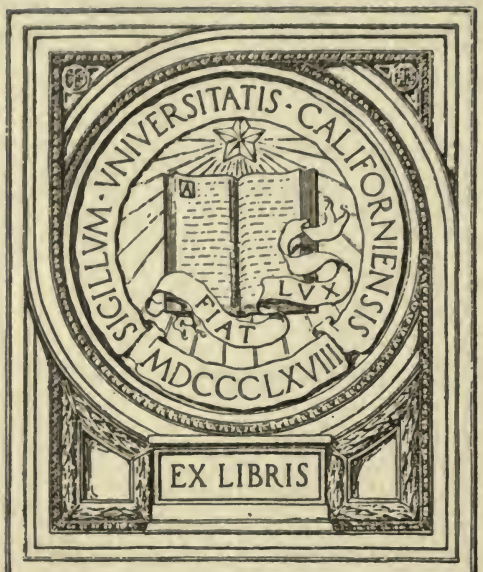
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ALBERT DÜRER.

BY

HERMANN GRIMM.

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When one speaks of far-famed poets or artists, of Gœthe, Schiller, Shakespeare, Raphael, or Rubens, the master pieces, by which their fame was gained, at once rise up before us. To speak of Gœthe is to name Werther, Iphigenia, Faust, to mention Raphael is to recall the corridors of the Vatican, and the Sixtine Madonna. And so with great scholars and warriors, their names are like a brief pen and ink sketch of remarkable books and of brilliant battles.

The artist of whom I now wish to speak to you, Albert Dürer, is one of those, who can dispense with a towering monument. Every one knows, that he was a great and celebrated painter, that he has a place in the first rank, but where then are his master pieces? By what first rate work did he draw the world's attention to himself, as Gœthe did with Werther, Corneille with The Cid, Michael Angelo with the Pietà? Or what was there remarkable in his life and career?

He lived at Nuremberg. His house there has been carefully restored and is entered with reverence. Dürer appears before us as a handsome tall man, with clear eyes, and fair curling hair, falling in waves on his shoulders; and this is pretty well all, that we are conscious of knowing about him. We re-

member, that here and there, this or that piece of work has been pointed out to us as Dürer's, but no one has ever stood before one of his pictures, lost in contemplation, as before one of Raphael's Madonnas. Dürer's works appear to us as mere trifles, engravings, wood-cuts, drawings, miniature paintings on parchment, wood and ivory carvings; choice and costly relics, rather than great pictures, asserting by their power and beauty their claim to an honourable position. And yet no one doubts, that Dürer was a great painter. Are then his works lost, destroyed, or carried away to foreign lands? on what rests his reputation, and by what is his greatness attested?

We may say at once, that Dürer's fame raising him to such a lofty height, and embracing the whole man, is of recent date. Dürer's name was always honoured, but the tone in which it is now uttered, resounds for the first time. And therefore, when we treat of him, we treat also of the characteristics of our age, which have made Dürer such a prominent personage.

Our age is that of enlightened enquiry. Every one who, in any way, is in a position to raise himself from the merely animal condition of uninterested ignorance, seeks to become a participator in the ruling tendency of our generation, devoted to the scientific investigation of everything, that exists around us. At the present time, the charm of such studies is all powerful. It is not for their material use, although enormous benefits have been derived from them, that these labours are undertaken, but to determine the laws of Nature. The man, who pursues them, on account of their mercantile interest, and thus produces results, is respected, but those only are truly noble, who work for the work's sake. In the present day, there is no loftier patent of nobility, than that of knowledge. Our recent cam-

paigns are no proof to the contrary. Their issues are unquestionably the results of science applied to military subjects. Courage and enduring valour have characterised the German race at all times. But the historic sentiment of their position, that inspired the body of the army, the circumspection that regulated the plan of the campaign, the perfection of the weapons, by which the war was carried on, are all the fruit of scientific investigation and are recognised as such with pride.

Two facts of great significance have sprung from this tendency of the present generation to scientific enquiry: 1st a colossal increase in the number of those, who devote themselves to the investigation of things past and present, and 2nd the deduction, of the most extreme conclusions from the new views. A freedom and want of reticence have appeared, which we ourselves regard with a certain dubiousness. The seniors amongst us (this word is used in its mildest sense) have been brought up in the belief that the original progenitors of mankind were in immediate communication with the Deity; now-a-days, when man questions, not only the traditionary written records, but every thing, which can give an answer (and an answer is now given by every stone and every drop of water) we are linked with the Apes. A great number of men, more perhaps than we are aware of, console themselves in all seriousness with the thought, that they are descended from these animals, only because the connection between mankind and the Apes has been to a certain extent, presented in a plausibly scientific light. In place therefore, of lofty powerful ancestors, ideals, to which we cannot in this after-time attain, appear poor Indian-like dwellers in lake villages, whose mounds of bones we ransack. No one now dares to throw doubt

on these tangible records of the oldest history, or to oppose the conclusions drawn from them. The province of religion fares no better. What exceeds in purity the aspect of ancient Christendom and its records? Now men investigate these occurrences, treating them as if they were events, that happened recently, and over which there was no need to become enthusiastic. Anything may be said so long as it is in the form of a scientific enquiry. And in a wonderful way, all this makes us not more arrogant, but more modest. We assign to ourselves a lower place. The Earth with all its destinies we say, is only a small episode in the great Creation. We no longer imagine, that the world was solely created for man's benefit. The race of man likewise, with all its destinies, is only a limited episode in the Earth's history; the nationalities are only portions of the human race, whom we look upon and observe as individuals. Their national proclivities, capabilities and actions are enquired into, the impress they have left on the world's story, is dispassionately determined, and their history constructed by taking these qualities into account as the motive principles. We seek by all possible means, to come on the track of the former and present relations of different races. Formerly, when one spoke of history, wars and the fate of dynasties were all that was thought of, now endless classes of inter-dependent facts must be taken into consideration. There is a hunt for new points of view. Formerly it was much, to have found a foot path through the wood, now the leaves of every single tree must be counted. Every stone is turned over, to see if anything unknown lies beneath. Every change of weather is observed and registered. For countless years an arrow head, formed by the hands of men, remains sticking in the body of a buried animal. Layer upon layer of sand and mould collect above

it. To-day, we dig deep, find the arrow, measure the depth, and determine from the style of the work and the position of the strata, the existence of different nations, who lived a certain number of thousands of years ago. Splinters of bone, according to their form, become hieroglyphics, capable of interpretation. A dozen words inscribed ages ago, without being themselves intelligible, show us to-day, the existence of a language and give trustworthy indications, as to the location and migration of nations. We look round on all sides with a sense of perfect freedom, and nothing appears any longer unattainable.

