

a matter of chance nor one for wonder. Until the year 1450 or thereabouts, Cologne was distinctly the metropolis of Germany. Its vicinity to the Netherlands, the Burgundian realm, and to France will have gone for much to effect this end. Above all, its commanding position upon the great thoroughfare, the Rhine, will have gained for it a position which insured importance and wealth. Though the fine arts were despised, as we have seen, they were even at that time a luxury, and they depended upon superfluity of money for their very existence then as they do now. Cologne assumed at that early age a position which was occupied much later by a town that had in a similar way become exceptionally rich through commerce—I mean London. It became the great attractor of talent ever since it was become the great market. For, strange to say, as far as we have been able to ascertain, not one of the many masters that form the School of Cologne—certainly none of the most important ones—was a native of the town. The earliest came from Suabia and the Upper Rhine; later ones from Westphalia, the Middle Rhine, then from the Dutch and the Flemish Lowlands. Each brought some home features with him, yet each seems to have accommodated his style at