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Resource Pages

for

Renaissance and Reformation Times

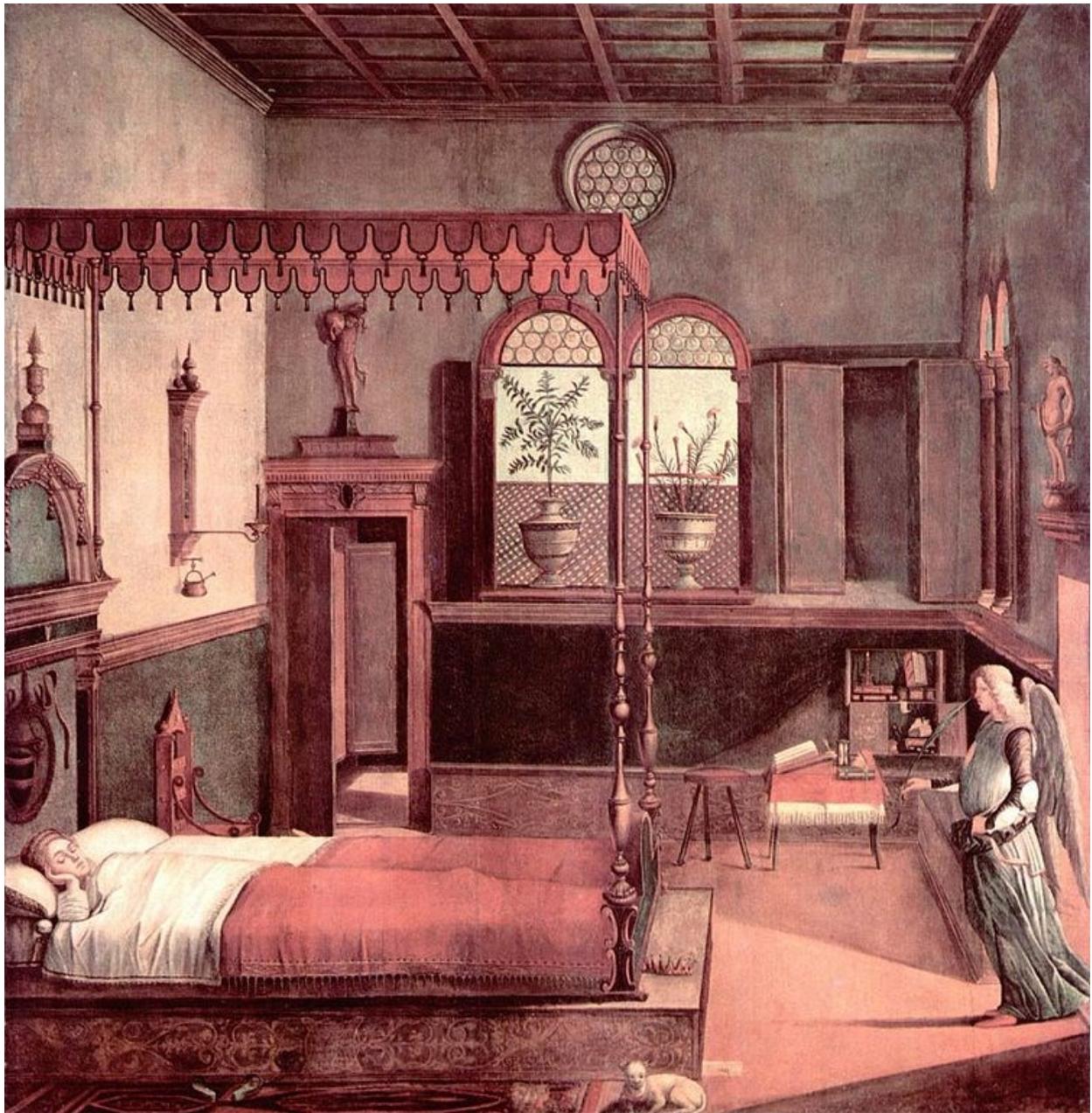
by Dorothy Mills

Used with *Classical Lessons for Renaissance and Reformation Times*

from *A Mind in the Light Curriculum*



Italian City States



Title: The Dream of St. Ursula
Artist: Vittore Carpaccio
Completion Date: circa 1495-1500
Technique: tempera
Material: canvas
Dimensions: 274x267 cm
Location: Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice



