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Albert Durers

DESIGNS

Of The

Prayer Book

London Published September 1st 1817
at
R. ACKERMANN'S LITHOGRAPHIC PRESS





ADVERTISEMENT.

IN presenting to the Public the Series of Designs executed by the celebrated Albert Durer, in illustration of the Catholic Prayer-book, I regret much that, in the edition published at Munich by Messrs. STRIXNER and PILOTY, from which this is copied, the text was omitted. Through the friendship, however, of M. SCHERER, Librarian to his Majesty the King of Bavaria, I am enabled to furnish a specimen of the first page. It will also be seen, that for the interesting Introduction, which contains all the information that can be collected respecting the original work, I am indebted to M. BERNHART, Assistant Librarian of the Royal Library at Munich.

With these recommendations, not possessed by the foreign copy, I trust that this *fac simile* of a very valuable graphic monument, though hitherto but little known, now submitted to the Public as the first production of my Lithographic Press, will experience such approbation as to encourage me to persevere in my efforts for the improvement of this infant art, which promises the most important accessions to the advantages already afforded by Printing.

London,
Sept. 1st, 1817.

R. ACKERMANN.

GERMAN SCHOOL.

ALBERT DURER.

ALBERT DURER acquired by his talents and virtues the friendship of Lucas de Leyden and the admiration of Erasmus and Vasari. This celebrated painter owed his elevation entirely to the force of his genius, his father having intended him for his own trade, that of a silversmith; but his taste for painting and engraving prevailed. Persuaded that an exalted imagination alone never reaches the sublime, he applied himself to the study of geometry, perspective, and architecture, by which he corrected his taste and formed his judgment. He studied engraving under Martin, and painting under Michael Wolgemuth.

It was not till after twenty-four years' study, that he completely mastered the pencil and the graver. The first subjects which he executed as an engraver were, the *Three Graces supporting a Globe*, the *History of Christ*, and the *Portraits of the Dukes of Saxony and Melancthon*. In one of his best prints, published fourteen years before his death, the expression of the head of St. Jerome is of a character worthy of the great Italian masters; and even the lion and fox upon the floor are rendered with the greatest truth; the lion breathes all the majesty of his race, and the fox all the cunning of his: in short, the respective character of every object forming a part of the composition of this excellent print is preserved with the greatest truth and precision.

Germany, Flanders, and Venice, in turns, exercised and admired his talents. Francisco Ubertini, Andrea del Sarto, and Jacopo Pontorme followed his superb manner of painting heads and draperies. Marc Anthony, one of his contemporaries, copied many of his prints, and affixing to them the name of ALBERT, sold them as originals; but ALBERT, being informed of the imposition, carried his complaint before the magistrates of Venice, who did him justice in suppressing the counterfeits.

Raphael, as a proof of the high estimation in which he held a portrait sent him by ALBERT of himself, returned him his own, with a great number of his drawings. Charles V. Maximilian I. and his brother Ferdinand, King of Hungary and Bohemia, gave continued proofs of their solicitude for his welfare, sought his works with eagerness, and loaded him with honours and riches. The most celebrated of his compositions in painting are, *the Adoration of the Kings*, *the Virgin crowned*

ALBERT DURER.

by *Angels*, a *Dying Christ*, and *Adam and Eve*: the fine composition of the latter inspired the Muse of a certain Gaspard Ursinus Velius with the lines,

Angelus hos cernens miratus dixit: Ab horto

Non ita formosos, vos ego depuleram.

He painted *Our Saviour carrying the Cross* for the senate of Nuremberg, who, to shew their respect for his merit, nominated him a member of their council. This artist added to a quick and fertile imagination much truth of outline and a firm though mellow and expressive touch: but his choice of the objects presented by nature was injudicious, and his costumes were inconsistent; such as dressing his Virgins in the fashion of the ladies of his time, and giving to his Pharisees and Sadducees the mustaches of German cavaliers.

His name is known in the literary world as author of treatises upon geometry, fortification, and the proportions of the human figure. ALBERT DURER was one of the wisest, as well as one of the best made men of his time: he had a fine open countenance, and a noble and prepossessing exterior, which secured him the esteem of the great and the friendship of his equals; but his days were curtailed by the insupportable temper of his wife. He was born at Nuremberg in 1471, and died there in 1527, aged 55 years.

The Louvre contains many of his finest productions; among others, *the Adoration of the Kings*, *Our Saviour adored by Shepherds*, *the Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem*, and several others. The present portrait is taken from a bust preserved in the town-hall at Nuremberg.

INTRODUCTION.

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THE first account of the Prayer-book to which these drawings of Albert Durer are attached is given by Joachim von Sandrart, in his *German Academy of the Fine Arts, Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting*, (Nürnberg, published by Jacob von Sandrart, 1675, fol. Part II., book iii., p. 224,) where he writes:—“ I have moreover seen a Breviary with drawings upon parchment, belonging to his Electoral Highness, Maximilian of Bavaria, in which Albert Durer has most ingeniously executed with the pen, and in different colours, figures of all the saints, according to their names, and also curious ornaments, foliage, and grotesque subjects, so that it is considered as one of the greatest master-pieces of his hand.” In the later edition of this work, by John Jacob Volkmann, this account is much compressed; for we are there told (Vol. VII., p. 221),—“ At the above-mentioned Elector’s (Maximilian of Bavaria), Sandrart saw a whole book of drawings of saints upon parchment, together with many embellishments.” In the *Journal* entitled *Deutschland’s Aufklärung im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, No. XII., August, 1805, p. 323, in the note we find the following remarks on the drawings in this Prayer-book:—“ In the Electoral Library at Munich is to be seen a Prayer-book, containing arabesques and figures drawn by Albert Durer. Most of them are taken from his wood-cuts, according as he found them suitable to the prayers attached: hence they display the stiffness of his early efforts, as well as the purity of his later style. Few of them are new ideas. Among these drawings is one (No. VI. in the copy) representing the Virgin of the Apocalypse, which affords the most striking demonstration of Durer’s genius. The female form, and the harmony of its different parts, together with the inimitable grace of the attitude, render the composition one of the most beautiful that can possibly be conceived upon this subject. It would be difficult to find a female form so exquisite in all the works of Raphael:—at least, we are not acquainted with any. On the other hand, St. John, writing in Patmos, is all greatness and prophetic sublimity—in the same style as Durer’s Apostles in the Electoral Gallery. If we may be allowed the comparison, these two figures form just

such a contrast as the beautiful Venus de Medicis and the Apollo Belvidere. They prove that, by his own powers, and without the aid of others, Durer attained the highest degree of perfection."

It is certainly astonishing, that in the original drawings of Albert Durer, notwithstanding the number of them in this Prayer-book, and the variety of objects which they embrace, not a faulty stroke is to be seen; neither can we perceive that they were previously sketched with lead-pencil, or any thing else. In the full conviction of this extraordinary talent conferred on Durer, the translator of the work which appeared with the title of *Alberti Dureri clarissimi Pictoris et Geometrae de Symetria Partium in rectis Formis humanorum Corporum, Libri in Latinum conversi, Norimbergæ, 1532, in ædibus Viduæ Durerianæ*, bears testimony to the facility and skill of Albert Durer in drawing off-hand, in combining the parts most accurately together, and in producing at once an harmonious whole without making any previous sketch, in the following words:—*Quid ego de manus constantia et certitudine loquar? Jurares regula normave aut circina perscripta, quæ nullo adjumento vel penicillo vel sæpe calamo aut penna deducebat, ingenti cum admiratione spectantium. Quid memorem qua dextræ cum animi conceptibus congruentia sæpe in chartas statim calamo aut penna figuras quarumcunque rerum conjecerit, sive ut ipsi loquuntur, collocarit? In quo hoc profectò legentibus incredibile futurum prospicio, distantissimas non solum argumenti sed et corporum partes instituisse nonnunquam, quæ conjunctæ ita inter se convenirent, ut aptius fieri nihil potuisset. Nimirum ita mens artificis singularis instructa omni cognitione et intelligentia veritatis consensusque inter se partium, ipsa moderabatur ac regebat manum, jubebatque sibi absque ullis adminiculis fidere. Similis erat promptitudo peniculum tenentis, quo minutissima quæque in linteo tabellave perscribere nulla designatione præmissa, sic ut non culpari modo posset nihil, sed laudem etiam omnium summam invenirent. Maxime admirabile fuit hoc laudatissimis pictoribus, quibus in illa re versatis plurimum, difficultas non esset ignota.*" This testimony is the more valid, as, according to the assurance of Wolfgang Panzer, in his *Annal. Typogr.* Vol. VII., p. 481, n. 305, the Latin Translator of Durer's work is Joachim Camerarius, who was born at Nürnberg, lived at the same time as Durer, and was intimately acquainted with him, as he says at the beginning of the same Preface:—"Conveniens tamen judicavimus, cum quod illius inventa ederemus, tum quod occasio data esset mandandi literis præclari viri (Alberti Durer) nobisque amicissimi vitam ac mores prætexere quæ partim sermonibus aliorum, partim præsentibus de ipso cognovissemus, habitura prædicationem aliquam dexteritatis et ingenii singularis et artificis et hominis, atque etiam allatura voluptatis non nihil legentibus."

All these quotations refer solely to those very highly esteemed designs with which Albert Durer embellished the Prayer-book. But the edition of this Prayer-book is as valuable as Durer's drawings themselves. Not only is no second copy of it known to exist; but it has also this peculiarity, that the letters with which it is printed are both very cleanly cut, and also adorned with flourishes, which is the more remarkable, as Theurdank's work, in 1517, has hitherto been considered as the first in which such letters occur: for as Albert Durer not only affixed his initials to all the designs contained in it, but also placed the date of the year 1515 beside them, this is a sufficient proof that the printing of the Prayer-book was finished in that year, if not earlier. The place where it was printed cannot be precisely determined; but there is every reason to believe that it first saw the light at Augsburg or Nürnberg. The letters of the Prayer-book bear a great resemblance to those of Theurdank in regard to shape and clearness, except that in the former they are much longer, but not so diversified, and the flourishes not so frequent as in Theurdank. It is not improbable that the Emperor Maximilian the First, when he resided in the year 1517 at Nürnberg, and honoured the artists of that city with his visits, saw this Prayer-book, and caused Theurdank to be executed in the same manner by John Schönsperger, printer, of Augsburg, whom he removed to Nürnberg, solely on account of Theurdank. I have already thrown out this idea in the *Beyträge zur Geschichte und Literatur*, chiefly collected from the Royal Central Library at Munich, by Baron Von Aretin, Munich, 1805, Part I., p. 87.; and also in my "Observations on the edition of Theurdank of 1517, and on the flourishes which occur in it;" to which the editor of the Drawings of Albert Durer refers in his Preface, and seems to coincide in my opinion.

To the possessors of Albert Durer's drawings it would be an acceptable addition if the publisher had attached to them the text of the Prayer-book, as it would then have been much easier to comprehend their meaning, which is frequently very obscure without the text.

The publication of the text would, however, be attended with some difficulties, because it is not complete. The loss of a few leaves is evident, from the circumstance of some being numbered at the bottom, and these numbers not corresponding with the extant printed leaves. Thus, for instance, the printed leaf 6 is marked with the written number 8; 7, with 9; 11, with 13; 12, with 14; 13, with 15; 18, with 20; 21, with 27; 22, with 28; 23, with 29; 29, with 35; 34, with 40; 35, with 41; 39, with 45; 45, with 51; 46, with 52; 58, with 70; 59, with 71.

