a borax-box, in his quality of goldsmith and director of the Mint. It remains, therefore, very doubtful if these artists themselves engraved on wood.' (Pass. vol. i. pp. 76-78.)

Mr. Chatto thought that if Albert Dürer had engraved his own designs he would not have introduced cross-hatching so frequently, and Woltmann coincides with those who see in Jerome Resch, Dienecker, and Lützelburger, with their assistants, the practical exponents of the designs of Dürer, Burgkmair, Holbein, and their contemporaries.

Certainly, as far as documentary evidence goes, there is nothing to lead us to believe that the early masters generally cut their own blocks, and considering to what an enormous amount of work their signatures are attached, it would appear next to impossible for them to have undertaken that office if they had desired. Considerations such as these, taken along with the important circumstance that the character of the cutting, or the 'technic,' of the works of the same master, about the same period, in the same series of prints, is not unfrequently very different in the various pieces of the series—one cut being of first-rate style, while that which follows it is but of third-rate character—induce the belief that such cuts could not have been the work of one and the same engraver, and that Dürer and his followers only drew their designs on the wood, and did not actually engrave them. Though we are forced to admit that this was the general rule, we are reluctant not to allow of exceptional instances. The extreme artistic feeling and decision with which some of the works of the old masters are cut,

and the apparently direct influence of the mind of the artist in carrying out the design—just as we see it to be in the etchings of the great etchers—make one loth to relinquish the idea that some of the more characteristic at least of their works were cut in part, if not entirely, by their designers.

There are certain wonderfully beautiful pieces so greatly superior to the general run in technical execution, that we feel disposed to agree with Didot and Heller that they can scarcely have filtered through any medium between the hand of the artist and their production in relief on the wood. That this belief is a matter rather of feeling than of anything else we admit, but in matters of art feeling has its value.

‘I believe,’ says M. F. Didot, ‘that the masters of the art but rarely took up the graver; nevertheless, on observing with what freedom, with what propriety, and with what sentiment, the heads, the hands, and the feet are drawn in the compositions of Albert Dürer, I am inclined to recognise in this the hand of the master, and I share the opinion of Heller, who believes that Albert Dürer did not confine himself to drawing on the wood the subjects afterwards confided to the knife of the engraver, but that he cut the contours of the more delicate parts, such as the heads and the extremities, and “*les cernait au canif*,” leaving to the engravers the duty of hollowing out that which he had thus indicated. . . . But in spite of the efforts of all those who have said and repeated, that the works of Albert Dürer and of other masters were entirely engraved by themselves on wood in relief, as in intaglio on copper, and notwithstanding the conscientious researches undertaken by MM. Rumohr and Umbreit to discover everything that might contradict the conclusions of Unger and Bartsch, one is forced to acknowledge that the evidence they have sought out with such minute care is often negative, and almost always hypothetical.’ (Bibl. col. 18, 25.)

M. L. Delaborde writes in answer to a letter from M. Rumohr: ‘You ask me what I think of Holbein’s Bible—it is charming; but that is all I know about it. There are cuts which are full of spirit, others which have been ruined by fools, but in which the genius of Holbein still appears like a piece of gold glittering at the bottom of a rivulet.’

Mrs. Heaton appears, from what she states in her ‘Life of

Albert Dürer,' to have been influenced in favour of the opinion that this illustrious master did actually cut the block upon particular occasions, by the same series of prints which has always seemed to ourselves to witness to the same conclusion. This series is the 'Apocalypse.' That all the pieces of the series were cut by Dürer we do not believe, but that several were his immediate handiwork we are unhesitatingly of opinion. By these same cuts Haufmann also appears to have been led to a like inference, and to give even a wider field to Dürer's own work in this respect generally than we should be inclined to do, though he admits that trustworthy signs of the master's actual labour are not to be met with after 1512. Mrs. Heaton places the matter very fairly before us when she says that—

'At the early period (1498) when the cuts of the Apocalypse appeared, I doubt very much, in spite of Jackson's assertions to the contrary, whether any working *Formschneider* in Nürnberg was sufficiently master of his art to be able to express the thoughts and meaning of the artist so unhesitatingly and powerfully as the engraver, whoever he may be, of these illustrations has done. The striking boldness of the cuts of the Apocalypse, which is due as well to the self-reliant knowledge of the *Formschneider* as to the free drawing of the designer, first led me to think it probable that Dürer was, in this instance, at all events, his own *Formschneider*, and afterwards my opinion was greatly strengthened by the study of some very early impressions of those cuts in the possession of Herr Cornill D'Orville of Frankfort. These impressions were probably struck off as trial-proofs, even before the edition of 1498. They have no letter-press at the back, but, unlike the later impressions without letter-press, every line is as firm and distinct as in the original drawing on the block, the bold hand and confident knowledge of an artist is indeed much more distinctly visible in these illustrations than the mechanical skill and accuracy of a good engraver. And this we should naturally expect if, as I think, Dürer not only designed but executed the work himself. Added to this intrinsic evidence, there is the extrinsic, that even if he could at that time have found a *Formschneider* capable of cutting his blocks, it is unlikely that he would have been able to pay him for his labour, for he published the cuts at his own cost, and would therefore, we may safely assume, be desirous of saving expense in such a responsible undertaking. Jackson's argument respecting cross-hatching is likewise

confirmatory of this view, for there is less cross-hatching in these than in any other of Dürer's woodcuts.' (Op. cit. p. 109.)

It is right to point out, however, that Sir H. Cole is of opinion that it is taking a very narrow view of art to suppose that workmen could not be found to engrave Albert Dürer's or Holbein's woodcuts in an age quite equal to, if not surpassing, our own in the execution of the most delicate ornamental work. Both Heller and Nagler strenuously maintain that the finer and more spirited of Lucas Cranach's pieces were engraved directly by himself (Bibl. 33, p. 40, Bibl. 48, vol. iv. p. 296). The general question as it is regarded by one section of critics, is, perhaps, as well stated as it could be by Rudolph Weigel in his *Holzschnitte*, &c. (Bibl. 71), though in a crabbed note in somewhat crabbed German.

'I repeat,' says Herr Weigel, 'that in my collection of woodcuts I have brought forward such examples only as are original cuts, *i. e.* cuts from blocks actually prepared by painters and draughtsmen for the purpose of being printed from, analogous to the self-produced copper-plate engraving, etching, mezzotinto, and lithographic work of painters. Such works of art speak for themselves, according to the spirit vivifying the material or guiding the hand which bore the burin, the etching-needle, and the scraper. In respect to these spirited productions which—exactly as in the case of etchings—the experienced connoisseur quickly, the learner slowly, but the common observer never appreciates—I cannot too urgently advise caution against accepting the judgments of recent phrase-makers concerning them. The latter draw their conclusions from modern handwork, the technical process of which is entirely different from the character of the wood-engraving of the old masters, and, moreover, these modern workers can very seldom justly lay claim to artistic knowledge. Those who have supported the view—in face of numerous opponents—that the old masters did actually engrave, never for a moment thought of ascribing the cutting of *all* the numerous wood-engravings known as Dürer's, Burgkmair's, and others, to the masters themselves, but only of such among those prints as at once strike the eye by their great superiority, and of which the number altogether is but small. A Raphael had his Marc Antonio, his Ugo da Carpi; a Titian his Andrea Andreani, his Boldrini; a Parmigiano, his Antonio da Trento; a Dürer, his Hieronymus the "Formschneider;" a Burgkmair, his Jost De Negker (Jos Diencker of Antwerp); a Rubens, his Vorstermann,

his Iegher; a Van Dyk, his Pontius; a Berghem, his Visscher; a Du Sart, his Gole, to multiply his works, and to whom he could confidently trust his name, since such helpmates—always good draughtsmen, sometimes even painters, and better acquainted than the artist with technical processes—knew how to carry out the inventions of the latter precisely as he desired. The wish to deny, however, that a Van Dyk, a Berghem, ever etched, ever themselves guided a needle; or that a Parmigiano, a Burgkmair, a Jost Amman, ever handled a graver, or a Du Sart the scraper, can never have been present to any reasonable mind, such a desire could be possible only to a conceited modern age which assumes it knows, and can do everything. He must be ill acquainted with the history of art who is ignorant of the fact that the great and hardworked masters of old constantly appealed to other hands than their own for assistance. A Rubens rarely painted entirely by himself the pictures ordered of him by princes, church dignitaries, and corporate bodies. In the same way sculptors, founders, copper-plate engravers, and all other artists, employed extraneous aid. That a clever practical wood-engraver, such as Jost de Negker, who was at the same time a printer, was placed at the head of a large wood-engraving establishment carried on under the Emperor Maximilian, is well known to have been the case. The spirit pervading it, however, came from the genius of a Dürer, a Burgkmair, Schaufflein. I repeat that he can know but very imperfectly the history of art who is not aware that many great masters have in their discursiveness devoted themselves to the mechanical arts and fostered in particular those of *multiplication*. That when practising the latter, in obedience to their artistic impulses, *con amore*, they produced those picturesque sheets which were the delight of their contemporaries, and are the pleasure of posterity, and these simply because it was often only from their comparative inexpertness in technical procedures that the spiritual personality of their creations shone forth the more.' (Bibl. 71, p. xviii.)

In leaving this topic we may refer the reader for more information to the work of Herberger (Bibl. 89 pp. 27-32) and to the third volume of Nagler's 'Monogrammisten,' numbers 1209 and 1241, where the subject is treated of in reference particularly to Lützelburger and Holbein.

That the early masters generally drew on the blocks, and did not merely furnish designs for others to transfer to the wood, though usually believed, is also a point open to discussion. A close consideration of the letters of Peutingger, quoted by Herberger,

leads to the opinion that the *preparation* of the blocks for his assistants, referred to by Dienecker (see particularly note 91, *op. cit.*), means the transference of the designs of Burgkmair and others to the wood. Nevertheless it cannot be supposed that the more characteristic pieces of the great men of old generally filtered through such a medium. After their time it became the practice with some to furnish only designs for transference.

If more difficulty be experienced in obtaining, by wood-engraving, a like delicacy of cutting, cross-hatching, punctiform style, &c., to that obtainable by the burin, needle, and *roulette* in copper-plate engraving; if no such resources as rebiting and the dry-point are at hand, as in etching; there is yet this great advantage left to the wood-engraver, viz. the power of reproducing the very lines traced by the artist on the block, and thus of preserving a certain freedom and largeness which give to his work a grandiose character, that is, always assuming that the original lines have been properly followed. But we must proceed to engraving on metal.

Engraving on Metal in relief.—It has been already stated that in early times engraving in *relief* on metal was not unfrequently practised, and that it is the opinion of several writers that some of the oldest prints which exist have, not unlikely, been engraved in this manner. The metal plate was cut on the same principle as we have described was followed in engraving on wood. We believe, also, that for some time engraving in *relief* on metal was employed in a partial manner on the plates used for the production of those curious engravings known as prints in the *manière criblée*, or the large ‘dotted style.’

These plates were but limited in number, and the style of them was altogether different, as a whole, from that of the early metallic engraving in relief, simulating wood-engraving. That the prints in the *manière criblée* are from metal plates, and that both engraving in *relief* and in *intaglio* were resorted to for their production, we are inclined to believe. But we pass by these plates for the present, observing that the metallic relief engraving now before us for consideration is that of a more simple character—mere outline, often—done quite in the spirit and feeling of relief in wood, and so closely simulating it as to give rise, sometimes, to considerable diffi-

culty in coming to a conclusion as to the origin of the print under observation. Weigel, we are aware, is not of this opinion as regards the difficulty of distinguishing between the two, but Paffavant accords with the views here expressed.

To the former writer we are indebted for some valuable information on this matter; he states that, on careful examination of the oldest prints hitherto considered as produced from wood-blocks, it may be observed that certain of them present peculiarities as regard the states of the impressions, and partly also in respect to the engraved lines. It may be seen that very frequently the coloured material used in working off the impression is very unequally distributed, or but very faintly given off generally over the print. On long lines the colour at particular places is narrow or slight in amount, while elsewhere it is dense and broad. Other lines, though of equable breadth, are so imperfectly charged with colour that a number of small uncoloured spots may be seen, even with the naked eye. With other lines the black colour has so little connexion throughout, that the impression may be termed 'gravelly,' or 'grumous.' In some places, where several lines occur and approximate—as, for example, in the representations of the eyes, mouth, fingers, toes, and hair—the colours from the different lines may be noticed to have run together, giving rise to a heaviness or bluntness of impression. In prints where such things as these are to be found there exists also a general deficiency of sharpness, equality, and clearness. The cutting of the acute angles and corners, and also of the more delicate lines, appears to have been 'shirked;' and in obtaining the impression the effects of the *frotton* are scarcely visible, the backs of such prints not being marked through forcible indentation from the front. Such engravings as these—which have been usually regarded as bad impressions from wood-blocks, caused by careless or imperfect cutting of the latter, or by insufficient dampening of the paper—are denied by Weigel, Zistermann, and Paffavant, to be impressions from wood at all. They assert that the material of the plates and borders which have furnished such impressions must have been metal. Even at a later period,—

Among the decorative borders after the designs of Hans Holbein and

his brother Ambrose, of Urse Graff, and others, with which the printers of Bâle were accustomed to ornament the titlepages of their books during the first half of the sixteenth century, are to be found several which were engraved on metal. The majority of these are not signed; a single engraver on metal has occasionally affixed his initials I. F. These borders are among the best of their kind, yet the cutting shows the craft, and is very thin. We cannot determine with certainty their author, though several persons reasoning from the initials before mentioned think he may have been Johannes Frobenius (the celebrated printer of Bâle), which is the more likely from the circumstance that these borders are to be more frequently met with in those works of which he was editor. A very interesting discovery instructs us that the engravings on metal of this epoch were executed on copper. Not only have two border pieces of the Master I. F. on this metal been found by M. G. Haas, of Bâle, in a printer's office of this city, but another engraving on copper belonging to the early part of the sixteenth century has been discovered by M. le Baron de Auffels among the archives of the Rotenhan family at Rentweisdorf. . . . This work on copper, in the style of wood-engraving, from which several impressions have been recently taken, is so freely executed and treated so exactly in the manner stated, that even the most experienced connoisseur could not believe these impressions to be other than the results of wood-engraving. To judge from the design and style of execution, the work may be considered to belong to one of the school of Alber Dürer.' (Paff. i. p. 100.)

The more ancient engravings in relief on metal were not worked on pure copper, but most likely on 'potin' or 'gelbkupfer,' a factitious metal—composed of copper, lead, tin, and calamine—that came into use during the thirteenth century, and which being softer more easily allows of the use of the graver than does the simple and pure copper.

A writer in the 'Bookworm' (vol. i. p. 64) states that many of Grüniger's books, printed at Strasburg as early as 1483 and subsequently, are illustrated with engravings, not cut in wood generally, but on a soft metallic substance like pewter, from which only a small number of good copies could be printed, since the remainder offered a blurred appearance, as the metal yielded under the press. According to Mr. Humphreys, the engravings in the 'Decacordium Christianum,' printed at Fani by Hieronimus Son-

cinus in 1507, are evidently not from wood, but from a soft metal, as is the case with many of the illustrations of the Italian works of the period. M. Galichon alludes ('Gazette des Beaux-Arts,' 1860) to a plate of copper engraved in relief, representing the Vision of Sainte Berthilde, with an inscription of three lines in Latin, and of which M. Longperier has given a description (accompanied by a proof worked off from the plate) in the 'Cabinet de l'Amateur.'

From the greater facility with which certain lines can be cut in soft metal than they can be cut in wood is derived one proof of the metal origin of such prints as we have alluded to; and in cases where decision is difficult this proof is, according to Passavant, most to be trusted to. It may be seen in the more facile tracing out on the metal of perfect curves of very small diameters, as in the locks of hair, at the extremities of the fingers, and analogous drawing, all of which cannot be so well effected with the knife of the wood-engraver. The latter forms the curves rather by a reunion of straight lines made to meet at very acute angles, thus constituting a number of diminutive facettes. As an example of the metal work we are discussing, and which shows the distinctive proofs of its nature, Weigel and Zestermann refer to a print in 'Apulei Platonici Herbarium' (Ulm, 1485-1490). This print, in addition to the imperfections before mentioned, has one of its margins or limitary edges formed by a curved line. Now (say Weigel and Zestermann) this cannot have resulted from the curving of a wood-block, for the latter would have 'sprung.' We can regard it, therefore, as due to the curving of the edge of a metal plate only, as we see occurring in the case of prints in the *manière criblée*. We may appeal to the practical knowledge of Mr. Jackson in further illustration of this point, who observes,—

'When a block of very dry wood becomes dished or concave on its upper surface, as shown in the preceding cut, there is little chance of its ever again becoming sufficiently flat to allow of its being well printed. When the deviation from a perfect level at the bottom is not so great as to attract the notice of the pressman previous to taking an impression, the block not unfrequently yields to the action of the platten and splits.'

These cracks and splits in blocks, causing the latter to be what

is termed 'sprung,' along with the worm-holes so frequently to be met with in the old crab and pear-wood blocks of the early masters, give rise to marks in the impression at once diagnostic of the wood origin of the engraving.

The peculiarities in the states of impressions and of engraved lines before mentioned, are to be explained by the fact of the material of the plate having something of the property of a fatty or greasy body, which prevents the colour becoming readily fixed, and allows it to run into greater or less-sized blots or masses. Wood, on the other hand, acts differently: it seizes and holds the colour equally throughout. A very small amount of curvature,—whether concave or convex—of the plate, a slight bruise, or easily occurring oxidation of it, will prevent a perfect transcript being taken, and give rise to uncoloured spots, or the 'grumous impression.' On some of the metal plates in relief book printers' ink may have been used, which, from the fatty acids it contains, is liable, if great cleanliness be not adopted, to react on the metal and give rise to unequal distribution of the material employed. If these facts be kept in view, Weigel and Zestermann are of opinion not any difficulty need arise in deciding whether an early engraving be an impression from wood or from metal in relief. In the opinion of M. Renouvier, however, the writers named are not warranted in some of their conclusions. In a review of Passavant's '*Peintre-Graveur*' in the '*Gazette des Beaux-Arts*' for 1860, M. Renouvier admits that

'There is reason for believing that in certain cases the engravers employed plates of metal worked in relief, but such was more often the case as regarded seal, punch, and letter engraving . . . the conclusions sought to be drawn from the appearance of the proofs are valueless, for the wood of box, service, and pear-trees, in the hands of a good workman, can be made to render every delicacy and roundness.

Be this as it may, it is unquestionable that metal plates were engraved in relief, since, in addition to the example previously alluded to, M. Hymans of Brussels has published a modern impression from an old plate cut in that way, which is in the possession of M. de Bruyne of Malines (*postea*, '*Manière criblée.*')

A recent opponent to the views of Passavant, Weigel, and

Zeffermann, is M. Kolloff, in the article on Zoan Andrea in the first volume of Dr. Meyer's edition of the 'Künstler-Lexikon' (Bibl. 45). But to our minds M. Kolloff is not a fair exponent of the really essential portion of these views. Years before the writers in question broached their theories, Dr. Dibdin suggested that the Spencer copy of the Canticum Canticorum was the production of some metallic substance, and was not struck off from wooden blocks; and Mr. Sotheby tells us, in his 'Principia Typographica,' that he was at one time induced to agree with Dr. Dibdin, but that further examination and consideration of the subject led him to another conclusion. In fact, good authorities differ widely as to the origin of some early prints. Mr. Chatto, *e. g.*, refers (Bibl. 38, p. 191) to the second edition of Caxton's '**Game and Playe of the Chess**' (supposed to have been printed about 1476) as the first printed book in the English language which contained 'woodcuts,' and gives (p. 193) reduced copies of the Knight (no. 7), and of the sixth or Bishop's pawn (no. 14). Passavant, on the other hand, commenting on this work, observes,—

'William Caxton, born about 1412, and dying in 1491, was the first who published in England books ornamented with engravings from metal. . . . About 1476 he added to his second edition of the "**Game and Playe of the Chess**"—the first edition of which appeared 1474—engravings from metal. Jackson, in his "Treatise on Wood Engraving," gives, at pages 235, 236, a couple of fac-similes, but regards them as engravings from wood' (vol. i. p. 178).

Jackson and Chatto, writing of Caxton, remark :—

'There are woodcuts in the Golden Legend. . . . The most considerable woodcut printed in England previous to 1500, is so far as regards the design, a representation of the Crucifixion at the end of the Golden Legend, printed by Wynkin de Worde in 1493. . . . The woodcuts in the Game of Chess and Mirror of the World are equally as good as the woodcuts which are to be found in books printed abroad about the same period.' (pp. 195-198.)

Passavant writes :—

'Caxton printed the "**Golden Legende**" likewise, which also contains engravings from metal. . . . Several old engravings from metal have been added to this work [Wynkin de Worde's edition]; the new

ones to be found in it have smaller figures; to these belongs the "Crucifixion." . . . One can easily judge from their appearance to what degree of inferiority this art was then reduced in England. . . . Jackson, in his work often mentioned, refers to another book having wood-engravings, and bearing the title, "The Cosmographical Glasse, containing the pleasant principles of Cosmographie, Geographie, Hydrographie or Navigation. Compiled by William Cunningham, Doctor in Physicke. Excussum Londini in Officina Joan Daini, Anno 1559." The principal cut to be found in it is the portrait of the young physician himself. . . . From the fac-similes Jackson gives of the portrait and of one of the initials, it is impossible to say whether the originals were engraved on metal or on wood.' (Op. cit. vol. i. pp. 179-183.)

According to Jackson and Chatto, the prints 'are all from wood-blocks' (p. 425).

Some persons have attributed to Rembrandt 'un très petit morceau gravé en bois,' of which a fac-simile is given by Rudolph Weigel in his 'Holzschnitte,' &c. (Bibl. 71). Nevertheless, Weigel himself, as well as others, are more inclined to regard it as having been worked from metal.

Books, even generally allowed to have been productions of the early press and movable metallic type, have been regarded by a few writers in the light of block-books, or as produced from text engraved on blocks of wood. In the 'Guide to the Printed Books, exhibited to the public in the British Museum, is the following notice of a work in Case IX. No. 7:—

'7. Tewrdannck.—An allegorical poem, in German, written by Melchior Pfintzing, on occasion of the marriage of the Emperor Maximilian I. with Maria of Burgundy. On vellum. Printed by J. Schoensperger at Nuremberg in 1517. Many eminent printers have declared this magnificent volume to be a xylographic production. It was, however, printed from movable metal types, and all the ornaments, initials, and flourishes were engraved either on wood or lead, and cleverly adjusted in the text. Described in Didot's "Essai sur la Typographie," 1855, p. 659. Bequeathed by the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville.'

For further information concerning the above work, the Treatise of Mr. Noel Humphreys (Bibl. 36, p. 175) may be referred to with advantage.

Curious doubts have arisen also as to whether a book was the

product of the wood-engraver or of the scribe. For example, a remarkable collection of early printed books was sold by Messrs. Sotheby and Wilkinson in 1870, not the least valuable work among them was the following one as described in the catalogue :—

‘191. Block-book. Wochentlich Andacht zu seligkeit der weltlichen menschen. A xylographic work printed on vellum, with text like a MS.

‘. . . A unique and most extraordinary work, wholly unknown to bibliographical and typographical writers. It is probably as ancient as the beginning of the fifteenth century, and forms a link between MSS. and block-books, as the block-books made another step towards printing with movable types. This work consists of 33 pages, commencing on the *verso* of the first leaf. The engravings, sixty-nine in number, are printed on the vellum, two, three, four on the page, and in this respect differ entirely from MS. volumes that are sometimes met with, illustrated with woodcuts stuck in. Several of the cuts have xylographic legends engraved on them, as the Angelical Salutation in the cut representing the Annunciation, and the names of different fairs represented. No block-book has hitherto been discovered printed on vellum, and therefore this must be considered as the first known work of that description. A portion of one leaf is torn off, and as there is no means of collating the volume, it must be sold not subject to return.’

A notice of the work here referred to appeared in the ‘Book-worm’ for January 1870, and in the number for March the following statement :—

‘When we inserted in our January number (p. 13), as usual, under the title of “Public Sales,” a verbatim extract of the catalogue, we had not examined the so-called block-book which the “Athenæum” found so puzzling. After a very careful examination, the very day of the sale, we soon came to the conclusion that the book was simply a well-written MS. on both sides of the vellum, and illustrated with small wood-cuts of a very archaic workmanship. In block-books the original tracing of the MS. is never transferred on the block with perfect regularity, or rather is always more or less damaged by the tool of the engraver. Often letters are found broken or mutilated. In the illustrated MS. of the “Wochentlich Andacht zu Seligkeit,” not only that never occurs, but where the ink has been rubbed, or has faded, the outside tracings of the pen, for the formation of the large letters, are still visible. The wood-cuts are printed not with distemper, as the greater part of the block-books, but with black printing-ink. No doubt the MS. as it is, is well worth the

price (120*l.*) which it fetched at the sale; but it will never be reckoned among the block-books of the fifteenth century.' (op. cit. p. 44.)

It is noteworthy that, as late as 1812, a librarian of the Lambeth Archiepiscopal Library—the learned and conscientious Archdeacon Todd—could mistake a printed book for a written one (*Athenæum*, July 5, 1873, 'Art Treasures of Lambeth Library').

Even L. Delaborde, Dr. Butler of Shrewsbury, and Dr. Dibdin, were at issue as to whether a *Donatus* and *Confessionale* were xylographic or from movable metal type. ('*Debuts de l'Imprimerie*' and Dibdin's '*Reminiscences*.')

There are one or two books, such as the '*Belial*' and '*Melufina*,' from the presses of Hans Bämmler, which appear to assert positively that the engravings with which they are ornamented are from metal, since the words '*cum aereis figuris*' occur on their title-pages. Nevertheless, their wood origin is so apparent to M. Didot that he regards the words quoted as having reference to the type rather than to the cuts, or as meaning that the work had been printed with characters of metal founded in *matrices* of copper derived from steel punches. Mariette was of opinion that in the *chiaro-scuro* of Boldrini after Titian the contours were engraved in metal in *intaglio*, the rest of the work being from wood-blocks. This view is repudiated by Didot, who believes that all the impressions were from wood. According to Descamps, the portraits of the Roman emperors, in *chiaro-scuro*, published by Hubert Goltzius in 1557, are from wood; while Papillon affirms that the contours are etched, and that the two *rentrées* are from wood-blocks engraved in *intaglio*. Mr. Chatto states that—

'What Papillon says about the outlines being etched is true, but a close inspection of those portraits will afford any one acquainted with the process ample proof of the *rentrées* being also printed from plates of metal in the same manner as from engraved wood-blocks.' (p. 405.)

Towards the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, some well-known French printers—Pigouchet, Jean Dupré (1488), Antoine Verard (1487), and Simon Vostre (1488–1520), published some very beautiful **Books of Hours**, ornamented with engravings, having peculiar characters. The chief of these were: first, that the ground, and often other

dark portions of the prints, were finely *criblé*, or dotted white, serving as a means of 'killing the black,' a practice then prevalent among French engravers. Secondly, each page of text was surrounded by a border of little subjects, engraved in the same manner, and often repeated at every third page. From the addition to some books of large separate prints, having rich broad borders of figure subjects, in floriated frame-work, these *Libres d'Heures* had a fine and ornamental effect. Not unfrequently they were printed in brilliant ink from picked type on fine vellum, so that they might compete with the sumptuously illuminated MS. Books of Hours then in fashion. The works published by S. Vostre are particularly rich in effect, he being, according to some authorities, the designer and engraver, as well as the publisher, of his illustrations. The prints decorating these Books of Hours have been generally considered to be impressions from wood, and Chatto gives (Bibl. 38, p. 233) two examples from an edition of *Heures a lusaige de Chartres*, printed at Paris by Simon Vostre about 1502, as illustrative of this mode of *engraving on wood*, by which are lessened the effects of a ground which otherwise would be entirely black. Mr. Noel Humphreys, too (Bibl. 36, p. 130), contends that 'most of the works produced by Pigouchet were printed with the greatest care on the purest vellum that could be produced, and are, in fact, the finest possible examples of early *wood-engraving* and printing.' Nevertheless, a very different account is given by a good authority—M. Firmin Didot—of the illustrations and borders in the French *Libres d'Heures*.

'A Book of Hours, printed by Jean Dupré in 1488, in which the borders of the pages are remarkable for their delicate execution, confirms the idea I have always had, viz., that the greater portion of the engravings and borders decorating the *Livres d'Heures* were engraved in relief on copper and not on wood. I had noticed in the Bible of 1540, printed by Robert Estienne, that its large and beautiful initials, so well ornamented and so well engraved on a *criblé* ground, were often to be met with several times repeated on the same page and in a perfectly identical manner. This could occur alone from a perfectly exact reproduction of them, and such as could not be obtained by means of the polytypage of an engraving on wood. It could arise, in fact, only from the stroke of a *matrix* in lead produced by a punch engraved in copper, the only means

then possible of obtaining a *cliché* [Appendix B.] perfectly conformable to the model. This procedure—antecedent to polytypage—has continued to be adopted all along in type-foundries for *vignettes* and large letters, and even for smaller ones, where the expense of engraving a punch in steel is desired to be avoided. This practice of engraving on copper the chief portion of the subjects intended for the ornamentation of “Hours” is confirmed by the Book of Hours of 1488, in which the printer, Jean Dupré, thus expresses himself in the notice following the kalendar,—“It is the repository of the history and figures of the Bible—both of the Old Testament and of the New—containing therein the vignettes of the present Hours *imprimées en cuivre*.” (Bibl. 18, col. 119.)

The volume of *Jehan du pre*—for so he prints his name in it—above alluded to is now in the library of the British Museum (c. 35, c.) We have examined it and seen for ourselves ‘*les vignettes des ces presentes heures imprimées en cuivre*.’ The work is a small quarto, containing twenty large plates and thirty smaller ones, independent of the borders. It is the only example known of these ‘*Presentes heures a l’usage de romme*.’

Both Langlois and Renouvier maintained that the prints in the *Libres d’Heures* are from wood, and not from metal; the latter writer, however, admitting that the assumed differential signs between engraving on metal in relief and on wood are ‘*arbitraires et trompeurs*.’ (See ‘*Des Gravures sur Bois dans les Livres de Simon Vostre*,’ Paris, 1862.)

According to M. Didot, his views readily explain how by means of polytypage the prints we are considering could be easily multiplied in the works of Vostre, and of other printers who have rendered the Books of Hours produced at Paris so celebrated, since, independently of greater delicacy of line, a reproduction of an engraving in relief on copper was much more easily and exactly to be obtained. Further,—

‘The repeated employment of these little compositions—reproduced, in fact, upon almost every page—and their frequent handling would soon have blunted the angles, broken the ridges, and damaged the engraving, had the latter been on wood; copper alone could offer sufficient resistance. It was particularly the smaller subjects, therefore, which formed the borders and were frequently alternated in use for the sake of varying the composition of the latter that were thus engraved on copper in relief.

Now that this circumstance is admitted it is easier to recognise in the technic of the prints, those of the latter which are from copper and such as are from wood. It even seems to me that Jean Dupré—who not unlikely practised several branches of typography—has sometimes sought to imitate by engraving in *relief* on copper effects analogous to those produced by *nielli* in *intaglio*, when printed off like copper-plates, so that typography might also enter into competition with the latter in this respect. This intention is very evident in the engraving of the last leaf of the “Lunettes des Princes composées par noble homme Jehan Mefchinot,” and printed by Jean Dupré—without date—but probably from 1494 to 1495. . . . The two engravings—one on copper, the other on wood—eight centimetres wide by thirteen high, representing the Adoration of the Shepherds, and the Angelic Salutation, the first entering into several Books of Hours of Simon Vostre, the second being in a folio Missal printed in 1519 by Jean Oliver for Jacques Cousin—prove not only that the smaller subjects forming the borders were engraved on copper, but that compositions of much larger dimensions were so likewise. These two prints—of which the original plate and block belong to M. Piot—have appeared in the number of the “Cabinet d’Amateur” for 1861, a publication which M. Piot carries on with ability and success. One can judge from the engraving on copper in which the corners are preserved intact, and the lines of the work are fine and sharp, of the difference between it and the engraving from wood, in which the edges are worn or damaged, and the impression inferior from overwork of the block.’ (op. cit. col. 119, 131.)

Paffavant agrees with Didot in regarding the *Libres d’Heures* which appeared in Paris during the sixteenth century, as ornamented with engravings from metal plates. He cites, too (i. p. 162), ‘Les xxj Epistres d’Ovide translätées de Latin en Francoys par Reverend père en Dieu Monseign’ L’evesque d’Angoulesme (Octavien de Saint Gelais),’ 8vo, printed by Verard, but without date—as affording an example in which such prints from metal are illuminated.

‘We may add here also that we find in these metal engravings of the *Livres d’Heures* the most ancient use of *clibés* from the original plates. In certain proofs we may observe on the white ground spots of impression showing that the ground of the *clibé* had not been kept sufficiently deep or had not been reproduced with enough sharpness—such spots never occurring in the case of proofs from the original plates.’ (vol. i. p. 163, note 111.)

Sufficient has been adduced to show that there is ample reason for being cautious in certain cases before determining whether an early print has been worked-off from a wood-block or metal plate.

Engraving on Metal in intaglio.—Independently of impressions from engravings in *relief* on metal, there have reached our time two other and more important kinds of proofs from engravings on metal plates. We have, in the first place, the results of the labours of the gold and silver-smiths, who were led in some instances to obtain impressions from their ornamental works, not originally meant to yield them; while in other cases—as illustrated by the *manière criblée*—they engraved their plates often probably for that purpose, but worked them in a very peculiar way. We have, secondly, the effects of printing from metal plates—usually of copper—engraved in *intaglio* by the artist, and not by the mere craftsman, specially, and for the purpose of being made to afford impressions. From the workers in gold and silver, the gravers and chasers of articles made of the precious metals, we have received some of the earliest specimens of the art of engraving, and which are known as *nielli*. The impressions from *nielli* were not, however, the objects for which the plates were engraved, they were rather the results of after-thought experiments made by the workman to see how he was progressing with his task, and what would be the effect of it when finished. The centre of interest lay in the engraved metal itself which was to be afterwards admired, and not in a second-hand production from it. About the ‘technic,’ or the engraved work of the metal plate, there was nothing special or peculiar, except in so far as it was produced by the professed gold or silver-smith, rather than by the pure artist. The plate was cut in *intaglio*, the cutting or engraving being often but conventionally ornamental, or, on the other hand, rising to the beauty of a *pax* by Maso Finiguerra. Of these impressions from intagliated ornamental metal-work or *nielli*, we shall speak more fully afterwards. From the finer and more artistic *nielli* the step was easy, but gradual, to the ordinary copperplate engraving of the pure artist, though often in one way the labour of the goldsmith-workman was of a higher character than were the first attempts of the artist-engraver on copper or other metal.

From the time when *nielli* impressions appeared to the beginning of the sixteenth century, there was produced a series of strange-looking prints, which seem to combine some of the characters of both wood and metal engraving; of work in *relief*, and of work in *intaglio*. Nevertheless, these prints distinctly give the idea that their originals had been worked or cut in a manner different in principle to that usually adopted in the engraving of the time, whether on metal or on wood, and that such originals had been produced as often for ornamental or decorative purposes as for being engraved from. When the latter was intended, the original plate bore an individuality which separated it, as a form of engraving, from every other style then common. It appears to have owed its origin, like the *niello*, rather to the jeweller's or goldsmith's workshop than to the studio of the artist. The prints worked off from such plates—the latter being now considered by high authorities to have been of metal—are those known as 'dotted prints,' or prints in the *manière criblée*. Of them we shall afterwards treat in detail.

It must be borne in mind that a chief point of difference between metal and wood-engraving is, that in the first the forms are cut out of the plate, while in the second they are left standing in *relief*. In metal the form-hollows are filled with ink, and yield the impression; in wood the ridges in relief are inked and give off their facsimiles. In order to obtain the intagliate forms in the metal-plate, various methods are followed in ploughing out or producing the hollows. In one and the most important, ordinarily called 'copperplate engraving,' the metal is cut by means of an instrument called a burin, or 'graver;' the roughness being removed by a triangular steel instrument, the 'scraper.' By the former tool the design, previously traced on the copper with a 'dry-point' or 'needle,' may be said to be furrowed out. In the use of the burin alone to engrave the metal the first attempts at simple metal-plate engraving were made: and so perfect is the power of this instrument in many respects, that, with some slight modifications,—as, *inter alia*, the resort to etching to prepare the designs,—the burin has been the source, from the time of the earliest German and Italian engravers until now, of the finest renderings of the works of the most illustrious artists, particularly in that

form of stroke or cutting known as 'line-engraving.' But while the burin takes such high rank, it should be remembered that there is not an instrument used in the fine arts which less permits of freedom of action. As Mr. Hamerton observes,—

'It is difficult to handle, requires the application of an appreciable amount of force, and is always slow even in the most skilful hands. The lines which it cuts are singularly pure and sharp, and it can vary both their thickness and their depth obediently to the pressure of the fingers and the lower part of the palm. It describes beautiful curves quite naturally, like a skate that bites in ice, but has great difficulty in following violent and minute irregularities.—It was especially adapted for the rendering of the naked figure whose elaborate curves and complicated modelling were well expressed by the burins of the great engravers. . . . Few naked figures in pure etching have yet reached the perfect modelling of the great line-engravers.' (Bibl. 27, p. 18.)

What the burins of the old masters were capable of effecting, whether in firmness or delicacy, may be seen in the finer works of Marc Antonio, Albert Dürer, and Lukas van Leyden. The Massacre of the Innocents by the first-named master, the Adam and Eve of the second, and the David before Saul of the third, have never been surpassed, if equalled. The use of the burin, and the production of *lined* work, have been the practice of the most eminent in the engraver's art.

There have been some artists who, instead of cutting lines with the graver, have worked out the metal in the shape of points or very small dots, afterwards harmonising the dotted parts with the graver. The little hollows, or dots, have been produced in different ways. Sometimes by a dry-point and hammer, at other times by a *roulette*; while in the work of the *manière criblée*, we must believe that the dots were fairly punched out of the metal in the case of the larger punctations.

The style of engraving in small dots, or the *manière pointillée*, is of very old date, and apparently originated with the Italians. A plate exists of the date 1480, on which this kind of work is present, but it was not intended for yielding impressions. Pelligrino da Udine, Marcello Fogolino, Moceto, and Giulio Campagnola (1482-1516), are generally allowed to have been the earliest engravers who had recourse to this process, though both Nagler

and Passavant state that there is a German punctated piece older than the works of these masters (Nag. Bibl. 48, vol. ii. n. 209; Pass. Bibl. 56, vol. i. p. 233.) Agostino di Musi (a pupil of Marc Antonio), who flourished from 1509 to 1536, had recourse to the method in question in some of his earlier works, confining it, however, to the flesh, as, *e. g.*, in the undated print of an old man seated on a bank, with a cottage in the background. A fine example of the manner is afforded by the well-known print of Giulio Campagnola, of a single figure standing holding a cup, and looking upwards. The background is executed with round dots, made apparently with a dry-point; the figure is outlined with a deeply-engraved stroke, and finished with dotting, the beard and hair being expressed by strokes. (Bartsch, xiii. p. 371, n. 3.) Jean Etienne de Laulne, who worked at Straßburg about the latter third of the sixteenth century, particularly adopted this style, many of his slighter pieces being worked out in dots only. John Lutma, at an after period, executed this description of engraving by means of a hammer and small punch or chisel after the manner of the goldsmiths, hence this work has been termed *opus mallei*. Though it was before remarked that, in the *manière criblée*, a dotting process is very strikingly used, it must not be confounded with the more delicate description of technic to be seen in the works of Campagnola, De Laulne, and others just mentioned.

Engraving on copper has been performed on plates not larger in size than a shilling, and in a few instances several plates, nearly a foot square, have been joined together, so as to form a very large print. Georg Andreas Wolfgang (1631-1716) produced such a one; in it the figures were of the size of life. It represented the Emperor Leopold the First as conqueror of the Turks. The artist employed ten large plates, producing a work nearly eight feet high by rather more than five feet wide. (Nagler, Bibl. 48, vol. ii. n. 2737.)

Etching.—The engraver of metal plates has not rested satisfied with the chafing-tool, the burin, the dry-point, and the punch, in working out their substance, but has had recourse to corrosives and destructive acids to bite or eat away the metal. The use of such mordants would appear to have been known to the ancients for

the purpose of adorning the sheaths of daggers, and ornamenting in arabesque-like style various arms and weapons. But we have not any very precise information as to how they proceeded to work, nor of the method of our forefathers of the middle ages who practised the same thing. Harzen has shown that Roger the First, King of Sicily, on coming to the throne in 1150, after repeated victories in Europe and Africa, caused to be engraved on his sword the following inscription: 'Apulus et Calaber Siculus mihi servit et Afer.' Since the hardness and temper of the blade would oppose the use of the burin in working the inscription, it may be presumed that resort was had to an acid mordant, as it unquestionably was employed at a later period for the purpose of intagliating the hard-tempered blades of arms, &c. There is a MS. belonging to the Paris Library, written by Maître Jehan le Begue, who was nominated a Member of the Royal Mint in 1431, in which is given a formula, 'ad faciendum aquam que cavat ferrum . . . et hiis factis, de ipsa linias ferrum, modo quo vis ipsum cavere feu radere, et radebit ipsum dicta aqua.*'

In the Sloane collection of MSS. in the British Museum exists a curious Venetian MS., supposed to be of the first half of the fourteenth century, in which (according to Sir Charles Eastlake, vol. i. p. 92) various passages prove that the art of *etching*, as far as biting metal went, was understood and practised long before it occurred to the monks or to Maso Finiguerra to take impressions from their plates. For example, the writer of the MS. gives the following receipt as being effectual 'to prepare a powder for engraving on iron: 'Take of Roman vitriol, ʒi; of corrosive sublimate, ʒi; nitre, ʒss; verdigris, ʒss—reduce them to a fine powder, then take your iron plate and cover it with a liquid varnish, dry it at the fire, and afterwards draw on it what you wish to engrave. Take wax and make a hedge round your drawing, pour very strong vinegar within it, and then add the before-mentioned powder, leaving it until the desired effect is produced.' Elsewhere in this MS. the preparation of liquid corrosives, under the name of 'aquafortis' (but not exactly corresponding with our usual nitrous acid), is described for 'engraving on iron.' Luca

* Mrs. Merrifield, 'Original Treatises on the Arts of Painting,' vol. i. p. 77, n. 63. Lond. 1849.

Paciolo (or Pacioli), a monk, who died in 1509, has also left us a means of engraving iron by the aid of acid (Naumann's Archives ; Pass. i. p. 368) ; and, according to Harzen, several relics still exist of ornamentation in metal-work by means of the etching process : poignards, *e. g.*, of the end of the fifteenth century and of the commencement of the sixteenth, and a framed clock of Maximilian the First, of perhaps as early a date as 1486.

About the end of the fifteenth century the practice was introduced—but by whom is not positively known—or engraving copper-plates by means of acids, so that impressions could be printed off from such plates as from works of the burin. To this method of intagliating metal-plates the term 'etching' is applied. Its practice may be described shortly as follows : A cleaned plate of polished copper is covered with a varnishy protecting layer, called 'etching-ground.' To this the design is either transferred, or the latter is at once drawn or worked out on the 'ground' with the aid of the etching-point, or 'needle.' This point—a stout piece of steel-wire, varying in thickness, inserted in a handle—removes the 'ground' from the metal-plate, wherever it works or passes, thus exposing the plate to the action of an acid, should one be poured over it, as it actually is in the next stage of the process. This stage is called 'biting-in.' A low wall of wax having been built up along the margins of the plate, dilute nitrous acid is poured over the latter. This acid coming into immediate contact with the copper where the etching-needle has scraped away the ground as it traced out the design, eats away or corrodes out the metal, intagliating it therefore more or less deeply, the stronger the acid, and the longer the time the latter is allowed to remain in contact with the copper. Where the ground has not been removed by the needle, the acid cannot act upon the plate, where it has been taken away the design will remain behind bitten into the copper, and visible as soon as the remains of the acid and ground are cleared off. In order to bring out effectually the design thus established, the plate is inked, to the latter paper under the effects of pressure being applied, an impression or proof is obtained as from other engraved objects. In addition to the action of an acid, the scratching powers of the 'dry-point' and 'scraper' are more or less resorted to, but to very different extents, by various masters.

In some cases—called etching nevertheless—the work is begun and finished entirely with the dry-point and scraper. The use of the former instrument produces more or less of what is known as *burr*. This burr, during the process of printing, gives off rich velvety gradations on the print. The burr (so often alluded to by *conoscanti*) is in fact the ridge of the copper material thrown up by the point on the left edge of the furrow, as the instrument cuts its way through the metal-plate. When the latter is inked for printing from, the burr catches and retains the ink in a peculiar way, and protects a certain margin of smooth copper against the operation of the printer's hand when he wipes the plate. The ink remains on this smooth copper, but passes away from the burr with a delicate gradation which gives a certain softness to the line.

‘The strong points of etching, in comparison with other arts,’ writes Mr. Hamerton, ‘are its great freedom, precision, and power. Its weak points may be reduced to a single head. The accurate subdivision of delicate tones, or, in two words, perfect tonality, is very difficult in etching; so that perfect modelling is very rare in the art, and the true representation of skies, which depends on the most delicate discrimination of these values, still rarer.’ (Bibl. 27, p. 21.)

According to the author quoted, a chief technical difficulty, though not precisely a manual difficulty, for it depends in a great measure on the use of the mordant, is the task of arriving at the relative weights of dark which the artist desires.

Many eminent masters have combined in their work burin, dry-point, and mordant, in variable degrees. Some have been happy in the effects produced, but others have sacrificed the qualities of each instrument and its work to attain only a mongrel sort of technic, scarcely to be recommended. Line-engravers of modern days effect some of the earlier stages of their work by etching processes previous to having recourse to the use of the graver. Workers in mezzotinto occasionally etch on their plates before entirely completing the true mezzotinto ground. Proofs worked off from such plates by Earlom and others may be met with occasionally in the art market.

From the operation of the graver we find decided and correct strokes, since from its form every time that it ploughs up the

copper an angular incision results, producing a firm sharp line, unless the stroke be very tender. The engraver with the burin has this advantage too, he can increase or diminish the force with which he works at pleasure, and so be master of a powerful line, or of the lightest trace. But the *etcher* is master of more freedom in everything save the depth of the corrosions. He has unrestrained liberty of execution, for his point runs playfully over the plate without resistance, following only the impulse of the artist's mind. When he puts down his 'needle' and resorts to his acid however, he finds that he has then a less manageable servant, and one whose work he cannot always be sure of. As Mr. Scott (Bibl. 64) observes, to obtain that command over the biting-in process, which will enable him to produce the exact degrees of light and shade desired, is the great desideratum of the otherwise proficient etcher on copper. When iron or steel is used, more trouble arises in this respect than as regards copper, for a deposit of the disengaged carbon is apt to ensue, and which hinders any further deepening of the lines.

As may be surmised, various kinds of metal have been employed for engraving on, but copper has been resorted to more frequently. The proofs from *nielli*, which have reached us, are chiefly from silver-work. After the times of the gold and silver-smith engravers, and their descendants, silver plates were now and then used. The print known as the Christ of Caprarole, by Annibale Carracci, is stated by some to have been engraved on a silver plate. Both iron and pewter were used in a few instances by Albert Dürer, and according to Heller tin was likewise employed. In the British Museum is an iron plate engraved by Burgkmair, as also two such plates worked by one of the Hopfers. Steel has been much employed in modern times for engraving with burin and by mordants. It has been supposed that Albert Dürer and the older masters had recourse now and then to a plate of it, but it is doubtful if steel was used before the commencement of the present century.—1805. (Notes and Queries, November, 1868.)

Engraving in Mezzo-tinto.—Another form of metal-plate engraving has now to be mentioned, which is very distinct in its pro-

cess and results from those of the burin, point, needle, and acid. This is *mezzotinto* engraving. With the graver, etching-needle, and mordant, the metal is cut away or removed where *darks* are described in the print. In *mezzotinto* work the metal is removed where the *lights* are intended. The process is as follows : A plate of steel or copper is indented or roughened all over its face with a tool called a 'berceau,' cradle, or rocking-tool. This resembles somewhat a chisel, having a convex and serrated edge, which by its oscillatory movement over the metal works the latter up into a kind of burr, and in such quantity that when the plate is rubbed over with ink and printed from, it produces on the paper an uniform tint of deep black. This operation with the cradle is known as 'laying the ground,' and is, perhaps, the most tedious part of the *mezzotinto* process, which in other respects is comparatively facile and expeditious. It consists in rocking the cradle to and fro in certain directions or 'ways,' determined by a plan or scale that enables the engraver to pass over the plate in many directions without any one of them being repeated. Care is taken that the grain of the ground shall be of an equal velvetiness and apparent softness. In recent years the 'barb' on the plate constituting the ground has been produced by machinery, and the plate so prepared sold by the square inch to the engraver.

Upon the plate thus qualified the design to be engraved is transferred often in the following way : The plate is rubbed with a rag which has been dipped in black chalk powder, or is smoked with a burning wax taper, as it is frequently in the process of etching. The back of the design, previously covered with a mixture of powdered red chalk and flake white, is then laid on the plate, and the outline of the design is traced over with a blunt point, the result being that the red particles on the back of the design are transferred to the black ground of the plate under the influence of the pressure. The process is then carried on with the 'scraper' by restoring the plate to a smooth surface in the perfectly light parts of the intended print, the gradations being preserved by scraping off more or less of the ground. In polishing the metal where the extreme edges of drapery, &c. come, and where the free touches of the brush in painting represent brilliant spots of light, recourse is had to the burnisher. Sometimes the deepest shadows are etched, and after-

wards blended with the mezzotinto ground. It is generally necessary to take numerous proofs, in order to ascertain whether the scraping approaches the desired effects. Such parts as appear deficient are marked on the proof with black or white chalk accordingly, the plate being worked up to their indications by further cradling where too much has been smoothed away, and by more scraping where the plate is not smooth, *i. e.* light enough.

Some very large plates have been worked in this method. We saw (through the kindness of the late Mr. Heuffner, sen.) a portrait in mezzotinto, which measured 3 feet 10 inches high by 2 feet 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. Two plates only had been employed in its production. One plate had been 3 feet long, the other made up the remaining length, which included simply the representation of a tablet. The portrait represented a German potentate, but had neither name of engraver nor date attached to it. The technic looked like that of Haid, or G. Killian.

Mezzotinto engraving is not of very ancient origin, it not dating back farther than 1640-42. It has been particularly fostered in this country, and has been termed by some foreign writers *la manière Anglaise*. It is a method which has certain advantages for particular subjects, such as portraiture, night effects, and other strong contrasts of light and shade. By the ablest English engravers it has been made to render the colours of the portrait canvas and the *morbidezza* of its flesh tones in a way that has not been accomplished by any other style of engraving. In their best results the effects of the cradle and scraper constitute some of the most attractive specimens of the engraver's art, and of the portfolio of the collector. Yet it must be allowed that when mezzotinto engraving deals with compositions in which the figures are crowded, it is wanting in power to detach the several parts with proper relief. If the parts are small it has not sufficient precision, which can be given only by an outline, or as in painting by a different tint. In very small pieces the frequent unevenness of the ground will occasion bad drawing and awkwardness in the extremities of the figures. Some masters have sought to remedy this latter drawback by terminating all small figures with either an intagliate or etched line, but too often the strength of this line and the softness of the ground accord ill together.

A peculiar application of the mezzotinto process to colour-printing (*gefärbte Schabkuntst*) was invented by Le Blon in 1704. Reflecting on the circumstances that in this method of engraving the plate received and imparted to paper its black colour in tenderly graduated and transparent tones, instead of in lines and flat tints, and that the plates of certain workers since the time of Prince Rupert and Vaillant had been printed off successfully in a colour less deep than the black of ordinary impressions, even in bistre-brown and blue, Le Blon conceived the idea of composing these tones of the three fundamental colours, red, yellow, and blue, and which in various degrees of intensity and of admixture being superimposed on each other, should produce the ordinary effects of the palette. In some instances a fourth plate (brown) was added, and both etching and the burin employed as well as the cradle in developing the forms.

It is not unlikely that Le Blon had in mind, when cogitating on the subject, the method and effects of the style of engraving presently to be noticed as 'chiaro-scuro' and 'camaïeux,' and to which in certain respects his own method may be seen to be closely allied. Le Blon, who worked for some time in England, produced some good effects by his process, which was followed afterwards by Ladmiral in Holland and Les Gautiers d'Agoty in France (*Bibl.* 40, p. 363).

A great drawback to Le Blon's invention was the circumstance that comparatively but few good impressions could be obtained from the plates, as they quickly deteriorated.

Engraving in Chiaro-scuro.—Ordinary engraving on wood and metal is limited in its power of giving relief to the objects it deals with, except in so far as it can effect it through a monochrome—if we may so speak—of black and white laid on in most instances with lines or hatchings in greater or less proximity. By the same monochrome the gradations of light and shade and of colour have to be indicated, all flat lines expressed; in fine, with black and white only, the relief, texture, quality, and colour of a complex piece of painting, are sought to be produced. However approximately well the chief masters of engraving succeeded in doing this, there have been always some who have felt the want of such qualities as actual colour only could bestow upon a flat surface,

particularly when this colour was passed before the eye in gentle gradations, presented of different tints and hues in accordance with the objects, and in keeping with a certain general effect of the composition. Some of these qualities of pictures were early sought to be given to good engravings, both by Italian and German artists; and though the first efforts apparently were made by the latter, the former, to whom simple wood-engraving appeared less attractive, developed this modification, termed *chiaro-scuro*, to a greater extent, with more artistic feeling and pictorial effect than did their Teutonic brethren. The earliest *chiaro-scuro* work known is of German origin, and bears date 1506. The first Italian work with a date is of the year 1518, yet it is admitted that Ugo da Carpi worked in this manner two years previously.

Though some variations occasionally existed in the method of work followed at the onset by the two schools, we may state, in a general way, the *chiaro-scuro* process to have been as follows. A block of wood was taken, and on it were engraved the contours or outline of a design, to which, in some cases, were added the deeper shadows. In other instances these shadows were retained for a second block. A third block was then used for the working thereon of the half-tints or lighter shadows. The first or outline block (*Strichplatte* of the Germans) was then inked—say black—and printed off on paper. This block being removed, the second block inked—perhaps sepia or green—was placed in the situation of the former block, and printed off over the first impression. This second block being removed, the third block, inked a lighter sepia or green tint, was put in the place of it, and printed off on the original impression. These blocks, thus successively superimposed, deposited at each impression on the paper another tint, or different gradations of a like colour to the first, the combined effects of which, when well managed, imitated the gradations obtained by the painter from the use of the brush, flat tints, and colour. In some instances the outline block was printed off last of all, and in others the first block was printed directly on a coloured paper. Generally, the practice was to print from the blocks the various gradations of light and shade in the same colour, but in different degrees of intensity. Some of Ugo da Carpi's *chiaro-scuros* have been printed off in a kind of mulberry colour, others in a sage-green. A sepia-like tint was not unfrequently employed.

The perfection of the chiaro-scuro, that is to say, its resemblance to a drawing, necessitates each block in the series to be exactly of a like size, and when placed under the press to coincide perfectly, or to 'register' rightly in position. The repetition of impression with this coincidence of 'register' forms what is termed by French writers the '*rentrée*.' To obtain it fine points are placed at the four angles of the frame (or on the tympan of the press), which may pierce the paper always at the same spots. The want of this coincidence and of true register, or the careless superposition of the different blocks in the series by second-rate printers and publishers, is the chief cause of the monstrosities and abortions in the shape of chiaro-scuros which frequently meet the eye. Parts are dislocated from each other, all is more or less out of place, or certain gradations of colour are wholly wanting from the entire series of blocks not having been used. The inexperienced collector who may have seen a masterly chiaro-scuro in a fine state by Andreani, perhaps meets with it shortly afterwards in a bad one. He scarcely knows what to make of it, nor how to account for the difference. The clue to the discrepancy may be found in what we have stated.

In Papillon's work (vol. ii. p. 154), the various *rentrées* of a chiaro-scuro of four blocks may be seen, as printed off, separately, beginning with the block of high lights, and ending with the outline or block of deepest colour. An illustration then follows, in which the blocks have been printed successively on the same paper, to compose the perfected chiaro-scuro. In the treatise referred to (Bibl. 53, vol. ii. p. 149), much information on the details of the process under consideration may be found.

The German school, in seeking to imitate the pictorial effects of colour in their chiaro-scuros limited themselves to the use of two, or at the most, three blocks. The Italians, striving to produce a more satisfactory illusion by a greater number of gradations, not unfrequently employed four blocks. There exists proof to show, however, that as early as 1510-12, chiaro-scuros from three blocks had been produced by J. Dienecker at Augsburg after the designs of Burgkmair. (Pass. i. p. 70.) Nevertheless it was the Italians who systematically carried out and perfected the multiplication of blocks and of tint gradations. In the chiaro-

scuros of the Italians there is likewise a more happy choice of light and shade than in those of the Germans. In the latter prints the light is too often scattered instead of being broad and free. There is frequently a disquietude about the German work, while there is repose with the Italian masters. One of the more eminent of the latter—Ugo da Carpi—often dispensed with an outline block, and indicated the contours by means of the first colour-block, or that of deepest shade. Andrea Andreani, on the other hand, never did without it.

An early and simple way with some of the German masters was to engrave the outlines on a block of wood, and on a proof from it to work off another block, having such parts hollowed out as were intended to be left white upon the print, such white, or 'high light,' being the ground of the paper. In a few instances the early German workers engraved their outlines on a plate of metal instead of on wood; for the second or colour impression, however, they resorted to wood. Later on, some masters engraved the outlines and lined shadows in *intaglio* on copper, supposing that both more executive despatch and refinement of handling were thus to be obtained. On the impressions taken from such plates engraved wood-blocks coloured were afterwards superposed. In one instance, however—'Historia Imperatorum Cæsarum Romanorum,' &c., with 46 portraits by Hubert Goltzius and Gietleughen, Bruges, 1563—not only was the first impression from a metal plate, but the subsequent two *rentrées* were likewise from metal, *i.e.*, if the views of Chatto be correct (Bibl. 38, p. 405). Moreover, the lights were cut in *intaglio* on the two plates for the two *rentrées* in the same manner as on wood for printing in chiaro-scuro. It is difficult to conceive, writes Mr. Chatto,—

'What advantage Goltzius might expect to derive by printing the *rentrées* from metal plates, for all that he has thus produced could have been more simply effected by means of wood-blocks, as practised up to that time by all other chiaro-scuro engravers. Though these portraits possess but little merit as chiaro-scuros, they are yet highly interesting in the history of art as affording the first instances of etching being employed for the outlines of a chiaro-scuro and of the substitution in surface printing of a plate of metal for a wood-block.' (Bibl. 38, p. 405.)

The allusion to etching here must be taken with some modification, for an etched plate considered to be by Parmigiano—St. Peter at the Gate of the Temple (Bartsch, v. xvi. p. 9, n. 7, 2nd state)—after being retouched, was made to furnish the contours and shadows of a chiaro-scuro, a wood-block being superposed for the half-tones and high lights. According to Mariette, Boldrini, in some of his chiaro-scuros after Titian, engraved the outlines in *intaglio* on copper, an opinion strongly opposed by M. Didot. Abraham Bloemart, a Dutch artist (1564–1647), who worked in chiaro-scuro, etched the contours on metal instead of cutting them on wood.

As early as the invention of printing with movable type, Peter Schoeffer tried to imitate the illuminated initial letters of MSS. by means of impressions from blocks of two colours. But if M. Didot's views be found, the mechanical procedure adopted by Schoeffer differed considerably from that followed by the wood-engravers of the sixteenth century in the production of their chiaro-scuros. Schoeffer is said to have taken an engraved block whose surface was overlaid with colour, and to have sunk in it another and 'lowered' block coated with a different colour. Thus the whole might be worked off or impressed at a single stroke, instead of by several efforts according to the number of blocks used in the ordinary method.

'In my report,' writes M. Didot, 'of the Great Exhibition of London I established for the first time the system of *emboitage* invented by Peter Schoeffer. It was suggested to me from the examination I had made in London of the Pfalter of 1457. On noticing in this example the reproduction of the different pieces composing the variously coloured portions of the capital letters with the same exactitude and regularity as to outline of design, as in the specimen of the Pfalter in our Imperial Library, I recognised the impossibility of obtaining *rentrées* so regular by means of successive "reiterations." By the system of *emboitage* alone, and, consequently, of simultaneous impression, could such perfect correctness and regularity be obtained; otherwise the very thick vellum used and obliged to be printed while yet damp, after having been well moistened, would have become unequally stretched, and thus the reimpression would have caused the *rentrées* of these pieces to have varied more or less, (Bibl. 18, col. 106, note 3.)

It is proper to mention, that to M. Ph. Berjeau ('Bibliomane,' p. 41) this system of *emboitage* appears a complication rather difficult to reconcile with the forms of these very beautiful letters. Another method of explaining the execution of the large initial capitals in some of the early printed books may be found in Blades' 'Life of Caxton' (vol. ii. p. 53, *note*).

Such prints as we have had in view, engraved and coloured from two or more blocks, and intended to resemble drawings or paintings in sepia, bistre, terre-verte, and other colours of two or more tints, have received the names of 'clair-obscurs,' 'camaïeux,' 'hell-dunkel platten,' as well as chiaro-scuro, and in recent times 'colour-printing' and 'ton-druck,' have been applied to methods of work analogous to such as we have described.

Impressions in Pâste.—Before concluding this division of our subject, we have to notice a method of taking off impressions from wood-blocks and metal plates, which is of a very peculiar character. In illustration of it but very few examples have reached us, and of the exact mode of procedure it is probable very little indeed is known. The pieces which illustrate the method are designated by Weigel and Passavant 'impressions in pâste.' The latter writer divides them into three kinds, viz., 'velvet-like impressions,' 'embroidery-like impressions,' and 'impressions in pâste properly so-called from metal engraving printed in relief.' Of the first two descriptions we know nothing personally beyond what Passavant states, and the fac-similes given by Weigel. Of the third kind we possess an example, and have seen two other specimens—one in the collection of the British Museum—at least we regard it to be of this character, and another in the possession of Mr. F. S. Ellis. The latter piece was a St. Christopher fixed on a page of a MS. psalter on vellum of about the end of the fifteenth century. Of the rarity of these strange productions, there cannot be any doubt, and we must let MM. Weigel and Passavant speak of them in their own words. The latter observes under the title of 'Impressions in pâste,'—

'There exist several kinds of impressions belonging to this style or work,

all of which are intended to imitate the textures of velvet, of embroidery, or of tapestry. Of the first two there is known to us but a single specimen of each class.

Velvet-like Imprint.—“St. George on Horfeback.” The ground is stencilled, consisting of stars, alternating with three berries, attached to a single stalk. The very peculiar character of this impression is produced by first covering the paper with a slight paste of a golden-brown colour, and by means of a proper instrument causing the paste to assume a cellular-like structure. The design is then printed off from a wood-block with glue or paste, the impression being afterwards dusted over with a velvety powder, so as to produce an appearance similar to that of the velvet or flock-papers of our own time (H. 9, p. 8 l., L. 7, p. 2 l.). This wood-engraving, so remarkable in kind and apparently unique, is executed in the archaic manner of the fifteenth century. It was found in Upper Germany, and at present is in the collection of M. Weigel.

Embroidery-like Imprint.—“St. Francis receiving the Stigmata,” He is kneeling towards the left, looking at the winged crucifix, from which proceed five rays. On the right Brother Elias sleeps. The piece is partly coloured; that is to say, the flesh and the rocks are of a reddish tint. The drapery of Brother Elias is reddish-brown lined with blue, and that of the Saint is covered with greyish filaments, giving it the appearance of embroidery; the folds are painted in black above and the ground is of the same colour. The rays proceeding from the crucifix are red and the landscape and trees green. (H. 7, p. 3 l. L. 4, p. 10 l.) This singular example came from the Franciscan Convent at Meissen, and is now in the Cabinet at Dresden.

Imprints in paste properly so called, from Engravings on Metal printed in relief.—This very peculiar description of engraving is illustrated by certain rather coarse impressions in relief on paper belonging to the second half of the fifteenth century. Several examples have reached us fixed on the covers of books coming from Upper Germany. Their bad state of preservation in general scarcely permits of our divining the method by which they were produced, but it is incorrect to suppose that they are impressions from sulphur on paper, since a number of these prints, particularly those in the Œttingen-Wallerstein collection in the chateau of Mahingen, dissolve—so to speak—when water is employed to detach them from the book-covers to which they are fixed, while those detached in the dry state remain perfect. From the investigations we have made of some well-preserved examples it appears to us that the following mode of procedure was most likely adopted. The

engraved lines in the metal having been filled with a coloured material—generally black in tint—of the consistence of paste, in such way that the design might be seen in relief and of deep colour, the plate was then warmed and printed on paper prepared with yellow ochre. In the chief masses of shadow the outlines often disappeared or became confounded, as it were, producing blots; the face, hands, and other portions of the flesh, were painted white. The remains of gilding show us that gold was employed for certain ornaments, and we find in one instance that some metallic powder or a solution of copper had been applied. Effects of the latter are not apparent in the greater number of specimens which have a dirty and brownish hue. The chief “*empreintes en pâte*” in the Imperial Library at Vienna came for the most part from Augsburg.’ (Bibl. 56, vol. i. p. 102.)

Sixteen pieces are described by Passavant, into the details of which we need not enter. Under the head of ‘teig-drucke,’ Weigel remarks:—

‘The paper was first ribbed and pressed so that it resembled the texture of some fabric. It was then spread over with a light dough-paste and bird-lime, of a golden-brown colour, which obtained a firm hold of the ribbed paper. After this coating was dry, the block or plate, having on it the design, was printed off with paste or bird-lime (instead of with the ordinary coloured material) on this golden-brown surface. The latter was afterwards dusted over with velvet powder, which, firmly adhering to the sticky surface, brought out the design, and gave to the impression the particular appearance of the velvet carpets of the present day.’ (Bibl. 70. See also Weffely, Bibl. 96, p. 37.)

Our own example of an *empreinte en pâte* is a Crucifixion, 7 inches high by $4\frac{3}{4}$ wide, with a margin of rather more than half an inch in breadth. It is on firm, coarse paper. The general aspect of the piece is that of brown stamped leather of three gradations of tone, the deeper tone being like the general ground, which is of a vandyck brown hue, the colour being thick pitchy or puffy in texture. The lighter hue is that of raw umber mixed with yellow ochre. Certain of the draperies have a technic somewhat of the *manière criblée*. There is a border with a running pattern to the piece, the various parts of which can be pretty well made out, though it is evident that the specimen has been much damaged.

The example in the collection at the Museum is a small print barely four inches high by three inches wide, having a border nearly half an inch wide, with a running pattern in it. The print is covered with a dark brown leather-like ground, having light brown or ochraceous work on it somewhat indistinct in places, but apparently representing Christ washing the feet of the disciples.