Whilst these researches are directed towards the development of nationalities, and ages are brought near and made familiar, whose distance from us in time, we formerly dared not measure, there is a negative side to the positive results of this most recent aspect of thought. Certainly, former historical accounts were laboured at with often the poorest tools, facts were seldom known with exactitude, and out of shadowy elements indefinite forms were shaped. In return for that our passions, which are always excited by anything that concerns the intercourse of man with man, stepped more clearly into the foreground and history, which to-day is considered as the result of invincible laws that work together in endless variety, was simpler and easier of comprehension. To-day, no fact is credited, unless it can produce good evidence, that it occurred exactly as it *must* have occurred. Every event must be so luminous, that nothing indefinite remains behind. Buckle's celebrated work on the History of Civilisation is the most brilliant exposition of the deeds of nations according to this method, the comprehensive introduction to

it (the only part actually completed) forms a foundation for the history of all nations.

So long as Buckle limited himself to the comparison of the qualities of the inhabitants of different parts of our planet, he made many astonishing and curious observations. But he was powerless, when he trenched upon the province, where struggles of a spiritual origin take place. To render these clear and intelligible, requires not only an appreciation of the influences, that impel the masses to a common action, but a knowledge of the characteristics of the individuality of the leaders of the people. He seized and explained only, what relates to the effect of Nature on Man, but his mode of treatment failed, when it was applied to the active agent. For here we can no longer make use of the observations and comparisons, that have served us hitherto.

It is a striking thought that, whilst we have so vastly extended our observations, in the knowledge of all the outer conditions of life, we have rather fallen behind in our grasp of the inner life, not only in what depends on the keenness of observation, but also in the power of pourtrayal. In this department no progress has been made. Our earliest records of spiritual conditions go back some two or three thousand years, during which men have always remained the same. It appears, that the old Greeks felt hate, love, ambition and such like passions just as we do, and that they heeded them still more, that they spoke, wrote, made better poetry, sculptured, built, and even thought better, than we do. The riddle of man's nature has not been solved by all our increased knowledge. Many things have now been rendered clear in history, because such an enormous amount of aid has been brought to bear upon it.

One problem, however, still remains unsolved, that is the secret of the special growth of each race.

Thus much we do indeed perceive. One feels, that nations have intellectual epochs, which are often concealed from view by an accumulation of visible facts, and yet it is by means of these secret influences, that the nation is carried onward. Our own experience furnishes us with many examples of men, who are the moving and guiding spirits of their age, and who, at the same time, faithfully and typically represent it. We feel, that these men will, one day, impart to succeeding centuries the characteristics of our era, and in by-gone times we seek after those, who will perform the same service for their own age. To find out these men and set them in the right light, has been and will continue to be one of the chief duties of historical writing. We must see men in their age in order to comprehend the age. In this way I come back to Dürer: Dürer's fame is of recent date, because in our time only has it been recognised, how truly he was the intellectual representative of his epoch. And so high does this attribute place him in our eyes, that he has the credit of being a great painter, almost without having given visible proof of the fact.

For certain epochs, these men, whom I call representative stand forth, each one alone. Every one knows that Voltaire in the middle of the last century, Rousseau for the time preceding the French revolution, and Mirabeau at its commencement were the mirrors of the intellectual movement going on in France. What the names of Gœthe, Plato, Pericles, Phidias, embrace and signify, is perfectly familiar to us. But let us take Italian history, which finds its image in Dante. If we were obliged to take him alone as the representative of

the intellectual condition of Italy at the turning point of the 13th and 14th centuries, the acerbity and sullenness of his nature would give us a conception of his times such as they do not fully warrant. We look round for a man who radiates with the light side of life, and the painter Giotto stands near to Dante and complements him. Little enough has been preserved of his works, as in Dürer's case; almost nothing is exstant, which by itself would stamp him as a great painter, however his place near Dante confers upon him a high rank, and renders him a man of historical importance, who cannot be dispensed with.

Let us again refer to Italian history. For the period, which marked the change of the 15th and 16th centuries a man is wanting, who at the same time comprehended and represented as much as Dante. Michael Angelo was by far too one sided, Macchiavelli, the same; we want a man again for the brighter side of the life, and Raphael presents himself. These three embrace almost the whole. I know scarcely any one, who represents vividly the war like spirit of the time. Neither Cæsar Borgia, nor Julius the 2nd, nor Bourbon, nor Colonna, and all the other famous soldiers. There is too much instability mixed up with their character, and that which appears genuinely alive in it, is only a reflection of Macchiavelli, without whom the age would remain uncomprehensible. He and Michael Angelo and Raphael contain all the others. Even Savanarola would disappear, did they not form the back ground

And now let us pass over to Germany at the same epoch. A crowd of characters present themselves, and yet when I observe them carefully, three only are representative and truly living for their own and all succeeding days, Luther, Hutten

and Albert Dürer. They make everything intelligible. Luther displays the power, the will and the selfconsciousness, Hutten the restlessness, the tenacity and also the bewilderment, Dürer the cheerfulness, frugality and honesty of the German nation, as it then appeared to the world.

Let us look around; there stands Giotto next to Dante, then Raphael and Michael Angelo, and here at last we come to Dürer, passing over in silence other artists, who take their place in the first rank among the representative men of other periods. To investigate these men's works, and from them to conceive a true picture of their age, is the task of the present science of Art. In olden times the importance of this endeavour was recognised and profited by accordingly, but more recently its capabilities have either been ignored or insufficiently used.

No where in Germany has the necessary material been collected with this object in view, nor has any one made it their task, to set to work upon it.

Albert Dürer stands forth possessing in full proportion all fine manly qualities. When we contemplate Michael Angelo, the form of the lonely man charms us, whose life in the totality of its functions forms an almost oppressively complete whole. If we compare Dürer's and Raphael's existences to countries, which at once border on and are bounded by others; and while fully occupying their own places, in relation to the whole, only appear as part, so that ranges of mountains, rivers and highways, form common possessions, which they share with others, Michael Angelo's life appears as an island surrounded by the sea. Incomplete in many things, but peculiar in all. Standing quite alone. With its own

vegetation, its own sky, its own inhabitants. External influences had little or no effect on Michael Angelo. He had no connexion with the other men, with whom he came in contact. He was what he was, from the beginning. No man pointed out to him the path, which he took and he could instruct no one to tread in his foot steps.

As a whole however he seems poor and sunless. In his poems about himself, he prefers to use the metaphor, that he was born in gloom and wanders in the night, that he might envy others, for what was denied to him. When we see such a man, his colossal performances misapprehended and falsely judged, we feel constrained to do everything, that is possible to be done, to clear away the obscurity, that surrounds him, and to set him in the light. But everything, that as yet has been done for him, is no more than what a man effects, when stepping in at the window of a great hall, he kindles a small light at the foot of a great statue that stands there. The outlines become a little more distinct, some parts are slightly illuminated, but on the whole, we can but guess at the form by the great masses that loom out of the general darkness. Whoever steps in, perceives enough to understand that the image of a mighty man stands there. No one perhaps will ever bring it into the light of clear day.