As the whole work thus consists of 62 printed leaves, it follows that the 62d must have borne the number 74, and that of course 13 leaves are wanting. To be convinced at once of this deficiency, we need only look at the back of the 56th printed leaf, which is the last of Durer's designs; for there commences the 99th Psalm: *Jubilate Deo omnis terra: servite Domino in lætitia, &c.*: and proceeds to the 3d verse: *Scitote quoniam Dominus ipse est Deus: ipse fecit nos: et non ipsi nos.* Then follow four blank leaves. With the 57th printed leaf begin the drawings of Lucas Cranach, with the text: *Lætabuntur in cubilibus suis:* which is the conclusion of the 5th verse of the 149th Psalm. The deficient text, therefore, extends from the 4th verse of the 99th Psalm to the end of that Psalm: then the 62d and 63d Psalms are wholly wanting: also *Canticum trium puerorum:—Benedicite omnia Opera Domini Domino;* the 148th and 149th Psalms to the 5th verse: *Exaltabunt Sancti in Gloria.*

It is evident that the original of this Prayer-book has long been defective, from the remote period at which the five blank leaves at the beginning, and the four blank leaves following the 56th, were introduced on account of this deficiency. It is to be presumed that originally this copy had a printed title-page, which has been lost, together with the missing leaves

These circumstances I have thought it right to state, that, if the text should be copied and printed, regard might be paid to them.

J. B. BERNHART,

Münich, June 17, 1817.

KEEPER OF THE ROYAL LIBRARY.

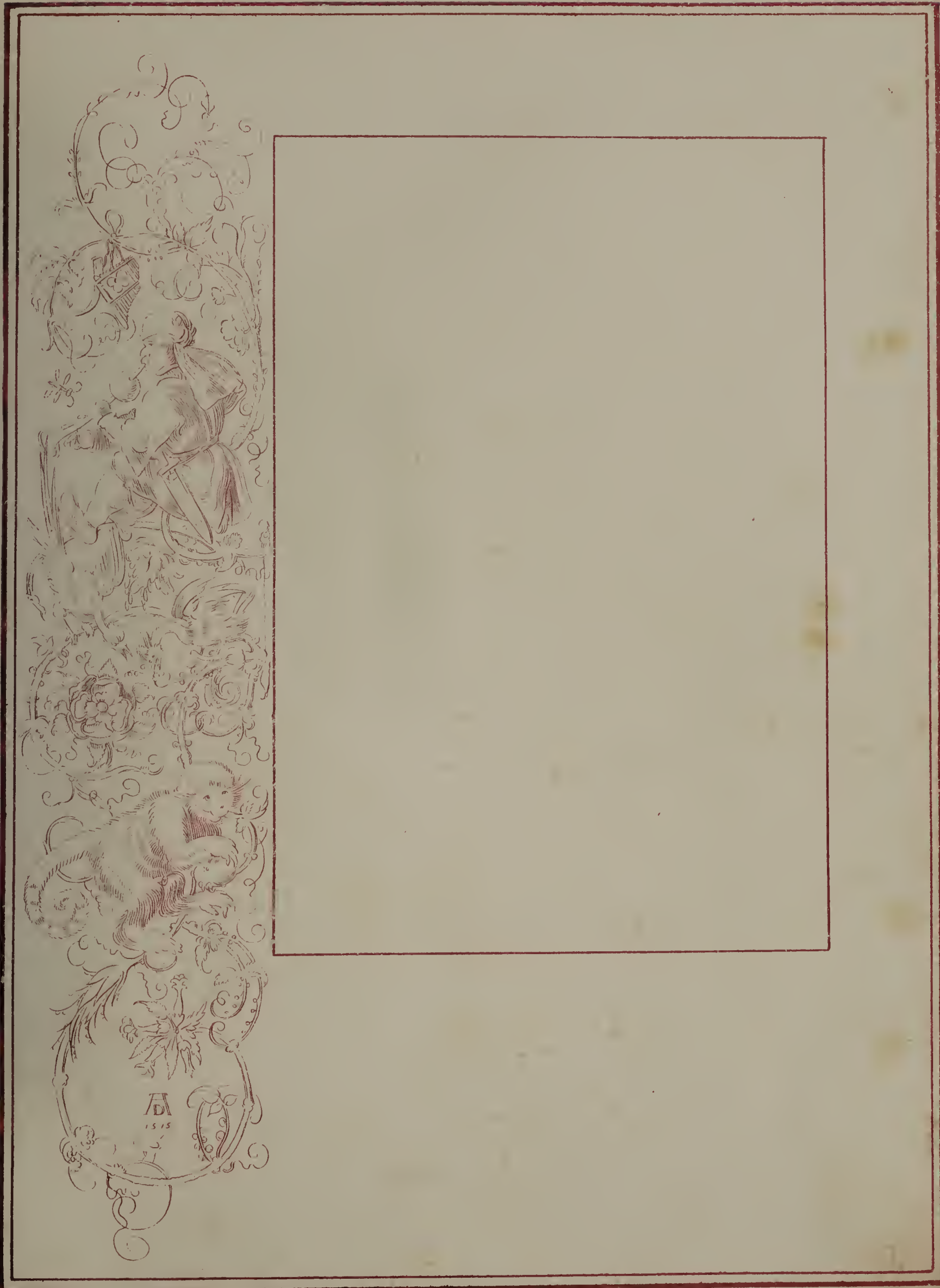
LIST OF PLATES.

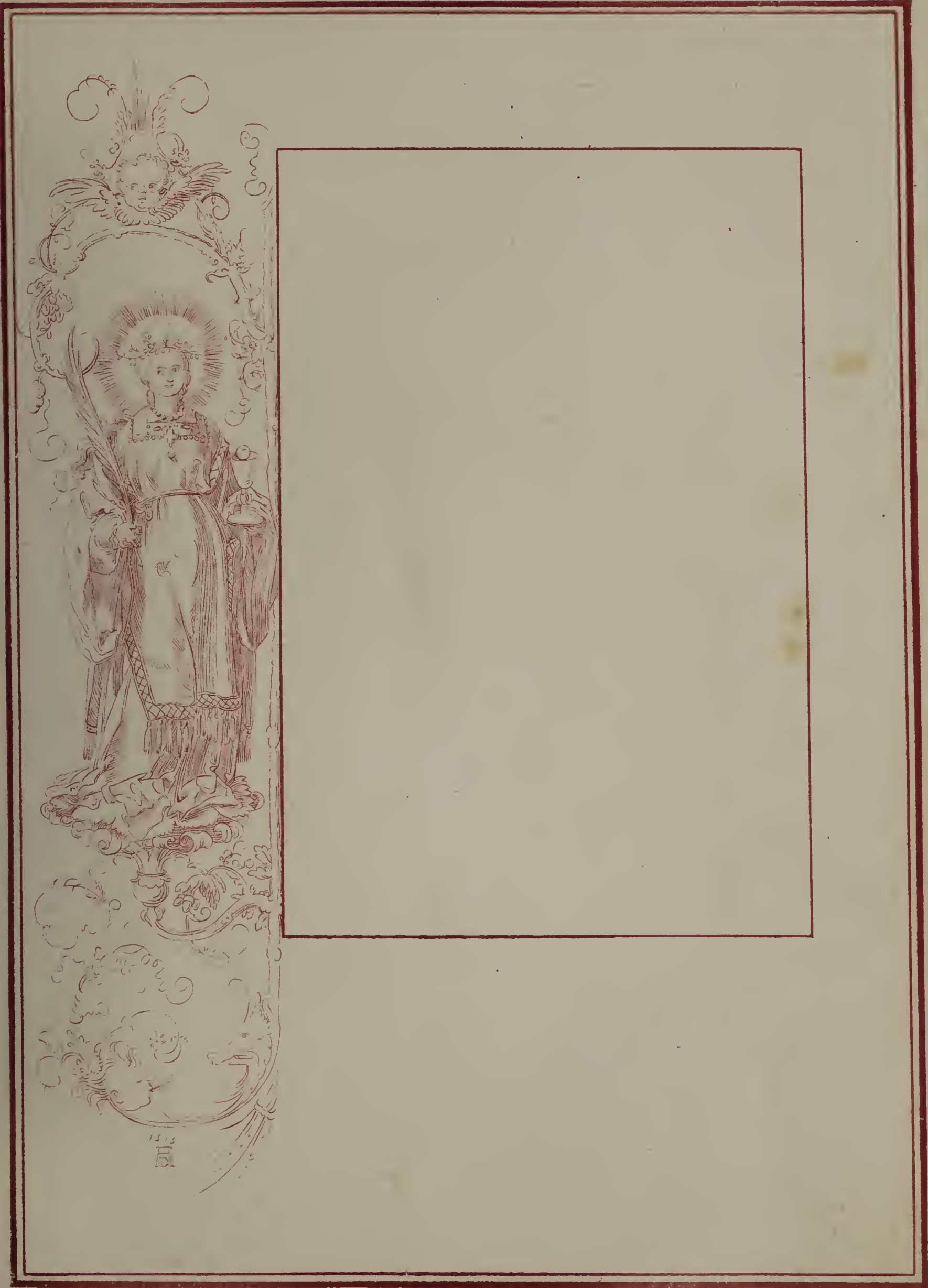
- PORTRAIT of Albert Durer, from an original painting in the Schleissheim Gallery.—Title page, &c.
 I. Arabesque: a man Playing on the Hautboy. The Rubric: *sui ipsius in Deum commendatio.*
 (Leaf 6 of the Prayer-book, with the original designs.)
 II. St. Barbara. (De S. Barbara. Leaf 7.)
 III. St. Sebastian, as the Saint who protects from Pestilence, denoted by the Dragon.
 (De S. Sebastiano. Leaf 8.)
 IV. St. George lifting the Dragon which he has killed. (De St. Georgio. Leaf 9.)
 V. A Sick Physician with the Urine-Glass. (*Propriæ suæ fragilitas cum gratiarum actione in Deum cognitio.* Leaf 9.)
 VI. Vision of John the Evangelist. (*Evangelium Johannis.* Leaf 17.) Apparatus for Writing at the bottom of Leaf 18.
 VII. A Knight drawing his Sword against Death. (*Quicumque hanc orationem devote dixerit, eodem oratio in agone mortis suæ sibi in memoriam veniet et adjumentum et consolationem præstabit.* Leaf 12.)
 VIII. The Beneficent Man. (*Pro benefactoribus interpellatio.* Leaf 15.)
 IX. Two Musicians, a Hermit, the Lion Fighting with an Insect. (Ps. 8. Leaf 35. *Constituisti hominem super opera manuum tuarum.*)
 X. King David Playing on the Harp. (*Psalmus De Profundis.* Leaf 16.) On the opposite side the Unicorn; a type of the Prophecies concerning the Blessed Virgin in the Psalms.
 XI. *Ecce Homo!* (Post elevationem corporis et sanguinis D. N. Jesu Christi. “*Domine J. C. qui mundum universum proprio sanguine redemisti.* Leaf 10.)
 XII. A Candelabrum, held by two hovering Genii. (Ps. 50. Leaf 19.)
 XIII. The Trinity. (*Sanctæ Trinitatis supplex invocatio.* Leaf 21. *Quia peccatores salvare venisti, miserere mihi peccatori.*)
 XIV. St. George on Horseback. (De S. Georgio. Leaf 23. Latin Hymn.)
 XV. St. Apollonia. (De S. Appolonia. Leaf 24.)
 XVI. St. Matthias. (De S. Mathia. Leaf 24.)
 XVII. St. Andrew. (De S. Andrea. Leaf 25.)
 XVIII. St. Maximilian. (De S. Maximiliano. Leaf 25.)
 XIX. The Pride of the Devil humbled: below, the Procession of one of the Mighty of the Earth: above, Christ in tranquil greatness, as the true Emblem of Power. The Child with the Hobby-horse, as first Leader of the Royal Car, seems not to have been placed there by chance. (*Contra Potentes.* Leaf 26.)
 XX. A Group of Fighting Men: on the side of the weaker party, (compare Nos. 21 and 40,) an Angel praying. (*Quando bellum adeundum est, duo psalmi dicendi.* Leaf 28.)
 XXI. A similar group; an Angel with a Censer. (*Psalmus Davidis.* Leaf 29. *Expugna impugnantes me.*)