At the recent sale of the Weigel Collection, among the *incunabula* procured for the British Museum, was No. 404, St. Peter Martyr, described by Weigel as ‘an impression in black from a plate intended for an impression in paste.’ It is of small size, and peculiar in appearance.

CHAPTER IV.

ADVICE ON COMMENCING THE STUDY AND COLLECTION OF
ANCIENT PRINTS.

WE assume the main objects of the student and young collector of ancient prints to be, first, the study in detail of particular illustrations of the various processes of engraving which have just been gone over; and, secondly, the bringing together a number of examples in aid of such study, or for reference to at any moment. Combined with these will exist that personal pleasure and enjoyment which only collectors know and love, if 'not wisely, but too well,' so often for their own pockets. To attain these objects satisfactorily, systematic procedure is requisite.

The range of the department of the connoisseur in ancient prints is extensive, and the novice may readily lose himself in a labyrinth of unprofitable labour, as regards both knowledge and expense. A farmer might as advantageously turn picture-buyer, or a mathematician deal in horses, as a person with but very small means and less information betake himself to collect 'old prints.' Should either of them do so, he will find he is pursuing that which is of questionable value under the twofold burdens of defective guidance and great cost.

The first thing a too hasty student of ancient prints might discover would be that he had been trying to accomplish something the general nature of which he had not sufficiently considered. Probably his first intentions would be confused; he would not have determined whether to study and collect the works of famous painters, of names familiar to every educated man, engraved by no matter whom, or the works of engravers of repute, no matter what they represented. Or he may have formed some confused notions about associating the two procedures, having observed that

eminent painters were often engravers of renown. In search both of knowledge and of specimens he may have continued for some time in a very unsatisfactory way.

After a period spent in this manner, he would become aware that he had collected a number of engravings of little or no value—prints, most of them, not worth keeping, or at any rate not worthy of having been bought, and which could be only put along with some dealers' lots in a sale, and sold at great comparative loss. His third experience would be that, in the purchase even of such prints as these, he had often been deceived as to the agreement of the pieces with their professions; that, in fact, he had—to use a common expression—either taken himself in or had been taken in by others. He might discover, *e. g.*, that his Albert Dürers were not simply poor states or in bad condition, but were not Albert Dürers at all, but copies, and perhaps such inferior or well-known ones that he could not help being ashamed of his ignorance. He might find that his Rembrandts were either such re-worked or washed-out things as not to be worth having; or that his Ostades were really such admirable copies as to cause him rather vexation at his want of caution than shame at having been duped. Nor ought the novice to wonder at such results: the mere taste or liking for a pursuit cannot in itself give that preliminary knowledge necessary even for its commencement. It is true that, after a long trial of patience and money frequently misplaced, knowledge would be bought; but how much more might have been obtained, in quicker time and at less cost, had some preliminary information been mastered before commencing the pursuit!

There are numbers of prints not worth having, not worth the room they take up, nor the confusion they cause. There are others so scarce or so costly that governments and millionaires only can hope to become their purchasers when such prints happen, at rare intervals, to come before the public for sale. To go in pursuit of the former is wasting money; in search of the latter, losing time. Yet these are rocks against which many a novice strikes. Mr. Maberly well observes,—

‘It often occurs at a public sale that a large number of prints is huddled together in one lot, none of them having been thought of sufficient value singly to insure a bidding. It will sometimes happen, by the

inadvertence or ignorance of the auctioneer or catalogue-maker, that some one rare print will have slipped in unobserved into such a lot, and if a print-dealer espy this, he will buy the whole lot for the sake of this one print alone. The rarity will be immediately placed in the arranged folio or dispatched to its anticipated destination, while all the rest of the lot go into the mass of the miscellaneous rubbish with which every dealer becomes now and then by such means as these encumbered, and a chance customer, who merely wants to collect prints, but knows not what, and only requires to be tempted, is regarded as a god-send; and he may assure himself that on such occasions he may acquire great accessions to his collection of what he will consider prodigious bargains. To a person not accustomed to the business of collecting ancient prints it may appear a very easy matter for a man with plenty of money in his pocket to at once possess himself of all that he may desire to have. Money, it is said, can purchase anything, but this must be with one limitation, viz., that this "anything" is to be purchased. In almost all the departments that have been spoken of, of ancient prints, there are many that may be readily met with, others that may also be readily met with, but not readily with the necessary qualifications as to state and condition; others there are of rare occurrence, so unfrequently coming into the market that a print-dealer, to whom an order may be given to procure an impression, may be employed for years in seeking before an opportunity be afforded of obtaining it; and beyond this, there are others of which but two or three, or, it may be, one impression, is known to exist. We have sometimes been amused with the sight of an order received by a London printseller from some ignorant innocent in the country who had suddenly taken a fancy to collect prints, desiring to have sent down to him immediately a number of engravings, according to a list enclosed, this list comprising a selection of the very rarest prints known; those in short, which are so rare as to have been the subject of special description in some book or catalogue which the would-be customer happens to have met with, or has been studying. The printseller must smooth his answer as best he may, aware himself that it would be scarce possible during a whole life to make up the collection required, and as to some of the specimens not at all.' (Bibl. 58, p. 62.)

There are old acquaintances in the print line that we get absolutely sick of, they meet us so often, and they are such shams. There are other prints we *know* of, but which we scarcely dare hope to see, for they have 'taken the veil.' In other words, these costly and almost unique gems are finally and safely housed, either

in the imperial collections on the Continent, in the British Museum, or in the private cabinets of one or two millionaire collectors. From the former strongholds they never will emerge, and from the latter but very rarely.

It is probable that the student may have become inoculated with the taste for print-collecting from frequent association with one of the *illuminati* and the occasional inspection of the treasures of his cabinet. He becomes witness of the intense enjoyment his friend evidently receives from his pursuit; and at length, from hearing and seeing so much of Albert Dürer, Rembrandt, Marc Antonio, and their *confrères*, he himself becomes affected with the malady, and determines to make a venture on his own behalf in the portfolios of some in the trade of whom he hears his friend so frequently speaking.

It is not unlikely that his own taste as to what he shall procure or the line he shall follow out may be influenced by the particular bent of his friend. Now collectors vary much in their *penchants*. One person may be more partial to etchings than to anything else, and take pride in his collection of the etchings of the Dutch and Flemish masters; another may find all that is most attractive in the genius of Marc Antonio and his immediate scholars; while a third will revel in the cunning handiwork of Lukas van Leyden or of Hollar. Yet all these may be of secondary consideration to some, in comparison with the block-sheets, early wood-cuts, and anonymous *incunabula* of the fifteenth century. It is true there are a few great masters to whom everyone does honour, and of whose works all are anxious to possess some examples, so great is the beauty and excellence by which they have immortalised their names. We have never yet met with one of our craft to whom a genuine Rembrandt, Albert Dürer, Van Ostade, and Claude, was not most acceptable, whatever might be the more particular line to which he paid special attention.

We believe that a collector, as a rule, rarely confines himself to one or even two artists exclusively, but sooner or later has a more or less general collection, marked by some special attention to a few favourites. But whatever the bias the student may receive—whether for wood or for metal, for early German, Italian, or mezzotinto engravings, let him beware of commencing the new

pursuit without preparing himself with some more precise information than the casual inspection of a cabinet and a desultory conversation can bestow. These will be the more useful to him the more knowledge he obtains. At first he will not be able to reap from them all the advantages they may offer. It is not very much knowledge the novice can possess when commencing his pursuit, but *some* knowledge he must have or he will deceive himself or let others do it for him.

The information he needs is of that kind which will lead him to have a clear idea of the different forms of engraving, of the names of and dates connected with the artists, and of the general characters of their works. He will require to know that these works bear certain marks on them which identify them with their authors, that these masters have been frequently copied, and their marks counterfeited or assumed. He must learn who are the typical masters of the various departments of engraving, what are their more famous pieces, and how they are more surely recognizable. He must not be entirely ignorant of what is meant by 'states' and 'condition,' nor of the 'laying-down' of and tampering practised with injured prints, of the value of margins, and many little points of daily occurrence and of importance, not only to the young, but to the most experienced collector. Much of this knowledge can be obtained only gradually, but a certain amount can be and should be possessed from the beginning.

No degree of what is usually termed 'common sense' alone will enable a person to tell a copy from a genuine etching of Ostade, any more than it will serve to pilot a ship down Channel. It is a technical knowledge which is required in both instances—a knowledge acquired partly from theory, partly from experience. It is this sort of information which is so much required by the novice—information which can be procured only through studying the actual engravings, along with the comments of good writers on them.

We need scarcely say how useless every fresh acquisition will be, if simply put by in the portfolio as soon as acquired. A young botanist might just as well dry his new and unnamed plant, and place it in his herbarium, and expect that, by so doing, he would attain a knowledge of its characters without the trouble of care-

fully examining it with his flora, as the student of ancient prints expect that by merely purchasing his specimens he can understand all about them. On the contrary, he will have to try the integrity and study the pretensions of every new acquaintance by ‘Bartsch’ or some other systematic writer. Some exertion, then, must be made to procure a certain amount of knowledge before commencing collector, if the pursuit be meant to be anything beyond a respectable waste of time and means.

Not only must there be an outlay of some small amount of trouble, but there must be one also of some money. It is but right to warn the young collector that the time has passed for such things as the acquisition of good prints for next to nothing, and the being able to make a covetable collection for a small sum. Of course in the words ‘a small sum’ persons of different means will find different senses: what we would imply is, that print-collecting under any circumstances, not admitting rubbish, is rather an expensive enjoyment, not only in itself, but in the tendency to lead on its votary deeper and deeper in its pursuit.

During our own time we have witnessed a great change take place. We could tell such stories of hunting up really good things in dirty, out-of-the-way shops known to a few of the initiated as would not be credited by the more recent devotee. Fifteen years back we gave five pounds for a very good copy of Albert Dürer’s *Apocalypse*, A.D. 1511. In 1870, wanting another set we could not procure one at the moment for less than 16*l.* We purchased it, fearing that soon we might not be able to procure it at that price. Old prints like old books, old pictures, and old enamels, of repute, have risen enormously in value during the last few years. Not only this, but their choicer examples are becoming more difficult to be procured every day at any price. They do not appear in the market. Nor is it to be wondered at, considering the greater number of collectors there are now than formerly, and the ready offers, America, Russia, and some of our colonies, make for certain classes of the *desiderata* of virtuosi and connoisseurs. A well-known dealer said to the author in 1872, in course of conversation, ‘I wrote a short time ago to a person at Stuttgart, and told him to send me anything he had got of the fifteenth century—he wrote in reply—“I have not got anything.”’

There is a print of the school of Marc Antonio in our collection, on which was written in 1742, '*très rare,*' '*rarissima.*' If such was the case more than one hundred and thirty years ago, what is likely to be the frequency of the occurrence of the print now-a-days? Gilpin, alluding to the Hundred Guilder Print of Rembrandt, remarks, 'It is in such esteem that I have known thirty guineas given for a good impression of it.' Now 1000*l.* would scarcely purchase a first-rate state of the same etching. About twenty-five years ago, the author of the '*Print Collector*' observed:—

'One first-class picture would purchase every purchasable print that it is desirable to possess' (p. 3). 'It would be vain to affect to tell him what his outlay would be in the attainment of a little collection, such as here contemplated, because we have not confined him to any number of specimens—this, however, he may venture to assume that a very respectable collection of prints by the artists whom we have catalogued embracing one, two, or three samples of each sufficient to show their varieties of style and modes of working, may be obtained for a less sum than that at which Mr. Christie shall now and then knock down some one little choice picture of two feet square.' (p. 152.)

As creditable pictures have kept price *pari passu* with prints, the above statements may yet hold good. We know that in our own day a small picture like the '*Garvagh Raphael*' and the '*Congress of Münster,*' by Terburg, and a De Hooghe, will realize from five to nine or ten thousand pounds,* while for larger canvasses, such as the Sout Murillo or the Ripalda Raphael, from twenty-five to forty thousand have been asked. But we do not think Mr. Maberly had in his mind such prices as these when he penned what has been quoted. The sums which the rarest print gems commanded in his day were very different to those which are asked for them now. Mr. Maberly wrote in 1844:—

'The highest price which any single print has produced at a public sale in England, and probably anywhere else, is three hundred guineas. This was in the year 1824 at the sale of Sir Mark Sykes' collection. The print was an impression of a work in *niello*, by Maso Finiguerra, the subject is the Madonna and Child enthroned and surrounded with angels

* Ten thousand five hundred pounds have been given recently for a '*Duchess of Devonshire*' ascribed to Gainsborough.

and faints. The late Mr. Young Ottley, afterwards the Curator of the Prints in the British Museum, met with this print accidentally at Rome, where he purchased it for a mere trifle. On his return to England he sold it to this eminent collector for about seventy pounds.' (p. 66.) 'The little print of which we are speaking, is supposed to have been printed not later than the year 1445, and is therefore exceedingly valuable, even if regarded as an object of antiquity merely, and a specimen of the very earliest infancy of the art. It was, moreover, at the time of its sale, considered to be unique, another circumstance which added greatly to its value. However, more than one other impression have been discovered since.' (p. 67.)

At the present time probably not thrice the amount which was paid for the above-mentioned gem would buy the print of highest mark, which might be brought to the hammer. At the sale of the Price prints, February 1867, the famous etching by Rembrandt of Christ healing the Sick, commonly known as the 'Hundred Guilder Print,' was bought by Mr. Palmer for 1180*l.* Mr. Palmer did not live long to enjoy his high-priced acquisition, for his collection was sold by auction in May 1868. This same etching, which many persons had thought to have been acquired at such a 'fancy price' as would not again be realised, was bought by M. Clement for 1100*l.*—eighty pounds less only than had been given a year before for it not with the intention to realise a profit in the way of trade, as was the case in the latter instance. In reference to this print, and the price it sold for, the 'Athenæum' had the following remarks:—

'With regard to the sale of the famous Hundred Guilder Rembrandt at Messrs. Sotheby's, on Saturday last, for so large a sum as 1180*l.*, the highest authority in the matter gives us the following information. At Baron Verfolck's sale in October 1847, the print was knocked down to the Messrs. Smith of Lisle Street for 600 guilders. But this small price was entirely attributable to the commercial panic then prevailing. At auctions in Holland, the buyer usually pays 10 per cent towards the expenses of the sale and brokerage, so that in round numbers this impression cost the purchasers in question nearly 160*l.* They sold it almost immediately after (Nov. 1847) to Sir Charles Price for 200*l.* In June 1840, at Mr. Esdaile's sale Mr. Holford paid 231*l.* for his "first state," and previously—May 1835—at Mr. Pole Carew's sale, Sir Abraham

Hume gave 163*l.* for one in the second state with the lines on the head of the donkey. These are the highest prices the print ever produced at previous auctions.

'The impression of the Pax by Maso Finiguerra, which has been referred to as an example of high prices, was sold at Sir Mark Sykes' sale in 1824 for 315*l.* being bought by Mr. Woodburn. It was subsequently the property of Mr. Coningham, and came into the possession of Messrs. Smith, with the rest of the owner's Italian engravings in 1845. From Messrs. Smith, the British Museum bought the whole of this collection. It is therefore an exaggeration to say the present proprietor paid 400*l.* for this Pax. It has been stated that the highest price paid at auction for a print was 315*l.*, and that a proof—Raphael Morgen's Last Supper—after Da Vinci obtained this sum. This is hardly correct. At a sale of Mr. Johnson's prints (the "Radcliffe Observer") at Mr. Sotheby's, on the 18th April, 1860, the proof alluded to produced 316*l.*, but on the same day an impression of Marc Antonio's Judgment of Paris brought 320*l.* This is believed to be the highest price ever obtained at a public sale for a print. Private sales are not in question.' (Athenæum, March 1867.)

Mr. Hamerton remarks that a single copy of Rembrandt's whole works could not be brought together for less than twelve or fourteen thousand pounds, even supposing the possibility of making a complete collection. We have heard the Rembrandt series of the British Museum valued at 30,000*l.* In 1838, Mr. Wilson's set of Van Ostade's etchings sold for 105*l.*, Mr. Segurier afterwards gave 159*l.* 12*s.* for the same set, which was sold again in 1844 for 309*l.* 15*s.*, and again in 1846 for 500*l.* It is now worth a thousand pounds, *i. e.* ten times its value five-and-twenty years ago! At Mr. Segurier's sale in 1844, the Van Dyck etchings averaged from 3*l.* to 8*l.* each, and were then thought to be very dear, at recent sales they have produced sums varying from 8*l.* to 80*l.* Mr. Marshall's set, which some years back might have brought 80*l.* or 90*l.*, was sold at the auction in 1864 for 400*l.* Ten or fifteen years past the 'Smaller Passion' on wood of Albert Dürer might be obtained for thirty shillings or two pounds; in 1871, the author paid 10*l.* for an original set, mounted and bound in morocco. For single cuts of it, having the letter-press on the *verso*, he once gave eighteen pence or two shillings, now he is asked ten and even fifteen shillings for a good impression. We have before stated that

recently the Apocalypfe cost us 16*l.* ; this same work in Albert Dürer's time produced him six shillings. An etched head of Rembrandt himself (W. 7) having the body drawn in by the artist in black chalk was bought for the late Duke of Buckingham at Mr. Hibbert's sale in 1809 for 5*l.* At the sale of his Grace's collection, it was sold for 53*l.* 11*s.*, when the cabinet of the last purchaser was dispersed the same print was bought by the British Museum for 105*l.* At the Howard sale in 1873 the portrait of Aretino by Marc Antonio after Titian realised 780*l.* At the sale of the Weigel *incunabula* at Leipzig, May 1872, the Virgin and Child as Queen of Heaven, by the Master **JB**, having the date 1451 on it, brought nearly 600*l.* ; the Coronation of the Virgin, by M. Schongauer, 420*l.*, while the entire collection of 533 lots produced about 12,000*l.*

Of course the class of prints included in these observations is of the highest character, and some of its members, such as the famous Rembrandt etching unsurpassed in beauty and perfection of technique. When these qualities are conjoined with great rarity, a collector, having knowledge and fine taste, will, should he have the means, pay a large sum to obtain such *desiderata*. But gems like these will not trouble the novice, for even if he had the money to buy them, it would be folly to aspire early to such acquisitions.

Under all circumstances, it is advisable that at the beginning of the collector's career, he rather avoid than seek prints of great rarity, and of extraordinary quality. Mr. Maberly properly suggests that before touching these, the eye should have become accustomed to exercise in the special department, that it have obtained experience in order to discover with certainty what is most congenial to its corrected taste, and on what it would be best pleased to fall back for permanent enjoyment. Even for far less costly examples the collector must proceed very cautiously as he will daily betray his incompetency to move without the aid of an honest dealer or a friend. The experience required to enable the novice to go alone is not trifling, and there are few among old connoisseurs who venture in all cases to act on their own judgments only.

Even as respects those 'fathers in Israel,' the dealers, it may be

asked, '*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*' Mr. Sotheby tells us, in his '*Principia Typographica*,' that there was in the collection of his friend, Mr. Monck Mason, a most brilliant impression of the St. Cecilia by Raimondi. It was described by Mr. Francis Graves in the sale catalogue as a copy. Mr. Graves was a gentleman who had devoted professionally his whole life to the study of engraving, yet he afterwards confessed that he had been completely deceived in respect to this print; so much so was he, that at the auction (which took place some time after he had described the print in the catalogue), feeling convinced his judgment was correct, he allowed the print to be purchased by Mr. Tiffen for a few shillings, it having undergone during the period of sale the usual ordeal of a careful examination by many distinguished amateurs and dealers. Mr. Tiffen, the printseller, entertained a different opinion; he recognised in the apparently too brilliant copy a genuine impression of that rare engraving, the finest original he had ever met with, and his judgment was rewarded by the amount he obtained for it afterwards.

Under the most judicious and cautious system of purchase, the bringing together a really fine collection of prints is an expensive pursuit. 'Who has a fine collection of prints?' asks Mr. Cunningham—

'A few—very few—names of fortunate owners will occur to many. What thousands of pounds are locked up in the shape of etchings and engravings, with the "burr" and without the "burr," before letters and after letters! What rarities are hidden in extra-atlas and elephant-sized portfolios! A noble attempt was more than made at Manchester in 1857 (the great Art Treasure year) to show what had been accomplished by Continental artists and ourselves in the great art of engraving. The dreary walk through Smirke's Thames Tunnel (called King George the Third's Library) has been *enlivened* of late by a few stalls of engravings that command little more attention than the ginger-bread stalls received in Mr. Brunel's passage of the Thames from Wapping on the left to Rotherhithe on the right, and yet that many-headed monster, the public, delights in print-shop windows. Molteno's, in Pall Mall, in our boyish days, was a *gratis* treat not to be matched (to our grown-up thinking) by the unimproved but not to be condemned continuations of it at the present day by Messrs. Colnaghi and Scott, and Mr. Henry Graves.'

It is proper to mention that the high prices which have been paid for certain prints have been given often for accidental properties attached to them rather than for any intrinsic perfection or beauties. By the former the young collector must not permit himself to be tempted—*mere rarity*, save as relates to quite the earlier examples of the engraver's art or *incunabula*, is not the property for which the judicious will pay a very high price.

Occasionally an impression acquires factitious value by reason of some peculiarity rendering it singular rather than in any other way covetable, or because it belonged to some particular person, or happened to be printed off on trial before the plate had been half finished.

'Le Clerc,' writes Mr. Gilpin (Bibl. 26, p. 169), 'in his print of Alexander's Triumph, has given a profile of that prince. This print was shown to the Duke of Orleans, who was pleased with it on the whole, but justly enough objected to the side-face. The obsequious artist erased it, and engraved a full one. A few impressions had been taken from the plate in its first state, which fell among the curious for ten times the price of the impressions taken after the face was altered. Callot, once pleased with a little plate of his own etching, made a hole in it through which he drew a ribbon, and wore it at his button. The impressions after the hole was made are very scarce and amazingly valuable. In a print of the Holy Family from Vandyke, St. John was represented laying his hand upon the Virgin's shoulder. Before the print was published the artist showed it among his critical friends, some of whom thought the action of St. John too familiar. The painter was convinced and removed the hand; but he was mistaken when he thought he added value to his print by the alteration. The few impressions which got abroad with the hand upon the shoulder would buy up all the rest three times over in any auction in London.'

There was a time—Descamps tells us alluding to Rembrandt's etchings—when

'On était presque ridicule quand on n'avait pas une épreuve de la petite Junon couronnée et sans couronne, du petit Joseph avec le visage blanc et du même avec la visage noir.'

For such supposed advantages as the above, if the private collector be not justified in spending large sums, public and national

collections, which are desired to be made complete and permanent, may be entitled to procure them at high prices.

‘The same great artist so often mentioned — Rembrandt — executed an etching of a little dog lying asleep. It would seem that on some occasion a sleeping dog accidentally attracted his notice, and that he took a sudden fancy to immortalise the little animal in the attitude of the moment. He hastily snatched up the first piece of copper at hand, with ground ready laid, without regard to fitness of size or shape, and as it happened to be greatly larger than was necessary, he scratched his subject in the left-hand corner of the plate working in that part only. When he proceeded to take an impression, he chanced to take a piece of paper of more than sufficient size to contain his work, but of less size than the whole copper, the result of which was that in the print no plate-mark appears, that is, no mark of the edge of the copper except on the top and right hand. Afterwards Rembrandt cut from the large plate the small square corner on which he made his etching, and from this now reduced plate the subsequent impressions were taken. The work itself has no great attraction; it is imperfectly bit, and very feeble in effect. It is not quite three inches and a quarter long by one inch and a half wide, and a good impression in good condition is adequately valued at about twenty or thirty shillings.

‘But whether fortunately, or unfortunately, there does happen to exist one, and as is believed only one, impression taken from the copperplate before it was cut, and this measures nearly four inches and a quarter long by two inches and a half wide. This impression was in the collection of Mr. Hibbert, which was sold by auction in 1809. Whether it was that at this period when, as we have seen, public taste was so far in its infancy, or confined to so few that the “Hundred Guilder” was allowed to pass for one-sixth of its present value, public folly was also in a comparative state of infancy; or whether it was that the peculiarity of this impression of this little print had not yet attracted its full share of notice, certain it is that the sum it sold for at Mr. Hibbert’s sale was only thirty shillings. The purchaser was M. Claussin, himself an artist, a great admirer and copyist of Rembrandt, and the author of a catalogue of his engravings. M. Claussin sold the print at a small advance of price to a London dealer of great celebrity; of him the late Duke of Buckingham purchased it for 6*l*. At the sale of his Grace’s collection in 1834, connoisseurs began to awaken to the hitherto inadequately acknowledged merits of the “little dog,” or rather of the superfluous abundance of blank paper bordering him on two points of the compass, and the fortunate purchaser at that sale was content to pay for this trumpery print 61*l*. Nor did he act unwisely, for

it is understood that he shortly after received an offer from a Dutch collector of first one hundred guineas, then 150*l.*, and at last this genuine descendant of the ancient Tulipians desired the proprietor to name his own price, and he would give it. But what genuine collector with due enthusiasm for his pursuit would consent to part with such a print at any price whatever? The happy possessor resisted all pecuniary temptation, and retained his "little dog" until he disposed of his whole collection, when among a number of more truly valuable prints selected from his portfolios, and bought for the British Museum, this curiosity, so to call it, passed to that national repository at the price of 120*l.* . . . There is an etching also by Rembrandt of four small subjects which were executed for illustrations to a book, and accordingly go by the name of "Four prints for a Spanish book." They are prints of no great attraction or merit; they were all four engraved on one large piece of copper, and after some alterations had been made, the copper was cut into four pieces, by which each became a separate plate. Meantime, however, a few impressions of the earlier state were taken off from the uncut plate, and these necessarily showed all the four prints on one sheet of paper. These sheets were in like manner cut into four, for the obvious purpose of being sewed or bound up into their respective places in the book. It happened that some very few of these whole sheets were left entire. Such a sheet, with all the four plates on it, and before the alteration above alluded to, appeared in the sale catalogue of Mr. Hibbert's collection in 1809, and brought the fair and sufficient price estimated by common sense of 1*l.* 7*s.* The purchaser was the Duke of Buckingham. By the time the Duke's collection came to the hammer, which was in 1834, the eyes of collectors had become open to the value of rarities of this description, and this sheet of four little prints was knocked down at 57*l.* 13*s.*; the purchaser being the collector, whose purchase of the "little dog" has been noted as having proved so advantageous. From this purchaser the print passed to the British Museum, that national establishment being happy to obtain the curiosity at the price of one hundred guineas. Good impressions, in good condition, of these prints, when occurring separately in their usual state, which they often do, sell at from fifteen to twenty shillings. . . . We will indulge in only one more of these anecdotes of fancy. There are some exceedingly beautiful and delicate etchings by Berghem of goats and sheep. They form two sets of eight prints each; one goes by the name of "The Man's Book," and the other of "The Woman's Book," from the circumstance of the first print of the set representing the one a male, the other a female peasant. It happened that Berghem etched six of these prints on one plate of copper (a similar case to Rembrandt's four prints for a Spanish book), and he

afterwards cut the copper in pieces, making each print a separate plate. He then etched more plates, extending the sets to eight prints each, as above related. By good luck or bad, one impression exists, taken from the uncut copper, with all the six prints upon it. One only! a unique impression! and therefore in the estimation of determined collectors of all that is singular, invaluable. M. Claussin bought it at the sale of Mr. Annesley's collection, in 1809, for 12*l.* 15*s.* It afterwards came into the possession of an eminent collector, a large portion of whose collection was afterwards purchased by the British Museum, to which institution this print was sold for 120*l.*, and the opinion of persons conversant with these matters is, that if it were now again in the market it would at this day bring more than double that sum.' (Bibl. 58, p. 74, *et seq.*)

To become the collector of mere curiosities should not be the desire of the true art-student, who, though he must not expect to be able to prosecute his legitimate wishes without pecuniary means, need not feel disheartened because he cannot enter the lists with millionaires and public institutions.

There are many examples readily to be met with which are suited to a general collector; others that may be acquired, but not both readily and reasonably, with good qualities as to state and condition; while there are prints of rare occurrence under any circumstances, and which, when they do occur, must be paid for according to their rank of state and condition. Hence a certain proportion of the student's collection may be obtained with comparative facility; after this his acquisitions can be made at intervals only, and his more valuable specimens, or those which cost most, can appear but as 'few and far between.'

It should be borne in mind that the articles with which the collector of ancient prints deals cannot have a necessarily definite price attached to them, like common objects of manufacture. There is no criterion, such as their cost of production, to be guided by. Not only rarity, merit, and the qualities of 'state' and 'condition,' influence the market, so to speak, but what may be termed *fashion* plays a not unimportant part. It is the same with prints as with pictures, flowers, and other objects of beauty and of desire. At one period the early Italian painters are more in vogue, and the later schools and Dutch masters are comparatively at a discount. At another time any price will be paid for a Hobbema

or a De Hooghe, while enthusiasm has diminished for the Lippi and Peruginos. A mania for tulips one year may ruin nearly a tenth of the people of a small state; another year auriculas are in the ascendant, or so may be camellias or rhododendrons. Thus it is with our own department; there is generally some one or two masters who are more in favour, and whose works are readily bought up; as a consequence in a rising market, where all are buyers, prices ascend accordingly. We have already noticed the augmentation in value of the works of Ostade and Van Dyck. A few years before this occurred Hollar was the idol;—nothing was heard of but a Hollar.

‘Now,’ writes Maberly, ‘Hollar is an artist of the seventeenth century, ranking in the English school from having chiefly practised in this country, of very superlative mechanical skill, a most faithful delineator of what was placed before him; but that is all. He displays none of the higher qualities of the art—invention, imagination, composition, chiaroscuro, effect.’ (Bibl. 58, p. 53.)

At a sale at Sotheby’s in July 1874, the Adam and Eve of Marc Antonio (B. v. xiv. p. 3, n. i.) was handed to a buyer for the sum of 485*l.*, a higher price than had been paid before for this print. At the same auction four pieces of one of the most admirable etchers who ever worked—Ribera—were sold for two shillings, one of the master’s chief etchings being included in the four. As the Adam and Eve was described in the catalogue as a ‘very fine and early impression before the hard outline on the arms, likewise before the retouch, and in perfect preservation;’ so the ‘Angel sounding the Trumpet’ (of Ribera) was considered ‘a brilliant impression.’ What therefore could be the reason of the disparity in estimation which the prices before mentioned evinced? Admitting the beauty and rarity of state of the Adam and Eve to be worth a great deal, it was surely not in the ratio of 485*l.* to 2*s.* for several prints by Ribera intrinsically considered? As a matter of trade speculation it probably was so, for good judgment on this point no doubt directed the purchase, *i. e.* supposing the latter not to have been a direct commission. In that speculation lay the secret. The truth was everybody had been screaming for some time about Marc Antonio as they had screamed about Turner. The Aretino of the

former had been sold shortly before for 780*l.*, and two small washes of indigo and yellow-ochre by Turner, worth about four and nine-pence each if by any one else, had been willingly accepted at 400*l.* How many of such purchasers of Marc Antonios and Turners could appreciate the refined treatment of the extremities in the prints of Spagnoletto?

The writer has known among collectors a passion for Chodowieckis. A short time back there was a loud cry for Callots. Mezzotintos after Sir Joshua Reynolds have, still more recently, been the chief *desiderata*; these accordingly becoming high-priced and scarce. Bartolozzi is appearing on the stage, and now that he must be well paid for, Schiavonetti, his pupil, is coming into estimation. A *fashion* in what was sought existed in the time of Sir Horace Walpole, who writes in a letter, 'We have at present a rage for prints of English portraits. Lately I assisted a clergyman in compiling a catalogue of them. Since this publication scarce heads in books not worth threepence will sell for five guineas.' The system of portrait-collecting initiated by Evelyn, Ashmole, and Pepys, and continued by the Earl of Oxford, the Duchesses of Portland, Horace Walpole, and J. Nickolls, received a fresh impulse on the appearance of the Biographical History of England by the Rev. James Granger.

'To such a height of enthusiasm did it arrive that old legends, chronicles, and curious pieces in the black-letter were considered either by the buyer or seller of little value compared with the *pictures* which they contained. Keepers of stalls and brokers became enlightened by the general pursuit after old heads, and withheld their memoirs, trials, and even almanacks till they had obtained an exorbitant demand for their attractive frontispieces.' (Preface to Bromley's Catalogue.)

The majority of portraits formerly collected were often, as works of art, if not of likenesses, simply rubbish. Leaving out the works of Faithhorne, Hollar, Passe, Houbraken, and perhaps of one or two others, the rest, as specimens of engraving, were not worth keeping. How portraits were fabricated formerly has been well shown by M. Henri Menu in the 'Chronique des Arts' for October 1873, in his article on the portrait of Dom Mabillon; as likewise by Mr. Carlyle in 'Frazer's Magazine' for April 1875, when discussing the portraits of John Knox.

As an illustration of this portrait-mania we may refer to the Sutherland collection now in the Bodleian Library. It was commenced in 1795 by A. S. Sutherland, F.S.A., and on his death, in 1820, was continued by his widow, who spared neither trouble nor expense in rendering it as complete as possible; in fact, its extent was nearly doubled afterwards. In accordance with her husband's will Mrs. Sutherland presented the collection to the famous Oxford Library. In this assemblage there are 184 portraits of James the First, of which 135 are from distinct plates; 743 of Charles the First, of which 573 are from distinct plates, besides 16 drawings; 373 of Cromwell (253 plates); 552 of Charles the Second (428 plates); 276 of James the Second; 175 of Mary the Second (148 plates); and 431 of William the Third, of which 363 are from separate plates. There are besides, frequently, numerous copies of the same plate or impressions from it in all its various states. Along with the views of London, Southwark, and Westminster, and the drawings of Van den Wyngaerde which the collection contains likewise, it is estimated that the Sutherland Cabinet cost 20,000*l.* (Macray's 'Annals of the Bodleian Library,' London, 1868.)

We have known the passion for collecting portraits so strong as to lead an amateur to relinquish every other branch for its prosecution, to amass heaps of all kinds and descriptions of likenesses, and apparently to think and dream of nothing else but portraits. Dying, he left drawers full of the latter to the 'National Portrait Gallery.' What has been done with the prints we do not know. Of our friend we would speak, however, with fond recollection, as it was by him that we were first inspired with a taste for and indoctrinated with some knowledge concerning ancient prints. Well do we remember how, as he perceived we were gradually branching off towards early woodcuts and other *incunabula*, he seriously endeavoured to inculcate that, after all, the τὸ καλὸν was to be found only among portraits, that all collectors, sooner or later, become converted to his view, and that ourselves would assuredly, as he expressed it, 'end in portraits.'

Mr. Dallaway has properly observed (Walpole's Anecdotes, vol. iii. p. 874, *note*), that it would be uncandid to assert that all

former collectors of portraits were influenced only by the desire of possessing rarities. The portraits which have reached the highest prices have been marked in the respective catalogues, not only *unique, presque unique*, but *brilliant impressions*, so that the merit of the engraver has not been considered always of secondary importance. Since most of the earlier portraits were employed chiefly as engravings for the frontispieces of books, since despoiled of them, the original plates became exceedingly worn, and thus ordinary impressions do not give a fair idea of their original excellence. When 'brilliant proofs' are seen, much of the stiffness and coarseness so commonly characterising these prints is often absent.

Fashion may take up a good name, and it may patronise a poor one; but there is always something in *name* that appeals to the collector. Against tripping here, then, let the novice be on his guard—let him beware lest mere name mislead him. Every great worker has produced more or less of unequal work, and the private collector of taste and limited means should restrict himself to that which is most worth possessing. The well-known engraver, B. Picart, annoyed at the ridiculous taste for bad examples simply because great and popular names were either rightly or wrongly attached to them, set about engraving a series of prints himself to which he placed the names of several celebrated artists. These prints he caused to be sold to the admirers of great names, who readily bought them as the works of Guido, Goltzius, Rembrandt, and others. Alluding to this transaction, Janfen considers that, under the circumstances, it was but 'an innocent imposture.' Goltzius himself imitated Albert Dürer, Lukas van Leyden, and other masters so well, that one of his pieces which he caused to be smoked that it might look old, was sold at a high price as an undescribed piece of Albert Dürer. (Bartsch, vol. iii. p. 6.)

The old saying, that 'a man must cut his coat according to his cloth,' holds particularly well as respects print-buying. A person cannot have a more costly collection than his purse can afford; but, whatever be the depth of the latter, the desire of every connoisseur should be to make his cabinet remarkable rather for the quality than the quantity of its contents. We would advise that, in forming a collection, the novice deal with

a few matters only at a time, and that, as examples of these are procured, he study them carefully in conjunction with the history of their authors and with the works generally of the latter; so that, when other specimens are met with, the collector may be more prepared for their critical examination than otherwise might be the case.

A subject which may often give rise to some thought will be, How far the collection of different 'states' should be ventured on? We would recommend that, at first, one 'state' only be meddled with, and that this be the most complete compatible with fine technic that is known, and in the best condition that the means at command can insure. On this point the following remarks of Mr. Maberly are so judicious that we need not make any apology for quoting them:—

'Should or should not a collector determine to possess himself, as far as he possibly can, of the same print in each of its different states? This, we venture to answer, must depend much upon the object which the individual has in view. If his ambition be to be recognised in the coterie of connoisseurship as a professed collector of such and such a master, he must certainly do this at whatever cost of pocket, and, we were about to say, of taste and rational judgment; but if he can refrain from aiming at this distinction, and if he resolve to stand free and uninfluenced by any motives but those of discretion and common sense, he will perhaps endeavour to mark out a line by which to limit his collection in this respect. . . . The question respecting these [states] will occur in the works of many engravers, but in none so much as in the very popular and important artist Rembrandt. . . . The acquirement of an exact knowledge of all these advancements, variations, and further finishings of Rembrandt's plates, is an important portion of the education of a collector. Of some of this artist's plates there are seven or eight, or even more, "states." . . . When a collector eminent for a nearly complete collection of Rembrandt's works opens his folio, he discloses, on sheet after sheet, four, five, six, or more—and it may be ten, as we have just seen—prints, all to a common eye and at first sight the same thing so many times repeated. The eye of the *conoscenti* fixes at once upon the one rare state, whichever it may be, and regards no other; the eye of the uninitiated wanders about, uncertain where to fix, and feels as if looking through a multiplying-glass. Whatever beauty there may be in some one, or each, individual print, is impaired for want of being set off as it deserves; it is

lost in the bewilderment of the mafs: at any rate it requires to be fought for and felected. Of fuch collections common fenfe fuggelts that the pleasure of the collector muft confift in the confcioufnefs of poffeffion and the reputation attached to it, rather than in any very fenfitive enjoyment of the intrinsic beauties of a fine work of art.'

The man of tafte, rather than the mere collector, will feek excellence before fome peculiarity, not of any value in itfelf, but perhaps rather detrimental to the artiftic merits of the engraving. But to the collector—pure and fimple—a 'ftate,' a 'firft ftate' in particular, however intrinfically poor or incomplete it may be, and from its rarity however coftly, is a thing that muft be fearched for and ultimately obtained at whatever ventures, otherwife his collection, without it, remains incomplete.

Perhaps in the cafes of Van Dyck and Claude fome attention fhould be paid by the amateur to the fubject of ftates as foon as he deals with thefe mafters. Early impreffions of their works are fo different and fuperior to later ones that fome knowledge of ftates becomes here almoft imperative.

Whether the collector confine himfelf to a few mafters, to one fchool, and to fingle ftates, or has determined on a general collection illuftrative of the progrefs of the engraver's art, he fhould know his own mind well before he purchafes. He fhould carefully efchew making miscellaneous bargains, purpofing to arrange all his acquifitions as foon as he fhall become poffeffed of an indifcriminate number fufficient to make arrangement neceffary. Further, he fhould withhold himfelf from bidding at fales becaufe an attractive print is felling for a few fhillings, or a lot of miscellaneous engravings appears to be going for nothing. If he does not, or gets into the habit of 'dropping in' at fhops without knowing what he wants, and allowing himfelf to be tempted as he looks through any folios which may be on the counter, he will find affuredly, at the year's end, that he has got together a mafs of engravings falling under almoft every clafs, and fo difperfed among all as to amount to very little in any one divifion, that he has nothing like a defirable collection, and probably, in the whole of it, not a fingle really good print. A ufeful plan is to carry a concise lift of *defiderata* in the pocket, and thus avoid two difagreeables: one, the purchafing of prints

already possessed ; the other, the letting escape such as are covetable. Few collectors can remember every piece which they have, especially of the ‘ little matters ;’ and every person occasionally desires to exchange some particular possession for one of a better ‘ state’ or condition. A few memoranda relative to these and analogous things will be of much assistance, and obviate that annoying occurrence, the purchasing duplicates.

Though something may be learnt from attendance at auctions, no great advantages can be gained by the collector as respects purchases. He will find that he is expected, as a private gentleman, to buy through the trade, that a coalition will be formed against his biddings for anything desirable, and that he is permitted to have the rubbish only. Besides,—

‘ There is a certain temptation in a sale-room, and a certain excitement which stimulates that temptation, which make it absolutely dangerous for anyone who is not of the most phlegmatic disposition, or who has not been made callous by long practice, or become apathetic by the years rolled over his head, to indulge his curiosity or idle away an hour in this amusing occupation. Old collectors are aware of this, and, though they may attend, they are not very frequently seen to bid. It will often happen, indeed, that there is nothing to tempt them ; but if otherwise, their most usual course is to commission a print-dealer to bid for them. A careful inspection of the lots worthy of attention takes place on the previous view-day, and a deliberate consultation then determines for what lots to bid, and up to what price.’ (Print-Collector, Bibl. 58, p. 59.)

En résumé, then, we advise the novice, in the first place, to obtain some general knowledge concerning engraving. We have sought, in the preceding pages, to offer information which he may accept with advantage ; and in the after ones he will meet with more in relation to this part of the subject. But we would strongly recommend that, beyond this, the works of Ottley (‘ History of Engraving’), Jackson and Chatto (on Wood-engraving), and the first volume of Passavant (‘ Peintre-Graveur’), be perused.

In the second place, he should look through the contents of a good cabinet, under the guidance of a friend who would point out the chief masters of the various schools, as indicated

in a subsequent part of this work. He may afterwards go through the collection by himself, accompanied by the volumes of Bartsch (Bibl. 2), studying the preliminary dissertations in the sixth and thirteenth volumes at his leisure. Having done this and perused the present pages, he may write out a short list of some of the chief works of two or three masters in a particular school; with this in his pocket, and with what we have said in the Chapter On the Examination and Purchase of Ancient Prints in his memory, he may make his first venture among the folios of some reputable dealer. Acquisitions having been made, let them be passed through the ordeal of a comparison with Bartsch's descriptions. The possession of Bryan's Dictionary (Bibl. 10) will afford much assistance to the student, the plates of monograms, ciphers, &c. in which should be carefully studied. It must be apparent that the new pursuit cannot be commenced without a few pounds being laid out in text-books. Such works as those of Ottley, Jackson and Chatto, Dupleffis, and Passavant, may be obtained for perusal only, or be consulted in a public library; but the treatise of Bartsch and the Dictionary of Bryan the student must *possess*. Without them he will find that he is next to helpless, and although with them he may safely commence, yet as regards Rembrandt, Claude and the French school generally, Wierix, Hollar, and some other esteemed masters, he will discover that the systematic treatise, in twenty-one volumes, of Bartsch will not afford him the slightest assistance. But attention may well be limited, at first, to some of the masters included in Bartsch. As progress is made, the novice will become bolder and less inclined to be trammelled by any foreign obstacle. Nevertheless, should he meddle with *incunabula*, he will need to procure the volumes of Passavant; if with Claude and the French school of portraiture, the works of Dumefnil and Dupleffis; if with Rembrandt, the monograph by Wilson, or by Blanc, and the work of Duchesne if he be tempted by *nielli*.

Whatever department he may particularly affect, but especially if his collection be intended to be general, the student will soon discover that *monograms* and *ciphers* are both his trouble and delight. In connexion with them he will find scope both for testing the accuracy of his knowledge and for the wildest hopes

of a collector. At one moment he will alight upon a prize—at a touch it may be gone; his familiar spirit in this matter being J. Nagler. (Bibl. 48.) With the works we have referred to the novice may assuredly go on his course rejoicing, being pretty certain to find in them all the information that can be obtained, if not all that is wanted, in respect to the various examples of the engraver's art which may come under notice. Ottley, Jackson and Chatto, Bryan, Bartsch, Passavant, Dumesnil, Dupleffis, Duchesne, Blanc, and Nagler—a full and goodly company undoubtedly! yet not too numerous to prevent the student referring to our Bibliography and calling in, when occasions demand it, yet further assistance. We know that, as both prints and knowledge are amassed, the yearning will be for more prints and more knowledge. We may, therefore, leave the young collector to his fate, which will be that of steady progress in a passion so absorbing that none but those affected can understand. Were we to venture to say more we should but feel with M. le Comte Léon Delaborde, when he states that what he writes ‘n’intéresse guères que les amateurs d’estampes et parmi eux encore que les amateurs assez heureux pour avoir fait de leur goût une passion, pour avoir poussé cette passion jusqu’à la manie.’ (*Histoire de Gravure en Manière Noire*,’ preface.)

CHAPTER V.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF
ENGRAVING.

WE now proceed to lay before the reader a sketch of the arrangement adopted in bringing under notice such details of the art of engraving in ancient times, and such masters and their works as should most interest the collector. That the classification which follows is hereafter somewhat laxly adhered to is admitted. But it should be remembered that all systems are more or less artificial, and that every scheme of arrangement and differentiation, however rigid in some of its exactions, will be found to give way on minor points for convenience sake, which is deemed of greater moment under the circumstances than the preservation of a very troublesome consistency.

In the first place, three chief divisions are made of ancient prints: 1. Wood Engraving; 2. Metal Engraving of the ordinary kind; 3. Mezzotinto Engraving. Under these heads are arranged the various schools of art, such as the Northern, or German, Dutch, Flemish, and other schools; and the Southern, or Italian and Spanish schools.

Under the separate schools are ranked the more important masters of each or such of them as it is thought expedient the student should be acquainted with. Some other subdivisions of details follow, but the whole will be better understood by the following tabular exposition:—

DIVISION I.—WOOD ENGRAVING.

A. *Northern Schools*, as Germany, Holland, Flanders, Switzerland, France, England—illustrated by the

- α—Earliest prints, or *incunabula*.
- β—Saint Christopher of 1423, and other early dated prints.
- γ—Block-books.
- δ—Early fingle or ‘fly’ sheets.
- ε—Nürnberg Chronicle, Schatzbehalter, Wohlgemuth, Pleydenwurff.
- ζ—Albrecht Dürer and his school, the Maximilian circle.
- η—Burgkmair, Schäußelin, Springinklee, Brofamer, the Cranachs, Beham, Baldung, Altdorfer, Holbein, Lukas van Leyden, Virgil Solis, J. Amman, Stimmer, Van Sichem, Jegher.
- θ—Early French Books, the ‘Books of Hours’ of Pigouchet, Vostre, Verard and others, Bernard Solomon.
- ι—Early ‘Moral Play,’ Caxton’s Illustrated Works, Cranmer’s Catechism, Coverdale’s Bible.

B. *Southern Schools*, as Italy, Spain—illustrated by

- κ—Early printed books with cuts.
Vavassore, Jacopo di Barbari, Campagnola, Beccafumi, Francesco de Nanto, G. B. del Porto, Domenico dalle Greche, Boldrini, Scolari.
- λ—Los Trabajos de Hercules, Regimento de los Principes.

C. CHIARO-SCURO WORK of *Northern Schools*, illustrated by

- μ—Cranach, Baldung, Burgkmair, Wechtelin, Goltzius, Jegher,
- „ of *Southern Schools*, illustrated by
- ν—Ugo da Carpi, Antonio da Trento, Nicolo, Andreani, Coriolano.

DIVISION II.—ORDINARY METAL ENGRAVING.

D. *Northern Schools*, illustrated by

- ξ—The Masters of 1446—1451—1457, and 1464.
 - ⒸⓈ, or the Master of 1466.
 - The Master of the ‘Garden of Love,’ the Master of the School of Van Eyck or of 1480.
 - The Master of ‘Boccaccio.’

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| GERMANY. | { | o—Martin Schongauer, Ifrahel van Meckenen, Albrecht Dürer, Ludwig Krug, Aldegrever, Altdorfer, the Behams, Binck, Pencz, the Hopfers, Virgil Solis. |
| HOLLAND. | { | π—Lukas van Leyden, Dirk van Staren, Cornelius Matfys, Lambert Suavius, the De Bryes, the brothers Wierix. |
| FLANDERS. | { | ε—Goltzius, J. Matham, Saenredam, Jacob de Gheyn.
The Sadeliers, Scheltius and Boetius de Bolswert, the Bloemarts, the Vorstermans, the Visfichers, P. Pontius, Houbraken, De Goudt. |
| FRANCE. | { | σ—The Lyons' Master of 1488, Duvet, Coufin, Garnier, the School of Fontainebleau, the De Laulnes, Callot, Mellan, Morin, Nanteuil, Edelinck, Masson, the Drevets, Schmidt (?). |
| ENGLAND. | { | τ—Geminus, the De Passes, Elstracke, R. Payne, Delaram, the Hogenbergs, Hollar, Droeshout, W. Faithorne, Marshall, Gaywood, Cecil, Logan, White, Ravenet, Grignon, Dorigny. |

The Chief Etchers of the Northern Schools.

- v—Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Bol, Van Vliet, Livens.
 φ—Oftade, Teniers, Bega, Dufart.
 χ—P. Potter, Berchem, Karel du Jardin, Van de Velde, Roos, Stoop, De Laer, De Bye.
 ψ—Claude, Both, Swanevelt, Waterloo, Ruifdael, Everdingen, Weiroter.
 ω—Zeeman, Bakhuizen.

(E. PRINTS IN THE 'LARGE DOTTED MANNER,' 'LA MANIERE CRIBLEE,' 'GESCHROTENE ARBEIT.')

F. *Southern Schools*, illustrated by

- α α—Nielli and the Niellatori, Finiguerra, Perigrino.
 β β—The Florentine *burinists*, Baldini, Botticelli, Pollajuolo, Filippo Lippi, Verocchio, Gherardo, Antonio da Giunta, Robetta.

- γγ—The Venetian, Paduan, Lombardian, Mantuan workers and others of Central Italy, as A. Mantegna, Zoan Andrea, Nicoletto da Modena, Giov. Andr. da Brefcia, Jacopo di Barbarj, Girolamo Moceto, Marcello Fogolino, Pelligrino da Udine, Benedetto Montagna, the Campagnolas, Leonardo da Vinci, Fr. Raibolini (?).
- δδ—The Roman School and Marco Antonio Raimondi, Agostino di Mufi, Marco Dente da Ravenna, Caraglio, the Master of the Die, Bonafone, Enea Vico, the Ghifis.

The chief Etchers of the Italian School.

- εε—Parmigiano, Meldolla (Schiavone?), Annibale Carracci, Guido Reni, Cantarini, Scarfello, the Siranis, Della Bella, Castiglione, Canaletto.
- ζζ—I. de Ribera.

DIVISION III.—MEZZOTINTO ENGRAVING.

Illustrated by

- ηη—Ludwig Siegen von Sechten, Prince Rupert, Sir Christopher Wren, Thomas of Ypres, Fürstenberg, Von Eltz.
- θθ—The Vaillants, the Van Somers, the Verkoljes, Gole, Valck, Blooteling.
- ιι—J. Evelyn, F. Place, Sir R. Cole, Sherwin, Luttrell, R. Tompson, Beckett, Alex. Browne, E. Cooper, R. White, Johnson, Lumley, W. Faithorne, Jun., J. Smith, G. White, the Fabers, Simon.
- κκ—Le Blon and followers.

As the preceding list of masters has been gone through, the student will have been surprised, no doubt, to meet with so many names that he had not heard of before, and must have been struck at the occurrence of others well known to him, but as belonging to a department of art different to that which is now under consideration. To speak to the unlearned in the branch of engraving of, *e. g.*, Burgkmair or Ugo da Carpi, would be to elicit the questions, ‘Who were they?’ and ‘What did they do?’ To tell even many, not unacquainted with other branches of art-knowledge, that Claude etched and Mantegna engraved, and that their works

are highly prized by connoisseurs, might cause some astonishment, if not scepticism. Yet it is the case, that while numerous masters have been able workers or designers in the branch of engraving, and but little, or not at all, known in any other department of art, there has been scarcely a painter of any repute who has not tried his hand with the needle or the graver. It is true that the amount of labour expended by the latter artists, on the technical processes before us, has been very various. While some, like Rembrandt, Ostade, and Dürer, spent much talent and labour, on one or more of them, each master stamping himself *facile princeps* in his *spécialité*; others, like Leonardo da Vinci, Fra Filippo Lippi, Tintoretto, J. G. Van Mabuse, and Wouwerman,* cannot be said to have done more than to have taken up the needle or graver upon one or two occasions only. (See Pass. vol. i. p. 239; Bartsch, xvi. p. 104.) If we can number the prints of some great painters by dozens, of other artists we cannot say further than that of their works only one or two doubtful examples are known, or that probable inference alone entitles them to rank among engravers. That Raphael actually guided the burin, in one or two instances, is assumed to have been the case, but certainly is not proven. (Nagler, v. iii. n. 441; Pass. i. p. 249.) Yet every lover of ancient prints will desire to claim him as having used the graver. There is an early print of the Umbrian school, representing a young knight armed at all points, bearing the inscription, 'GVERINO DIT MESCHI,' *i. e.*, Guerinio il Meschino, the hero of a celebrated romance of the middle ages. It is of good execution, and treated so spiritually, that Rumohr was inclined to consider it an attempt of Raphael during his early years of study.† Again, there are one or two prints of the school of Marc Antonio—if not of the master himself—in which certain parts, like the heads and nude forms, are executed with such feeling for beauty, and with such spirit, as to have given rise to the supposition that Raphael himself may have been, not their designer merely, but likewise their engraver. Such, for example, are no. 34, vol. xiv. of Bartsch (the Virgin weeping over the body of Christ, or the

* Or N. Fick according to some. See Weffely, Bibl. 96, p. 163, also Weigel, Bibl. 95, p. 68, W 2.

† Ascribed by Waagen to Francesco Francia.

Virgin with the Naked arm); no. 47, ditto (the Virgin seated on the Clouds); and no. 381, ditto (Philosophy). Cumberland was of opinion that Raphael etched also.

It is probable that we possess at least one engraving by Donato Bramante,* and Correggio is believed by some persons to have etched; in Smith's Sale Catalogue, 1849, occurs the following description of a piece supposed to be by him, 'Sea Nymphs and Tritons, his only etching, from the collections of Mead, Barnard, Rysbrack, and Sykes; very fine and extremely rare.' It realized 10*l.* at the auction. (See Nagler, vol. i. n. 2187.)

It is thought that we possess three or four small engravings by Leonardo da Vinci, and Titian is admitted by many to have drawn in several instances on the wood-blocks; he is considered by others to have cut one or two blocks himself, and a few critics assert that he likewise worked on copper. Squarcione and Francia have been included in the list of engravers, and Vafari long ago maintained that Verocchio engraved, but others doubted this. Recently certain rare prints, impressed throughout with his particular manner, have been admitted as probably belonging to him. Rubens has been credited with five or six pieces, and Sir Christopher Wren is considered to have scraped at least two heads in mezzotinto.

Admitting there are doubts about some great masters, yet to what a noble list of others may not the lover of engraving confidently appeal. Mantegna, Pollajuolo, Botticelli, Primaticcio, the Caracci, Guido, Parmigiano, Canaletto, Ribera, Tempesta, and others of the Southern schools. Rembrandt, Ostade, Van Dyck, Ruissdael, Paul Potter, Berchem, J. B. Weenix, Both, of the Dutch or Flemish schools; and Albert Dürer, Cranach, M. Schongauer, of the German provinces. Nor can we forget Holbein, Salvator Rosa, Gaspar Pouffin, and Claude. Not only were all the above great painters, but they were good engravers as well; and some became so excellent in their work, as still to remain the typical masters of the particular departments of engraving they developed. Take Rembrandt, Ostade, Van Dyck, and Claude, as principal etchers—what eminent painters, too, in their special departments! Select from the workers with the burin the four more eminent as Dürer, Van Leyden, Marc Antonio, and Hollar




* On Bramante, see 'Gazette des Beaux-Arts,' vol. x. 1874, pp. 254, 379.

—two out of the four are well-known painters. Select four of the most renowned designers, if not engravers, on wood, viz., Dürer, Holbein, Ugo da Carpi, and Burgkmair—three out of the four were well-known workers with the brush. The iconophilist, then, may strengthen his arguments for the nobility of his pursuit, by showing that the chief masters in Art generally have been those who have mainly catered for the pleasure and instruction he enjoys.

There is a phrase in frequent use, viz., ‘painters’ etchings,’ which is sufficient proof how much engraving is indebted to the true artist for the position it has obtained. A ‘painter’s etching’ is at once a token of some of the better characteristics of the artist, as far as black and white can help to bestow them. Characteristics, too, which no amount of dexterity, in merely mechanical processes, can produce; and which make ample amends for any shortcomings in the perfection of the pure technic.

While the etching process has been—as will be seen afterwards—a favourite branch of engraving with the true artist, the latter has often attempted other departments. But the rule has prevailed, whether artist and engraver or engraver only, that each worker has been more successful in one branch only of the art. Exceptions of course exist, for Dürer is equally renowned for his works, both on wood and copper, and his few etchings give proof of his versatility and power. Blooteling, too, who was an admirable worker with the burin, scraped some mezzotinto plates of first-rate quality. On the other hand, Rembrandt, the prince of etchers, is supposed to have cut only one small piece on wood, viz., the ‘bust of a Philosopher with an Hour-glass’ (Wilson, n. 318), of which a facsimile is given by Rudolph Weigel. (Bibl. 71.) Some writers have ascribed this piece to Livens, whilst others doubt if it be from wood at all. Rubens’ designs on wood, as cut by Jegher, are the great painter all over; while such few etchings—or those attributed to him—as we have seen, do not do him justice. Cranach, great and versatile on wood, was spare of, and comparatively meagre in, his work on metal; on the other hand, Lukas van Leyden surpassed his work on wood, bold and free as it was, by his brilliant and inimitable engraving on copper. Holbein confined himself to designs on wood and to metal in relief;



while Marc Antonio, and such of the more eminent members of the Italian School, who excelled with the burin, generally refrained from wood and the 'needle.'

It is satisfactory to know in detail to whom we owe so much for the pleasure we receive in our pursuit, be he artist and engraver, or engraver only. To a great mass of prints we can attach the names of its authors, whether as relating to the engraving or the design. As respects woodcuts this holds good, but partially it is true, as far as the actual engraver is concerned; and there remains a large number of impressions, from both wood-blocks and metal plates, the paternity of which, as regards either design or technic, it is not in our power to solve. A certain number of masters, as, *e.g.*, Rembrandt, Waterloo, Ostade, Berchem, Israhel van Meckenem, the Ghisis, and others, generally put their names in full, or nearly so, on their plates, or, added to their Christian names, the places of their birth or residence, so as not to allow of any doubt being experienced as to whom the work was due. A considerable proportion, however, never, or only rarely, added their names in full; but employed a cipher, monogram, or mark, by which their works might be identified. When either a distinct cipher or monogram has been used, there is in most cases not much difficulty in saying who was the engraver, or in the case of woodcuts the designer, of the piece, since the cipher or monogram is made up of the initial letters—if not more—of the artist's name. Thus Albert Dürer uses the cipher ; George Pencz, the cipher ; Marc Antonio Raimondi, the monogram ; while others do not either intertwine or interjoin the letters, but keep them distinct as an initial signature, as **B·M** for Benedetto Montagna, and **H·B** for Hans Burgkmair. In some instances, the cipher, monogram, or letters, are placed on a small tablet, or within some kind of framework, so that the artist has a 'mark' as well as a cipher. Hans Brosamer, *e.g.*, often places his monogram **HB** within a tablet; and Albert Dürer his cipher in the same way. Other masters make a play upon their names, and use for their marks engraved designs of the objects which their names import. Thus the Hoppers put a *hopcatkin* between the initial

letters of their names ; at least most persons regard the symbol as such, though others have looked on it as a chandelier, and as ' la pomme de pin des armoiries d'Augsbourg.' (Pass. v. 3, p. 289.) Ludwig Krug engraved a little jug between **LK** ; Schäufelin adds a single or two-crossed ' baker's peel ' to his cipher ; while Jobst Hondius occasionally drew beneath his monogram, **HI**, a dog or hound (in allusion to his name) as if barking. Jerome Cock sometimes marked his plates with two cocks fighting, H. de Bles with an owl, Hans Adam with a naked figure under a tree, Martin de Vos with a monkey and fox separated by a stream, while Dirk Van Staren placed a large star between his initials. Relative to engravings marked in this manner, there is generally not much difficulty in forming conclusions.

There is another class of prints, concerning the authors of which we are more or less ignorant. In some instances we have arrived at apparently fair deductions, in others at but very questionable inferences ; while, as respects a third section we are in complete ignorance as to whom the works included in it are due. On a print of this class there may be an initial signature, but to whom it may belong is perhaps very doubtful, or there may be a cipher or monogram which may be construed so as to refer to more than one, or even two, masters. Thus there are some early prints from metal of the German school, of about the date 1500, having the letters **MZ** on them. The name of the artist has been stated as Mathæus Zafinger, or Zatzinger, Mathias Zigel, M. Zuigler, M. Zwickopf, Matthew Zink ; while there are other prints, having their origin in the school of Marc Antonio, signed **PB** ; but to what artist these letters refer we have not the slightest notion, nor are we certain whether the artist was Italian, German, or Flemish, by birth, though there is some reason to believe, notwithstanding his betrayal of the influences of the principles of Italian art, that he was from the Netherlands. There is, likewise, a series of prints, several of which are of first-rate quality in both work and design, which are marked by some—to us now purely conventional—device or sign, which often does not help a whit towards a discovery of the names and histories of their authors, unless associated with letters, as they are in a few cases. Thus in the Dutch and Flemish schools we have

the 'Master of the Crab,' and the 'Master with the Star,' in the German school, the 'Master of the Banderoles;' the 'Master of the Acorn;' the 'Master of the Shuttle,' called likewise the 'Master of the Scraper,' Zwott, and Meister Johann von Köln in Zwolle; and the 'Master of the Anchor.' In the Italian school there are the 'Master of the Caduceus,' called likewise Francis de Babylone, Jacob Wälch, Jacopo di Barbarj, and Il Barberino; the 'Master of the Mouse (or Rat) Trap,' the 'Master with the Bird,' and the 'Master of the Die;' in the French school, the 'Master of the Unicorn,' another name for Duvet.

On some prints, while there is not either name, initial letter, cipher, monogram, or date, there are marks or signs which are not the representations of any known objects, and which can scarcely be described in words. We have pieces on which, *e.g.*,  are engraved for their distinctive recognition, but in general we do not know anything more of these masters than their works. In certain instances there is a date only, or a date with letters marked on the print; all else is hidden. Such prints are, therefore, spoken of as belonging to the 'Master of 1446,' the 'Master of 1466,' or the 'Master  and his School,' the 'Master of 1480,' and so on. Lastly, there are engravings absolutely destitute of any distinctive cipher, date, or sign. These, when they are specially noteworthy from their antiquity or other reasons, have been made to give the names of their subjects as those of their authors. Thus we have the 'Master of the Arms of Charles the Bold,' the 'Master of the Garden of Love,' the 'Master of the Sybil,' the 'Master of the Fountains,' of the 'Playing Cards,' of the 'Round Playing Cards,' of the 'Tarots,' &c.

In many cases, as we have stated, conclusions have been gradually arrived at which prohibit us from saying that the masters of the works in question are quite unrecognised. But in other instances—and they are not few—all is doubt or confusion. The pieces of these 'unrecognised' masters are generally alluded to as 'Anonymous prints of the School of Van Eyck,' 'Anonymous of the School of Martin Schongauer,' 'Anonymous of the fifteenth century,' 'Anonymous of the School of High (or Low) Germany,' 'Anonymous of the School of Marc Antonio.' In these pieces



the more or less archaic style of the design, the mode of work or the 'technic,' the selection and treatment of subject, the character of the inscriptions (if any), of the architecture, and secondary objects, are used as guides to help us as far as possible out of the labyrinth. And a labyrinth, this interpretation of ciphers, monograms, and marks, undoubtedly is. Yet to a full understanding of the subject, as far as it has been worked out, the student of ancient prints must endeavour to attain, for the demands of his knowledge in respect to it will be constant. Though it be true that as regards a large number of the ciphers, monograms, &c., of the older masters, there is but slight difficulty in their interpretation; the novice has, it must be remembered, the task of learning what that interpretation may be, and this task is not a small one. There still remain, too, the 'unrecognised' and 'anonymous' prints to puzzle both greybeard and student.

Monograms and Ciphers.—One of the chief sources of protection from being deceived when purchasing engravings, and of assistance in selecting them, will be found in a full and correct knowledge of marks and ciphers, genuine and fictitious, original and super-added, for there are prints having the right marks of their true masters, but which have been added by others, and bad prints bearing the marks of good masters which have been attached to them by dishonest persons. Materials for the study of monograms (often wrongly so termed as will be seen) may be found in Bryan's Dictionary (Bibl. 10), the volumes of Bartsch and Passavant, and particularly in the 'Table générale des Monogrammes' at the end of the sixth volume of the latter author. To a full and comprehensive understanding of the subject, the work of Brulliot (Bibl. 9) has been until recently the mine of reference, but this treatise is now left far behind by the elaborate work of Nagler (Bibl. 48), which is unquestionably a most valuable source of information. Still as far as relates to the marks and symbols of those masters who have not letters attached to their signs, the appendices to the three parts of Brulliot's treatise continue to be the chief keys to their solution, the work of Nagler not having yet included that section which is to deal with this portion of the subject.

The student of ancient prints should have a proper and clear idea of what a 'monogram' and 'cipher' really are, so that he may not commit himself as we have known students of other departments of art to do occasionally. Not long since we were looking, with a person, at a picture by Rembrandt. There arose a question as to its date. 'Oh, there is his monogram with the date to it,' said my companion, pointing out the name Rembrandt, written in full at one corner of the canvass. It is, we suspect, not a very uncommon error to suppose that the signature in full of an artist written in a cursive, dashing kind of way on the canvass is a 'monogram!' Little acuteness is required to perceive that such cannot be the case, nor is either Symmachus or Mr. Hodgkin (Bibl. 34), in our opinion, correct. We agree with the critic of the latter writer in the 'Athenæum' as to the true character of the 'monogram.'

"A monogram," writes Symmachus, as quoted by Mr. Hodgkin, "is a name set forth in an abbreviated form, and is compacted by certain intertwinings of the letters as to be more easily understood than read." "The monogram," says Mr. Hodgkin himself, "not only of the present, but also of the past, differs from the cipher (once the bane of coach panels) in this that in the latter each letter did duty twice, in order to produce the desired symmetry. This license, the result of indolence or skill, is happily not permissible in the monogram, which ought simply to present an artificial combination of each of the required letters."