How different are Raphael and Albert Dürer! It is as if we stepped out of obscurity, silence, and loneliness, into the middle of a sunny market place, where the windows glitter, the fountains spring, and men are engaged in busy traffic. Here nothing meets us full of strange mystery. Only one thing fails us: we cannot comprehend the whole at one glance. One fact must be grasped after the other. As if breathing the breath of spring, that seems eternal and inex-

haustible, we pass through the crowd of friendly living beings. How many alluring dark eyes are directed on us from all sides, when we glance in memory over Raphael's life and works! How the cheerful bustle of the city life, inside and outside the walls, crowds upon us, when we turn to Albert Dürer! We see Michael Angelo fleeing to Venice once in youth, once in old age; the first time driven forth by a threatening dream, the second time with the thought of the downfall of his fatherland in his heart. Raphael on the contrary, how innocently he travels through Umbria and Tuscany, how hopefully towards Rome: Dürer, how briskly he rides over the Alps to Venice, and later on journeys with wife and maid servant to the Netherlands. To sit at table with Michael Angelo, would have been like supping with the Gods, when you would weigh every word you heard and still more scrupulously every one you uttered; with Dürer and Raphael, you would have chatted and taken wine. Pleasing to look at too how willingly would you press through the crowd, to grasp their hands; whilst it suffices to see Michael Angelo from a-far, as when watching a statue drawn in triumph through the streets of a town.

Dürer and Raphael are Italy and Germany side by side at the same period. No description makes the difference between the two countries so clear, as a glance at these two men and their creations. Here as there, a flower suddenly shoots up, tall and wonderful as that of an Aloe. In Italy, the son of a poor painter is transplanted to Rome from his small provincial town, and there in the space of fifteen years attains the highest grade of fame, of riches, and of splendour; he died with the thought of becoming a Cardinal, and left behind him gold, palaces, and a Pope in tears. Men and

women of the highest rank boasted of associating with him, and of the possession of his works, if they were so fortunate as to secure any. Rome became extinct, when Raphael passed away. And on this side of the Alps, Dürer is the citizen of Nuremberg, a German inland town. Never illuminated by those concentrated flames of celebrity, in whose midst stood Raphael, a soft and penetrating light nevertheless streamed forth, whose lustre spread far to the North, and to the South extended to Rome, so that Raphael exchanged presents of esteem and friendship with him. He worked hard, never receiving great commissions, never honoured with appointments even by the citizens, whom he made famous. But let us observe this activity in its own quarters, what a cheerful happy self-contained existence he passed from early youth, when he was an apprentice to Wohlgemuth, who had much to suffer from his workmen, till his death, which his friends ascribed to the excessive labour forced upon him by the parsimoniousness of his wife. But we cannot believe that Dürer ever felt himself oppressed with work, for a Puck-like merry spirit breaks out everywhere. One supposes rather, when reading his letters from Venice, that a nature armed with so much humour must give him the mastery over a wife's ill temper. His Diary in the Netherlands, in which he jotted down every expense, seems to confirm this. He often eats and drinks with good friends, whilst the wife and maid remain at home; not rarely he mentions, that he had lost at play, and buys whatever curiosities come under his hands. Dürer must have had somewhat of Raphael's "gentillezza". His life was uneventful, and when he died, his friends, like Raphael's, missed rather the man than the artist: Pirkheimer, in the poetic Elegy on his death, dwelt most on Dürer's excellence in whatever he

undertook, as if Art were only one amongst other qualities, which adorned him. Luther writes, whilst giving vent to his detestation of the Anabaptist movement, "God seems to have taken away Dürer, in order that he should no longer live to witness it." Dürer left behind him a great void, when he died: how few do so, they know, who have seen with astonishment, how often on the death of the most remarkable people not the slightest token remains to indicate the loss.

What the word of a representative man is worth in his time, we experience in these utterances of Luther: Much had been gathered to the praise of the city of Nuremberg in those days; many of honourable deeds were recorded, but in spite of all, the city took no distinct rank amongst other cities. Now however we have Luther's dictum "Nuremberg is the eye and ear of Germany" „Auris et Oculus Germaniae", and this utterance invests Nuremberg with a nobility that all the praise of others could not procure for it. Dürer too is given his right place in his relation to the heart of Germany, and his love for the city, which gave him but little in return, is explained.

Nuremberg must have possessed somewhat of the critical acuteness that made Florence, in the height of its glory, so feared and so fruitful. In both, we find the citizens anxiously beautifying their city out of love for it, nowhere did they feel so happy as in their own houses. How carefully do we find these houses and streets delineated in the artistic works of their artists! Dürer excelled in so doing and his own house is also the dearest to him. In his precious, perhaps most precious plate, where he has transplanted the holy Hieronymus (Jerome) together with the lions into his own small room, we notice, that by a few touches he has fitted it up into a

study for the venerable old man. With what pleasant enjoyment has he delineated with tender strokes, even the knots and cracks in the boards of the room, that is dear to him! How the sun with warm pleasant beams, creeps sideways through the small panes of the wide, subdivided windows reaching the ground and just lighting up the stout well made table. The lion stretched out blinking and sleepy, and the small terrier curled up near it, both seem to belong to the chamber. You seem to hear the buzzing of the flies and the rustling of the leaves turned over by the hand of the bearded old man. How orderly everything stands in its place, how brightly shines the polished furniture, each piece in its proper position. I think, that the plate must seem to one, who has it in his room like a piece of sunshine hanging up, that shines through the saddest times.

This composition is only like one verse of an almost indefinitely long poem. What a diary of his rich life do the engravings drawings and similar studies produced by Dürer's hand present to us! His portraits, a perfect illustration of German character of every class, from the Emperor whose portrait, he limned in the little chamber in the Castle, at Augsburg, to the beggar and the peasant in the street. Heavy looking monks, distinguished warriors, citizens, country people, tramps. Added to these, cities, villages and landscapes. The fantastic feature of belief in witchcraft, which had formerly such a powerful sway over men's minds, finds its expression in many compositions. The incapacity of realising what has passed, except in the costume of the present, and of regarding history otherwise than as a romantic mixture of truth and fiction, both indications of the prevailing ideas,

show themselves most unmistakeably. One sees how few, at that time, were able to realise the sequence of events connecting what was then occurring with the times of the old Roman Empire. Pleasure was taken in the existing state of affairs and in the idea, that, what had always been, would always remain. Every house was built so indestructibly, as if it should last for ever, that is, as long as Church and State. And these were Powers, that would endure for ever. There was complete satisfaction in the arrangment of this world, respect for them and submission to the governing powers, earthly and heavenly. A childlike reverence for the powers, that be, in whatever guise they might present themselves.