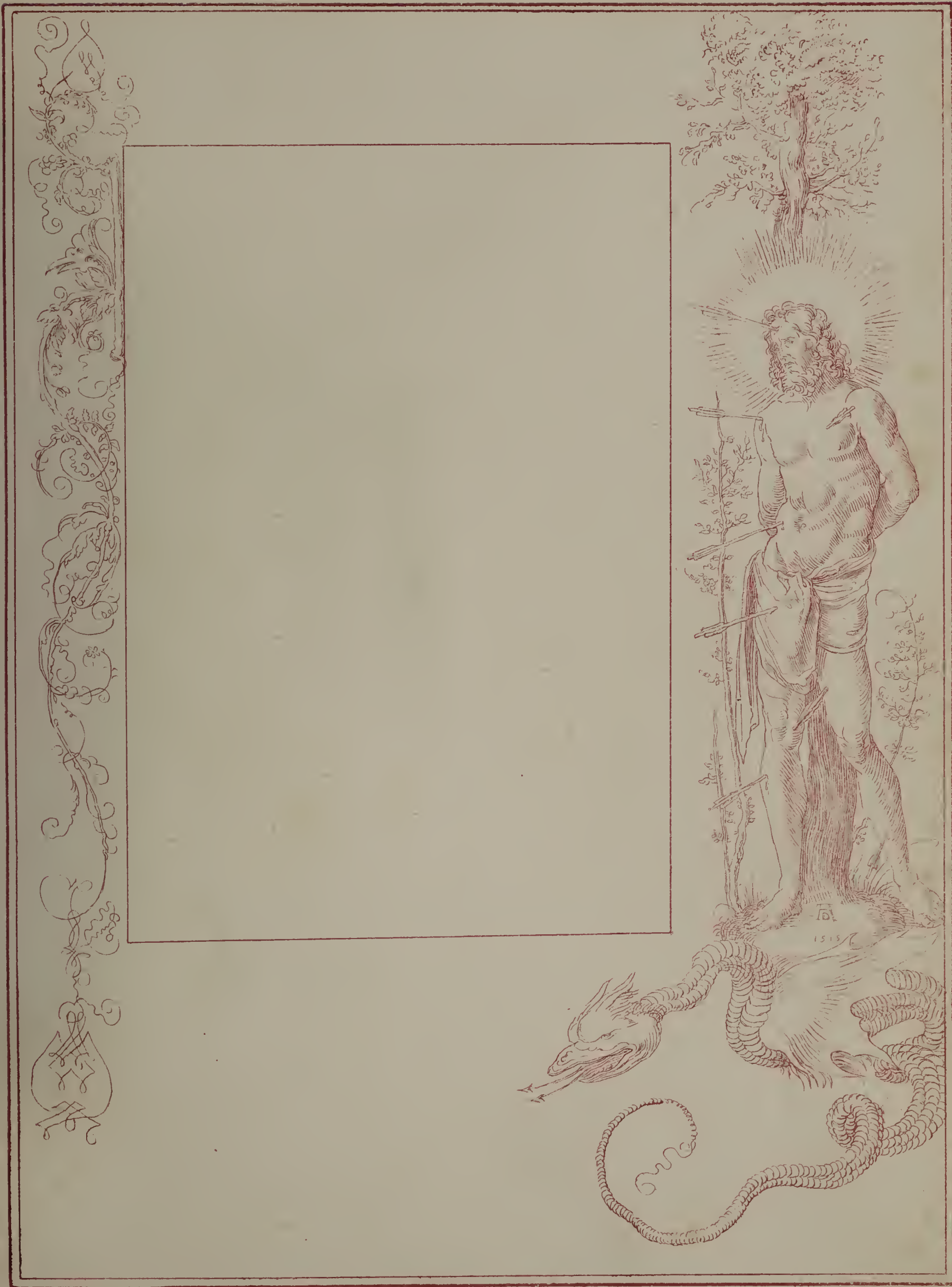
- XXII. and XXIII. The Annunciation of Mary. (Here begin the *Horæ intemeratæ Virginis Mariæ secundum usum Romanæ curiæ*. Leaf 35, 36. The anger of the Devil is excited by Christ's becoming man.)
- XXIV. The taking of Christ. (*Quomodo Judæi perterriti ceciderunt in terram*. Leaf 23.)
- XXV. An armed Man: underneath, a Fox enticing Fowls. (*Pater noster*. Leaf 34. Probably in reference to the "*Memento comprehensionis et temptationis tuæ*," or to the "*Ne nos inducas in tentationem*.")
- XXVI. A Warrior on Horseback pursued by Death. (*Hymnus: Quem terra, pontus, æthera*. Leaf 37.)
- XXVII. The Souls in Purgatory. (*Preces pro animabus fidelium parentum meorum defunctorum, &c.* Leaf 16.)
- XXVIII. Fight of Hercules with the Harpies. (*Psalmus, Cœli enarrant*. Leaf 39.)
- XXIX. An Indian Warrior. (*Psalmus 23*. Leaf 41. "*Domini est terra et universi qui habitant in ea*.")
- XXX. An Arab with a Camel. (*Psalmus 44*. Leaf 42. Perhaps allusive to the passage, "*Et filiæ Tyri in muneribus; vultum tuum deprecabuntur omnes divites*.)
- XXXI. A Man Sleeping. (*Psalmus 86*; of quite martial import, perhaps referring to "*Propterea non timebimus dum turbabitur terra*. Leaf 44.)
- XXXII. An Arabesque. (*Psalmus 95*. Leaf 45.)
- XXXIII. Hercules Killing the Lion; underneath, a drunken Man. (*Iste Psalmus 196*), et alii duo dicuntur diebus Mercurii et Sabati. Leaf 46.
- XXXIV. An armed Man; below, a Woman asleep. (*Psalmus 69*. Leaf 47.)
- XXXV. An Orchestra. (*Psalmus 97*. *Cantate Domino canticum novum*. Leaf 49. "*Psallite Domino in cythara et voce psalmi, in tubis ductilibus et voce tubæ corneæ*.")
- XXXVI. Mary at Prayer, crowned by an Angel. (*Benedictio. Precibus et meritis beatissimæ Virginis Mariæ*. Leaf 50.)
- XXXVII. The Housewife returning from Market:—perhaps Durer's own brawling wife.
- XXXVIII. An Angel praying: below, Bacchus or Silenus. (*Lectio secunda*. Leaf 51. "*Et in plenitudine sanctorum detentio mea*." The lower part forms a fine contrast with the angel and the rising eagle.
- XXXIX. An Arabesque, without reference.
- XL. St. Augustin, or St. Ambrose: below, the Infant Jesus. (*Hymnus Sanctorum Ambrosii et Augustini*. Leaf 52.)
- XLI. An Angel praying: underneath, Two Men fighting. (*Ad laudes: "Deus in adjutorium meum intende"*. Leaf 54.)
- XLII. Perhaps an Apotheosis of the Artist. The Napkin of Veronica, as a symbol of picturesque representation. *Psalmus 92*. Leaf 55.)
- XLIII. A Group of Four Dancers. (*Psalmus 99*. "*Jubilare Deo omnis terra; servite Domino in lætitia*." Leaf 55.)

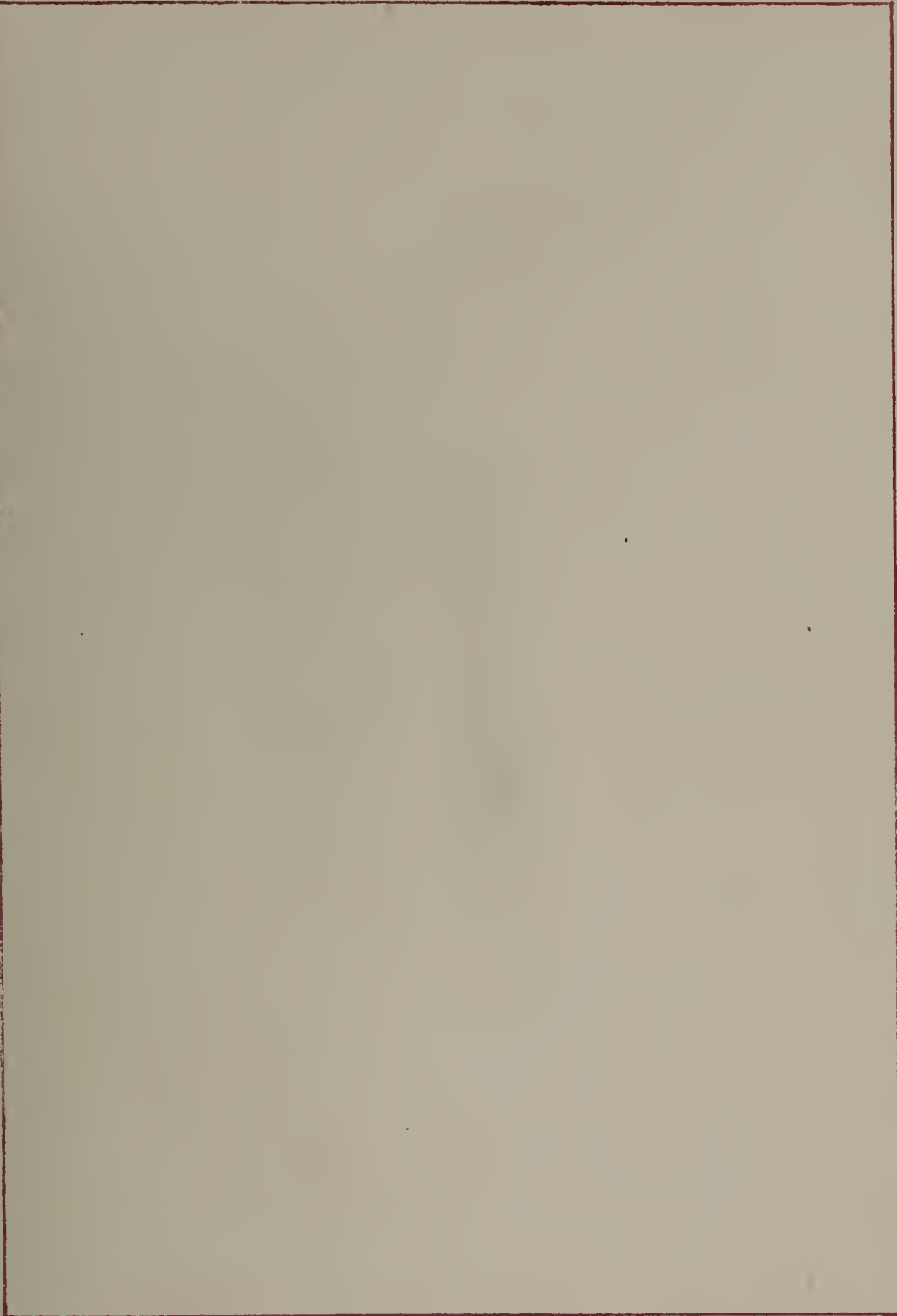
Oratio ad suū propriū angelū.