The fact is, the term 'monogram' has been wrongly applied to merely *intertwined separable* letters, and its application to such simple marks or signs as a die, tablet, wheel, jug, or graver, is, if possible, a still greater mistake: merely intertwined separable letters constitute a *cipher*, not a monogram, the true nature of the latter being—

'That it shall consist of such combinations of letters or signs as may be formed by the duplicate or more frequent use of one or more of the parts of the characters. Thus with regard to the well-known mark of Albert Dürer, that is a monogram which uses the right-hand stroke of the A for the perpendicular of the D; thus, , but is a mere cipher when the D is put into the eye of the A, or stands between its feet .

In all such cases as the first, the letters are inseparable, for if attempts at isolating them are made, they go to bits; whereas, in the latter instance, the letters, however intertwined, are yet independent of each other.

Schools of Engraving.—The separation of masters into the German or Northern and Italian Schools, is one based on more than mere locality. Speaking generally, an Italian print may be known at once from a work of the Northern Schools by certain characteristics of style, of drawing, and mode of treatment of the story. About each the whole feeling of both design and technic is essentially distinct. In one the classical element prevails, in the other the romantic; in the Italian work the influence of the nude, in the German the peculiarities of costume operate extensively. In the former, the spirit of Greek and academic art makes itself known, however dimly, while in the latter the element of the grotesque is occasionally obtrusive. It is here in art, as it is in literature, where the two schools of the classical and romantic styles have been long recognised as distinctly in the histories of Greece and Rome as in the history of the middle and subsequent ages. At first the novice may fail to readily appreciate always the differences between the two schools, but he will gradually find that one of the easiest things he has to do when examining a fresh portfolio will be to separate the works of the Northern and Southern artists. Such, too, is the predilection of taste, the influence of education and other circumstances, that the search for *desiderata* in one only of these schools may have led the print-hunter to his quarry. Not that he may entirely discard the other school, but the likelihood will be that he will have a decided preference, and that his collection will gradually become fuller in one particular department than in any other.

In the Italian School the spirit of the antique may be observed in its earlier productions, the very forms are often sculpturesque and Greek, and the stories of the Mythology are its frequent themes. The drawing, though often bad, has yet been evidently carefully worked out, as far as the powers of the artist would permit him to do so, while in the finer examples the drawing and forms of the nude are frequently of high quality. The drapery,

though conventional, has yet a classic and artistic feeling about its arrangement and folds, while tending to be deficient rather than superabundant in quantity. The female is intended to be beautiful both in form and in feature, and the male, an Apollo, a Pan, or an athlete. The beauty of the Italian School is the ideal of all time and all places, and has, as its most essential feature, a feeling of refinement in both technic and idea.

In the German School it is otherwise, yet the qualities it exhibits are not in the least less attractive to as many connoisseurs than are the fascinations of the Italian School to others. If the spirit of the abstract beautiful be not so all-pervading here as in the Italian School, the want of it is counterbalanced to many by the minute and truthful *realism* which the German school presents. We look on the one as on a beautiful stranger with whom we may have often but little sympathy, we meet the other with a sense of comfortable fellow-feeling, to whose demands on what is expected of us we cheerfully assent. This we do, because we live amid common forms and common things; we are in reality of the earth, earthy. Our fellow-beings are draped *au rigueur*, they are often plain, if not ugly, and are occasionally grotesque. We like the 'comfortable,' and therefore recognise and sympathise with its representation; we are North men, not Romans; Christians, not Pagans; and have been born, bred, and educated to many of those customs, feelings, and traditions, which the masters of the Northern Schools have so admirably portrayed both on copper and on wood. It is true that in the German works the attitudes are often constrained and angular, the arrangement of the drapery frequently wrinkled and in minute folds, that personal beauty in the female is too often displaced by plainness, and in the male by downright ugliness or grotesqueness of form. Nor can it be denied that there is frequently spread over the whole design, of whatever story, such a feeling of life in the middle ages, and comfortable Northern *bonhomie*, as to render the anachronism truly absurd. But in spite of all this, though we *admire* the masters of the Italian School, we *love* the Germans. It must be allowed, too, that the forms of the latter are not *always* angular and constrained, and that they have, even in some of the earlier examples, occasionally much grace. In proof, let reference be made to the Saint Apollonia, no. 25 of

Weigel (Bibl. 70), an early metal (?) cut supposed to be of the beginning of the fifteenth century, and to the Saint Mary Magdalene, no. 70 of the same author, a cut of the fourteenth century. 'Mary as Queen of Heaven,' of the Master **Æ**, is particularly refined, and is unquestionably very early, whether the date (1451) be genuine or not. The great master himself—Albert Dürer—however, furnishes ample evidence of all the characteristics, desirable and undesirable, of the Northern Schools, and at the same time exhibits such examples of grace, feeling, and attention to outline and drawing, as to leave little to be desired. In the German school may be found engravings equal in effect, truthfulness to nature, earnestness of story, and propriety of action, to say nothing of technical processes, to any prints which have come down to us from the Italian masters.

A certain refinement in the contours of the nude forms present in the works of the latter, and towards which we are so redolent of praise, was unquestionably not exhibited by the German engravers, nor did the Italians offer us that middle-age romance and truthfulness of every-day existence, served up by draped figures in so charming a manner as did the Germans. Fairholt, in his 'Rambles of an Archæologist' (p. 202), alluding to the striking peculiarity of the treatment of the drapery among the latter, remarks that its origin—

'Was once explained to us by an old native artist, who assured us that it was entirely caused by the models for study which they universally employed. These were small lay figures, over which draperies were cast, formed in *wet paper*, disposed according to the artist's fancy, and allowed to dry and set in the rigid form we see in their pictures.'

At all times the love of the fantastic has characterized the schools of the North, particularly the German School, during the sixteenth century. The latter circumstance was due to the influence of Protestantism. The Reformation fostered science, but on art it gradually effected a deleterious influence. It sacrificed religious *sentiment* as a source of error on the shrine of the critical faculty. Previously, however, a like feeling, though modified in its expression, pervaded some of the earlier efforts of both Northern and Southern schools.

There can be no doubt that about the time of Albert Dürer and Marc Antonio the two schools exerted a reciprocal and beneficial influence over each other. German artists and prints went to Italy, the latter being studied and copied by some of Italy's greatest men, while Italian prints and southern influences were brought back by the Germans to the north, where they helped to correct the frequent grotesqueness, if not vulgarity, of its various schools. The realism of the better masters of the latter had also its influence directly on the Venetian, indirectly on the Roman designers, in preventing them carrying too far the imitation and traditions of Byzantine teaching and repeating for ever recollections of the antique.

In all questions relative to art there is so much of *feeling* influencing our preferences and dislikes that we are led to cling with enthusiasm to the one, and to express the other more vehemently than is right. The iconophilist, who is an admirer of the Classical and Italian Schools, often looks down with something like pity on the lover of the German School and the romance of the middle ages, while the latter is not slow in regarding the mere classicist as indifferent to the beauty of both the technic and legendary lore, which Dürer and his contemporaries so ably illustrated. The airs which some admirers of the Italian masters have given themselves are most amusing. Cumberland, for example, tells us that one of the chief reasons he had for writing his work (Bibl. 14) was to turn those—

'Who are now with weighty purses accumulating the trash of other schools into the right way as we hold it. . . . I know there are many who will start at this doctrine, and think it is my intention to lay sacrilegious hands on the Van Mechelins, Aldegravers, Van Leydens, &c.; nay, even that George Pens, Ibens, and their dear Albert Durer, will be slighted; but I can assure them I by no means think lightly of the services such men have afforded to artists whose *aims were moderate* . . . but if ever they begin to taste the beauties of the class of prints recommended [artists of the pure Roman School], they will never seek after others to any extent, or at any rate not begin their selections from them till able to extract the honey from the poisonous flower, and thus the awkward woodenness of Lucas Van Leyden, or the extravagant fury of Goltzius, will become alike innocuous.' (p. 2.)

The truth is, the two schools in their typical aspects have so little in common with each other that a fair comparison between them cannot be instituted. Their distinctive qualities and charms will affect different minds and tastes in different ways. By him in whom the feelings of the archæologist, the love of old books and missals, of early typography, and of the romance life of the north, form, as it were, the framework surrounding the liking for old prints, the German masters will be more appreciated, while he whose favourite reminiscences are those of Greece and Rome, their myths and fables, and can say,

‘ I lighted at the foot
Of Holy Helicon, and drank my fill
At the clear spout of Aganippe’s stream.
I’ve rolled my limbs in ecstasy along
The self-same turf on which old Homer lay
That night he dreamed of Helen and of Troy ;
And I have heard at midnight the sweet strains
Come quiring from the hill-top, where enshrined
In the rich foliage of a silver cloud
The Muses sang Apollo into sleep ;’

and can hypostatise such beings of the mind under forms born of the study of the crayons of Raphael and Michael Angelo,—he, we say, will perceive attractions in the masters of the south which the northern artists cannot pretend to offer him.

The broad separation of the Italian school from the German, though holding good under all circumstances as far as relates to drawing of the nude and refinement of forms, ceases to exist as respects *subjects* under certain conditions. *Laus Deo*, there is one ground on which the masters of both schools have met in common, and rendered like homage to those both beautiful and solemn topics which art become Christian constantly sought to embody. In our own department, not less than in cognate branches, art was at the commencement *religious*. Italian or German it matters not, many of the first-fruits of both were Christian in act and feeling. The first paintings of modern art—as opposed to antique and pagan—are Christian, and to be met with in the Catacombs of Rome. The death of this art seemed imminent when reviving in the thir-

teenth and fourteenth centuries it burst forth in the genius of Cimabue, Giotto, Orcagna, Cafentino, the Lippis, Masaccio in Italy, and in that of Masters Wilhelm, Stephan, Von Werden of Cologne, and of the Van Eycks, Hemling, Van der Weyden, and others in Flanders and Germany. Many works of these great men have reached us, and what are the subjects with which they mostly deal? They are the symbolism and history of the Christian life. It was the same in MS. illuminations and miniatures from the sixth and seventh centuries to this revival of Christian art. A chief, if not the chief, theme of those members of conventual houses, who were known as *miniatori*, was the Christian Church, and the objects most richly adorned by them were 'Hours,' 'Benedictionals,' 'Missals,' and 'Services.' It was the same in architecture; the earliest, the brightest gifts of genius, were employed in erecting those wondrous cathedral temples which yet exist, and still amaze us. Nor was it otherwise with the departments of engraving, of designing, and printing.

We have already seen that the earliest woodcuts which have descended to us with dates treat of sacred subjects, and that those which preceded them, but which we have received dateless, seek themes for illustration among the saints and martyrs of the Catholic faith. In the same spirit are the earlier impressions from engraved metal plates which we possess. They represent the Passion of our Lord, the work of the Master of 1446.

We need not do more than allude to the *pax* of Maso Finiguerra, and the beautiful gifts bequeathed us by Martin Schongauer and his school, to show how the Northman, as well as the Italian, proceeded in the same path. If we digress to printing and books, or remain among the earlier xylographs, there is not any difference in regard to subject. The oldest of the latter we possess treat of the Apocalypse, of the Prefiguration of the Blessed Virgin, of Human Salvation, and allied topics, while the first book printed from movable metal types bearing the printer's name and a date is a 'Psalter,' so distinct and noble in its work that it could be read from a distance by the officiating priests and chanters of the conventual choir. Almost the first

duty that was allotted to the wonderful invention here implied, as if becoming its high destiny was to say,

‘*Adorem⁹ Dñm qui fecit nos, P^s venite ad Serbite.*’*

as though the new handmaid to civilisation and Christianity should have been marked from the beginning with a preternatural grace; for

‘If this work [the Pfalter of 1457] could be considered as the earliest specimen of typography,† as it assuredly is the first with a certain date, it might indeed be almost said that the art had no infancy, but that it appeared at once in the fulness of vigour and beauty. All the known copies are on vellum, the body of the text is of a beautiful jet black, while the large initial letters are printed in red and blue. The largest of these is the letter **B** at the commencement of the first Psalm, and though it be the earliest specimen of a letter printed in two colours by two separate impressions [*antea*, p. 99], it still continues to be the best, for though it has been several times imitated, it has never been equalled.’ (Chatto, in ‘*Illust. London News*,’ April 1844, p. 254.)

While all the forms of art in their new development or revivification from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries advanced under the care of the Church, and expended most of their energies in illustration and furtherance of the Christian faith, the works of the designers and engravers, like those of the early painters in fresco, tempera, and oil, were impressed with that formal and archaic spirit and its associate intensity of expression and earnestness of purpose which characterised so markedly the early masters of Christian art. In the Italian schools this archaic spirit became refined and softened in the forms it vivified in comparison with its manifestations in the schools of Germany, but appeared to less advantage as the Southern artist left the spiritual themes of the Church for the sensuous classicism of mythic and profane stories, as it then lost, *pari passu*, the charms of

* The fourth line of the first passage of Fust and Schoeffer’s Pfalter, the first book with a printed date. (Bibl. 36.)

† The earliest specimens of typography with a date are certain Indulgences with 1454 on them (Delaborde, Dibdin, Sotheby, Humphreys).

holy expression and of lofty purpose. Both schools, however, devoted their powers to the object pointed out—an object which modern masters fought gradually to cast aside, and became, as they did so, not only more and more degraded in design and style, but often feeble and vulgar in technical processes. If the latter, along with drawing and composition, did not attain at once their full development under the hands of the earlier art ministers of religion, the spiritual expression at the command of art did; and it is this, with its attendant earnestness, which so raises the efforts of the primitive schools in the estimation of those who venerate not only the form but likewise the spirit. This spirit it is, so often linked with gentle grace, which binds together the early Italian and German masters in a common bond, however they may differ in other characteristics, no matter whether they be engravers or belong to other departments of art. The criticism applicable to one branch of the latter is adaptable to another, and the student should not find any difficulty in converting the following eloquent lines—though expressly written in reference to the works of the earlier painters—to his advantage in regard to the labours of those who first practised the engraver's art:—

‘ On entering the rooms you are met by a set of stiff figures with fixed gaze, and rigid posture, and long hands, and graceless drapery, and gold skies behind their heads, and little stiff sprigs at their feet, whom, at first sight, you condemn as equally devoid of life, expression, or truth. But wait awhile — a strange change is coming over you — you feel that these passionless figures are attracting you with a mysterious fascination — that they are telling you in a language, addressed not to the organs of sense, but to the perception of the spirit: that they were conceived, it is true, at a period when art offered no blandishments for the eye, nor scarce materials for the hand, but that which is her highest aim and object — that which was especially committed to them — the *idea* — has been more safely preserved in their starch keeping than in the softer outline, freer touch, and looser fold of a subsequent age. They tell you that they have none of the pride of life nor lust of the eye to attract a roving gaze or to fix a careless mind, but that their faith is genuine — their love pure and their devotion intense; in short, that it is not their fault, but yours, if you are of fouler

eyes than to behold their deep meaning. They tell you also a valuable truth, viz. that spiritual beauties will always overcome earthly defects. You see a virgin on a gold ground holding a child no bigger than a doll, but you forget all considerations of disproportion in that angelic expression of natural tenderness which gains upon you the longer you look. You come to an apostle standing by a crucifixion. He is at least eight feet high, with hands in proportion, but the truth is in him, and you see the inspiration to preach it, and the courage to die for it. Then you pass on to another picture—a conclave of holy matrons are sitting in great dignity; on the floor before them are several children in rich garments with glories round their heads, playing with the sword, the saw, the lance, and other emblems of martyrdom. These are the infant apostles! You care not for the incongruities and anachronisms, but only perceive a perfection of child-like tenderness and innocence, heightened by a certain infant solemnity, which announces to the spectator that high calling, of which they themselves are ignorant. Then there is a stately figure of a Bishop, St. Denis, with half his head above the eyebrows in his hand. Yet he stands the unshrinking witness of the true faith with all the nobility of expression preserved, though the noblest feat of it be away. By this time, too, you begin to discover many technical beauties. Though the trees in the background be like cabbages and the figures in the foreground like wooden images, yet there is more air in their skies and more blood in their veins than in the whole Düsseldorf School put together. The execution is exquisite, the colours tender, the shadows transparent, while finished with a minutia which claims the eye and even the microscope to the remotest corner, yet, by the intensity of expression, and by a certain artless straightforwardness of arrangement, concentrating the attention on the principal part.'

While the early Italian masters, in their treatment of religious subjects, frequently impressed them with a refinement so ideal and poetic as to remove the scenes from all relations to probable occurrence, the Germans often stamped them with so realistic an adherence to actual life as to make them parts in events which might have been acted at the time they represented them. But though different in many points, whether relating to the treatment of religious or profane history as was the practice of the two schools, there have been, nevertheless, Northern artists who appear to have been influenced by the

principles of both, and concerning whom it is occasionally disputed whether they should be ranked in the list of the masters of the Northern or of the Southern schools. These masters have usually visited Italy for some time, and become imbued with classic feelings and refined idea of form, often at the cost, however, of originality, vigour, and truthfulness. They have not the true ring of the pure Italians,—perhaps, with one exception, viz. the ‘Master of the Die,’—and yet they are far from being only Germans or Frenchmen. The result has been that such of them as have attained repute have been claimed by their countrymen, because they were born and received their early education in France or Germany, as the case might be. Others, on the contrary, have reckoned them members of the schools of Italy, because they worked much in the South, and became so influenced by the principles there prevalent as to lead them to produce works greatly at variance in their design and technic with those common to their own homes. The same has happened with respect to Continental artists who have settled or worked long in England, and *vice versa*; hence the student must not be surprised to find certain masters arranged under particular schools in our own system of classification who are placed elsewhere by others. Where, for example, it might be asked, should Claude Gellée le Lorrain be put—in the French or in the Italian School? He was born in France, and lived there until his apprenticeship expired; then went to Rome, where he became a most industrious artist. After a time, he returned to France and worked at Nantes for the Duke of Lorraine, but went back to Italy, after an absence from it of two years, and remained at Rome until he died. His art-education was distinctly Italian, and the refinement, love of Roman architecture, classic character of many of his themes, and the idyllic spirit so evident in his works, make one feel that he was far more of an Italian than a French genius. Whether we look at this great master revelling on canvases in all the gorgeous splendour of a summer’s eve, or pouring out his alluring art in the form of the most delightful etchings, we feel that, though not born, he became afterwards by choice, a true child of the South. Yet Dumesnil, with others, forming

so strong a body that we care not to resist them, consider Claude as French. Again, where shall we place George Pencz? He was born at Nürnberg, and was a pupil of Dürer, but afterwards went to Italy, becoming a not unimportant member of the school of Marc Antonio. With whom are we to associate those charming artists, whether as painters or etchers, John and Andrew Both? They were born in Holland, studied under Bloemart, and went to Rome. They worked afterwards at Venice, where Andrew died, and then John returned to Utrecht. There is nothing Dutch about their works; in all there is the feeling of Italian landscape. Paul Bril, too, where should be his resting place? He was born at Antwerp, died at Rome, and evinced in his pieces a strange compound of both Northern and Southern influences. Beyond all, what school shall claim Van Dyck? Shall that of England or of Flanders? Though born and working much at Antwerp, he was twice painting in England, was lodged at Blackfriars among his majesty's artists, was knighted by King Charles, and endowed by him with an annuity of 200*l*. He became the most popular artist of his time while in this country, marrying the daughter of Lord Gowrie, who brought him much personal beauty and the dower of a noble name. Though he afterwards visited Paris with the hope, it is believed, of being employed in the then projected decoration of the Gallery of the Louvre, he returned to England, died at Blackfriars in 1641, and was buried at St. Paul's Cathedral, with a funeral pomp suited to his world-wide reputation. Holbein is another great master who does not remain undisputed. Shall he belong to Germany, Switzerland, or England? Who was the 'Master of the Die?' Was he Bartel Beham of Nürnberg? If so, then a German became one of the most successful imitators of Marc Antonio Raimondi. Which shall retain him along with Jacob Binck—Italy or Germany? The 'Master of the Caduceus,' *alias* Jacob Walch, Jacopo di Barbarj, Il Barberino, was formerly ranked in the German School; he is now with pretty full assent transferred to that of Italy. Shall the English School detain Hollar, Lombard, Delaram, Dorigny, and Ravenet? and what is to be done with those French masters brought up under the

influences of Primaticcio, Nicolo dell' Abate, and Rosso, and known as the 'School of Fontainebleau?' May the French hold Schmidt and Wille, the Roman School Gaspar Pouffin? and where shall we place those Dutch and Flemish mezzotinto scrapers who spent the greater portions of their art lives here? Our doubtful list might easily be added to, but enough has been adduced to show we should have some excuses to offer, if afterwards found at variance with certain opinions of others, or with the principles of our own classification.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NORTHERN SCHOOLS OF WOOD-ENGRAVING FROM
EARLY TIME TO ALBERT DÜRER.

DIVISION I.—WOOD-ENGRAVING.

A. *Northern Schools*, as Germany, Holland, Flanders, Switzerland, France, England, illustrated by the

α—Earliest prints or *incunabula*.

β—Saint Christopher of 1423, and other early dated prints.

γ—Block-books.

δ—Early single or ‘fly’ sheets.

ε—Nürnberg Chronicle, Schatzbehalter, Wohlgemuth, Pleydenwurff.

THE earliest examples of the art of wood-engraving, illustrated by impressions on paper and vellum, which have reached us (*i. e. incunabula*), have not, unfortunately with but very few exceptions, any dates marked on them, so that we cannot be certain of the exact period when they were produced. The oldest wood-cut with a date generally accepted as authentic is an engraving known as the Buxheim Saint Christopher, familiar from facsimiles and reduced copies. It has the year ‘millesimo ccccxx tercio’ (or terno) inscribed on it. There is, however, another print, the Bruffels Virgin, discovered since the Saint Christopher, which lays claim to being five years older than the latter, and exhibits the date MCCCC°XVIII. But the genuineness of the inscription has been called in question by some good authorities, and it is maintained that the Buxheim Saint Christopher is still the oldest wood-cut known having a date beyond suspicion. There is a third cut with an early date on it—a Saint Sebastian marked with 1437. Besides

these are two others on which are *written* the dates 1440 and 1443 respectively.

The before-mentioned wood-engravings are the only ones hitherto discovered, bearing distinct dates anterior to the second half of the fifteenth century, and of these but one alone—the Saint Christopher—can be said to be accepted generally as satisfactory, and this even has been declared—as we shall presently see—by one or two critics to be not quite *sans peur et sans reproche*.

There is reason for believing, as before stated (p. 14), that we have more ancient wood-cuts than the Saint Christopher, and its contemporaries; but then those cuts have not any dates. Of course, in respect to them no direct and absolute testimony to their earlier origin is producible. They are comparatively few in number, extremely rare, in fact almost unique; and it is their intrinsic characters alone of style, design, and execution, which lead the observer to accept or reject the early dates assigned by some for their production. With respect to them and the sources to which to go for illustrations we have before spoken, and shall further observe only that some high authorities at the sale of the Leipzig Collection (1872) expressed the opinion that M. Weigel had scarcely sufficient warranty for attributing such early dates as he had given to many of his wood-cuts, and that he had been seriously mistaken in more than one instance. We pass on to some details connected with ‘the Saint Christopher of 1423—the time whence the annals of engraving have fixed their first landmark’

In 1769, Heinecken, the keeper of the Prints at Dresden, met with an engraving, concerning which in his ‘*Idée Générale*’ (Bibl. 30), published in 1771, he thus wrote,—

‘I discovered in the Chartreuse of Buxheim, near Memmingen, one of our most ancient convents in Germany, the figure of Saint Christopher carrying the infant Jesus through the sea: opposite to him is the hermit who raises his lanthorn to light him, and behind the saint is a peasant carrying a sack with his back to the spectator ascending a hill. This piece of a folio size is engraved on wood, and illuminated after the manner of our playing-cards; at the bottom may be read—

“Cristofori* faciem, die quacunque tueris.

Ilia nempe die morte mala non morieris.

Millesimo cccc^oxx^o tercio.”

‘At any rate,’ continues Heineken, ‘we know with certitude from this cut that figures and letters were engraved in 1423. There is not even any ground for suspicion here. The print is pasted on the binding of an old book of the fifteenth century. One of the old members of the convent, probably, thus desired to preserve it, and at that time not any person doubted nor disputed concerning its antiquity.’ (p. 250.)

The old book referred to was a manuscript of a ‘*Laus Virginis*,’ completed in 1417, and left to the convent by Anna Canoness of Buchaw, living in 1427, but dying probably before 1435. The cut of the Saint Christopher was pasted within the right hand side of the binding, while within the left hand side of the same binding was another wood-cut, an Angelic Salutation, similar in size to the Saint Christopher, worked off on apparently the same kind of paper as the latter had been, with a like ink, and therefore, in all probability, executed about the same time. The binding consisted of grey, uncurried, or untanned leather. The contents of the volume had been written in a brown coloured (faded?) ink, and here and there rubricated. The numerals 1417 were at the end of four lines of MS. following the colophon, which likewise contained the same date. (Dibdin, ‘*Bibliotheca Spenceriana*.’)

The cut has been impressed on paper rather thick than otherwise, with dark-coloured ink, apparently prepared with oil or varnish. The whole has been afterwards coloured with the help of a stencil—at least so it is supposed. The size of the cut from engraved border to border is $11\frac{1}{10}$ inches high, by $8\frac{1}{10}$ inches wide. The majority of writers persist in affirming that the date on it is *millesimo cccc^oxx tercio*. We agree with a small minority which reads *terno* instead of *tercio*, but do not think Pinkerton justified in using *terno* distributively, and so multiplying each x by *ter*, and bringing forward the date to 1460.

The book and cuts in question came afterwards into the possession of Earl Spencer, the father of the present Earl, who pur-

* The word is *Cristofori* in the original.

chased them at a high price, and they remain at the celebrated library at Althorp (associated with many other rare and costly *incunabula* of art) in the same condition we believe as when found. A facsimile of the Saint Christopher, the size of the original, was published by Von Murr in his *Journal* for 1776, by Ottley in his 'Inquiry' (Bibl. 50 and 52), both coloured and uncoloured; and in 'L'Artiste' (année 1839), copies of both Murr's and Ottley's facsimiles were given by M. Léon Delaborde, to show in what respects they differed from each other.

It is generally considered that the Saint Christopher is much superior in both design and engraving to many of the cuts of analogous subjects produced several years later; and judging from the manner of its execution, it can scarcely be regarded as a first or even second effort in the art.

'The engraving, though coarse, is executed in a bold and free manner, and the folds of the drapery are marked in a style which would do credit to a proficient. The whole subject, though expressed by means of few lines, is not executed in the very simplest style of art. In the draperies a diminution and a thickening of the lines where necessary to the effect may be observed, and the shades are indicated by means of parallel lines, both perpendicular, oblique, and curved, as may be seen in the Saint's robe and mantle. In many of the woodcuts executed between 1462 and 1500, the figures are expressed and the drapery indicated by simple lines of one undeviating degree of thickness, without the slightest attempt at shading by means of parallel lines running in a direction different to those marking the folds of the drapery or the outlines of the figure.' (Jackson and Chatto, p. 48.)

According to Passavant, the style of the drawing quite corresponds to that of the first quarter of the fifteenth century. The features are strongly pronounced, and the folds of the draperies are devoid of those angular breaks practised at the middle of the fifteenth century. Though nearly all agree as to the somewhat advanced art-character of the Saint Christopher, there are yet dissentients to this opinion. Duchesne, *e. g.* finds the surest proof of its antiquity in the 'rudeness and defectiveness of the design.'

We have stated that the cut of the Saint Christopher has been

generally looked upon as beyond suspicion of having been tampered with, and as proving by the date engraved on it the time when it was produced. But there have been a few who have affirmed the wood-cut in question is not what it has been assumed to be. One of the most vigorous of the detractors of the Saint Christopher was the late Mr. Holt, the archæologist. As the character of the most ancient print, with a date attached to it, forms an important and interesting inquiry, it would scarcely be right for the young connoisseur to remain ignorant of what may be said on the matter. His knowledge on the subject might some day be canvassed, when, as a professed amateur of ancient prints, he would not like to be found wanting. We trust, therefore, that the following remarks will not be deemed superfluous.

In 'Notes and Queries' for 1868, Mr. H. F. Holt observes :—

'From one cause or another the date of the Saint Christopher of 1423 was permitted to reign undisputed until 1819, when Koning boldly declared the date to be false, and contended that it should be 1473—millesimo cccc°LXX tertio—and that the L had been erased. In that opinion he was supported by Sotzmann, who founded *his* argument on the ground that "no other engraving of so ancient a date was known, and that those which had been theretofore found were *posterior* to 1450." A third objector also presented himself in the person of Mr. Pinkerton, who designated the true date to be "millesimo cccc°xx tertio—1460." Fully concurring in the opinion of those authorities that the date 1423 *could not possibly* indicate the period when the woodcut was executed, I nevertheless was unable to agree, either with Koning or Pinkerton, as to the particular manner in which the supposed alteration in the date had been effected; and, believing that the so-called "facsimiles" might be treated as approximately faithful representations of the original woodcut, I came to the conclusion that the readiest and most probable manner in which the presumed fraud in the date had been contrived was by converting the "c" of the "xc" into an x; thereby, with a stroke of the pen, adding seventy years to its date; and I accordingly, in July 1864, at a meeting of the Archæological Institute, announced the opinion I had formed.'

The right answer to these surmises of Koning, Pinkerton, and Holt, is readily afforded by the latter authority himself, who confesses that neither he nor the other two dissentients had ever seen

the original print, which they had declared to have been tampered with ! But afterwards,—

‘By the courtesy and kindness of Mr. Cavendish Boyle I was,’ writes Mr. Holt, ‘on the 28th of August last, afforded an opportunity of leisurely and carefully examining the far-famed woodcut in Lord Spencer’s celebrated library at Althorp ; and the result I arrived at was, that it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the date 1423 on the engraving has never been falsified in any manner, and consequently that all theories founded on such an idea fall to the ground, and may be henceforth dismissed as utterly untenable.’

This is so far satisfactory. But Sotzmann, besides doubting the validity of the date, on the score of its earliness, and the absence of other prints with equally early dates, suggested that the legendary inscription found at the bottom of the cut might relate to some event which happened in 1423 during the occurrence of which a pious person, on looking at the figure of the Saint, would pray to be preserved that day from a sudden death.

Mr. Holt, having committed himself to maintain that the date 1423 could not possibly indicate the period when the woodcut was executed, curiously enough found himself justified in continuing to think so after he had had the opportunity of examining the Saint Christopher ; his justification for doing this being derived from another source than a supposed tampering with the date. Had it not been for Sotzmann, however, we suspect the source in question would not have been discovered.

‘By some unaccountable fallacy of reasoning, every commentator on the Saint Christopher has completely overlooked the Hamlet in the play—the simple explanatory key which discloses the true state of the case—viz. the fact that the woodcut in question is divided into two separate portions, the “ Saint ” and the “ legend,” and that they are so thoroughly distinct the one from the other as to admit of their being readily separated at any moment, without injury or prejudice to either, each being complete in itself. When the German artist was commissioned to engrave the Saint, he was supplied with the Latin legend, and he simply copied it—the date being that *on the legend*—without the slightest connexion existing between it and the period at which the woodcut was produced. By this “ common-sense solution ” the fallacy of Baron Heineken and his

disciples is annihilated at one fell swoop, truth is recognised after a continuous suppression of nearly one hundred years, and the natural progress of art relieved from the bondage by which it has been so long and improperly trammelled. . . . I hope I may be excused from here mentioning (*par parenthèse*) that I have often smiled at the manner in which the clever librarian, Krifmer, permitted Heinecken to revel in the enjoyment of his imaginary treasure-trove. Whilst in his [Heinecken's] eyes "1423" decided the date at which the Saint Christopher was engraved, the cunning monk—who, of course, knew better, and that it merely formed an adjunct to the legend—took great care not to undeceive him. A premature disclosure of the truth would have spoiled Krifmer's market and deprived him of the price of his reticence,' &c., &c.

Not only to Sotzmann, but to a perusal of M. Renouvier's work (Bibl. 60), Mr. Holt was, we suspect, indebted for the suggestion that the woodcut is divisible into two distinct portions—the Saint and the legend—and that the date which follows the latter is connected with it, or to some event concerning the Saint, and not with the execution of the engraving. In support of this particular view of Mr. Holt, we may likewise refer to some remarks of Mr. W. J. Thoms, in 'Notes and Queries' for October, 1868, which inquire whether there was in the year 1423 a likelihood for any special demand for such protection to pilgrims as 'Christofres' were supposed to supply. Mr. Thoms refers to a Bull of Urban the Sixth reducing the jubilees to every thirty-three years, and commanding the year 1390 to be observed as such a festival. 'Presuming,' says Mr. Thoms, 'this bull to have been acted upon, the second jubilee held by it would be the year 1423, the date of the legend.' But Mr. Holt maintains, further, that—

'Other substantive objections exist which I believe must satisfy every unprejudiced mind that the block from which the engraving was printed *could not* have been cut at the early date hitherto assigned to it. Thus the Saint Christopher was produced by means of a "printing-press," and with "printing-ink," neither of which had ever been heard of in 1423; and, further, it is printed on paper identical with that ordinarily used by Martin Schön, as well as by Albrecht Dürer, between 1480 and 1500, which paper bears the well-known watermark of the period, viz., a bull's head with an upright line rising between the horns, and surmounted by a flower; and, lastly, whilst the style of the Saint Christopher is precisely

that which might have been reasonably expected *circa* 1493, there was no woodcut whatever in existence in or prior to 1423, nor for more than sixty years afterwards, comparable to it in the remotest degree, either in originality of treatment, vigour of execution, or practical knowledge of wood-engraving, the celebrated initials in the Mayence Bible alone excepted. . . . The admiration of the Saint Christopher should be limited to the talent displayed in the engraving itself, which, for reasons I explained in 1864 at the Archæological Institute, I most firmly believe to be the work of Albrecht Dürer. . . . That attribution I still maintain,—that it was executed by him at Colmar in 1493, on the occasion of his visit to the brothers of Martin Schön.’ (Notes and Queries, August, September, October, 1868.)

According to Mr. Ottley, the Saint Christopher had been printed with a press—at least this was his original opinion, which, as we shall presently see, he afterwards somewhat modified; and Dr. Dibdin considered the impression to have been worked off in ‘printer’s ink.’ With both of these opinions Mr. Noel Humphreys agrees, and considers, therefore, that the impression at Althorp is not one of the original or earliest impressions from the block, but one worked off at a later date. This is possible enough to have been the case without detriment to the question *sub judice*. Suffice it, however, to say that the chief counts in the indictment against the Buxheim Saint Christopher of 1423 are,—

1. That the date is *suspecte*, because no other wood-engraving so old, having the year marked on it, is known to exist.
2. That the date has been tampered with.
3. That the date refers to the legend in some unrecognised way, and not to the period at which the figure of the Saint was engraved.
4. That the impression is in ‘printer’s ink;’ whereas, in 1423, such ink was not used.
5. That the impression has been worked off by means of a press; whereas, in 1423, the printer’s press was unknown.
6. That the paper on which it is printed bears the watermark of the bull’s head, and which is of the time of Dürer.
7. That the design, style, and technic are far beyond what might be expected to have been produced in 1423—in fact, are fine enough to be due to Albert Dürer.

With respect to the first count, it may be observed that, unless we are bound to discover *several* cuts of a like date to each other—and whence arises, it may be asked, such obligation?—the most ancient engraving known may be left to stand without suspicion *quoad* the date, *i. e.* if all other circumstances concur to favour its pretensions. Further, we are *sure* that wood-engraving was practised before 1423, since the name of the ‘*Formschneider Ulrich*’ stands inscribed on the registers of the city of Ulm for 1398.

As regards the *second* count, we have already seen that it has been withdrawn—at least by Mr. Holt.

In respect to the *third* count, all that we can say is, that it is mere assumption and assertion. The *onus probandi* of its truth rests with those who promote it. Hitherto sufficient evidence has not been brought forward in its support. In fact, the date might belong to both figure and legend; the jubilee referred to by Mr. Thoms might have occurred in the year 1423, and the ‘Christofre’ might then have been engraved to meet its requirements.

The *fourth* count may be true, and yet not be a sufficient reason for rejecting the authenticity of the date. The count affirms the cut to have been taken in ‘printer’s ink,’ in ‘dark colouring matter similar to printer’s ink,’ and in ‘black oil-colour, or what is commonly termed printer’s ink.’ In reply, we assert, with Passavant, that engravings probably more ancient than the Saint Christopher, have been taken off in very dark ink, and reference may further be made to Weigel (Bibl. 70) in support of the same opinion. We would particularly direct attention to a Saint Christopher, no. 12, vol. i., an impression from a metal plate executed—it is thought by Weigel—between 1375 and 1400. It is notable for having been printed with ink of a deep black colour mixed with oil or varnish. Weigel and Passavant agree in this: and from examination of *incunabula* in the British Museum and elsewhere, we accord with them, *viz.* that the greater or less degree of blackness of the colour in which a cut has been printed when used alone to determine the age of the print, may lead to a false conclusion. We know, too (Eastlake, ‘Materials,’ &c.), that colouring matters, mixed with oil

and varnishes, were used for various purposes from a period much earlier than 1423, to say nothing of their employment among the Greeks and Byzantines. In the MS. of Peter de St. Andemar (in the Library at Paris), supposed to be coeval with the better known treatise of the monk Theophilus, 'Diversarum Artium Schedula,' compiled at the close of the twelfth century, occurs the direction to use (*nigrum*) 'in maceris—vel cum aqua vel cum ovo et in lignis cum oleo.' Weigel, alluding to a 'zeugdruck' in his possession, considered to be of the first quarter of the fifteenth century, writes, 'The black colour has been produced by a mixture of oil with pine foot (*kienrufs*), the red by oil and ruddle.' Objection fairly may be taken to the use of the term 'printer's ink' in lieu of dark colouring matter mixed with oil, as tending to a foregone conclusion, as likewise to Mr. Humphreys' statement that all wood-blocks in 1423 were 'invariably printed with distemper colours.'

In respect to the *fifth* count, which affirms the impression to have been taken by means of a press, reply may be made in the words of Jackson and Chatto, that—

'As the back of the cut cannot be seen in consequence of its being pasted on the cover of the volume, it cannot be ascertained, with any degree of certainty, whether the impression has been taken by means of a press, or *rubbed off* from the block by means of a burnisher or rubber, in a manner similar to that in which wood-engravers of the present day take their proofs;' (p. 47.)

and with Passavant, that 'nothing authorizes the belief that it has been printed off by the press.' But even could such an opinion be accepted as expressing the fact, it would not damage the validity of the Saint Christopher, since, as before remarked (page 28), some kind of press was very early in use by both joiner and bookbinder. Camefena is stated by Weigel to have met with, on the binding of a book, in the Library of the Benedictine Convent at M^olk, very early remains of tessellated, arabesque-like ornamentation produced by a hand-press upon the thin calf-skin leather, and relieved or brought out by colour.

Mr. Ottley, whose statements in his 'History of Engraving' gave impetus to the opinion that the Saint Christopher had been

printed by means of a press, afterwards, in his work, 'An Inquiry concerning the Invention of Printing,' placed the matter in a different light, as the following will show,—

'I formerly observed, in speaking of these two wood-prints [the Saint Christopher and its companion, the Angelic Salutation], that they show no signs of having been taken off by friction, but were evidently printed with a press, but I now find that in saying this, I went farther than I could be justified in doing without examining the backs of them, which, as they are pasted within the covers of the MS. above mentioned, it was impossible for me to do. For I have since met with early wood-engravings of Germany and the Low Countries taken off in black ink by friction as well as in the brownish tint, which was commonly employed in the ancient block-books. Others, again, I have found taken off in black printing-ink with a press, and indeed I am in possession of a specimen of wood-engraving printed in black oil-colour on both sides the paper by a downright pressure, which I consider to have been without doubt printed in or before the year 1445.' . . . 'It appears, therefore, that both these methods of taking impressions from engraved blocks were used at a very early period. Whether the Saint Christopher and its companion were printed by friction, or with a press, I undertake not to determine, though I incline to the opinion that they were printed in the latter method. I am aware that the invention of a press for printing with has been commonly considered contemporaneous with the invention of typography, and that a proper black ink for printing is said to have been first introduced in Holland or Germany at the same time: but black oil-colour was certainly used long previously in painting; and that both these are vulgar errors seems sufficiently proved by the prints just mentioned.' (p. 187.)

That 'prenters,' whatever the term may imply exactly, existed at Antwerp in 1417 we are authorized in believing from the documents published by M. Léon de Burbure ('Bull. de l'Acad. Roy. de Belgique,' 2nd series, t. viii. n. 11). M. Van Even, of Louvain, also has shown that in 1440 the 'prenters' of that town claimed before the authorities certain rights that had always belonged to their *predecessors*. Upon this point reference may be made for details to the memoir of M. Ruelens in the 'Documents,' &c. Bibl. 19, troism. liv. p. 44.

Further, both the fourth and fifth counts might be met with the admission that the impression of the Saint Christopher that has

come down to us was one thrown off some time after the block had been engraved, and thus the date of the execution of the latter is not affected.

The *sixth* count refers to the paper on which the Saint Christopher has been printed, affirming it to be of the same description, and bearing the same water-mark, viz., a bull's head, with an upright line rising between the horns and surmounted by a flower, as the paper employed in the time of Dürer and Schongauer. Mr. Ottley, in his last and posthumous treatise, edited by M. Berjeau (Bibl. 52), observes, in relation to the water-mark of the Saint Christopher,—

‘The paper-mark appears to be a bull's head, with an upright line rising between the horns and surmounted by a flower’—‘the above two prints being pasted down, I was unable to trace the *exact* shape of the paper-mark, as I might have done could I have seen through the paper by holding it up to the light.’ (p. 186.)

Now if the cut be still fixed to the binding of the ‘*Laus Virginis*,’ we do not know the means by which the character of the paper has been so definitely determined by Mr. Holt. But even had the paper of the Saint Christopher the well-known water-mark of the bull's head, the validity of the print would not necessarily be jeopardised, for, according to Gütermann (referred to by Haufmann of Hanover [Bibl. 29]), the ox-head was the trade-mark of the Holbain family of Ravensburg, who already made linen paper at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Sotheby (vol. iii. p. 113) gives a copy of a tracing of a bull's head, with stalk and flower, or star, which he obtained from a MS. of about 1376–1381; and in Weigel's collection several forms of bulls' heads appear in cuts certainly executed before the time of Dürer.

The *seventh* and last count refers to a matter rather of feeling than of fact. If Mr. Chatto, *e.g.* thinks that the figure of the Saint and that of the youthful Christ whom he bears on his shoulders are, with the exception of the extremities, designed in such a style that ‘they would scarcely discredit Albert Dürer himself’ (p. 47), and if Mr. Holt believes that the print under discussion actually be the work of this great master, other persons are of different opinions. Duchesne, as before stated, found the strongest

evidence of its antiquity in the rudeness and defectiveness of the design,—

‘It is one of those curiosities,’ he says, ‘which cannot be seen without a feeling of astonishment. It interests me neither by the composition, the drawing, nor the work, for nothing can be coarser, more incorrect, and less agreeable to the eye. But when we come to reflect that a print intended to respond to popular devotion, a simple sheet of paper, has been enabled to traverse a period of four centuries and reach us without accident, we cannot feel surprised at the value attached to such an object.’ (*Notice des Estampes exposées dans la Bibl. Royale.* Paris, 1837.)

According to M. de Brou, ‘the style is that of the commencement of the fifteenth century, and the coarse character of the technic clearly indicates the infancy of the engraver’s art.’ M. Lacroix is of opinion (*Bibl.* 41), that it is ‘so roughly engraved, and in drawing so faulty, that it is only natural to assume that it must be one of the earliest attempts at wood-engraving.’ Mr. Ottley, admitting that the principal group is composed with dignity, and that the drapery is in part in a grand style, allows that ‘the extremities and some other parts of the figures are so defective in point of drawing as to give reason to suspect that the artist who prepared the design from which the print was immediately engraved had no part in the invention of the piece, except that of introducing the fish under the feet of the saint, the diminutive mill in the foreground, and the other accessories, all of them so far beneath criticism that one could almost suppose it had been his intention, by surrounding Saint Christopher with such absurdities, to bring the saint into disrepute.’ Sotheby speaks of the Saint Christopher (*v.* iii. p. 174) as ‘that remarkably coarse, but celebrated wood-engraving;’ and while Mr. Holt perceives in the treatment of the figure the work of the chief master of the sixteenth century, Passavant declares its style to be completely in accordance with that of the first quarter of the fifteenth.

Admitting, however, with Ottley, that as far as the youthful Christ and part of the figure of the saint are concerned, the subject is designed with dignity and feeling, showing an intention and power out of keeping with the somewhat Japanese-like treatment of the rest, we maintain that it is exactly this want of balance that

should lead us to regard with favour the claim of the Saint Christopher,—a want of balance which may be met with in cuts which we suspect to be earlier than the Buxheim engraving of 1423. The masters of *incunabula* constantly produced work having expression and grace, as far as the features and general *pose* of the body were concerned, but were not only bad, but wretched exponents of the extremities, and often ridiculous in respect to the accessories they introduced. The work of Weigel (Bibl. 70) exhibits several illustrations having quite as much feeling and dignity as are to be found in the Saint Christopher, and these in cuts which there are reasons for thinking to be as early, if not earlier than the Buxheim engraving. Particular reference may be made to no. 9, a 'zeugdruck,' supposed to be of the second quarter of the fifteenth century, for the exhibition of much grace and feeling.

The remarks of Mr. Holt concerning Krifmer laughing in his sleeve as Heineken was taken in by him on the discovery of the print, are baseless and unworthy of place in serious discussion, nor can less be said for the superficial and contemptuous manner in which Mr. Holt conducted his attack on early prints and block-books in general.

Not long after the account and facsimile of the Saint Christopher had appeared in Von Murr's Journal (1776), antiquarians were startled by hearing that another impression of the print had been found, which was eventually secured by the Bibliothèque Royale de Paris. Soon came the discovery of a copy at Basse, while another made its appearance in the cabinet of M. Birkenstock of Vienna, and which still could be seen—according to Pafsavant—in the collection of Madame Brentano at Frankfurt. Confusion followed, particularly the Parisian announcement; and Dr. Dibdin, along with the Althorp Saint Christopher, made a journey to the French capital in 1819 at the request of Lord Spencer to investigate the matter. The subject was afterwards taken up by Delaborde and others, the result of the inquiries being the proof that all these so-called original and early impressions of the Buxheim engraving of 1423 were simply 'modern antiques,' manufactured out of the facsimile copy of the original engraved by Roland in 1776 for the illustration in Von Murr's Journal,

and by a specimen of which, after it had been duly toned down with an infusion of coffee, Murr himself had been deceived! The Paris Saint Christopher was afterwards withdrawn from exposition, notwithstanding M. Crapelet's attempts at justification, though an account of it was still allowed to remain without any reference to its true character in the *Description des Estampes exposées*, etc., published in 1855. Fuller details than have been here given may be found in M. Delaborde's memoir in 'L'Artiste,' before referred to (p. 155), in the first volume of Passavant, p. 27, in the work of M. Renouvier (Bibl. 60), and in Dibdin's Bibliographical Tour, vol. ii. p. 143, note, and 2nd edition, vol. ii. pp. 56, 57.

It has been stated that in the same volume—the 'Laus Virginis'—in which the Saint Christopher was found, another woodcut, an Angelic Salutation, or Annunciation, but without a date, was also met with. This cut was nearly of the same size as the former, had been worked off on like paper, with similar dark-coloured ink, and both had been coloured apparently by means of stencils. The conclusion was drawn that both pieces had been produced about the same time, and that they had been joined together originally on one paper, so as to form a kind of diptych. A reduced copy of this beautiful design—the Salutation—can be seen in the works of Ottley and Jackson. In the composition there is so much delicacy and refinement that Ottley was struck by its resemblance to the style of the old Italian schools. From the character of the architecture and the graceful attitude of the Virgin, the easy folds of the drapery, and by the inscriptions on both pieces being in characters of a somewhat less Gothic form, and less perplexed by abbreviations than those usually found on the early woodcuts of Germany and the Low Countries, Mr. Ottley suggested that the Angelic Salutation and the Saint Christopher might turn out to be the productions of Italy, and not of Germany. Certainly we never look at a copy of the former print without thinking of the Crivelli (no. 739, 1872) in the National Gallery; but we know that the Germans could be graceful, very graceful, occasionally; and, moreover, there are strong reasons for discarding Italy as the birth-place of these two prints, which reasons may be found stated in the work of Jackson and Chatto, p. 54. Weigel, who possessed a very similar, if not identical, cut of

the Salutation of the 'Laus Virginis,' referring to the suggestion of Ottley, remarks (vol. i. p. 47):—

'In our specimen we cannot discover the least ground for such evidence; on the contrary, in style, form, and colour, there is so much of High German that we abstain from a refutation of Ottley's opinion, and invite connoisseurs to a critical examination for themselves, by which they will in all probability be led to view the matter from our own stand-point.'

The reduced copies of the Althorp Salutation, in Ottley and Jackson, give us certainly a higher feeling of delicacy and refinement than do the facsimiles in Weigel; such may be due, however, to the error of the copyist in making his drawing more delicate than that in the originals, and to the smaller size, in which the figures are represented.

The 'Brussels Print' next demands our attention. Down to 1844 the Buxheim woodcut could claim the right of being regarded as the oldest known engraving *with a date*. In that year an inhabitant of Malines being in the act of breaking up an old coffer which had contained some mouldy parchments, found an antique-looking print pasted inside the lid. Fortunately, M. de Noter, an architect of Malines, happened to be present, and carefully taking off the fragments—for the print was in a dilapidated state—afterwards succeeded in putting them skilfully together. He then discovered the date of the year 1418 clearly visible on the engraving. Intelligence of the discovery was immediately conveyed to the Baron de Reiffenberg, the conservator of the Royal Library at Brussels, who after an inspection of the print and communication with the Government, purchased it for the Library for 500 francs. The print represented the Virgin and Infant Jesus with Saint Catherine, Saint Barbara, Saint Dorothea, and Saint Margaret, seated within a palisaded garden, similar to that of 'the Pucelle d'Holland' ('*Hortus conclusus*,' 'A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse.' Song of Solomon.) In the upper part of the composition were three angels with wreaths and two doves. On the top bar of the gate of the palisade was inscribed MCCCC^cXVIII^o. On the outside of the palisade was a rabbit, as if just come out of its hole. The print had been coloured according to the custom of the time, but some of the red and a little dirty green colour and

bistre only remained. The watermark of the paper was an anchor, placed horizontally in the upper division of the sheet—a mark not to be found in any of the prints collated by Janfen.

The engraving, as it now stands, is 16 inches high by almost $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. Age has imparted to it a brownish-yellow tint, and it is torn and worm-eaten in several places. In fine, it is in so very poor a condition, so faded, and yet so discoloured, that without some attention it is not easily deciphered in parts. The whole of the inferior portion has been torn off, and part of the rent runs up into the palisade of the garden. The piece here described is considered by several good observers extremely like in work to the well-known 'Virgin' of an early period belonging to the Berlin Cabinet; in fact, both have been thought to have been produced by the same hands. But according to M. Ruelens the letters of the inscriptions in each are so different that the text at least could not have been cut by the same master.

Not long after the discovery at Malines, a somewhat reduced copy of the cut was published in the 'Athenæum' (Oct. 1845), and some account given of its history. In 1864 a full description, with two facsimiles—coloured and uncoloured—were given in the 'Documents Iconographiques et Xylographiques de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique,' by M. Ruelens, along with a critical analysis of the testimony in favour of and against the validity of the date. To this memoir reference should be made, if practicable, if not, the third volume of Sotheby's 'Principia,' p. 174, may be substituted.

When the 'Brussels Print' became known, its authenticity was so favourably acknowledged that there seemed likelihood of the Saint Christopher being deposed from its honourable position.

'It is only necessary to say,' wrote the authority in the 'Athenæum'—following Reiffenberg apparently—'in confirmation of the authenticity of the original which is now deposited in the Public Library of Brussels, that the paper on which it is printed, the colours that have been employed, and the condition in which it was found, attest an antiquity which the date of the engraving renders incontestable, the minutest examination having failed to detect the slightest sign of falsification. Indeed, the circumstances under which the Malines print was acquired at once preclude a supposition of this nature, for it was only a few days in the possession of the first

proprietor, an ignorant *cabaretier*, who knew nothing of the appliances of art; it then passed into the hands of an architect named De Noter, a gentleman of known probity, who almost immediately communicated his discovery to the Baron de Reiffenberg, and straightway the print was purchased by that eminent archæologist for the Public Library at Brussels, of which he is the conservator.'

Notwithstanding the favour with which the Malines print was received, good judges have since been opposed to each other in their estimates as to the genuineness of the date it bears. If Reiffenberg, Luthereau, Renouvier, Berjeau, Ruelens, and others consider the latter to be genuine, on the other hand M. de Brou, Passavant, Lacroix, and Chatto do not. M. de Brou contends that the style of the engraving does not warrant the date 1418, and gives not less than forty-six designs of female costume from illuminated MSS. of 1401-1491 to support his opinion that the print should be assigned to a period between 1460 and 1480. He maintains, also, that at the present time the date is no longer in its

'primitive condition, and may have been altered. In fact, all the numerals have been gone over with a blacklead pencil, the mccc very gently, so as to be barely evident; but in the xviii the x and the v have been marked by the pencil with such force that it is impossible to say what the numbers were originally. The three units alone are nearly intact, and probably remain as they were at first printed.'—'It may be replied, perhaps, that if the numerals have been gone over with the pencil, it was done only to render them more distinct; but the fault would not be more pardonable, since henceforth the reality of the date may always be contested, and, it must be owned, with very good reason. Far better would it have been to have allowed the numerals to have remained just as they were, however faint their condition may have been: then every one might have judged how far the date 1418 was really and indubitably to be found there.' (Quelques Mots sur la gravure au Milleme de 1418, par C.D.B. Bruxelles, 1846—Un Dernier Mot sur l'Estampe a Milleme 1418.)

Passavant (vol. i. p. 110) thus comments on the 'Brussels Print':—

'The composition is of the style of the school of Van Eyck. . . On the barrier of the garden is to be found the pretended date of 1418. But if it be attentively regarded, it will be seen that this is the form under which

the date appears, viz.: M CCCXVIII: 'The unusual sign having almost the form of a circle, to be found in the middle, has been added to replace the letter L, which has been scratched out, but of which traces are still to be distinctly seen. The original date, therefore, was MCCCC^oLX^oVIII (1468); and the sole point of interest to us about the print is, that it shows that the same pale brown tinted colour ordinarily employed for printing the old block-books of the Netherlands continued to be used up to this time.'

Lacroix speaks (*Les Arts au Moyen-age*) of the Brussels print as 'a composition of a somewhat grand style, which does not agree very well with the date 1418 which may be seen at the foot of the print.' Chatto maintains (*History of Playing-Cards*) that as the numerals 'have evidently been repaired by means of a blacklead pencil, both the genuineness and the authenticity of the date have been very justly questioned.' M. Renouvier, at first a sceptic and afterwards a believer, writes,—

'On looking at the cut it was evident that it was the work of an ancient printer, worked off, like playing-cards, in distemper ink, with colours "*au moule*," rubber, and stencil. But since it had suffered some rather severe alterations and a restoration the extent of which could not be defined, one felt bound to hesitate about the original date. But having again seen the print and examined it very scrupulously, I am bound to say that the cut where the date is is intact, and that I cannot any longer refuse to concur in its acceptance.'

M. Ruelens himself was, like Renouvier, at first an unbeliever, but became afterwards a strenuous advocate for the complete genuineness of 'La Vierge de 1418.'

'At the time when the print was obtained for the government we had not the honour of being connected with the establishment where it is now preserved. When we became attached to the latter, several years after the discovery of the cut, we were strongly opposed to its authenticity. Influenced by the many rumours then circulating, and which have not yet ceased, we belonged to the dissentient party. Later, being able to study the specimen at leisure, and to consult numerous iconophiles, our doubts have vanished, and at present we do not find the least difficulty in admitting the perfect authenticity of the print and its date.'

As long as there exists any doubt concerning the condition

and import of the actual numerals, criticism respecting other details in support of or against the date of production of the print would be simply *de trop*. We shall confine ourselves, therefore, to this question of the numerals, referring the reader to M. Ruelens' memoir (Bibl. 19, 3^{me} livr.) for full information upon other topics; premising, however, that it is quite within the scope of human nature that M. le Baron Reiffenberg and M. Ruelens—the stronger advocates of the genuineness of the date—may feel a kind of official anxiety about the legitimacy of their art-offspring, and that others will therefore the more closely scrutinise everything they have to say in its favour.

M. Reiffenberg states, in his first memoir relative to the 'Virgin of 1418,' that,—

'With the use of so powerful a lens that the eye can pierce the texture of the paper, not the least sign of any falsification can be perceived.'

After M. de Brou had published his critique, together with his 'Dernier Mot,' relative to the treatment of the numerals with the blacklead pencil, Baron Reiffenberg replied,—

'I declare that when I first saw the print and bought it there was not the least trace of lead-pencil about the date. If, either in order to cause doubts to be cast on the specimen or from any imprudence, some one to whom it has been confided or has traced it allowed himself to use the pencil, I cannot say. All I maintain is that I have seen the date, both with the lens and the naked eye, *perfectly intact*.'

Of course, all that M. de Brou could speak as to was the actual condition of the date when he examined it; what it might have been before he saw it he could not tell. Nor does the Baron, to our mind, say so clearly as could be desired that the numerals are *now* distinctly as if they had never been interfered with: as to whether anybody has touched them with the pencil, 'c'est ce que j'ignore.' M. Ruelens, however, is evidently quite sure that they continue as they were from the first, and maintains that—

'the date is perfectly and incontestably plain and intact, and that the traces of pencil which M. de Brou asserts having seen "ne sont guères perceptibles." Undoubtedly the lines of the numerals, as well as of

the entire drawing, are not as defined as they would be in a print worked off in oil ink with the press; but they indubitably exist, and are visible without the aid of a lens. Were pencil-marks superimposed, it would not require a practised eye to distinguish the demarcation of the line of the pencil from that of the course of the bistre-like ink, and to discover how much the one has changed or added to the other. Careful examination of the print affords no trace of this folding together, as it were, of the ink and the pencil. That formerly marks of the pencil existed we cannot undertake to say; at the present time, at least, they do not exist any longer.

‘Has a numeral of the date been scratched out? It is little probable. The latter is divided into two equal portions by the peg which fixes the diagonal bar to the horizontal one. The last c and the x are placed at equal distances from this peg; an intermediate L between the latter and the x would certainly have destroyed such symmetrical arrangement. It is scarcely necessary to remark that not anyone, except M. Passavant, had observed that a numeral had been scratched or removed from the situation in question. The peg is too well indicated, and corresponds too well with the other pegs, distinctly to be seen on the other traverses of the gate to allow of the supposition that it has been substituted in place of an L. If it be yet thought that the x had formerly been an L, we maintain once more—in spite of the hesitating insinuation of M. de Brou—that the x is perfectly visible and unchanged. It is the same as respects the v. We have heard this latter numeral objected to, as being an unusual form at the date 1418; but a glance at the first work at hand of any treatise on palæography will prove the contrary.

‘As respects this date, one view alone—in our opinion—could be maintained, viz., that it has been printed in its entirety after the engraving was executed. Such a thing is not *impossible*; but after the documents we have produced, and the reasons we have given, it is, to say the least, extremely *improbable*. Further, we perceive no stronger reason for the existence of such an objection to our present print than there is in regard to the Saint Christopher of 1423, or the “*Spirituale Pomerium*,” &c. That which is *possible* for the one is possible for the other.’

M. Ruelens ingeniously points out the incompatibility of MM. de Brou’s and Passavant’s statements with each other. They are simply contradictory. If the kind of falsification asserted by M. de Brou be correct the theory of M. Passavant is impossible; if the latter authority be right in his surmises, M. de Brou must be

quite wrong. Before leaving the Bruffels Print, or the Virgin of 1418, we would observe that the facsimiles in the memoirs of Reiffenberg, Ruelens, and M. Luthereau—the latter a very firm believer in the validity of the date—vary in coarseness of outline, depth of coloration of the paper, and general distinctness of parts. All, however, agree in this, that the peg alluded to by M. Ruelens is to be seen alone on the upper bar, the tear at the bottom so running up through the other transverse bars of the gate as to remove those portions of the bars where it may be supposed the central pegs would have been placed. The only other pegs to be observed are on the uprights or posts of the gate at the *end* of, not *on*, the traverses.

The third cut bearing an early date, *i. e.* before the second half of the fifteenth century, is known as the ‘Saint Sebastian of Saint Blaize.’ It represents the martyrdom of the saint accompanied by a prayer both to God and to Saint Sebastian. It was found at the Monastery of Saint Blasius, in the Black Forest, in 1779. The cut bears the date of 1437, and is preserved in the Imperial Library at Vienna. An objection was raised by Bartsch against this date applying to the execution of the engraving. He maintained that the date referred to a concession of Indulgences connected with the Saint. But Passavant has drawn attention to the fact, that in the prayer allusion is made only to an intercession against an epidemic and sudden death, and that not any mention is made of an indulgence.

The curious leaf found by Mr. Ottley in an old German MS. of 1445 should not be passed over. This leaf was considered to have been bound up with the MS., and is remarkable for having a woodcut printed off in black oil ink, and by means of a press. (Bibl. 52, p. 190.) It is unnecessary to allude to other wood-engravings with asserted authentic dates previous to 1450, since the dates have been either merely inferred on very doubtful premises, or have been marked in *written* characters only. (see Pass. vol. i.)

The characters of the wood-engravings executed previous to and contemporaneously with the Saint Christopher are, speaking generally, one and the same. The cuts are of sacred subjects, chiefly connected with our Lord’s Passion, and with the Martyrs

and Saints of the Church. They received popularly the name of 'Helgen,' or 'Helglein,' *i. e.* Saints, or Little Saints, and were the produce chiefly of the workers in the convents, or were issued by the heads of corporate bodies, as proved by the public registers of Ulm, Nürnberg, Augsburg, and Nördlingen. In the first of these cities a wood-engraver, *i. e.* *formschneider*—Ulrich—was registered in 1398, three other *formschneidern* were entered in 1441, two more in 1442, and so on, proving how early the art-workmen became incorporated. On the cuts we are now considering not any engraver's name has hitherto been met with. It has been asserted that on a cut executed before 1430 or 1440 occurs the engraver's name, *viz.*, 'Jerg Haspel ze Wibrach' (Pass. i. p. 39). But though the name may be there, the actual date is not. The latter has been only *inferred*, and this quite alters the matter.

The single or 'fly' sheets of little Saints and Holy Pieces served as a great source of religious instruction among the common people. To such as could not read, and to those who could, but to whom access to MSS. of religious character was difficult, these rude figures of the Holy Saints and Martyrs, these rough memorials of the Cross and Passion, attached to which were often pious ejaculations and short prayers, served the purpose of recalling to mind many of the leading Christian doctrines of the times and the bright examples set by the heroes and heroines of the Christian faith. The single figures of saints, and especially the xylographic productions to be presently mentioned as 'block-books,' served, in conformity with a precept of St. Gregory, to assist the recollection of those who had heard the Scriptures read or were themselves reading them, and to refresh the memory of the catechist whose teachings could be prompted as his eyes passed over the symbolic illustrations. The chief purpose was in fact a continuation of that which from the time of Gregory the Great (A.D. 540-604) until now has been authorized by the Church, *viz.*, the instruction of the less literate by pictorial representations. In the words of the Roman bishop 'ad Serenam Massiliensem Episcopum'—*nam quod legentibus scriptura, hoc idiotis præstat pictura cernentibus, quia in ipsa etiam ignorantes vident quid sequi debeant, in ipsa legunt qui litteras nesciunt. Unde et præcipue gentibus pro lectione*

pictura est. (Migne, Pat. Curfus, tom. lxxvii., S. Greg. Mag. t. iii. epist. cv. lib. ix. col. 1027; epist. xiii. lib. xi. col. 1128). We learn from M. Michiels' 'Histoire de la Peinture en Flandre' that on fast-days the Lazarists and other religious orders, who were accustomed to nurse the sick, carried in the streets large wax-candles richly ornamented, and distributed to the children 'Helgen,' and wood-engravings, illuminated with brilliant colours, representing sacred subjects.

These ancient woodcuts belonging to the earliest period of art are distinguishable from those of a later date by their archaic style, the heaviness of the outlines, and by the draperies being cast in rounder folds, than those of the broken angular forms which, under the influence of the school of Van Eyck, characterised the masters of the North in the latter half of the fifteenth century. These *incunabula* do not show any trace of shadow as produced by 'hatching,' and have been for the most part more or less coloured, as if to better satisfy the demands of the common people. As before remarked, they have been frequently printed off in a pale or bistre-colour distemper ink, which looks much like what we should now call 'water-colour,' and the pallor of the impression has been commonly regarded as a sign of great age. This holds good, however, but partially, for as Weigel, Passavant, and Otley, have shown, some of the most ancient cuts that have come down to us, whether from wood, or metal in 'relief,' have evidently been printed with a very dark ink, prepared with either oil or varnish. On the other hand, examples of the last quarter of the fifteenth century, proceeding from the school of Ulm, have been printed in a pale distemper colour like that of the earlier engravings.

The colours employed to ornament the cuts varied according to the time and place of the execution of the engravings. In the oldest examples we find often a purplish violet uniting harmoniously with a bright green colour. To this department of the subject Weigel and Passavant have paid much attention; the following is condensed from the account given by the former (Bibl. 70) on colour, as a means of distinguishing the various schools of Germany:—

1. *Swabian School.*—Chief Seats: Ulm, Augsburg. Colours:

bright red, amber, yellow, umber, slate grey, green, and black. Not any blue in drapery as a rule. The red is a 'juicy red,' from a bluish carmine to cinnabar red, often from age becoming almost violet. Colours frequently overlaid with a layer of cherry-tree gum-varnish, which gives a bright or shining appearance to the print, or becomes from age 'dead,' or looking as if it had been originally unequally spread over the surface of the colour. The bluish-red colour is from elder-berry juice; the brighter, livelier red from madder-lake. A bright red and yellow passing gradually into pale brown, with mineral green, belong especially to the cuts of Ulm. The style of engraving, or technic, varies in goodness and character. The Swabian dialect is on the cuts.

2. *Franconian School*.—Chief Seats: Nurnberg and Nördlingen. Colours not so lively as in the school of Swabia. The deeper red is more brown than carmine in hue, but on the other hand minium (red lead) is very often employed. The yellow is usually a pale ochre. Blue occurs occasionally. The technic varies.

3. *Bavarian School*.—Chief Seats: Friefing, Tegernsee, Kaiserstheim. Colours not lively, mostly somewhat pale, except in certain coats of arms. A deep and pure carmine, yellow ochre (often turbid), and a green (prepared with ochre) passing into a moss-green may be observed. Blue is to be met with. The most lively-coloured cuts are the Tegernsee pieces. The red is generally cinnabar, and the green a 'May green.' These cuts still keep, however, to the Bavarian characteristic—the use of pure carmine and of ochre. The technic evinces care and better drawing, this School being the most artistic of the Schools of Upper Germany.