And Dürer also took real pleasure in producing what related to his art, and in the sentiment that his own works would, to a certain extent, share in his immortality. He took the greatest care in the preparation of his colours. All the ingredients were as permanent as possible. And this assiduity to render earthly things lasting, he extended with like practical sentiment to the existence beginning after death. According to his ability he strove to secure on earth a good memory and in heaven a good reception and the latter object was never out of his mind. Without any sentimentality however. For the old creed presented the world to come as a quiet happy dwelling place, certain to be reached and enduring for ever, not without some kind of civil order, wherein each one's place was ready, where the child should regain its toys, and the old man renew his intercourse with his friends. Also what seems surprising to us, there was no regret, when a sudden turn seemed to shorten the way to it. Dürer went through life as through a garden, where he was locked in, but never felt emprisoned. He moves slowly, his eyes rove about, what-

ever he sees, he sees as in a picture, and his hand is unwearied in sketching these pictures.

And how modestly he prosecutes his charge! He draws so that every line should present to us the very object before him. Never has an artist of so much genius observed the world with so much candour, none has pourtrayed it in certain aspects with so much truth.

Some may raise objections to this last statement. For indeed, the master, who at that time pourtrayed Nature with the strictest accuracy, was Holbein. Holbein, younger than Dürer, but his contemporary, flourished at Basle, painted there some very pretty compositions on walls, but especially portraits and small pictures, then went to England, where he died. Holbein is perhaps the man, who in portrait painting has most exactly rendered Nature. But there is one thing characteristic of him, in his portraits: there is something wanting in expression, that on longer acquaintance, awakes almost a feeling of sorrow. I have not seen all his works, but all I have seen confirm this observation. One feels, that there has been a fruitless struggle to invest these perfect reflections of Nature with a soul. A short time since, I recognised a picture by his hand, till then unknown to me*. A work such as this, presenting new ground for study, is observed with the greatest impartiality and with the most favourable sentiments. An incomparable work! Colour and drawing unite to produce perfection; the problem, how to transfer the countenance of a man to a flat surface with colour, without depriving it of the least attribute of life, seems solved. Neither Raphael nor

* In the Castle at Weimar. The picture has come from Holland, and has only recently been exhibited, that is, why I mention it.

Leonardo could have done, what is accomplished here. All these excellencies however, do not replace the want of cheerfulness, which prevents Holbein being for his age, what Dürer is. Holbein's works betray no individuality. You do not see the master behind them, whom you could approach and ask to solve the mysteries, that dwell in the picture. Holbein draws faultlessly, he arranges agreeably and tastefully, but intellectually he brings us no farther. Holbein's sketches are the studies of a painter, Dürer's the notes of a poet. Dürer's figures seem more animated, the more we observe them. Who knows not his portrait of the Jungfer Fürlegerin, a Nüremberg patrician's daughter, whom he painted twice? She is not beautiful, only has splendid hair. He lets the light fall intentionally so strangely on the face, that a world of clear light and shadows play about it, investing the head with wonderful life. And the hair is painted, as if he had taken each one singly, and the fingers of the hand are rounded with indescribable tenderness. People may say that the portrait is brown in the shadows, that it is rather a caprice than a work of art; but to me it appears as springing from a most loving and impartial view of Nature.

This love for Nature is declared most fully in the portraits, that Dürer painted of himself. I believe no master has so often and so carefully painted his own person as Dürer, and with such conscientiousness in rendering even the smallest detail. Here also he seemed to rejoice in every little hair, and to delight himself in the delineation of the hand, which he knew so well how to draw. He liked especially to paint himself in handsome rich clothing, in fur bordered mantle, in a finely embroidered cap, for he had a particular pleasure in fine clothes, and French and Spanish mantles, and was quite

conscious of his handsome tall figure. In Venice he took dancing lessons.

A portrait of himself begins the series of his works so far as they remain. "This I painted as a copy of myself, when I was nine years old", is written on the leaf preserved at Vienna. Drawn as a child draws, but already bearing witness to the endeavour (which Leonardo da Vinci recognised as the seal of young people to art), to make the head stand out round against strong shadows. In this portrait, the long hair is as straight as a straw, so that the curls we see him wear later, may perhaps owe something to artificial aid. This vanity accords with the spirit of the age, which spread adornment and decoration over everything, even the person.

When Dürer drew that picture, he was still at school. He had already ten sisters and brothers, his mother, who hadi married very young and whom he took to his own home after his father's death, bore eighteen children in all.

"Now you should know," we read in Dürer's Diary, "that in the year 1513, on the Tuesday before Passion Week, my poor dear mother, whom I took to my home two years after my father's death, as she was quite poor, who has been with me nine years, one morning early was taken deadly sick, so that we broke open the chamber, as otherwise we could not get to her, for she could not undo the door: also we carried her down into a room, and the two Sacraments were given to her, for every one thought she would die, for she was always in health after my father's death, and her custom was to go much to church, and she always strove with me with all diligence, when I was not behaving right, and she always took great care of me and my brothers, and as I went out and in,

her saying was: "Go in the name of Christ", and she constantly gave us holy admonitions, had always great care for our souls, and her good works and her compassion, which she showed towards every one, I cannot enough point out to her praise. This my pious mother has borne and brought up eighteen children, has often had the plague and many other heavy remarkable sicknesses, has suffered poverty, derision, contempt, scornful words, terror, and great opposition. Yet she was never revengeful. A year after the beforementioned day, when she was taken ill, that is in the year 1514, on a Tuesday the 17th of May, two hours before night, my pious mother Barbara Dürerin departed as a Christian, with all the Sacraments absolved from all pain and sin by the priestly absolution. She had given me her blessing and wished me all godly peace, with much beautiful teaching, that I should keep myself from sin. She desired also to drink Saint John's blessing, which she then did, and she feared death much, but she said, she feared not to come before God. She died hard and I remarked, that she saw something fearful, for she wanted holy water, and before that she had not spoken for a long time, and her eyes grew dim. I saw also, that death gave her two great thrusts at the heart, and she closed her mouth and eyes and departed in agony. I prayed, that God would be merciful to her, for this gave me so much pain, that I cannot express it. It has been her great joy to speak of God, and she sought after the honour of God, and she was in her sixty-third year, when she died, and I have buried her honourably according to my means. May God the Lord grant that I have also a blessed end, and that God with his heavenly host, my father, mother and friends will come to my death bed, and that the Almighty God will give us eternal

life, Amen. And in death she looked more beautiful than in life."

Every one must feel, with what love he clung to his mother, of whom no picture so well as I remember is extant, although he pourtrayed her more than once.

Now let us observe his father, whom he painted twice, an old sensible looking man with a small cap in his hand. And then Wohlgemuth's portrait, reflecting with thoughtful care the thin features of the old man. We require no words such as those with which Dürer described the death of his father before that of his mother. If anything can give an idea of the source of the love and truth of his character, it is these portraits.

