



SUNDAY READING

EARLY RELIGIOUS PRINTS.

Wood Engraving First used to Depict Scenes in Scripture History.

Wood engraving was, from its birth, the peoples' art in an eminent degree, says an English writer. The first gifts were of diverse character, for it brought that great popular amusement of modern times, the playing-card, and with it more holy prints—figures of the saints—to touch the conscience and arouse religious feeling. The earliest unquestioned mention of playing-card in Europe occurs in 1392; but if they were not in general use before that year, they spread with enormous rapidity. This new and sudden demand may have led to a search for more speedy means of manufacture, and so to the first application of wood engraving. There is no card, however, known to have been printed from a wood block of an earlier date than the first known figures of saints, and the reign of authority favour the priority of the latter.

There were representations of various religious scenes in scriptural or traditional history, and were scattered by the monks broadcast among the people. In Flanders, it is said, on days of the festival, the monks wielding in procession, distributed brilliantly colored wood-cuts of holy spirits to the children in the streets. Numerous as they were in their day, only a few scattered examples have survived. The most famous of these is the St. Christopher, which Heineken found pasted inside the cover of a manuscript in the Convent of Buxheim, in Suabia. It is dated 1423, and was long considered the earliest known wood-cut. The saint is crossing the river with the Child-Christ on his shoulder; opposite, on the right bank, a hermit holds a lantern in front of his cell; on the left, a peasant, with a bag on his back, climbs the steep ascent from his mill to his cottage high up on the cliff, where no swelling of the stream can reach it. The mutual attitude of the two heads is expressive, and the folds of the saint's robe are well cast about the shoulders, but otherwise there is little merit in the cut; the drawing shows the rude beginning of art, but an attempt to mark shadows by a greater or less width of line is noticeable, and the lines are more varied than is usually the case in very early work.

The Virgin and Child, in a garden preserved in the Royal Museum at Brussels, and dated 1418, is the earliest dated print; it is finer in design than the St. Christopher the field is better filled, and the drawing more natural.

Besides these and other dated examples, there are several without date, one of which, a Crucifixion, is very rude, although that does not necessarily point to an early date. Ottley, in his description of it, assigned it to a time as early as 1445, which is the date of the manuscript itself. The Carthusian monk who transcribed his prayers in this book, pasted it between the leaves, apparently with reference to an allusion, in the text of the page opposite the print, to the blood of Christ, which is represented in it by spots and lines of vermilion ink on the body of the Crucified Lord. On the left are the figures of the Virgin and Lingorius; on the right, St. John, and perhaps the Centurion; beneath are the gates of hell, with three patriarchs in limbo; in the upper left hand corner is an angel holding the sacred handkerchief on which are presentation of the face of the Saviour was miraculously impressed and pierced; and above, in the upper margin are a scourge and a knife.

Mr. Ottley says that this is one of the rudest prints he ever saw. It is certainly an interesting illustration of the early effort of a rising art. Nearly all these prints were taken off in a pale brown distemper, and were printed by rubbing in the back of the paper. The St. Christopher and some other examples were printed in black ink, and with a press. They were usually coloured by hand, or by means of a stencil-plate, and the outlines being thus obscured, they were rendered much more pleasing to the eye than they now appear.

Mahomedans at Devotions.

Our visits to the Mosques were not without reminders of the Holy Book, "Loose thy shoe from thy foot." Do not run the risk of desecrating this sacred place with any of the defilements of the common world, says "Peter Lombard" in one of his letters from Egypt. If you choose to take off your boots, good; if not, you have to wear sandals over them; and the Moslem custodians do not like you to touch these sandals even with your hand, they prefer to tie them themselves. So shod we went into several, and the sight is impressive. A service at the regular hour of prayer you are not permitted to see. Once we were very urgently hurried out because the time drew nigh. But in two of them we found a solitary sheikh in his pulpit, seated on the floor with his face towards Mecca, chanting the Koran. And one of them did it beautifully. His voice was a strong and sweet baritone, and so true to the key that I could have jotted down the melody on a bit of music paper. We stood near and listened to him, but of course he took no notice of us. Here and there were a few men performing a vow, apparently; they went on from station to station reciting passages at each place. At one Mosque M. and I watched a man at "the Mecca door," (a closed-up recess pointing always towards their holy city); he knelt and touched the floor with his forehead, remained for a while motionless, stood up and extended his hands for a minute, again knelt in the same lowly fashion. How long he continued I know not, for he was still engaged when we left, but another joined him whilst we stood by. I fancy he looked a

little embarrassed at finding himself watched, but it so he was not hindered, for he began his devotions as his fellow Moslem was doing. I whispered to M. who is a stiff High Churchman, "Do you suppose that prayers so earnest as these evidently are wasted on the empty air?" "I am sure they cannot be," was the reply. And I fully agreed with him. I was deeply moved by the intensity of their manner, and trusted that in the church which I know best in London the Lord of all souls will give equal earnestness to those whom I see on week days praying with a better faith and fuller hope.

APOSTLE TO THE GERMANS.

Something About the Life and Labors of Saint Boniface.