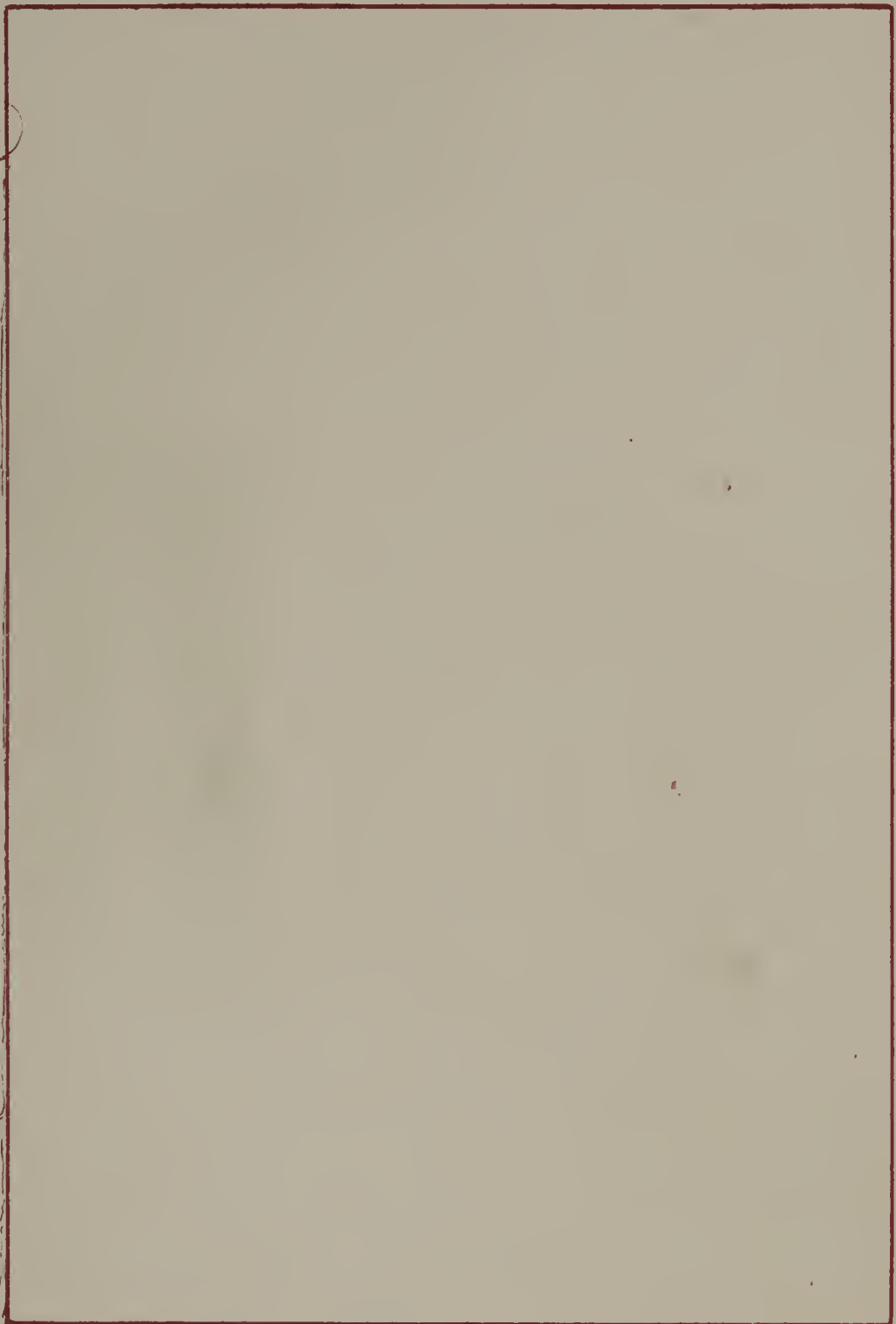
Aus propitiū esto mihi
peccatori. Et sis mihi tu-
stos omnibus diebus vite mee.
Deus Abrahamā. Deus Isaac.
Deus Jacob miserere mei. Et
mitte in adiutoriū meum pro-
priū angelū gloriosissimū:
qui defendat me hodie: et prote-
gat ab omnibus inimicis meis
Sctē Michael archangele. De-
fende me in p̄lio: ut non pereā
in tremendo iudicio. Archan-
gele christi. Per gratiam quā





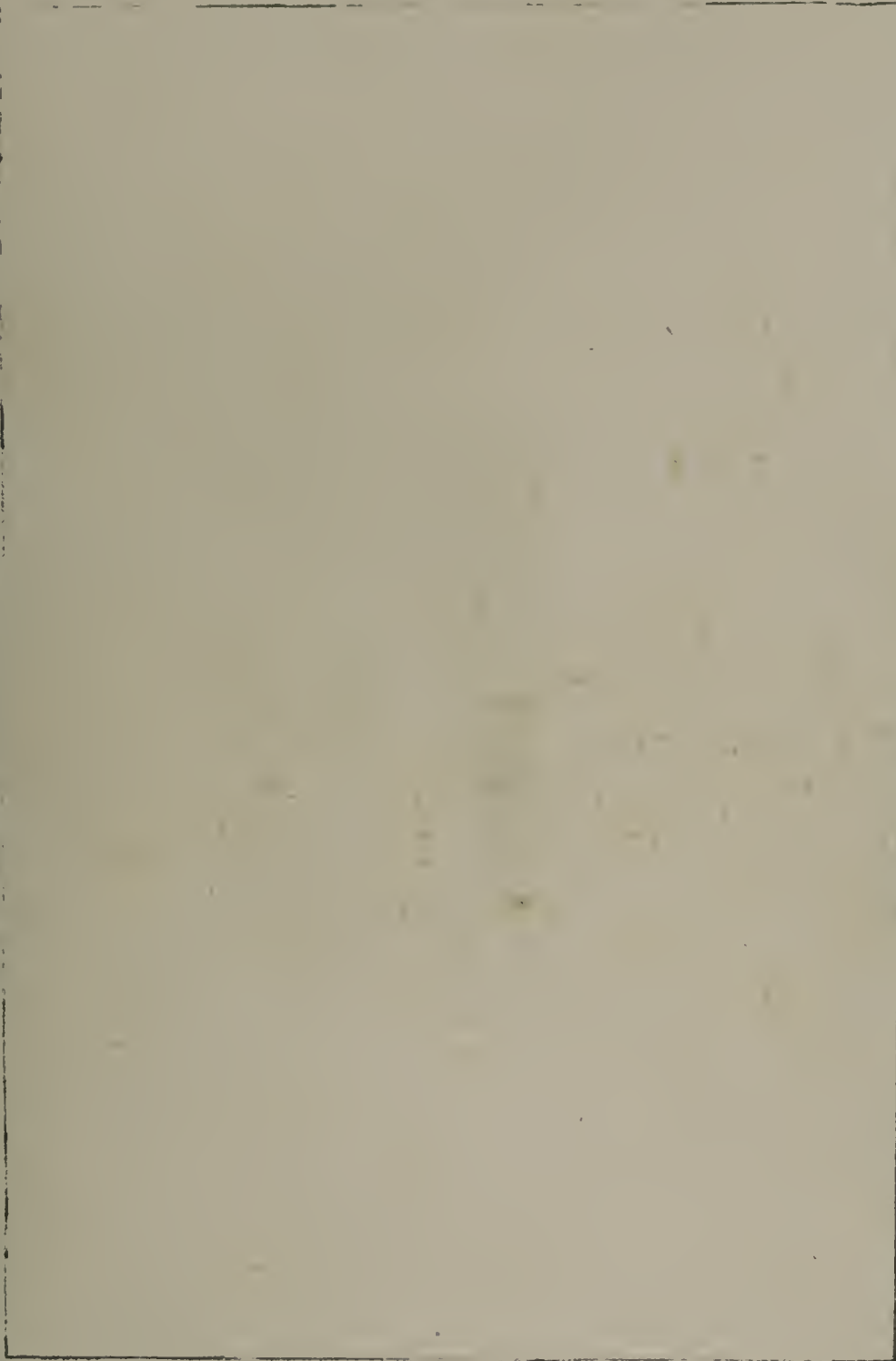






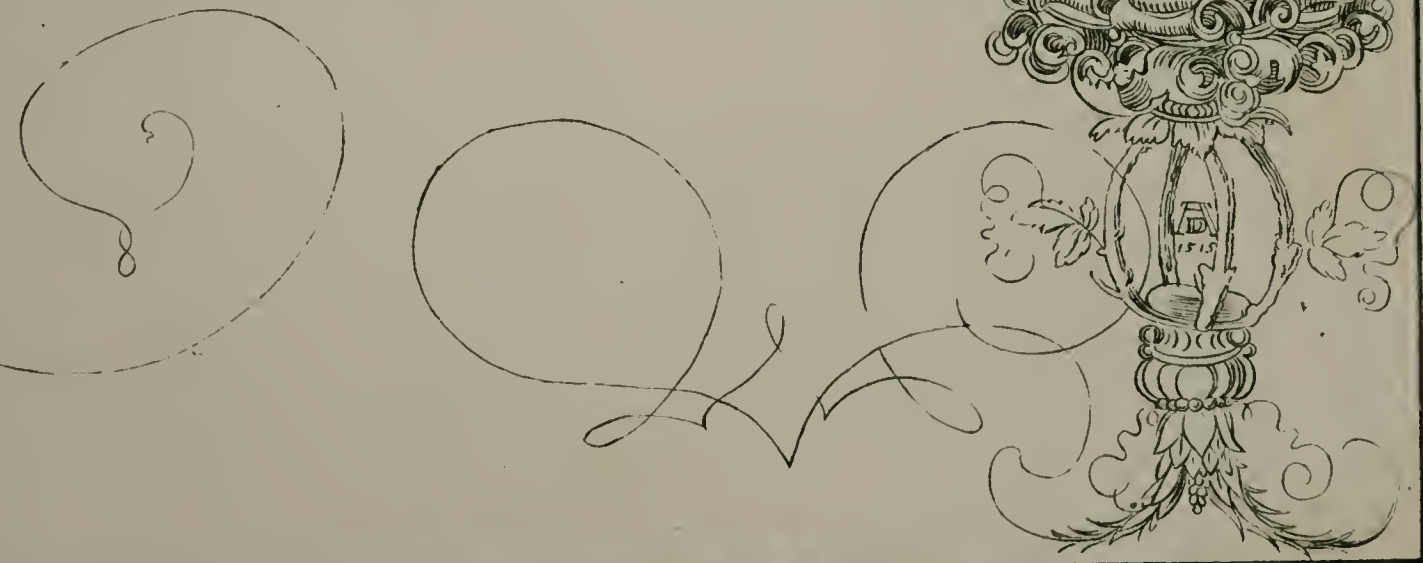
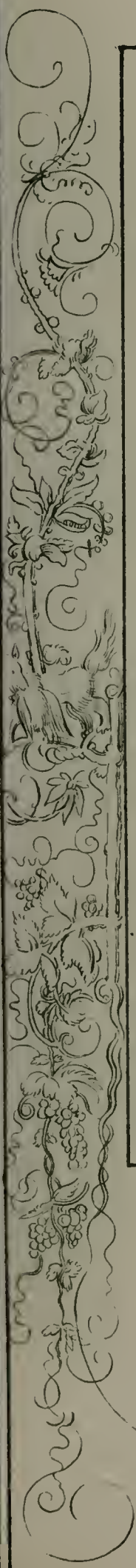
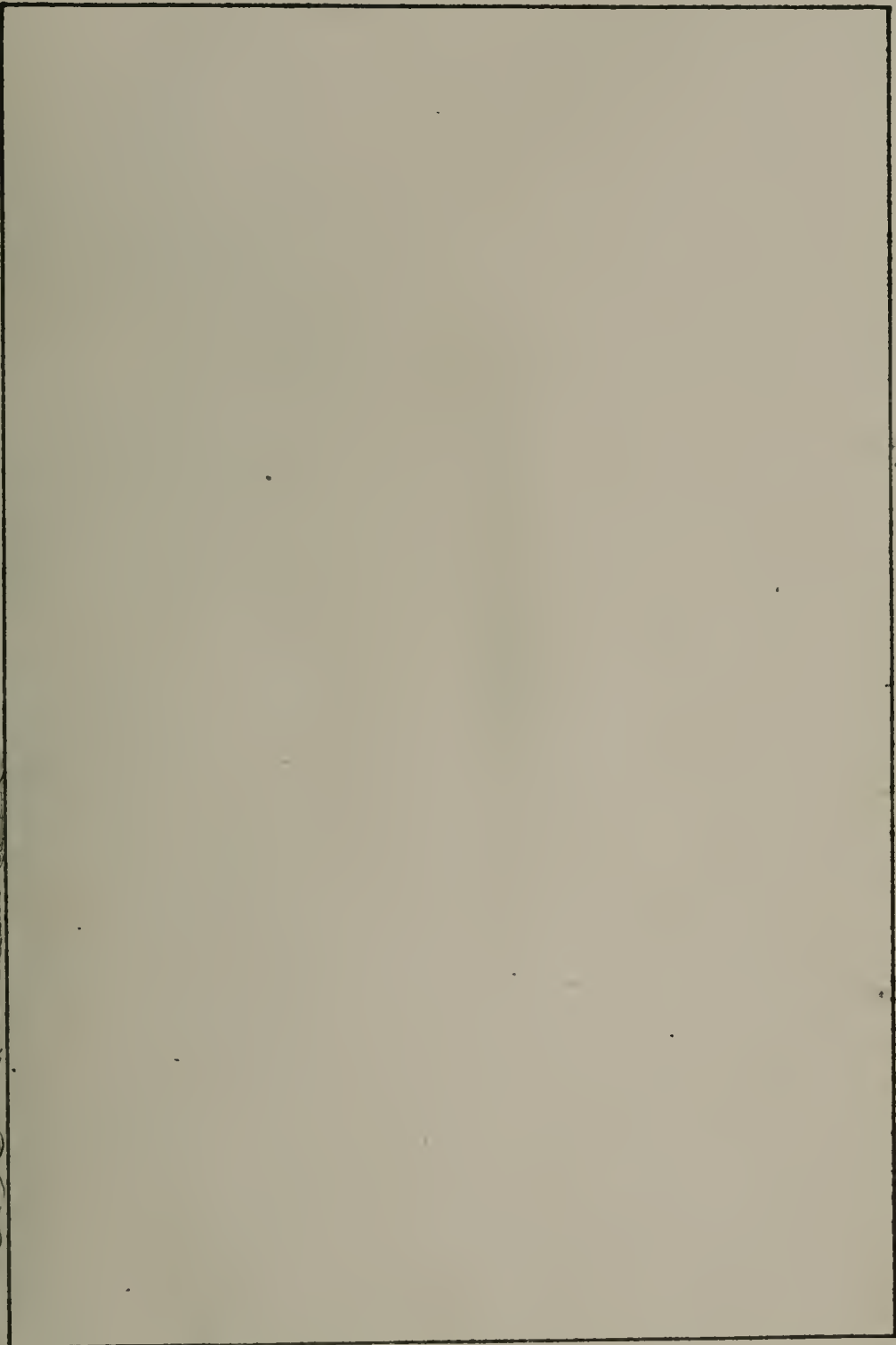
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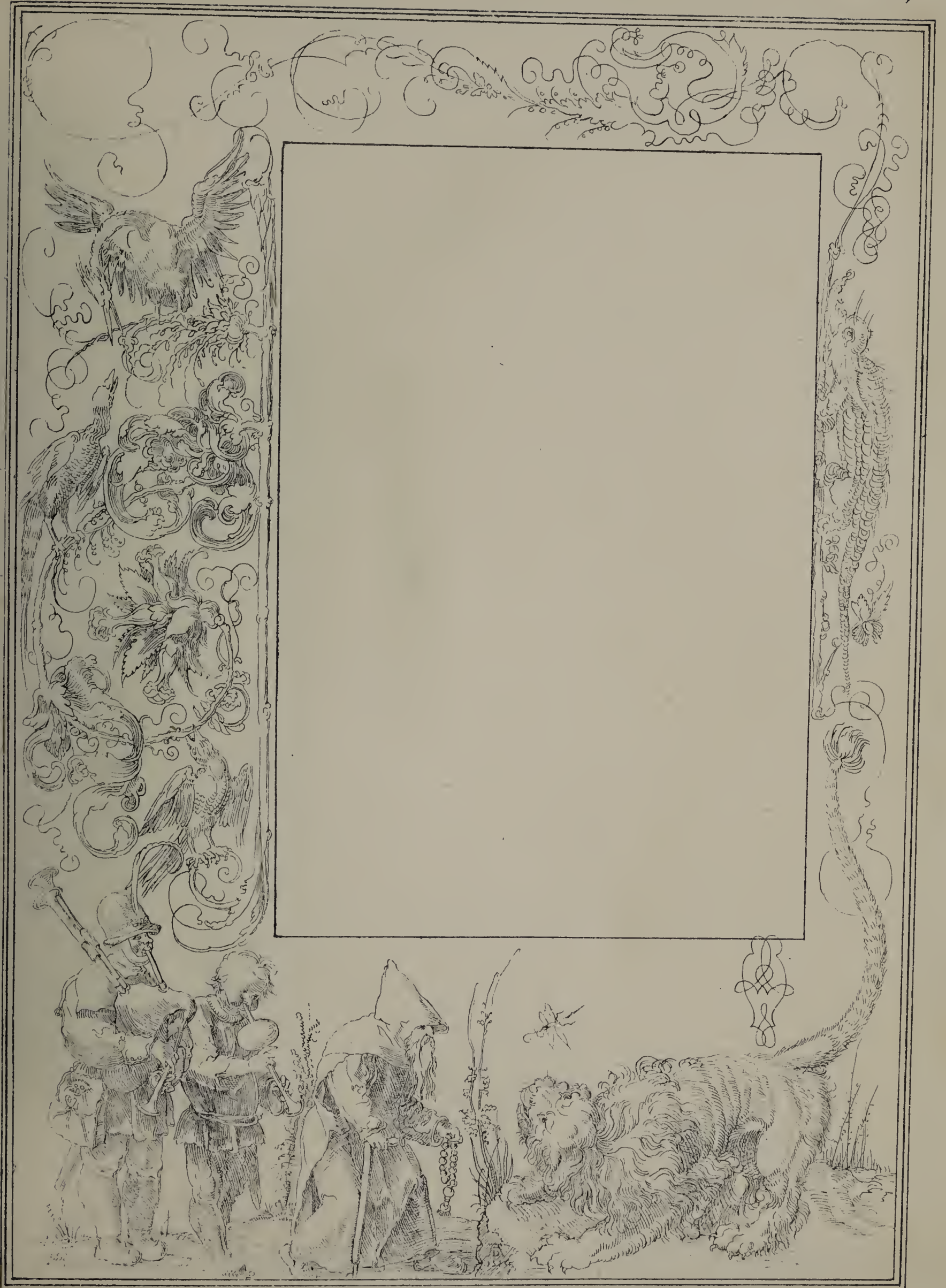