*Title: Capitulation of Granada
Artist: Francisco Pradilla Ortiz
Completion Date: 1882
Technique: oil
Material: canvas
Dimensions: 330x 550 cm
Location: Palacio del Senado*



Title: Virgen Mosca (with Isabella of Castille)

Artist: attributed to G. David or J. Gossaert

Completion Date: circa 1520

Technique: oil

Material: panel

Dimensions: 92x 79 cm

Location: La colegiata de Santa Maria la Mayor, de Toro (Zamora)



Title: King Ferdinand of Aragon
Artist: Michel Sittow
Completion Date: late 15th century/early 16th century
Technique: oil
Material: panel
Dimensions: 29x22 cm
Location: Kunsthistorisches Museum



*Title: St. Jerome in His Study
Artist: Albrecht Durer
Completion Date: 1514
Technique: engraving
Location: Kupferstichkabinett, Dresden*



*Title: Portrait of Erasmus
Artist: Hans Holbein the Younger
Completion Date: 1523
Technique: oil and tempera
Material: panel
Dimensions: 76 x 51 cm
Location: National Gallery*



*Title: Christina of Denmark
Artist: Hans Holbein the Younger
Completion Date: 1538
Technique: oil
Material: oak panel
Dimensions: 179.1 x 82.6 cm
Location: National Gallery*

From *Readings in European History* V. II by James Harvey Robinson

“The Abdication of Charles V”

This is Charles V’s address at Brussels in 1555.

Given at St. Mark's in Rome, in the year of our Lord's incarnation 1540, September 27, in the sixth year of our pontificate.

III. THE ABDICATION OF CHARLES V (1555)

Although [my councilor] Philibert has just fully explained to you, my friends, the causes which have determined me to surrender the possession and administration of these Belgian provinces and leave them to my son, Don Philip, yet I wish to say certain things with my own mouth. You will remember that upon the 5th of January of this year there had elapsed forty years since my grandfather, the emperor Maximilian, in the same place and at the same hour, declared my majority at the age of fifteen, withdrew me from the guardianship under which I had remained up to that time, and made me master of myself.

279. Charles V's address at Brussels (1555).

The following year, which was my sixteenth, King Ferdinand (my mother's father and my grandfather) died in the kingdom over which I was then forced to begin to reign, owing to the fact that my beloved mother, who has but just died, was left, by reason of the death of my father, with disordered judgment, and never sufficiently recovered her health to be capable of ruling over the possessions which she inherited from her father and mother.

At that time I went to Spain by way of the sea. Soon came the death of my grandfather Maximilian, in my nineteenth year, and although I was still young I sought and obtained the imperial dignity in his stead. I had no inordinate ambition to rule a multitude of kingdoms, but merely desired to secure the welfare and prosperity of Germany, my dear fatherland, and of my other kingdoms, especially of my Belgian provinces; and to encourage and extend as far as in me lay Christian peace and harmony throughout the whole world.

But although such zeal was mine, I was unable to show so much of it as I might have wished, on account of the troubles raised by the heresies of Luther and the other innovators

of Germany, and on account of serious war into which the hostility and envy of neighboring princes had driven me, but from which I have safely emerged, thanks to the favor of God. . . .

This is the fourth time that I am setting out for Spain. I wish to say to you that nothing I have ever experienced has given me so much pain or rested so heavily upon my soul as that which I experience in parting from you to-day, without leaving behind me that peace and quiet which I so much desired. My sister Mary, who in my absence has governed you so wisely and defended you so well, has explained to you in the last assembly the reasons for my determination.

The emperor's
bad health.

I am no longer able to attend to my affairs without great bodily fatigue and consequent detriment to the interests of the state. The cares which so great a responsibility involves, the extreme dejection which it causes, my health already ruined, — all these leave me no longer the vigor sufficient for governing the states which God has confided to me. The little strength that remains to me is rapidly disappearing. I should long ago have laid down the burden if my son's immaturity and my mother's incapacity had not forced both my spirit and my body to sustain its weight until this hour.