4. *Lower Rhine Schools*.—Chief Seats: Cologne, and towns of Burgundy. Colour: Pure, but not strong, the tints being generally pale.


Some of the earlier coloured cuts appear to have been tinted by hand alone, more or less carefully, while those of somewhat later date have been often very clumsily and coarsely coloured with the aid of stencils. Mr. Chatto has the following quotation from a letter of Krifmer in Murr's Journal:—

‘It will not be superfluous if I here point out a mark by which, in my opinion, old wood-engravings may with certainty be distinguished from those of a later period. It is this, in the oldest woodcuts only do we perceive that the engraver (*formschneider*) has frequently omitted certain parts, leaving them to be afterwards filled up by the card-colourer (*briefmaler*). In the Saint Christopher there is no such deficiency, although there is in the other cut which is pasted on the inside of the fore-covering of the same volume, and which I doubt not was executed at the same time as the former. It represents the Salutation of the Virgin by the angel Gabriel, or, as it is also called, the Annunciation; and from the omission of the colours, the upper part of the body of the kneeling Virgin appears naked, except where it is covered with her mantle. Her inner dress has been left to be added by the pencil of the card-colourer. In another woodcut of the same kind, representing Saint Jerome doing penance before a small crucifix placed on a hill, we see with surprise that the saint, together with the instruments of penance which are lying near him, and a whole forest beside, are suspended in the air, without anything to support them, as the whole of the ground had been left to be inserted with the pencil. Nothing of this kind is to be seen in more recent woodcuts when the art had made greater progress. What the early wood-engravers could not readily effect with the graver they performed with the pencil—for the most part in a very coarse and careless manner—as they were at the same time both wood-engravers and card-colourers.’ (p. 50.)

The circumstance of the inscriptions on a xylographic fly-sheet or block-book being placed in scrolls or banderoles is generally allowed to be a sign of earliness of production, but the form of the letters and delicacy of the engraving, in certain editions of some of the block-books, do not tally with this theory, which nevertheless is true in the main.

According to Weigel, the best determining characters *quoava* the date of production of an old cut are to be found in the costume, mode in which the hair is dressed, general carriage of the figure, and the arms and accoutrements represented in the composition; colour being really subsidiary, though helpful to these. Sir Samuel Meyrick did not hesitate to assure Mr. Ottley that the wood-blocks of the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis* were cut between the years 1430 and 1435, asserting that next to actual dates there is no criterion of age so sure as *costume*, which changing on an

average within every ten years fixes the real period almost precisely. But this is trusting to costume and style far beyond what they merit, for, as Mr. Sotheby rightly observes, costume and armour are somewhat changeable in illustrations at the fancies of the artists; and it may not be within the scope of our judgment always to be sure what was the particular form of personal habilitment and its accessories, male or female, within a range of ten or twenty years. This source of doubt in connexion with the disputed date of an early print is important to remember. Style and manner with costume may, it is true, indicate an epoch, a period, but hardly a year or two, or given moment of time. Both Mr. Chatto and Mr. Taylor are of this opinion, since any type of costume or style once become conventional might continue in circulation for a considerable period, and this too in different countries. Mr. Planché, on the other hand, while admitting the perpetuation of an ancient type, regards 'costume and armour, in conjunction with which must not be forgotten remarkable fashions of hair and beard,' as 'infallible tests' within a fair range. The last-named archæologist 'never, in the course of some thirty years' rummaging amongst old printed books and engravings, met therein with any costume which could be identified as earlier than the reign of Edward IV.,' *i. e.*, 1461-1483.

Block-Books.—About the time of the production of the Saint Christopher engraved sheets began to appear, each sheet or page containing text as well as figures, a number of sheets being bound up together. The engraved composition and words were on one side only of the paper (anopistographic), the inscription or text being cut out on the same block as used for the figures. Such engraved sheets united or bound together are now known as 'Block-books' or 'Xylographs.' Like the fly-sheets or single prints, these xylographs treated of religious subjects at first, were printed off like them in pale or brown distemper ink with the *frotton* or rubber, and were generally more or less coloured. The authors of them are not to be recognised; all is mere surmise concerning their producers, for the only sign or cypher which has been observed on any sheet of the block-books is a—to us, meaningless—mark  and which is reversed on a few leaves of certain editions of the

Ars Memorandi. A mark very familiar is given by Heller (Bibl. 31, p. 43), as having been found by Krifmer on a wood-cut decorating a MS. of 1461 (see Nagler, vol. ii. n. 1642). Nevertheless J. van Eyck, Dierick Bouts, Wohlgemuth, Koster, the Brothers of 'Common Lot,' and others, have been brought forward, with more or less justice, as having been engaged in their production.

It should be borne in mind that many of the block-books or xylographs had previously existed under the form of illuminated MSS., executed by the more rapid scribes of conventual brotherhoods, and afterwards more or less enriched by the draughtsman and rubricator. There exists in the Bodleian Library at Oxford a MS. of the Apocalypse of the thirteenth century, some of the numerous illuminated illustrations of which have been bodily reproduced in the block-books of two centuries later, and which bear the same title. The block-books are in general, then, but repetitions of previously existing forms, not exactly identical, but sufficiently close to indicate their true origin, not only as regards their general idea, but even much of their details. The authorship of the MS. has been by some critics awarded to Ansharius (a monk of the convent of Corbée, who was sent in the ninth century to evangelise Lower Saxony), since, according to the testimony of German chroniclers, 'per numeros et signa conscripsit libros indigitatos pigmentorum vocabulos.' (Renouvier, Bibl. 60.)

This attribution is quite wrong however, and the interpretation given by Ornheim to the statements of Rembertus in his 'Life of St. Ansharius' (Migne, Pat. Curfus, vol. 118, col. 1002) retailed by Heineken (p. 321) and adopted by Renouvier is clearly erroneous. That the words *notas*, *pigmenta*, *pigmentis*, with their context, imply something very different from what the old chroniclers supposed may be readily seen from the notes to 'Leben des Heiligen Ansgar,' &c. Von Lebrecht Dreves, Paderborn, 1864, pp. 127-129. Further, as Berjeau remarks (Bibl. Paup. p. 6) at the early time of S. Ansharius (A.D. 825) Latin rhymed poetry was not in use, nor was it employed posterior to the fifteenth century; the period of its adoption was from the eleventh to the fifteenth century.

The most ancient of the block-books is generally admitted to

be that called the 'Apocalypse,' or the 'Historia Sancti Johannis Evangelistæ, ejus visiones apocalypticæ,' though higher claims are made by some for the 'Ars Memorandi.' Six different editions are known, some editions varying slightly in their subjects. Each has from forty to fifty compositions, mostly divided from each other by horizontal lines forming the bottoms of the upper and tops of the lower compositions. On some pages the explanatory texts consist but of a few lines within the field of the engraving, while in others it is so extensive that, if it were 'set up' in moderately sized type, it would be sufficient to fill a duodecimo page. Earl Spencer's copy is considered by some judges as probably the first edition. The impression is very clear, and the figures are coloured in purple-violet, cinnabar-red, yellow-brown, and brown colours. The Library at Paris likewise possesses a fine copy of the same edition, coloured purple-violet and green. The contours are firm and decided, but shading is not represented. The composition of the first (?) edition is in general simple and expressive. The later editions are engraved with a coarse line, and one copy—that at Berlin—is coloured with purple-lake verging to brown, cinnabar-red, green, and dirty yellow, and has the white draperies shaded with indian-ink after the manner often found in coloured wood-cuts of Upper Germany during the second half of the fifteenth century.

The exact time and place of production of this early combination of engraved figures and text cannot of course be definitely determined. Some, like Sotheby, bestow upon it a date as early as 1415-1420, while others assign it to the second half of the fifteenth century. Mr. Chatto thinks that it is 'upon extremely slight grounds,' only that it has been conjectured to have been engraved before 1430. Much dispute has taken place relative to the place of its production, Germany, Holland, the Pays-bas being each claimants for the honour of its birth. According to Passavant, it belongs incontestably to Upper Germany. Moreover, the manner in which the figures are coloured—purple-violet and bright green—is very characteristic of the schools of that part of the North. Neither the general artistic style of the compositions, nor the very short proportions of the figures agree with the style and manner of Van Eyck and his scholars, while they are

in perfect accordance with those of the schools of Upper Germany.

Besides the Apocalypse, the block-books known as the 'Ars Memorandi,' 'Salve Regina,' 'Historia Sanctæ Crucis,' 'Der Entkrift,' and 'Liber Regum,' may fairly be considered of German origin.

The second more important block-book is the 'Historia seu Providentia Beatæ Virginis Mariæ ex Cantico Canticorum,' or the Præfiguration of the Blessed Virgin Mary from the Song of Songs. This title, which is inscribed on one of the editions, does not indicate however the true character of the designs, which relate mystically to the love of Christ for His Church. In reference to these Berjeau's facsimile, and Sotheby's 'Typographia,' should be consulted. It is a work of small folio size, consisting of sixteen leaves, printed on one side with the *frotton* in dark brown, or even black ink. Each impressed page contains two subjects, one above the other, the total number of the latter being thirty-two. Three editions are known.

'The style in which the cuts of the History of the Virgin are engraved indicates a more advanced state of art than those in the Apocalypse. The field of each cut is altogether better filled, and the subjects contain more of what an engraver would term "work," and shadowing, which is represented by courses of single lines, is also introduced. The backgrounds are better put in, and throughout the whole book may be observed several indications of a perception of natural beauty, such as the occasional introduction of trees, flowers, and animals.' (Chatto, p. 73.)

In the opinion of Passavant the very elongated forms recall the school which flourished at Haarlem under Dierick Bouts or Steuerbout, and the work is probably of about the year 1464. Sotheby is inclined to place it as far back as 1445, while others have allotted it even to the year 1433.

A third well-known xylograph is the 'Biblia Pauperum,' or 'Biblia Pauperum Prædicatorum,'* and of which five editions are enumerated. It consists of forty leaves in four copies, each leaf being impressed on one side only. One copy has fifty

* See 'Illustrated London News,' for April 1844, also the note at page 128 of vol ii. of Weigel (Bibl. 70).

leaves. The book contains a series of subjects from the New Testament, *i.e.* the events taking place from the Annunciation to the Passion of Christ, and from the latter to the Last Judgment. The figures are accompanied by references to passages of the Old Testament, to be taken as types of the subjects of the New; and the arrangement of both is such that on a single leaf several subjects may be seen often separated from each other by architectural decorations.

‘The manner in which the cuts are engraved,’ writes Mr. Chatto, ‘and the attempt at something like effect in the shading and composition, induce me to think that this book is not so old as either the Apocalypse or the History of the Virgin. That it appeared before 1428, as has been inferred from the date which the Rev. Mr. Horne fancied that he had seen on the ancient binding I cannot induce myself to believe. It is more likely to have been executed at some time between 1440 and 1460; and I am inclined to think that it is the reproduction of a Dutch or Flemish, rather than a German artist.’ (p. 93.)

It is now generally allowed that the *Pays-bas* gave birth to the ‘Biblia Pauperum,’ as well as to the ‘Historia Virginis.’ The former is, in Passavant’s opinion, most probably the oldest as well as the finest—in the original edition—of all the xylographic productions of the Low Countries, the style of the drawing recalling that of the school of Van Eyck.

As it is not our purpose to dilate upon these interesting *incunabula*—an almost separate branch of study in themselves—we shall pass over the ‘Ars Moriendi,’* ‘Ars Memorandi,’ ‘Salve Regina,’ ‘Exercitium super Pater Noster,’ ‘Historia Sanctæ Crucis,’ ‘Der Entkrift,’ ‘Die Kunst Cyromantia,’ and others, and notice only the ‘Spirituale Pomerium’ and the ‘Speculum Humanæ Salvationis.’ In strictness the former—the Spirituale Pomerium—cannot be considered a true block-book: it is an illustrated MS. (in the Royal Library at Brussels); but it is so capable, in the opinion of some authorities, of affording assistance in the study of the block-books, and as helping towards the solution of their dates, places of production, and connexion with

* Attributed by Duchesne aîné to the Master of 1466. (Voyage d’un Iconophile, . 364.)

printed texts, as well as with MSS., that it demands consideration here.

It is known as the 'Spirituale Pomerium' of Henricus ex Pomerio or of Henri van den Bogaerde, Canon and Prior of the Priory of Groenendael, who died in the year 1469, aged eighty-seven. The MS. consists of twenty-four small folio leaves, having at the commencement of each chapter a woodcut with legend, numbered in Roman numerals, pasted on a page in a place reserved for it. There are twelve cuts, four inches broad and somewhat higher, printed off in a dark-coloured, almost black, fatty ink, by means of the rubber according to M. Renouvier, and by press in the opinion of Reiffenberg. The subjects are scriptural, and the MS. contains paraphrases on the former, and on the legends of the cuts; the whole presenting the essential characteristics of a *Biblia Pauperum*. A point of much interest lies in the circumstance that a double sheet of or the first two pages of the *Biblia Pauperum vera*, have been added to the end of the volume, as if there had been the intention to point out an analogy between this block-book and the *Spirituale Pomerium*—an analogy which has been carried so far as to lead Harzen, Passavant, and others, to believe that both works had a common origin. The latter writer observes, however, that while the hatchings are elongated and oblique in the *Pomerium*, they are almost horizontal in the *Biblia Pauperum*. Other differences also between the style of the block-books and that of the *Pomerium* are perceived by Renouvier.

'The drawing is heavier, the figures have larger heads, the strokes of the technic are coarser and more elongated, and the subjects with the exception of the seventh, an interior—are not inclosed within a framework as in the *Biblia* and *Speculum*. Further, the blocks have been printed off with a darker and thicker ink. Notwithstanding, however, the relative inferiority thus implied, the characters of the Flemish School are not the less apparent. (Bibl. 60, p. 79.)

The tree-forms in the cuts of the *Pomerium* recall to our mind those to be seen in some of the prints of the Master of 1466—orange-trees when in tubs.

Another matter of importance lies in the fact of the date

of the production of the MS. being well known, since its exact time is twice indicated in the colophon as M^oCCCC^oXL^{no}. From the character of this colophon (which is written in red ink), and from its having the word *editum* in it, M. Du Mortier concludes that both the MS. and the cuts pasted in it belong to the year 1440, as also that the author of the one was likewise author of the others. Reiffenberg doubts the correctness of this conclusion. One thing is tolerably clear, however, as shown by M. Alvin: this is, the engravings were executed for the author of the MS., if not by him, either before or in the year 1440. Recent researches have proved that about this period the celebrated painter, Dierick Bouts, often went to make a spiritual retreat at the convent of Groenendael. This house was then occupied by members of the Brotherhood of Common Lot, or the 'Frères de la Vie Commune,' whose duties were to copy MSS. and assist in spreading religious knowledge and feeling by means of pious books. It would follow almost necessarily that Bouts would be brought into close relations with the Prior Henri Van der Bogaerde (Pomerius), and would most likely give assistance to the Brothers generally by furnishing them with designs for their xylographic works, as well as to the Prior for his special treatise.

As soon as printing from movable metallic type came in use the Frères de la Vie Commune at once applied themselves to the new art, establishing presses at Brussels, Louvain, and other places. The Brothers at Louvain afterwards changed their rules for those of the Order of Saint Augustine, continuing to print, however, until Johann Veldener, would appear to have relieved them of their work. All the editions of their printed works are anonymous, differing in this respect from those of other printers, who were accustomed to add their names, etc. with some pomp and flourish. It has generally been supposed that the only printed work in which the Brothers introduced woodcuts is, the 'Legendæ Sanctorum Henrici imperatoris et Kunegundis,' etc. Bruxellis, 1484. 4to. (Bookworm, ii. p. 167.) Strefs has been placed on this circumstance by Mr. Inglis as tending to show that the Brothers were not likely to have had anything to do with the production of the xylographic books. But as nearly half a century intervened

between the production of the 'Legendæ' and the Spirituale Pomerium, the gradual extinction of xylographic engraving among the Brothers is rather to be inferred. Further, if Berjeau be right, the Legendæ was not the only book printed with illustrations by the Brotherhood in question. (Introduction to Speculum, p. lxi., and Bookworm, vol. iii. p. 111.)

As the works known as xylographs, block-books, books of images, are all anonymous, and in conformity, in other respects, to the ideas and habits of such a confraternity as the Brotherhood of Common Lot, and as the resemblance which the drawing of the Speculum Humanæ Salvationis bears to the work of Bouts is noteworthy, the following conclusions, based on the Spirituale Pomerium and researches connected with it, may be advanced:—*First*, that some short time before 1440 the earlier block-books of Netherlandish origin began to be produced. *Secondly*, that they owed their origin in the main to the Brothers of Common Lot. *Thirdly*, that the 'Ars Moriendi,' 'Biblia Pauperum,' 'Speculum Humanæ Salvationis,' 'Historia Virginis,' 'Exercitium super Pater Noster,' the 'Figured Alphabet,' with others, are of Netherlands origin. *Fourthly*, that from the Priory of Groenendael proceeded some of the most noted xylographs, and that D. Bouts rendered considerable help towards their composition. *Fifthly*, that in the production of two of these works, the Pomerium Spirituale and the Exercitium, Henri van der Bogaerde comes before us with much testimony that he was the author of their texts, and with some evidence that he had to do with the designing of their cuts. The conclusions here expressed are founded chiefly on the inquiries of M. Ernest Harzen (Naumann's 'Archives,' 1855), which have much helped to illustrate the history of the Brotherhood of Common Lot founded by I. de Groote in the fourteenth century. But exception to some of them would be taken by MM. Alvin and Renouvier. The latter writes,—

'We have stated those reasons which forbid our fixing the date and authorship of the "Biblia" and "Speculum;" nor can we side with the opinion of M. Harzen relative to the identity of the authors of these two works, though we agree with him in tracing an analogy between the Speculum and the works of Veldener. The intervention of the

Frères de la Vie Commune suggested by M. Harzen does not seem to us admissible. It was not the monks alone who were artists without self-esteem and notoriety in the Middle Ages. They took some part, it is true, in xylography and typography; but this part was small indeed in comparison to that taken by civic corporations. Veldener was not a "clere de priure" at Louvain, but was inscribed in his quality of a printer and agent of the University on the register of the latter in 1473.* (Bibl. 60, p. 91.)

M. Goethals is likewise a dissentient, attributing the Spirituale Pomerium, the Exercitium, as well as the Canticum and Speculum to Guillaume Van Apfel, de Breda, Chatreux de la Chapelle de Notre Dame. For further information on this interesting topic, reference may be made to M. Alvin's memoir in the 'Documents,' Bibl. 19, prem. livr., and to Renouvier, Bibl. 60.

The last of these *incunabula* to which we shall refer is the 'Speculum Humanæ Salvationis,' ascribed by Hadrian Junius,* and others, to Koster, the Dutch rival to Gutenberg† as inventor of the art of printing. Into this troubled question of rivalry and authorship it is not our duty to enter: suffice it to say, that the Speculum is of Dutch or Flemish origin,—probably the latter. It is a small folio, without date or inscription, of which four editions have been enumerated. Two editions are in the Latin language, two in the Dutch. These are what may be termed the primitive issues, for there are later editions, and some printed in Germany. The chief of the latter are two 4to editions by Veldener (A.D. 1483 and later), in which the cut-blocks have been fawn in half longitudinally, in order to allow of their appearance in 4to. In the Latin primitive editions there are sixty-three leaves, five of which compose an introduction or prolegomena, the remaining fifty-eight leaves having 116 woodcuts and explanatory text. The Dutch editions contain the same number of cuts as do the Latin; but as the preface occupies only our leaves, the whole work has one leaf less than in the Latin copies. The leaves are impressed on one side only (anopistographic), as in other block-books, each leaf having two subjects side by side, surrounded by architectural designs of Gothic character. As in

* Or Adriaan Jongh.

† Or Hans Gaensfleisch Guttemberg von Sulzloch.

the *Biblia Pauperum*, there is a subject from the Old Testament—the type or forecast—by the side of a subject from the New—the fulfilment. The impression has been worked off in light brown, sepia-coloured ink, as far as the cuts are concerned, the text being much darker. From the style of the composition Passavant is of opinion—

‘that this *Mirror of Salvation* could not have been executed before 1460; for not only the beauty of the drawing but the *finesse* of the execution on wood indicates the period of the development of the school of Van Eyck, particularly the Louvain branch, when Dirk Steurbout of Haarlem flourished (1462–1468), and the style of the compositions has much analogy with the manner proper to this artist. This opinion is made the more probable by the intention of the drawing when representing the hair which often exhibits very difficult foreshortening.’ (vol. i. p. 118.)

One of the most interesting points connected with the *Speculum* is, that it holds an intermediate place between the block-books which are wholly executed—*i. e.* both texts and cuts—by the wood-engraver and books printed with movable types; for in three of the editions—

‘the cuts are printed by means of friction with a rubber or burnisher, in the manner of the *History of the Virgin* and other block-books, while the text set in movable type has been worked off by means of a press; and in a fourth edition, in which the cuts are taken in the same manner as in the former, twenty pages of the text are printed from wood-blocks by means of friction, while the remainder are printed in the same manner as the whole of the text in the three other editions—that is, from movable metal types and by means of a press.’ (Jackson and Chatto, p. 96.)

In the particular Latin edition having twenty pages of xylographic text, the ink of the latter is of paler colour than the ink of the rest of the work printed from movable type, but yet darker than that of the cuts. It would appear therefore that the two impressions—the one from the cut blocks, the other from the text blocks—were taken separately.

‘As the first edition of the *Speculum* was printed subsequent to the discovery of the art of printing with movable types, and as it was

probably printed in the Low Countries where the typographic art was first introduced about 1472, I can discover no reason for believing that the work was executed before that period. Santander, who was so well acquainted with the progress of typography in Belgium and Holland, is of opinion that the *Speculum* is not of an earlier date than 1480. In 1483 John Veldener printed, at Culemburg, a quarto edition of the *Speculum* in which the cuts are the same as in the earlier folios. In order to adapt the cuts to this smaller edition, Veldener had fawn each block in two through the centre pillar which forms a separation between the two compartments in each of the original engravings.' (op. cit. p. 105.)

There has been much discussion as to which of the four editions previously enumerated should be considered as having been issued first. Most of the earlier writers down to the time of Meerman, and afterwards Heineken, Berjeau, and others, have regarded the Latin version having twenty xylographic pages as the first issued. On the other hand, Ottley, Dibdin, and Chatto oppose this view, maintaining this version to have been the third edition instead of the first, which latter is to be seen, say they, in the Latin version not having the xylographic text. Meerman, on the other hand, took one of the Dutch versions for the *Editio Princeps*. We incline to the opinions of Heineken and Berjeau. (See introduction to the facsimile of the *Speculum* by the latter.)

According to Meyrick and Berjeau the woodcuts of the *Speculum* are certainly anterior to the middle of the fifteenth century. (Bookworm, ii. p. 75; Ottley, *Bibl.* 52 p. 314.) That the first edition appeared some time before 1480 is, we think, very probable.

In reference to the statement that the art of typography was first introduced into the Low Countries about 1472, the following extract from the diary of a certain Abbot Jean le Robert, discovered at Cambrai in 1772, and which valuable MS. is preserved in the archives of the town of Lille, should not be passed over:—

‘*Item* for a Doctrinale *getté en molle*, which I sent for from Bruges by Marquart, the first writer of Valenciennes in Jan. XLV. (*i.e.* 1446) for Jacquet 20 sols Tournois. Little Alexander got a similar one, which was paid for by the Church. *Item*, I sent a Doctrinale to Arras to instruct Dom Gerard, which was bought at Valenciennes, and was *gettez en molle*, and cost 24 groots. He returned me the said Doctrinale on all Saints Day,

in the year LI. (*i. e.* 1451), saying that it was of no value, and full of mistakes. He had bought one of paper.' (Heffels' Van der Linde, p. vi.)

The term *getté en molle* is considered by some respectable authorities to refer to type cast in metal or in a mould, the expression *jeté en moule* being still in use in remote districts of Belgium and France. The Doctrinale here alluded to is believed by the supporters of Koster to have been the production of his followers, while some of his opponents maintain that these 'Doctrinales' were printed from a wooden form, *i. e.* a form *jeté en moule*, and others argue that the books mentioned were MSS., and that the term *getté en molle* means simply bound, as the term *en papier* implies loose sheets. According to Mr. Skeen,—

'The assertion that *jettez en molle* means, and can only mean printed from cast types, has no weight, and the phrase itself is valueless as an evidence that cast types were in use at the time when Abbé Jean le Robert wrote his Diary.' ('The Haarlem Legend of the Invention of Printing,' by Dr. A. Van der Linde, Heffels' translation, London, 1871, p. viii.)

'Who does not perceive, while reading the Cambrai document, that in 1451 the term of *getté en molle* is used in contradistinction to *en papier*—what can *molle* be but a "form," and what is therefore a book *getté en molle* but a book brought together in a form, or in a binding, in contradistinction to another *en papier*, *i. e.* in a paper cover? (Dr. Van Meurs, quoted in Van der Linde, p. ix.)

The reviewer of Dr. Van der Linde's work in the 'Athenæum' observes, in reference to the term in dispute, 'The expression, we must allow, is exceedingly puzzling, but we cannot possibly believe that it refers to printing with movable types.' (Athenæum, n. 2315, 1872. Appendix D.)

According to Van der Linde, it is impossible to determine the age of the engravings of the Speculum within ten or twenty years. The book may be historically placed in the second half of the fifteenth century, and far on in the third quarter of it. (*op. cit.* p. 28.)

The Speculum Humanæ Salvationis may be said to connect the xylographs or block-books with the first work entirely printed from movable metallic type, illustrated with woodcuts containing figures. This work is the 'Book of Fables,' or 'Liber Simili-

tudinis' of Albrecht Pfister, of Bamberg, produced in the year 1461.

Block-books having both text and figures continued to be executed for some years after the perfecting of typography. Perhaps the last of such xylography produced was an Italian block-book—*Opera noua contemplatiua*, | *Opera di Giouāniandrea Vauffore ditto Vadagnino stampata nouamēte* | *nella inclita* | *Vinegia* | *Laus Deo*. This Venetian production could not have appeared (as shown by Cicognara) before 1510 or 1512, and in the opinion of a fair authority (Mr. Ellis) may not have seen the light until after the year 1520. It is entirely xylographic, being composed of 120 blocks occupying 60 pages. Three additional leaves are added for the title and ending. Two editions or versions have been recorded. It is very scarce, and is the only Italian block-book known. (*Le Bibliophile illustré*, vol. i. p. 185; Berjeau's *Cat. illustr. des livres Xylographiques*, p. 43; Humphreys' *Bibl.* 36, p. 43, pl. 7.)

Before leaving the block-books we may notice shortly the theory of the late Mr. Holt, whose opposition to the usually received views on these objects was as marked as that he evinced towards the Saint Christopher.

'I utterly deny,' wrote Mr. Holt in *Notes and Queries* for 1868, 'the real existence of either printed playing-cards or block-books with or without text, images of Saints or Donatuses prior to the invention of printing with movable types, and I submit that so far from their having induced that invention they were all without any exception the direct and immediate consequences which resulted from it.' (p. 314.) Although, therefore, my observations will in general apply to the whole series and range of block-books, my remarks will for the reason I have stated, to some extent, be especially directed to the *Biblia Pauperum*, which I may in all fairness state I shall venture to insist, was executed by the same artist as produced the *Canticum* and the *Speculum*, and that such artist was Albrecht Dürer and none other (p. 362), . . . whilst his father's apprentice, he being, as I will conclusively show, the most accomplished *formschneider* then in existence . . . to avoid the expense of using metal type was his first object, and he accomplished it by engraving on wood both text and illustration.' (p. 388.)

Mr. Berjeau and Mr. Humphreys replied to Mr. Holt, the former remarking *inter alia*—

‘To fiddle upon this poor Albert Dürer the drawings of the *Biblia Pauperum*, which are scarcely worthy of the pencil of a glass-flainer of the twelfth or thirteenth century, is too bad. To think that the artist who drew the *Canticum Canticorum* in the purest style of the Van Eycks was likewise Albert Dürer, is to show an ignorance of medieval art perfectly astounding.’ (Bookworm, Nov. 1868, No. 35.)

Mr. Humphreys, in a letter to the ‘Times’ for August 21, 1868, wrote as follows—

‘I passed a portion of last autumn at Munich, where I undertook a careful examination of the block-books contained in the Royal Library—one of the richest collections known. No. 24 of that collection was a “*Biblia Pauperum*,” the blocks of which are pretty closely copied from the original Dutch edition, though somewhat enriched in the style of ornamentation and other details. It is printed on both sides of the paper in printer’s ink, and bears the date 1470 with the printer’s mark. There is also another edition from the same block (No. 23) printed in distemper for colouring, and which bears the same mark and date. A third *Biblia Pauperum* of the same collection printed in printer’s ink from entirely different blocks and of very inferior execution, bears the date 1471. Here, then, are at once no less than three of the latest specimens of the *Biblia Pauperum*, all printed long before 1485. There is also an edition bearing the name of its printer or engraver, Hans Sporer, of Nürnberg, date 1475. He is a well-known man, and in his last work gives, in addition to his name, his address behind the church of Saint Martin. Those block-books, which are printed in printer’s ink on both sides of the paper [opistographic], were evidently produced at a period long posterior to that during which the block-books were printed in distemper, and on one side of the paper only; these peculiarities and their style of art placing them, in the opinion of most bibliographers, full fifty years before the latest of the dates just referred to.’

Mr. Holt, in reclamation to all this, pledged himself ‘to state the grounds upon which I claim the production of the *Biblia*, the *Speculum*, and the *Canticum*, as the work of Albrecht Dürer.’ What these grounds were we know not, but are told by Mr. Planché, in his ‘*Recollections*,’ etc., that Mr. Holt had prosecuted researches at Nürnberg, the result of which he was on the point of committing to the hands of Mr. Murray when his death unfortunately occurred.

In the Library at Althorp is a copy of the *Biblia Pauperum* having the date 1467 on the hogskin binding.

Sufficient has been stated to illustrate the advancement of wood-engraving from the production of flying sheets of single figures of our Lord and Saints with merely names or 'Ora pro nobis' below them, through combined sets of leaves, impressed on one side only, with numerous figures and explanatory inscriptions, all cut on the same block, up to the combination of wood-engraving, with the fully developed art of the printer.

From the beginning of the first half of the fifteenth century we have arrived at the middle of the second half, at which time there are frequent indications of the period and locality of the production of prints, either from the actual dates being given or from the arms of persons and of places being engraved on them. This knowledge is confirmed by the references to particular wood-engravers or *formschneidern*, made in the registers of those cities—such as Ulm, Augsburg, Nürnberg,—in which the art first flourished. For an account of some of these cuts and the names registered, reference may be made to Pass. vol. i. p. 37, *et seq.* The period thus passed through was, as it were, the cradle of the art, and the student and collector of ancient prints must be of cool temperament if he fail to experience a large amount of interest as regards its history and a continuous desire to add to his collection some precious relic of its time. Several of its remains bequeathed to us are priceless and unique, not to be possessed by others than their present owners, and unprocurable by love or money. Such gems as the Saint Christopher, the Angelic Salutation, the Saint Brigita, of the Althorp Library; the Saint Sebastian of the Imperial Library at Vienna; the much-canvassed Brussels Print; the Immaculate Virgin of the Cabinet at Berlin; etc., have all become cloistered, never to break their vows until the Governments which own them and the lordly houses which protect them shall prize them no more. As this is not likely soon to happen, and as hopes of *repliche* being found are only of the faintest character, there is not any consolation left to the votary of our pursuit except such as he may procure from the best fac-similes. Other examples, though often unique and always costly—such as the specimens which adorned the Weigel Collec-

tion at Leipzig—may be occasionally obtained, it is true, when brought to the hammer or through private sources. But such opportunities must become less and less frequent, and the prices will rise.

It is the same as respects the block-books and similar xylographs; there are those which are unique, and preserved in public and royal collections; such are unobtainable. There are others, and these often most noteworthy, which are to be bought at rare intervals—but at what price? At the Crivenna sale a copy of the Apocalypse was sold for 510 florins, and the Duke of Devonshire, in 1815, paid 201*l.* for a copy of the *Biblia Pauperum*; and both these works, when they have since appeared for competition, have realised still higher prices. At the Weigel sale (May 1872) the British Museum paid above 1000*l.* (7150 thalers) for a unique and complete copy of the first edition of the *Ars Moriendi*, and nearly 500*l.* (3310 thalers) for a first edition of the Apocalypse. A *Biblia Pauperum*, coloured, and in fine condition, brought not far short of 400*l.* (2363 thalers). At the Yemeniz sale in 1867 a copy of the Apocalypse sold for 200*l.*, and one of the *Ars Moriendi* for 382*l.* The *Editio Princeps* of the latter work belonging to the Corser Library realised 415*l.* about a year afterwards. At the sale of the late Sir W. Tite's collection (1874) a copy of the Apocalypse was valued at 285*l.* The *Speculum* of the Spencer collection—a first edition, with two imperfect leaves—cost 300*l.* Now, it might be worth double this amount, since 700*l.*, and even 1000*l.*, have been paid for fine examples of this book. These prices may startle the novice, but the young bibliophile will hear of them with great composure. What, he will say, is your *Ars Moriendi* to the Roxburghe 'Decameron?'—that small folio in faded yellow maroon binding, of black letter, printed by Christopher Valdarfer at Venice in 1471, and purchased by the Marquis of Blandford, at the sale of the Library of the Duke of Roxburghe in 1812, for 2260*l.* True it is that when the Roxburghe 'Decameron' was refold in 1819, it realised only 918*l.* 15*s.*, showing that its previous price was artificial, while the first edition of the *Ars Moriendi* brought—as we have stated—in 1872, above 1000*l.*; and there is not any reason to think that, if it were refold, it would bring less than half its value,

as in the case of the Decameron. But then there is the vellum copy of the Mazarin Bible* which was knocked down to Mr. Ellis at the sale of the Perkins' Library, in 1873, for not less than 3400*l.*, while another copy, but on paper, was bought by Mr. Quaritch on the same occasion for 2690*l.* However, let not the novice be quite disheartened, for we can assure him that, at the Yemeniz sale, a copy of the 'Speculum'—we cannot say in what condition—was to be had for 78*l.* Even this he may think somewhat beyond his mark. If so, he must do as we have done, be content with facsimiles and reduced copies. Some such records as these of the *incunabula*, which have been reviewed, should commence every systematic collection. Because the student cannot grace his cabinet with a Saint Christopher or a block-book, there is not any reason why he should not possess some memorials of them, and therefore we say let him procure them as soon as he can. The best Saint Christopher he can obtain is the facsimile, by Ottley, from his 'History of Engraving,' and which may be met with occasionally as a loose piece for a few shillings. We have so purchased it twice over; once in an odd lot, bought at an auction, and again—not very long since, we espied it in a shop-window, and soon made it our own, at the cost of one shilling and sixpence. A facsimile of the Brussels Print should likewise be sought for. We know of three copies, viz. those given by Reiffenberg, Ruelens, and Luthereau. They differ somewhat in coarseness of outline, colour, and distinctness of parts; which copy is the more correct we cannot say, but probably that of M. Ruelens is the most easily procurable. It may be found in the Documents Iconographiques, liv. 3, no. 19 of our Bibliography. A reduced illustration may be met with in the 'Athenæum,' *antea*, p. 168, and one yet smaller in M. Garnier's work (Bibl. 88).

With the Memoir of M. Ruelens, may be obtained also a facsimile of La Vierge Immaculée of Berlin, and M. Berjeau has

* We may recall to mind that this edition of the 'Biblia Sacra Latina' was the first complete book executed with metal type by Gutenberg and Faust, *circa* 1450–55. It is generally known as the 'Mazarin Bible,' from the discovery of the first recognised copy having been made in the library of Cardinal Mazarin, placed in the college founded at Paris by himself. (See Bibliotheca Spenceriana, vol. i. p. 3; Dibdin's Bibliographical Tour, vol. ii. pp. 253, 364.) Ottley was of opinion that the Mazarin Bible was printed after the Bible of 1462, the first Bible with a printed date. (Bibl. 52, p. 149.)

engraved a copy of the Crucifixion of the Library of the Arsenal at Paris, a print supposed by Delaborde to be of as early a date as that of the Saint Christopher. With respect to block-books, we may refer to the facsimiles of the *Biblia Pauperum*, *Speculum*, and *Canticum Canticorum*, produced by M. Berjeau as the next better things to the originals. Reference to Sotheby's 'Principia Typographica' may be advantageously made, as likewise to that admirable work—the *History of Wood Engraving* by Jackson and Chatto. In the latter may be found reduced copies of all our old friends, the Saint Christopher, Saint Brigita, the Annunciation, etc., numerous examples of cuts from block-books, and of miscellaneous things to which reference has not been made here. The volume in question may be considered a mine of valuable information and illustration of the history of wood-engraving included in the period from the date of the Saint Christopher to the end of the fifteenth century. Should other sources of information be desired, the writings of Heineken may be consulted, particularly his *Idée Générale*, *Bibl.* 30. To this writer credit is due for having first brought before us a history of those interesting xylographs, the Books of Images. Should the collector wish for a leaf or two only of facsimiles of the *Biblia Pauperum* or *Speculum* to follow the copies of the Saint Christopher and the Brussels Print, supposed to be now in his cabinet, it may be useful for him to know that M. Berjeau has reproduced single leaves as if for such purpose. Such specimens, along with many other memoranda of *incunabula* out of the ordinary reach of the iconophilist, may likewise be found in the 'Bookworm.'

It may not be out of place here to draw attention to the several examples of xylographic works contained in that great storehouse of literary valuables, the British Museum, reminding the reader at the same time that the collections of Munich and Wolfenbützel are famous for their riches in block-books.

The following is extracted from the Guide to the 'Printed Books exhibited to the Public,' in the King's Library of our National Collection, as showing what fine samples are open to the inspection of the curious investigator. There are in the Print Room some modern impressions also from two old blocks of the Apocalypse, in the possession of Earl Spencer.

CASE I.—BLOCK-BOOKS.

1. *Biblia Pauperum*, or Bible of the Poor, once a popular manual of devotion, and supposed to be the earliest of the 'Block-books;' *i. e.* books printed from carved blocks of wood on one side of the leaf only, and executed in Holland, Flanders, and Germany during the first three quarters of the fifteenth century. The cuts are coloured by hand. Considered by Heineken to be the first edition. See his *Idée Générale*, &c., p. 292. Purchased in 1848.

2. *Biblia Pauperum*.—Block-book; the second edition, according to Heineken, *Idée Générale*, p. 307. From the library of King George III.

3. *Biblia Pauperum*.—Block-book. Bequeathed by the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville.

4. *Biblia Pauperum*.—Block-book. A German edition, the last leaf of which bears the date **1811** [1475]. This edition is remarkable for having a signature in the centre of the fold between each two leaves. Purchased in 1842.

5. The Apocalypse of St. John.—Block-book; the fifth edition, according to Heineken. From the library of King George III.

6. The Apocalypse of St. John.—Block-book, with the cuts coloured. From the library of King George III.

7. The Book of Canticles.—Block-book. Some copies of this edition have a Dutch inscription at the head of the first leaf. This copy has the inscription. See Ottley's *History of Engraving*, vol. i. p. 139. Purchased in 1838.

8. The Book of Canticles.—Block-book, with the cuts coloured by hand, and without any inscription. See Heineken, *Idée Générale*, &c., p. 374. Bequeathed by the Rev. C. M. Cracherode.

9. *Defensorium inviolatæ Virginitatis beatæ Mariæ Virginis*.—Block-book, with the cuts coloured, supposed to be unique. The date **1270**. [1470] occurs on p. 1. Purchased in 1849.

10. *Defensorium inviolatæ Virginitatis beatæ Mariæ Virginis*.—Block-book. Described by Jacobs and Ukert, *Beiträge zur ält. Litt.* p. 98, et seqq. Purchased in 1854.

CASE II.—BLOCK-BOOKS.

1. *Ars Memorandi*; or, a Memoria Technica for learning by heart the four Gospels.—Block-book; the second edition, according to Heineken, *Idée Générale*, &c., p. 396. Purchased in 1854.

2. *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis*.—Block-book. Grenv. Catal., Part 1, vol. ii. p. 678. Bequeathed by the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville.

3. *Ars Moriendi*.—Block-book; the second edition, according to Heineken, *Idée Générale*, p. 406. Purchased in 1845.

4. *Ars Moriendi*.—Block-book. Purchased in 1846.

5. *Turris Sapiencie*.—A single page, printed from a block. Purchased in 1849.

6. *Temptationes Demonis*.—A single page printed from a block, showing the seven deadly sins and the minor sins which spring from them, with the texts of Scripture applicable to each. Described in *North British Review* for Nov. 1846, p. 153. Purchased in 1842.

7. *Mirabilia Romæ*.—in German. Block-book, unknown to Heineken, printed about 1480. Described in *Ædes Althorp*. ii. 188. Purchased in 1857.

8. A German Almanack, by Magister Johann von Kunsperck, *i. e.* Johann Müller, called Regiomontanus.—Block-book, produced at the press of the celebrated Astronomer Regiomontanus, at Nuremberg, about 1474. Supposed to be the earliest printed almanack. Described in Panzer's *Annalen*, i. p. 76. Purchased in 1855.

9. A German Almanack.—Block-book, printed at Mentz about 1490. Purchased in 1835.

10. A German Almanack.—Block-book, printed at Leipzig, by Cunrad Kacheloven, about 1490. Purchased in 1853.

11. *Opera nova contemplativa*. Figure del Testamento Vecchio.—The last Block-Book; printed at Venice about 1510, by Giovanni Andrea Vavassore. Purchased in 1848.

12. Impression from a block, representing Christ, guarded by Soldiers, before Herod.—Supposed date not later than the middle of the 15th century. Found pasted inside the cover of a copy of the *Vitæ Patrum*, attributed to St. Jerome. Purchased in 1852.

13. An impression from a block, representing the Virgin Mary and Infant Jesus between St. Joachim and St. Anne—This and the following wood-print (the 'Seven Ages') are pasted on the inside of what were the covers of N. de Lyra's *Moralia super Bibliam*. Purchased in 1846.

14. Impression from a block, representing the Seven Ages of Man, with the Wheel of Fortune in the centre.—Date about 1460. Described in the *Archæologia*, vol. xxxv., 1853. Purchased in 1846.

15. *Planetenbuch*.—Block-book representing the planets Saturn, Jupiter, the Sun, Venus, and the Moon, and their influences on human

life, with German metrical descriptions. Printed about 1470. Purchased in 1860.

Though trammelled at his outset, the young collector must not despond, for it may happen that on some fortunate day he may come across a few inches, of coarse, not very clean paper, marked with some strange-looking, if not, grotesque figures, representing it may be Christ seized in Gethsemane, or Bearing the Cross. The forms will be in outline only, and of one thickness, the drapery rounded perhaps or more likely angular in its folds. The outline will look as if it had been obtained by rubbing ink—pale, dark, or even black through the slits of a stencil plate rather than from an engraved block. Shadows will be wanting, the perspective odd, and the whole may be coloured with green, red, brown, and purple water or body paint. Yet the story cannot be mistaken, nor can the expression and earnestness of the actors in it be missed. Such a piece is now before us, and strange as is the whole composition, yet in the chief figure there are both dignity and grace. Should such a cut look rather mouldy or dirty, never mind, let it be bought at once, the mould and the dirt are but as the *patina* on an ancient bronze. Such a *morceau* as this the collector may register in his catalogue, ‘Anonymous of the third quarter of the fifteenth century.’ It and its contemporaries have become too rare to be suffered to escape when they come within grasp. Do not regard the cost, pay it and forego some other *desideratum*. Fine Rembrandts, choice Albert Dürers, rare Schongauers, and costly Marc Antonios, may be more readily obtained if one chooses to pay their price. But not so these rough-looking *incunabula*, they rarely occur for sale, pay what you like, though when they do occur they may be obtained for less than such examples as have been just named. It is probable, too, that they will disappear almost entirely from the market, now the dispersion of the Weigel Collection has taken place. In it most of the floating examples had gradually become amassed, now they have been dispersed, many taking up their permanent abodes in public cabinets. Some no doubt have gone into private hands, and they may again present themselves at long intervals. We believe that a few such early woodcuts may yet be purchased in Germany, varying in price,

from 2*l.* 10*s.* to 30 guineas, but they are very few, we believe; and could we have afforded it they should be fewer, yet we ought to be grateful, since our cabinet is not destitute of some examples from the famous Leipzig collection.

Such pieces as have been referred to, may be considered as carrying the student forward to the time of which early wood-engravings either singly or as contained in books, may be comparatively easily procurable, if their price be not an object. This time still includes, however, ten years of the fifteenth century, for the period of easily procurable prints may be dated from 1490, the year about when the 'Schatzbehalter' (1491), the 'Hortus Sanitatis' (1491), and Nürnberg 'Chronicle' (1493) appeared, works abundantly illustrated by the wood-engraver, and from imperfect copies of which the engravings are not unfrequently cut to find their way to the portfolio of the print-dealer. It is true that from 1470 the practice of introducing woodcuts into printed books became pretty general throughout Germany, while in the English language Caxton's *Game and Play of the Chess*,* printed about 1476, was the first work containing illustrations either from wood or from metal in relief. In 1482 Ptolemy's 'Cosmography' was printed at Ulm, with maps engraved on wood; while in 1486 the Latin edition of Breydenbach's 'Travels' was printed at Mainz, containing a beautifully-engraved frontispiece in which cross-hatching was introduced for the first time. (Chatto, Bibl. 38, p. 207.) But these, and like illustrated books of the period, are rare and expensive treasures,† coming oftener within the range of the bibliophile than within that of the print collector. We fear, therefore, that the latter must remain content with some cuts from one or other of the three works previously mentioned.

It may be observed that a certain distinction should be always kept between the earlier xylographic works before referred to and the woodcut illustrations of the first books printed from movable metallic type. The Books of Images were works of art in the sense that they were executed by artistic draughtsmen, essaying a new procedure which was to find a rival in copperplate engraving;

* Second edition, *antea*, p. 78.

† Caxton's 'Mirrour of the Worlde,' formerly in the possession of Mr. Hurt, at the sale of whose collection it was sold for 97*l.*, realised at the disposal of Sir W. Tite's library in 1874, 455*l.*

while the cuts introduced into the printed books were nothing further than the coarse efforts, probably of mere cutters of wood-blocks, card-markers, or printers' workmen, to whom the master printers themselves intrusted such work. As M. Didot observes:—

‘It may be said without much exaggeration that the greater number of the figures which *decorate* the books of the early printers, are so badly drawn that they resemble quite as much apes as human forms. This statement may be at once confirmed by inspection of the first typographic work of Pfister—the Fables of Boner—in which on the first cut are to be seen represented children scarcely distinguishable from monkeys, except by the costume. In the works printed by Bämmler and Antoine de Sorg, the figures are just as coarsely executed.’ (Bibl. 18, col. 14.)

We have been alluding to the illustrated books of the German school only; some of the Italian works are different, in this respect, as are also some one or two German engravings, such, *e. g.*, as the title-page to Breydenbach's ‘Travels.’

As a rule all woodcuts appearing in books printed before 1486 consist of little more than outline with the shadows and folds of the draperies indicated by a series of short parallel lines, without the introduction of any lines crossing each other, forming what is technically termed ‘cross-hatching,’ and they are often inferior both in design and execution to the best of the block-books. It is in Breydenbach's ‘Travels’ (1486), where cross-hatching first occurs, that the drawing and composition of a practised artist first appear. The ‘Cité de Dieu’ (*i. e.*, St. Augustin's ‘De Civitate Dei’), printed by Jean Dupré and R. Gerard at Abbeville in 1486, contains some good examples of early wood-engraving, and certainly does credit to the early press of that city. A facsimile page from a copy of the work in the British Museum may be seen in Mr. Humphreys' treatise. (Bibl. 36, plate 48.)

Book-plates, except cuts from very early works, or under some exceptional conditions, may be discarded by the collector. But he should have a few from the Nürnberg Chronicle for more reasons than one. In the first place, it is positively known who were the designers—if not, the actual engravers—of the illustrations. In the second place, of the ‘mathematical men’ skilled in the art

of painting, who superintended the work, one—(Wolgemut, or Wohlgemuth)—was the master of Albert Dürer. In the third place, ‘the peculiarity of the cuts in the Nuremberg Chronicle is that they generally contain more of what engravers term “colour,” than any which had previously appeared, as well as cross-hatching.’ (Chatto.) There has been evidently much intention on the part of the artist to produce *effect* by strongly marked shadows cut in stout contiguous lines. The book is a folio,* compiled by Hartmann Schedel, a physician of Nürnberg, treating—we may say—*de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, illustrated with views of towns, figures, and busts of eminent persons, the number of cuts being about two thousand, executed under the supervision of Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, and printed by Anthony Koberger in 1493 at Nürnberg. We certainly must agree with Chatto as to many of the cuts of the Nürnberg Chronicle being rubbish, and with Didot that the book is rather ‘*un livre d’imagerie que d’art.*’ Some of the prophets, as Joel, Osea, Isaiah, are absurdly ludicrous, the first doing duty afterwards as Sorobabel. Many of the illustrations have indeed much the appearance of being manufactured cuts, furnished by contract at so much per hundred, as though quantity and not quality had been the chief object of the publisher.

Nevertheless it must be admitted that there are some large effective subjects in which both figures and drapery are much superior to those of the general mass of the engravings, and fairly

* The *Chronicon Norimbergense*, or the *buchs der Croniken und geschichtens mit figure und bildnissen*, etc., was issued originally under two forms—first, as a Latin version; secondly, as a German one, a few months after the appearance of the first. In the German version some slight variations from the Latin are to be found. We believe that the German version is scarcer than the Latin, though usually selling for somewhat less than the latter; but both are now becoming scarce books, their prices ranging from 15*l.* to 30*l.* Should the German issue be desired, care should be taken that the copy contains the additional leaves with chart at the end, extending from folio cclxiii. to f. cclxxxvj., and having in the colophon on the verso of the chart, *Folbracht an. xxiij. tag des monats Decembris Nach der gepurt Cristi unsers haylands M.ccc.xciii. iar.* Some copies end at folio cclxii., in the colophon on the verso of which may be read,—*M.ccc.xciii. iar am fünften tag des monats Octobris. Altithrono sint perperue laudes. ag. alt.*

Hearne, in the preface to ‘Robert of Gloucester,’ remarks:—‘For my part, the oftener I consult this chronicle, the more I wonder at the things in it; and I cannot but esteem the book as extremely pleasant, useful, and curious by reason of these very odd cuts.’

entitle the designers and engravers to commendation. The fine title cut to ‘*Ipse dixit et fiant sunt, mandavit et creata sunt,*’ the illustration of ‘*Data est mihi potestas in cælo et in terra*’ (ci. *verso*), the representation of the Electors, Knights, and others of the Holy Roman Empire (clxxxiv.), with the rich figure of the seated Kaiser in the centre of the upper row of figures; the ‘Dancing Deaths’ (cclxi.); the upper figures in the ‘Last Judgment’ (cclxii.), and the enthroned forms of Æneas, Pius, and Frederick the 3rd Roman Emperor (cclxix.), redeem to a considerable extent the more trade-like illustrations in this remarkable volume. In the figure and action of the angel in the ‘Expulsion from Paradise’ (vii.), and in that of God the Father in the ‘Blessing the Seventh Day and the Separation of the Heavenly from the Elementary Orbits’ (v. *verso*), we think that we can trace the prototypes of certain figures in Dürer’s Apocalypse. The representation of Nürnberg itself is so natural that we fancy as we look at it that we can make out the house of Albert Dürer. Evidently more pains have been taken to insure correctness with this cut than with any other; the two churches, St. Lorenz and St. Sebald, are named, and the wooden bridge over the moat appears to us just like that which we crossed but the other day (1871). On the peculiarities and merits of the Nürnberg Chronicle, Dr. Dibdin’s analysis in the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* may be consulted with advantage, as also Thausing’s ‘Dürer Geschichte,’ pp. 50–53.

The large cut of the Glorification of the Son in the ‘Schatz-behalter’ (Koberger, 1491), is a fine specimen of Wohlgemuth’s power as a designer and wood-engraver, and of which a facsimile is given by Weigel (Bibl. 71).

From the period of Koberger’s publications, cross-hatching as a means of representing shade and of indicating local colour, may generally be observed in old German woodcuts, though in Italy the old method of engraving without cross-hatchings, and chiefly in outline, continued to prevail for thirty years after.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NORTHERN SCHOOLS OF WOOD-ENGRAVING FROM ALBERT
DÜRER TO THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

DIVISION I.—WOOD-ENGRAVING.

- ζ.—Albrecht Dürer and his school; the Maximilian Circle.
 η — Burgkmair, Schüpfelin, Springinklee.
 Brofamer, the Cranachs, Beham.
 Baldung, Altdorfer.
 Holbein, Lukas van Leyden.
 Virgil Solis, J. Amman, Stimmer.
 Van Sichen, Jegher.
 θ — Early French Books, the ‘Books of Hours’ of Pigouchet,
 Vostre, Verard, and others.
 Bernard Solomon.
 ι. — Early ‘Moral Play,’ Caxton’s Illustrated Works, Cranmer’s
 Catechism, Coverdale’s Bible.

AS the sixteenth century approached a new era dawned on the art of wood-engraving. A great genius arose to influence it, and who was remarkable not only as a designer on wood, but as painter, copper-plate engraver, and carver. He was engineer also, and not unknown as a writer.

‘In the valley of the Pegnitz, where, across broad meadow lands,
 Rise the blue Franconian mountains, Nuremberg the ancient stands.

* * * * *

There, when Art was still Religion, with a simple, reverent heart
 Lived and laboured Albrecht Dürer, the Evangelist of Art.’

He is the first master whose name we have to mention yf-

tematically, and of his works the collector should procure all of good state and condition that his means will permit.

ALBRECHT DÜRER. Born, Nürnberg, 1471; died, Nürnberg, 1528.

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 5, Heller, Bibl. 32.)

This great and much-admired master will, in the course of the following pages, come before us as wood-engraver (or designer on wood), niellist, worker with the burin, dry-point, and etching-needle. Connected with engraving, either on wood or metal, Dürer stands forth as one of its brightest ornaments: in fact, wood-engraving may be said to have had a new birth in the old city of Franconia. From the appearance of the 'Apocalypse,' in 1498, the whole artistic characters of this department of art underwent a change, produced, as it were, by the magic wand of Michael Wohlgemuth's apprentice. From the struggling efforts of archaic quaintness it freed itself at once, exhibiting a spirit of sublimity and grace clothed in extraordinary technical excellence, not surpassed in some respects—considering its intention—by the efforts of more recent times. This holds good, not only as respects wood-engraving, but also, to a great extent, as regards engraving on copper-plate in the schools of the North. In the latter branch, it is true, the technical excellencies of the Master of 1466, and of Martin Schongauer, are far superior relatively when compared with the best examples of wood-engraving which we could procure of the same epoch. Nevertheless, from the finest of the works of the masters just named, the rise is indeed great to the Adam and Eve, the Knight and Death, the Saint Eustachius, and the Saint Jerome of Albert Dürer.

The name of Dürer holds the same position in the Northern schools as that of Leonardo da Vinci does in the schools of the South. Whether regard be had to the design or to the technical skill of Dürer, he is not less a marvel—springing up at once, as if by virtue of some supernal power, in order to impart a new spirit and purpose to the time. In general inventiveness, in mystic

and weird-like combinations, in a kind of poetic realism and natural truthfulness, this

‘Most super-sensuous of the sons of art’

ranks second to none. But when we bear in mind that, besides these powers of a great designer, he was so perfect a master in the use of the graver that his best cuts and finest plates could not be surpassed as regards their technic in our own day, we can hardly overrate the extent of his abilities. Our admiration increases, too, when we become acquainted with the every-day life of the artist. His simpleness of heart, and excellence of character, demand from us a respect due to the man altogether apart from his works.

As we ponder over Dürer we discover that beneath the outer garments of simplicity and daily toil lay the poetic and mystic fervour of a Hebrew prophet. To employ the words of Mr. Hamerton, Dürer—

‘was one of the most grave artists who ever lived.’—‘There is a quality in all Dürer’s work which gives it inexhaustible interest; it always makes us feel that we have not yet got to the bottom of it, that there are meanings in it deeper than any we have yet read, and that closer and more intelligent study will be rewarded by farther knowledge and fuller enjoyment. His intense seriousness, his powerful and somewhat morbid imagination, gave him a tendency to philosophical and poetical suggestion somewhat beyond the range of graphic art. It is easy to propose solutions of Dürer’s enigmas, but what he really intended in some of his most elaborate plates will perhaps remain for ever a mystery. Who knows what was in Dürer’s mind when he engraved the “Great Horse?” Certainly his purpose was not simply the designing of a muscular quadruped.’ (p. 72.)

Yet there have been, and no doubt still are, those who, neither in Dürer nor in the whole of the German and Flemish schools, perceive anything beyond a purely technical ability. Listen, *e.g.*, to Cumberland, who, in a professed treatise (Bibl. 14) on ancient prints, thus expresses himself:—

‘In the Early German schools we find little else but the mechanical part of the art, without the soul or spirit of ideality; whereas, in the first efforts of Italy, there are feeling, grace, sentiment, and nature. . . Neither

can the fact be denied, that even in the best of the laborious Germans, Albert Dürer, we find only a learned pedant, and shall in vain seek for grace, expression, sentiment, or poetic composition. When he attempted the sublime, as in his *Melancholia* and *armed Warrior*, he was only lugubrious; when the beautiful, as in his *Nymph* and *Satyrs*, grotesque and vulgar; and in all his Scripture histories, where we expect to find sentiment, monotonous and dull. In the mechanic part it cannot be denied he was fine, but he always applied his graver in the same way . . . but who would not prefer one of Schiavoni's elegant scratches on pewter to the elaborate, overworked performances of this great German master? If such, then, is the effect produced by Dürer on intelligent minds, what shall we say to the Van Leydens and a hundred other imitators?' (p. 33.)

But enough of this. He who could look upon the seated *Virgin of the title* to the 'Epitome in Divæ Parthenices Mariæ Historiam,' and not perceive grace and expression; on the sorrowing figure of the title of the 'Smaller Passion,' and not find sentiment; on the 'Knight and Death,' and discover only the lugubrious; would be scarcely one whose judgment any more than his feeling would be worth much consideration—at least out of the sphere of his Italian proclivities. It should be remembered that, as Mrs. Heaton well puts it,—

'Albert Dürer is by no means an artist who appeals to all the world. The beauty and holiness of Raphael, the grace of Correggio, the glorious colour of Titian and Rubens,—even the power and majesty of Michael Angelo,—can be appreciated, to some extent, by all but the most ignorant or insensible; but the secret of Dürer's strength lies further from the surface, and requires more of intellectual and imaginative effort in its study than that of any of the Italian masters. His work is always transcendently good, but that it is also most beautiful will only be perceived by those whose eyes have been trained to seek out that high and subtle beauty which lies outside the region of the sensuous.' ('Life of Albrecht Dürer.')

Let it be said, then, of Albert Dürer,—whenever the collector may meet with a woodcut, copper-plate engraving, or etching of the master which is not in his collection, let him purchase it if it be a good impression and in fair condition. At present we have to deal with the woodcuts only.

We have seen that up to the time of Dürer the efforts of the wood-engraver produced scarcely more than tentative and imperfect results; but this master strove with all the means at his command to extend the domains of the engraver's art, and to carry the latter to a high degree of excellence. With Dürer engraving on wood became something more than mere linear cutting—it, in fact, entered the lists as the rival of engraving on metal, offering energy and effect for what it wanted on the score of refinement and delicacy. While Dürer was not at a loss to perceive the advantages of being able to impart the utmost finish to his work on copper, he recognised at once that the character and purport of wood-engraving demanded something different. In the first place, it was clear to him that the coarse paper of his time necessitated bold and broad cutting, combined with considerable energy and style; in the second place, he foresaw that these measures could be more easily carried out and new pictorial effects obtained by increasing the dimensions usually given to woodcuts up to his day. Had Dürer possessed such conditions of paper and press as we have now, and had he resorted to certain mechanical aids in the practice of the technic which are common to our own time, it is probable that from the first his woodcuts might have gained something in delicacy, but would have lost in power. That his designs and general treatment, however, would have well answered on a smaller scale is evident from the circumstance of their bearing reduction as well as they do. From such reductions in size, delicacy of cutting, and care in printing, which modern practice admits of, many persons take a liking to the woodcuts of Dürer in the form of copies, who would pass over the fine and bold originals. This modern approach to the character of intaglio work pleases them better than an artistic sweep of relief on the wood. To appreciate the beauty of Dürer's work, when reduced by competent engravers, let the reader refer to the titles—*en vignette*—of the 'Life of the Virgin,' and of the 'Larger Passion;' to the reductions of the Last Supper, the Bearing the Cross, the Descent into Hades, the Birth of the Virgin, and of the Repose in Egypt, given by Jackson and Chatto in their well-known work. The first-named cut is in a fine impression, one of the most beautiful little gems ever produced.


As there gradually arose engravers on wood—apart from artists and designers—capable of a more delicate and elaborate technic, Dürer often reduced the size of his designs, and modified the style of his drawing. But it is clear, we think, that Dürer himself cut only when his designs were of the largest and boldest in manner, if not in size. Whatever may be the beauty of such engravings as the Assumption of our Lady in the ‘Life of the Virgin,’ and of the Great Trinity; we prefer the Seven Candlesticks, and There was War in Heaven, of the ‘Apocalypse,’ and the Seizure in Gethsemane of the ‘Larger Passion.’

To the Italian mind the beauty and character of the designs of Dürer were at once apparent, and Marc Antonio Raimondi, the most renowned engraver on metal of the Southern Schools, set to work to copy them, and sold his impressions as originals. Nor did Raphael hesitate to accept the Germanic influence. The Italians admitted, in fact, that Dürer required only to have been born at Florence, and to have studied at Rome, to have been equal to their greatest master. But could it have been possible for Dürer to have been Italian, what, it may be asked, would the world have gained? On the contrary, as M. Didot observes,

‘His original qualities, this Germanic type, would have lost that naïveté and energy so remarkable in Dürer, and manifesting themselves to such a high degree in his compositions. And this whether he represents maternal love in his Virgins, enthusiasm in his triumphal processions, terror in his Apocalypse, or the pensive and mystic thoughts of so many of his finest compositions. The profound emotion which inspires the works of Albert Dürer always leads to our returning to them, and re-studying them with profit; as, Raschiotti remarks, “*La muta poesia di Dürero parla ancora tacendo ne suoi vaghi intagli.*” (Bibl 18, col. 28.)

Not less than 347 woodcuts have been attributed to Dürer. But if we limit the cuts of the master to such as may be regarded as evidently being after his designs, about 170 is the extent of their number.* A more liberal view would extend it to 218, beyond which a vague probability only could be said to exist for his having had anything to do with the cuts of the remainder. The cypher

* Retberg reduces them to 167.

of the master is almost always on the genuine pieces; it is placed sometimes on a tablet, often not, and is occasionally accompanied by a date. The cypher is a large capital **A**, with a small capital **D** placed within the **A** below its central transverse line, thus .

The earliest woodcut with a date is the very rare, if not unique, piece at Stuttgart, known as the Three Knights and Three Deaths. It bears the date 1497, as likewise the cypher (Nagler, vol. i. p. 200, n. 131). Some difference of opinion has existed as to whether this work is not a drawing rather than an engraving, and reference should be made regarding it both to Haufmann and Passavant. The next woodcuts having a date associated with the cypher are those composing the series of the Apocalypse, issued in 1498. Here the date is given on the *verso* of the last page but one of the series. Nevertheless, the character of the work sufficiently acquaints us that the entire set must have been engraved some time anterior to this period. Then follow two cuts of the Smaller Passion, having each 1509, and two of the same series having 1510 on them. Three pieces of the Larger Passion bear 1510. After this period 1511 is the more frequently occurring date; 1527 which is to be found on the Siege of a Town (Bartsch, 137, Heller, 1903) is the latest which appears.

Of the cypher as it occurs through Dürer's woodcuts, Nagler gives ten variations; in all of these, however, the ground-form, as before indicated, is repeated. Occasionally the small **D** is reversed **α**, as (*e. g.*) in one or two pieces of the Smaller Passion.

From among nearly the two hundred cuts fairly attributable to Dürer, there stand out four distinct series in marked prominence, and in which the high character of the master is seen in nearly every design. These sets of wood-engravings are known as the Apocalypse, the Larger Passion, the Life of the Virgin, and the Smaller Passion. The whole four should be possessed by the admirers of the artist. The cuts composing each series appear under two forms, viz. with letterpress on the back of each piece, and without letterpress there, and warm has been the battle to decide which form is the earlier of the two. Not any account

is here taken, of course, of those impressions thrown off after the death of Dürer, which are destitute of printing on their *versos*.

In respect to the early and genuine editions, or those issued by the author, some writers maintain that the latter generally worked off a limited number of proofs without letterpress for presents to friends, or even as a small regular edition, and such are considered to be great *desiderata* for the cabinet. Others are of opinion that the first issue had always type on the *versos* of the cuts, and that between this and what may be considered the regular second edition a limited and irregular issue sometimes took place of the cuts not having letterpress on their backs. The point in dispute is like the question whether Dürer actually used the knife on the block—not easily determinable, but from the specimen which we saw in the Durazzo collection when it was in London,* which showed the vignettes of the titles of the Life of the Virgin, and of the Larger Passion, worked off on the same sheet of paper, and an impression from the latter to have been worked off without letterpress, we agree in the opinion that early issues of the four series may have been of the same character, though limited in extent. One thing is certain, viz. those very beautiful and clean or clear impressions without type, rightly regarded by many as the first, and therefore choicest copies, are so rare as not likely to come before the novice as purchasable articles, while those impressions of evidently inferior quality, also without type, are clearly such as have been thrown off after the death of Dürer, or even as late as the middle of the seventeenth century, and are therefore to be avoided. The safer course open to the collector is to seek for a set having the original Latin type on the backs of the cuts. If this be obtained, he is at least sure that he has got an early edition; and though it may be he has not the *first* issue that appeared, he may be certain he has not the later impressions, and that will be something to rejoice over. With any of the pieces of the four great series before mentioned having a Latin version on the backs—prose in one instance, in the rest poetry—the collector will be safe as far as their age is concerned; as to their state of impression and their condition these are other matters.