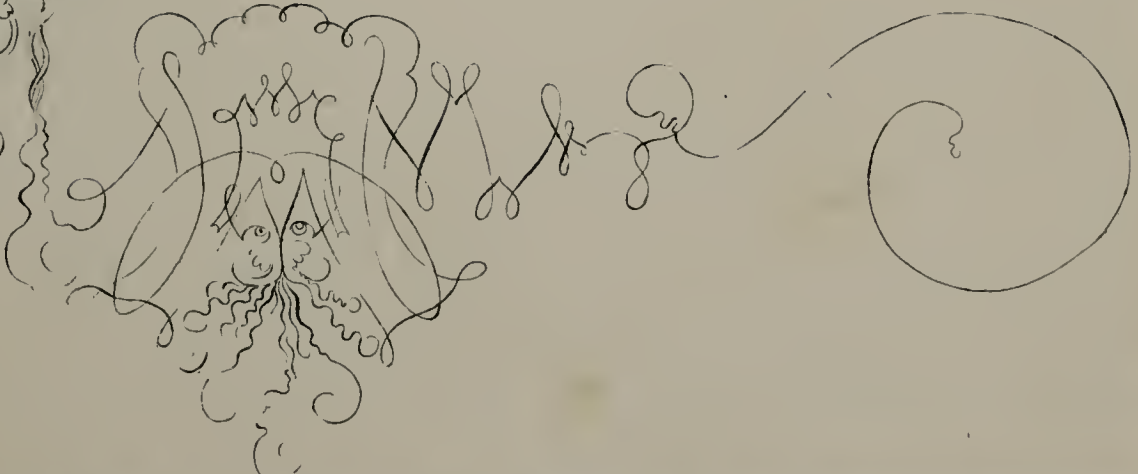
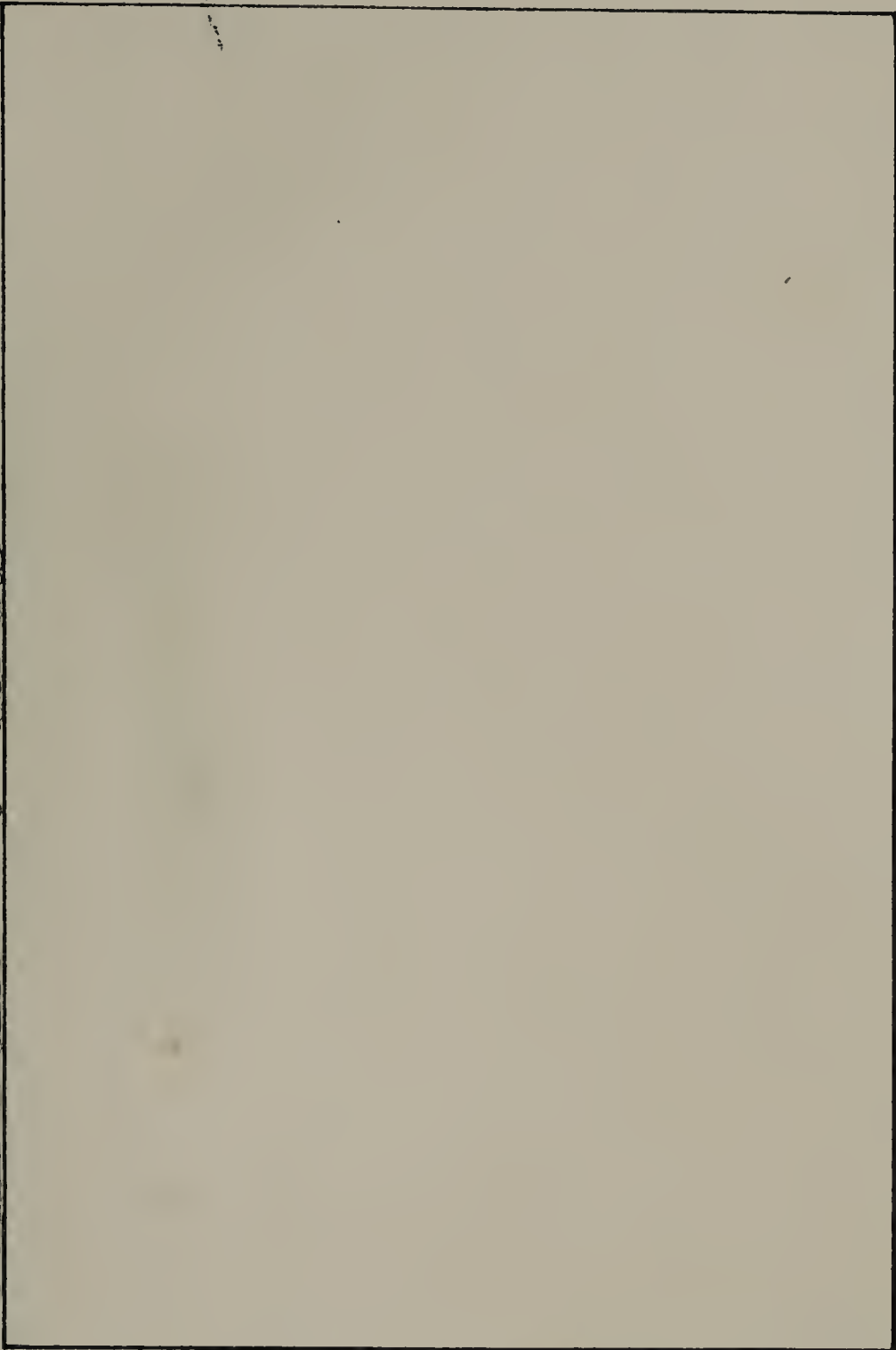
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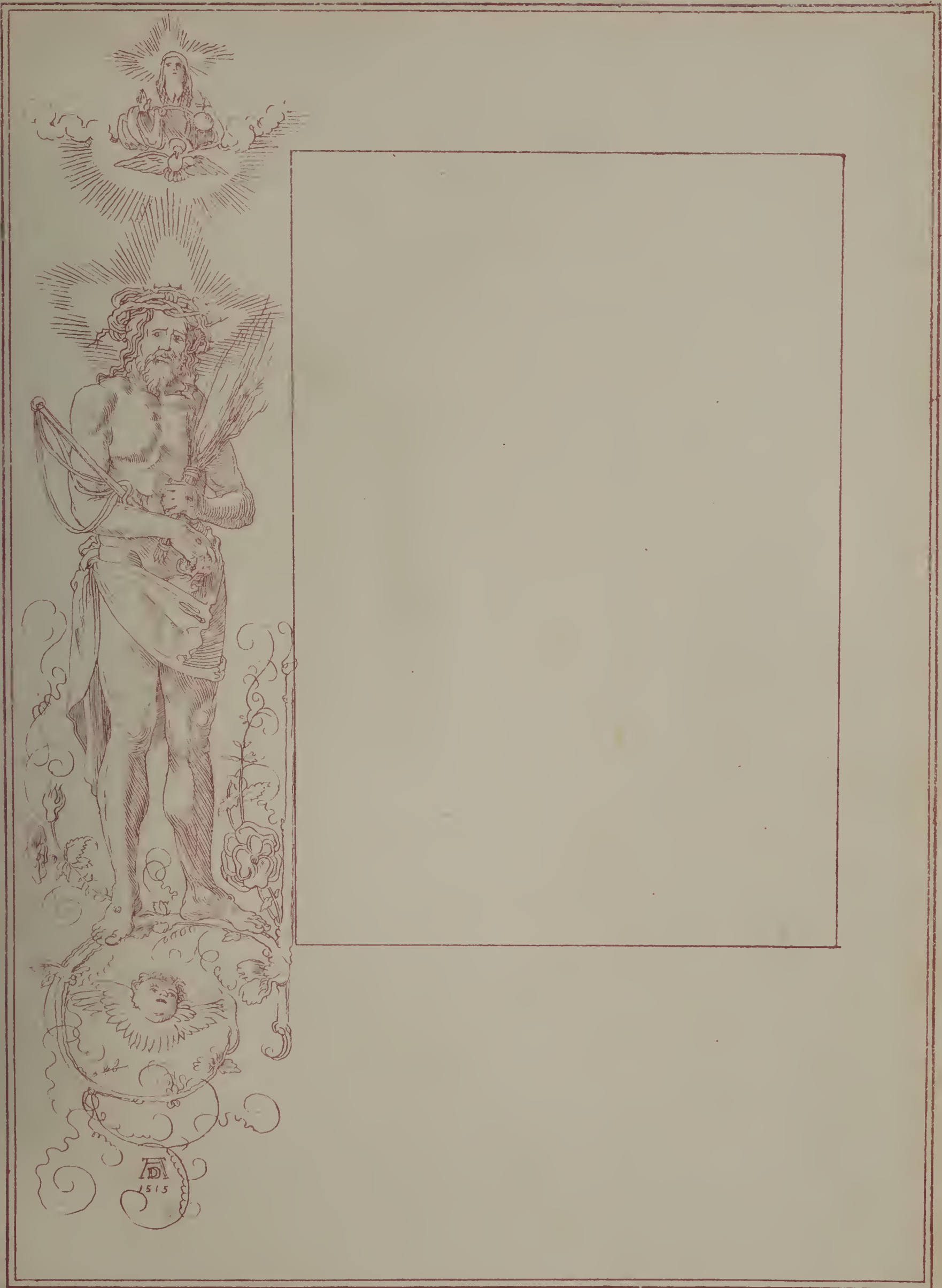




