

2 STORIES OF GERMAN ARTISTS

cross the Alps and direct our research towards the primitive stages of German art! It is, of course, scarcely a matter of surprise that here every new departure should have occurred at least a full century later. The art of the brush is known to the true mediæval ages only in two forms—as practised by the illuminator of manuscripts, and, again, by the mural decorator. Each of these practitioners was dependent, a minor agent who scarcely could claim to be considered the bearer of a separate and self-reliant art. The independence of painting rested upon the introduction of the *easel* picture, and this occurred north of the Alps in the course of the fourteenth century; but how slight was the recognition achieved when the novelty had come! No less a man than Dante mentioned and celebrated Cimabue. Who ever mentioned, let alone immortalised, the painters of the Cologne School? It is an astonishing fact that from the earliest times down to the beginning of the sixteenth century the name of only *one* single artist among them all has been handed down to us in connection with his work, and even this we do not owe to contemporary writers, but to a much later man—a man, indeed, who was among the first to claim for the artist that degree of atten-

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