The last time that I went to Germany I had determined to do what you see me do to-day; but I could not bring myself to do it when I saw the wretched condition of the Christian state, a prey to such a multitude of disturbances, of innovations, of singular opinions as to faith, of worse than civil wars, and fallen finally into so many lamentable disorders. I was turned from my purpose because my own ills were not yet so great, and I hoped to make an end of all these things and restore peace. In order that I might not be wanting in my duty, I risked my strength, my goods, my repose, and my life for the safety of Christianity and the defense of my subjects.

From this struggle I emerged with a portion of the things I desired. But the king of France and certain Germans,

failing to preserve the peace and amity they had sworn, marched against me. The Germans were upon the point of seizing my person. The king of France took the city of Metz, and I, in the dead of winter, exposed to intense cold, in the midst of snow and blood, advanced with a powerful army raised at my own expense to retake the city and restore the empire. The Germans saw that I had not yet laid aside the imperial crown, and that I had no disposition to allow its majesty to be diminished. . . .

I have carried out what God has permitted, — for the outcome of our efforts depends upon the will of God. We human beings act according to our powers, our strength, our spirit, and God awards the victory or permits defeat. I have ever done what I could, and God has aided me. I — and you, too — should return to him boundless thanks for his aid, for having succored me in my greatest trials and in all my dangers.

To-day I feel so exhausted that I could not help you, as you see yourselves. In my present state of dejection and weakness, I should have to render a serious account to God and man if I did not lay aside authority, as I have resolved to do, since my son, King Philip, is of an age sufficiently advanced to be able to govern you; and he will be, I hope, a good prince to all my beloved subjects.

I am determined then to retire to Spain and to yield to my son Philip the possession of all my Belgian provinces. I particularly commend my son to you, and I ask of you, in remembrance of me, that you extend to him the love which you have always borne towards me; moreover I ask you to preserve among yourselves the same affection and harmony. Be just and zealous in the observance of the laws, preserve respect for all that merits respect, and do not refuse to grant to authority the support of which it stands in need.

Above all, beware of infection from the sects of neighboring lands. Extirpate at once the germs of heresy, should they appear in your midst, for fear lest they may spread abroad and utterly ruin your state, and lest you fall into the direst calamities.

“Speech Against the Armada”

Queen Elizabeth’s speech, as delivered to her troops at Tilbury in 1588, before the arrival of the Spanish Armada.

My loving people,

We have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear. I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see, at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honor and my blood, even in the dust.

I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which rather than any dishonor shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field.

I know already, for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns; and we do assure you on a word of a prince, they shall be duly paid. In the meantime, my lieutenant general shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject; not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valor in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over these enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.

A SCHOLAR OF THE RENAISSANCE

An important source for the life of Desiderius Erasmus, the famous Dutch humanist (1446-1536), is a biographical sketch by his friend, Beatus Rhenanus. It forms a part of the dedication by Beatus to the emperor Charles V of the collected edition of Erasmus's writings, which was published at Basel in 1540. Selections from this sketch, together with extracts from the Epistles of Erasmus, are reproduced below. Erasmus had a very extensive correspondence. "I receive daily," he once wrote, "letters from remote parts, from kings, princes, prelates, men of learning, and even from persons of whose existence I was ignorant." The three thousand letters which have been preserved throw much light on the history of the Renaissance period.

83. The Life of Erasmus

Erasmus was born in the early years of the reign of your great-grandfather Frederick III, at Rotterdam in Holland. . . . As his birthplace the town of Rotterdam will always be entitled to the reverence of the learned. The next praise is claimed by Deventer, where he had his education, having been before a choir boy in Utrecht cathedral, where after the custom of such churches he had been employed for the sake of his small, high-pitched voice. . . . The ability of Erasmus was soon shown by the quickness with which he understood, and the fidelity with which he retained, whatever he was taught, surpassing all the other boys of his age. Among the brothers, as they were called, who are not monks but like them in their mode of living and their simple and uniform dress, was John Sintheim, a man of good learning for that time. . . Sintheim was so delighted with the progress of Erasmus, that on one occasion he embraced the boy, exclaiming, "Well done, Erasmus, the day will come when thou wilt reach the highest summit of erudition"; and having said this, dismissed him with a kiss. Every one will admit that his prophecy came true.