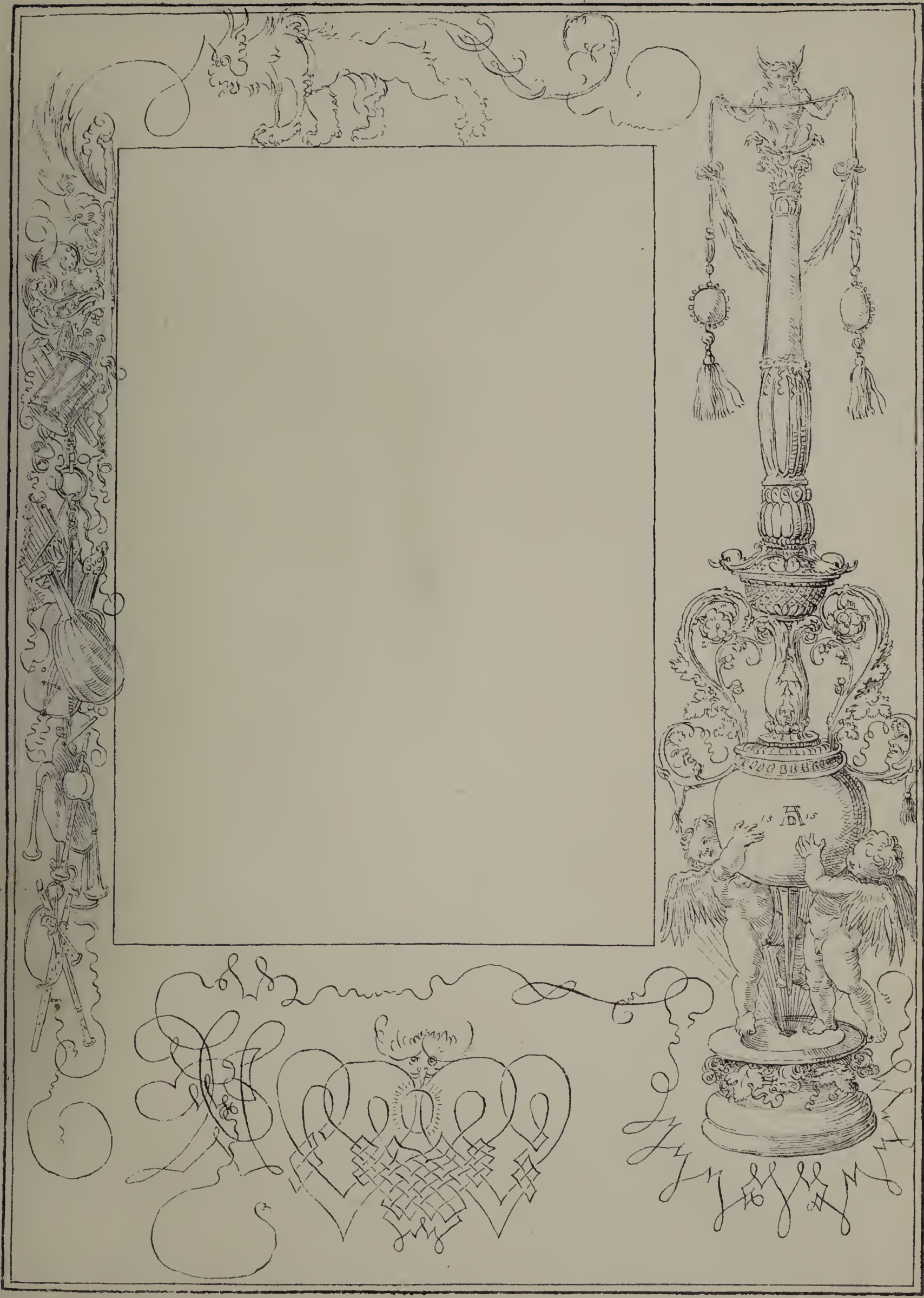
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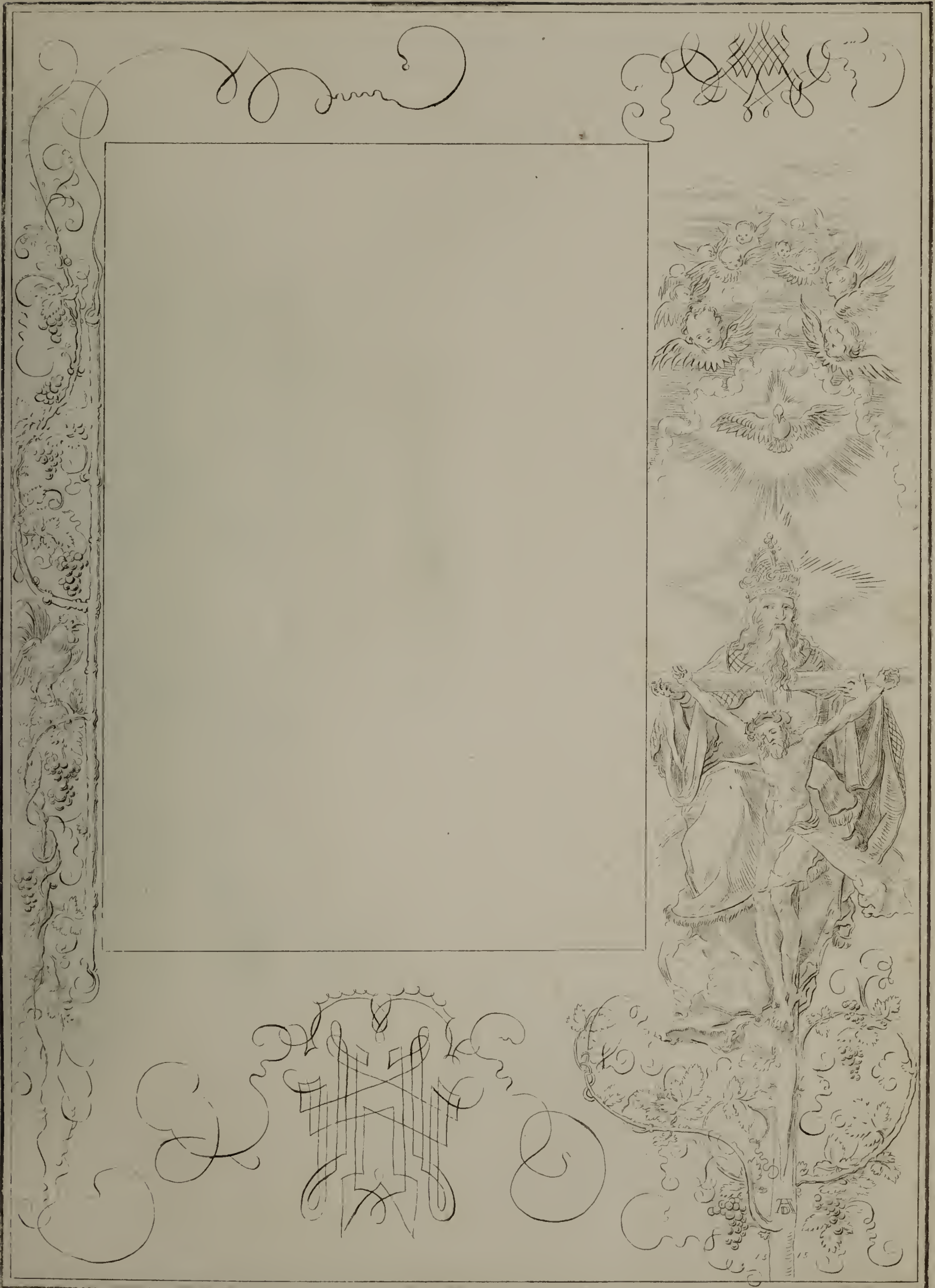