The first series, the Apocalypse (B. 60, Hel. 1652), may be

* This example is now in the possession of William Mitchell, Esq.


commenced with. This, as before stated, first appeared in 1498, under two forms, viz. one form with German and one with Latin text on the *versos*. In 1511 was issued another edition having the Latin version of the Revelation of St. John, with slight variations (as pointed out by Haufmann) in the printing of the text from the Latin edition of 1498. The edition of 1511 bears the title *Apocalipsis cū figuris*, cut in fine ornamental letters, having below them a *vignette* representing the Virgin and Child appearing to Saint John. Following this title are fifteen large folio cuts, embodying, with one exception, the visions seen by Saint John in Patmos. This variation is the design representing the attempted martyrdom of the Saint during the reign of Domitian. On the backs of fourteen of the cuts the Latin version of the Revelation of Saint John is printed in double columns. The *versos* of the title and last piece, *i. e.* the Angel imprisoning the Dragon, are devoid of letterpress. This edition will be in all probability the only one which can be easily obtained by the collector, but if the earlier issue of 1498, having on the title *Apocalipsis cū figuris*, but wanting the *vignette*, can be procured, so much the better. To it, however, should afterwards be added the completed title of 1511. Under all circumstances the colophon on the *verso* of B, 75, Hel. 1689, ought to be examined, for here should be found the date ‘Anno Christiano millesimo quadringentesimo nonagesimo octavo,’ or ‘— quingentesimo undecimo,’ according to the edition.

Passavant makes out not fewer than five distinct genuine issues, but if a good copy of the edition of 1511 can be obtained, the collector may be satisfied. Having it, he will discover that he is in possession of one of the most remarkable series of designs ever put on paper. In general conception, in vigour of action, in drawing power, *i. e.* in Dürer’s style, in wondrous idea as well as in general richness of effect, these compositions of the Apocalyptic phantasmata remain unrivalled. The only things we remember that can approach them in genius are the designs of Blake’s ‘Job.’ These visions, which would appear to defy all visible form, Dürer, writes Woltmann,

‘Attempted to represent in pictures, and to utter the unutterable. He never succeeded in truly illustrating, in actually conceiving and repre-

fenting things; but his pictures exhibit a wonderful grandness of conception and a transporting power of imagination. Any succeeding artist, even the most independent, can scarcely, in depicting the same subject, avoid the influence of these compositions.' (Bibl. 74, vol. ii.)

The technic of some of the cuts of the Apocalypse is so bold and free, and so much to the purpose, that we cannot help thinking Dürer himself must have therein used the knife. The Seven Golden Candlesticks, Death on the Pale Horse, the Four Slaying Angels, St. Michael and the Dragon, and the Woman fitting on the Beast, are so fine in intention of line and rich in effect that we cannot suppose Nürnberg possessed before 1498 a *formschneider* capable of rendering Dürer's compositions in so perfect a manner as is here apparent. Haufmann and Rumohr are of opinion that the whole of the series was engraved by the author. This we do not think.

As now met with, except under rare circumstances, the sheets of the Apocalypse are always loose, and more or less cut down. In a few public libraries they exist, bound together in the form of a large folio volume. The series was copied as early as 1502, and the copy published at Straßburg with German text. The copy is the size of the original, and has been stated to have been made by one Hieronymus Greff. The monogram  with a dagger between the letters at the top, is on each cut; but, in truth, not anything definite is known about the copyist. (See Heller, Bibl. 32, p. 637.) There is another copy in circulation made much more recently; it is a poor attempt, however, but it might deceive the inexperienced. There are also two copies which were made a short time ago, and published confessedly as such; these are beyond our province.

The next series of Dürer woodcuts to be noticed is that of the Larger Passion. (B. 4, Hel. 1110.) This is composed of a sequence of twelve sheets, including a title, published collectively in 1511. Some pieces have the date 1510 on them, but it is probable that the series was begun much earlier than this. (Thausing, p. 246.) The subjects are rather more than 15 inches high by 11 inches broad. They include the various incidents of our Lord's Passion from the Last Supper to the Resurrection, along with

a most beautiful and pathetic *vignette* title representing Christ seated, crowned with thorns and clasping His hands. A soldier mocks Him, offering Him a reed.

Among this series are to be found some of the finest designs of the master. The Last Supper, the Seizure in Gethsemane, the Bearing the Cross, and the Resurrection, are particularly noteworthy. The figure and action of Christ in the 'Seizure' have not been surpassed; the whole composition, in fact, is admirable. The Bearing the Cross (B. 10, Hel. 1127) afforded Raphael assistance in his well-known *Lo Spasmo*. Some of the other pieces, in both design and technic, fall considerably short of the excellencies to be met with in those to which we have just referred. The great differences in technical execution would imply that various hands were engaged in cutting the blocks. Some of the craftsmen were very able, while others must have been but mediocre workmen. So fine is the title in all respects, however, that we agree with those who have maintained Dürer himself to have been its engraver as well as designer.

There are three, if not four, editions of the Larger Passion. The issue which should be sought for is the *second*, or that having the Latin verses of the Monk Chelidonius on the backs of the cuts, with the exception of the last cut, on the *verso* of which is the colophon. The title is not very easily procurable, and care should be taken that the pieces of the Last Supper, and the Seizure in Gethsemane, be good impressions, in fair condition, as these are designs which should be enjoyed in all their beauty. According to Heller, Koppmayer of Augsburg had the original blocks from which he worked off an edition without text, in 1675, and from this are obtained the impressions usually offered for sale. Hausmann states that an edition was printed at Ulm in 1680, the impressions in which are smudgy and poor.

If, in the Apocalypse, rather than in any other of the woodcuts of Dürer, the weird and imaginative character of the artist be illustrated, it was in the *Life of the Virgin* that he gave full play to the poetic realism of his nature. The first series of designs is not of this world; the second breathes of it through forms of the greatest, yet often most homely, beauty. The latter exquisite series of cuts, the *Life of the Virgin* (B. 76, Hel. 1692) is

probably the popular favourite of Dürer's productions. Most of its designs are easily comprehended in full, and some are so quaint with all their beauty, that the youngest and most light-hearted observer cannot help being struck by them and feeling interested in their contemplation.

The sequence consists of nineteen separate designs and a *vignette* title. The cuts are between eleven and twelve inches high, and rather more than eight inches broad. The title is one of the most graceful designs ever produced by the master. The Virgin is seated on a large and tasselled cushion borne by the crescent moon. The infant Christ is in her arms. The drapery is large and admirably arranged, as fine in its way as that of the drapery of Andrea del Sarto, in his *Madonna del Sacco*. Both technic and design in this title are so superior that we cannot help assigning each to the immediate hand of Dürer.

The series of compositions commences with the Rejection of Joachim's Offering; following this is the Promise given to Joachim; then come illustrations of the more important events in the Life of the Virgin connected with the birth and youth of the Saviour. The last design but one is the Assumption, our Lady being received by the Trinity in a glory of Angels; the last is a celebration in honour of the Virgin Mother. As remarked by Mr. Scott, these 'twenty noble and beautiful works form the most excellent votive offering ever made by engraving to the mother of our Lord's body.'

The pieces comprised in this charming series appeared singly at various intervals, Dürer appearing to have been engaged on it from 1504 to 1510. Zani is perfectly right—according to Passavant and Retberg—in stating that the date on the Reconciliation of Joachim should be read 1504, and not 1509, since the last numeral has the form of a '*lacet*.' This view is supported by the consideration that Marc Antonio executed copies of two pieces of the series, viz., the Angelic Salutation and the Adoration of the Kings, upon which he placed the date, 1506. Mr. R. Fisher, in his biographical notice of Marc Antonio, published for the Burlington Fine Arts' Club, on the occasion of their exhibiting Marc Antonio's works in 1868, affirms that the date in question is false, having been afterwards added.

There are three editions of this series. The edition to be sought for by the collector is that of the year 1511, having the Latin verses of Chelidonius on the backs of the cuts. There is an example, as a bound volume, shown to the public, in Case xi. of the King's Library in the British Museum. A bound copy, sold at the Yemeniz sale, in 1867, for 10*l.* 8*s.* It would realise now, we believe, thrice as much. Recently (1873) a fine set—(unbound, as usually met with), of clear impressions, brought at a London auction 16*l.* The cuts had been printed off on much thicker paper than is generally the case. In a trade catalogue of July 1874, now before us, the Larger Passion, the Life of the Virgin, and the Apocalypse, 'together 48 magnificent large engravings, fine original impressions, in one vol., folio, old gilt morocco,' are priced 63*l.*

Some of the pieces in the Life of the Virgin are less frequently to be met with than are others. The more rare ones are the Title, the Flight into Egypt, and the Assumption. Care should be taken that the impression of the latter cut be a good one, as it is a fine specimen of the technic practised at Nürnberg early in the sixteenth century. There are some impressions of cuts of this series on blue paper without text. It will be found instructive and interesting to compare the copies made by Marc Antonio on metal with the original woodcuts.

The fourth series to come under notice is the Smaller or Little Passion (B. 16, Hel. 1142). It consists of thirty-six designs and a vignette title. The cuts are about five inches high and nearly four inches broad. The title represents Christ seated on a large stone, and having the crown of thorns on his head; he is bowed down in thought and suffering. The compositions which follow illustrate the Fall of Man, the Angelic Salutation, the Nativity, and the Passion of our Lord. The sequence closes with Christ seated for the Judgment of the World. A regular edition appeared in 1511, having the Latin verses of Chelidonius on the backs of the cuts. Before this was issued however, proofs had been thrown off without text, as is proved from the collection at Amsterdam possessing the series printed off by fours on each sheet, and without letterpress behind. The great purity and sharpness of these impressions forbid the supposition that they were

worked off at a later period. (Pass. vol. iii. p. 159.) Though we may be correct in regarding the Amsterdam impressions in the light of 'proofs' or trials, rather than as portions of a regular issue, what must certainly be called an *edition* without text, and probably without title, was published either before the edition to be next alluded to, or not very long after its appearance.

The issue of 1511, with the Latin rhyme and vignette title of Christ Seated, is the one which may be sought for. According to some authorities, the title in this edition appeared under two forms, viz. one form, in which there are merely the words 'Figuræ Passionis Nostri Jesu Christi' above the figure of Christ; another, where there is a Latin verse of four lines beneath the figure, above which figure, too, the title runs differently to the other, viz. 'Passio Christi ab Alberto Durer, Nurenbergenfi Effigiata,' etc. By some writers this latter form of inscription is the only one recognised as genuine, the first title or that without the Latin verse, being considered spurious, or a copy. We can answer for the fact, that the title, having the Latin verse, was thrown off without letterpress on the *verso*, as we possess an impression clearly genuine of such character. A genuine old title is difficult to obtain, and a perfect set of this edition of 1511 with title as issued may be said to be of very rare occurrence. Such sets as have been placed in more recent collections have generally been made up or obtained piece by piece. The same may be said of the edition without letterpress on the back, since, as Sir H. Cole observes, 'a search has been altogether vain to discover a first edition with title, as given by Heineken, bound as a volume, and consisting of the thirty-seven cuts apparently issued originally together.'

According to Heineken, the original blocks got to Venice by 1612, when a certain librarian, Daniel Bifuccio, issued impressions from them in the form of a small 4to volume, each cut having on the back Italian verse in *ottava rima*, by P. R. Mauritio Moro, Canon of the Congregation of Saint George at Alega. This edition of 1612 wants the proper vignette title, and has in its place a portrait of Dürer engraved on metal. A *perfect* copy of this edition would seem to be rare, as neither the Oxford Libraries nor the British Museum possess one. 'I have never seen,' writes Sir H. Cole, 'but one perfect copy of this edition, and

this is in Mr. Pickering's possession.' We possess a few pieces only of it.

The collector should endeavour to obtain as many cuts as he can of the set of 1511, having the Latin verse beneath the figure on the title, and fill up the *lacunæ* temporarily with such pieces without the text, or those having Italian verse, as he is fortunate enough to meet with. As he obtains his *desiderata* he can displace the latter by the former pieces. In thus effecting completeness for the time, care should be taken that the impressions temporarily adopted are not composed of the copies known as the work of Momartius, published at Brussels in 1644, and without text. These copies are such admirable facsimiles of the originals, and some impressions are so good that very considerable difficulty may be experienced in distinguishing between them and those of the originals which are destitute of text. A full description—which should be carefully studied—of these and other copies may be found in Heller. (Bibl. 32, page 551, *et seq.*)

The whole subject of the editions of the Smaller Passion is in a very unsatisfactory state, and the student will do well to go over the matter in the pages of Heller, Nagler, and Haufmann. The latter affirms that a complete set of the Latin edition of 1511—*i. e.* of the pieces of the series *all worked off at the same time* and following the title,—is so very rare that the only one he knows of exists in Vienna. The set at Munich wants the title. Apparently original and complete sets have been generally *made up*.

Thirty-three of the original thirty-seven wood-blocks have for some years past found a resting-place in the British Museum. Sir H. Cole writes (Bibl. 13),—

‘They were purchased in 1839 by Mr. Josi, the present Keeper of the Prints, from the Rev. P. E. Boissier, whose father bought them many years ago in Italy. The Rev. P. E. Boissier informs me that his father accidentally met with them at Rome, but that he knows no further particulars of their history. It is certainly quite possible that they may have travelled from Venice to Rome since 1612, but in the absence of any precise information about them, it seems not unlikely that Mr. Boissier may have bought them at Venice and not at Rome. They are the same blocks which Mr. Ottley mentions having seen in the possession of Mr.

Douce. The blocks have suffered somewhat from age and wear. Some are worm-eaten, and the border lines throughout are broken. 'The four impressions of these blocks, which were printed by Mr. Ottley in his History of Engraving, show the extent of the damage which the blocks have suffered.'

In 1844, Sir H. Cole edited an issue of the Smaller Passion, derived from the original blocks. In this edition

'The defects have been remedied by using stereotype casts of the blocks which have been lent by a special permission of the Trustees of the British Museum. New border-lines have been added, the worm-holes stopped, and those parts skilfully cut by Mr. Thurston Thompson, who has also re-engraved, with full feeling, the subjects of the Sitting Christ, and of Jesus Parting from his Mother.

'The process of stereotyping has had the good effect of restoring almost the original sharpness and crispness of the lines, and of rendering the present impressions nearer the state of the earliest impressions than they would have been had they been taken from the blocks themselves. This statement may seem paradoxical, but it will be seen that it has a reasonable explanation. In order to take a metal cast of a woodcut, a cast is first taken in moist plaster-of-Paris. This is thoroughly dried by baking, which causes it to shrink throughout as much as the eighth of an inch in a cast of six inches in length. The result of this slight shrinkage has been to reduce the thickened lines nearly to *their original fineness*, and several of the present impressions are so crisp and clear that they will not suffer by a comparison with choice early impressions.'

Marc Antonio copied the whole series on copper, and of these copies three different editions exist. Care must be taken not to confound the present Smaller, or Little Passion from wood, with what is known as the Small *Copper* Passion (B. 3, Hel. 139) of sixteen pieces, equally by Albert Dürer, and also copied by Marc Antonio, L. Hopper, and others.

The Smaller, like the Larger Passion, shows in the different manner and degrees of excellence of the technic of some of the cuts, that various workmen must have been employed in the actual engraving. The vignette title was probably cut by Dürer himself. The Cleansing the Temple, Washing the Feet, Agony in the Garden, Ecce Homo, Sudarium, Christ appearing to His Mother, and one or two other pieces, are super-excellent, and in

fine impressions delightful to look at as works of art. On the other hand, Christ before Herod, the Flagellation, and Pilate washing his hands, are inferior in technic. According to Mr. John Thurston, the Scourging, Jesus nailed to the Cross, Jesus appearing to His Mother, and Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene, may be taken as instances showing so many different engravers.

With good impressions in his cabinet of the four chief works of Dürer which have been shortly described, the collector may rest satisfied that he has the great master of Nürnberg well represented as far as his woodcuts are concerned. But Dürer, like Rembrandt, is a universal favourite; and many are not contented with the above alone, but would willingly add to their collection several of his single pieces. In case such might be the desire of the reader, and he should aim at possessing some examples of the earliest efforts of Dürer, *i.e.* before the publication of the Apocalypse, we recommend the selection of one or other of the following pieces: The Holy Family with the three Rabbits (B. 102); Saint Christopher with the Birds (B. 104); Holy Family in a Room (B. 100); Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand (B. 117); Martyrdom of Saint Catherine (B. 120); Samson slaying the Lion (B. 2); the Bath (B. 128); Hercules (B. 127); Man on Horseback (B. 131). So satisfactory, both in design and technic, are the cuts of the Apocalypse that they can hardly be considered as the first trials of their author. It is extremely probable that some, if not all, of the single pieces just mentioned were fruits of his labour previous to his illustration of the Revelation of Saint John.

A noteworthy woodcut is the Holy Trinity (B. 122, Hel. 1646). This the collector should undoubtedly possess in fine state and condition, as it is perhaps one of the chief of the Dürer cuts, as far as delicacy and elaboration of technic are concerned, and is also commendable in design and expression. Some critics maintain that the composition is so good in every respect, that not anybody but the master himself could have engraved, as well as designed, it. Heller, Ottley, and Thauling are loud in its praise, while Chatto and Weigel demur to these encomiums, except in so far as they may refer to the cut as being a fine piece of workmanship. Under any other aspect than the latter, 'the so-called master-piece of Dürer's wood-

engraving is deficient, too much mere mechanical labour has been bestowed on it, the *means* are too obtrusive, for the eye is more forcibly arrested by the evidence of the workman's labour than the mind is affected by the artist's design.' Rumohr thought he discerned the epoch of Goltzius foreshadowed in the great Trinity. We agree on the whole with Chatto, that this cut compels us to think of the wood-engraver proper rather than of the designer, and, after all, it does not excel in technic the Assumption of our Lady in the Life of the Virgin. The Mary crowned by two Angels (B. 101) is, as Mr. Scott calls it, a 'sumptuous invention,' and may well claim the collector's notice. The Mass of Saint Gregory (B. 123, Hel. 1833) is a favourite piece with us. Other good examples are the Adoration of the Kings (B. 3); Saint Jerome in a Room (B. 114); Holy Family with the Cithern (B. 97); Last Supper (B. 53); Christ on the Cross (B. 56); the Rhinoceros (B. 136); and the Triumphal Arch of Maximilian (B. 138, Hel. 1915). The latter work, when entire, forms a piece ten feet long by fully seven feet wide, at least this is the measurement of the example in the British Museum. This impression bears the date 1515, is made up of twenty-six sheets composed of probably not far short of a hundred separate cut-blocks. The designs were furnished by Dürer who had them engraved under his own immediate superintendence by Jerome Resch,* who executed his task with much ability. There are four editions of the 'Triumphal Arch,' containing a variable number of illustrations. The work is very scarce, and in any degree of entirety is to be met with only in a few public collections. Now and then a single cut or two may come across the collector. (Nagler, vol. i. p. 195, n. 121.) The Large Head of Christ crowned with Thorns (B. appendix, p. 182, n. 26. Hel. 1629), a finely cut and grand design, is, according to some, only a doubtful Dürer; others agree with Passavant in thinking that none other than Dürer could have bestowed the character of imposing majesty which reigns over the imperfection. Hauer and Retberg attribute it to H. S. Beham.

When purchasing the woodcuts of Albert Dürer it should be kept in mind that the artist's cypher may be met with on

* According to Thausing (p. 373), this engraver's name was J. Andree.

numerous prints well known not to be by him, and that it is present on others with which it is but *probable* only, that Dürer had anything to do in the way of desigining.

Among the genuine works of the master there exists far less range for difference and degradation of impressiion in the case of the woodcuts than is to be observed in his engravings on metal. It is to be noted also that—contrary to what holds good generally, though not always, *quoad* the latter—such woodcut impressiions as are of a very deep, powerful character, are often of more recent origin than those which are less forcible, though brighter and clearer in line. In these there is more definition and less blackness than in the others. Many of the old Dürer blocks have remained in very fair working condition until comparatively recent times. The consequence is, there are modern impressiions in the market, and the risk is greater of being deceived in respect to them than when dealing with the copperplate engravings and their modern progeny. But since, as relates to both, much caution should be used when purchasing the higher priced specimens, the study of the tests afforded by the ‘watermarks’ of the papers used by Dürer should not be neglected. On this subject Dr. Haufmann, of Hanover, is the chief authority, though the Critical Catalogue of Retberg (Bibl. 93) affords assistance in connexion with it. Haufmann has pointed out (Bibl. 29) that the works of Dürer, as they respect the paper test, may be divided into prints of three periods, viz.,—

A. Those of the *first* period, or up to the time of the Venice journey, 1505. The papers of the chief prints have, as water-marks, the Great Bull’s head and the Gothic letter **Ð**.

B. Those of the *second* period, or dating from the Italian journey to the trip to the Netherlands, *i.e.*, from 1507 to 1520. Here the Great Bull’s Head, the High Crown, the Imperial Orb (*Reichsapfel*), the Anchor in a Circle, and the Towers and Wall, are the ordinary water-marks.

C. Those of the *third* period or dating from the return from the Netherlands, *i.e.* from 1521 to 1527. In the prints of this division the paper is marked with a Little Pitcher with a handle, the Armorial Coat of Nürnberg, the Armorial Coat with Lilies and Crown, etc.

Though the study of the water-marks and of the textures of the Dürer papers may be profecuted by the collector as an additional means of helping him through certain difficulties, very much weight or confidence should not be placed on it. When the tests proposed by Hausmann bear out other desirable testimony, it will be so much more satisfaction to the possessor, but very trustworthy examples may be met with which will not support their application for several reasons, concerning which it is but right to mention that Hausmann is very candid. On the other hand, the crucial water-marks may exist, and yet the impressions not be satisfactory. Hausmann readily admits this :—

‘From the paper alone not any conclusion relative to the goodness of the impression can be drawn as constantly occurring, for sometimes flat, ill-printed, or otherwise spoilt impressions from over-use of the plates or blocks may be found on paper of the earliest characters. Nevertheless, it cannot escape the observation of the collector who institutes a comparison, that this rule holds good, viz. superiority of impression stands in connexion with certain kinds of paper.’ (Bibl. 29.)

The author quoted is of opinion that the water-mark test may be found more often available in the case of the woodcuts than as regards the copperplate engravings of Dürer, since the former have been printed off on larger and less fragile sheets. The papers employed for the woodcuts are comparatively of a thicker, less delicate kind than those used for the engravings from metal, although, judging from the water-marks, they, in part at least, must have proceeded from the same mills. Such of the woodcuts as have letterpress on their backs have the firmer paper. The various water-marks met with throughout the Dürer woodcuts are, as given by Hausmann, very numerous. Twenty-one different symbols are mentioned, ranging from the Great Bull’s head to the double Roman capital **AA**, with the cross in the centre **A†A**.

With respect to the woodcuts, the safer guides to the antiquity of the impression are the greater sharpness, purity, and clearness of the technic, along with absence of the signs of ‘springs,’ or fissures or rents in the border lines, of worm-holes and other

trifling damages, which the blocks contract through over-use and time. It should be remembered that some of the older impressions with text on the back are occasionally less clear and clean in technic than such as have not any text. Haufmann goes so far as to say that with the exception of the impressions of the first edition of the Apocalypse of the year 1498, in which the blocks were inked and printed from with very great care, and from which the proofs consequently came off sharp and clean, the impressions of all the Dürer serial woodcuts are on the average less clear when accompanied by text than are good impressions of the same unaccompanied by it.

The great reputation enjoyed by Albert Dürer throughout Europe was the means of bringing him into close connexion with Maximilian the First, Emperor of Germany, 'a large magnanimous imperial nature, vain of its power, and desirous of its celebration.' (Scott.) It was under Kaiser Max's reign that wood-engraving attained in Germany its highest point of development, and it is by no means paying the Emperor too high a compliment when we speak of the 'School of Maximilian,' or the 'Maximilian Circle.' He resolutely fostered a number of talented designers around him, the leading member of which was Albert Dürer; and but for Maximilian we could scarcely have had bequeathed to us such admirable examples of the art of the commencement of the sixteenth century as now adorn our collections. Much interesting information concerning the Emperor and Peutinger who was his adviser as to art matters, may be found in the following work, 'Conrad Peutinger in seinem Verhältnisse Zum Kaiser Maximilian I.' Von Theodor Herberger. Augsburg, 1851. This memoir is, we believe, scarce, but we have become possessed of a copy through the kindness of Alfred Aspland, Esq., to whose work on the Triumph of Maximilian, published in connexion with the Holbein Society's Fac-Simile Reprints (1875), reference should be made, as the subject of 'The engravers of the Triumph' is treated therein exhaustively.

Of the more eminent of the Maximilian circle, and worthy to take rank next to Dürer, were—

HANS BURGKMAIR (OR BURGMAIR), Father and Son. Father born, Augsberg, 1473-1492, died 1531; Son living, 1559.

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 197.)

As it is now impossible to discriminate between the woodcuts designed by the senior and junior Burgkmairs, we shall follow the usual course, and speak of them as of a single person. The collector should certainly possess some examples of this master's workmanship, as he was a very fine and bold designer, producing rich effects and much colour in his work. Some few of his pieces are of such high character that they are not unworthy of Dürer himself, yet, as Mr. Chatto observes,—

‘The best cuts of Burgmair’s designing, though drawn with great spirit and freedom, are decidedly inferior to the best of the woodcuts designed by Albert Dürer. Errors in perspective are frequent in the cuts which bear his mark, his figures are not so varied, nor their characters so well indicated as Dürer’s. . . . his merits as a designer on wood are perhaps shown to greater advantage in the Triumphs of Maximilian than in any other of his cuts executed in this manner.’ (p. 280.)

The series of woodcuts here referred to is, in respect both of design and technic, among the best of all the works executed by order of the Emperor. It remained unfinished at his death, in the year 1519, and the blocks were first printed from as a series, as far as they extended, in 1796, at Vienna, and published at the same time in London by J. Edwards. A few proofs appear to have been thrown off as the blocks were engraved, and there is an old copy in the Imperial Library at Vienna containing 128 pieces, of which 101 are proofs in the first state. Those cuts of the 135 pieces of the series of 1796, which have Burgkmair’s initials on them, are designed with much spirit and freedom, and rank next to such as have been ascribed to Dürer,* while their technic is in some examples better than that of the Dürer cuts in the present series. A full and illustrated description of the Triumphal Procession may be found in the work of Jackson and Chatto, and the volume by Mr. Aspland to accompany the fac-similes of the ‘Triumph,’ published by the Holbein Society and before alluded

* For an account of Dürer’s unquestionable aid to the *Triumphzug*, see *Thausing*, p. 391. *Antea*, p. 66 of present volume, also in connection with this subject.

to should not be forgotten. The subject is likewise discussed in Dibdin's Decameron, vol. i. pp. 201-5, and in the Bibliographical Tour, vol. iii. p. 529.

Bartsch gives a list of 82 titles, including serials, to Burgkmair, and to this list Passavant adds 48, making a total therefore of 130. Several series of this master's pieces are only to be had as comparatively modern impressions; and it may be said, speaking generally, that the Burgkmair cuts met with usually among the dealers and at sales, do not give a just idea of the merits of the master. They are not his better works. His coarser style is represented, but not his finer and richer manner. A favourite piece of our own is the Saint Veronica holding the Sudarium (B. 22), a fine impression of which is in the collection at the British Museum. This cut, as far as its intention and technic go, is not surpassed either in design, expression, or work, by any equivalent piece of Dürer. In order to form an adequate idea of the cuts of the Triumph, some old proofs in the just named cabinet should be examined. The following pieces may be recommended to notice: Delilah and Samson (B. 6); Equestrian Portrait of the Emperor Maximilian (B. 32).

Burgkmair's mark is an initial signature—**H·B·** or **h B**. Care must be taken not to confound his mark with the monograms of H. Brofamer and H. Baldung Grün. (See Pass. iii. p. 265.)

HANS LEONARD SCHÄUFELIN (or Schäuuffelin, Schaufflein).

Born Nürnberg, *circa* 1490; died, Nördlingen, 1540.


(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 244.)

Of this well-known and prolific master it will be proper to obtain three or four good examples. He was both pupil and imitator of Albert Dürer, and one of the most reputable designers on wood of his day. Some of his unmarked pieces have been occasionally ascribed to Dürer, but very little scrutiny will prove how inferior Schäuuffelin was to the latter, both in point of composition and delicacy of drawing. We believe that Schäuuffelin, like Dürer, occasionally engraved his own compositions. He was a great illustrator of books, and was the chief of the two designers of the cuts in the famous allegorical poem on

the deeds, 'Helds und Ritters herr Tewrdannckhs,' believed to have been the joint production of the Emperor Maximilian and his secretary, Treytz-Sauerwein, notwithstanding an Imperial chaplain, Melchior Pfinzing, is put forward as the composer. It was first printed by Schönsperger at Nürnberg in 1517.

In 'Der beschlossene gart des rosenkrätz marie, gedruckt unbolendet zu Nurnberck durch Doctor Vlrichen pinter—MDV' are two cuts having Schäufelin's mark on them, and in the *Speculum Passionis Domini Nostri* of the same author, printed at Nürnberg in 1507, are three cuts with like marks. If these marks are thus properly interpreted, and 1490 be accepted—as it usually is—as the date of Schäufelin's birth, the latter must have begun designing for the wood-engravers when he was scarcely more than fourteen years old. It is more probable, however, that our master was born before 1490. (Nagler, vol. iii. p. 566.)

Schäufelin's cuts will frequently come before the notice of the collector as he turns over portfolios containing old wood-engravings. Bartsch refers to 132 separate works, Passavant increases the number to 175. The Bearing the Cross (B. 28) is a good example of the master. A Repose (B. 7); Descent from the Cross (B. 32); an Angel with a Cross (B. 53); Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian (B. 39); Lady and Musicians (B. 96), and Les Danseurs des Noces (B. 103), are likewise noteworthy. The latter form a series of twenty pieces, fine and bold in style, and cut by very different hands to those producing some other designs of the master.

Schäufelin's mark consists of a large capital **H**, having a smaller capital **s** on the cross bar of the **H**; by the side of this cypher is the representation of a small shovel or baker's peel  there are sometimes two peels crossed. Nagler (vol. iii. n. 1444) is very full on this master.

HANS SPRINGINKLEE. Born Nördlingen — ? died, Nürnberg, 1540.

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 322.)

Very little is known of the history of this designer on wood. He is said to have resided in the house of Albert Dürer, and to have been called Albert Dürer Minor. According to Thausing

(op. cit. p. 383) he followed more closely the steps of Dürer than any other of the Nürnberg School. He is believed by Doppelmayer and Nagler to have himself engraved. He possessed sufficient knowledge and dexterity to be able to obtain considerable repute as a draughtsman and painter.

Springinklee was a considerable illustrator of books, the chief of the latter being the 'Hortulus Animæ' of 1516. A King kneeling by the side of a Chapel (after Burgkmair) (B. 58), is in a good impression a fine and rich example of technic and effect. Aaron in the Vestibule of the Temple (Nagler, vol. iii. p. 646, n. 9), may also be recommended. In the work of Derfchau (Bibl. 15) may be found some modern impressions from the original blocks of the Seven Planets.

Springinklee's mark is a monogram forming the capitals **H S K**, the **S** being placed on the transverse bar of the **H** **SK**. In some instances the monogram is on a tablet.

HANS BROSAMER (or Bröfamer). Born, Fulda, 1506 ;
died, Erfurt, 1560?
(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 455.)

This artist was a free and bold designer, and a specimen or two of his work should have a place in the cabinet. He engraved on metal as well as designed on wood. His works on the latter decorate several books of the second half of the sixteenth century. An Ofler in a Stable (B. 15) is not unfrequently met with, but it is declared by Heller to be the work of Baldung Grün.

Brofamer's mark is a monogram forming the capitals **H B**, occasionally having a lozenge or small diamond on the transverse bar of the **H**, **H B** **H B**. Brofamer may be mistaken through his mark for H. Baldung, and *vice versa*. The exaggerated force and energetic action of the latter are sufficient to distinguish him from Brofamer.

Though attention has been drawn to Schäußelin, Springinklee, and Brofamer, the student may pass them over without much loss, and go direct from Burgkmair to the **CRANACHS**, father and son. Both the latter were eminent artists of their time, though the son was not so able as his father, either in drawing or design. As far

as originality and *verve* are concerned, these designers on wood are placed by many before Burgkmair, and next to Dürer ; the cabinet of a collector is generally found to contain more woodcuts of the Cranachs than of any other masters, except Dürer. Our own prepossessions would place Hans Baldung (Grün) next to Dürer and Burgkmair for design, technic, and able chiaro-scuros. He evinces as much energy as do the CRANACHS, and less caricatures the human form than they do.

LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER. Born, Kronach, in the Episcopal District of Bamberg, 1472 ; died, Weimar, 1553.

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 273.)

LUCAS CRANACH THE YOUNGER. Born, Wittemberg, 1515 ; died, Wittemberg, 1586.

(Passavant, vol. iv. p. 24.)

Except by Heller, Passavant, and Nagler, the woodcuts of the two Cranachs have been generally confounded together, the mark of each master being the same, with one slight variation, to be presently noticed. Their mark consists of the initials **LC**, either separate or interlaced, near which is sometimes a date ; at other times a winged serpent, having a ring dependent from its mouth



Occasionally these signs are placed on a tablet. Sometimes the serpent is present without the initial letters.

The difference between the marks of the father and son consists in the circumstance of the wings of the serpent being perpendicular or erect to the body in the mark of the former, while the wings are horizontal to or closed down upon the body of the serpent in the mark of the latter. (See Pass. vol. iv. p. 5.)

Being court-painter at the Saxon court (A.D. 1504), the elder Cranach had the privilege of placing the chief arms of Saxony on his productions. As a consequence of such right, two shields are often to be found on his engravings, along with or without the marks previously mentioned. One shield contains two crossed swords, the other the '*crinali*,' or Saxon '*Rue*.' The artist was

fond of hanging these shields on the branches of a tree when the composition permitted. The genuine cuts of the elder Cranach are usually marked with some combination of the signs mentioned; but there are not wanting pieces bearing the arms of Saxony, with which neither the senior nor junior Cranach had anything to do.

Herberger and Schuchardt considered the Cranachs—probably it was the elder one who was a *kartenmaler*—to have been the inventors of printing in gold and silver on woodcuts. It may be gleaned from a letter of Peutingger (Herberger, *Bibl.* 89, p. 26, note 81) that in 1507 a court-painter of the Elector Frederick the Third of Saxony, had found means to represent figures of knights in armour of gold and silver on vellum, and that in 1508 Peutingger himself, by dint of much trouble and expense, had succeeded in having the same description of work imitated by certain artists at Augsbuurg. There was not anything unreasonable in the supposition of Schuchardt and Herberger, as it was known that Cranach had printed-off woodcuts in the chiaro-scuro style from two blocks in 1508, and that a third block or some other process might have been resorted to by which the final decoration of the armour was effected. It was not until recently, however, that any example of such work in gold and silver bearing the Cranachs' marks and cyphers was known, the only specimen we were acquainted with approaching such early work being an equestrian portrait of the Emperor Maximilian by Jost Dienecker, after Burgkmair. This example is from two blocks on vellum, one of the blocks have been made to render the high lights by means of gold laid on somewhat after the manner of bookbinders. This piece is described as being a fine illustration on the whole, and is in the possession of the Marshal von Hauflab at Vienna (*Lödel, Bibl.* 42). Recently, however, an impression from a design by L. Cranach—a St. George and the Dragon—(*B.* 7, p. 284, n. 65) from two blocks has been discovered at Vienna, in which the second block has been made to print-off some of the high lights and decorations on the horse and its trappings, plumes of the helmet, etc. in gold. The initials **LC** in gold are at the lower right hand corner near the feet of the horse, the two shields being at the upper left hand corner. This interesting specimen of the early German school is now in

the possession of Mr. W. Mitchell, through whose kindness we have had the opportunity of examining it. It appears to be genuine, though the gold is very brilliant, and the paper looks as if it has been stained deeper in parts by the hand.

In connexion with the statement that the discovery of the method in question was due to a *court-painter* of the Elector Frederick, it should not be forgotten that there was a certain 'Meister Johann,' who for some years shared the court favour, along with Cranach; he accompanied the Elector in 1493 on his pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, and was probably the author of the portrait figures of the Saxon Princes which adorn an old book of genealogies preserved in the archives of Dresden. (Nagler, *Bibl.* iv. p. 295.)

Bartsch ascribes 155 pieces to the elder Cranach, which number Passavant augments to 223, and allots 44 to the son.*

Those woodcuts of the Cranachs which are in chief request will be found to have an adequate price attached to them when good impressions in good condition. Some of them are not very easily obtainable at any price; while other pieces, particularly the smaller ones and the book-plates, are common enough. The style of engraving and wiry kind of line employed by these masters, when once recognised, can scarcely be mistaken afterwards. The treatment of the hair of the figures is also peculiar and diagnostic.

Schuchardt, Nagler, and others assert that the elder Cranach himself cut many of his finer works, while Bartsch and Kugler will scarcely listen to such a doctrine. Not on this point alone, but on the character of the pieces, opinions vary; for while Heller terms the Saint George attended by two Angels (B. 67) 'a fine print,' Nagler and Schuchardt speak of it as one of the 'least important pieces, both as respects the drawing and technic,' of the master. To our mind it is a bold but coarse engraving, certainly not characterised by any beauty, either of design or execution; it is simply expressive of power.

* It may be here observed that a single number in Bartsch, Passavant, and other systematic works, is often the number of a *series* only, or the reference to a volume in which many illustrations of the particular master may be found. It would be next to impossible to enumerate singly each small piece of the prolific illustrators of books.

As an example of L. Cranach the elder, we think well of the Venus accompanied by Love (B. 113). It is simpler, in better taste, of better drawing, and of more breadth in light and shade, than are his efforts generally. It has the date of 1506 on it, and exists as a chiaro-scuro, as well as a simple woodcut. Saint John preaching in the desert (B. 60), the Angelic Salutation (B. 2), Adam and Eve in Paradise (B. 1), Repose in Egypt (B. 4), Holy Family in a Room (B. 5), Saint Anthony transported in the Air by Demons (B. 56), the several prints known as the Tournaments, the larger series of the Evangelists and Apostles, the portraits of Luther and Melancthon, are all covetable examples of the elder Cranach.

Passavant is rather full in his fourth volume on the works of the two Cranachs, but Heller's Lucas Cranach's 'Leben und Werke,' and Schuchardt's 'Ueber Lucas Cranach,' in the 'Deutscher Kunstblatt' for 1851, No. 2, and as a separate monograph, should be referred to for ampler details.

HANS SEBOLDT (SEBALD) BEHAM. Born, Nürnberg, 1500 ;
died, Frankfurt, 1550 ?

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 112.)

It will be proper to have a specimen or two of this master, who was formed in the school of Albert Dürer. He was a free and bold designer, and worthy of the circle to which he was attached. In the opinion of some writers he, like Dürer, visited Italy; and, certainly, traces of an Italian influence may be observed in some of his later works. He was rather a prolific master, both in metal and wood-engraving. Bartsch refers to 171 pieces of the latter description, which number is increased by Passavant (vol. iv. p. 76) to 207. As examples, the Passion of our Lord (B. 84-91), and the Virgin under a Tree (B. 123), may be recommended. The large 'Christus Kopf,' ascribed by some to Dürer (B. 26, Hel. 1629), is by Hauer and Retberg allotted to Beham.

Beham's mark is a monogram forming the capitals **HSB**, the **S** being placed on the cross-bar of the **H**; or **HSB**, the **S** being

as before mentioned **HB** **HP**. Prints having the latter monogram are of earlier date than such as bear **HSB**. Caution is necessary, so as not to confuse the mark of Beham with the monograms of Brofamer and Baldung Grün. Nagler (vol. iii. n. 1511) has much to say concerning Beham.

HANS BALDUNG (also BALDUNG GRIEN or GRUN). Born, Gmünd (Swabia), 1470; died, Strasburg, 1545-1552.

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 301.)

This artist was a friend of Dürer, and a well-known designer of his time. We are disposed to rank him higher than others do,—even to place him next to Burgkmair. A fine set of Baldung's woodcuts is perhaps a greater *desideratum* than anything else after the more important of the Dürer series.

There cannot be any doubt that, in some of his pieces, Baldung has carried his energy and action too far, producing an air of grotesque, but though generally evincing much *verve*, it is not often that he exceeds the bounds of propriety; nor do we ever meet with such strange corkscrew-like forms as we may find in Cranach's compositions. We do not know anything finer, setting aside Dürer's masterpieces, than the Adam and Eve (B. 3) of Baldung, whether regarded as a simple wood-engraving or as a chiaro-scuro, for it may be seen in both states. Cranach, in his Venus and Cupid, makes an approach to it. Other able specimens of this master's ability are the Adam and Eve (B. 1) and the Eternal Father (B. 40). The pieces attributed to him are numerous extending according to Eifenmann (Meyer, *Künstler-Lexikon*, vol. ii. p. 617) to 155 in number, inclusive of the chiaro-scuros.

Hans Baldung or Grün made use of a cypher and several monograms, viz. a capital **H** having a small-capital **G** on the cross-bar of the **H**; the capitals **HB** only; the capitals **HB** having a small **G** on the cross-bar of the **H** **HB**. The result has been that some of Baldung's work has been ascribed to Burgkmair and Brofamer, and that of the latter to Baldung. The great spirit and marked character of the design and technic of Baldung's engravings are nevertheless highly diagnostic.


ALBRECHT ALTDORFER, (or A. ALTORFFER). Born, Altdorff (Bavaria), *circa* 1480; died, Regensburg, 1538.

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 41.)

This master has been called by some French writers 'the little Albert,' because most of his works, which are somewhat in Dürer's manner, are but small in their dimensions. He was painter, engraver on copper, and designer on wood. It is highly probable, too, that he actually cut many of his own designs. He is regarded as one of the more eminent artists that Bavaria had produced up to the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Altdorfer's woodcuts are short of a hundred in number, and from them any of the following may be selected for the cabinet:—The History of the Fall of Man (B. 1-40) is fine and bright, with much sparkle in good impressions; the Virgin in a Church (B. 48); the Worshipper of the Virgin (B. 49); the Virgin on the Half-Moon (B. 50). The Saint Jerome (B. 57) is well thought of by some.

The style in which Altdorfer's designs are engraved is peculiar, and but little experience is required to enable the novice to distinguish this master's pieces by the character of their technic. A number of comparatively modern impressions of Altdorfer's cuts are in the market which show the blocks to have 'sprung' in several instances.

Altdorfer's mark is more a monogram than a cypher, formed by a sort of high-waisted double-capital **A**, one **A** being placed within the other, the top bar of the innermost letter forming the very high transverse bar of the outer initial . A careless observer might confound the mark of Altdorfer with the symbols of Albert Dürer and of Aldegrever.

As the student was told before that he might at once pass from Dürer to Cranach if he did not wish to develop the department of wood-engraving in his cabinet to any extent, so may it be said here that, should such be the case, he can proceed from Cranach to—

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER. Born, Augsberg, *circa*
1494-96 ;* died, London, 1543.

(Paffavant, vol. iii. p. 353 ; Woltmann 'Verzeichniß' appended to
Bibl. 74.)

This great master ranks in the early Northern school next to Dürer in general artistic ability, natural genius, and fertility of invention. He was an admirable painter, and his designs on wood have, in many cases, never been excelled. In some particulars he has been judged to have surpassed Dürer, while inferior to him in others. Holbein had a freer feeling for beauty of form than had Dürer, and he made pure realism on the one hand, and the superhuman, the fantastic, the intangible on the other, subservient to probable or truthful historic representation. Hence in many of his compositions may be found a more general harmony, resulting from more balanced parts, than is usually to be met with in the works of Dürer. Woltmann says that 'the only man in German art who has reached true perfection of form is Holbein, and Holbein alone ;' and surely no one could look upon the beautiful copies of the designs which adorn 'Holbein und seine Zeit' without feeling that there is a certain beauty, refinement, and tone about these designs which were never equalled, much less surpassed, in the compositions of any of his contemporaries. 'Nul n'a pu comme Holbein composer une action avec le moins de figures et dans le plus petit champ possible,' writes M. Renouvier. Woltmann is of opinion that Holbein was much influenced by Burgkmair.

Holbein is most widely known by his two series of illustrations familiar as the 'Dance of Death' and the 'Bible Pictures.' Both works are of such high character as regards design, and contain many cuts so admirably engraved, that they have obtained a world-wide reputation. We may refer also to certain prints in 'Cranmer's Catechism,' to the titles of Tyndale's and Coverdale's Bibles, Initial and Dance of Death Alphabets, numerous portraits, book-illustrations, elaborate title-pages and borders, arms of public libraries and charities, and the marks of well-known early printers, as having to be placed to the account of

* Nagler says 1499-1500, vol. iii. n. 1010.

Holbein: the sum-total being about 315 pieces, and perhaps 20 alphabets. For all these the artist, during his residence either in Germany, Switzerland, or England, made the drawings, and in a majority of instances directly on the blocks. Some of Holbein's larger designs, such as the Ages of Man, the Death of the Good and Wicked Man, etc., would seem to have been executed at Augsberg, the master's native city. These latter pieces are of great rarity, being met with in only a few public collections, the Museum at Basle even being without them,—a circumstance which could scarcely happen had they been produced while the artist resided in that town. (Pass. vol. iii. p. 355.)


The few woodcuts which have Holbein's signature to them are arrangeable under two divisions. In one rank may be placed those executed during the artist's early residence at Basle, when it was of some importance to him that he should become well known to the printers; in the other come such as belong to the later years of Holbein's residence in England, when he had become eminent, and his name alone would be capable of bestowing value upon that which might have been, after all, but of little worth, though in reality the reverse however small and unpretentious. Under such circumstances there is no doubt considerable difficulty in determining what really was or was not designed by Holbein of a number of unsigned pieces often attributed to him. (Woltmann, Bibl. 74, vol. ii. p. 12.)

As in the cases of Dürer and Cranach there are writers who maintain that Holbein actually engraved at least some of his own compositions. The 'Dance of Death' and 'Bible Pictures' series are frequently adduced as examples of his immediate hand-work. Others strongly oppose this view, and bestow the credit of the engraving of the better cut pieces on one Hans Lützelburger, who was a native of Basle, and admitted positively to have been the engraver of a Dance of Death Alphabet, the designs of which some attribute to Holbein, though Nagler and others consider the Dance of Death Alphabet, by Holbein, to be a different series to that engraved by Lützelburger. (Nagler, v. iii. nn. 1209, 1241.)

'We agree essentially with Sotzmann, Chatto, and Passavant, that the painters themselves did not engrave the wood . . . the wood-engraver

who executed all the works considered by Rumohr to have been cut actually by Holbein was Hans Lützelburger.*

Such is the opinion of Woltmann. (Bibl. 74.) On the other hand Weigel (Bibl. 71, p. vii.) observes:—

‘I here repeat that I am not one of those who ascribe to Hans Lützelburger—otherwise Frank—the engraving of the originals, but regard the  on the piece of the Duchefs [in the Dance of Death] as a monogram of Holbein.’

The first edition with a date of the Dance of Death, having forty-one cuts in the series printed on both sides of the paper, with dissertations, texts of Scripture and verses, is that of Lyons of 1538, published by the brothers Trechfel. As early as 1527 or 1530 fragmentary sets appear to have been issued, printed on one side only of the paper, with German titles, and destitute of date. Editions continued to be issued up to 1562, having additional cuts, making at length a total of fifty-eight pieces. This series, though habitually entitled a Dance of Death, bears in reality the superscription, ‘Les Simulachres et Historiées Faces de la Mort,’ etc., *i. e.* ‘The Images and Storied Aspects of Death.’

The Editio Princeps of the Bible Pictures, or Bible Figures (*Historiarum Veteris Instrumenti*,* *Icones ad Vivum expressæ*), appeared at Lyons in 1538, though—as in the case of the Dance of Death—the ‘Icones’ were in circulation and use anterior to that time, even as early, according to some, as 1530. The first Lyons edition of 1538, published by the Trechfels, contained ninety-two carefully printed cuts.

Alluding to the former series—the Dance of Death—Mr. Chatto remarks,—

‘They are truly masterpieces of wood-engraving, and though they have been frequently copied, all the so-called facsimiles that have hitherto appeared are far inferior to the originals. A few years ago one of the best wood-engravers of this, or indeed any other country, being asked his opinion of those cuts, and if he thought that he could re-engrave them in a manner equally excellent, replied, “They are the best wood-engravings that I have ever seen, and I certainly do not think that if I were to re-engrave them, my copies would be equal to the originals. Such things

* ‘Testamenti’ in the next edition, 1539.

as they are, engraved in the best manner from original designs, which have all the spirit of the master to guide the engraver, can never be equalled by any copies." There is no needless display of mere mechanical skill in those cuts, they are executed in a manner at once simple and efficient, and they are not so remarkable for the mere delicacy of the lines as for lines properly applied to convey a meaning.' ('Illustrated London News,' April 20, 1844.)

'Though most of the "Bible Cuts" are inferior, both in design and execution, to those of the Dance of Death, and though several of them are rudely drawn and badly engraved, yet many of them afford points of such perfect identity with those of the Dance of Death, that it seems impossible to come to any other conclusion than that either the cuts of both works have been designed by the same person, or that the designer of the one series has servilely copied from the designer of the other, and, what is most singular, in many trifling details which seem the least likely to be imitated, and which usually constitute individual peculiarities of style.' (Bibl. 38, p. 368.)

The last observation leads us to remind the student that some critics have refused to acknowledge Holbein as the author of one if not of both of these two remarkable series of illustrations, while others admit that though *documentary* proof of the fact may be wanting, the intrinsic evidence is in itself sufficient to establish Holbein to be their designer. There is a third party which avers that both extrinsic and intrinsic testimony exist to show that Holbein was the author of the series in question. Mr. Wornum, in his *Life of Holbein*, commenting on the Dance of Death, writes,—

'The evidence that this remarkable series of woodcuts is from the original designs of Holbein, is not conclusive, and this fact has accordingly been disputed. That Holbein was the author of the designs I cannot but believe; they bear in their vigour and dignity an internal evidence of his hand. The engraving is exquisite, the lines being singularly fine and accurate, the character and expression very seldom suffering from the inexpertness of the engraver.'

The polemics of this question are considerable, and are beyond our limits. We must suffice with the remarks that nearly all the testimony in favour of Holbein being the designer of the Dance

of Death, usually ascribed to him, is derivable from the feeling that the spirit of this artist, and not of any one else, pervades the series; though there is likewise some circumstantial evidence, based on the history of the period, which closely associates Holbein with its authorship. It should be stated, that there have not been wanting inquirers who have maintained that as regards the Dance of Death, there is direct and conclusive evidence to show that Holbein *could not* be its designer. For arguments in favour of Holbein reference should be made to Jackson and Chatto, and to Woltmann; for such as are of opposite character, the work of Mr. Douce (the Dance of Death, etc. London, 1833) may be consulted.

One difficulty in connexion with this subject has been placed in so fair a position by Woltmann that we cannot refrain from quoting his remarks. The difficulty relates not only to the want of any recognition of Holbein in the preface of the Lyons edition of the Death series, but to the apparent desire to lead the reader of it on a wrong scent as regards the designer of the cuts which follow.

'Only intentionally,' says Woltmann, 'can Holbein's name have been here suppressed, and the reason for this it is not difficult to perceive. It lies in the original satirical character of the pictures. Holbein's interest, like that of the publisher, rendered it desirable that they should appear anonymously. In Lyons every movement towards the Reformation was zealously opposed by the bishop and the authorities, and the bloody edict against heretics, issued by Francis the First, was put in force. Many of these pictures of Death, however, especially such as those of the Pope and the Nun, might have given offence to the strict Catholic party. This might have been all the more serious had the book appeared with the name of HOLBEIN attached, who was at that time residing at the Court of the Protestant King of England, and was a Citizen of Basle, belonging to Switzerland, from whence the new doctrines emanated. He was, therefore, not mentioned, and the death of the engraver was employed in a manner which would evidently put the public on a false track. Further, a much-esteemed ecclesiastic and orthodox writer was engaged to write the preface, and the abbess of a well-known convent placed directly under Papal jurisdiction, to accept the dedication. If such persons did not take exception, others would not have pretexts for taking offence. Holbein himself, too, may in his own interest have taken some precaution.

At this time in England, after the death of the Queen, Jane Seymour, religious reaction had commenced, and clipped the wings of true Protestant freedom.' (Bibl. 74, vol. ii. p. 113.)

In the Gazette des Beaux-Arts (vol. iv. p. 481—2nde periode, 1871) is an interesting paper by M. Edouard His on Hans Lützelburger, from which we extract the following:—

'From the two documents of 1526 found in the Verzicht-Buch of Basle, we learn that a wood-engraver Hans, who died in this town at the period mentioned, had received from Melchior Trechfel, of Lyons, pecuniary advances on account of certain blocks which Hans had undertaken to engrave. On receiving news of the death of the latter, Trechfel claimed the blocks. They were sent to him on condition that a responsible person at Basle should become bail that Trechfel would surrender them should a creditor of superior title claim them.'—'This coincidence is not the sole indication, however, of the identity of this engraver Hans with Hans Lützelburger. The agreement of the two documents in mentioning the engraver as not longer existing serves to clear up the following passage occurring in the first edition of the "Simulacres," and the meaning of which continued unexplained, viz., from "Donc retournât a noz figurees faces de Mort tres grâdemēt viēt a regretter la mort de celluy qui nous en a icy imaginé si elegâtes, figures," &c., to "en ce chef d'œuvre comprifes."' (A. iij. verso.) 'It is clear that the author of this preface, whom we know to have been Jean de Vauzelle, Prior of Montrosier, implies by the artist whose premature death he regrets, *he* who engraved the "figurees, faces de Mort." The passage in which he speaks of the "imparfaictes hiitoires," to which "nul n'a osé imposer l'extrême main" does not leave any doubt on this point, but it is equally clear that he confounded together the engraver and the designer of the compositions, considering them as one and the same person whom he speaks of as an excellent painter, announcing this idea yet more clearly by the words, "qu'il ne peult parachever plusieurs aultres figures ia par luy traffées." Since Holbein, incontestably the author of these wonderful compositions, yet lived at the time of their first publication, it is not to him, certainly, that this passage alludes. We have proof likewise that not only Vauzelle, but the Trechfels themselves were ignorant as to who was the actual author of the compositions, and that there did not exist any direct communication between Holbein and the editor of his works, but only between the latter and Lützelburger. We must conclude, therefore, that this "excellent engraver" did not work for

Holbein, but rather that Holbein worked for Lützelburger on the same principle as he furnished designs to glass-painters, jewellers, and other artists of secondary rank. Nevertheless we cannot help being astonished that Trechsel who possessed the blocks in 1526 should have allowed twelve years to have passed before making use of them. Perhaps we may find the reason in the impossibility of his being able to meet with an engraver sufficiently *au fait* to cut—equally as well as Lützelburger had done—the blocks on which the tracings had been already made (the twelve of 1547, Ed.,) or perhaps the times did not appear at all favourable for the publication of a satirical book affecting both clergy and laity.” “The absence of the name of Hans Lützelburger from the registry of the Archives of Basle need not surprise us any longer if we bear in mind the shortness of his stay in that city at which he did not arrive probably before 1522. The ‘Combat dans le Foret’ to which we have referred as bearing his name and this date, appears nevertheless to have been engraved at Augsburg.”—“Passavant thought, and with reason, that Lützelburger worked for some time in the *atelier* of Jost de Negker [Jost Dienecker], a celebrated wood-engraver at Augsburg.”

In reference to the ‘Bible Pictures’ and ‘Cranmer’s Catechism,’ Mr. Wornum observes,—

‘The cuts commencing with Noak’s Ark are unequal, some few towards the end being engraved by a very unskilful hand, as those of Joel and Zacchari especially, and the composition in several of them formal and uninteresting from the very nature of the subjects; others, and these not a few, are exquisite designs, though perhaps on the whole they do not show the same spirit that we find in the Dance of Death; the subjects are of a more sober or solemn character.’ (op. cit. p. 188.)

‘The series of designs in Archbishop Cranmer’s Catechism is commonly given to Holbein, but of the engravings of this work I am quite satisfied that he is wholly innocent, though one design by him, and perhaps two, have found their way into it (p. 190.) . . . The singular unskilfulness of the engraving itself, should the designs belong to Holbein, sufficiently proclaim the fact that he must have been dead when they were executed and published.’

According to Woltmann, the greater number of the cuts in Cranmer’s Catechism are decidedly French engravings, in the style of Bernard Solomon, only three designs of this rare book being the work of Holbein. These are Moses on Mount Sinai, the Pharisee and the Publican, and Christ casting out a Devil.

Though there is direct and conclusive evidence that Holbein designed the Bible Pictures, there have been those who would have robbed him of his right, and have bestowed it on Levinus de Witte, a painter of Ghent.

The Lyons edition of 1538 of the Dance of Death sold at M. Potier's sale in Paris, 1870, for 1020 francs. At Sotheby's, in December 1873, 'the Dance of Death, 34 proofs, with German titles of the highest rarity, but wanting Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 10,' brought 95*l.*, and the first Lyons edition of 1538, 22*l.* The original set of the Bible Pictures may be occasionally met with at the price of 25*l.* or 30*l.*

The portrait of Erasmus with the Terminus, by Holbein, is quite a master-piece of wood-engraving. The block of it still exists in the Library of Basle, but it is said not to be usable.

Holbein's mark consists of the initial letters **HH**, or a monogram formed by two **H**'s joined together, or of a large capital **H** having a smaller **H** on its transverse bar. By some, the monogram forming **HL** is given to him, others rightly allot it to Hans Lützelburger. Concerning the latter engraver, Nagler, vol. iii. nn. 1209, 1241, may be consulted.

The subject of Holbein and his works, in relation to wood-engraving, is one upon which very much might be said. We must refrain, however, from its further discussion, referring the reader to the work of M. Firmin Didot (Bibl. 18), to the first two volumes, published by the Holbein Society, in 1869, as well as to the sources previously mentioned.

As original copies of the Dance of Death and the Bible Pictures are rare and costly, the collector may be disposed to rest satisfied with the facsimile reproductions of the Holbein Society, or with the admirable copies in Mr. Douce's well-known volume on the Dance of Death, and in the volume of Bible Prints, both published by Mr. Pickering. In Bohn's Illustrated Library, London, 1858, may be found a work, containing the Death series, accompanied by Mr. Douce's 'Dissertation,' and the Bible Cuts, with an Introduction by Thos. Frognall Dibdin.

The only other copy of Holbein we need refer to is the set of thirty etchings of the Dance of Death by Wenzel Hollar. These etchings are included within ornamental frames or borders de-

signed by Diepenbecke. There is not any text to them, except the Latin scriptural quotation under each piece that occurs in the original editions in that language. Hollar's copies from the original cuts are a degree less both in width and in depth than the latter. In one subject, viz. Death and the Soldier, he has not copied the original design, but has followed one from a spurious edition of the series. It is remarkable—as observed by Mr. Douce—that this is the only print belonging to the spurious ones which is not reversed. In Hollar's copy all the pieces are reversed, except no. 5 and no. 18. The series bears the date 1651. The original copper-plates of these etchings came into the hands of Mr. James Edwards, who published an edition from them about the year 1794, after they had been rebitten with great care, 'so as to prevent that injury with respect to outline, which usually takes place where etchings or engravings upon copper are *retouched*' (Douce). To Mr. Edwards' publication of Hollar's prints there was prefixed a short dissertation on the 'Dance of Death' by Mr. Douce. This edition was reprinted *verbatim*, and with the same etchings in 1816, for J. Coxhead, without any mention of the former issue, and with the addition of a brief memoir of Holbein.

Holbein's Dance of Death Alphabet may be seen facsimiled in Mr. Douce's volume, as issued by Bohn, and in Jackson and Chatto's treatise, but the beautiful little work of M. Anatole de Montaiglon—truly a *livre de luxe* as a large paper copy—on the 'Death Alphabet of Hans Holbein' especially merits notice.

On much concerning the works of the Holbein family in general, Paffavant (vol. iii. p. 353) may be consulted with advantage.

LUKAS VAN LEYDEN (or LUKAS JACOBSZON). Born, Leyden, 1494; died, Leyden, 1533.

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 331.)

This eminent artist, though not holding relatively the high position above so many others as a designer on wood, which he

does with respect to copper-plate engravers, nevertheless maintains a fair rank. He contributed no doubt materially to the development of wood-engraving, and was, like his great contemporary Dürer, alive to the particular advantages which result from adopting a bold and large manner in design and technic, in this branch of the engraver's art. While Lukas van Leyden in his copper-plate engraving is one of the most delicate and refined workers, he is just the reverse in most of his woodcuts. In some of the latter no master has been freer in his line and stronger in his technic than has 'Master Lukas,' who—says Dürer, in his Diary—'has invited me to eat with him. He is the engraver on copper; a little man here at Antwerp, for pleasure, having come from his own town, Leyden, in Holland. I have portrayed Master Lukas of Leyden with the point.'

Bold and good as Lukas is on wood, yet we shall be struck with the great superiority of Dürer when we compare the best pieces of the latter with those of the former artist.

Lukas van Leyden was not a great producer in our present branch of engraving. Passavant allots him only thirty-two pieces; one or two of these should be possessed by the collector not simply because they are in themselves good examples of wood-engraving, but as illustrating the difference between the delicate technic of the master when working on metal, and his very pronounced manner when designing on wood. Adam and Eve (B. 1 and 2, page 438); Herodias with the Head of John the Baptist (B. 12); Jezabel and Achab (B. 11); and the Chief Heroes of Antiquity, or the *Neuf Preux* (B. 15), may serve the collector's purpose. We would advise Bartsch's account of this master to be supplemented by Passavant's, in vol. iii. p. 7.


Lukas van Leyden's mark is a capital **L** by itself, or on a tablet. It is in some instances accompanied by a date, 1525-27. Occasionally the **L** is reversed **┘** (**L** **┘**). As a rule, this artist's wood-engravings are scarce.

VIRGIL SOLIS (OR VERGILE SOLIS). Born, Nürnberg, 1514;
died, Nürnberg, 1570.

(Bartsch, vol. ix. p. 242.)

It will be well to procure a specimen or two of this most voluminous master, as samples of the better style of book illustrations from woodcuts during the first half of the sixteenth century. Further, his name is so frequently quoted, and his cypher so constantly coming before notice in 'Bible Cuts,' that he cannot be ignored. He is generally allowed to have been an engraver of wood-blocks as well as a designer on them. Mr. Chatto remarks of V. Solis,—

'The cuts which contain his mark are extremely numerous, and, from their being mostly of small size, he is ranked by Heineken with the "Little Masters." Several of his cuts display great fertility of invention, but though his figures are frequently spirited and the attitudes good, yet his drawing is generally careless and incorrect. As a considerable number of his cuts are of the same kind as those of Bernard Solomon, it seems as if there had been a competition at that time between the booksellers of Nuremberg and those of Lyons for supplying the European market with illustrations of two works of widely different character: to wit, the Bible and Ovid's Metamorphoses—Virgil Solis being retained for the German, and Bernard Solomon for the French publishers.' (p. 406.)

Several hundred woodcuts are extant, having on them the mark of Virgil Solis, which is a cypher, forming a large capital **V** having a smaller capital **S** on the right arm . If details concerning the cuts of this master be desired, reference should be made to Nagler's *Künstler-Lexikon*, Art. Solis. Superior in boldness and vigour to this artist is—

JOBST AMMAN (JODOCUS AMMON). Born, Zürich; 1539;
died, Nürnberg, 1591.

(Bartsch, vol. ix. p. 351; Becker, *Bibl.* 80.)

Jobst Amman must rank as one of the chief designers and engravers on wood of his day. He worked with both needle and burin likewise, and is believed to have painted in oil and on glass.


It is in connexion with wood-engraving however that he is best known.

In 1560 Amman settled at Nürnberg, where he joined Virgil Solis in executing some works. He soon after became acquainted with Sigmund Feyerabend, of Frankfurt, the well-known patron of art and publisher, at which time (*circa* 1564) his period of greatest activity commenced. Amman was much influenced by Feyerabend, and continued to exert his abilities for him in the way of book illustration for a quarter of a century. Like all the great masters, Amman furnished as a rule the designs only for the engravers, but cutting the blocks himself as they did now and then exceptionally. That he occasionally engraved we think must be clear from the high character of the technic as well as of the compositions in the 'Charta Luforia,' or the Book of Cards, and from the figure of the engraver's knife accompanying his cypher on one of the pieces in Fronsperger's 'Kriegsbuch.' The Charta Luforia volume is extremely scarce, but a fine impression may be seen in the British Museum. Good copies of some of the cuts by Byfield are given by Singer (Bibl. 65); and the work is described in detail in the author's 'Descriptive Catalogue of Playing-Cards in the British Museum.'

Amman was very prolific of his designs for wood-engraving. 254 titles are recorded by Weffely (Meyer, Bibl. 45), under several of which are volumes containing from one to three hundred illustrations. The master is often noticed in connexion with his work on 'Professions and Trades,' a good account of which may be found in Jackson and Chatto. (Bibl. 38, p. 409.) A facsimile reproduction of Amman's 'Gynæceum sive Theatrum Mulierum' has been published by the Holbein Society. (1872.)

Chatto observes of this master that—


'His style bears considerable resemblance to that of Hans Burgkmair, as exemplified in the Triumphs of Maximilian. Many of his figures are well drawn, but even in the best of his subjects the attitudes are somewhat affected, and generally too violent—some of his very best designs are to be found among his equestrian subjects. His men generally have a good "feet," and his ladies seem to manage their heavy, long-tailed steeds with great care and grace.' (p. 412.)

The mark of Amman consists of various modifications of **JA**, **IAH**, **IH**, in the forms of both cypher and monogram. The **A** in particular is often made with a flourish, *IA* . He has likewise a conventional sign formed of an inverted **V** (Λ) having a capital **T** above it, over which is the numeral 4.

Full accounts of this master may be obtained in the monograph of Becker (Bibl. 80), and in the article 'Jost Amman,' by Wessely, in the first volume of the *Künstler-Lexikon* (Bibl. 45).

TOBIAS STIMMER. Born, Schaffhausen, 1534; died, Straßburg, — ?

(Bartsch, vol. ix. p. 330.)

Stimmer was highly thought of in his day as a designer on wood for book illustrations. Nearly one hundred pieces—of which some are series containing many cuts in a set—are known to be by him, and numerous wood-engravings are attributed to him, though they do not bear his mark. The latter is composed of the capitals **T** and **S** intertwined ().

Like V. Solis and J. Amman, Stimmer is constantly passing before the notice of the rummager of portfolios containing miscellaneous wood-engravings. He is thus known chiefly as the author of small scriptural subjects, in the greater number of instances cut from books.

CHRISTOPHER VAN SICHEM. Born, Delft, 1580? living at Basle, 1646; died, — ?

CHRISTOPHER, Junior (or CORNELIUS VAN SICHEM). Working at Amsterdam from 1617 to 1636.

(Nagler, 'Monogrammisten,' vol. ii. nn. 651, 802, 803.)

The collector cannot fail of frequently meeting with small woodcuts, chiefly of a scriptural character, and somewhat analo-

gous to the pieces of Solis, Amman, and Stimmer. These cuts are not unlikely to be by a Christopher van Sichem, as before given. We might well pass them over were there not other wood-engravings bearing a mark like that which they bear. These engravings are of a later date of production than the smaller scriptural subjects, and are chiefly after the designs of H. Goltzius, Matham, and Bloemart. Some of them are remarkable for their bold and effective characters, and one or two of the larger heads should find a place in the cabinet of wood-engravings. These fine and vigorous productions are stated by some to be the works of a Cornelius van Sichem, who flourished at Amsterdam from about 1617 to 1636. Nagler deems this Cornelius to be the same person as the younger Christopher. Not less than four Sichems have been stated to have designed or cut on wood, viz., Christopher van Sichem, senior and junior, Carl van Sichem, and Cornelius van Sichem. The subject is in great confusion; writers on it contradicting each other.