Boniface was an Englishman whose original name was Winfrid, and was born at Kinton, in Devonshire, about 680. He was educated at a monastery in the diocese of Winchester, where he became acquainted with the sacred and secular learning of the times. At the age of 30 he was ordained priest, and laboured with much zeal in preaching the Word of God. He was eager to be employed as a missionary to the Pagans. In the year 716 he went into Friesland with two monks, but finding it impracticable to open a mission there at that time, he returned to England. He afterwards visited Rome, and was encouraged in his missionary plans by Gregory II., who gave him a commission, with ample powers. Fortified with this, Winfrid went into Bavaria and Thuringia, where he infused new zeal into existing churches, and was successful in converting many of the heathen. His labours in Eastern Germany were attended with great hardships because of the poverty of the country. He supported himself by the labour of his own hands, and was often in great peril from the rage of the obstinate pagans. Friesland, which was closed against his first attempts, was open to him, and he laboured there with great success. Returning to Rome to report the results of his mission, he was kindly received by Gregory II., who consecrated him bishop of the new German churches, by the name of Boniface.

Armed with letters from the Pope, and strengthened with a band of labourers fresh from England, Boniface returned to the scene of his mission, and became more active than ever in establishing Christianity in Germany. In Hesse he found that an oak tree of prodigious size was the occasion of much idolatrous superstition, and, though running great risk from the fury of the ignorant populace, he caused it to be cut down. Forty years this devoted missionary labored in spreading the gospel in the Germanic states, and in the 75th year of his age fell a martyr, strange to say, in Friesland, the scene of his first unsuccessful mission. One morning Boniface, and fifty-two of his companions, were suddenly attacked by a troop of wild Frisians armed with lances and shields, and were cruelly slain.

Boniface has left on record his method of dealing with idolaters. His shrewd observations have a suggestive value to the missionary of to-day. "Do not," he writes, "contradict in a direct manner their accounts of the genealogy of their gods; allow that they were born from one another in the same way as mankind are. This concession will give you the advantage of proving that there was a time when they had no existence. Ask them who governed the world before the birth of their gods; ask them if these gods have ceased to propagate. If they have not, show them the consequence; namely, that the gods must be infinite in number, and that no man can be rationally at ease in worshipping any of them, lest he should offend one who is more powerful. Argue thus with them, not in the way of insult, but with temper and moderation; and take opportunity to contrast these absurdities with the Christian doctrine. Let the pagans be rather ashamed than incensed by your oblique mode of starting these subjects. Show them the insufficiency of their plea of antiquity. Inform them that idolatry did anciently prevail over the world, but that Jesus Christ was manifested in order to reconcile men to God by His grace."

In Face of a Common Foe.

Let us work for God with energy, always remembering that the time is short. Let us work cheerfully. "Give us," says Carlyle, "the man who sings at his work." Let us work and fight for the captain untiedly. What a loss of power there is in our parties and divisions! Perhaps, like soldiers of different corps, our appearance and our names may differ; yet we know but one flag, one King, one Captain, and our warfare is the same—against the world, the flesh and the devil. "Yonder is your foe—shake hands," said Nelson to two English officers not wholly congenial on the eve of Trafalgar. There are strongholds of darkness and evil to be overcome, which would be overcome if only christian workers would "shake hands" and work untiedly.

Christianity and Civilization.

When the microscopic search of skepticism has turned its attention to human society, and found a place on this planet ten miles square where a decent man can live in decency, comfort, and security, supporting and educating his children, unspoiled and unpolluted, manhood respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard—when skeptics can find such a place ten miles square on this globe, where the gospel of Christ has not gone and cleared the way, and laid the foundations, and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the skeptical *literati* to move thither and then ventilate their views.—James Russell Lowell.

Wisdom is displayed not so much in doing the right thing as in doing it at the right time. The time for doing it is the great distinction between wisdom and folly. It may be said that as space is the sphere in which Divine power is displayed, time is the sphere for displaying Divine wisdom.

NEWS AND NOTABILLIA.

It is reported that the Pope has decided finally that Archbishop Satolli shall reside in Washington.

The Catholic Historical Society is to make an exhibit of records and relics at the Columbian Exposition.

The universalists in the United States are strongest in New York. Massachusetts is next and Ohio is third.

Let us be affable, but never flatterers, for there is nothing so vile and unworthy of a Christian heart as flattery.—St. Vincent de Paul.

The first woman minister who conducted a marriage ceremony in Ohio has just been married herself, and another woman minister read the service.

The money collected at the laying of the corner stone of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, last December amounted to \$20,000.

Leave all and you shall find all, for everything is to be found in God by him who, for the sake of God, despises everything.—St. Augustine.

Four United States Senators are Roman Catholics. They are Murphy of New York; Smith of New Jersey; White of California, and Caffrey of Louisiana.

The New York Mail and Express has a silly notion that the name of the first day of the week should be spelled Sunday, and persists in using that orthography.

An archbishop's mitre is different from a bishop's, in that it has a beading round it, and is surmounted at either point by a cross on an alb; also it rises out of a ducal coronet.

During the last twenty years more than \$63,000,000 has been spent in restoring cathedrals and churches in England, and more than \$18,000,000 in building new churches.