Erasmus soon after lost both his parents; and by the persistence of his guardian, who wished to shake off the burden of his charge, he was thrust from the school of Deventer into a monastery near Delft. In that place he had for several years as a partner in study, William Herman of Gouda, a youth devoted to literature. Assisted and encouraged by this companionship, there was no volume of the Latin authors that Erasmus did not peruse. By day and by night the two youths were employed in study; and the time that others of their age spent idly in jesting, sleeping, and feasting, these two devoted to poring over books and practicing their pen. The bishop of Cambrai, Henry of Bergen, having heard of his fame, invited Erasmus, after he had been ordained, to join him, when he was himself preparing to visit Rome. He saw in Erasmus a person endowed with cultivated manners and of great ability in learning and eloquence. It was evident that such a companion would be creditable as well as useful, in case of any intercourse or correspondence with the pope or cardinals. Some circumstance, however, which I cannot explain, prevented the bishop from undertaking this journey. . . . Although the bishop changed his mind about going to Italy, he still kept Erasmus in his court, being delighted with the charm and distinction of his character. . . .

After a time the bishop, taking into consideration the happy genius of Erasmus, furnished him with the means of going to Paris and applying himself to scholastic theology. . . . When he found the college life too hard, he was glad to remove to the house of an English gentleman. ... It was then that Erasmus became known in England, to which island he shortly afterwards went, being invited by his pupils who had returned home. He returned to England afterwards more than once and taught for some time in the university of Cambridge; as he did also at Louvain.

At last by the persuasion of friends, having always had a strong desire to see Italy, he went to Bologna. ... In Erasmus's journey he was made a doctor of theology at Turin, together with his English traveling companion. Thus he carried with him into Italy the dignity as well as the erudition which others are wont to bring back from that country. At Bologna he finished the volume of *Adages* which had been begun some years before. . . .

When this work was completed, he wrote to Aldus Manutius* to ask him whether he would undertake the printing of it, to which he willingly consented. Erasmus then removed to Venice. . . . His stay at Venice lasted a considerable time, since he revised and republished there two tragedies of Euripides, Hecuba and Iphigenia in Aulis, and corrected the comedies of the Roman dramatists, Terence and Plautus, with special regard to the meters. ...

*The famous Venetian printer, and publisher of the "Aldine Classics."

After leaving Italy he visited his friends at Antwerp and Louvain and presently crossed to England, to which he was attracted by his love of Colet the theologian, who was dean of St. Paul's in London, and of Grocin, Latimer, and Linacre, and especially of Thomas More. His patron was William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and chancellor of the kingdom, that is, supreme judge, who surpassed all the bishops of that island in liberality. He gave Erasmus money, and also presented him to the living of Aldington in Kent. This he had some scruple at first in accepting, considering that the entire emoluments rather belonged to the pastor, whose business it undeniably was to be present night and day to instruct the people placed under his charge; but the archbishop met his hesitation with the following question: "Who," said he, "has a fairer claim to live out of a church income than yourself, the one person who by your valuable writings instruct and educate the pastors themselves, and not them alone but all the churches of the world, which they severally direct and serve?" Certainly, I have more than once heard Erasmus say that princes ought to assist scholars by their own liberality, whereas in order to spare their purses they were accustomed to present them to benefices, which the followers of learning were compelled to accept, if they wished to secure leisure for their studies. . .

The students of France and Germany required a separate edition of the New Testament in Greek. Erasmus had formerly written some notes upon it, and having found them among his papers he revised and extended them in great haste amid the bustle of the press. There were some who thought the Latin version itself required correction, being a work written or rather translated, as may be presumed, for the general body of Christians ; and with this demand he showed his usual readiness to comply. The whole book he dedicated to Pope Leo X, and with good reason, the principal document of our religion being inscribed to its presiding chief. The revised works of St. Jerome, which he helped to prepare, were dedicated to Archbishop Warham, as an everlasting memorial of extraordinary respect. . . .

Erasmus afterwards came back to Basel with the intention of reediting the Adages and finishing the Paraphrases of St. Paul and the Gospels. It is doubtful whether the applause with which these works were received by the world of readers was greater than the pleasure which he took in writing them. "Here," said he, "I am on my own ground." And so he was. His chief study was of the old interpreters: among the Latins, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Hilary; among the Greeks, Chrysostom and his imitator Theophylact. Only the style was his own.