It is no small thing to pourtray men as they really are If we glance over the range of modern painting, we have a series of first rate portraits, that exceed a hundred in number. There is nothing more instructive than a comparison of such works. Nowhere do we see so clearly into the depths of an artist's soul, as in portraits. They form the measure of his genius, and not less so, because portraits by great masters are always regarded as secondary works, in which to a certain extent they relaxed in their efforts. Professional portrait painters are not referred to here; their works are moulded by fashion and are generally devoid of soul.

We spoke just now of Holbein. That want of sympathy, which to my mind appears in him in antithesis to the height of technical execution, is not found in him alone. Vandyke's extraordinary performances in this department suffer from the same defect, as well as many of Rembrandt's and Rubens'. It appears also in Sebastian del Piombo and Andrea del Sarto,

who in every other quality must be numbered with the best masters. Raphael on the contrary, Rubens also, and Titian make their portraits look at us with eyes that sink deep into our hearts. And Dürer as well. Like Shakespeare's characters their portraits represent species, while they depict individuals. Dürer's Jungfer Fürlegerin is a type of a modest city maiden, his woodcutter that of a German citizen and honest fellow. From these pictures, that are still kept in the respective families, we learn to appreciate the power, on which the German city at that time rested, as plainly as what is communicated to us by written records. They are historical portraits, that reveal to us German citizenhood, just as Raphael shows us the Rome of his time, Titian the last splendour of Venetian greatness, and Rubens, Vandyke, Murillo, Velasquez, the men by whose help the Hapsburg dynasty, in the 16th and 17th centuries, was rendered paramount in Spain and the Netherlands. Rembrandt, on the other hand, is the historian of Dutch freedom. If we glance over all, that the Napoleonic era brought forth in works of Art, we do not find one of the French painters, who was able to produce a really historical portrait.

But Dürer's pictures are poems. His powerful Kaiser Charles, whose countenance he has made correspond with the magnificent insignia, amongst which it is enthroned: does it not realise whatever ideal, poetry, history and the sagas have presented to our minds of the great Emperor Charles? Is he not a type of the mighty heroes of fable, who like demi gods represent the source of all German power, nobility and history? Like a St. Gothardt, from whose secret rocky crevices the German Rhine gushes forth, the great central river of Germany and not as now its boundary.

If we notice Dürer's portraits and paintings only as works of art, it would be a delusion to suppose, that we could not find defects. His truthfulness often passes into triviality. He painted even the minutest details. Rubens with bold strokes of his brush, or Titian with the medley of colour of his later works produced a splendid semblance of Nature, but when we compare the copy and the original, we find great differences; Dürer went to the other extreme and was almost microscopic in his exactness. Dürer displays, not the pedantic minuteness of Denner, whose portraits give a punctilious imitation of the surface of the face, but a conscientiousness, that causes him to go too far. As compared with other great masters, he failed in the complete command of the technical means of his art, and so his figures want animation, they look so still, that in some it amounts to an expression of positive anxiety. The cause of this may have been that he was conscious of not always producing at the first stroke what he wished to create, so that, when he worked quickly, his ideal may not have been attained. It is acknowledged, that his portrait of Erasmus of Rotterdam is far behind that painted by Holbein. But certainly he sketched boldly and thus originated many works, of which few others were capable. The pen and ink drawing of Felix Lautenschläger comes to my mind, that Dürer in the Netherlands, it may be well said, threw off; it is a wonderful study drawn on green paper with a pen and touched up with white. If one found fault with some of Dürer's paintings and said, "he paints as if he made pen strokes with the colours," the sentence in this case might be turned the other way, for these light pen touches are set on, as if they were pencil strokes.

Dürer's characteristic of "rather writing than painting" is

a second reason, why his paintings at times fail in technical finish. They scarcely seem completely thought out. There is no artistic purpose visible. I mean one feels, that he wished at the beginning to produce a certain thing, but that he laid down the pencil before he had accomplished it. Yet we must remember, that this finish is the fruit of years of practice, and these Dürer did not enjoy, for commissions were scarce. That this want was indeed only accidental, and not inherent in his character, is shown by a few works. Partially for example, in the Strahower Madonna, but specially in the Apostles of Munich. Here we see tasteful, well arranged groups historically correct, and simple solitary forms, grandly conceived and depicted as only Raphael and Michael Angelo could pourtray them. These Apostles unveil a phase of Dürer's power, that justifies his association with the highest masters. No one however, required him when living to give greater proofs. We must acknowledge with sorrowful reproach, that we had no Emperor, no nobility, no citizens, who understood him. Meanwhile the examples given, suffice as regards Dürer's fame. Yes! this feeling, with which he inspires us, of having known him, enables us almost to see more than real works would perhaps have done. To imagine is often more attractive than to realise. Thus Gœthe, whilst he made use of the most diverse poetical forms, has produced in each department only one work, properly speaking, which however, is of such a tenor, that it seems to represent a whole series of unproduced works of similar form. But with Gœthe there were other causes at work, he was a poet independent of public opinion, and never received any impulse to work from that quarter.

Dürer was most at home when engraving on copper or drawing on wood. In the year 1509 he had to paint the As-

sumption of the Virgin Mary (a work that was destroyed by fire) for Jacob Heller of Frankfort. Dürer wrote thus to him, "No one shall again persuade me to undertake a picture with so much work in it. I should become a beggar, if I did. For in a year I can finish a number of ordinary pictures, more than it is considered possible for one man to produce, but painting ever so diligently stroke by stroke, you never get to the end, therefore I will stick to my engraving, and had I done so sooner, I should, to-day, be worth 1000 guldens more than I am." With the graving-tool, Dürer certainly did not work less carefully. What he did in this department of Art, succeeded better than his other productions, and laid the foundation of his celebrity. Here even in the "finest line" he is free and full of life. Apart from the very small size, in which they are executed, his compositions, if I may so say, stand alone. They have their own special greatness. Were they enlarged to life size, they would not be greater than they are; just as Raphael's cartoons or Michael Angelo's frescoes are not less important in the smallest engraving, than on the large surfaces covered by the originals.

Dürers fancy is astonishingly creative in these works. Whilst now we seek to realise the events of New Testament history by introducing interesting foreign scenery and representing the landscape with accuracy and artistic firmness till the observer lends himself to the illusion and invests the figures lightly sketched in against this back ground with a like undoubted reality, Dürer plants his figures conspicuously in the fore ground, concentrates the whole of the life on them and for the surrounding accessories takes German Architecture, dress, and furniture. His scenes from the life of Mary are a series of pleasing idyls drawn from the homely

landscape around him. He who never had children and whose wife had so little that was ideal about her, imparts to these scenes a child like poetry, that is very charming. No poem, no records of any kind could so well pourtray the life of a happy young wife dwelling in the citizen life of that time, as Dürer's pictures of Mary. He gives the Angel such a fairy like ministering expression, that it does not appear the least out of place, and in the surroundings, where his fancy produces the most wonderful mixture of German Architecture and Italian Renaissance, he shows how unconcernedly the strange forms of the past were welded with those of the present. This is symbolical of the tendency of his times, for in other things there was the same mode of procedure. Hans Sachs, who certainly in other matters did not come up to Dürer may yet in this respect be compared with him. Hans Sachs translated impartially Homer, Pindar, Sophocles and others of the same stamp into German doggrel for his Nuremberg public.