God took away the grave of Moses, that the people might have before them, in full and undisturbed relief, the man himself. It is an easier thing to revere the dust than to follow the example.

The late Bishop Barlow, of Chichester, England, had five daughters, all of whom had the good luck to marry bishops; viz.: Hereford, Lichfield, Winchester (2) and York. The monument in Itchin Abbas Churchyard, Hampshire, records the unique fact.

The unitarians lead in Massachusetts with 189 organizations and 34,610 communicants. After Massachusetts come in order, New York, 4,470 communicants; California, 3,819; New Hampshire, 3,252; Maine, 2,421; Illinois, 1,932; Michigan, 1,904; and Rhode Island, 1,595.

The archbishops and bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary have presented a memorial to the Emperor, asking him to protect the church against the measures introduced by the Hungarian government, and considered by the prelates as hostile to the church, chief among these being the proposition to make civil marriage a complete fulfillment of the marriage contract.

Hawaii has a total population of 100,000; Native population, 35,000; half-castes, 6,000; Chinese, 15,000; Japanese, 12,000; Americans, 2,000; foreign percentage, 7,500. Imports valued at \$7,000,000; exports, \$13,280,000. Schools, 178; of these thirty-six are native schools; pupils in all, 10,000. Native churches, 59; communicants, 5,427. Foreign churches, 11; membership 1,190.

The Pope is very temperate in his diet. His breakfast, which he takes after mass, consists of coffee and milk alone. At noon he eats two eggs and a piece of chicken, as a rule, and some fruit. He drinks at the same time a glass of Bordeaux. On fast days fish and macaroni are substituted for chicken. From dinner till bedtime the Pope takes no nourishment, with the exception of a bit of bread soaked in milk.

Rev. Andrew P. Peabody, D. D., the well-known preacher and teacher of Harvard University, died at his residence, Cambridge, on Friday of last week. He had been ill for about a month. On Wednesday evening, Feb. 1, he fell down an exposed stairway, cutting his head badly and sustaining a severe shock. Complications set in weakening him greatly. His death was caused by pneumonia.

Preachers should make a note of the remark of a recent writer, who says that "the average limit of sustained attention in an audience is about twenty minutes, and that it is very difficult for a speaker to interest his hearers thirty minutes. It was not so in the old days when we had great orators, and it is not so now when an eloquent speaker has a message to deliver. But, for the average talker, twenty minutes is long enough."

A memorial hall for Phillips Brooks is to be built in the "Yard" at Harvard. A committee has invited subscription for a fund of \$300,000 and his class, 1855, pledges the last \$10,000 of each \$100,000. There can be no doubt that the hall will be built, and it will be worthy of a noble memory. Devoted to religious and social uses, it will, in the words of the committee, "convey to coming generations of students the splendid spiritual endowment which he gave to Harvard."

Canon Routledge, in his "History of St. Martin's, Canterbury," just published by Messrs. Kegan, Paul and Company, claims the proper distinction for that venerable edifice. He describes it as occupying the unique position of being the only existing church that was originally built as a church during the first four centuries, and has remained a church till the present day. St. Martin's has a sort of rival in St. Mary-in-the-Castle, Dover, which Canon Puckle believes to have been erected by British workmen sometime in the fourth century.

Brother Anselm, night porter at the Grande-Chartreuse Monastery, has just died. It was under this humble name that M. de Breconart, who once played such a brilliant part in the highest Parisian society, finished his days. M. de Breconart was married three times, and by his third wife he had a daughter. One day, on coming home from shooting, he discharged his gun into a thicket, behind which his daughter happened to be standing. She fell, shot dead. In despair M. de Breconart entered as a simple friar the monastery of Grande-Chartreuse in the most humble and trying of functions.

Messages of Help for the Week.

SUNDAY: "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy, and in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy temple.—Psalm. 5: 3, 7.

MONDAY: "The trees of the Lord are full of sap."—Psalm 104:16.

TUESDAY: "O, earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord."—Jeremiah, 22:29.

WEDNESDAY: "He maketh the Sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Matthew 5: 45.

THURSDAY: "We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."—1st Timothy 6: 7.

FRIDAY: "Now, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came among them; and the Lord said unto Satan, Whence camest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.—Job. 1: 6, 7.

SATURDAY: "O, Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great towards us, and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord."—Psalm. 117.

Following the Best Plan.

Prof. Drummond has been addressing the Edinburgh university students again. He is reported to have said that if a man were laying a plan for life he might as well follow the very best. There was no question which was best, the most complete ideal. They might ask him why should they not follow Charles Kingsley, or read Shakespeare, or be content with Browning and Tennyson. For one thing these were all second-hand men and all that was highest in them had come from Jesus Christ. Men needed some one to kneel to; hence the necessity of choosing Christ to be the feature of their lives.

Seek some absorbing employment on your higher ground—your upland farm,—whether no cart path leads, but where you mount alone with your hoe,—where the life everlasting grows; there you raise a crop which needs not to be brought down into the valley to a market; which you barter for heavenly products.—Thoreau.

The man who thinks the world owes him a living is always in a hurry to levy on the debt.

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