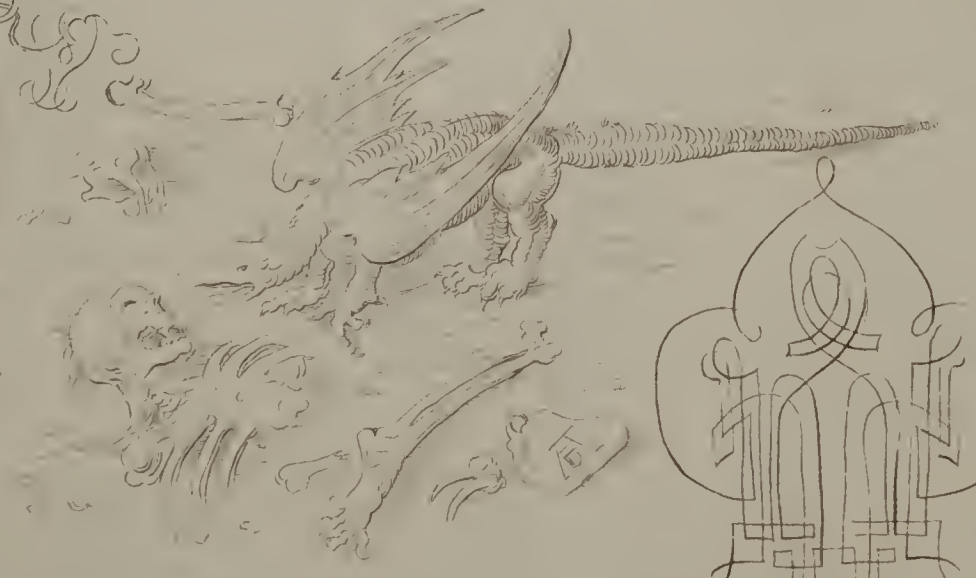
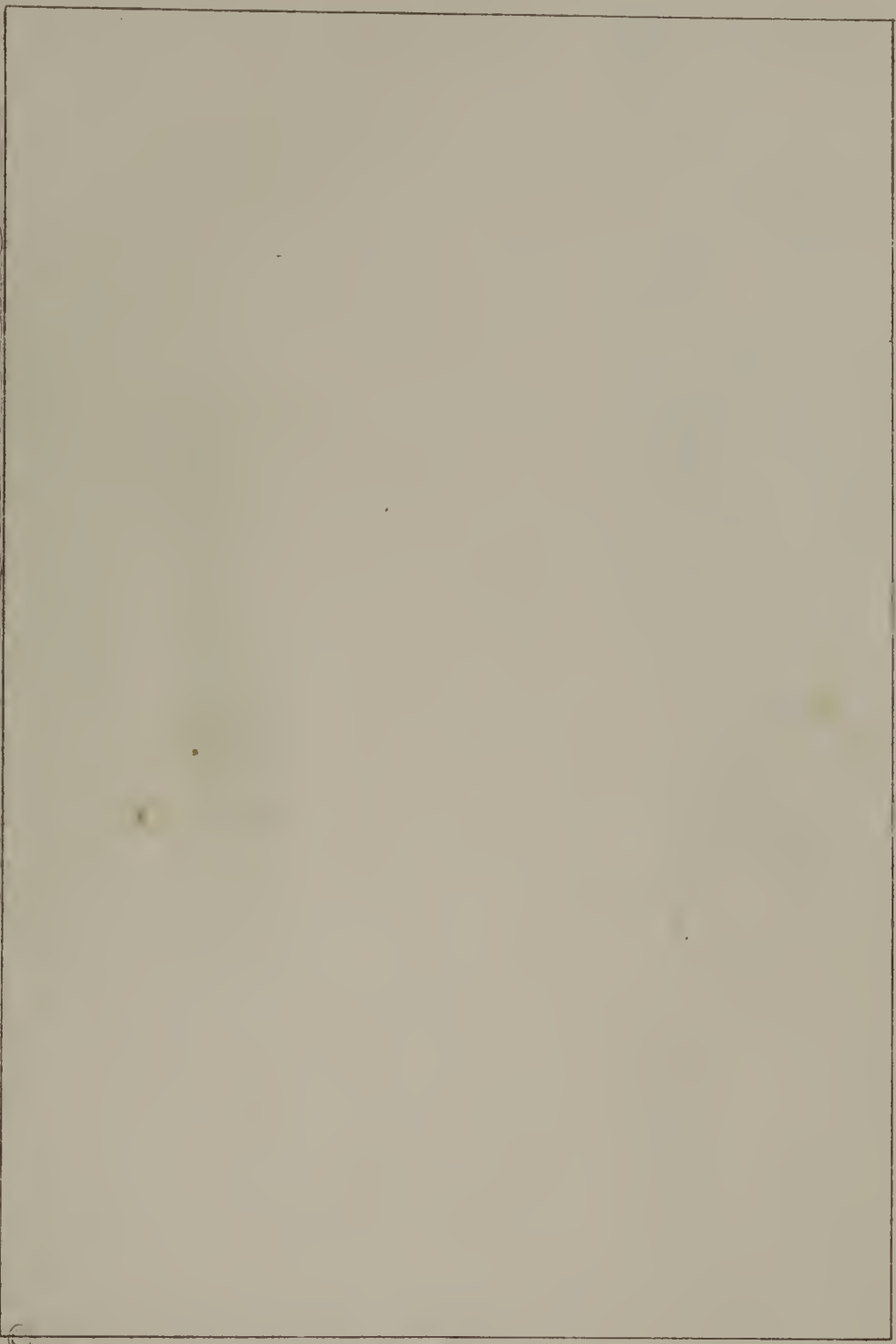
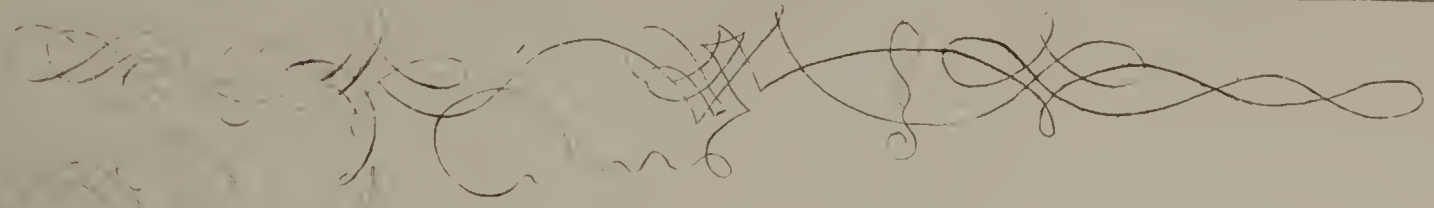
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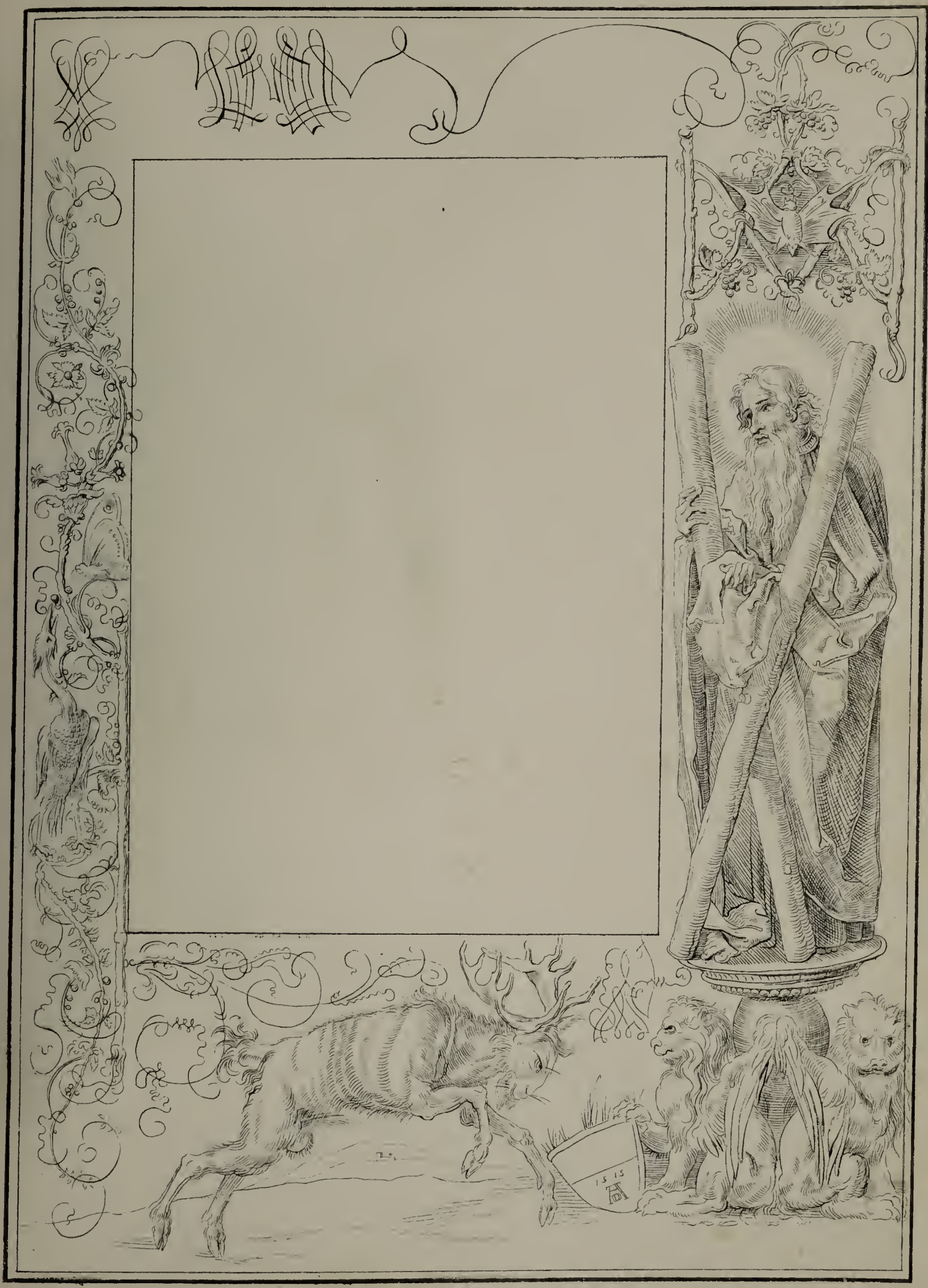