Dürer in his works of this kind represents the German life of those times with so much fidelity, that he actually transplants us into the midst of it. He had no preferences but reproduced whatever offered itself to him, without any intention of displaying any one of his powers in particular. His figures of the Virgin Mary, have often quite ordinary countenances; a number might be counted, that can in no way be called beautiful. It appears impossible for him to prop up his ideal or to modify in the least the tone of the effects, that nature presented to him. He took with a certain passivity such as also characterised Goethe, whatever presented itself to him. As well as he could, yet without much ado, he reproduced it on paper. There are artists, who cannot

draw a single line without betraying a consciousness, that their work will be seen by others; Dürers pictures look, as if he had produced them solely for his own pleasure. It seems to be a characteristic of all those, who have done anything good in art, in Germany. Gœthe's best things flow from the same sentiment, and Walter von der Vogelweide's poems, that are always recalled to my mind, when I see Dürer's works. All three seem to wander through life without fixed aim, with a loitering or a hurried step as pleases them. Almost without knowing what they do, they pluck here and there a flower as it comes in their way and returning in the evening they lay their nosegay on the table, and from the verdict of the world they first realise, that these flowers were not for their own eyes alone.

Hence it comes, that Dürer has left no master-piece. He appears never to have entered into rivalry with any one, or to have been envied by any one. Thus, in Antwerp the artists escorted him home with torches, and did him honour, but neither the Venetian ducats nor the Dutch guldens, which were offered to him could keep him from returning to Nuremberg, where his friends lived. Of extraordinary incidents Dürer had but few in his life, of those, which mark the phases of development in his Art, scarcely any. I have on a former occasion endeavoured to bring before you his Venetian journey in the year 1506, as constituting a kind of epoch in his life and I abide by this conclusion, but if one reviews all his works from the first to the last, one feels, that this man is always the same, and as Goethe said of him, he can alone be judged from his own stand point. He was born in 1471; in 1506 he went to Venice for a year, and in 1520 to the Netherlands for the same length of time; his

death took place in 1528. Pirkheimer asserts, that his wife scarcely ever allowed him to leave home. At any rate, his unwearied assiduity made him a willing prisoner in his studio. Then at last he applied himself to writing on anatomical and architectural subjects and took a position in the town, which in certain respects resembled that of Michael Angelo, becoming an indispensable authority in Nuremberg on all subjects concerning art, and without his advice nothing of the kind was undertaken. More minute accounts are still wanting. But he always appears as a clear headed and totally unselfish man, and such individuals, when once the world recognises their disinterestedness, soon have honour thrust upon them. The Town-Council had great respect for him, and Dürer manifested his gratitude by presenting a picture to the city. But he never fought and suffered for it, as Michael Angelo did for Florence, no crowd of painters thronged around him as round Raphael and the few poems from his hand are so unmusical, that in comparison with them Hans Sachse's language has quite a Ciceronian ring. Yet that Dürer knew how to express deep thoughts is shown by the introduction to his book on Proportions and that he took an interest in what was happening in the world around him, when it was needful, we know from the pages of his Diary, where on the news of Luther's imprisonement (when he was taken to the Wartburg) he laments over the loss of this man. On reading these simple words, which run in the form of a prayer, that God will have mercy on the fate of Germany, one feels from the midst of what nation Luther rose.

We are accustomed to consider the Reformation as a movement chiefly arising from literary beginnings. The

political economical and moral motives, which united to produce the great result, are often passed over in silence. What part art played in it, will be first generally recognised, when the character of religious art in Germany and its influence down to Dürer's time upon history is carefully investigated and explained.

Before the Reformation, the religious idea, and its historical purport were to a great degree realised to the people by means of art. Painted walls supplied the place of books.

There is an old Italian copper plate engraving representing the painter Apelles with the inscription *Apelle poeta tacente*, "Apelles the silent poet". This poetry was at that time as valuable and intelligible, as if language had been made use of. Buildings for the honour of God and the fame of the City filled to overflowing with master pieces of furniture, statuary and painting were vents by which this mute art strove to embody a crowd of ideas; expressing devotion power and pride, which it is now considered not feasible to give, save by words. A statue raised to a man is now an honour, which if it is wanting, does not cause the man to be one hair's breadth less respected, but then it was a monument, that expressed and manifested really and truly the veneration of the people. By no literary means could the pourtrayal of a character be so well achieved, as by Raphael's or Dürer's pictures. In Rome as in Germany it was considered impossible to attain by words, what was accomplished by colours, just as impossible does it now seem to us to produce Shakespeare's Juliet or Goethe's Iphigenia, by the art of painting.

Dürer in his scenes from the New Testament was no modern illustrator. His compositions give picture and text at the

same time. These engravings were spread over Germany in great number, and were everywhere copied, and in Italy were even engraved by Marc Anton, who otherwise only condescended to engrave Raphael's works, and as they just preceded by a year Luther's translation of the Bible, from the living fullness of their expression, in a wonderful way prepared the people for this book. The towns were soon filled with pictures of Bible scenes, and many, naturally, were of decided excellence. I need only recall to you Adam Krafft's" Stations", full of heart-stirring feeling. Nevertheless no master like Dürer could pourtray the life of Christ. None could so well show the connection of the different parts, and invest them with the property of clinging to the memory and assuming a sort of power, just as Gœthe's and Shakespeare's ideas and characters cling to the mind, dwell there and carry on an independent existence. These readings of the Biblical story by Dürer's hand were impressed on the hearts of the people. And quite free from the antiquarian Byzantine taste, they moved the soul and excited a new and cordial interest in these events. And then came Luther's work, the first in the German language, that was read by all Germany, and which contained the real text to these pictures. For no one doubted but that God had dictated the words of the Gospels to those Evangelists, whose names they bear.

But what constitutes Dürer's special importance, is the service he rendered his era, similar to that of Giotto, when placed by the side of Dante. We have certainly enough evidence of the drolleries of his time, but of the gracefulnesses of its life, there exists no such monument, as is embodied in his works and whole career. We recognise in him the cheerfulness, the youthfulness I might call it, which springing from

the heart of the German people, so well accords with Luther's temper, which explains the childlike playful spirit in Luther himself, and which he, the earnest man, knew characterised the situation of the moment.

