

able and ignominious" were circumstances for him, as Durer himself says, giving vent, for once, to his righteous indignation. So much the higher stands the moral earnestness with which he unweariedly lived for his art.

In consideration of the master's many-sidedness, we will begin the survey of his most important works with the representations of

lessness and extravagance, unfolds itself in the woodcuts of the apocalypse of St. John, which appeared in 1498.

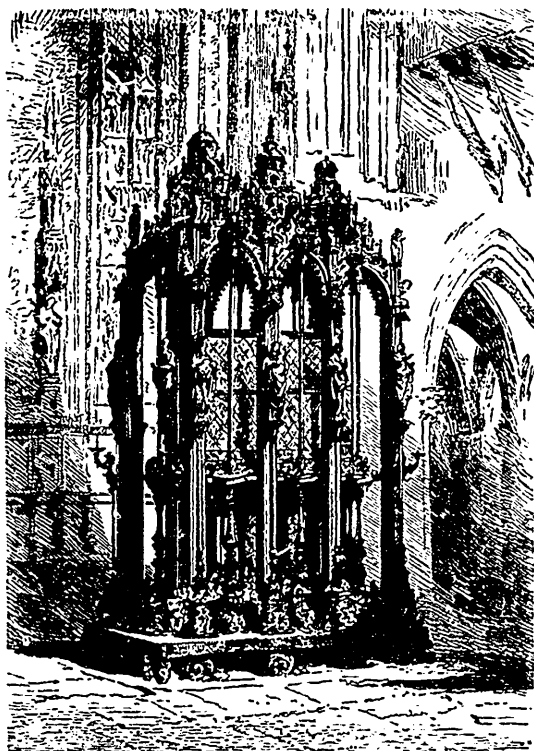
Above all, we should not forget how much the great master accomplished, through these and numerous other works, for the development of wood-engraving. The art of cutting stamps with a raised design in wood, or even in

metal, and which was then employed for many practical purposes, was already known far back in antiquity. In mediæval times, such stamps were made use of, among other things, for stamping tapestry or cloth patterns of various kinds; and the initial letters of manuscripts were frequently printed in this way.

The most frequent application of this kind of wood-engraving was made after the fourteenth century, for supplying single leaves, which were offered for sale to the faithful, at the places of pilgrimage. The great monasteries, skilled in the practice of every art, also took up this, and sent forth whole series of engravings,—as, for instance, the *Biblia Pauperum*, the *Ars Moriendi*, the

Apocalypse, etc. Playing cards also, which had been introduced into Germany as early as the close of the fourteenth century, were soon struck off from blocks, though at first prepared by the "card-painter."

The first who, by a perfect artistic mastery, raised wood-engraving to the height of its mission, and made it a powerful



SHRINE OF ST. SEBALD, NUREMBERG.

religious subjects. In them Durer has broken through the limitations of ecclesiastical conception, and portrayed the sacred incidents, no doubt with all the petty details peculiar to the age, but, at the same time, in purely human fashion, and with overwhelming power. All the sublimity of a fancy as yet unbridled, and which wanders into the regions of form-