The mark of the Van Sichems is formed of a large capital **V** having a smaller capital **C** on the left arm and an **S** on the right,



CHRISTOPHER JEGHER. At Antwerp in 1620; not living after 1664.

(Nagler, vol. ii. n. 231.)

This master was apparently of German extraction; but little further is known of his history than that he was probably born some time between 1578 and 1590, that about 1620 he arrived at Antwerp, and worked there under the supervision of Rubens.

Following the examples of Albert Dürer, Lukas van Leyden, Holbein, Titian, and other eminent painters, Rubens, at a later period, gave an important impetus to wood-engraving. This he effected by drawing designs on the blocks, and employing Christopher Jegher to engrave them. The latter being a very able worker in a bold, free style, developed Rubens' ideas *con amore*. He cut the forms in spirited strokes, working with cross-hatchings, as in pen-and-ink work. In some instances, however,

this gave a confused or blotted look to the lines producing the broad shadows, and his style of cutting has often a coarse and somewhat mechanical feeling about it. Rubens himself appears to have been conscious of this, and hence in some instances had a tinted block imposed over all the composition, which block had the high lights cut out upon it. By this means both softness and brightness were given to the whole; the idea of thus obtaining them being derived probably from the Italian *chiaro-scuro*.

Take, however, the large pieces which bear the names of Rubens and Jegher, and it must be allowed that design and technic declare at once that both artist and craftsman were at cherished employments. Some of the cuts by Jegher, after Rubens, are approached in largeness of style and effect only by the engravings of Boldrini after Titian. The finer of the large heads by Sichem, perhaps, entitle the latter master to join the same rank.

More than one example of the ability of Jegher may well find room in the cabinet of the collector. It has been stated that, after the death of Rubens, Jegher purchased the greater number of the blocks he had engraved for the painter, and published impressions from them on his own account. The preferable copies are those having the name of Rubens as their publisher; such as have the name of Jegher substituted for that of the artist belong to the after issues and are less valuable. The pieces known as the Garden of Love, Christ tempted by Satan, the Infant Christ and Saint John, the Coronation of the Virgin, are all capital examples. Silenus led by a Satyr and old Man is remarkably fine and bold. The late Mr. Fairholt, in his 'Homes and Haunts of Foreign Artists,' thus alludes to these designs and Rubens:—

'Like Raphael, he employed the best engravers to copy his works under his own superintendence, and he drew upon wood many good designs, fully aware of the large renown that Albert Dürer had achieved by the same process.' 'These woodcuts are generally much larger than Dürer's, but do not possess that clearness of line and knowledge of pen-drawing which Dürer's evince. They have more solid shadow, and their painter-like style has been sometimes aided by tint-blocks printed over them after the manner of the Italian, Ugo da Carpi. The largest of his cuts is the somewhat offensive subject, Susannah and the Elders—it measures $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth by 17 inches in height. The next in size,

and the best in treatment, is a Repose of the Holy Family, remarkable for the freedom and beauty of the trees and landscape, it is a copy of one of his best known pictures. But perhaps the most characteristic is a group of Fauns supporting Silenus; it is admirably rendered. All were engraved by Christopher Jegher, whose chief ability lay in the preservation of Rubens' powerful *chiaro-scuro*.'

Jegher has left many small woodcuts behind him bearing the initials **CJ**, and **ICJ**. He also cut the blocks for illustrating the edition of the 'Perpetua Crux' published in 1649. Cristoffel Jegher is on some of his pieces.

FRENCH SCHOOL.

The old French stencillers and wood-engravers were called *Dominotiers*, from *Dominus*, our Lord, whose form they were so frequently called on to represent, and which embodiment, along with the small prints of a religious character similar to the German 'Helgen,' received the name of *Dominos*. Subsequently the word *Domino* was used to signify coloured or marble paper, and the makers of it, as well as the engravers and colourers of woodcuts, were termed *Dominotiers*.

A few of the works of the *Dominotiers* are to be found in the Paris Cabinet, and these, in the opinions of competent judges, have the characters belonging to the first period of the art. (Pass. v. i. p. 154.)

The library at Althorp is stated (*Bibliophile Illustré*, July 1863) to contain a French xylographic kalendar with chart of the date 1458. A fragment of another edition of the same work is in the British Museum. These relics are supposed by M. Berjeau to have been the work of one G. Broufcon du Conquet a bas-Breton, the author of a curious little xylographic kalendar in the Sloane Collection of MSS. in the British Museum (no. 966), and of a kalendar in the possession of the Duc d'Aumale.

The printed forms which appeared in France of the xylographic books, such as *L'Art au Morier*, the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis*, etc., were illustrated with cuts of German origin apparently. This circumstance holds good also as respects the earlier French printed works having woodcut illustrations, such as the 'Melusine,' and 'Miroir' of Lyons, 1478, and the 'Belial'

of 1481. It is true that some persons regard these cuts as printed from metal in relief and not from wood; which, however, were it the case, would not invalidate their coming from the source mentioned. A Dance of Death, published in 1485, containing twenty-five pieces, seems to have been one of the first series of cuts of distinctly French origin. This series was soon followed by the beautiful Books of Hours, published by Pigouchet, Simon Vostre, Antoine Verard, and others. Some of Verard's blocks for other works were afterwards sent to England for use in books printed here. It must be now accepted in accordance with the teaching of Passavant and Didot that many of the finer and more remarkable of the illustrations in the Books of Hours were from metal and not from wood. On this debated topic something has previously been said (p. 83), and it will be again alluded to when speaking of *la manière criblée*.

While Germany and the Netherlands, led by Albert Dürer, the Cranachs, and others; and Italy represented by Ugo da Carpi, produced important separate wood-engravings, and repeated them; France at the same period, did not produce a single meritorious piece that we are aware of, either from the designers of the day, or as copied after the works of the older masters. France appeared to regard wood-engraving only in the light of a help-mate to typography. Book-plates, therefore, are almost the only source to look to for specimens of early French wood-engraving and of metal in relief. In the case of the *Libres d'Heures* they are often very beautiful and attractive, elsewhere they are frequently poor enough. The former are difficult to procure and costly, the latter are to be frequently met with in portfolios of miscellaneous prints.

Of the French book-illustrations easily procurable the cuts of Bernard Solomon are the best. Whether he actually engraved as well as designed on wood is not determined, but he was a most industrious artist, and one of the best of the Lyons school. The pieces usually ascribed to him are all of small size, and though executed in a delicate manner, are generally deficient in effect, and may readily be distinguished by the tall, slim figures of the composition.

For the general collector there is not much covetable in this department of French art—with the exception, of course, of the 'Books of Hours.'

‘It is in these works that French engraving must be studied in order that the originality which the art exhibited at its commencement may be rightly appreciated. No country knew so well as France how to illustrate with *naïveté* and spirit a Gospel, and to decorate an “office.” The Germans patiently arranged large compositions, which they placed here and there in their Bibles; while the Italians, more ambitious, and also more skilful, preferred to produce works impressed with an elevated style no longer adapted for ordinary volumes. The Flemings were the only ones who—along with the French—adorned their religious books with *vignettes*. But those of the former people were drawn without spirit, and were very frequently badly composed. The French artists, on the contrary, knew how to bestow on their plates a sincerity which explains the success obtained for half a century by the “*Livres d’Heures*.”’ (Avant-propos par M. Dupleffis à Jules Renouvier—“*Les Gravures sur Bois*.”)

For detailed information concerning these books the treatise of M. Didot (Bibl. 18), the memoir of M. Dupleffis on the works of Simon Vostre (Paris, 1862), the treatise of Mr. Noel Humphreys (Bibl. 36), and in particular the fifth volume of Brunet’s ‘*Manuel du Libraire*’ may be consulted. The first volume of Passavant, the work of Jackson and Chatto, and various memoirs by Renouvier, are other sources of information on early French wood-engraving, and an ample list of references is likewise given in Heller’s work (Bibl. 31).

ENGLISH SCHOOL.

The earliest record of wood-engraving in England is probably to be found in the remains of a folio sheet or broadside containing sixty-eight lines of a ‘Moral Play.’ It is, we believe, unique, and was in the collection of M. Weigel of Leipzig, at the sale of whose cabinet in 1872 it brought nearly 140*l.* (900 *th.*) Not any figures, it is true, are here represented, but simply stanzas of xylographic printing, having between them borders containing strings of five-leaved rosettes. This relic of xylography is supposed to be of the date of from 1450 to 1470; it is now in the British Museum, and has been fac-similed by Mr. F. C. Price.

In reference to this example, considered by J. Payne Collier and Weigel to be the oldest remains of an English dramatic

work, Mr. H. Bradshaw, of the University Library, Cambridge, thus wrote in the 'Bibliophile' for December, 1863 (vol. ii. p. 141):—"M. Weigel's interesting fragment cannot be considered part of a moral play or any such production. If any one will glance at the various lists of John Lydgate's works he will see enough to show him that this is a set of stanzas on "the Seven Theological Virtues," written most probably for scrolls to be put above or beneath figures representing these virtues on the wall of a room, or in some such position as many of Lydgate's verses are known to have been."

The second edition of Caxton's *Game and Playe of the Chess*, considered to have been printed about 1476, is usually regarded as the first work in the English language which had wood-engravings. Then followed the *Mirror of the Worlde*, the *Golden Legend*, etc., containing illustrations. There are those who believe that the chief part of these early English (?) engravings are imprints from metal plates in relief, and not from wood-blocks,* while others affirm that whether the impressions be from metal or from wood, they are, in all probability, not the productions of this country, but may be traced to books of an earlier date printed on the Continent. Mr. Noel Humphreys thus expresses himself on this subject:—

"It is probable that great part, if not the whole of the type of our early printers, was imported from Germany through the Low Countries, and consequently the engravings must have been the work of foreign artists, the engraved blocks being imported at second-hand from the Continent, and frequently introduced in English books without the slightest regard to their fitness either in subject or character. But, in fact, little is known upon this subject. Strutt and Evelyn, in speaking of the early use of wood-engraving in England, confuse the distinct arts of engraving on wood and on copper, while a writer in "Chambers' Cyclopædia" is no clearer, but infers that the art was "brought here from Antwerp by John Speed." Dr. Henry, of biblical celebrity, satisfies himself with a reference to Walpole's superficial catalogue of engravers, all tending to prove that next to nothing is accurately known of the first stages of the art of wood-engraving in England. Some of the rude engravings in Caxton's "Mirror of the World," 1481, have indeed been thought to be

* *Antea*, p. 78.

of British workmanship, as also the plates of the second edition of the "Game of the Chess," &c., &c.; but even if so, they may yet be copies from foreign works, as we know that he copied a design from the "Biblia Pauperum" to illustrate his "Life of Christ." The cuts of the second edition of the "Canterbury Tales," have, however, a fairer claim to be considered English work from certain peculiar characteristics of style, though beyond this there is no proof whatever.' (Bibl. 36, p. 186.)

In a curious Oxford edition of Caxton's *Festial* (or *Liber Festivalis* as it is frequently called) printed in 1486, but by whom is not surely known, there are some rather coarse woodcuts: these, however, have been declared to have been the work of foreign artists, probably of the Netherlands.

Such views but little coincide with the opinions of those who, like Strutt and Ottley, surmise we were as early in engraving, both on wood and metal, as were the Germans. We have before (page 51) alluded to a notion of Strutt in respect to engraving on metal; in regard to Mr. Ottley we may state that he gives in his *History of Printing* (Bibl. 52, p. 198) a facsimile of an early English wood-engraving representing Christ in half figure above the inscription of an Indulgence. This cut, he thinks, from the circumstances under which it was found, may be as old as the Saint Christopher. The inscription is in English. As in the instance brought forward by Strutt, there must be surely a mistake somewhere, notwithstanding Mr. Chatto's reclamation;—

'I protest,' says he, 'against bibliographers going a begging with woodcuts found in old English books, and ascribing them to foreign artists before they have taken the slightest pains to ascertain whether such cuts were executed in England or not.' (Bibl. 38, p. 198.)

In Strutt's and Ottley's instances the mistakes relate rather to the date than to the locality of production.

It is almost alone among the book-plates of the sixteenth century that specimens of undoubted English art can be found. Not any separate sheets nor series of beautiful designs, like those of Dürer or Burgkmair, of bold rugged pieces such as those of Cranach, no grandiose compositions and free technic as we owe to Titian, Boldrini, and Giuseppe Scolori, are to be found. What there is must be searched for on the shelves of the bibliophile;

the portfolios of the iconophilist must not be expected to furnish much illustration. It should be borne in mind, however, that a few of the cuts in Cranmer's Catechism, printed in 1548, are perhaps rightly judged to be from the designs of Holbein (*antea*, p. 240).

The first complete English translation of the Old and New Testament, known as Miles Coverdale's, is supposed to have been printed at Zürich in 1535. It is ornamented with a number of woodcuts, which, although somewhat coarsely engraved, are designed with such spirit as to have been considered not unworthy of Holbein. But be they whose they may, they cannot be regarded as of English origin and work.

‘Wood-engraving in England during the time of Holbein's residence in this country appears to have been but little cultivated, but though there cannot be a doubt that the art was then practised here by native wood-engravers, yet I very much question if it were practised by any person in England as a distinct profession. It is not unlikely that many of the woodcuts which appear in books printed in this country about that period were engraved by the printers themselves. It has, indeed, been supposed that most of the woodcuts in English books printed at that period were engraved on the Continent, but this opinion seems to be highly improbable,—there could be no occasion to send abroad to have woodcuts so rudely executed.’ (Jackson and Chatto, p. 378.)

In the *Bibliophile Illustré* (vol. ii. p. 64), and *Bookworm* (vol. iv. p. 120), M. Berjeau shows that blocks engraved for Antoine Verard, the well-known Paris printer of the fifteenth century, were sent to England, and used as late as 1656, while Pynson, W. de Worde, Notary, and others, had not refrained from employing them in their editions of the ‘*Shepheardes Calendar*.’ A facsimile of one of the cuts, taken from an edition of 1618, may be seen in the number referred to of the *Bookworm*.

In the British Museum is an interesting woodcut from three blocks, measuring $19 \times 19\frac{3}{4}$ inches, representing ‘*The Ark Royal*,’ the largest vessel in Queen Elizabeth's navy, and the flag-ship of Lord Howard of Effingham in the battles with the Armada; she carried fifty guns, and was of 800 tons burthen. In the woodcut

she is represented as rigged with four masts, and having the admiral's standard at her gangway, thus continuing the custom, which obtained in ancient as well as mediæval times, of exhibiting the armorials of the warriors on board a vessel, on shields suspended at her sides; the Royal standard flies at her mainmast head; the Tudor rose is on a flag at the summit of her mizenmast, and a St. George's cross appears at her foremast truck. This woodcut, if it be of English origin, is one of the oldest works of the kind executed in this country.*

From what has been stated, it must appear that there is not any necessity for entering further into the history of early wood-engraving in England. There is one point of detail, however, to which it may not be out of place to allude; it is, that the first number of an illustrated newspaper appeared in England in 1643. It was called the 'Mercurius Civicus, or London's Intelligencer.' The first number contained a portrait of Charles the First, and likewise one of Sir Thomas Fairfax, both engraved on wood. In the eleventh number on the *verso* of the second leaf (83-84) was given an illustration of a warlike weapon which had been found in certain houses in Lancashire. Portraits of the Queen, Prince Maurice, Prince Rupert, Sir W. Waller, of a Lord Mayor, of a Sheriff, and a figure of Mercury were in due course presented to the reader (British Museum, Burney Coll. vol. ii. 1643; vol. iii. 1643; vol. i. 1644).

The reviewer of the former edition of this work in the Athenæum, for January 3rd, 1874, remarks in reference to the above statement concerning the 'Mercurius Civicus,'—

'We are not concerned to dispute the priority of this periodical, yet it would be well to say that "Mercurius Civicus" was preceded by a countless host of illustrated tracts and broadsides, all dealing with current events which differed but formally from the "Mercurius," and were by no means confined to a report of a single event. For example, *Old News newly Revived* dealt with "the discovery of all occurrences happened since the beginning of the Parliament," and was published two years before "Mercurius." A *Perfect Tiurnall; or Welsh Post*, with a portrait of Charles the First: "London, printed for her Welsh Post, to carry to her countrymen in Whales, 1643 (Sat., Feb. 4, to Sat., Feb. 11,

* British Museum Report, etc. for 1875, p. 41.

1643),” may be called an illustrated newspaper, and must approach very closely to “*Mercurius*.” It points to other and previous issues. It is probable that the portrait of the king which decorates the last-named periodical was not new; and it is certain that that which accompanied the former made its appearance again and again.’

If this country was backward in our present department of art during its infancy, it has since made amends, for now we are quite equal, if not superior, to the wood-engravers of other places in mechanical technic, and the amount of design worked out in its service is something enormous at the present day. But the intention and spirit of the wood-engraving of our time are not identical with those of the past. If in mere technic of cutting and mechanically producing lines, in knowledge of various ingenious expedients to assist the printing process, and in choice of paper, the wood-engraver has never been seen to greater advantage than now; he has never—to use the words of an able critic—been more unfaithful to the true nature and principles of his art. No art has been so unfortunate as modern wood-engraving in being condemned from the first to produce results precisely the contrary of those which are naturally indicated by the method (Hamerton). As observed also by Mr. Aspland,—

‘The capacity of wood is limited. It can express perhaps better than copper the strong contrasts of light and shade, but trade necessities required that it should do the work of copper; the tint tools were brought into full use, and the result was an imperfect imitation; the value of the process is gone, and a poor, tame, and for art purposes, a worthless plate is produced.’ (Introduction to Jobst Amman’s ‘*Gynæceum*.’ Holbein Society’s Publication.)

To dilate on modern wood-engraving, however, would be to advance beyond our limits.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SOUTHERN SCHOOLS OF WOOD-ENGRAVING.

DIVISION I.—WOOD-ENGRAVING.

B. *Southern Schools*, as Italy, Spain—illustrated by

α—Early printed books with cuts.

Vavaffore, Jacopo di Barbarj, Campagnola, Beccafumi, Francesco de Nanto, Giov. B. del Porto, Domenico dalle Greche, Boldrini, Scolari.

λ—Los Trabajos de Hercules, Regimento de los Principes.

IT has been already stated that in Italy wood-engraving was not taken up at first with that liking and spirit with which it was welcomed in the North. In the former country it was chiefly under the guise of ‘chiaro-scuro’ that it captivated the artist and arrested the attention of the engraver. In this restriction the *incunabula*, before alluded to (p. 24), of course are not included; but with those we tread upon debateable ground not within our immediate compass, and upon which we have already entered. It should not be forgotten that at an after period some very fine and bold work proceeded from the Italian wood-engravers, who had the advantages offered by the designs of Raphael, Titian, and other great painters, whose compositions they developed on the block in a free and painter-like style.

The first woodcuts usually regarded as Italian, with a date, appeared at Rome in 1467, in the form of illustrations to a work entitled ‘*Meditationes Johannis de Turrecremata*.’ This work is in folio, and is ornamented with thirty-four woodcuts, the first illustration being the Creation of the World, the last the Final Judgment. These cuts are assumed to be have been engraved

by an Italian master, after the designs of Fra Angelico da Fiesole. But it is more probable that the engraving was the work of a German *formschneider* in the employ of Ulrich Hahn (originally of Ingoldstadt), a German printer then settled at Rome. As far as their mere technic is concerned, these cuts should be regarded then rather as of Northern than of Southern origin. Passavant declares that 'il n'y a que quelques-unes des gravures qui rappellent par le costume des soldats romains et par les cyprès dans les paysages leur origine Italienne' (vol. i. p. 131). The forms are in outline, and though designed with more spirit than the cuts of Pfister's Tracts, can scarcely be considered as better engraved.

The next dated woodcuts illustrate the treatise of R. Valturius 'de Re Militari,' which appeared at Verona in 1472. They are thought by some to have been both designed and engraved by Mathæo de Passis.

'A considerable degree of talent is displayed in many of the designs; there is nothing in the engraving, as they are mere outlines, but what might be cut by a novice. . . . The drawing of the figure [a man shooting with a cross-bow] is good, and the attitude graceful and natural. The figure, indeed, is not only the best in the work of Valturius, but is one of the best so far as respects the drawing, that is to be met with in any book printed in the fifteenth century.' (Chatto, pp. 186, 188.)

In 1497 an edition of the life and epistles 'De Sancto Hieronymo' was published by Lorenzo di Roffi da Valenza, containing some fine woodcuts and woodcut capitals; but of all the wood-engravings executed, not only in Italy, but elsewhere, during the latter third of the fifteenth century, there are none to be compared for elegance of design with those which adorn the 'Hypnerotomachia Poliphili,' printed by Aldus at Venice in 1499. By some critics, not only the designing but the engraving of these cuts has been ascribed to Benedetto Montagna. It is just possible that he designed them, but whether he cut them wholly, or called to his aid either 'Master Jacob from Strasburg,' or Giov. Andrea Vavaffore, or did not have anything to do with them, are the merest surmises. Passavant (along with others) refuses to acknowledge Benedetto Montagna as even their de-

figurer. Giovanni Bellini, Alessandro Botticelli, Andrea Mantegna, and Raphael Santi, have each been regarded as the authors of the beautiful cuts in the 'Hypnerotomachia.' On cut 3, which represents Poliphilo asleep on the ground, occurs a Gothic letter h at the lower right hand corner. This letter is repeated on the cut of signature c (the thirteenth illustration) toward the left hand corner (Nagler, v. i. n. 1613). The forms, which are only in outline, bear intrinsic evidences of the old Padua-Venetian School, in which a certain fulness of contour prevailed, while at the same time there existed a decided feeling for beauty of form. When the more graceful of these charming cuts are compared with the early German book-prints, one is reminded of comparisons between the frescoes of the Pompeian panels and the grotesques of George Cruikshank. The feeling of these compositions is such that we strongly advise the reader to refer to the copies of them, as given in the Treatise of Jackson and Chatto, in the fourth volume of Dibdin's *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*, p. 155, and in Weigel's *Holzschnitte*, &c. (Bibl. 71.) The work itself, both rare and costly, may be seen in the British Museum, in the form of the Venice Edition of 1545. (634, l. 12.) At a sale at Messrs. Sotheby's, in 1870, a copy brought 30*l.* 10*s.* Another copy was sold a little later in the same year for 35*l.*, but this, on collation, proving to want four leaves, was refold for 23*l.*

A large bird's-eye, or perspective, view of Venice from six blocks finely engraved was executed by Jacopo di Barbarj, about the year 1500, and there are some early separate Italian woodcuts which should be referred to of seven sheets of the 'Seven Planets,' bearing on three pieces the initials 'F. F.,' and one piece the address, '*In Venetia p Zuan Adrea Vadignino di Vavaffori al Ponti di Fuferi.*' This has been presumed to refer to Florio Vavaffiore (brother to Zoan Andrea), who worked at Venice in 1544. There are also woodcuts attributed to Zoan Andrea himself. Reference should be made here to what has been stated previously (p. 190) in respect to an Italian block book.

To Domenico Beccafumi of Sienna (b. 1486, d. 1551) at least a dozen pieces have been ascribed, and several examples of Domenico Campagnola may be met with.

From certain remarks by Luca Paciolo in the dedication of his

work, 'De Proportione Divina' (A.D. 1509), it has been thought that Leonardo da Vinci not only designed, but actually engraved, a few woodcuts. Commenting on these remarks of Paciolo, M. Dupleffis writes,—

'The text is truly so formal that it does not appear to authorize any discussion. Nevertheless, it appears to us difficult to admit, after having examined the volume itself, that Leonardo da Vinci took any further part than that of furnishing the designs. How can we suppose in fact that one of the greatest artists who ever lived could have spent precious time in laboriously cutting a piece of wood to obtain a letter of the alphabet, a cube, or a triangle, when the first engraver at hand could have taken his place without disadvantage? Among the numerous cuts which adorn this volume, one only is of any interest in an art point of view. This is the first cut, it is printed by itself, and represents a profile likeness in outline. The precision of the drawing and expression of the countenance, more sweet than powerful, suggest the hand of one of the Milan School, and the name of Leonardo might be placed below the portrait, without any person, we think, dreaming of displacing it.' (Bibl. 22, p. 49.)

The Marquis Girolamo d'Adda has endeavoured to show that certain woodcuts attributed to Da Vinci are by 'le Rouennais Guillaume de Signerre' (Gaz. des Beaux-Arts, 1868, t. xxv. p. 123).

It has been a disputed question whether the eminent copper-plate engraver, Marc Antonio Raimondi, and his well-known pupil, Agostino di Muzi, ever worked on wood. Firmin Didot (Bibl. 18, col. 105) and Berjeau reply in the affirmative. At the sale of Dr. Wellefley's Library in 1866, the following announcement was in the catalogue:—

'2016. "Epistole & Evangelii Volgari hystoriate," printed within woodcut borders with beautiful wood-engravings, by Marc Antonio (with his cypher), and Agostino Veneziano; calf extra, g. e. excessively rare. Venetia, 1517.'

In the Bookworm, vol. i. p. 188, M. Berjeau alludes to this volume as follows:—

'A most important work for the history of wood-engraving, as it proves beyond a doubt that Marc Antonio Raimondi and Agostino Vene-

ziano engraved on wood as well as on copper. Heller, who informs us that Agostino by some had been mentioned as an engraver on wood, but that there was not the slightest foundation for such a surmise, was totally ignorant of any attempt even by Raimondi, an ignorance shared by Bartsch, and all others who have given a list of his works.'

The volume in question fold for 32l.

Not less a person than Maria di Medicis is said to have engraved on wood. There is a portrait by her of the date 1587—a young Florentine lady—an impression of which is in the British Museum, and a facsimile in Weigel's *Holzschnitte Berühmter Meister* (Bibl. 71). Some persons have regarded this portrait as the likeness of the Queen at fourteen years of age, while Chatto laughs (p. 461) at what he terms the credulity of those who believe that Maria di Medicis engraved it. If, however, what is stated by Robert Duménil (Bibl. 62, vol. v. p. 66) be correct there is hardly a valid reason for rejecting the prevalent opinion.

The following masters may be signified also as among the recognised workers in the present department.

FRANCESCO DE NANTO. Flourished at Venice about 1530.

(Pass. vol. vi. p. 213.)

This engraver, who was a native of Savoy, reproduced the compositions of Girolamo da Treviso (1497–1544), but not any details of his life have reached us. His woodcuts are in the Venetian style, large, clear, and firm in technic. In the British Museum is a series from a *Life of Christ*, on one piece of which is the inscription—'Franciscus De Nanto De Sabaudia' P^o Miuciafci M Inscidit.'

The cypher **D†N** on a woodcut of 'The Flight into Egypt' has been assumed to belong to this master, but it was used by the printer, Domenico Nicolini, who lived at Venice about the year 1600, and he might, as publisher, have placed it there long after the execution of the cut.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA DEL PORTO (or the Master with
the Bird).

(B. xiii. p. 244; Paff. v. p. 149.)

A well-known engraver both on metal and wood working during the first half of the sixteenth century. He belonged to the Lombardo-Venetian School. Seven or eight woodcuts are attributed to him.

His mark was composed of the capitals **I·B·** and a large bird by the side of the second letter.

DOMENICO DALLE GRECHE. Worked at Venice
about 1549.

This master scarcely admits of further recognition than is afforded by the inscription on one of a series of twelve sheets composing a large cut of the 'Passage of the Red Sea by Pharaoh,' after Titian. This print is a magnificent example of design and of free bold technic. More than one impression of it may be seen in the British Museum.

NICOLÒ BOLDRINI OF VICENZA. Worked at Venice
in 1566.

(Paff. vol. vi. p. 217.)

He had the great advantage of having the designs of Titian to endow with permanent form, and so well was this duty occasionally done that it is the opinion of some that Titian himself must have cut as well as designed these finer compositions.

'For my own part,' remarks Cumberland (p. 390), 'I take him to have been a mere wood-print cutter, and that what he executed from Titian was drawn on the blocks by that master, otherwise he would have been better known, as nothing of Titian's pen drawing can be superior to

the caricature of the Laocoon, and no common wood-cutter could have copied it with such freedom and expression.'

The pieces by Boldrini after his favourite master are generally of good size, bold and free in execution, the compositions being as grandiose in their feeling as their technic is broad. The cabinet should decidedly not be without one or two specimens of these fine illustrations of Italian art. Attention may be directed to the Six Saints (Paff. vol. vi. p. 233, n. 53); Samson and Delilah (Paff. no. 5); Saint Jerome (Paff. no. 58); Portrait of Charles V.; Repose in Egypt (Paff. no. 12); Marriage of Saint Catherine (Paff. 61); and Venus and Cupid (Bartsch, vol. xii. p. 126, no. 29). On the latter piece (which may be met with also as a *chiaro-scuro*) is inscribed the most complete reference to the master that we possess. On a few other cuts his signature NB and Nic bol inc may be found, but in a great many instances the works have been referred to Boldrini upon only probably correct conjecture. (Paff. vol. i. p. 150; see also Nagler, vol. i. n. 1888; vol. iv. n. 2321.)

GIUSEPPE SCOLARI OF VICENZA. Worked at Venice
under Paolo Cagliari Veronese in 1580.

(Paff. vol. vi. p. 218.)

Of the personal history of this master not anything is known beyond the above than that he received his early education in his own country from Giovanni Battista Maganza. He was a bold and free workman, and his cuts, both in design and technic, are not unworthy of companionship with the works of Boldrini, Schem, and Jegher. His action is in fact too energetic, and his line in some cases coarser than is agreeable. Nevertheless an example or two of Scolari should certainly be among the *defiderata* of the collector of ancient wood-engravings. Not more than ten or twelve pieces have been ascribed to him. Of these the Ecce Homo (Paff. vol. vi. p. 229, no. 32); Christ led to Execution (Paff. no. 33); the Abduction of Proserpine (Paff. no. 67), will afford a good idea of this artist's style and work. But it will be rather from the Saint George (Paff. no. 56), that a due

notion may be had of the amount of exaggeration which Scolari could impress on both his design and technic.

On some of Scolari's pieces his name in full occurs, on others it is wanting. The latter cuts have been assigned to him from intrinsic evidence.

About the time of Titian, when good and bold engravers worked in Italy, numerous large pieces from several blocks were produced which, however interesting and deserving of a place in the collection of a public institution, are utterly unmanageable by the private collector. If the separate sheets remain unconnected the character and effect of the whole are lost, and if joined together it is most inconvenient to study them. In the cabinet of the British Museum is a portfolio of some of these elephantine wood-engravings mounted on linen. It is well worthy the investigation of the student, who may find in it not only the large and vigorous pieces in question, but other and smaller examples deserving his notice. Some of the latter were intended for chiaro-scuro, but impressions were often taken and allowed to remain as if from single blocks and hence are to be met with as ordinary woodcuts.

Among the smaller examples to which attention may be directed is the series of seven curious early pieces marked as 'probably from the Italian version of Æsop's Fables printed at Verona in 1479;' also the set of ten cuts from 'Gli Alchemisti,' on one of which is inscribed 'Mecarinus de Senis inventor S,' and which according to Paffavant (vol. vi. p. 151) implies 'Domenico Beccafumi de Sienne surnommé "il Mecarino."' There are also two pieces which have been ascribed to Meldolla (Cumberland, Bibl. 14, p. 412), and a few from the 'Sanctum Dei Evangelium Arab. Lat.,' the compositions in which were furnished by Antonio Tempesta, and engraved, in part at least, by Leonardo Norfini or Parafole. This edition of the Gospels in Latin and Arabic was 'rescued from almost entire oblivion by Malanimeus, and now as a contribution to art is saved from oblivion in the publications of the Holbein Society.' (Facsimile Reprint, London, 1873; also Nagler, vol. iv. n. 1256.) There is a larger piece—a sort of *fête champêtre*—having on it 'Ant. Tempestiti Inv.' 'Pompeio Orfino fecit.'

SPANISH SCHOOL.

In Spain as in Italy, engraving on metal was early preferred to engraving on wood for the illustration of books. The oldest cuts recorded are those accompanying a work, entitled, 'El libro de los Trabajos de Hercules.' It was published at Zamora in 1483, and contains eleven illustrations. Passavant refers to a work, 'Regimento de los Principes,' published at Seville in 1494, as an example of the fact that Spanish wood-cuts of the first half of the sixteenth century are mostly in the German style, and were executed probably by German artists and workmen who introduced the art of printing into Spain. (See Pass. vol. i. p. 171.)

Some interesting observations in connexion with wood-engravings occurring in an early Spanish book, and subsequent editions of it in other languages, may be found in the fourth volume of the Bookworm (1869) under the title 'Le Chevalier Délibéré.' The book was first written in French, 1483, and printed in 1488 ;* according to the writer in the Bookworm,—

'the best translation is the Spanish one por don Hernando de Acuña. Barcelona, 1565 the most excellent engravings of this edition are the work of an unknown Spanish artist whose monogram is **A**, and sometimes **E Æ**. We looked in vain in Brulliot for the monogram and name of this artist, who highly deserves to be recorded in the history of Spanish engraving during the latter part of the sixteenth century.' (p. 26.)

The above remarks should be supplemented by reference to Nagler. (Bibl. 48, vol. i. no. 389.)

* See Dibdin's 'Bibliographical Tour,' vol. iii. p. 526.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MASTERS OF THE STYLE OF ENGRAVING TERMED
'CHIARO-SCURO.'

DIVISION I.—WOOD-ENGRAVING.

C. CHIARO-SCURO WORKERS of *Northern Schools*, illustrated by

μ—Cranach, Baldung, Burgkmair, Wechtelin, Goltzius, Jegher.

„ of *Southern Schools*, illustrated by

ν—Ugo da Carpi, Antonio da Trento, Nicolo, Andreani, Coriolano.

THE method of producing the particular effects of the style of engraving and printing-off impressions termed 'chiaroscuro' has already been described (p. 95) in a general way. The works so produced are often very beautiful, and some of the more popular specimens in the cabinet of the collector, as far as the uninitiated are concerned, will be found to be in this department of art. The pictorial results such prints afford from the judicious employment of gradations of colour, and the grandeur of the designs and freedom of hand displayed in the compositions and technic, combine to arrest the attention of the unlearned as well as of others. Nor is this to be wondered at, seeing that both the best designers and the best craftsmen have been so often engaged on the task. In this branch of engraving, the Italians in particular excelled, and it is therefore capable of affording evidences of grace and feeling which are often but slightly apparent in other efforts of wood-engraving of early times.

But it must be admitted that some rough work—though artistic in one sense—is to be met with amongst the chiaro-scuros. A mixture of coarse indented outline, irregular blotches of colour,

unfinished work and coarse textured paper are occasionally found in these prints to such an extent that the latter become 'caviare' to the many, and the eye of the amateur alone can be brought to appreciate them. But taking chiaro-scuros *en masse*, and weighing the great number of beautiful pieces against the less attractive specimens, we may safely assure the collector that from these prints he may fill a moderate-sized portfolio with examples which will stand fair to rank high in the opinion of his artist friends.

'When we look at the Triumph of Cæsar drawn by Andrea Andreani after Mantegna, we seem to have before us the originals of those sublime *temperas*, in which the painter has refuscitated the Roman world, and put motion into the antique sculptures. When we meet with on the prints of the same engraver the grandiose designs traced by Beccafumi in the Duomo of Sienna--those magnificent pavements which arrest the steps and admiration of the traveller--we are pleased to behold them again, and not less pleased to think that others may thus enjoy them without travelling to Italy. What delightful illusions we experience from the *camaïeux* of Antony of Trent, as they reproduce the figures of Parmigiano so nobly mannered in their easy and graceful actions! What majesty the thoughts of Titian retain when translated by Boldrini!' (M. Charles Blanc, 'Grammaire,' &c., p. 649.)

It has been already seen that Germany and Italy have quarrelled for the honour of having originated the 'chiaro-scuro.' Malpé and Cheron ascribed the first efforts to Girolamo Moceto in the year 1500, but their illustrative example continues apocryphal (Nagler, vol. iii. n. 1115), and there cannot be much doubt as to how the credit should be awarded. To Germany, the palm of *priority* at least must be given, for the earliest known chiaro-scuro with a date is a Venus and Cupid, by Lucas Cranach the elder, having 1506 marked on it. It is a piece from two blocks. Then follow a Repose in Egypt, by the same master, of the year 1509; an Adam and Eve, by Hans Baldung (Grün), 1510; the Sorcerers, by the same, 1510, a chiaro-scuro, from three blocks; the portrait of Pope Julius II., by J. Dienecker, after Burgkmair, 1511; the portrait of Baumgartner, by the same, 1512, a piece from three blocks; and the Rhinoceros of Albert Dürer, 1515, from two blocks.

The first Italian pieces—those of Ugo da Carpi—carry us back only to 1518, though it may be allowed that this artist worked at the process in 1516. The earliest date actually on his work is 1518. If it be objected in reference to the German claims that the blocks of shadow tints were added at an after period to the original blocks of the prints just instanced, as would appear to have been the case with respect to the Rhinoceros of Dürer, we must fall back on the documents published by Herberger (*antea*, pp. 66, 97, 223), which prove that in 1511 and 1512 prints from three blocks had been already prepared by Jost Dienecker at Augsburg after designs by Burgkmair. We may recall to mind particularly the letter from the engraver himself to the Emperor Maximilian, in which he boasts of being the inventor of engraving on wood from three blocks, and announces that he has executed in this manner a portrait of Baumgartner, after a drawing by Burgkmair. Another of these prints of greater age (1510), likewise by Burgkmair, is that representing ‘A young Man seized by Death,’ imperfectly described by Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 215, n. 40.

Heller remarked more than half a century ago that in the Straßburg ‘Ptolemy’ printed by I. Schott in 1513, the maps had been worked off from three blocks. Passavant, referring to this volume, observes :—

‘The map of Lorraine is printed in three colours. The hills and forests are in green, the chief towns in red, and the villages in black. The armorial bearings encircling the maps are likewise printed in colours representing the proper metals.’ (vol. i. p. 71, note.)

The credit then of having originated the present method of engraving with even three blocks belongs to Germany, but the Italians greatly advanced this particular process, not only by bestowing on their prints the aspect of more artistic drawings having numerous gradations of light and shade, and of colour, but by occasionally employing four blocks in their production. This working with several blocks, and the resorting to the beautiful compositions of Raphael, Parmigiano, Titian, and other great painters, constitute the part which the Italians took in advancing the practice of *chiaro-scuro*. It must be allowed, too, that with whatever

number of blocks they worked, the Italians continued to improve the method by associating with it an amount of artistic feeling not usually bestowed on it by their Northern compeers. It may be granted, however, that in some of the pieces of Wechtelin, Baldung, and Burgkmair—the earliest in the field—considerable taste and freedom are exhibited.

ALBRECHT DURER (*antea*, p. 204).

There are four pieces having this master's cypher, which were printed after Dürer's time as chiaro-scuros. These are the Rhinoceros (B. vii. p. 147, n. 136); the Holy Family (B. vii. p. 176, n. 10); the large Christus-kopf (B. vii. p. 182, n. 27); and the Portrait of an Elector of Saxony (B. vii. p. 189, n. 43).

Of the first piece, and, indeed of the other prints also, it may be remarked that the shadow or colour tints were not originally intended, but were added afterwards; of the second, that the original block is thought by many to be a spurious Dürer; of the third, that, though generally admitted to be a genuine Dürer, its authenticity has been doubted by a few; and of the fourth, that it is at least doubtful. The portrait of Ulrich Varenbüler (B. 155) may also be met with as a chiaro-scuro, but with which Dürer as such had as little to do as he had with the other examples. The 'Varenbüler' appeared as a chiaro-scuro first at Amsterdam in the seventeenth century. All pieces are of great rarity.

LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER (*antea*, p. 228).

As this master was the earliest worker in chiaro-scuro, the collector should have of course an example of his practice. Judging the Venus and Cupid (B. vii. p. 291, n. 113) as an impression from a single block, and from what has been stated concerning it as a chiaro-scuro, we infer it must be Cranach's best work. As a chiaro-scuro, however, we have not had the advantage of seeing it.

A well-known piece is the Repose in Egypt, dated 1509 (B. vii. n. 3). It has too 'spotty' a look, arising from the numerous scattered high lights; it wants quiet. The Saint Christopher from two blocks may also be mentioned (B. vii. n. 58).

HANS BURGKMAIR (*antea*, p. 224).

A specimen of this artist should be sought for; it will be difficult to obtain, however. His chief pieces are the Virgin and Child (Pass. vol. iii. p. 270, n. 84), Equestrian Portrait of Saint George (B. vii. p. 208, n. 23), Saint Luke painting the Portrait of the Virgin (B. vii. n. 24), and Death seizing a young Man (B. vii. n. 40), a piece from three blocks. According to Passavant, the deeper shadows in the first-mentioned print have been added with the brush.

JOHANN WECHTELIN (also J. VUECHTLIN, likewise JOHANN ULRICH PILGRIM). Worked at Straßburg from 1508 to 1520; died at Straßburg — ?

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 449.)

Among the better of the early German chiaro-scuro are twelve pieces bearing as author's mark Io V. and two crossed pilgrims' staves on a tablet, but without a date



Until recently the author of these prints was called JOHANN ULRICH PILGRIM, and '*Le Maître aux bourdons croisés.*' He was considered as belonging to the end of the fifteenth century. In 1851 Loedel (senior) announced that the so-called J. U. Pilgrim was the same person as Johann Wechtelin, a painter of Straßburg, the author of a well-known Passio Christi, and of illustrations to the works of Dr. Geiler von Kaiserberg and various theological treatises of the beginning of the sixteenth century. Passavant, Schneegans, and Loedel (junior) have supported this view of the identity of Pilgrim and Wechtelin, placing the artist (with Wechtlin as his proper name) at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and as forming one of the Dürer circle, in which, along with Burgkmair, Schüpfelin, and others, he held a worthy place. Nagler opposes these conclusions (Bibl. 48, vol. iv. n. 219), and maintains that the master of the '*Passio Jesu Christi Salvatoris,*' of 1508, who is Io. Vuechtlin, was not

the author of the chiaro-scuros marked Io. V. and attributed to one I. Ulrich Pilgrim. Nagler denies also that the crossed instruments represented on the chiaro-scuros are intended for pilgrims' staves, believing them to be meant for cutting tools. To enter into the discussion would be to go beyond our limits, we must refer the reader to Loedel's work, *Bibl.* 42; Passavant, vol. iii. p. 327, and Nagler, vol. iv. n. 219.

The chiaro-scuros marked Io. V. with two crossed staves (?) are from two blocks. They are very rare, and it is not likely the collector will be able to procure any of them. But as they all are very good, and some—as we think—extremely fine, the work of Loedel will not be an undesirable acquisition. In it excellent facsimiles of the originals exist along with much general information in reference to chiaro-scuros and wood-engraving.

Particular attention may be directed to the following beautiful pieces among the set to which the mark of this artist is attached. The Crucifixion (B. vii. p. 449, n. 1), Saint Sebastian (B. 5), Alcon (B. 9), and the Death's Head (B. 6). About some of the chiaro-scuros of Io. V. there is an Italian look or feeling which neither Cranach nor Grün ever evinced.

HANS BALDUNG (GRÜN) (*antea*, p. 232.)

This fine, free, and expressive worker offers in his chiaro-scuros to the collector not only the best examples of his abilities as an artist and engraver, but also prints of this character which have not been surpassed by any of the Masters yet mentioned of the present department. Three of his pieces are older than any of the works of the Italian engravers. Endeavour should be made to obtain one at least of them. They are Adam and Eve, from two blocks (B. vii. p. 306, n. 3), with the date 1511; the Sorcerers (B. 55), 1510, from three blocks; and a fine undescribed portrait of Ferdinand the First, an impression of which is in the British Museum. In our opinion the Adam and Eve of this master is one of the finest of the old German chiaro-scuros. The Sorcerers is a somewhat bizarre design, and may be met with as an impression

from a single block, as well as a chiaro-scuro. The author was asked in 1874 30*l.* for a fine impression of the chiaro-scuro, but fine and rare as it might be the price was ridiculous, and was not entertained for a moment. (Eisenmann in Meyer, Bibl. 45, art. Hans Baldung.)


HENDRICK GOLTZIUS (or GOLZ). Born, Mühlbrecht, 1558 ; died, Haarlem, 1617.

(Bartsch, vol. iii. p. 3.)

This very clever and bold designer, who often engraved his own compositions as well as the works of other artists, will be frequently attracting notice, more especially as engraver with the burin, at examinations of the portfolios of the printfellers. But whether on wood or on metal, Goltzius was no common man, and in some respects may be regarded as a master of first rank. As a draughtsman he was clever ; as a designer, learned ; as a composer, ingenious ; and as regarded both the graving-knife and burin, his knowledge and practice of technic were capable and extensive.

To Goltzius the cabinet of the collector may be said—in face of Cumberland's disdain—to be indebted for some very choice work. The master's crowning fault is—exaggeration ; whether in design or technic he can with difficulty refrain from overdoing his work. His *taste*, in fact, was bad ; he was *trop prononcé* in everything ; he sometimes appeared almost savage. Goltzius had science, he had art, but he led both to the verge of contortion and the grotesque. He imitated Michael Angelo ; but, as Chatto observes, 'not with success ; he too frequently mistakes violence of action for the expression of intellectual grandeur, and displays the contortions of the Pythoness without inspiration.' Yet with all his faults—some of which were common to his contemporaries—none of the latter can be compared with him.

Here we have to regard Goltzius as a worker on wood and in chiaro-scuro only ; as the latter he must be allowed to have been of first rank, and one of the most effective masters. His colour is rich and contrasted, but sometimes a little too positive. Most of his pieces are from three blocks.

The portfolio of chiaro-scuro should certainly not be deficient in his Hercules killing Cacus. (B. vol. iii. p. 72, n. 231.) Some of the finer impressions of this print are almost dazzling, even by candlelight. Choice may be made of one or two pieces from the Divinities of the Fable (B. nn. 232-237); of these the Helios (B. 234) is specially recommendable. John the Baptist (B. 226), from three blocks, is likewise fine. A landscape, such as B. 242-245 include, will form a novelty in the portfolio of chiaro-scuro. Goltzius' mark is a cypher formed by the capitals H G .

CHRISTOPH JEGHER (*antea*, p. 247).

One of the large landscapes after Rubens, in which a general tint block has been employed, may form an agreeable addition to the portfolio.

It is rather to the Southern than to the Northern schools that the collector must look for the chief ornaments of his cabinet in the present department. To the Italians we pass then.

UGO DA CARPI (or HUGO D. C.) Born, Carpi, 1450?
died, Rome, *circa* 1520.

(Bartsch, vol. xii. p. 11; Pass. vol. vi. p. 206.)

In one of two interesting documents concerning this master which have come down to us, he describes himself as a wood-engraver only, and asks for the protection of the Venetian Senate against such persons as may intend to copy and counterfeit his designs in chiaro-scuro, of which process he declares himself to have been the inventor. The date of this application to the *Signoria* is 1516. The exact resolution to which the latter came is not known. Nagler and Passavant think that Ugo was successful in his demand. The artist, however, left Venice and went to Rome. We are fully aware of this fact, viz., that U. da Carpi was not the *inventor* of the chiaro-scuro treatment of wood-engraving. As before stated, there are pieces by Lucas Cranach having the dates 1506 and 1509 on them respectively, while there is not any

work of the Italian master bearing an earlier date than 1518 (*antea*, pp. 96, 268).

On arriving at Rome the artist commenced his fine series of chiaro-scuros from Raphael's designs. So admirable are some of the series that they have been thought by a few critics to have been drawn on the blocks by Raphael himself. While most effective in results, Ugo da Carpi was yet simple in execution. Generally three blocks were sufficient for his intentions. His contours are decided, and his half-tints well charged. The chiaro-scuros executed by him have been declared to be not only superior to the works of the German masters, but as remaining unsurpassed to the present day. Loedel observes,—

‘It is not, as is often asserted, that merit is due to Ugo da Carpi chiefly for the use of three blocks in his chiaro-scuros, but rather for the peculiar repetitions of the broad lights, shadows, and half-shadows, the *rentrées* affording which were capable almost alone—*i. e.* without the outline-block—of producing the effects of a sketch in colour.’ (Bibl. 42.)

One of the master's forcible pieces is that which, according to Vafari, was his first essay in the new process, viz., A Sibyl reading as a Boy holds a Torch (B. vol. xii. p. 89, n. 6). It is from a design by Raphael, and from two blocks. This print is so good that the collector will do well to refer to the facsimile of it in Weigel (Bibl. 71), if he cannot get a glance at the original, which we need scarcely say is rare. A copy of it the reverse way is to be more frequently met with. This in itself is so satisfactory that it may be regarded as a second *chef-d'œuvre*. Weigel is of opinion that the latter is a chiaro-scuro by Parmigiano, who is supposed to have received instruction from Ugo da Carpi during the time the two artists were at Rome together.

It is surmised by Nagler that Parmigiano himself must have engraved the wood occasionally and prepared several of the blocks in colour which have been attributed to A. da Trento, U. da Carpi, Nicolo, Andreani, and Ghandini. To the satisfactory development of some of these chiaro-scuros careful imitation of the pattern drawing was necessary, and this often with three or even four blocks. To effect this would be beyond the capacity

of an ordinary wood-engraver, and the immediate co-operation of the original draughtsman or painter would be requisite. (Nagler, v. ii. p. 846.)

Vafari and others look upon the Diogenes after Parmigiano (B. xii. p. 100, n. 10), as the chief piece of the master, and certainly both it and the Saturn (B. p. 125, n. 27) are very fine and free. The Diogenes was one of his later works. The Death of Ananias, after Raphael (B. p. 46, n. 27), was one of the first, as it bears the date 1518. David and Goliath (B. p. 26, n. 7), the Miraculous Draught of Fishes (B. p. 37, n. 13), the Descent from the Cross (B. p. 43, n. 22), the Resurrection (B. p. 45, n. 26)—all after the designs of Raphael—are noteworthy. Æneas and Anchises (B. p. 104, n. 12), after the same painter, is a very satisfactory piece.

Some of Ugo da Carpi's prints are marked with his name; others with **VDC** or **VGO**; several—at least they are attributed to him—are without any signature. It is probable that this master left behind him some fine simple woodcuts, besides the chiaro-scuros; but the former, being unsigned, have been allotted rather hastily to Boldrini. (See Pass. vol. vi. p. 209.)

ANTONIO DA TRENTO (also ANTONIO FANTUZZI DA TRENTO).

Born 1508? died — (?) A. Fantuzzi, from Bologna, working at Fontainebleau, 1540–1545.

(Bartsch, vol. xii. p. 14.)

This master was a pupil of Parmigiano, and was instructed by the latter in what he had learnt from Ugo da Carpi concerning the production of chiaro-scuro effects. A. da Trento followed Parmigiano to Bologna about 1530, where he proceeded to work in chiaro-scuro, after the designs of this artist. Most of his pieces are from three blocks, and are well esteemed. Bartsch allots him fifteen works, but regards him as one person with Antonio Fantuzzi, to whom he ascribes thirty-seven. Selection may be made from the following pieces: the Martyrdom of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, after Parmigiano (B. xii. p. 79, n. 28); the Tiburtine Sibyl and Augustus, after the same (B. p. 90, 7); a Seated Man,

viewed from behind (B. p. 148, n. 13). Relative to the last, Bartsch writes,—

‘This, which is nothing more than a simple academy figure, is yet of singular beauty, both for the correctness of the drawing and the lightness of touch. Parmigiano alone was capable of such refinement, and we can scarcely doubt that he himself traced on the wood, both the outline and the hatchings which express the shadows and lights, before they were engraved.’

Saint John the Baptist in the Desert (B. p. 73, n. 17), after Parmigiano, from two blocks, although but a small engraving, is generally regarded as of considerable beauty. Weigel gives (Bibl. 71) two facsimiles of it, considering it of such excellence as to warrant the idea that Parmigiano must himself have cut the outline and shadows, as well as have prepared the colour-blocks, and have given them to Antonio da Trento as offering examples to be followed.

The mark of the master is a monogram forming the capitals

AT, ANT, A AN.

Upon certain etchings of the Italian school a monogram forming **AFT** may be seen. These etchings were at one period ascribed to Antonio Fantuzzi, an engraver and painter of Bologna, at first a scholar of Parmigiano, and afterwards connected with the school at Fontainebleau from 1540 to 1545. To this same A. Fantuzzi have been ascribed likewise, by some, a few of the chiaro-scuro attributed by many to Antonio da Trento. Vafari, Bartsch, and other writers have maintained that Antonio da Trento and Antonio Fantuzzi, or the chiaro-scuroist and the etcher, are one and the same person. This view is opposed by others. The question may be found discussed in Nagler, vol. i. n. 17, n. 579; and Paff. vol. vi. p. 195.

GIUSEPPE NICOLA (VICENTINO). Lived during the first half of the sixteenth century.

(Bartsch, vol. xii. p. 16.)

He was a pupil of Parmigiano, whose designs he worked out in chiaro-scuro, often very effectively. In the style of his work he

followed Ugo da Carpi. According to Passavant 'he is distinguished from Antonio Fantuzzi, his contemporary under Parmigiano—who likewise engraved in clair-obscur after this master—by not employing engraved lines for representing shadows, but using flat tints on the block for that purpose.' Bartsch refers to the following piece from three blocks, after Parmigiano, as one of the most perfect which has been executed from this painter, viz., Christ healing the Lepers (B. p. 39, n. 15). The action is fine and dramatic, and the effect good; but the drawing is loose, if not slovenly, in parts. Hercules and the Nemean Lion (B. p. 119, n. 17) is a worthy example of the master, as is also B. p. 99, n. 9. The Portrait of Charles the Fifth is fine, and may be met with as a simple wood-engraving as well as a chiaro-scuro.

GIUSEPPE SCOLARI, of Vicenza (*antea*, p. 263).

Of this artist we have seen a very fine Entombment. From it and what we know of his simple wood-engravings, we should be inclined to think he must have executed some other covetable chiaro-scuros.

ANDREA ANDREANI. Born, Mantua, 1540? died at Rome
or Mantua, *circa* 1623.

(Bartsch, vol. xii. p. 17.)

It is not unlikely that this master was born later than even 1546. The earliest date on any of his pieces is 1584, and it is not very probable—man of energy and industry as he was—that from thirty to forty years would pass before he came into public notice. We are in ignorance as to his instructor; nor is there conclusive evidence that Andrea Andreani went to Rome, although it seems likely that he did go there.

Andreani was an artist of considerable repute, more widely known, perhaps, as a chiaro-scuroist than any other Italian engraver, as he not only produced a large number of prints properly his own, but also procured blocks cut by other persons, added blocks to these, or, having retouched them, published impressions from them,

as if they had been engraved originally by himself. As Andreani took care to select the blocks of such able workmen as Ugo da Carpi, Antonio da Trento, and Giuseppe Nicolo, to metamorphose into his own productions, he has sometimes obtained credit for more than he deserved; for, though a good engraver, he was scarcely equal to the masters before mentioned. On the other hand, occasionally, he has had scantier justice done him than was proper, since scepticism has prevailed respecting prints truly his own, on account of his undoubted deceptions in other instances.


Andreani was a fine chiaro-scuroist, and has popularly afforded an admirable idea of the grand style of Beccafumi, in his chiaro-scuro after the designs of this painter for the mosaics of the pavement of the Duomo at Sienna. The most recent criticism on the artist which we have met with is by Kolloff, in the article on Andreani in the first volume of Meyer's Nagler's 'Künstler-Lexikon.' It is to this effect:—

‘Bartsch, who is so scrupulous, evidently undervalues Andreani more than is just when he places him so far below his predecessor Ugo da Carpi. The pictorial effect in Andreani's pieces certainly is not so striking as it is in the works of Ugo da Carpi, who practised quite a different style and obtained particular force from reiterations of several colour-blocks, without the use of any outline-block. In Andreani's process of chiaro-scuro the employment of an outline-block was habitual, and on which two or more blocks in darker or lighter tones were printed. Andreani was an industrious artist, and placed much stress on a clear and correct technic. His works—even his best—have something dry about them, and in comparison with the daring but sketchy dashes of Ugo da Carpi his manner seems tame and cold; but it is more careful and uniform, and evinces a surety and definiteness contrasting to advantage with the repeatedly blotchy and dauby manner of Ugo.’

Some of Andreani's pieces are of considerable size; one of the better known of the larger sets is the Triumph of Julius Cæsar, in ten sheets, after A. Mantegna (B. vol. xii. p. 101, n. 11). The Sacrifice of Abraham, after Beccafumi (B. p. 22, n. 4), is a large and fine work; as is likewise the Abduction of the Sabine Women, after Giovanni di Bologna (B. p. 94). The collector may be

fatisfied, however, with some of the master's moderate-sized pieces, such as Pilate washing his Hands and dismissing Christ, after G. di Bologna (B. p. 41, n. 19); it is from four blocks, and is a very agreeable piece to study. Care should be taken that both halves of this print be obtained. The Entombment, after Raphael da Reggio (B. p. 44, n. 24); and after G. Scolari (B. p. 45, n. 25); the Virgin and Saints, after Ligozzi (B. p. 67, n. 27); Eve, after Beccafumi (B. p. 21, n. 1) and Nymphs at the Bath (B. p. 122, n. 22), are each worthy of selection.

The chiaro-scuros reprinted by Andreani may be found in Bartsch allotted with tolerable correctness to their true authors. These pieces are thought by some persons to be generally superior to such as were engraved by the Master himself from original designs, and in the execution of which he had to depend on his own taste and judgment. The pieces Andreani engraved, after Beccafumi, must certainly be admitted to be very fine.

Andreani continued to work late, as shown by two pieces dated 1612. Sometimes his name is written in full on his prints; in other instances he employs as his mark a large, straggling, double kind of A, or a large capital A having a small A within it  Andreani's cypher is so similar in appearance to that of Alb. Altdorfer that they may be easily confounded (*antea*, p. 233).

BARTOLOMEO CORIOLANO. Worked at Bologna from
1630 to 1647.

(Bartsch, vol. xii. p. 18.)

There were three artists established in Italy having the name of Coriolano, viz., Cristoforo, Giovanni, and Bartolomeo. It has been stated that Coriolano is the name of Lederer Italianised, and that the family originally came from Nürnberg. Bartolomeo Coriolano was one of the later and better of the Italian masters in chiaro-scuro, carrying out the principles he had learnt in the school of the Carracci.

'He usually confined himself to two blocks for his cuts: on one he cut the outline and the dark shadows like the hatchings of a pen, and on the

other block the demi-tint; these he managed with great judgment, and his prints have a fine effect. His drawing is masterly and spirited, and his heads of a fine expression, characteristic of the great school in which he was educated.'—'There are a few of his cuts executed in chiaro-scuro in which he used three blocks.' (Bryan, *Bibl.* 10, p. 183.)

B. Coriolano was fond of developing the designs of Guido Reni and of Guercino, and this intention he generally accomplished in a very artistic way. The following pieces are good illustrations of the master:—The Virgin and Sleeping Jesus, after Guido, from three blocks (B. xii. p. 52, n. 5); the Virgin, Infant Jesus, and Saint John the Baptist, after Guido, from three blocks (B. p. 61, n. 20); the Four Sibyls, after Guido (B. p. 87, n. 2, 3, 4, 5). The master's name is very often on his pieces.

Reference to other workers in this branch is unnecessary, but a few general remarks may not be out of place.

It may happen to the collector that he has been struck with the well-defined work and effective character of a chiaro-scuro met with in the portfolio of a friend. He searches after it for himself, but is much disappointed in being able to meet with only a slovenly printed, washed-out-looking impression of a very different colour to that which he expected. He is much puzzled, as well as dissatisfied, scarcely believing the two pieces to mean the same print. They do so, nevertheless; but the one is a 'fine state,' fully and carefully printed, the other is a 'poor state,' *i. e.* an impression imperfectly or badly worked off. In the latter something has been left out; the middle tint, perhaps, is lost or left without its proper termination. Instead of having been printed off in several gradations of bright, rich, effective colour, it has been made to look as if it had been 'scamped.' Even under circumstances where there has not been any intention of doing less than the best, and of not carrying out the full process carefully, misadventures in chiaro-scuro printing will now and then ensue. In former days the strongly-sized paper needed considerable damping to render it fit for use. When thus distended, it received the impression of the first block. It was then, perhaps, allowed to dry before it was again damped, or was placed simply between sheets of damp paper

until the next block was ready for being printed from. Such alternations and varying degrees of damping and drying affected the comparative measurements of the paper considerably. The small register holes in the paper of the first impression did not properly coincide with the 'points' of the second block, and this misfit showed itself in irregular appearances in the impression caused by the stretching of the paper to one or other side in fastening it on the points of the second and third blocks. In a portrait, for example, the high lights on the nose and eyelids might be placed away from their truthful lines, and similar shiftings would become apparent in other parts of the print. In chiaro-scuro from two blocks only, the operation of the second or colour-block, with its broadly-marked lines, kept such faults when they occurred at a *minimum*. But in pieces from three or more blocks the want of coincidence or register between the several impressions representing the composition would be plainly shown by many parts of the latter being incorrectly placed, and out of relation to each other. In some Italian chiaro-scuro the last block used was that of the contours and deeper shadows, and this from such derangement as we have alluded to, would often cause the limbs to appear too meagre or too thick, according to circumstances.

In many imperfect Italian pieces the colour employed was too thin. Thin colour was resorted to for the purpose of obtaining more tender gradations, or for getting transparency. Instead of these being obtained, however, the result was that the deeper cut lines of the lights in the first tone-block which should have formed melting transitions into one of the after-tones, flowed too easily into it, disturbing the luminosity and harmony of the composition, in which they often represented formless light patches only.

The custom of printing off the same design in gradations of different colours at various times often causes disappointment to the collector, as certain colours undoubtedly better suit particular compositions than they do others. When a print has been seen under its most becoming aspect as regards colour, it is annoying to be able to find only a vulgarised edition of it.

Under circumstances of marked imperfection, in respect to 'states' of chiaro-scuro, it will be better to refrain from purchas-

ing. Still, whenever a Ugo da Carpi, and an early German piece, come in the way, they should be secured, as these things are becoming *rarae aves in terra*.

With these remarks we bring to a close what we have had to say concerning the masters of wood-engraving. Enough has been laid before the novice, who does not intend making this department of art a particular study and prominent feature of his collection. He who desires to do so will, no doubt, soon discover that we have left unnoticed much, which will gradually come to assume in his estimation a position of some importance.

There are many masters with marks and cyphers who are known, others having them, but who are unrecognised, and many pieces have reached us without any marks, and the authors of which are in complete obscurity. For all these the student must refer to the volumes of Bartsch, Passavant, Heller, Nagler, and others. Among these masters occur some names, however, which we cannot refuse to register here. These are Jakob Coornelisz d'Oostanen, *alias* Walther Van Assen; Johann of Frankfurt; Urse Graff; Antoine de Worms; Errhard Schön; Melchior Lorch; Salviati, and Chriegher. All were eminent in their day, either as designers or engravers on wood. Of some of them but few engravings are extant; of others, examples are more numerous and may be frequently met with.

Besides the cuts of the known and of the unrecognised workers, the various early printed books of Nürnberg, Bamberg, Straßburg, and Basle, afford a wide field for inquiry. The reader may bear in mind, too, that not less a person than Rembrandt is believed by some high authorities to have engraved a design on wood, though others regard the piece in question—the Philosopher with the Hour-glass—as from metal, and some ascribe its origin to Livens. The latter artist has cut on wood a few pieces in the most masterly manner; they are wonderfully broad and effective, and of first-rate excellence as examples of small portraiture. Gaspar de Crayer and Dirk de Bray likewise tried their hands with the graver. Nor should Aldegrever be forgotten.

Among the workers in *chiaro-scuro*, Holbein and Altdorfer are to be reckoned. The Beautiful Virgin of Regensburg, by

the latter master from four blocks, is one of the most picturesque of the old German chiaro-scuros. But the pieces last alluded to, with others of their class, are either unique, or so rare and expensive, that the collector must not expect to find them within his grasp. As objects of knowledge and rarity, he should, as a professed connoisseur of ancient prints, nevertheless become acquainted with them, as they are referred to and figured in the works of Weigel (Bibl. 71), Loedel (Bibl. 42), and Derschau (Bibl. 15).

CHAPTER X.

ENGRAVING ON METAL.

THE consideration of that which may be regarded as the classical form of engraving is now before us, viz. engraving in *intaglio* with a *burin* on copper. By it the finest designs of the most eminent masters have been developed, and a power and beauty of technic attained which can hardly be observed in any other branch of the art of engraving.

‘Let us open,’ writes M. Charles Blanc, ‘this portfolio, which contains a collection of some of the more remarkable prints. As we read therein the annals of engraving, we may become cognizant of the laws of this delightful art. They are in fact *burinées* on copper by the master-gravers. We at once perceive—which proves the superiority of art over mechanical technic—that there are prints which in their rudimentary simplicity do not show any manual dexterity, nor choice of means, but which, nevertheless, are admirable, and have been duly estimated for four centuries. As we turn over the engravings of Mantegna, what an imposing character they present, in spite of the primitive rudeness of the work. Take as examples the Bacchanals, engraved by this master—his combats of Tritons and his plates of the Triumph of Cæsar. The burin is handled with an uncouth sameness. The caparisoned elephants carrying torches and candelabra, the Roman soldiers bearing the eagles and trophies, the blowing trumpeters, the oxen led to sacrifice, the banners, the vases, the litters, are all engraved in a similar manner. Short rigid hatchings, always parallel to each other, mark the shadows. But how strongly the engraver accentuates the characters with his one and uniform method of work! How well he is able with his unaltering strokes to vary the expressions! How incisive he is in his rude *naïveté*! how grand in his stiffness!

‘Nevertheless, such an austerity of manner must not be regarded as sufficient for the art of engraving, which is an art that should distinguish itself from pure design. The engraved forms should be rendered more

interesting by a particular method of cutting them in the metal. This *method* is to engraving what *touch* is to painting, and penmanship to calligraphy.

‘To the German and Flemish Masters—Martin Schoen, Albert Dürer, Lucas van Leyden—is due the credit of conceiving and introducing into art the piquant variety of methods of work which double the interest of an engraving. The Nativity of Dürer, and the Saint Jerome in his Cell, already realise improvements beyond which scarcely anything is to be desired. Seated before a desk, Saint Jerome is absorbed in the study of the Scriptures. A bright light enters by two casements of small panes into the chamber of the anchorite, and pictures the trembling shadows of the framework on the embrasures. Every object of which the composition is formed preserves its right appearance. The pine planking of the floor is rendered with striking correctness, by means of lines which follow the course of the veins, and turn round the knots of the wood. A Lion and a Fox lying in front are engraved in ways which express the fine hairs of the latter, and the coarse fur of the lion. The incisions of the burin are directed in conformity with the perspective, the form, and nature of the objects and their chief dimensions. A gourd is suspended from the ceiling, and one feels sure that the surface of the fruit is smooth and glossy. In a word, the accessories play a very interesting optical part—a part even too interesting.’