In stature Erasmus was . . . not a tall man. His figure was compact and elegant. He had a constitution extremely delicate, and easily affected by trifling changes, as of wine or food or climate. As he advanced in years he became subject to frequent attacks of catarrh, which is so common and constant a complaint with studious people. His complexion was fair, with hair that in his younger days had a touch of red, bluish grey eyes, and a lively expression of face; his voice was not strong, his language beautifully explicit, his dress respectable and sober, as became an imperial councilor and a clergyman. He was most constant in his attachments, no inscription on his list of friends being ever on any account changed. His memory was most retentive. He had learned as a boy the whole of Terence and Horace by heart. He was liberal to the poor, among whom, as he came home from mass, as well as on other occasions, he used to distribute money by his servant. He was especially generous and kind to any young and promising students who came to him in want of help.

The Epistles of Erasmus, translated and edited by F. M. Nichols. London, 1901-1Q04. 2 vols. Longmans, Green and Co.

Nichols, Epistles, vol. i, pp. 25-37.

From *Readings in Medieval and Modern History* by Hutton Webster

Letter by Martin Luther

109. To the Emperor Charles V

Doubtless every one marvels, most gracious emperor, that I presume to write to your Imperial Majesty. For what is so unusual as that the king of kings and lord of lords should be addressed by the meanest of men? But whoever can estimate the enormous importance of this subject, which so intimately concerns the divine verities, will not wonder. . . .

Several small books I wrote drew down the envy and hatred of many great people, instead of their gratitude, which I merit. First, because against my will I had to come forward, although I had no desire to write anything, had not my opponents, through guile and force, compelled me to do so. For I wish I could have remained hidden in my corner. Second, as my conscience and many pious people can testify, I only brought forward the Gospel in opposition to the illusions or delusions of human traditions. And for so doing, I have suffered for three years, without cessation, all the malice which my adversaries could heap upon me. It was of no avail that I begged for mercy and promised henceforth to be silent. No attention was paid to my efforts after peace, and my urgent request to be better instructed was not listened to.

The one thing they insisted upon was that I should be extinguished. . . . Hence, O lord, prince of the kings of the earth, I fall humbly at your Serene Majesty's feet, begging you will not take me, but the cause of divine truth (for which cause only God has put the sword into your hand), under the shadow of your wings, protecting me till I have either won or lost the case.

Should I then be declared a heretic I ask for no protection, and only plead that neither the truth nor the lie be condemned unheard. For this is only due to your imperial throne. This will adorn your Majesty's empire! It will consecrate your century and cause its memory never to be forgotten, if your Sacred Majesty does not permit the wicked to swallow up him who is holier than they, nor let men, as the prophet says, "become as the fishes of the sea — as the creeping things that have no ruler over them."

Currie, Letters, No. xl.

Written from Wittenberg, January 15, 1520.

From *Selected Essays* by Michel de Montaigne

Translated by Donald M. Frame

Of Idleness

Just as we see that fallow land, if rich and fertile, teems with a hundred thousand wild and useless weeds, and that to set it to work we must subject it and sow it with certain seeds for our service; and as we see that women, all alone, produce shapeless masses and lumps of flesh, but that to create a good and natural offspring they must be made fertile with a different kind of seed; so it is with minds. Unless you keep them busy with some definite subject that will bridle and control them, they will throw themselves in disorder hither and yon in the vague field of imagination.

*As when the light of waters in an urn,
Trembling, reflects the sun or moon, in turn
It flickers round the room, and darts its rays
Aloft, and on the panelled ceiling plays.*

-Virgil

And there is no mad or idle fancy that they will not bring forth in this agitation:

They form vain visions, like a sick man's dream

-Horace

The soul that has no fixed goal loses itself; for as they say, to be everywhere is to be nowhere:

He who dwells everywhere, Maximus, nowhere dwells.

-Martial

Lately when I retired to my home, determined so far as possible to bother about nothing except spending the little life I have left in rest and privacy, it seemed to me I could do my mind no greater favor than to let it entertain itself in idleness and stay and settle in itself, which I hoped it might do more easily now, having become heavier and more mature with time. But I find-

Ever idle hours breed wandering thoughts.

-Lucan

-that, on the contrary, like a runaway horse, it gives itself a hundred times more trouble than it took for others, and gives birth to so many chimeras and fantastic monsters, one after another, without order or purpose, that in order to contemplate their strangeness and foolishness at my pleasure, I have begun to put them in writing, hoping in time to make even my mind ashamed of them.