When Luther describes the "Birds' Parliament" under his window in the Wartburg, and the "Cawing" of the crows, that proposed to carry a crusade into Turkey, one might think, that Dürer had drawn the scene. When we hear Luther relate how, while hunting in the woods round the town, a hare took refuge from the eager hounds in his wide sleeve, I see the scene, as if Dürer had engraved it. Dürer liked to represent child angels playing with little hares, when he depicted the innocent court of the Madonna. When Luther speaks of the old men and maid-servants, of his wife, the "Dominus Ketha" as he playfully calls her, and of the children's peculiarities, of his colleagues, who went timidly to bed, because they feared to take the English Sweating Sickness, and of how he persuaded them to get up again, it seems to me, that his words flow from the same source, whence spring Dürer's strokes on the paper. One man explains the other. A glance at the life of that time usually leaves something depressing and sad on the picture. Luther's surroundings appear to us quarrelsome and often almost vulgar. And in politics, in worldly affairs, how cold, narrow and colourless seem these strifes. The whole condition of things seems decaying and desolate. But whoever recognises Dürer, sees the sunshine beaming over it, and the fair green smiling fields of Germany. The Emperor Max, who in his old age appeared like a persevering eagle in the rain, doubtful as to whence his next meal will come, perching now on one withered branch, now on another, catches a cheerful beam from this sun, and looks

in consequence more pleasant. Krafft, Vischer, Sachs, Pirkheimer, all the Nuremberg artists and scholars, look fresher and less mechanical. Even Holbein, who is so great in himself, cannot dispense with Dürer. Without him, there is something about him uncertain and cold.

Holbein has also illustrated the events of the New Testament. His compositions evince such skill, that one is tempted to fancy, they contain the same deep sentiment, which marks Dürer's drawings. But these attempts lead to illusions. Holbein has worked with rare taste and wonderful knowledge of extraordinary means, but his personality is at variance with these terrible events, and the dissonance is so marked, that it forms a special token of his nature. Holbein has painted nothing, that is inspiring. Immense progress is to be marked in him, but no development. His Dresden Madonna throws no illuminating light over earlier or later works. It is a wonderful piece of painting in itself. Dürer was far from being able to equal it. Dürer never specially sought to paint beauty for its own sake, to produce a work to catch the attention of gazers, as does a Madonna of Raphael's. Dürer was too childlike for that. He was not only a painter, he was a Nuremberg painter, whilst Holbein was universal, cosmopolitan, and his creations like Leonardo's came rather with the power of a magician, than with that of a homely human artist. And his life was in accordance with the character of his works. He withdraws into England, as Leonardo into France. His residence in London leaves the city just as unknown and misty, as if he had never been within its walls. Dürer's journeys to Venice and the Netherlands on the contrary, seem like rifts in the cloud, that even now would almost cover over these countries from our eyes. We want warm human sympathy, to

apprehend men and eras. Let us place Holbein near Dürer however, and it is as if they shared each other's treasures. Involuntarily we supply the one with a share of the wealth of inner feeling, that wells up and overflows in the other.

I return now to the statement, that Dürer's fame as it is now understood, is of recent date.

What Dürer was to his period and his friends, was of a transient character. Many, of whom we know nothing more, are just as dearly, perhaps more dearly missed and sorrowed for, than Dürer was at his death. To-day, we recognise for the first time, that Dürer, his works and his times taken together, form a work of art, inseparably united and called by the one name Dürer, which thus marks an epoch.

Germany's great men have never been narrow minded. Raphael was a painter, Corneille a poet, Shakespeare a poet; but Gœthe and Dürer were men. Who will refuse them this title? Who till now would have classed the two together? Gœthe's and Dürer's greatness lies not specially in what they produced, but in *how* they produced it. They left behind only a single complete work: themselves.

Raphael's, Michael Angelo's, Leonardo's and Titian's works stand disconnected from their author and apart from him. Corneille, Racine, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Milton, and many others, have left complete works, full, mature, endued with vitality. The works transcend the master as the peach the branch, on which it grows. The works however of the great Germans take a lower place than their creators', and form only a subordinate element of an inseparably connected whole, that reaches its highest point in themselves. Men of other nations, Michael Angelo and Dante not excepted, compared with most Germans, are not so intimately connected

with what they have produced. Their works complement each other less, in fact it would be a mistake to place many of them near one another. Before these one exclaims: What an artist! There one says: What a man! And the man discovers to us the meaning of his works.

To labour thus seems a feature of the German character. We require of an artist, before the name is conferred on him as a title of honour, that his whole existence shall be in harmony with his works. We possess a set of men, who have a claim to this title, and from the possibility of attaining it, a doctrine has been started, that this "artisthood" is easier to reach by means of external help, and therefore it is the duty of the State to lend a helping hand. And as much, that has been done in this belief, was done in the name of Dürer, this idea cannot remain unmentioned, when he is spoken of.

What relation does Dürer bear to the art of the present day?

All those, who have grown up in the midst of the present busy life, and feel themselves to be men, on whose joint labours the existence of the people rests, feel the need of identifying themselves visibly with the people. No one can base his life on an occupation, which he only endures, or for which he requires constant assistance. Such a condition is unbearable. We wish to work and to perceive, that this work takes effect. Each man desires, that years should give him a claim to a place of honour, where his energies can expand.

What rank in the series of these progressive powers does the creative artist take? That, to which the result of this energy points out. It is to be feared, that soon men will appreciate architects not by the beauty of their buildings, but

by their technical importance, as well as by the sums they have thereby earned; the painter, the musician according to their fees, the poet and author by the results of their activity. We have the right not only to look at the outer aspect and to judge accordingly, but also the duty to make those, who desire to turn into this path, attentive to the inevitable results of such a proceeding. Life must be taken as it is and cannot be altered.

But we may also say: Who can deny, that there is a kind of work, whose aim rises far above that of common life, and whose fruits, although they may bring less than nothing to their originator, are nobler than the greatest riches of others?

Therefore, if we take account of what the world most honours, esteems as most manly and as the mark of the highest nature, we find it to be, to want nothing from the world, and therefore to despise, what it offers. Yes, whenever an active mind models a narrative of the fate of great men, does he not contrive, that they should fall into misery, or at least never lets them be puffed up with riches? What makes Garibaldi so great, is that he accepted no title, no elevation of rank, no gift, but lives as a poor man on his rocky isle, and that, what he did, he did for no reward.