‘If Dürer was not ignorant of aerial perspective, he always neglected at least marking a well-felt series of gradations between the foreground and distance. This omission Lucas van Leyden set the example of correcting, by representing objects with a touch which became gradually lighter and lighter as these objects receded. He put “atmosphere” into his prints, so that *crowds* might breathe in them. In a plate where—retracing a fable of the Middle Ages—he has engraved the poet Virgil suspended in a basket by a courtesan, some figures in the foreground, freely and clearly engraved, appear as if within reach; while on a more distant plane, the basket containing the poet, and hanging from a window, is rendered by less decided and softer work, making one conscious of the successive layers of air and increasing the distance.

‘Next comes Marc Antonio—after having renounced counterfeiting the original but *tudesque* engravings of Albert Dürer—glad to seek the supervision of Raphael, and now something appears in the art of engraving which before had not any place in it. Beauty of execution becomes united to largeness of style. To the coarse though sublime monotony of Mantegna succeeds an elegant and contained manner, varied, but without

oddity ; imitative, but not trifling. Under the supervision of Raphael, and the sway of his superlative advice, Marc Antonio regarded engraving in the way it should be looked at when engaged with the great masters. He viewed it as a concise translation, bringing into light the essential object ; as capable of indicating everything, of saying everything, and which, destitute of the language of colour, insists on the supreme beauty of the contours, accentuates the heads, the selecter forms, the fine action and the force and delicacy of the extremities and appendages. His manly and noble method of incising the copper agrees wonderfully with the facile dignity of the designs which he interprets. His supple stroke, without hesitation, turns with the muscles, and indicates by its movements the presence of the bones, the depressions and protuberances of the softer parts. In preserving extended lights on his plate, Marc Antonio arrived at a simple but grand and powerful effect ; he obtained a large figure on a small plate. He is, *par excellence*, an engraver of *style*. But what is this, it may be asked—what is this “style” in art which the Bolognese master has illustrated ? Style in engraving is the pre-eminence of drawing over colour, of beauty over richness. I say “colour,” since the engraver, though reduced to the monochrome effect of white and black, has nevertheless his own method of being a colourist. Raphael had inaugurated style in engraving, Rubens introduced *colour* into it. He taught the two Bolswerts, Vorsterman, and Pontius—his engravers—not to neglect the value of the local tints, which, after all, are only like notes in the music of clair-obscur. Cinnabar, for example, being more sombre than carmine, should be rendered in the print by a fuller amount of black. This was the last step of progress which engraving could make, or—if it be preferred—it was the last resource with which it could enrich itself. Nothing stood in the way now of the engraving becoming the equivalent of the picture. Albert Dürer had understood how, by variety of methods of work, to imitate multiformity in objects ; Lucas van Leyden had shown how to preserve aerial perspective ; Marc Antonio had indicated the means by which the suppleness of the graving-tool should subserve the triumph of the drawing ; the pupils of Rubens proceeded to show in what manner the effects of a painting might be produced, *i. e.* its coloration by light. Thus the engraver became armed at all points, as in translating the hues of Rubens, the most diverse methods of incising the copper had been discovered. Drapery, flesh, hair, landscape, architecture, sculpture, every object, in fact, which can enter into the composition of a picture is capable of being characterised with the point of the burin.’ (Bibl. 7, pp. 663-668.)

In the following review of the more eminent masters of the graver will be found one or two digressions, for though keeping within the circle of engraving on metal we must discuss as distinct subjects, first, the more eminent *etchers* of the Northern and Southern schools; secondly, *la manière criblée*; and, thirdly, *nielli*. We shall endeavour so to arrange the discussion of these topics as may be in least dissonance with the systematic classification of schools in general.

ON METAL ENGRAVING OF THE ORDINARY KIND.—INCUNABULA AND MASTERS OF THE GERMAN SCHOOL FROM THE MASTER OF 1446 TO VIRGIL SOLIS.

DIVISION II.—ORDINARY METAL ENGRAVING.

D. *Northern Schools*, illustrated by

ξ—The Masters of 1446—1451—1457—1464.

Ⓒ Ⓔ or the Master of 1466.

The Master of the ‘Garden of Love;’ the Master of the School of Van Eyck or of 1480.

The Master of ‘Boccaccio.’

Germany, o—Martin Schongauer, Ifrahel van Meckenem, Albrecht Dürer, Ludwig Krug, Aldegrever, Altdorfer, the Echams, Binck, Pencz, the Hopfers, Virgil Solis.

In a former chapter on the General History of Engraving, it was shown (p. 42, *et seq.*) that the Northern schools preceded the Southern by nearly twenty years in engraving metal plates for the purpose of producing impressions from them on parchment or paper. It was stated (p. 48) that there had descended to our own time a print bearing the date 1446. This precious relic is one from a series—a Passion—and was formerly in the possession of M. Jules Renouvier, the well-known writer on subjects connected with art. He described the sequence in question in the *Mémoires de la Société de Montpellier*, giving likewise a photograph of the Flagellation, the piece which bears the date. Such of the series as have been preserved have been printed on paper made from cotton rag, the paper

having a water-mark of three connected circles surmounted by a branch. Passavant is of opinion that these engravings originated in the school of Upper Germany, and in the management of the burin show a certain analogy to a Flagellation at Dresden, and to a Christ on the Cross at Berlin. According to all appearances, the Master of 1446 was a goldsmith-engraver, but not any definite information concerning him exists.

The next ancient engraving with a date is the Immaculata or the Virgin of the master 33, lately an ornament of the Weigel collection. It has the year 1451 engraved on it. A full description and copy of the piece may be found in the second volume of Weigel's great work. This print underwent much scrutiny at the sale at Leipzig, and high authorities were not satisfied that the date was a truthful one, or had remained untampered with. Nevertheless it sold for above 600*l.* (3950 th.) The piece in question has been coloured, but is of a more elevated style and more delicate execution than is the Passion of 1446, which betrays a trivial imitation of nature, and a far coarser technic. Upper Germany has been thought to have given birth to this print, but Renouvier ascribes it to the Pays-bas.

In the first volume of the 'Anonymous Early German Masters' in the Print-room of the British Museum is a unique (?) series of the *Neuf Preux* described by Passavant (vol. ii. p. 21, n. 34-42) and referred to by M. Fétis in his *Memoir Bibl.* 19, livr. 5^e). According to the first authority the technic is like in some respects that of the Master of 1464 (the Master of the Banderoles) and also of the Master of 1466. The series in question was pointed out to us by Mr. Reid as so closely approaching in technic and in the character of the engraved inscription the work and writing of the Weigel 'Immaculata' as to incline to the belief that the engraver of the *Neuf Preux* and of the Immaculata was one and the same. That the date 1451 was truly the period of their production, however, is to be doubted.

The third print with a date is in the collection at the British Museum. It is a Last Supper in the series of a Passion, and has **LVII. JOR.**, engraved on it, which is without doubt meant to imply the year 1457. There are twenty-seven pieces in the set, each piece being on parchment, and rather more than three inches high by two

and a half inches broad. The engraving is in simple and rough outline, the figures are coloured, and in some instances so completely as to leave the engraved lines to be discovered with great difficulty only. According to Waagen, the artistic characters of this series recall the school of Cologne of the beginning of the fifteenth century (*antea*, p. 49).

In the library at Danzig is a circular print representing the decapitation of Saint Catherine. It has been pasted—in a spot *left vacant for the purpose*—on the title-page of a MS. of the date 1458. The date of the print may be fairly assumed therefore to be as old as that of the MS. The style of the design has been thought to recall Martin Schongauer, but the technic is not like his, and is much more ancient in character. Wessely thinks it approaches the style of Matteo Dei. The impression is black and clean.

THE MASTER OF 1464, OR THE MASTER OF THE
BANDEROLES.

(Paff. vol. ii. p. 9)

On the first letter of an engraved alphabet in the Dresden Cabinet occurs the date 1464, and just below it, towards the right, the sign given in Paff. v. ii. p. 28. The earliest mention of the Master of this sign occurs in the MS. catalogue of Paul Beham of Nürnberg, which is of the year 1618. In it are noticed certain prints, viz. the ‘Days of the Creation,’ in connexion with a mark like a capital **T**, or not very unlike the mark on the alphabet just referred to. Not less than fifty other pieces are known in unison with the style of work met with in these prints, which have been ascribed to the Master of 1464 and his scholars. His management of the burin is peculiar.

‘The contours are generally firmly accentuated. His shadows are executed with the dry point and formed with close lines crossed in such a manner as to form very pointed lozenges. The earlier impressions thus preserve a full tone, and are covered equally throughout; they have been printed off with a pale black ink, and always by means of the *frotton*. Worn impressions in which the delicate lines are absent, are not only hard and weak, but have a look of rudeness void of all harmony.

‘It should be noted as a remarkable circumstance that we meet with the same technical method of engraving, both in respect to the contours and the delicacy of the lines forming the shadows, in certain of the prints of Sandro Botticelli of Florence, a contemporary of our master.’ (Pass. vol. ii. p. 11.)

The writer quoted concludes that it was the Master of 1464 who influenced Botticelli, and not the latter the Master of 1464, in the style of his work.

The engraver last mentioned was very fond of introducing inscriptions of some kind into his compositions. As these are often placed on scrolls or ribbons, he has been called the ‘Master of the Banderoles;’ likewise the ‘Master of the Feathered Flesh,’ on account of his peculiar rendering of the latter. M. Duplessis remarks:—

‘The figures of his compositions are covered with almost imperceptible strokes apparently produced by a pointed instrument, and not by a cutting *burin*. The metal must have been very soft; it has been rather frayed than intagliated, and does not appear to have been printed from by means of a press. The ink applied but in small quantity to the surface of the plate would not, we think, have borne much pressure, nor would the plate itself have supported it. Another strong testimony in favour of the opinion that the proofs were obtained by aid of the *frotton* is the entire absence of plate-mark. Of this anonymous master we have seen several prints sufficiently entire for the marks of the edges of the plate to have been apparent, had the latter really undergone strong pressure.’ (Bibl. 22, p. 181.)

The various inscriptions found on the pieces of the Master of 1464 show him to have been a man of extensive knowledge, while his richness of fancy in composition proves his talents as an artist. He essayed for truth in the expression of his heads, and his want of address in the management of the burin alone prevented him from arriving at a higher degree of excellence. The style of his composition is archaic, and his landscape—especially as regards the way in which the ground is indicated—along with frequent errors of perspective, often recalls the manner of the wood-cuts of the beginning of the fifteenth century. In this respect his style is so removed from the school of Van Eyck, that Passavant objects

to associating him with it (Pass. v. ii. p. 10). Sotzmann avers that the Master of 1464 was a monk, and belonged to the Brotherhood of 'Common Lot' before referred to (page 184). But, as Passavant remarks, the licentious details of some of his pieces would militate against such a view of the matter, unless we assumed such pieces to have been engraved before their author professed religion.

A few scholars or followers adopted this master's style of work so closely as to render it difficult for us to distinguish their pieces from those of their teacher. Altogether the number of prints attributed to the latter and his school by Passavant is fifty-six. To the second volume of this writer, we must refer for details connected with them. It is not likely that any will come within reach of the collector, who must avail himself of the advantages of the National Collection, which contains some examples of the master. It is just possible that fortunate opportunity, supported by a good round sum of money, may enable the amateur to become possessed of a specimen of—

THE MASTER OF 1466, OR OF THE INITIALS **E S**.

(Bartsch, vol. vi. p. 1. Pass. vol. ii. p. 33.)



Up to a comparatively recent period, the Master of the Gothic letters **E S** was looked upon as the earliest engraver known having a definite date. Some of his pieces have 1467 on them, one has 1461, but the more frequent date is 1466. Allusion has been made before (p. 49) to an engraving described by Dibdin (Bibl. Tour, vol. iii. p. 277) as having on it in MS. the date 1462. On the upper portion of this piece, and slightly intruding on the composition, a former possessor has written his name in red ink rather largely, thus,—

Frater Conradus Damberger de 139111.

1862.

Passavant allots this print to our present Master (1466).

Different opinions have been held in respect to the date 1461, some authorities read it as 1467, while others view it with

suspicion, as it appears to have been added to the plate after the earlier impressions had been worked off. A particular point of interest in connexion with this subject, has of course ceased to exist since the works of the Masters of 1451 and 1457 have become known, but careful consideration of the matter and of the original impressions in the British Museum has convinced us that Strutt was right, and that Zani and Bartsch were wrong. The date, we believe, to be 1461 and not 1467. When it was placed on the plate is another question. Here we agree with Ottley, who doubts its authenticity. This doubt is based on the evident alteration of the date on the Saint John the Baptist, of which two copies exist in the National Collection. On one, the earlier impression, the date is ; on the other, the later one, it is . In the latter impression, taken off after the plate had become worn by use and had been retouched in the darker parts with the graver, the artist appears to have introduced a figure representing a second 4 between that figure already existing and the 4 (8), and also to have converted the point following the fourth numeral of the date in the earlier impression into an 4, exactly of the same shape as that of the last figure of the date in the print under consideration, and forming the basis of Strutt's argument. (Ottley, vol. ii. p. 605.)

That our present Master did work, however, A.D. 1461, may be presumed from the circumstance that on the King of Shields in a sequence of Playing Cards engraved by him, is the portrait of Charles VII., King of France, who died in July of that year. It is very unlikely that this monarch would have been chosen instead of his successor Louis XI., had the former been dead when these cards were executed. (See Pass. vol. i. p. 202; v. ii. pp. 33, 176.)

The Master of 1466 must be regarded as the first of the fine workers of the early German engravers, since as respects technic he is at once on a different and much higher level than any other we have cited. His true name has been stated as Stechin, Stern,*

* On account of the letter  and the stars which he often introduces in the decorations of the draperies.

Schön, and Engelbrechtzen, and he has been claimed by Salins, Valenciennes, Cologne, Munich, the School of Upper Germany, by Lorraine, and the Pays-bas. The avocation of a goldsmith has been awarded him also. That he was of this business is not improbable, but as to anything more, name and birthplace, all is mere conjecture, and one conjecture seems as good as another. The following criticism is from Passavant :—

‘ In the management of the burin he still shows considerable analogy with the archaic method of the Master of 1464, but his hatchings in the flesh are more regular and delicate, and in the manner of treating the shadows of his draperies he widely differs from him. His drawing—which is delicate in the contours—and style of composition incline to the opinion that he was a pupil of the school of Van Eyck ; and this seems the more probable as we note that the chief motive in one of his pieces representing the Sibyl with the Emperor Augustus is borrowed from a picture by Roger van der Weyden, the elder. The composition of the Trinity (B. vi. No. 37) is likewise treated in the style of the same school. Nevertheless, he has some peculiarities of drawing which depart from this style, which are to be seen particularly in such prints as bear his mark, and in which we find the nose on his faces of women and young people to be long, thin, and slightly rounded at the base. As to his management of the burin, it does not in the least resemble that in the much more developed technic of the Netherlands engraver, known as the Master of 1480. It should be remarked, however, that there are considerable differences among the prints attributed to him, or which bear his mark even, for while the majority is executed with much delicacy other pieces exhibit far less of this quality, and several very good examples offer a different type of drawing in the youthful heads in as far as the latter have noses very unlike that fine type we specified as existing in his other engravings. We may add, too, that the greater number of the figure-letters of an alphabet attributed by Bartsch and others to the Master of 1466, show differences of execution, and very often a freer and fuller burin as in the Netherlands manner of the time. We may therefore conclude that the Master of 1466 had many pupils who in part adopted a particular style of engraving, or distinguished themselves only by a weaker manner than that of their prototype. Very few of them have marked their pieces with a monogram or date, and a small number only offer sufficiently defined characteristics by which they may be distinguished one from the other.’ (Pass. vol. ii. p. 33.)

Ottley observes (Bibl. 51, p. ix.):—

‘In finishing his draperies as well as the naked parts of his figures, especially in the lighter tints, he commonly employs small dots or very short touches of the graver. His hatchings in the masses of shadows are laid extremely close together so as often to produce the strength required without the necessity of crossing them by other strokes, and although he sometimes adopts cross hatching, he seldom or never permits them to cross the former range of strokes rectangularly.’

Some art-critics recognise a Master **Æ**, and others a Master **D S**. The pieces attributed to these engravers are ascribed by others to our present artist the Master of 1466 or **Æ S**. Nagler is very full on the latter, and we strongly advise our own short notice to be supplemented by a reference to his second volume, nn. 1477 and 1763.

On examining the fine series of the works of **Æ S** and his followers in the collection at the British Museum, one is struck with the beauty of the technic in many of the pieces, there being in fact evidence of such surety of procedure, and such excellence of result, that no one could for a moment suppose that these engravings were tentative specimens in a new process. From inspection of them, one feels satisfied that engraving on metal must have been practised for some time before such results could have been produced. The trees in this Master's pieces have a peculiar appearance; they look like the formally clipped orange-trees kept in tubs.

Paffavant allots not less than 212 pieces—inclusive of some playing-cards—to the Master of 1466. He also refers to 105 additional prints, which, although not bearing any signature, are evidently in his style or that of his school. For the most part, however, these latter pieces are either too weak or too rude to allow of their being considered as the actual work of the master. Of the more valued of his prints may be mentioned Mary of Enfielden (B. n. 35); the Angelic Salutation (Paff. 116) of our National Collection, and the Virgin on the Crescent Moon (B. 33); the Virgin, B. vi. p. 52, is interesting on account of the date it bears. The Sudarium (B. 86) is a fine piece, and noteworthy from its having the year 1467 as well as the **Æ** and **S** engraved on

it, but scarcely any print excels the Saint Barbara (Paff. 180) in its exquisite beauty. The Man of Sorrows (Paff. 155) may be seen as a coloured print in the Cabinet of the British Museum.

Following in the train of these early German engravers are certain Flemish ones, such as the Master of the Garden of Love; the Master of 1480, or the Master of the School of Van Eyck; the Master of Boccaccio, and numerous 'anonymous' masters of both the German and Flemish schools. On these it is not our intention to dilate; we may remark, however, that examples of both the Master of 1480 and of the Master of Boccaccio may be seen in our National Collection. These engravers, along with the Master of the Garden of Love, are most fully represented in the Museum of Amsterdam. The examples belonging to the latter have been published in the form of etched facsimiles under the following title, 'Curiosités du Musée d'Amsterdam,' par J. W. Kaifer. Utrecht [no date]. In the accompanying text Harzen's opinion that the Master of 1480 was Zeitblom is opposed by Kaifer. (See also Paff. vol. ii. p. 252.)

The Saint George and the Dragon of the Master of 1480 sold at Mr. Palmer's sale, in 1868, for 34*l.* 10*s.* The Saint Christopher and Infant Christ of the Master of 1466 brought at the Salamanca sale, in 1869, 22*l.* The Pentecost of the same master was sold at the Weigel sale, 1872, for more than 200*l.*, and the Saint Matthew for above 90*l.* At this auction four playing-cards of the Master of 1466 realised nearly 270*l.*

The first of the early German engravers the collector can readily procure an example of—if he chooses to pay the money—is the distinguished artist,—

MARTIN SCHONGAUER (or M. SCHÖN). Born, Augsberg,
circa 1420; died, Kolmar, 1499?

(Bartsch, vol. vi. p. 103.)

This eminent engraver is in high repute with admirers of the German School; and deservedly so, for his burin is alike delicate,

forcible, and free, and some of his ornamental work has not been surpassed to this day. A certain amount of dryness in some of his pieces and the character of others, like the Virgin with the Parroquet (B. 29), point to the influence of the School of Van Eyck.

M. Schongauer has been called 'the father of the German School of Engraving,' but erroneously, as must be evident. The same observation applies to him as was made relative to the Master of 1466, viz. that not one of his pieces exhibits him a novice in his calling, nor the art itself as tentative, with the exception perhaps of B. 29, just mentioned. We recognize him as a fine workman only in a well-known branch of art, and this—if other evidence were wanting—would go far to support the view that engraving on metal-plates for the purpose of being printed from, was practised in Germany before it was in Italy.

Notwithstanding that most of Schongauer's prints evince an equal ability in technic, close examination will show that the powers of the artist underwent the modifications usual with all great Masters. During his first period to which should be allotted the Temptation of St. Anthony (B. 47), Annunciation (B. 1, 2, 3), St. Michael (B. 58), his more careful but colder manner, and his thinner and more superfine stroke do not allow of the expression of much individuality, but evince rather the influence of the School of Bruges. In his after works the Master's originality becomes very apparent, and his stroke, while deeper, is more free and personal. Among these later pieces should be included the Death of the Virgin (B. 33), the Passion (B. 9-20,) and the celebrated Bearing the Cross (B. 21), compositions full of movement and energy. In these the well-felt contours of the figures are indicated with a deep and broad stroke, and the shadows, though marked by cross-hatchings, are graduated into the lights by means of small curved lines terminating the strokes, and repeated in the shadows. A fine and tender technic renders the half-tones and models the nude parts, but this soon wore away as impressions were worked off, leaving the rest of the engraving apparent. As the plates thus became deteriorated, most of them were retouched by a clever engraver who ventured to meddle only with the more pronounced contours and shadows. Nevertheless his rather forcible retouch gives to the print a false appearance of earliness of impression and vigour which may deceive the inexperienced. But attentive examination will show that the brilliancy is frequently due to the too forcible contrast of the lights and

darks, and that such impressions, though deep in tone, are flat and deficient in the modelling of the naked portions of the figures.' (Galichon, *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, vol. iii. p. 257, 1859.)

Martin Schongauer's prints are generally marked with the capitals **MS**, between which is placed a sign somewhat like a cheese-cutter—**M&S**. Since a date is never present, we are left to conjecture when the artist first began to work. From the great and nearly equal excellence of all his pieces, and assuming that he was born about 1420, we may conclude that he had practised drawing and goldsmith's engraving for some time before he commenced engraving for such impressions as have reached us. If so, probably 1450 had arrived before Martin Schongauer turned pure artist-engraver. As his prints have been worked off with fine black ink, and by aid of the press, Paffavant thinks that he could hardly have drawn his earliest proofs before 1460.

Care must be taken when purchasing the works of Schongauer, for not only have able workers like I. van Meckenen and others produced satisfactory copies of them with their own names honestly attached, but less scrupulous engravers and dealers have placed the initials and mark of the Master himself on their own performances to ensure their more ready acceptance. It is in this way that M. Galichon would explain the presence of M. Schongauer's signature on the letters **N** and **K** of the Alphabet of the Master of 1466, as likewise on many pieces of mediocrity, particularly the copy in reverse of a Dead Christ by the Master, **BM**, which bears the address of M. Petri, a former possessor of several of the original plates of Lukas van Leyden.

Highly as Schongauer was at first and is now esteemed, he could not have been in much repute during the eighteenth century, if we may judge from the circumstance that at the sale of Mariette's collection 187 of Schongauer's pieces, along with one or two of Bocholt and of I. v. Meckenen, were sold in one lot for the small sum of 399 livres, 19 deniers, a sum which would not purchase at the present time one of the Master's first-class works in good condition.

The collector should make himself owner of any piece in fair condition of Schongauer that comes within his range, since his

works are becoming every day more rare and expensive. One of the larger and finer of his engravings is the Bearing the Cross (B. 21). The Death of the Virgin (B. 33) is in high esteem. The Angel (B. 1) and the Virgin (B. 2) of the Annunciation are sweet little prints, and in the two small Crucifixions (B. 22, 23) the figures of the Virgin and Saint John are very graceful and expressive. The Angelic Salutation (B. 3) is a beautiful example, and the Bearing the Cross (B. 16) is likewise to be commended. Saint James the Greater (B. 53) is large and rare, while the Saint Anthony (B. 47) exhibits fine delicate technic, and even more *bizarrerie* than does the composition of the same subject by Lucas Cranach. The Flight into Egypt (B. 7) is a charming composition—so attractive is it, that there have not been wanting those who have looked on it as the artist's master-piece. As specimens of ornamental work, a Crook or Head for a Pastoral Staff (B. 106), and a Censer (B. 107), may be recommended.

Bartsch notices 116 pieces by M. Schongauer and ninety others which bear his mark without having been engraved by him.

At the Marochetti sale, in 1868, the series of the Wife and Foolish Virgins sold for 52*l.* 10*s.*; the Adoration of the Kings for 15*l.*, and Christ with Magdalene for 23*l.* 10*s.* At the Weigel auction in 1872 the Coronation of the Virgin—a beautiful impression in admirable condition—was sold for above 400*l.*; and the like sum was paid for the Death of the Virgin at Kalle's sale in Frankfort, 1875. The Nativity realised nearly 150*l.*, at the first-named auction. At a sale at Sotheby's early in 1872 the Man driving a Donkey brought 14*l.* 5*s.*, while, later in the same year, the prices realised were, for the Angel of the Annunciation, 56*l.*; the Nativity, 22*l.*; the Baptism of Christ, 19*l.*; Christ before the High Priest, 46*l.*; Pilate washing his Hands, 41*l.*; Christ presented to the People, 40*l.*; Christ bearing the Cross, 20*l.*; the Virgin in a Court-yard, 96*l.*; the Temptation of Saint Anthony, 26*l.*; Saint Michael, 12*l.*; one of the Foolish Virgins, 13*l.*; the Censer, 21*l.*

ISRAHEL VAN MECKENEN (or ISRAEL VAN MECKEN VON BOCHOLT). Born Megken or Malines; died, Bocholt, 1503 (worked at Bocholt from 1482).

(Bartsch, vol. vi. p. 184.)

This master is held in repute in spite of the stiffness of his figures, the frequent defectiveness of his drawing, and the sameness of his work. The style of the latter, though betraying the goldsmith, is pure, determinate, and good. His designs, though quaint, have often much expression in them, and his treatment of some subjects, such as courting, loving couples, musical parties, is quite his own. After studying a few of his pieces, his style and technic will become at once recognizable when examples come across notice at future periods. They are so marked and peculiar that his prints can scarcely be mistaken. There is likewise often such an archaic feeling about them that one would be disposed to assume Van Meckenen worked at an earlier period than we know he did. Duplessis, in fact, has suggested that, as the style of more than one of his prints appears to be that of a period anterior to the time of the actual engraving, the artist may have obtained worn-out plates of an earlier date, re-worked them, and appended to them his name.

Few less than 270 pieces are attributed to Ibrahel van Meckenen, but a considerable number of these are copies from other masters, particularly from Martin Schongauer. The Death of the Virgin (B. 50), after Schongauer, is one of Van Meckenen's best works, and his copy of this master's large Bearing the Cross (B. 23) is a fine piece. The Dance of Herodias (B. 9), Christ in a Pulpit (B. 144), the Mass of Saint Gregory (B. 102), the Man and Woman seated on a Bed (B. 179), the series of the Card Players and the Musicians, are good examples of the engraver. Some of his ornamental work and pieces are very fine and delicate, nor should the portraits of himself and wife (B. 1), though somewhat formal, be passed by, for they are well engraved, and there is much expression in them.

The name of the master is engraved at full-length on two of his pieces. Some prints are marked simply 'Ibrahel,' and on

others the initials **I V M** or **I M** or **I** only occur, sometimes in picturesque and ornamental Gothic characters. 

Israhel V. M. and a kind of escutcheon may also be met with.

The Dance of Herodias sold at the Marochetti sale for 24*l.*, and the Christ crowned with Thorns brought at Sotheby's in 1872, 15*l.* 10*s.* At the Weigel auction, 1872, Mary with the Clock (B. 145) realized nearly 50*l.*

During the period included in the latter third of the fifteenth century and the first portion of the sixteenth, numerous other engravers occur. Of some of these the names and meagre histories are known, but of others their marks or signatures alone are recognizable. There exist likewise many anonymous prints to which neither marks nor signatures are appended. It would be unadvisable for the collector to trouble himself about these at the commencement of his labours. He will have quite enough to do to make himself acquainted with the leading masters of engraving. As these become familiar, and the cabinet can boast of well-selected examples of their work, the collector may, with less hesitation and more advantage to his collection, make such divergencies as he chooses in the by-paths of art.

Reference need here be made to the names only of some of the better known of such engravers as may be studied at a future period. These are Bartel Schön, Franz von Bocholt, Albrecht Glockenton, Wenzel von Olmütz, Veitt Stofs, N. A. Mair, Mathæus Zatzinger, Telman von Wefel, and Zwott or Meister Johann von Köln aus Zwolle. We may notice likewise the Masters of the different kinds of Playing Cards, particularly of the round cards and of those with the suits marked by men, dogs, birds, flowers, and chimeric animals.

Bartsch (vols. vi. and x.) and Passavant (vol. ii p. 119) should be consulted in connexion with these and other early engravers.

ALBRECHT DÜRER (*antea*, pp. 204, 269.)

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 30.)

Though the general characteristics of this eminent master have

been already touched on, it was as a designer and engraver on wood only that Dürer came before us in detail. As we are now to meet him on different and—in some respects—higher ground, where he displays fresh and fuller powers, some further remarks may be allowable.

Albrecht Dürer, as an engraver on metal, stands *facile princeps* over all his compeers, whether the feeling, poetry, and romance of his designs, the dexterous management of the burin, or the exquisite finish of his engravings, be considered. Like Rembrandt, he is a master, of whom the iconophilist never tires, and of whose works he desires to possess every example he can obtain. Like Rembrandt, he captivates both by the poetic feeling of his ideas and his consummate technic. Further, like the Dutch enchanter with the needle, and light and shade, Dürer owed almost everything to himself, after he had learned the use of the pencil and chalk, modelling-tool and graver in the goldsmith's work-room; such knowledge of design, colours and painting as Wohlgemuth could teach, and obtained some general hints on engraving from the brothers of Martin Schongauer at Kolmar.

On looking at Dürer's choice of subjects for execution on copper, we are struck by his frequent selection of Scriptural and religious topics, so that here as on wood his touch might be sanctified by his thought. Among these subjects may be found some of his finest works, as, *e.g.* the 'small copper Passion,' the Adam and Eve, the several Marys on the Crescent Moon, the Saint Jerome, Saint Anthony, Prodigal Son, etc.

When Dürer left the domain of religion, he came forth clad in romance and poetry. He wrote tales with the burin which are both the delight and the wonder of the highest intellects of our day. Before the weird and solemn picture of the Knight, Death, and Demon, we remain spell-bound, straining to discover what it may portend in all its sombre and majestic thought. We become young again as we breathe the freshness of the morning, feel the leafiness of the woods, and partake in the animal enjoyments of those thinking dogs, as these things all flow towards us while we gaze on the Saint Eustachius. There is a Cavalier and Ladye walking together, lost to everything but themselves. They do not perceive Death behind the tree, who is watching them—of

what are they talking, and in what dread scene are they soon to be involved? There is a woman, above whom is written 'Melencolia,' fitting, bent in thought, or as if in bitterest introspection; a key is at her side, an hour-glass is against the wall, a bell is ready to sound, a cube, compass, crucible, are at her feet. On the wall are the magic square of Agrippa and the mystic numbers of Hohenheim and Paracelsus. There is a winged boy gazing with piercing look towards a tablet on which he writes—but what? Is it 'Vanity of vanities,' says the Preacher; 'all is vanity?' There is a Dream—what are the phantasies now peopling that man's thought? Who is that winged female—like the Woman in the Apocalypse—bearing a bridle and a richly-chafed and golden cup? That bearded Orson or hairy savage seeking to kiss that well-dressed lady by the shield? But wait—on the latter is a 'Death's-head,' a bare and eyeless skull? Does it tell that of both the jewelled brow and the beggar's unkempt head, 'to this favour we must come?'

But let us pass from the region of romance and quaint mediæval German thought into that of reality. Let us look at the execution of Dürer's works, study his management of, and admire his mastery over the graver.

'Nothing that has ever appeared in more recent periods surpasses in executive excellence his Saint Jerome seated in a room, or his Adam and Eve. The strange and weird Knight and Death and the Demon, is also a masterly example of execution; the Helmet with its pomp of heraldic appendages, and the actual and reflex lights on its polished surface are characteristically though minutely expressed; the skull is accurately drawn, and its bony substance unmistakably described. The hair of the "Satyr," with its beard and wild redundance of snaky tangled hair, has considerable well-managed breadth of light and shade, here the drapery of the female, quaint as it is in style, is not, as we see it in Dürer's other works, hard, stiff, and formal, but relaxes in its freedom and simplicity, and has quite a silky texture; in fact, it approaches very nearly to what we now call "picturesque compositions of forms and light and shade."' (Ure's Dictionary. Art-Engraving.)

The following paragraphs contain a short analysis of the memoir by M. Galichon on the works of Dürer, communicated by the French critic to the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, for 1860.

M. Galichon points out that Dürer in his earlier efforts imitated the work of Schongauer, but always fought to excel him in concealing the line upon which the contour of his forms depended. Dürer at first indicated the shadows by lines, enlarging them towards the lights into which they melt by means of slightly curved strokes with the burin. His manipulation before 1496 was somewhat rude or careless, his hand not having as yet acquired all its power of incising the copper with neatness and precision.

Up to 1496 Dürer's line, though commencing to become more tender, still retains traces of its former rudeness, soon however, to entirely disappear. In the works produced at this period we may perceive the employment of a new method in rendering the half tones. We refer to the use of the 'dry point.' By 1503 the line has quite lost its coarseness, and opens less as it approaches the lights. The work is finer, closer, and very dry. The foreground and surfaces on which the objects are placed are more elaborated, covered with numerous counterstrokes and further strengthened with dots.

By 1511, Dürer is complete master of his burin, which he manages in the future with every freedom. His work has lost all rudeness, and has not the dryness of that of the prints of 1503. His strokes are clean, brilliant, supple, and much varied, in order to express the polish of armour, the knots in wood, the beautiful fur of animals, and the vitality of flesh. Dürer now avails himself more frequently than before of the 'point' in rendering the half-tones, and softening the deeper shadows, and indicates his buildings and trees of the more distant parts of his composition.

The exact date at which the artist engraved his first plate cannot be said to be determined. Some regard the *Woman with the Wildman* (B. 92), and the *Holy Family with the Butterfly* (B. 44), as his earlier trials in consequence of their evidences of want of practice in the management of the graver. Other critics fall back on the *Four Naked Women* (B. 75), because it has the date 1497 engraved on it. Considering that the latter piece is engraved in a sure and forcible style, clearly showing its author to have been rather a proficient than a novice in his art, it has

been supposed that the date 1497 refers to something else than to the time when the print was executed.

According to Thausing (op. cit. p. 164)—whose remarks on this print are well deserving consideration,—the 1497 indicates the completion of the original design by Wohlgemuth of which Dürer's engraving is a copy.

‘Both pieces, original and copy, bear on the globe which hangs above in the centre the date 1497, which, from having been taken as that of the origin of Dürer's print, has given rise hitherto to much confusion in the chronology of the works of the latter master. Nagler found himself obliged, simply on technical grounds, to reject the opinion in question. His observations led him also to the conclusion that the work of the Master **W** was the original of Dürer's piece, and consequently of all later copies.

‘. . . As to the meaning intended to be conveyed by the artist of the four naked Women of different ages, we are and always have been in the dark. At their feet lie skull and bones, and in the back-ground lurks the Devil. Sandrart early opposed their right to the title of the three Graces, seeing in them four witches. This interpretation is the one generally accepted at the present day. There is much to be said in its favour if the character of the times when the engraving appeared be considered. In the year 1484, Pope Innocent VIII. had issued the famous Bull *Summis desiderantes*, in which he advocated the persecution of witches in Germany. The inquisitor Jakob Sprenger had finished in the year 1487 his *Malleus maleficarum*, the “Witchhammer,” printed first at Cologne in 1489, and at Nürnberg in 1494 by Anton Koburger. In 1496 appeared the second edition in the latter city, along with other works on the witch theory. Thus the idea of representing some witch ceremony might easily arise in the mind of a Nürnberg painter, and in such a case the letters O. G. H. might be read (somewhat in the style of Sprenger's Latin) *Obsidium generis humani*. This interpretation may have quickly become popular and have been easily transmitted by tradition to the time of Sandrart; the artist also perhaps favouring it with reference to the sale of his work.’ (Thausing, op. cit. p. 164.)

It is right to bear in mind that one of Dürer's earlier dated engravings on copper is among his best, viz. the Adam and Eve (B. 1), which has on it 1504.

Should the opinion of Frenzel—a former director of the

Dresden cabinet—be right, viz. that a certain Conversion of Saint Paul, in the Saxon Collection, is by Dürer, this piece would certainly have precedence even of the Wildman, and Our Lady with the Butterfly, since the execution of it evinces little practice, being rude and resembling the technic of a goldsmith-engraver. This Conversion of Saint Paul is unique.

The latest dated engravings are three portraits bearing the year 1526.

Some difference of opinion has existed respecting the nature of the metal plates used by Dürer in certain instances, as well as the process he adopted in working on them. There is not any doubt that he *etched*, and that B. nn. 19, 22, 26, 70, 72, and 99, are results of the etching process. But what metal did he employ? Some say iron, and not copper; others reply neither iron nor copper, but pewter, tin, and steel. Leaving the etchings for the present, let us refer to B. nn. 21, 43, and 59, and ask how were they produced? Some maintain that they are etchings from iron plates, while, according to Passavant, they have been worked with the 'dry-point' on copper, and from allowing the 'burr' to remain on the plate impressions were obtained, having a Rembrandt-like effect.

'The Man of Sorrows, of 1512 (B. 21), is engraved in this way, though it would appear that Dürer has here polished to a certain extent the burred ridges of the lines, since we do not meet with impressions so strong in tone as are the preceding two engravings. [B. 43 and 59.] Although the earlier proofs by this method are full of effect, the ability of Dürer can be seen to advantage only in a few examples now become of great rarity, since the burr serving to produce force of tone was soon removed and later impressions are weak in effect and very pale.' (Pass. vol. iii. p. 146.)

Of the pieces here referred to, M. Galichon writes, 'in fact their execution seems to be due to the dry-point, *non ébarbée*, strengthened by some strokes with the burin, worked on plates of some metal more yielding than copper.'

One hundred and six (or thereabouts) engravings by Dürer executed with burin and dry-point are known. Of these any which are obtainable in fair impression and condition, should be

welcomed by the collector. There are not many *states* of Dürer's pieces. Such as are known are usually the result of other hands endeavouring to repair portions of Dürer's original plates damaged by oxydation or otherwise. Plenty of Dürers are in the market, but they are too generally impressions from worn-out plates. As a guide to the novice, we shall notice the works of the master in such sequence as preferred by ourselves, admitting at the same time that our own preferences may not be those of others. Of this we are sure, however, that the collector will not repent following our choice.

We give precedence to the Small Copper Passion (B. 3-18, Heller, 3-18), so called to distinguish this series from the Little Passion on wood before noticed (p. 215). This set of sixteen small prints must be considered, as Mr. Scott observes, 'equal to the best work of Dürer, and among the most extraordinary feats of the art of engraving; the curiousness of execution, the power of hand in minutæ, combined with the dramatic reality and terrible truthfulness of Dürer's nature, can never be reproduced or supplanted.' The greatest masters have made use of these compositions for their pictures, and have directly copied some of them in the most literal manner. A fine set in entirety is not easy to procure; the piece of Saint Peter and Saint John healing the Lame Man (B. 18) is particularly difficult to meet with in good impression and condition. Some have looked on this piece as not originally belonging to the series, but as a separate composition; while Thausing accepts it as connected with the set, and as showing that the latter was never completed, since Dürer surely must have intended to have added other designs, and not to have closed the series with this piece of Saint Peter and Saint John.

Twenty-five pounds may be asked for a set which may just give satisfaction; while for a fine series, such as was sold at Mr. Marshall's sale in 1864, 60*l.* may have to be given. Poor and slightly imperfect sets, or sets with the pieces cut down to the quick, may be bought for less. At Sotheby's in 1872, such a cut-down set realised only 15*l.*

The finest copy of the Small Copper Passion is stated by Hauffmann to be in the Royal Collection at Copenhagen. The watermarks on the papers of the choicer impressions are the Bull's

Head and Large Crown. Numerous spurious copies by different hands exist, a full account of which may be found in Heller, *Bibl.* 32, p. 385.

Adam and Eve (B. 1, Hel. 1). This we regard as the *chef-d'œuvre* of Dürer's single pieces. To become fully satisfied that this opinion is correct, it will be necessary to examine a fine impression, such, *e. g.*, as the perfected proof in the collection at the British Museum. In this fine engraving the forms are fully made out, the drawing is good, the management of the burin admirable, and the whole void of any extremes or exaggeration. In purity and simplicity of design and perfection of technic, not any work of the master has excelled this. Dürer himself regarded it as his best work, taking great pains with it. From a branch of a tree hangs a tablet, having on it ALBERTVS DVRER NORICVS FACIEBAT 1504^t, proving that the engraving was finished before the artist had completed his thirty-fourth year. There is a very rare state of this print, in which the ground of the left side and centre only are finished, while the right-hand portion, with its figures, is indicated by outline alone. A proof in this state may be seen in the British Museum. It has been said that a state exists in which the tablet is without any inscription; but this is doubtful. The fine textured paper on which the choicer impressions have been worked off is very fragile. It bears the Bull's Head. Inferior impressions are more frequent on paper with the two Towers. Under any circumstances, the Adam and Eve is not frequently met with; in good condition it is rare, and brings a high price. At the Férol sale, in 1859, the Adam and Eve brought 1505 francs. At Mr. Marshall's sale, in 1864, it realised 41*l.* 10*s.*; at Mr. Palmer's, 1868, 39*l.*; at the Howard sale, in 1873, this print sold for 50*l.*

Not less than ten copies, metal and wood together, of this piece are enumerated by Heller. The best copy is that by Wierix; it bears his name below that of Dürer on the tablet. M. Ephrussi has suggested that Dürer may have been influenced in the composition of this work by a bas-relief in bronze by Jacopo di Barbari. (*Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, 1876.)

Saint Eustachius, or Saint Hubert (B. 57, Hel. 54), is the largest and most elaborated of the copperplate engravings. If it has a fault, it is that of appearing overcrowded in detail, by which

the 'breadth' of the composition is detracted from. But on the whole it is a splendid performance, and has always received great praise. In point of finish, not one of Dürer's engravings surpasses it, and the expression of the dogs is extremely natural and fine. The Saint has been supposed to represent the portrait of the Emperor Maximilian. Haufmann remarks of the Saint Eustachius :—

'The unusually large size of the plate appears to have given rise to some difficulty in printing, for in the finest impressions small spots with bruised lines may not rarely be met with, and old impressions are to be found which show slight displacements of the paper to have taken place under the roller. Some old proofs of wonderful strength exist in which the ink has been laid on too thickly to be advantageous to clearness. These proofs are on a particularly firm paper, with scarcely perceptible wire-marks fifteen and a half lines distant from each other.'

According to the authority above quoted the Saint Eustachius is almost exclusively on paper with the High Crown, though some impressions have the Bull's Head, and one has been met with on paper with the Pitcher. Heller states that impressions exist on satin and parchment. The Emperor Rudolph II., a great admirer of the master, could not rest until he had obtained the original metal plate. This he had gilt, so that it might be thought of as highly as if it were gold itself, but which did not prevent it, however, seeing a change of fortune. It was sold at Prague, in 1782, by an Imperial commissioner charged to retain only the more precious articles of the royal collection. As the commissioner did not count Dürer's plate among these, it was its fate to pass through several hands until it became the property of M. Joseph Redtenbacher, of Kirchdorf, in Austria, in 1826. Thausing (op. cit. p. 229, n. i.) asserts that this gilt plate is not the original one by Dürer, but that of the copy no. 71 of Heller.

At the Ponfonyi sale, in 1867, this print sold for 21*l.* Nine copies are enumerated by Heller.


The Knight, Death, and the Demon, or Nemesis* (B. 98, Hel. 94). In respect of poetical conception and weird-like beauty, this is the chief composition of the master. Nor is it much

* Applied also to the Justice, B. 79, and to the Great Fortune, B. 77.

behind any of his works in technical execution and other qualities. 'It is,' as Mr. Scott remarks, 'an invention the most perfect, and the most interesting problem presented by the master of the art—everyone who has seen it never forgets it.' In this remarkable production Dürer represents—

'an equestrian knight armed at all points, seen in profile, and going towards the left. Death mounted on a stumbling nag, accompanies him, exhibiting an hour-glass, while an evil spirit follows him, with claw extended, as if ready to seize him at the hour of death. The landscape is composed of wild rocks clothed with some withered trees, and of a distant castle. Near the knight's horse runs a dog; a lizard is on the ground—a skull is on a stone.' (Bartsch)

For the various interpretations which have been given of this beautiful yet solemn piece of art-poetry of the past, the reader should refer to some papers by Mr. Holt in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' for 1866-67, on the Allegorical Engravings of Albert Dürer, in which not only the author's views, but those of most writers of eminence, are given. (See also Thausing, *op. cit.* p. 452.)

This print bears a tablet having on it **S** 1513 . A copy exists in which the **S** is absent. The earlier impressions were worked off directly under Dürer's superintendence, and are extremely clear and harmonious. They are on a fine paper, having ribs about an inch distant from each other, with the Pitcher as water-mark. Under any tolerable circumstances the 'Knight and Death' always exacts a high price, but when of fine impression and of good condition it cannot be purchased under a very considerable sum. At the Férol sale, in 1859, it reached 760 francs; at the Hippisley sale, 1868, 94*l.*; at an auction at Messrs. Sotheby's, 1872, 65*l.*; and later in the year, 75*l.* Early in 1872 we saw a fine impression, in good condition, at a London dealer's, which was on sale for 64*l.* He had shortly before disposed of one with more margin and a somewhat finer impression, for 80*l.*; we were afterwards gratified by the sight of a magnificent proof which was valued at 90*l.* Three copies are referred to by Heller.

Saint Jerome in his Study (B. 60, Hel. 57). 'One of the wonders of the master.' This work has been with the older engravers a favourite piece to copy. The varieties of texture obtained by the technic are extraordinary. It bears the date 1514. Early impressions have been worked off *apparently* on paper with the High Crown, according to Haufmann, yet the water-mark is not present, probably from the plate not having been large enough to include it, though the print is one of the larger works of the master. The paper of some late copies has the Pitcher water-mark. Thirteen copies are enumerated by Heller. Copies 1 and 2 of this writer are deceptive to the inexperienced, and the means of their detection should be studied both in Heller and Bartsch before purchasing a Saint Jerome from unknown hands. At the Ponsfoni sale, in 1867, this piece was sold for 49*l.*

The Prodigal Son (B. 28, Hel. 28). This has always been a favourite piece with the amateur, yet it is one of Albert Dürer's earlier works. It is supposed to have been executed between 1500-1506. The artist is thought to have represented his own features in the Prodigal. The natural characters of swine, as delineated in this print, have not been surpassed in truthfulness. In 1872, an impression by no means in good condition, sold at Messrs. Sotheby's for 10*l.* Five copies are referred to by Heller. One is highly deceptive.

The Larger and Smaller Fortunes (B. 77-78, Hel. 70-71). The first of these prints, called the Great Fortune, Temperance, Pandora, and Nemesis, is for technic unexceptionable, being one of Dürer's most forcible and striking pieces. There are two states of it. It is supposed to have been engraved between 1507 and 1514. Fine old impressions are on paper with the Crown above two Lilies on a shield. Six copies are noticed by Heller. Passavant, vol. iii. p. 153, may be referred to relative to the application of the term Nemesis to this piece.

The Abduction of Amydone (B. 71, Hel. 65), or the Meerwunder; and the Jealousy (B. 73, Hel. 67), or the Great Satyr, the Great Hercules, or the Bacchanal;* are peculiar but fine

* Now regarded as a middle-age version of the myth, 'Hercules, Nessus and Dejanira.' (Sallet, *Untersuchungen über A. Dürer*, p. 17. *Thausing*, op. cit. p. 170.)

examples of the master. The Shield of the Death's Head (B. 101, Hel. 98) is of masterly execution and of fantastic design.

The Gentleman and Lady Walking (B. 94, Hel. 78) is a highly interesting print on account of an evident though hidden story it possesses, and from the costume and general character of the piece. There is much suggestiveness in it, and it is a general favourite. The earlier impressions, though vigorous in tone, are very delicate in stroke. Passavant states that the plate, after becoming slightly worn, was 'brought up' by the needle and acid. This explains why the after-proofs are somewhat coarse and more or less *sales d'impression*. In the 'Additions et Errata' to Albert Dürer (vol. iii. p. 491), the writer referred to notices three states of this piece. The earlier and better proofs are on paper having the large Crown water-mark. Heller enumerates six copies.

The Saint Anthony (B. 58, Hel. 50) is a little gem, one of the most charming, both in design and technic, of the smaller works of Dürer. It bears the date 1519. The earlier impressions are very clear, clean, and bright like silver, while later ones have lost sharpness, and appear flat. Heller alludes to twelve copies, and to these another one is added by Nagler. A very beautiful little piece is, Mary with the Starry Crown standing on the Half-moon (B. 31, Hel. 32). There are two states of this print; one in which the smaller rays of the 'glory' are not completed, another in which they are finished. The first state is very rare. Heller enumerates eight copies. Caution is requisite in purchasing the smaller Dürers, as there are very deceptive transcripts about. Mary by the Wall (B. 40, Hel. 40) bears date 1514. It is a fine work of the master. It is sometimes called Mary with the Purse. The town in the background has been said to represent Nürnberg, and the likeness of Agnes Frey has been traced in the features of the Blessed Virgin.

Should the collector become possessed of the above pieces, he may rest assured that he will have Albert Dürer's great powers of design and execution well represented. But we doubt very much whether he will be contented with these acquisitions; he will fain have more. If so, we would recommend the Melancholy (B. 74) the Dream or Idleness (B. 76), the larger and smaller War Horse (B. 96-97), Four Naked Women (B. 75), and the portrait of

Billibald Pirkheimer (B. 106). Should early works be desired, then the Wildman (B. 92), the Love Offering (B. 93), or the Holy Family with the Butterfly (B. 44), may be sought for. If later pieces be desired, the portraits of Erasmus and Melancthon may be obtained.

The 'Holy Family with the Butterfly' (B. 44) (or Grafshopper, Newt or Dragonfly, which the figure more or less approaches in different versions of the composition), was undoubtedly one of the earliest efforts of Dürer. According to some it was produced by 1494 or 1495, though Thausing affirms that it could not have been executed prior to 1496. Be this as it may, the piece in question has served as the *point de depart* for much discussion concerning the origin of some of the earlier of Dürer's engravings. It has been generally supposed that Dürer copied the piece under consideration (B. 44, Hel. 643) from the work of an older master, and that Dürer himself was copied by Wenzel Von Olmütz, Ifrahel van Meckenen, and Marc Antonio. In a modification of the design, bearing the signature of a large Gothic **A**, and which has been ascribed by Nagler (vol. i. n. 2) to Dürer's father, it has been customary to find the prototype of the piece by Dürer, jun., though Heller (p. 426) regards it as probably being a copy only of the latter instead of being the original version.

In the British Museum is an example of B. 44 in reverse and wanting the figure of the Deity above, on which are the signature and mark of M. Schongauer. Ottley supposed that in this piece might be seen the original of Dürer's engraving. But the signature has been evidently tampered with. An inscription of some kind has been erased along with a portion of the foreground technic, and the contiguous paper has been damaged and repaired. Faint traces of the letters R O of an old inscription may be seen. The signature and mark of M. Schongauer have been inserted with the pen, and the technic of the print is assuredly not that of this master.

In the opinion of Thausing (p. 158) neither the Madonna with the Grafshopper nor the Love Offering (B. 93) were original conceptions of Dürer, but were probably derived from older engravings by his preceptor, Wohlgemuth.

'Up to the beginning of the present century Wolgemut had been generally recognised as a copperplate engraver; all such plates being ascribed to him as were marked at the bottom centrally with the letter **W**. At that period Adam Bartsch met with in the Albertina an impression of the Man of Sorrows between Mary and John (B. 17),—also engraved by Schongauer,—on which was the inscription in the handwriting of the sixteenth century—"This engraver was named Wenzel, and was a goldsmith." This information, combined with the indication on the death of Mary after Schongauer (B. 22): 1481. WENCESLAUS DE OLOMVZC IBIDEM induced Bartsch to ascribe to the same Wenzel all such pieces as were marked with **W**, and which before had been allotted to Wolgemut. The otherwise unknown goldsmith of Olnütz was assumed to have copied when young Schongauer, when older Dürer; an assumption which could hardly have been maintained as regarded Wolgemut. Further, the latter, according to Bartsch, could not have afforded Dürer the models for a series of his engravings, since the pieces marked with **W**, and corresponding to similar works of Dürer, were much inferior in character to the latter, a reason which, in spite of its universality, was of but little value considering the lateness and badness of the impressions in which the prints of the Master **W** generally appeared.' (Thausing, p. 153.)

'In vain was it argued afresh—timidly at first by Ottley (vol. ii. p. 682), more decidedly afterwards by Sotzmann (Deutsches Kunstblatt, 1854, f. 307), that the prints marked with **W** were not copies from Dürer, but probably were the *originals* of Dürer's works. Bartsch's opinion prevailed, viz. that either there were not any engravings by Wolgemut, or that they must be sought for among the anonymous pieces. Thus the good old tradition that Dürer had learnt engraving, as all other art qualifications, from Wolgemut is broken up, and it is necessary that we should re-establish it.

'Quad von Kinkelbach—who was evidently ignorant of the name of Wolgemut—thus speaks of Dürer in his "Teutscher Nation Herrlichkeit," Köln, 1609, "and especially has he closely imitated certain of the **W** pieces: the great Hercules, in which, however, **W** retains the superiority; but in the others Dürer excels: the Triton; the St. Jerome in the Wilderness; the Prodigal Son; the Virgin with the Ape; the Dreaming Doctor; and the Little Horsewoman. The author of the article "Von Kunstlichen Handwerken in Nürnberg," (Archiv. f. zeich. K. xii. 50), repeats this account with the explanation, "the letter **W** is Wolgemut." . . . All the old Nürnberg catalogues of engravings agree in ascribing the monogram **W** in these prints to Wolgemut. In the catalogue by

H. A. of the Derfchau Art collection (Nürnberg, 1825), it is remarked, "This much is certain, viz., the three plates signed with **W**, and the like ones engraved by Dürer, *i.e.* the Amymone, the Dream, and the Walking Couple, were executed by Wolgemut, since these plates existed at the end of the last century in the Knorr establishment at Nürnberg for the sale of works of art, and had been recorded in the business books for a hundred years as having been purchased of Wolgemut's heirs. The preservation of these three plates of **W** down to our own time, is confirmed by the numerous modern impressions from them extant. The like holds good as respects the piece: the four Witches of **W**; the plate existing at Möhringen, near Stuttgart, in 1822." (Thaufing, pp. 153-156.)

In conformity with these views in favour of Wohlgemuth, the writer just quoted maintains that the Wildman (B. 92), the Great Courier (B. 81), the Holy Family with the Grasshopper (B. 44), the Love Offering (B. 93), the Lady and Gentleman Walking (B. 94), the Dream (B. 76), the Four Naked Women (B. 75), and the Rape of Amymone (B. 71), have certainly been suggested by, and more or less copied from, works by Wohlgemuth. As regards the Jealousy or the Great Hercules (B. 73), the Virgin with the Ape (B. 42), and the Cook and his Wife (B. 84), the connection between the originals by Wohlgemuth and the copies is less determinate, while the Three Geniuses (B. 66) and the Sorcerers (B. 67) owe their origin to an Italian influence.

In support of the opinion that the prints marked **W** do not belong to Wohlgemuth, but rather to Wenzel von Olmütz, see Passavant, vol. ii. p. 132. Nagler, vol. i. p. 168, n. 33, deals with this subject.

Before leaving Albert Dürer it will be well to remind the reader that in Heller's work (Bibl. 32) he may find a storehouse of information. As Heller wrote in 1827, however, it is to be expected that additional knowledge has been gained since then. It will be right therefore to consult besides the monograph in question, the third volume of Passavant, the first volume of Nagler, the Catalogue by Retberg, and the Memoir by Hausmann. For the details of Dürer's art life generally, no better work in the English language can be recommended than the biography by Mr. Scott; but German scholars would do well to procure Moriz Thaufing's 'Dürer, Geschichte seines Lebens und seiner Kunst,' etc., Leipzig, 1876 (of which an English translation has been pro-

mised by Mr. Murray), and Dürer's 'Briefe, Tagebücher und Reime nebst einem Anhang,' Wien, 1872, by the same author. Mrs. Heaton contributed an article to the 'Academy' for July 4, 1874, on Recent Contributions to Dürer Literature, which should not be passed by.

The well-known masters, Burgkmair, Cranach, Brosamer, and Baldung, who followed Dürer in the foregoing account of engravers on wood, may be passed over now, for though of each a few prints from engraved metal plates exist, the acquisition and study of these pieces may be well deferred to a future time.

LUDWIG KRUG (Lukas Krug). Born—*circa* 1490,
died Nürnberg? after 1535.

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 535.)

A master of considerable repute in several branches of art. He has been praised as goldsmith, modeller and carver, painter and engraver. But very meagre accounts of his life exist however, being chiefly the mention made of him by Neudörffer and Paul Beham.

Sixteen prints from engraved metal plates and one cut from a wood-block are allotted him. These are marked with a tablet in the middle of which is a small jug placed between the letters

L K 

The pieces thus signed have been ascribed by I. de Jongh and Immerzeel to Lukas Cornelisz, *alias* L. Kock, L. Kunst, an ascription rightly opposed by Passavant and Nagler.

The drawing and technic of several of Krug's prints are careful and delicate, and his designs arrest the attention. It should be observed, as pointed out by Passavant, that the engraver, both in his compositions and the manner of his work, shows much analogy with the style of the Dutch masters of the beginning of the sixteenth century. This would lead to the surmise that Krug received his artistic education in the Low Countries.

Not any of this master's pieces are common, some are exceed-

ingly scarce. All are worthy of the collector's attention, but the Nativity (B. i.), the Adoration of the Kings (B. 2), Two Naked Women (B. 11), and the Bather (B. 12) may be instanced as particularly noteworthy. The latter piece (B. 12) and a Saint Sebastian unknown to Bartsch, are among the rarer of Krug's engravings.

The collector must be warned that three, if not four, of the original plates were preserved in the Praun Cabinet at Nürnberg for 200 years, and that they afterwards passed into the hands of Frauenholz, the publisher, who caused impressions to be worked off from them at the beginning of the present century. B. 1, B. 2, B. 11 and it is suspected others, are to be met with as modern examples, therefore under all circumstances it is advisable to look to the character of the paper, as well as to the state of the impression, when purchasing a Krug. Some modern states too exist thrown off from the plates after they had been retouched, and copies both regular and in reverse of one or two of the master's works have been described.

On the Nativity (B. 1) is the date 1516. A Saint Luke in the Albertine collection at Vienna attributed by Passavant to Krug is without mark and signature. Passavant refers to the master, vol. iii. p. 132, but Nagler, vol. iv. n. 1158, is more complete.

The artists collectively known as the 'little masters' have next to occupy attention. Among them are Altdorfer, Aldegrever, the two Behams, Pencz, and Binck,—

'All of them born in Nürnberg, or repairing thither to pursue their art for a time, then leaving for various countries, I think it is not too much to suppose the presence of the master (Al. Dürer) the reason for this extraordinary talent. We see the subjects treated have a common character, and in many instances are traceable to the Dürer influence, although that of Burgkmair also is apparent. . . . Aldegrever was a Westphalian, and of him we may say with certainty that he was Dürer's pupil. The works of this master are such as to show him to have been a man of quite extraordinary powers, not a "little" but a "great master," realising Bible histories like a poet. How curious is the contrast between the German treatment, wherein the characters of the Old and New Testaments are treated in the garb, and according to the manners of the day in Nürnberg, and the Italian, where the semi-classic loose drapery and generalised ideal, separate

the characters represented from our sympathy! . . . Altdorfer is said to have been in Dürer's studio, but his style is not so closely resembling Dürer's as to support this supposition, and he is said to have been the pupil of old Holbein . . . Next in invention and power of hand to Henry Aldegrever is H. Sebald Beham, who is said to have learned engraving from Bartel, who was however his junior, and also to have studied under Dürer. Certainly Sebald's manner is more resembling Dürer's than that of any of these little masters, even Aldegrever. George Pencz was by all accounts a pupil of Dürer, and on leaving Nürnberg repaired to Italy attracted by the celebrity of Raphael and Marc Antonio . . . Bartel Beham and Jacob Binck both followed the same attraction . . . All these men differed from Marc Antonio and his Italian companions in an essential particular. The Italians were exclusively copyists, the Germans were *inventors*, and so artists in a much higher sense. No one of the great early period of engraving in Germany could have been much assisted, because they all worked out their ideas as a painter does.' (Scott, Bibl. 64, p. 174.)

ALBRECHT ALTDORFER (*antea*, p. 233).

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 41.)


One hundred and nine pieces are allotted by Passavant to this master. He is often considered to be inferior on metal to what he is on wood. We are not of this opinion, and regard the fine print of the Crucifixion (B. 8) equal to anything he ever accomplished on wood. The Saint Jerome (B. 22), and Portrait of Luther (B. 61), may be recommended. Altdorfer is, it must be confessed, unequal in his technic.

HEINRICH ALDEGREVER. Born, Paderborn, 1502?
died, Soest, 1558?

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 362.)

This able artist was goldsmith, painter, etcher, as well as worker with the burin. As the latter he has a beautiful, careful, and complete manipulation, whether we keep in view his smaller pieces or his large portraits. The drapery of some of his figures, though full, is broken and crumpled in an exaggerated Dürer-like

way, and in one or two series of prints he has made his figures absurdly tall, with very diminutive heads. Nevertheless, his small pieces are very satisfactory, though we think his large portraits of William, Duke of Juliers (B. 181), John of Leyden (B. 182), and Bernard Knipperdolling (B. 183), speak more highly for him. Albert van der Helle (B. 186) is also a fine example. Of Aldegrever's small pieces we may specifically notice the Annunciation (B. 38), the series of the Good Samaritan (B. 40-43), Christ on the Cross (B. 49), the B. Virgin (B. 50 and 52), Rhæa Sylvia (B. 66), Mutius Scevola (B. 69), and Titus Manlius (B. 72). The series of the Labours of Hercules (B. 83-95), the small Dance of Death (B. 139 to 142), and the Wedding Dancers (B. 160-171), are to be thought well of. Aldegrever's ornamental friezes, dagger-sheaths, and groups of children, are very beautiful.

Nearly three hundred pieces have been ascribed to this master. His prints are generally marked with a large capital **A**, having a smaller capital **G** within it,  placed on a tablet on which is often a date. Careful examination only or a rubbed condition of a print may lead to the confounding Aldegrever's cypher with that of Altdorfer and of Dürer, and *vice versa*.

HANS SEBOLDT BEHAM (*antea*, p. 231).

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 112.)

This reputable engraver is generally considered as that one of the 'little masters' who has most nearly approached the manner of Dürer, though certainly inferior on the whole to Aldegrever.

His works on copper are numerous, amounting to 270 pieces. Some of them ought unquestionably to find a place in the cabinet of the collector. The Adam and Eve (B. 6); Moses and Aaron (B. 8); Immaculata (B. 17); Man of Sorrows (B. 26); Saint Sebaldus (B. 65); and Trajan (B. 82), may serve for illustration. The series of the Prodigal Son (B. 31-34) is very good, as are also some of the friezes, *e. g.* B. 143.

BARTHEL BEHAM (or BARTEL BEHEM). Born, Nürnberg,
1502; died in Italy, 1540?

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 81.)

This artist was either the cousin or uncle of H. S. Beham.* Sandrart states that he went to Italy, and worked under the direction of Marc Antonio, both at Bologna and at Rome. Some of B. Beham's engraving is so good that it is believed Marc Antonio passed it off as his own. This view is supported by an examination of certain pieces of the latter master, in which, though the style be Italian, as far as relates to the composition and drawing, the manner is that of the German School. Such, for example, are the pieces B. vol. xiv. nn. 383, 373, 377.

At one time Barthel Beham was considered by many as the same person known as the 'Master of the Die.' Bartsch observes of B. Beham,—

'This engraver having placed his mark on a few only of his prints it has resulted that lists of his works have been always very defective. Nevertheless, his *burin* has such special charms that it has not been difficult for us to separate from the crowd of anonymous prints many of his unrecognised pieces, and to pick out from his hitherto supposed works those mediocre productions which are certainly not his, but have been attributed to him by mistake and from want of judgment.' (Vol. viii. p. 83)

About eighty pieces belong to Barthel Beham. His mark—when it exists—is either two capital **BB**, or **BP**, joined together by a transverse line, continuous with the transverse portions of the initial letters **BB BP**. Concerning the cypher **BP**, Nagler (vol. i. n. 1993) should be referred to.

The Virgin at the Window (B. 8) is what may be truly termed a sweet little bit highly to be commended. The Combat of Naked Men (B. 18) is fine and full of Italian feeling. Apollo and Daphne (B. 25) is good, but preference would be given by some to the portraits B. 60 and 63.

* Thauling considers (p. 468) that the two Behams were brothers.

JAKOB (Jacobus) BINCK. Born, Köln, 1504? died
Königsberg, 1568.

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 249.)

The history of this master includes some points of interest in connection with the courts of Denmark and Prussia which our limits do not permit of discussion. For these matters reference may be made to Passavant, vol. iv. p. 86, and Nagler, vol. iii. n. 775.

Binck's pieces are unequal in merit, but when at his best he must be allowed to have been a fine careful manipulator with a delicate burin. Though often a copyist, he was a very good one, as witness his *Massacre of the Innocents*, after Raphael by Marc Antonio. He became very Italianised in feeling and took pleasure in copying such pieces as dealt with the Divinities of Fable, and had been engraved by Caraglio and his contemporaries. 'When,' writes Duplessis, 'he engraved after Albert Dürer and Marc Antonio, Binck's burin is delicate, but after Beham it is heavy. When working out his own designs, he does not appear to be any longer the same artist. The close and sharply accentuated lines of his plates which reproduced the compositions of another master, are replaced by distant and meagre strokes, scarcely sufficing to indicate the form and to define the contours.'

A fair specimen of Binck's own design and work is the Saviour (B. 14). The Virgin (B. 19) is fine and delicate, and not unlike Dürer; so is the Saint Anthony the Hermit (B. 21), though there is less sparkle in both than is to be found in Dürer's smaller pieces. A portrait (B. 95)—said to be the artist himself—is a good example of his more refined technic. At least 140 pieces belong to him.

Binck's mark is a cypher formed by the capitals **I B**, often with a small c placed on a transverse line between them **IcB**. This small c frequently looks like G, and hence Binck's mark may be confounded with H. S. Beham's.

GEORG PENCZ (OF GREGORY PEINS). Born, Nürnberg, 1500?
died, Breslau, 1550?

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 319.)