The number of those, who raise themselves to this height of unselfishness, is extremely small. In all cases however, although it is the highest result of a life's history, it does not do to begin with it. The man who, in his younger years, has not tried to make himself of value in the world, is sick or useless. To pursue something, that brings a livelihood or honour, or when fortune's goods are present, to enter into public life, is a necessity for well organised natures. We ob-

serve this everywhere, and where the reverse is seen, it is a sign of an unsound state of affairs. Gœthe, Raphael, Shakespeare, Michael Angelo, Beethoven, and many others, left property behind them and strove to possess it. Dürer also left a house and a handsome fortune and did his best while living, to increase it. All these men attained their position by strenuous labour, so that none of them ever required any pecuniary aid from high æsthetic considerations. They did receive money now and again, and later on Dürer obtained an Imperial pension, that was paid to him irregularly enough. Great artists were helped by giving them important commissions. Some missed these, Dürer for example, but this was the fault of the people and not of the artist. When Dürer had nothing to paint in oil, he engraved on copper, or carved or worked at anything else, that he liked. The beauty of his works, he always gave gratis, gave it into the bargain as it were, for he was certainly not better paid for his work, than other masters. What conduced to the advantage of Dürer as well as of all the creative artists of his time, the good as well as the mediocre, in distinction from those of the present day, was the circumstance, that Art, as I have already remarked, was the only intellectual means of expression in common use. The artist was as necessary to the people, as the public scribe is to the Roman peasant of to-day, who tells him, what should be put into his letters, and who sets it down for him.

Now I assert, that the artists reared in our Academies cannot without extraordinary good fortune, develope as independent men, a happy activity, whilst they themselves but for some extraordinary Providence, sink into poverty domestic and intellectual.

Dürer with the highest ideal of his calling was ap-

parently never more than an artisan. But whether the work was great or small, whether it brought in little or much, was not such an important object to him, as that it should be a work of art. This alone distinguishes the work of the artist from that of the artisan, Dürer engraved with his whole soul in his work, and what he strove to realise, was to make it worthy of the object and of himself which was his best reward, and nothing besides compensated for the want of it. This feeling of being an artisan did not prevent his associating with the learned men of his time, nor exclude him from their society. It would he false to set up Dürer as a kind of model on account of his virtues as a citizen and to make of him a pattern artist just, as we now endeavour to construct out of the most impossible materials the pattern father of a family, the pattern peasant and the pattern shoemaker. Dürer was in accordance with the good old times. Were such a man as Dürer now living in Berlin, and desirous of entering the best society (because this is and always will remain the most cultivated), he would try for the most profitable commissions and like Raphael and Michael Angelo, who indeed followed this plan, let himself be well paid for them. He would not, however, think it the duty of the State to make work for him, any more than Dürer considered the Town-Council of Nuremberg bound to give him commissions, or try to spread the idea, that the State should found institutions for talented young people, who perhaps might turn into Albert Dürer's.

Academies exist and will not allow themselves to be abolished. We not do raze one institution to the ground to set another in its place; we reform it. The time has arrived for such reformation. Whilst all other institutions of state are being remodelled, art academies, still remain intact.

No better example exists than Dürer's energy, to show wherein the art of the present day fails.

Dürer is a worker, who grew up in thorough harmony with his era; without confining himself to one department he sought to master all species of technical work in order to produce whatever was required of him. Raphael and Michael Angelo held a similar position in respect to their generation, and so did nearly all artists until the close of the last century. Only within the last seventy or eighty years has this doctrine of the teaching of genius and urging on art for its own high sake been started, that has rendered so many men unhappy and not one happy. It is unfortunate, that this doctrine has penetrated to the state, which it believes, protects art, whilst it brings up young people in the idea, that it is possible to make artists of them in public schools.

What kind of life then did Dürer lead? First under his father he learnt to be a goldsmith. Then he was apprenticed to Wohlgemuth, next he went on his travels, from the beginning showing what he was, and proving his merit. And when he was himself master of a workshop, what carried him onwards, was his fine character, his resolution to he satisfied only with the noblest aims, without that he would have been unhappy and his works as valueless as those of the numberless dozens of other masters around him.

Let us never forget, that genius lies only in character. We are now able to spread knowledge and correct views with extraordinary effect among the people. If the state will take a part and in this way do something for art, let it awaken in the people the knowledge of what art is, what position it occupies as an exponent of thought in this and other times. This will give the Museums a useful application, and

let a few practical ideas flow into the school lessons, which will not require many extra words and the sentiment will again flourish, from which national art shall arise anew.

Dürer was not a man, who styled himself an artist, who, because he painted and sculptured, believed he was doing something extraordinary. He was a Nuremberg citizen and master. He painted when paintings were ordered of him, engraved on copper and sold his plates singly or in parts, worked without much thought about criticism and fame just as Shakspeare wrote his pieces to collect full houses. Dürer did not work because he was cheered on, but because there was a power within him, that would manifest itself. Dürer is like a bubbling fountain, that must gush forth whether it is conducted into a marble basin or into a cattle trough. He must spring forth and every thing else must take care of itself.

The opinion entertained by a people of its great men varies. For some time men tried to find in Goethe the type of an Apollo, then that of Jupiter, then at last that of the elegantly attired minister of state, in which dress his statue is erected before the theatre of Weimar, standing by the side of Schiller, who wears a kind of dressing-gown. It would have been more correct to bestow the homely garment on Goethe and to have let Schiller appear as the elegant. A later time will again rise up above all family and household details and demand for intellectual greatness more heroic drapery.

Dürer was at first only a famed engraver and towards his friends a most cherished and most faithful companion. Pirkheimer writes over his tomb "What was mortal in Albert Dürer lies under this stone".

In Sandrart's opinion a hundred years later, this was not enough and an epitaph was added, that Dürer was celebrated

as prince of artists. In pictures he was now depicted with burning black eyes and heavy beard and curls. Then these disappeared. His pictures vanish one by one from Nuremberg, most going abroad, at last scarcely anything but his engravings remain.

Through Goethe's sympathy Dürer after many years, was again brought into notice. It was Goethe, who first looked from the works of the artist to the excellency of the man. At the end of the last century many of Dürer's manuscripts came to light. At the beginning of the present, when the opposition to the old school in Germany so completely broke down, the young men of the newer ideas attached themselves to Dürer. Now he began to rise into distinction, so that at the third centenary of his death at Nuremberg and Munich enthusiasm reached its height. A monument was erected to him, in his name German art should again arise.

This enthusiasm has certainly decreased; the worth of the man however progressed. Nevertheless, I return to my first assertion: Dürer is famous without being known to the majority of the people. Only few possess a specimen of his work. Photography has made it possible to obtain the greater part of his works cheaply. The photo-lithographic impressions of the Passion and of the Life of Mary are for sale, and are properly speaking only now making their way and spreading for a second time the feeling of the truth and earnestness visible in Dürer's creations. As yet however no one has made a complete collection of the attainable impressions of his works as a monument for public use; not till then shall we be in a position to speak of him in a way, that will be productive of good results. For to understand an artist one must have seen his works.

And thus, with all our respect for the man, the full knowledge of his greatness lies yet in the future. Those, who love him will however maintain, that his highest merit lies in his personality. The unsightliness of his works is a part of their excellency, the uneventfulness of his outer life one of the conditions of his development, who knows him not misses the knowledge of part of our history, and for those, who know him, his name has a ring in it, as if one called aloud Germany! Fatherland!

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