Great pleasure may be derived from the works of this artist, as he is one of the more perfect of the 'little masters,' though very Italianized in work and character. So much is this the case, and so excellent is he both in feeling and technic, that Bartsch has described the celebrated Maffacre of the Innocents *au chicot* (B. xiv., p. 19, n. 18) as an original piece of Marc Antonio, whereas it is by Pencz. It is sometimes preferred to the original, which is B. xiv., p. 21, n. 20.

'On carefully comparing these two masterpieces of engraving on copper, no. 18 appears, it is true, neater and firmer in drawing, but differs not only in the burin line, which is slightly thinner and stiffer than that of so consummate an artist as Marc Antonio, but the expression of the heads has less life, and the hatchings sometimes have that horizontal direction which is never found among the Italian engravers. No. 20, which undoubtedly belongs to Marc Antonio, is of freer line, and fuller outline, and of greater vivacity of expression in the heads. Everything considered, we are fully convinced that the print No. 18, *au chicot*, was executed by George Pencz after the original drawing of Raphael.' (Pass. vol. iv. p. 101.)


Pencz has worked several large pieces after Italian masters, and therein shown what he could accomplish as an engraver. But, as the writer just quoted observes, the drawing of Raphael and of Giulio Romano has contributed much to the degree of excellence exhibited. In the larger pieces of his own composition Pencz is much feebler in his drawing; in the smaller ones, however, he has never been excelled by his German contemporaries.

The series of the Life of Christ (B. 30-54), though the pieces are small, is fine both in design and technic. B. 56, 57, 75, 90, and 92, are prints of value. The portrait of John Frederick, Elector of Saxony (B. 126), is a large and fine work, delicately engraved; as is likewise the undescribed portrait of Christian, King of Scandinavia, in the collection of the British Museum. Accord-

ing to Paffavant, B. xv. p. 412, n. 66, attributed to Giorgio Ghisi, is by Pencz.

Bartsch regards the portraits (vol. viii. p. 361), considered by some to represent Pencz and his wife, as not this master's. In other words, the two heads marked *IMAGO GREGORI PEINS* and *IMAGO DVXORE GREGORI PEINS* were not engraved by Georg Pencz, nor do they represent him and his wife. (See Nagler, v. iii. n. 238.)

We learn from Thausing (op. cit. pp. 468-471) that in the year 1524, Pencz and both the Behams were summoned before the authorities at Nürnberg, on account of their irreligious and socialistic opinions. The result of the inquisition was the banishment of the 'three Godless men' from that city. In 1525, Jerome Andree, the wood-engraver proper, was thrown into prison. Eventually Pencz was allowed to return to Nürnberg, but Bartel Beham settled at Munich, and H. S. Beham at Frankfurt-on-Maine.

The works of this artist have usually a cypher formed by the capitals **PG**, the **P** being placed above the **G**, through the top of which the lower portion of the **P** descends . Care must be taken not to mistake Pencz's cypher for the cyphers of P. Galle and of others. (See Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 320.)

DANIEL HOPFER. Flourished at Augsburg, 1516-1549.

JEROME HOPFER. Ditto 1520-1523.

LAMBERT HOPFER. ? ?

CB with the 'houblon' and date 1531.

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 471.)

From 1500 to 1550 there worked at Augsburg three brothers, HOPFER by name, also another artist, with the initials **CB** and a date. The work of the latter being in the style of the Hopfers, he has been regarded as belonging to the same family, more especially as it was deemed necessary to account for a fourth, or David Hopfer, but who is considered by other writers to be the same as Daniel.

The Hoppers—particularly Hieronymus or Jerome—were great copyists, often coarse in technic, their work not always bearing close inspection. Thus has arisen the practice, with some, of depreciating these masters. We think better of the Hoppers, however, than to treat them disparagingly. Some of their work is extremely good, particularly that of Daniel Hopfer, which is often rich and full of tone. The drawing, when closely examined, may be seen to be occasionally loose and bad, and in some of Daniel's pieces the figures are exaggerated into deformity or caricature; but, in spite of this, Daniel Hopfer was an able engraver, and is well worthy the attention of the iconophile. Even to the servile copying by these masters we are indebted, for we are thus readily enabled to form an idea of what some now very rare or utterly lost compositions of early Italian and German artists were like.

Several of the portraits executed by them are interesting both historically and as regards their technic. The Hoppers are further important from their having been among the first engravers to employ alone the etching process in copying the burin works of those who preceded them. They worked on plates of iron also (or iron slightly steeld?) as before mentioned in the Chapter on Processes (p. 92).


As already implied, Daniel was the better artist of the family. Some of his prints may be said honestly to be *fine*—a favourite word with the connoisseur. Such pieces, *e. g.*, are, Christ leaving his Mother (B. 8), and Christ on the Cross (B. 12 and B. 14). B. 21, 25, and 26, are good; so is B. 34, in particular. B. 38, 41, and 45, are noteworthy. The Woman taken in Adultery is a well-known print by D. Hopfer, whose manipulation evinces considerable address in ornamental architecture and decoration. As examples of ornamental work, B. 17, 19, may be referred to. Daniel Hopfer's portraits are occasionally very satisfactory, *e. g.*, the Emperor Maximilian (B. 79). B. 122 is a fine design for a mon-france.

JEROME HOPFER is, no doubt, little else than a copyist of old Italian and German masters. In this line he has done some good things however, as witness the undescribed copy of the Massacre of the Innocents in the National Collection, the Virgin on the Half-Moon (B. 5), Joseph with the Cradle (B. 4),

and Saint George on Horseback (B. 16). The portrait of Francis of Sickingen (B. 65) is worthy of mention, as are also the copies from designs of Raphael and Campagnola (B. 44 and 46).

The copy by Lambert Hopfer of Albert Dürer's small copper Passion has a general brightness of effect about it, but will not bear thinking of with the original in recollection. The Trinity (B. 19) is a small, effective copy, but heavy and black in the shadows.

Of the Master CB 1531 we may cite the portraits of Charles the Fifth and his brother (B. viii. 2534, n. 3).

The marks of the Hopfers are their initial capitals having a catkin of a hop-plant, between them . In the instance of the Master CB the hop-plant follows the cypher.

VIRGIL SOLIS (*antea*, p. 244).

(Bartsch, vol. ix. p. 242.)

On account of the size of the majority of his pieces, Virgil Solis is generally ranked with the 'little masters.' He was a most prolific artist. Passavant awards him the credit of 625 pieces. It is doubtful whether, in this number, the whole of his engravings are included—at least such as bear his mark: for it is difficult to conceive that all these were produced by his own hand. They may have been executed under his inspection by pupils and workmen, perhaps not more than one-third being actually his own. This view is borne out also, by the inequality of the technic in the prints which have Virgil Solis' mark. Those pieces of superior character which may be considered fairly as the master's own work on the copper have gradually become scarce, and, when in good condition, are much prized. In these the technic is fine, yet decisive, and all intentions are perfectly carried out. V. Solis' friezes and ornamental work, in particular, are valued, as are likewise his designs for goldsmiths' work, and especially his series of cards having animated marks of suits.

CHAPTER XI.

ON METAL-ENGRAVING OF THE ORDINARY KIND.—MASTERS OF
THE DUTCH AND FLEMISH SCHOOLS.

π—Lukas van Leyden, Dirk van Staren, Cornelius Matfys,
Lambert Suavius, the De Bryes, the Brothers Wierix.

ε—Goltzius, I. Matham, Saenredam, Jacob de Gheyn.

The Sadeliers, Scheltius and Boetius de Bolswert, the Bloemarts, the Vorstermans, the Visschers, P. Pontius, Houbraken, De Goudt.

WE introduce the masters of Holland and the Pays-bas with the eminent artist,—

LUKAS VAN LEYDEN (*antea*, p. 242).

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 331.)

‘At a period,’ writes Bryan, ‘when Albert Dürer had carried the art of engraving to such perfection in Germany, and Marc Antonio exercised it with the greatest reputation in Italy, Lucas disputed the palm with those celebrated competitors in the Low Countries. He learned the use of the point and graver from a goldsmith, which he carried to a surprising pitch of perfection for the short time that he lived. His style differs from that of Albert Dürer, and seems to have been built on the manner of Israel van Mecheln. His execution is neat and clear, but as his stroke is equally fine in objects in the foreground, as in those in the distance, and as there is a want of connexion in the masses, his plates, though extremely neat, are inferior to those of Albert Dürer in firmness and harmony of effect. His figures are tall and meagre, the extremities rather mannered than correct, and though his attitudes are not ill chosen, they are generally stiff and ungraceful.’ (Bibl. 10, p. 401.)

This criticism, though just in some particulars, is only partially so in others, or applicable alone to the earlier works of the master. So excellent is L. van Leyden, that he holds rank in the estimation of the collector generally next to Rembrandt and Dürer. But one of his very excellencies is of that kind which renders him a most difficult master to procure in a satisfactory condition. His technic was so fine and delicate, his management of the burin so fastidious and tender, and his gradations were so nice, that his plates would bear but very little usage, and yield comparatively only few perfect impressions. But these latter with all their silvery tones are exquisite, and when procurable are of great value. Unfortunately, they are rarely to be met with, for most of L. van Leyden's prints having lost their silveriness and their more delicate and tender lines, seem dull and faded, often wretched scratches, in comparison with what they appear at their best.

'Let any one,' says Mr. Maberly, 'who would see Van Leyden in perfection beg a sight at the British Museum of the print of David playing before Saul; but he should be previously apprised that the sight of this most splendid impression will make him dissatisfied with every print that he is likely ever to meet with by the same artist.'

There is not any master of whose excellencies so imperfect a judgment may be formed from the common run of prints usually met with as is the case with L. van Leyden. This engraver, to be properly appreciated, should be seen as he is represented in our own National Collection.

His works are generally arranged as of three periods or 'manners.' The pieces of the first manner are characterized by very fine and close lines, much movement and expression in the heads, a drawing often not very correct, and by a tendency in the compositions to the style of the antique schools. This period is illustrated by the Adam and Eve (B. 11), Abraham dismissing Agar (B. 17), Jephtha's Daughter (B. 24), Samson and Delilah (B. 25), the Resurrection of Lazarus (B. 42), etc.

In the works of the second period or manner more freedom may be perceived united to his great delicacy of line, and above all a surprising tenderness of gradation in the distancing of objects. This latter quality had been hitherto neglected in engraving with

the burin, and in expressing it, L. van Leyden was not excelled by those masters who immediately succeeded him. In his treatment he is now exclusively natural, and hence full of character and life, though easily liable to exaggeration, and to pass even into caricature. Several of his better works which are of this period seem to have been produced between the years 1510 and 1520. Perhaps he shows himself to the greatest perfection in the large *Ecce Homo* of 1510. (B. 71.)

In the third period, Lukas van Leyden swerved from nature towards the ideal, and, although becoming larger and freer in the management of the burin, yet, from not possessing either the sentiment of the beautiful, or a sufficient knowledge of the drawing of the nude, his later works are not very satisfactory. The *Adam and Eve* of 1529 and the *Mars and Venus* of 1530 belong to this division.

Lukas van Leyden commenced engraving when very young; it is said as early as nine years of age. We certainly find he had finished a plate by the time he was fourteen, for the print of the *Monk Sergius and Mahomet* (B. 126) bears the date 1508. He continued to work until the year 1533, his last performance being, it is thought, *Pallas* (B. 139). Tradition relates that the artist, feeling his end approaching, desired his friends to bring this plate to his bed-side, from which he gazed on it with much interest, as his last, but unfinished effort in an art the bounds of which he had done so much to extend.

The chief works of this eminent master may be referred to as follows; but the collector, meeting with any piece of fair impression and in good condition, should, if possible, make it his own.

The *Calvary* (B. 74) is a fine large print, full of figures, having the date 1517, in reverse on the earlier impressions and regular on the later. 'This piece,' says Bartsch, 'is one of the more perfect of the works of Lukas. It might serve as a model for the treatment of distances, and it would appear that Goltzius and Saenredam had well studied it. Good impressions are very rare.' A third state is recorded by Passavant; in it the plate has been retouched. *Christ shown to the People* (B. 71) is another large and rich piece of composition of the year 1510. Were it not for the

actual date, it would scarcely be credited that a boy only fifteen or seventeen years of age could have produced such admirable work. This print brought a good price in the time of its author. The Conversion of St. Paul (B. 107) is a fine piece of the year 1509. Bad impressions exist of this composition which have been thrown off after the plate had been reworked by anonymous hands. David playing the harp before Saul (B. 27), 1508: nothing can surpass the exquisite work of this engraving, nor ought rival its marvellous and brilliant silveriness in such an impression as that in the British Museum. The Poet Virgil suspended in a basket (B. 136), 1525: this is an extremely fine specimen of the master, and, moreover, of interest in respect to a statement of Vasari relative to Dürer and his print of the Knight and Death. Vasari has been shown to have been incorrect. (Pass. vol. iii. p. 6.) 'These two prints,' writes Passavant, 'are distinguished from each other by perfectly different methods of execution, the manner of Albert Dürer meriting in all respects the preference, though that of Lukas van Leyden exhibits a freer style of work.' Mary Magdalene Dancing (B. 122): a large piece, engraved by the master in the plenitude of his powers, 1519. Good impressions are rare, and realise high prices, as they did during the life of the artist. The portrait of the Emperor Maximilian (B. 172), is fine but very scarce. The series of fourteen pieces, composing the Passion of Our Lord (B. 43-56), 1521, is desirable: a copy of it by I. Muller exists; the pieces have the date 1521, and the sign of the master, viz. L; 'I. Muller excudit., C. Dankert excudit,' are on the first print of the series.

Smaller and less expensive works, but yet very noteworthy, are the following:—Christ with the Instruments of the Passion (B. 76); Prodigal Son (B. 78); Saint Christopher (B. 109); Temptation of Saint Anthony (B. 117); the two Surgeons (B. 156, 157); a Young Man with a Skull (B. 174), thought by some to represent the artist; the Head of a Warrior in a Medallion (B. 160); and the Musicians (B. 155), 1524. Not far short of 180 pieces may be attributed to Lukas van Leyden.

In purchasing the smaller and less costly works, such as the Apostles, Passion, etc., the collector should be constantly on his guard, on account both of the deceptive copies which are about, and the impoverished state of the impressions produced after the

original plates had been in use for some time. Many copies are often assumed to be the poor and worn-out originals, and since the difficulty of obtaining better is great, the former are bought as a makeshift, the truth being, however, that they are altogether spurious.

About the time of Lukas van Leyden there flourished IHERONYMUS AEKEN or AKEN, also called JEROME BOSCH, 1450-1516. This artist has been confounded with an architect and sculptor, Alaert du Hameel. (See Nagler, iii. n. 2560.) Following Aeken we have—along with others—the Master of the Crab, 1528; the Master of the letter **S**, 1519; Allard Claafzen or Alaert Claas, 1520; and

DIRK VAN STAREN (DIRICK VAN STAAREN), The Master with the Star. Worked at Antwerp during the first half of the sixteenth century.

(Bartsch, vol. viii. p. 26.)

Of the birthplace and period of death of this engraver not any details have come down to us, though he belongs with Lukas van Leyden to the more important of the Dutch or Flemish Masters of the beginning of the sixteenth century. He is remarkable from the circumstance of almost always placing on his prints the date of the year, and frequently the name of the month and day when his work was executed. These indications are associated with the initials of his name having the figure of a star between them. Thus, *e.g.* on Christ tempted by Satan (B. 5), may be seen at the lower part—1525, **D*V**, APRIL II; and on St. Luke painting the portrait of the Virgin (B. 9), **D*V** 1526, IN JVLII 26. The earliest date to be found is 1522, and the latest 1544 (B. 2).

The star between the capitals forms a rebus on the artist's name (Star or Staaren) usually read as Dirk van Staren; Dirk and Dirick being diminutives of Theodoric. That this is the true interpretation of the signature in question is inferred from the notices by Guicciardini and Albert Dürer of a well-known Flemish glass-painter whom they call Theodor Stas and Dietrich zu Antdorff respectively, and by whom it is supposed, are certain drawings having **D*V** on them, and some painted glass

windows at Bruffels with the date 1544 and STV as a monogram. These drawings and paintings are considered as representing the style and compositions of the present master.

Twenty pieces from engraved metal plates and three from wood-blocks are ascribed to him. Two of his compositions have a fine and rich effect from their architectural backgrounds, and altogether are very covetable productions; these are the Homage of St. Bernard (B. 8), and St. Luke painting the Virgin (B. 9). The largest work from metal is the Deluge (B. 2), but it is not the Master's best performance. The calling of Peter and Andrew (B. 3), and St. Peter on the Sea (B. 4), are worthy of selection. The smaller pieces, B. 14, B. 15, B. 16, and B. 17, are from etched plates perhaps of iron in one if not two instances. In the latter the technic much resembles that of some of Dürer's iron plates, and of Burgkmair's Mercury and Venus. On one of the British Museum examples there is considerable burr and *fond sale*.

In the National Collection is one of the three woodcuts attributed to the Master, and the only one which bears his mark. It is an interior (8 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide by 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. high), having galleries running along the walls; on the gallery at the left side is the date 1526, on that of the right are the letters D * V. The composition appears to represent a school, though there are as many adults as children in it, on the whole it is rather a peculiar and desirable piece; we are not aware that any other impression has been recorded.

There exist copies of B. 12, B. 17, and B. 18. (Nagler, vol. ii. n. 1408.)

Towards the end of the sixteenth century we meet with other Dutch and Flemish engravers of less importance, among whom—

‘ We see disappear little by little originality, power of invention, feeling for nature, and the gift of being able to represent her with that *naïveté*, delicacy, and vitality, so common with the older masters. This falling off is specially observable among the contemporary or succeeding artists, who lost, under the influence of imitating the Italians, the German element which characterised their art.’ (Pass. i. p. 223.)

To these latter belong Cornelius Cort, 1536; Cornelius Matfys or Meffys, of Antwerp, 1533-1560; Lambertus Suavius, of Liege, 1540-1559. The family of the De Bryes, of Liege and Frankfurt, 1528-1570, and the brothers Wierix or Wierx, of Amsterdam, 1550, remained true to the older Dutch manner. The last-named artists demand from us specific notice.

JOHANNES WIERIX; HIERONYMUS WIERIX; ANTONIUS WIERIX. Flourished at Antwerp from 1562 to 1618. According to ALVIN, John was born at Antwerp 1549, Jerome born at Antwerp 1553, Anthony born at Antwerp? Died 1624.

(Alvin, *Bibl.* 1.)

The general opinion has been that these engravers were born at Amsterdam. Their name is spelt on their prints in various ways, viz. Wierix, Wierx, and Wierinx, and their Christian names are generally Latinized. Their works belong to what may be termed the end of the old period.

The prints of the Wierixes are very numerous, and often commendable, particularly the pieces of Jerome, many of which may be ranked for excellence with those of the 'little masters' of Germany. This holds good especially as regards his small prints of devotional subjects, some of which are extremely beautiful and tender, both in design and technic. There are among them engravings looking like fine miniatures, but in which nevertheless, with all their delicacy, the forms and muscular markings are well defined.

In their work these masters nearly always carried out their intentions to completeness—often, too, with masterly precision. This was effected, at the same time, with far less pretence than was exhibited by inferior artists. The compositions of the brothers Wierix have been called by some critics stiff and dry, described as put into the shade by the school of Goltzius, and displaced from their position by the etchers who succeeded it. But let us say that not one of the school of Goltzius ever produced more effective yet tender little prints than the Flagellation and Crucifixion in the 'Passio Domini Nostri J.C.' (Alvin, n. 342.)

They are worth more than all the lumpy, knotty exaggerations and coarsely executed pieces of too many of the followers of Goltzius.

The chief authority on the works of the brothers Wierix is M. Alvin (*Bibl. i.*), who speaks of them as follows :—

‘These indefatigable workers laboured without ceasing for more than half a century, *i.e.*, from 1562 to 1618. There was scarcely an illustrious person of their time of whom their burin has not preserved a faithful likeness. As long as they lived not an illustrated book issued from the Antwerp press without one, at least, of the three brothers having something to do with it. At one time they reproduced the designs of popular painters; at another period they engraved their own compositions; and, embracing all departments, they became to some degree a mirror reflecting the ideas then current in the Belgian provinces at the exodus from the great crisis of the sixteenth century.

‘The brothers Wierix have engraved the portraits of nearly all the eminent persons of their day: the greater number of such prints are very small in size, and of wonderful finish. Jerome, however, has executed some of very large size—too large, in fact, for his usual manner of manipulating the burin. The portraits of Henry the Third, King of France, and of Philip the Second, King of Spain, are almost of the natural size. These engravings, though unquestionably surprising as far as the mechanical work is concerned, are entirely destitute of picturesque effect. The artist has not preserved any proportion between his strokes and the dimensions of his copper; he covers a plate a foot square in the same way he would work had he but a few centimetres. He is like a miniaturist usurping a canvas of Rubens or the surface of a wall destined for Michael Angelo. As draughtsmen the Wierixes are remarkably correct. This is particularly evident in the execution of the extremities, and of the feet and hands—those rocks on which so many masters perish. Their style has not much elevation in it; but their idea of the beautiful, particularly in the human face, and of the female especially, is assuredly more pure than that of their master, Dürer. I do not wish to overdo their merit, but I cannot, on the other hand, like some writers, be guilty of the injustice of depreciating it. I admit that, among their prints, numerous pieces are to be met with, which, if they were all they had produced, would rightly cause their authors to be regarded as not above mediocrity. But to judge the Wierixes equitably, the whole of their works should be taken into account, and it is particularly necessary that good impressions of them be seen. The ori-

ginal plates have become worn out by much over-use, and such impressions as are usually met with for sale give but a faint idea of what the prints were in their original state. Jerome is generally looked on as the more able of the three brothers. I can readily understand his being so considered, more particularly when the prints marked **IHW**—really the work of John Wierix—are attributed to him. In my judgment John is the truer artist; it is he who has most originality and most style. Jerome and Anthony excel him in softness, fineness, and velvety qualities—qualities which J. Waldor, their pupil, exaggerated to the uttermost limits. The pearl of price in this respect is, perhaps, Christ Entombed, engraved by Jerome after Otto Vennius.

So productive were the brothers Wierix that two thousand pieces are ascribed to them by Alvin. Portraiture and religious subjects, particularly the Histories of the Blessed Virgin and Saints, were most favoured by them. They also made—Jerome especially—numerous copies from Albert Dürer and the older masters.

They varied their signatures considerably, but usually Anton. Wierix, Hieron. Wierix, and Joh. Wierix, appear on their respective engravings. Sometimes their initials only are present; when **IHW** or **JHW** present themselves, it is not easy to say whether they be intended for John or Jerome Wierix.

Of Anthony it may be observed that, of his larger pieces, those having the addresses of J. B. Vrint, 1584, and of Liefrink, 1588, are the more desirable impressions. A Crucifixion (Al. 254) by Anthony W., after Martin de Vos, is very fine, as is likewise a Virgin and Child, by Anthony. Cain slaying Abel (Al. 82) is well worth possessing. In such pieces as Al. 484, after Quintin Matfys and others, Anthony W. is quite archaic.

Several of Jerome's portraits are very satisfactory, as are also many of his small scriptural pieces, as, *e. g.*, his Vita Deiparæ Virginis (Al. 438) and the Infancy of Christ (Al. 441). In the latter may be found some admirable prints. Christ with Saint Peter and Saint John, after Martin de Vos, and a Last Supper (Al. 186), are of larger size, and very noteworthy.

John Wierix's copy of Albert Dürer's Adam and Eve should not be forgotten, executed as it was, at a very early period of his career.

Dr. Dibdin the Bibliographer was very partial to the works of these Masters, making allusion to them not unfrequently in his highly interesting books, one of which—the Decameron—we may add, ought to be the delight of the iconophilist. A winter's evening over a large-paper copy—

‘ . . . ligna super foco
Large reponens, . . . ’

should be felt to be a great treat.

HENDRICK GOLTZIUS (*antea*, p. 272).

(Bartsch, vol. iii. p. 11.)

With this well-known master a new epoch in Dutch and Flemish engraving set in. Though to him its introduction is due, he yet showed, in his first manner, the spirit and technic of the older styles, as may be seen in B. 13, 17, etc. In some of his earlier works there is also much of an Italian feeling—due, of course, to his residence in Rome, where he executed works after Italian masters.

Goltzius was a wonderful man as an engraver: it mattered little to him whether he produced a portrait half the size of life or a composition not larger than a florin. In some of his smaller pieces his technic is most delicate and tender, while in his larger ones the work is bold and open, with a very decided line, the whole being brilliant and shining. In his later style originality may be witnessed. He was the first engraver of the clear and clean open line invading the whole composition: wonderfully, too, it was managed. Some of Goltzius' incisive and silvery pieces are admirable; in his other manner, particularly the style in which the portrait of F. d'Egmont (B. 168) is engraved, he is often quite as excellent, reminding us—as in the piece last mentioned—something of Hollar.

The great faults of Goltzius and his school are their frequent violence of action and their exaggeration in drawing and foreshortening. To these is not rarely added a lumpy or knotty manner of indicating muscular prominences and the superficial vessels. It is well that the student should be aware what extremes may be reached, in these respects, by otherwise good artists: let him,

therefore, refer to Goltzius' Hercules with his Club (B. 142), the Fall of Tantalus, Icarus and other pieces (B. 258 to 261) after Cornelis, and the Companions of Cadmus devoured by Dragons (B. 262). These are designs of such exaggeration and distortion as to be truly repulsive, and the technic of them is equally disagreeable. Let it be noted how the superficial veins on the backs of the hands of the figures in the doubtful pieces, B. iii. p. 96, n. 6 and 7, are indicated. Goltzius himself is too often bad enough, but, united to Spranger, the result is insufferable. What a contrast when following Martin de Vos! Take, for example, the Annunciation, B. 294.

We do not think that Goltzius can be seen to greater advantage as an engraver than in the well-known six prints in the manner of different artists, called his Master-pieces (B. 15-20). Of these we prefer the Circumcision, in the manner of Albert Dürer: in it the technic is extremely good. In the set of the Passion (B. 27-38), which is scarce, are several pieces of good design and admirable execution. Several of the artist's portraits, both small and large, are most commendable: the large head of Theodor Cornhert (B. 164) is particularly noteworthy.

More than three hundred pieces rightly belong to Goltzius, but other prints are attributed to him; there are likewise numerous engravings of his designs by some of his known contemporaries, and by anonymous workers.

(See Weigel, *Bibl.* 95, p. 92, who is very full on Goltzius.)

JAKOB (JACOBUS) MATHAM (OR MAETHAM). Born,
Haarlem, 1571; died, 1631.

(Bartsch, vol. iii. p. 130.)

He was the stepson of Goltzius, whose style he followed, and often not unsuccessfully. But his drawing is bad, his faces often ugly, and at first he may be passed over by the collector without much loss. Perhaps Matham is seen to most advantage when there is more landscape than figure work in his pieces as, *e.g.*, in Abraham dismissing Agar, after Bloemart (B. 63). Another pupil of Goltzius and also of de Gheyn, was,—

JOHANNES SAENREDAM. Born, Leyden, 1565 ;
died, 1607.

(Bartsch, vol. iii. p. 215.)


This artist is also called Zaeredam. Bryan remarks that his prints are executed in a neat, clear style, and with considerable facility.

His design is not very correct, and there is generally a want of effect in his management of the lights and shadows. According to Bartsch, Saenredam is to be preferred to Matham. Another eminent pupil of Goltzius was,—

JACOB DE GHEYN the Elder. Born, Antwerp, 1565 ;
died, 1615.

(Paff. vol. iii. p. 115.)

Though bold and free he managed the burin with much delicacy, and his portraits are full of truth and life. De Gheyn in his historical compositions becomes mannered, though his design may be admitted to be correct. His style is often rather dry.

Paffavant enumerates 209 pieces by this master, of which twenty-seven are portraits. His mark is generally a cypher formed with an **ID** and **G** . Sometimes these letters are kept separate, and occasionally the name is written in full.

Mention may here be made of the SADELERS, a Bruffels and Antwerp family. They were six in number, and worked from the latter third of the sixteenth century to the latter third of the seventeenth. Some of them lived for a time in Italy and Germany. The elder Sadeler—John—was the more eminent. He was a very fair draughtsman, and engraved both portraits and historical pieces in a neat, clear style. His younger brother, Raphael, likewise drew well, and some of his works, whether portraits or compositions, are very good. The latter, however, are deficient in many cases of freedom and life.

About the Sadelers, there is generally a degree of formalism

whether engraving their own designs or those of other artists. In the majority of instances, their engravings are after other masters.

Most of the family were very productive workers, and the scriptural pieces of some of them may be met with in every miscellaneous portfolio. In Bryan's Dictionary may be found a list of the more important works of the Sadeliers, with special references to such prints as are more worthy of attention.

The two masters—Boetius Adam and Scheltius de Bolwert—were born in Friesland, but settled and worked at Antwerp during the first half of the seventeenth century. The younger brother, Scheltius, is regarded as one of the more eminent engravers of the modern school in his country. He has been described as 'perhaps the most powerful engraver for effect that ever lived, and the most faithful renderer of the style of his original.' Both these masters engraved after Rubens, and some of their better pieces are from this artist. Of Scheltius, Bryan remarks:—

'He has particularly distinguished himself by the admirable performances he has left us after some of the finest pictures of Rubens and Vandyck, which he represented with a judgment and ability that gives them more effect than can well be expected in a print, and appear to exhibit the very character and colour of the paintings. It was not unusual for Rubens to re-touch his proofs in the progress of the plates with chalk, or with the pencil, which corrections attended to by the engraver, contributed not a little to the characteristic expression we find in his prints; proofs of this description are to be met with in the portfolios of the curious. He engraved with equal success historical subjects, huntings, landscapes, and portraits, and the number of his prints are very considerable.'

Reference should be made to Bryan for details concerning these engravers.

The families of BLOEMART of Utrecht, of VORSTERMAN of Antwerp, and of VISSCHER of Haarlem, produced some well-known and good engravers during the seventeenth century. The family of HONDIUS or DE HONDT also engraved portraits, often of merit, but frequently in a very stiff and dry style. The DE PASSE family—some members of which worked in England—are in

repute for their portraits and for their historical pieces after Martin de Vos, and other artists. Certain of the heads by WILLIAM DE PASSE are much sought after, and are very scarce. Having resided most of his life in this country, W. DE PASSE has been placed by many writers in the English School. JONAS SUYDERHOEF is an artist of deservedly high reputation. Some of his works are of beautiful execution, his portraits being in high repute. PAUL PONTIUS, a pupil of Lukas Vorsterman, was an admirable engraver of portraits after Van Dyck and Rubens, and his finer pieces are very acceptable to the cabinet. The same may be said of the works of Houbraken (1698), whose execution was particularly delicate and soft. He is considered to have formed his style from NANTEUIL and EDELINCK; according to Bryan, 'his heads do not yield to those of Drevet in the beauty of their finishing, and they surpass them in the boldness of his stroke and the brilliancy of colour.'

There are seven prints engraved by a Dutch Nobleman—COUNT DE GOUDT—after designs by ELSHEIMER, which the collector will do well to acquire. These engravings are remarkable for effect, and for their peculiar technic. The smallest of them—Herodias with the Head of John the Baptist—is not common. The largest—Ceres at the Cottage Door—was copied by HOLLAR; the two prints should be compared together. With this allusion to DE GOUDT, we close our remarks on the Schools of Germany, Holland, and Flanders, having arrived far on in the seventeenth century, and feeling to be gradually losing perception of that odour of sanctity which hangs about the portfolios of 'Ancient Prints.'

CHAPTER XII.

ON METAL-ENGRAVING OF THE ORDINARY KIND.

MASTERS OF THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH SCHOOLS.

- σ—The Lyons' Master of 1488, Duvet, Coufin, Garnier, the School of Fontainebleau, the De Laulnes, Callot, Mellan, Morin, Nanteuil, Edelinck, Maffon, the Drevets, Schmidt?
- τ—Geminus, the De Paffes, Elstracke, R. Payne, Delaram, the Hogenbergs, Hollar, Droeshout, William Faithorne, senior, Marshall, Gaywood, Cecil, Logan, White, Ravenet, Grignon, Dorigny.

IT may be stated of the French school that it begins to be important when the interest of the German and Italian schools has already begun to fade. It is not until the commencement of the seventeenth century that the school of France makes a position in the history of our present branch of art. Before then numerous engravers had worked, it is true; but, speaking generally, it may be said that these masters left but little of importance behind them, and of their personal histories we are very much in the dark.

Leaving out of consideration the illustrations in the 'Books of Hours,' published by Vostre, Verard, and others, many of which are from metal plates engraved in relief and punctated, the only engravings which are known of the fifteenth century are some views of towns illustrating an account of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This work appeared at Lyons in 1488, and is supposed to have been written by one Michelet Topie, of Piedmont. From this time until 1520, we have not any French engraving with a date. Of this year we have one of


JEAN DUVET (or DU-VET), the Master of the Unicorn.

Born, Langres, 1485; was living in 1556.

(Bartsch, vol. vii. p. 496.)

This artist was a goldsmith in the services of Francis I. and Henri II. of France, and was the first French engraver worthy the name of master. He is often called the 'Master of the Unicorn.' Although his earliest dated print bears on it 1520, it is supposed that Duvet must have handled the burin some short time before this; he continued working until he was seventy years old, for in 1556, he obtained a royal privilege for the publication of his 'Apocalypse Figurée.' Though not devoid of originality, Duvet was fond of copying from other masters, and, in our opinion, some of his best work is to be found in these copies. He rather affected an Italian style. Bartsch regards his technical procedure as

'merely a picturesque assemblage of different lines, which, although sufficient to produce the requisite shadows, does not necessitate that subtil attention necessary for executing a clean and careful stroke. It is doubtless this coarse kind of work which has given rise to the opinion that Jean Duvet did not engrave on copper, but on a metal less hard than it.'

About most of Duvet's work there is a very mechanical and metallic character, just such technic, in fact, as an engraving goldsmith might produce. Seventy-five pieces are ascribed to him by Passavant. On some of these JOH. DUVET, or DUVET, is written in full; on others, I D, on a tablet, may be seen . Some prints have a date only, while others have not any mark whatever.

Certain engravings, in which the Unicorn is introduced and supposed to bear reference to the amours of Henri II. and Diana of Poitiers, have caused this master to receive the cognomen before mentioned. One of these (B. 44), Poison and Antidote, or the Battle of the Animals, is so superior in design and technic to the rest of Duvet's works that some critics have ascribed the piece to an Italian source of high pretension. According to Stanley (see Bryan), Mr. Carpenter, the late Keeper of the Prints at the British Museum, believed it to be the work, *in toto*, of Leonardo da Vinci, and Mr. Stanley agrees in this opinion. Passavant attributes

the design to Da Vinci, but the actual engraving to Cefare da Sesto. Cumberland (Bibl. 14, p. 451, n. DLII.) has some remarks on this piece which should be consulted. Another, but unmarked print (Pass. vi. p. 257, n. 65. Bartsch, vol. x. p. 23, n. 42), ascribed by Robert-Dumefnil to J. Duvet, is regarded by Passavant as being the work of Cefare da Sesto, as far as the composition is concerned. (See Nagler also, vol. iii. nn. 2176-7.)

It may be said, that, as a rule, Duvet's own compositions are heavy, confused masses, out of which it is often difficult to disentangle the *motif*, the whole composition being made still heavier by the cumbersome style of technic. This observation applies particularly to his 'Apocalypse.' (B. 12-35.)

'Duvet,' remarks Duplessis, 'is too often dry and involved, his composition is confused, his technic sometimes too meagre, and the whole work too frequently wanting in style. The care also with which he treats the details, and the too carefully studied folds of the draperies distract attention from the general forms and sentiment of the story. . . . Duvet takes just as much pains with the accessories of his designs as he does with their most important objects, hence there is no focus of interest, but everything is equal, and all is surcharged.' (Histoire, &c., p. 60.)

Duvet's best piece, we think to be a Saint Sebastian, of which there is an impression at the British Museum. The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian (B. 10) is likewise worthy of mention, as is also the Christ and the Woman of Samaria, in the National Collection. The Annunciation (copied by Ottley), and the pieces B. 24 and 33 of the series of the Apocalypse, are deserving of particular notice. The Virgin and Child, after Raphael (B. 7), and the Entombment, after Mantegna (B. 6), show Duvet to most advantage as a copyist.

After Duvet come several workers, as Couffin, Jean de Gourmont, Corneille, Perriffin, Thomassin, Gaultier, Woeiriot, and others, but whom the student may at first pass by. His attention must nevertheless be called to the School of Fontainebleau (B. 16, p. 299), the members of which, though generally working rather as etchers than as burinists, cannot be anywhere more conveniently

1. studied to than here.

In 1531, the French king, Francis the First, summoned Francesco Primaticcio, a pupil of Giulio Romano, to France, to decorate with paintings the celebrated chateau of Fontainebleau, having the year previously obtained the services of Rosso Roffi. These masters were accompanied, or soon followed, by other Italian painters. With them certain French artists eventually became associated. Of this company several members appear to have represented on copper the works, afterwards decorating the palace they had been summoned to adorn. Most of such engravings are now very rare, and it is almost impossible to say to which masters those that are known should be ascribed. Other compositions also were engraved by the members of this school, the southern spirit of which gradually Italianized for some time French artists generally. The mannered style of drawing, however, of many of these, and their want of delicacy and care in technic, give only a secondary rank to their engravings. According to Duplessis (Bibl. 21, p. 79), Antonio Fantuzzi and Leonard Tiry (Thiry de Deventer) were the more eminent of the School of Fontainebleau.

Further information should be sought in Delaborde's *La Renaissance des Arts*, t. i. ; Renouvier's *Des Types*, etc. ; Duplessis' *Histoire* ; Passavant, vol. vi. p. 189 ; and Bartsch, vol. xvi. p. 299.

The only master to whom we shall specially refer before Callot, is

CHARLES ETIENNE DE LAULNE or STEPHANUS,
Born, Orleans ? 1518. Worked until the end of the Sixteenth
Century.

He engraved numerous pieces after the Italian masters of Fontainebleau, after Raphael, and his own son John with whom he passed a considerable portion of his life at Strasburg, where it is thought he died. He formed his style chiefly by the German 'little masters,' but remained inferior to the best of them. Some of his figures and smaller compositions put one in mind of Bernard Solomon ; the execution of his ornamental work is as complete as can be seen in any of his engravings. He usually marked the latter with the initials of his partly Latinized name, **S** or **SF**, or **S fecit** ;

but in some instances, added in full—*Stephanus*. Some critics maintain that his son,—

JEAN ETIENNE DE LAULNE, working at Strasburg, 1582, likewise engraved, and that certain prints bearing the initials, **IS** 1582, executed in a peculiar method, are of his performance. In these pieces the contours of the forms are made out with the burin in line, but all the rest of the technic is effected with points or dots in a stippled manner. This gives the work a peculiar look, but the process must not be mistaken for the large dotted style of the *manière criblée*, afterwards described. De Laulne's manner more nearly approaches to some of the work of Campagnola, and the more recent method of Bartolozzi (*antea*, p. 88). These prints are not at all common; they are worth having as examples illustrating one form of the *manière au maillet*. Two examples are in our own collection, viz., the Neptune and Arethusa. (Pass. vol. iv. p. 158, nn. 1 and 2.)

JACQUES CALLOT. Born, Nancy, 1593; died, Nancy, 1635.

(Meaume, Recherches, &c., Bibl. 44.)

Of the French School of engravers not one is better known than CALLOT, and for some time past he has been in much favour with collectors. With his enthusiastic admirers we have not much sympathy. Tastes differ, however, and it may happen that the collector may become—like some we know—Callot-mad. From his numerous prints a few pieces are quite sufficient for us. His more fantastic vagaries, and his ragged, jagged style, have not for us any charms.

‘From the brain of no other artist,’ writes M. Galichon (*Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, vol. v. p. 198, 1861), ‘did a like legion of monsters all armed ever make their exit. One would suppose that Callot must have fitted himself for his vocation by a descent to the Styx; that he had visited in one night the Hell of the Christians, the Gulfs of Tænare, the Court of Pluto, and the Palace of Belzebuth.’

In some of his smaller prints, as those of the Passion (M. 19-30), Callot is delicate and quiet, both in technic and design. His

figures of female costume (M. 679) and Beggars are good; his Coins are to the purpose, and the sets of the Apostles and Saints (M. 104, *et seq.*) are worthy of mention. But particular commendation may be given to his Saint Nicholas Preaching at the entry of a Wood (M. 140), a Crucifix (M. 176), and to the curious design known as the Benedicite, or Grace (M. 65). It may be admitted also that in many of his popular pieces, Callot's *diablerie* is amusing and decidedly Mephistophelian. But he has too much of this, and in some of his more sombre compositions his figures have such large bodies, small heads, and stuck-out limbs, that in spite of their life and the luminous quality of the engraving the impression made upon us is not agreeable. Yet, as before remarked, there are many who extol Callot; we quote the following from Strutt as being a good criticism on the master from a different stand-point to our own:

'The fertility of invention, and the vast variety which are found in the works of this excellent artist, are very astonishing. One could hardly have supposed it possible to combine so great a number of figures together as he has done, and vary the attitudes without forced contrast, so that all of them, whether single figures or groups, may be easily distinguished from each other, even in the masses of shadow, especially when we consider that they are often minute even to admiration. He generally (in his larger prints especially) raised the point of sight to a considerable height in his compositions to afford a greater space for his invention. In that charming print called the Punishments, the number of figures he has introduced is wonderful, all of them dispersed in different groups with the greatest judgment, and the actions of the smallest of them in the distance seem conspicuous, though the largest figure in the foreground scarcely exceeds three-quarters of an inch. The same may be said of the Fair, and, indeed, of many others nearly equal to them in beauty. Where so great a number of figures is introduced in one print, it cannot be supposed that there should be any great general effect to strike the eye at first sight. On the contrary, on casting it cursorily over the Fair, the Punishment, or the Temptation of Saint Anthony, one would be at a loss to declare the subject, the whole appears confused and without harmony; but the trouble of a careful examination is well repaid by the richness, the beauty, the taste, and the judgment we discover in the disposition of the figures, the management of the groups, and the variety and propriety of the attitudes which steal, as it were, upon the mind.'

Callot worked in several styles. His first manner was in imitation of his tutor, REMY CANTA-GALLINA. After this he worked entirely with the graver, but not with much success. Of this character are the lives of the Apostles, small plates after LUDOVICUS CIVOLIUS. His next style was a mixture of point-work and graver, with coarse, broad etching in the shadows. Illustrations of this method may be seen in the Cardplayers, the Miracle of Saint Manfuetus, the Benedicite. Callot's best manner is that in which he appears to have worked with the greater freedom; in this he expresses with a single stroke both variety of character and correctness of design.

This Master is stated to have been the first to have used hard varnish in etching. According to Mr. Hamerton, Callot's manner—

‘was usually far more that of an engraver than a genuine etcher, but he was a man of great genius and wit, and when he chose to use the point like a true etcher, he could do so very effectually. The bits of true etching occur rarely, and only in parts of his works. The mass of what he did is spoiled as etching by reminiscences and imitations of the burin. . . . Callot's excessive mannerism is obvious. Its chief peculiarity is the habit of reducing everything as much as possible to a peculiar kind of curve, rather like the curve of a goose-quill and feather. If the reader will look at Callot's work with a view to this curve, he will be surprised by the frequency of its occurrence.’ (Bibl. 27.)

Callot was a most prolific artist, not less than 1500 pieces being described as belonging to him. In the British Museum collection there are six folio volumes appropriated to his engravings. The master generally placed his name in full upon his plates.

The chief reference to Callot's labours is ‘*Recherches sur La Vie et les Ouvrages de J. Callot, par M. E. Meaume.*’ Nancy, 1858. There is a small catalogue by J. H. Green, published in London, 1804, which may be occasionally met with at the second-hand bookfellers.

CLAUDE MELLAN. Born, Abbeville, 1601; died,
Paris, 1688.

(Robert-Dumefnil. *Le Peintre-Graveur Français*. Bibl. 62.)

An eminent engraver of his school, both in portraiture and composition; he studied and worked for some time at Rome. While there he engraved in the ordinary method, crossing his strokes a second and third time, as the strength of the shadows required. He afterwards adopted a novel and peculiar mode of working with single parallel lines (*au seul trait*) without any crossing strokes over them, the shadows being expressed by the same lines being made stronger, and consequently nearer to each other. A print of Mellan—the Sudarium of Saint Veronica—is often a show-print in shop-windows. It is executed entirely with a single spiral line begun at the extremity of the nose, and continued, without solution of continuity, over the whole face and back-ground. Inferior impressions, worked off after the plate had been retouched should be guarded against on purchasing this curious effort of the graver. Dupleffis is very severe on this ‘tour de force,’ terming it ‘un enfantillage impardonnable chez un artiste qui peut lorsqu’il le veut manier le burin avec habilité.’ This peculiar technic of a single line thickened at the shadows suggested the Relief and Guillochin machines employed in modern times in the department of mechanical engraving.

A list of Mellan’s more esteemed pieces may be found in Bryan’s ‘Dictionary.’

JEAN MORIN. Born, Paris, 1612? died, —, 1666?

(Robert-Dumefnil. Bibl. 62.)

Was another engraver who worked in a peculiar method, viz. a mixture of strokes and dots, chiefly produced by means of the point, and intended, as some suppose, to imitate Van Dyck’s manner,—

‘After having marked with correct outline the characteristic features of a face, J. Morin modelled the flesh by means of an infinity of small points

obtained through the means of a technic rendered soft by etching. This procedure is so difficult that Anthony Van Dyck and J. Morin are the only artists who have managed it satisfactorily. Morin's drawing is precise, his colour sober, and there is bright intellect in his countenances.' (Dupleffis, *Bibl.* 21, 22.)

Morin's better prints are his portraits, particularly those after Phil. de Champagne. The latter are everywhere admired, and with connoisseurs of his native country Morin is an especial favourite. His portrait of Cardinal Bentivoglio is considered the artist's *chef d'œuvre*, and that of the Sœur Catherine d'Arnauld is of very high character. The heads of Vitré (R. Dumefnil, 88), of the Abbé Richelieu (R. D. 83), Margaret Lemoine (R. D. 62), De Goudy (R. D. 54), Christyn (R. D. 51), and of Lemercier (R. D. 69), are good examples of the master.

Morin executed a few landscapes, but those which we have seen are of inferior character. Some of his historical pieces are so surcharged with work as to appear heavy. One hundred and eight pieces, together with some doubtful ones, are ascribed to Morin by R. Dumefnil.

In relation to the French School generally, we would recommend the student to have recourse to it chiefly for its admirable portraits. In this department it is unsurpassed, and is capable of enriching the cabinet with valuable specimens. The careful execution, the clearness and brilliancy of the technic, are often remarkable, while the indications of texture, the feeling of colour, and general *noblesse* of manner imparted to the whole design, are equally to be admired. One drawback the school of French engraved portraiture often has undoubtedly, but this is equally the fault of the painter, and of the time in which he lived. There is frequently too much flutter of dress and drapery, too much ornamentation and framework about the design. Were it not for the flowing and outrageous wig the head would often be swamped in the magnificent folds of Hyacinthe Rigaud's curtains, which, luminously engraved and admirably rendered in texture as they are, tend only the more to distract attention from the less obtrusive and tenderer features. One of the most celebrated masters of this branch of French engraving is

ROBERT NANTEUIL. Born, Rheims, 1630; died, Paris, 1678.

(Robert-Dumefnil, vol. iv. p. 35.)

This artist, though dying at the comparatively early age of forty-eight, left about three hundred pieces behind him. Some of them are portraits nearly the size of life, executed with remarkable clearness and precision of character. The beauty of effect possessed by some of Nanteuil's works places them among the more covetable engravings of the French School; and since the artist worked in more than one manner the collector has ample scope for choice, which, with this eminent engraver, should be liberal.

Nanteuil would seem, in his earlier practice, to have imitated the style of Mellan, working in single strokes only, and not crossing them, as, *e. g.*, in the portraits of Hesselin, the Abbé Molé, Cardinal Mazarin, and of others. In his after manner he is to be seen to more advantage. He then engraved with such distinctness and beauty, that his technic in these particulars has never been excelled. Several of his portraits are now scarce and command high prices. The following are some of the chief works of the master. The Portraits of M. de Bellievre (R. D. 37); of M. De Loret (R. D. 150); Cardinal Mazarin (R. D. 183); De Da Vayer (R. D. 143); Louis XIV. (R. D. 101); Colbert (R. D. 74). Robert-Dumefnil allots 234 pieces, and six or seven doubtful ones, to Nanteuil; of these he gives a very full and critical account in the 'Peintre-Graveur Français' (Bibl. 62).

At the exposition of engravings on the opening of the New Library, at Guildhall, in 1872, there was a fine series of portraits by this master on view. Mr. Rose remarked, in the catalogue concerning them,—

'The beautiful condition of these portraits by Nanteuil is very noteworthy, considering that they have been engraved more than 200 years. It is lamentable to think that of the engraved portraits of to-day scarce a vestige will probably remain in 200 years, owing to the wretched paper now manufactured and used for engravings.'

Dibdin more than half a century ago drew attention (*Decameron*, vol. ii. p. 337) to the bad effects produced by modern paper

on that which has been impressed upon it. ‘The age,’ he remarks, ‘of good paper-making in this country is gone,’—‘a good fair crown octavo ream of *Dutch Paper*, in the time of our well-beloved William III., is, generally speaking, worth an imperial ream of the time of our venerable George III.’

More recently (1858) M. Bonnardot has observed :—

‘I doubt if our descendants two centuries hence will be able to dispense with restoring the majority of books, engravings, and lithographs which have issued from our presses since 1825—that is, supposing there is then a like esteem for such records of the past as there is at present. Since the date mentioned our cottony papers bleached with chlorine and made with alum, promise but faint chance of endurance. Those prints which have been worked off on India paper will be almost the only survivors; even this paper is not always of good quality.’ (Bibl. 82, p. 210.)

The Portrait of Turenne, by Nanteuil, brought 840 francs at the Debois Sale in Paris, in 1844; and in 1872, two volumes, containing the Works of this master, 206 in number, realised 122*l.* at a sale at Messrs. Sotheby’s.

Another worker in this branch of engraving, almost, if not quite, on a level, with Nanteuil, is—

GERARD EDELINCK. Born, Antwerp, 1627; died, Paris, 1707.

(Robert-Dumefnil, vol. vii. p. 169.)

The style of this artist has been described as ‘more precious than that of Bolswert and Pontius without being less picturesque.’ He possessed a profound acquaintance with what is called colour in engraving, and his plates, though exquisitely finished, discover nothing of labour nor of littleness. Mr. Maberly observes of Edelinck,—

‘He chose to confine himself to the burin alone without the admixture of etching;’—‘nothing can exceed the freedom of delicacy with which Edelinck handled his favoured tool. Some connoisseurs fancy that a little mixture of etching would have given more force, so that delicacy and softness might have been less predominant qualities, and some also affect to see in several of Edelinck’s prints a tendency to the quality which in modern French

engravers has been, and with sufficient meaning, termed "metallic." (P. 148.)

Edelinck worked so equably that it is very difficult to say with certitude which are his earlier engravings. Duplessis is of opinion (Histoire and Bibl. 22) that, compared with Robert Nanteuil, Edelinck is clearly superior. In both the drawing is equally correct; the physiognomical expression as just; and the *pose* as happily chosen; but the colour, quiet and tender in the portraits of Nanteuil, is always rich in the works of Edelinck. The latter engraved other subjects than portraits; some of these compositions, as, *e.g.*, the Holy Family, after Raphael, have been very finely produced.

Three hundred and thirty-nine pieces are attributed to Edelinck by R. Dumefnil, of which 200 are portraits. The portrait of Philip de Champagne (R. D. 164) is considered a favourable specimen of the engraver's ability. The portraits of Lebrun (R. D. 238), Tortibat (R. D. 328), and Rigaud (R. D. 303), are likewise good examples.

ANTOINE MASSON. Born, Orleans, 1636; died, Paris, 1700.

(Robert-Dumefnil, vol. ii. p. 98.)

This master, in some of his portraits, stopped very little short of either Nanteuil or Edelinck. He worked with the graver only, and of this instrument he had acquired such command from his former occupation of ornamenting the hard metal of gun-barrels, that, when he treated copper, he has been described as 'playing with his tool as with a pencil.' He was thus enabled to express the textures of different substances with great fidelity. Some of his heads are the size of life, but these are not generally considered as his more favourable efforts. Masson engraved several scriptural compositions, of which his copy of the disciples at Emmaus, by Titian, is thought of the most highly. His portraits of Brisacier and of Oliver D'Ormasson are much esteemed, as are those of Guy and Charles Patin. Sixty-eight pieces, of which sixty-two are portraits, are attributed to Masson.

PIERRE DREVET. Born, Lyons, 1664; died, Paris, 1739.

PIERRE DREVET, *fls.* Born, Paris, 1697; died, Paris, ?

With some examples of the two Drevets, in addition to selections from the works of the masters before referred to, the collector may be satisfied with his illustrations of the French school of portraiture. The only exception that might be made would be in favour of Georg Friedrich Schmidt, a German, who worked in Paris, and was received into the French Academy there, engraving for his reception plate his fine portrait of Mignard. But as Schmidt was not born until 1712, he is too late for us, and we are thus saved the unenviable duty of determining his position in the schools.

Of the two able engravers, the DREVETS, the son was the more eminent, his portraits of Boffuet and Samuel Bernard being generally considered specimens of pure engraving with the burin, which have scarcely been surpassed. The portraits of De Cotte and of René Pucelle may also be signalised. Like Maffon, both the Drevets were very expert in rendering the texture of inanimate objects, 'luxuriating,' as Mr. Maberly observes, in furs, lawn, velvet, lace, bronze, carved woods, etc., to a degree, exciting, it is true, much admiration, but at the same time tending to draw down on their school the censure of being too fond of frippery and flutter; a tendency, we may add, not absent in their finest pieces.

There was also a CLAUDE DREVET, who was a good portrait engraver, concerning whose works, along with those of the other Drevets, ample details may be found in the 'Manuel de l'Amateur d'Estampes' of M. Charles Le Blanc.

Besides the French engravers already alluded to, the present school includes the families of the AUDRANS, of the POILLYS, and of the PICARTS; some of the members of which attained high rank as engravers. But these, along with many other masters, must be passed by, and their histories learnt in Robert-Dumefnil's systematic work (Bibl. 62), or in Nagler's *Künstler-Lexikon*.

ENGLISH SCHOOL.

Of the *Old English School* there is not much to be said. It is very unpretentious, numbering but few members of technical merit, if those engravers of foreign extraction, who are often claimed for it, be excepted. The true and creditable English school commences with Hogarth, goes on with Sir Robert Strange, Woollett, Sharp, and Ryland, and is especially characterised by that band of eminent men formed of Place, the younger Faithorne, R. and G. White, Smith, Faber, Houston, Corbut, Dickinson, Earlom, Valentine Green, MacArdell, and others, who devoted their abilities to that branch of work we have to consider afterwards as mezzo-tinto engraving. It is the opinion of some, however, that the De Passes, the Hogenbergs, Hollar, Droeshout, Ravenet, Grignon, and Dorigny, should be reckoned of the English school; but since Hollar is the only one of these masters of whom we shall specifically treat, we may be spared meddling with the litigated question as to the schools which have the better right to claim them as members.

The earliest copper-plate engravings which England can claim as demonstrably her own may be found in a book entitled 'Compendiosa totius Anatomie delineatio ære exarata per Thomam Geminum, Londini, 1545.' In this treatise are forty illustrations from copper-plates along with a frontispiece which represent probably the earliest efforts of rolling-press work in this country. A second edition* of 'Geminus's Anatomie' was published in 1559, which remarks Dibdin, 'presents us in the engraved elaborate frontispiece (upon copper) with the earliest portrait of Queen Elizabeth, who began to reign in the month of November, 1559.' But before this time (1545), an engraved frontispiece had appeared in an edition 'Caleni [for Galeni] Pergamensis de Temperamentis—Impressum apud præclarain Cantabrigiam—M.D.XXI,' and in the 'Byrth of Mankynde, newly translated out of Laten into Englyshe,' etc., London, MCCCCXL, and printed by Thomas Raynald, were engravings from metal-plates. But to

* So termed in Ames-Dibdin (vol. iv. p. 527), but it was more properly the third edition, as there was one—or a fresh issue at least—in 1552.

these not any engraver's name was attached, and there is not any surety that they were the work of English artists. The nationality of Geminus himself is a doubtful matter also, from his own statements he would appear not to have been an Englishman. In reference to this subject and the books mentioned, the following authorities should be consulted, viz., Ames'-Herbert 'Typographical Antiquities,' London, 1785-90, vol. i. pp. 557, 581; vol. iii. p. 1411. Ames'-Dibdin, London, 1810-19, vol. iii. pp. 556, 564; vol. iv. p. 537. The 'Bookworm,' London, 1869, vol. iv. p. 22. Reference should be made likewise to what has been previously stated concerning the illustrations to Caxton's works at page 78 of this volume.

JOHN PAYNE, born about 1606; died, 1647.

A pupil of the celebrated Simon de Paffe, is generally considered to have been the true father of English burin engraving. He produced various subjects, but his portraits are in chief estimation. The likeness of W. Alabaster, D.D., after Cornelius Janfen, is regarded as his best work. Had Payne's industry equalled his capabilities, he might have held higher rank as an engraver than can be allowed him with justice. He is reported to have been idle and neglectful, and to have died in poverty before he was forty years of age in consequence of his indolence, though he had the patronage of King Charles. He is spoken well of by Evelyn in his 'Sculptura,' and was eulogised by P. Rawlins in 1648 as then lately dead. Payne is celebrated by Evelyn for his large print, three feet long, of the great ship, the *Royal Sovereign*, built by Phineas Pett in 1637.

AGGAS (or A. Ryther, see Bryan), COLE, CROSS, ELSTRACKE, DELARAM, DOLLE, GLOVER, HERTOCKS, and VAUGHAN, were other members of the early English School; but they need not detain us.

Though obliged to admit that the admirable worker to be referred to immediately was not an Englishman, but a Bohemian by parentage and birthplace, we would fain say, with Maberly, that 'in all other respects he is English.'

WENZEL HOLLAR, (or Wenzel von Prachna, or Wenceslaus Hollar.) Born, Prag, 1607 ; died, London, 1677.

(Parthey, *Bibl.* 54.)

The circumstances—once good—of Hollar's family having become ruined by the battle of Prague, in 1619, the son Wenzel was forced to look towards some means of earning a livelihood. He took to drawing plans and engraving. In his twenty-first year he left his home and ascended the Danube, traversed Swabia, reached the Rhine, and remained at Cologne. While at Frankfurt, on his way to the latter city, he received instruction from M. Merian in the etching process. The Earl of Arundel, meeting with Hollar at Cologne in 1636, brought him in his suite to England when he returned. After remaining in this country for about ten years, and being taken prisoner at Basingstoke, in 1645, with Faithorne and others, Hollar went to Antwerp, returning to England in 1652. He soon afterwards went to Barbary on the errand of King Charles the Second, returned, and, in 1672, travelled about the north of England. On his going back to London at the Restoration, he was not more fortunate than he had been previously, as he could obtain only thirty shillings for drawing and engraving his large view of Greenwich on two plates. A few years afterwards he died in great misery in London, and under circumstances which make one blush for humanity. An interesting biography of this most able, but unhappy artist was written by Vertue, the engraver.

As a master of manipulative procedure, of mechanical dexterity, of delicate and imitative execution, Hollar takes very high rank. Every department of representation is indebted to him for the work of his needle and graver. Portraiture, costume, landscape, architecture, animal and vegetable life, coins, shells, maps, shipping, etc., were undertaken by him with equal facility and success. With respect, however, to the higher departments of an artist's vocation, such as invention, feeling, and freedom of design, Hollar must be regarded as having been deficient in them. Wonderful power and versatility of technic, with the most delicate imitativeness, usurped in his hands everything else. Hollar's productiveness, too, was remarkable. Taking all his pieces, perhaps 2740 may be awarded

him. If we do not mistake, as many as eighteen or nineteen folio volumes are appropriated to Hollar's works in the British Museum.

In the line of mechanical execution this master is so fine, that a collection should no more be without examples of his work than it should want Dürers, Rembrandts, and Marc Antonios. Some of Hollar's pieces, especially the portraits, are rare, and command high prices. Several of his prints are etched, others are worked with the graver. According to Mr. Hamerton, the majority of Hollar's etchings are not to be recommended as examples of this particular technic, but one or two of them are to be noted as possessing a rare and delicate beauty, which gives their author a certain rank. Hollar was 'a most industrious engraver, but then the training for this hurts a man as an etcher.'

In respect to his pieces, all we can do here is to point out such examples as may give a good idea of the master's admirable manipulation of graver and needle. Commendable, then, are the Saint Catherine of Alexandria, after Raphael (P. 117); Portrait of Clenche (P. 1376); Sir Robert Heath (P. 1413); Catherine of Arragon (P. 1549); the old Countess of Arundel (P. 1349); Antwerp Cathedral (P. 824); the Suspended Hare (P. 2050); a Leopard (P. 2065); a Lion, after Albert Dürer; a Mole; and in particular some plates of muffs, fans, gloves, and shells. Certain copies, after Elsheimer, of some of the Greek Divinities, are very beautiful, but the series of the 'Seasons' (P. 606) are, with justice, great favourites, for not only is their technic of the highest character, but they have a certain amount of feeling, of which Hollar is not often demonstrative. Many of the artist's smaller portraits, especially of females, are very attractive, as are likewise some of his smaller landscapes. Hollar's copy of a design for a chalice by Andrea Mantegna should not be forgotten.

His plates very commonly bear his name in full, and have often a date. Sometimes he has a monogram forming **WH** or **WPL**. Numerous impressions of his plates are about, taken after the coppers had been reworked; against these the novice must be on his guard.

Should it not be convenient to refer to the monograph of Parthey (Bibl. 54), Bryan may be consulted. There is a cata-

logue of the Works of Hollar by Vertue, but, except for the notice of the artist's life appended to it, it is not of much service.

WILLIAM FAITHORNE THE ELDER. Born, London, 1620 ?
died, London, 1691.

This prominent member of the English School was a pupil of Robert Peake, the Royalist. He accompanied his instructor in the King's service, was made prisoner at Basinghouse, was brought to London, and confined in Aldersgate, where he practised engraving. After much solicitation he was released and permitted to retire to France, where he was patronised by the Abbé Marolles. About the year 1650, Faithorne returned to England and married the sister of the notorious Captain Croud. He set up a shop at the sign of the Ship, near Temple Bar, where he followed his art, sold prints and books, and engraved for the bookfellers. Some time after—or about 1680—he retired to more private life in Printing House Yard, Blackfriars, and, though still continuing to engrave, chiefly drew from the life in crayons. Walpole tells us that the misfortunes of the engraver's son broke the father's spirits, though originally a robust and vigorous man, and that he died from slow pulmonary disease in 1691.

While Faithorne was in France he received much of his best instruction from Nanteuil (*antea*, p. 348), and whom in a few instances, perhaps, he equalled. He adopted occasionally the styles of Couvay and Mellan, and likewise the manner of Hollar.

Faithorne's works are mostly portraits of historic or known characters executed with the graver in a clear, free style, often full of colour, but having occasionally in some of his choicer pieces a little of that metallic or brassy look characterising many of the French portraits of the Schools of Nanteuil, Drevet, and others.

As far as Faithorne's technic is concerned much difference in kind and excellence of workmanship is exhibited by it. Three styles may be easily distinguished, viz., that of the coarse, large, open, single stroke, thickened at the depths and shadows, adopted from the works of Mellan; secondly, the careful, delicate finished work of a master, the result of the instruction of Nanteuil; and thirdly,

the dotted or stippled-like technic in the faces as practised by Hollar.

Some of Faithorne's pieces are extremely fine both in technic and expression, while others are equally as poor, at least in technic, for Faithorne was so great a master of the other quality that a portrait by him, however bad in certain respects, could be scarcely devoid of some expression. His power of seizing the characteristic physiognomy of his model, of expressing life in the face, was always considerable, frequently very great. Most of his personages speak to you, you feel as though you could *see* them think, in many the expression is of a sedate and melancholy character which throws a charm of serious poetry, as it were, over the artist's representations. We do not know of any engraver who has stamped the features with more of the magnetic influence of vitality than has Faithorne in some of his choicer portraits. These countenances while looking into you, speaking to you with their eyes, impress you at the same time with the feeling that a deep and often solemn self-introspection must have been common to their owners.

Faithorne's scriptural and other compositions are often defective in drawing, hard in technic, and formal in character; in fact, are only of very second-rate importance.

The portraits of this master are numerous, some being very scarce and valuable. His emblematic print of Oliver Cromwell in armour between pillars, and the Lord Protector in armour on horseback, are rare in the extreme and command high prices at sales from the pure portrait collectors. The same may be said of the Sir Francis Englefield, and Charles II., 'Heire of ye Royall Martyr.'

As choice examples of the master as an engraver the portraits of Sir William and Lady Paston, and of William Sanderson, are usually regarded with great favour. We would particularly recommend however the portrait of Prince Rupert, especially the full face one after Dobson; that of Robert, Earl of Aylesbury, before the inscription; of Edward Anderson; John Bayfield; Thomas Hobbes of Malmsbury; John Kersey; Thomas Killigrew, in a furred cap and with a dog by his side; John Ogilvy; Sir Henry Spelman, and of Thomas Stanley. We doubt, however, if

Faithorne ever surpassed his small portrait of John La Motte, citizen of London, which as seen in one of the impressions in the British Museum Cabinet is truly beautiful. The portraits of Sir James Calthorpe and of William Oughtred may be referred to as illustrating particular styles and methods of technic adopted by the engraver at various periods.

The name of the master in full is usually inscribed on the plate; when not so present two capitals **FF** may be found. Six volumes containing his works are in the British Museum.

WILLIAM MARSHALL (1610-1650) was but an indifferent worker, yet his portraits are in repute for their historic relations. Not much more can be stated of

RICHARD GAYWOOD (1660) and of **THOMAS CECIL (1630)**.

Gaywood was a pupil of Wenzel Hollar. Of Cecil it is remarked by Bryan that the partiality of Evelyn for his countryman induced him to place this master on a level with the greater artists of his time, a period which was distinguished by some of the chief engravers of France, particularly Nanteuil, and when engraving was at a very low condition here.

Gaywood's copies from Vandyke's etchings, and his portrait of Margaret Lemon, are well worthy of possession however, and the collector may do well to procure also the portrait of Guttenberg by Gaywood, and that of Sir Edward Coke by Loggan. (1635-1693).

Robert White, who died in 1704,—having been a pupil of Loggan—may be said to close this period of English art.

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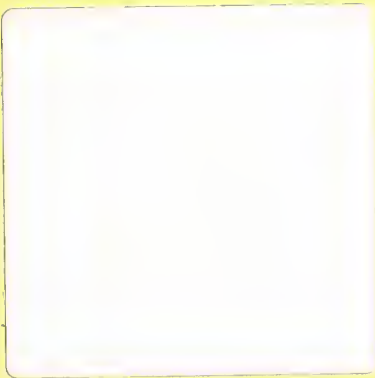
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