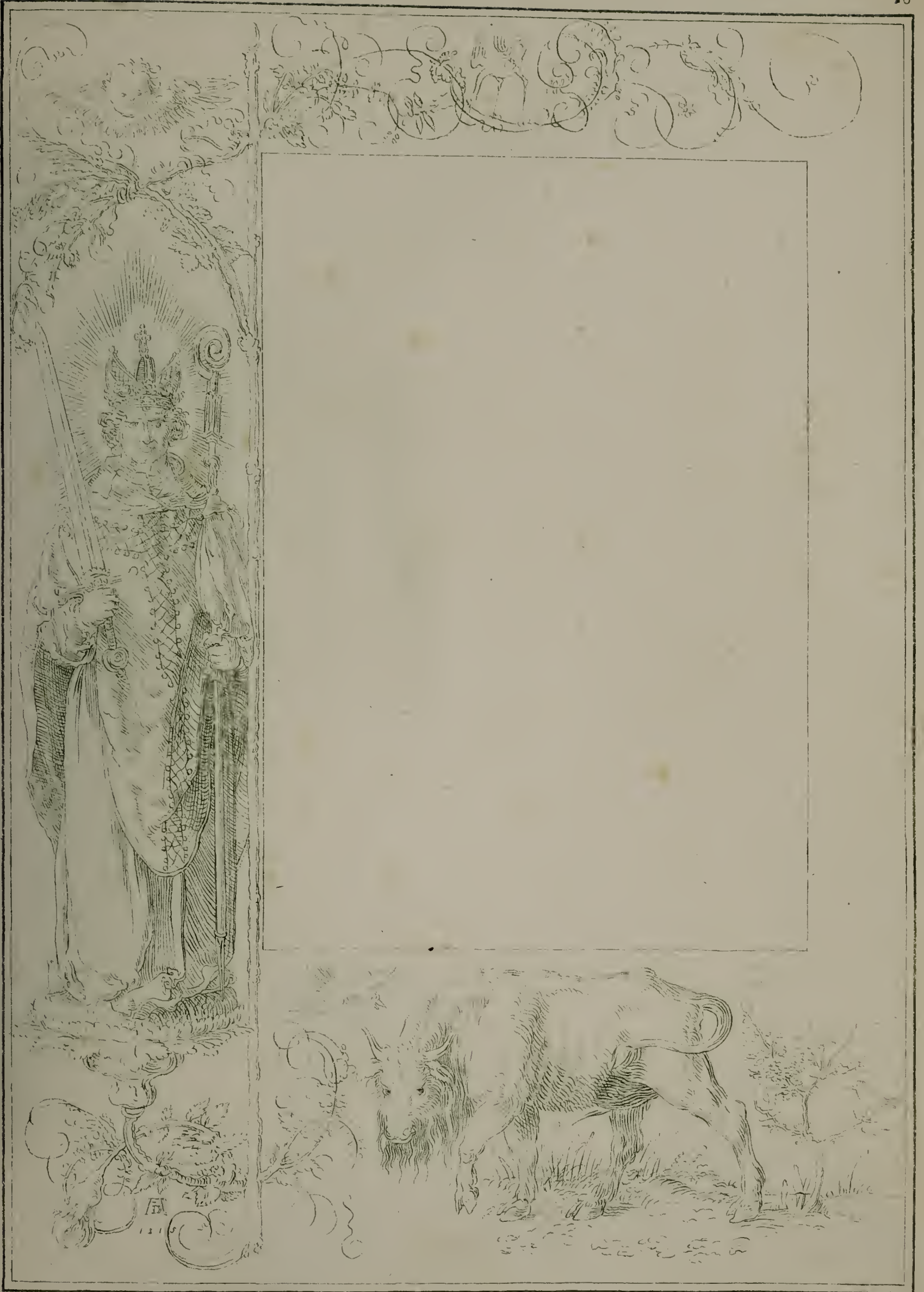


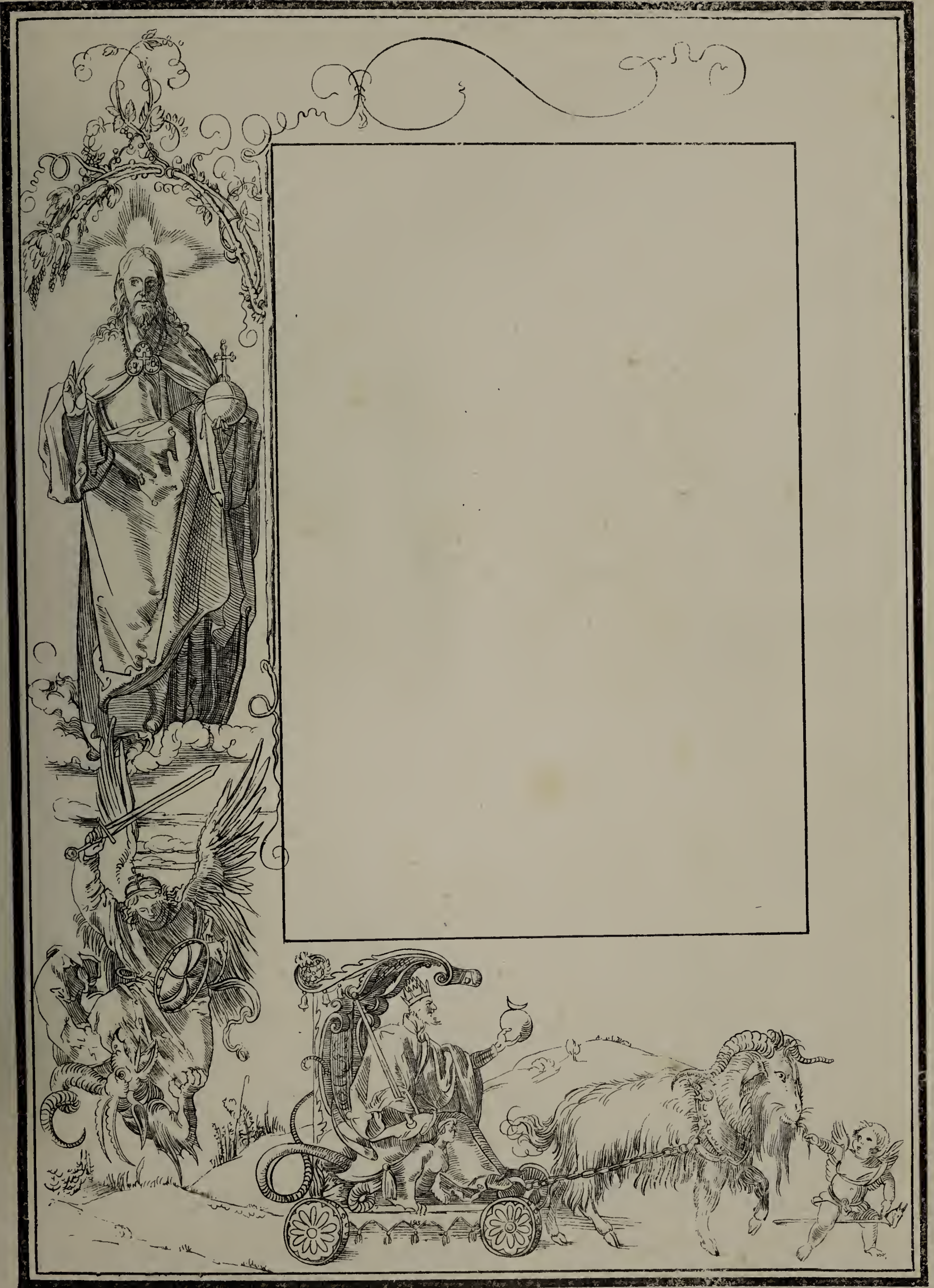






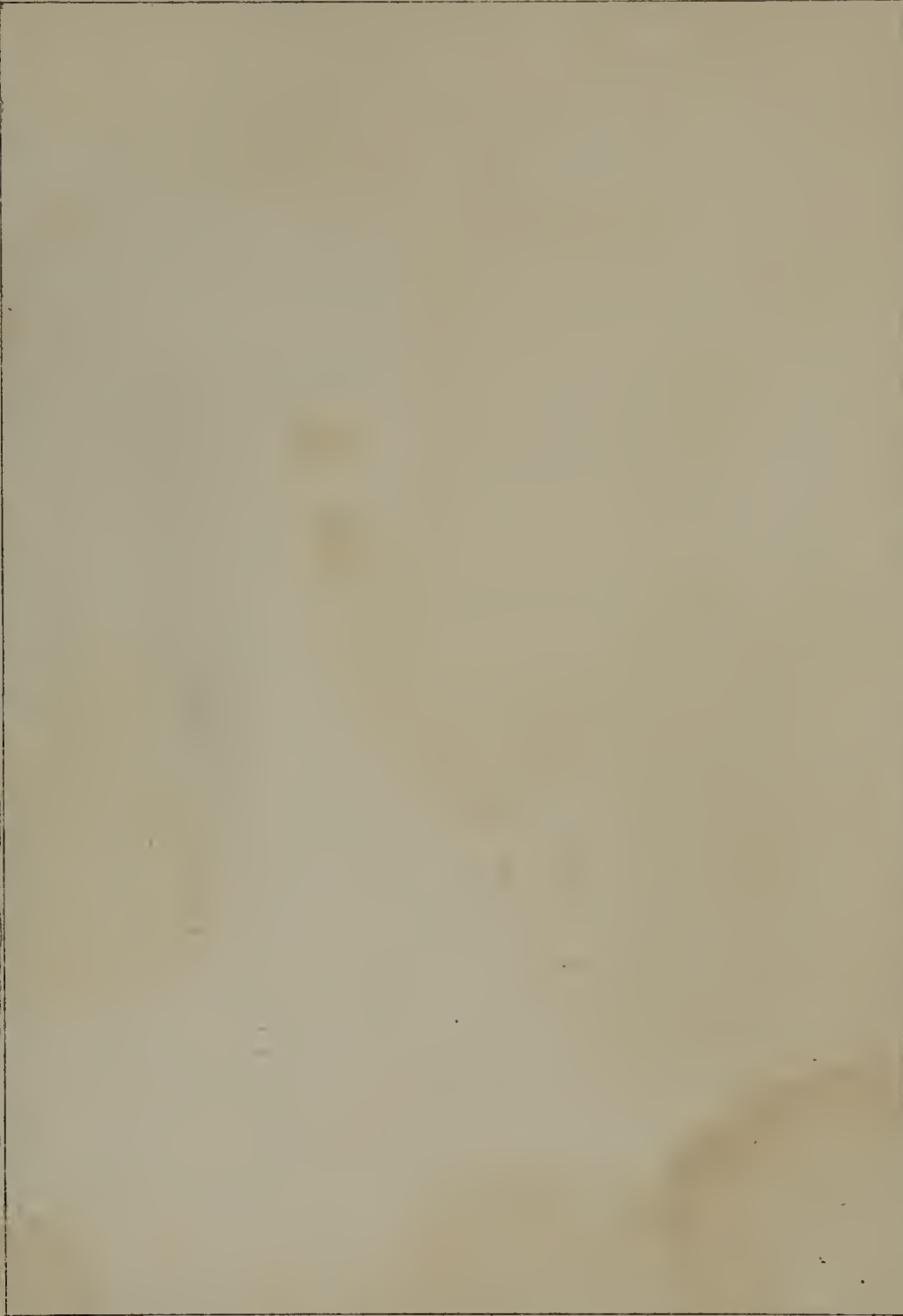


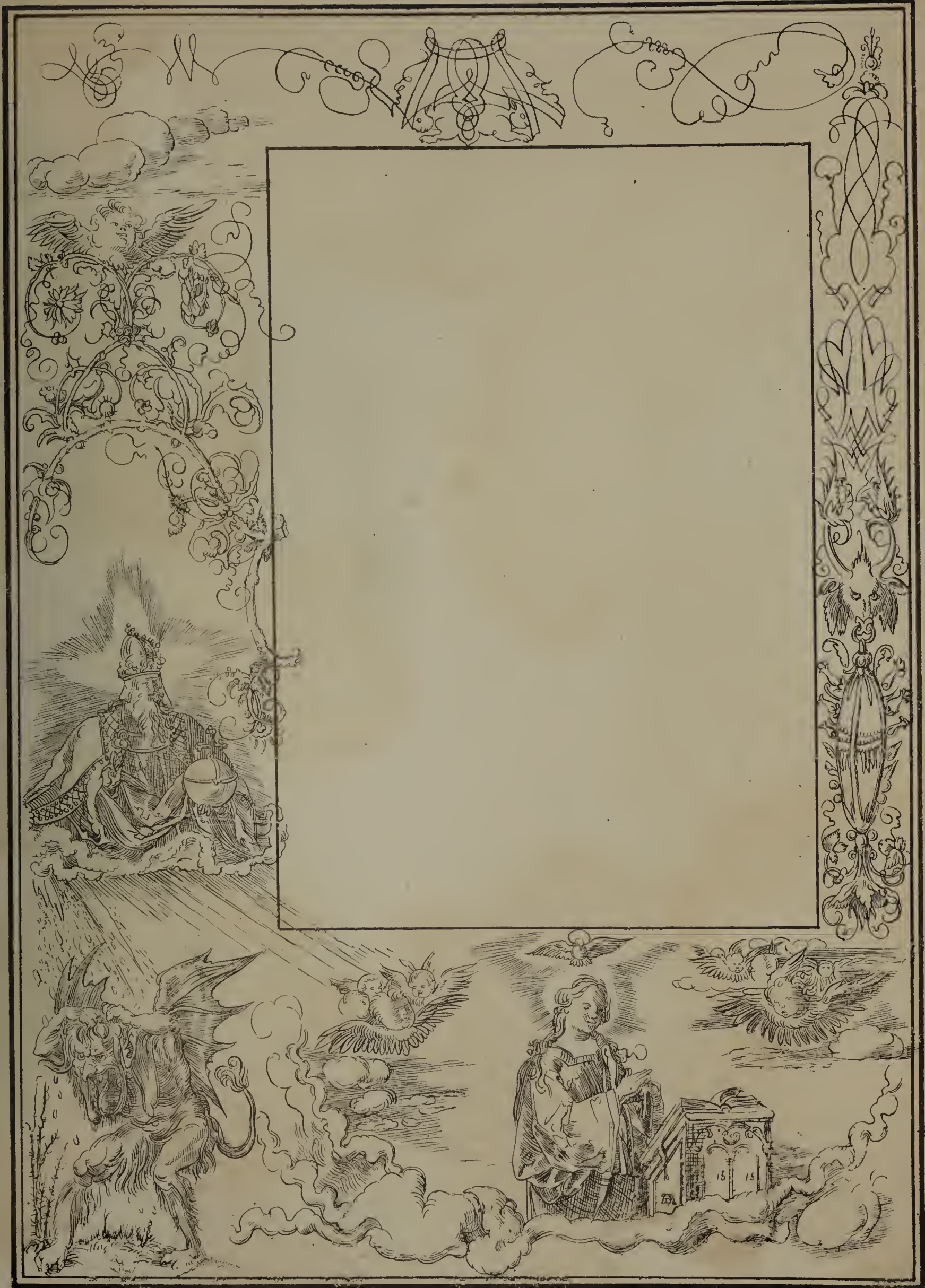






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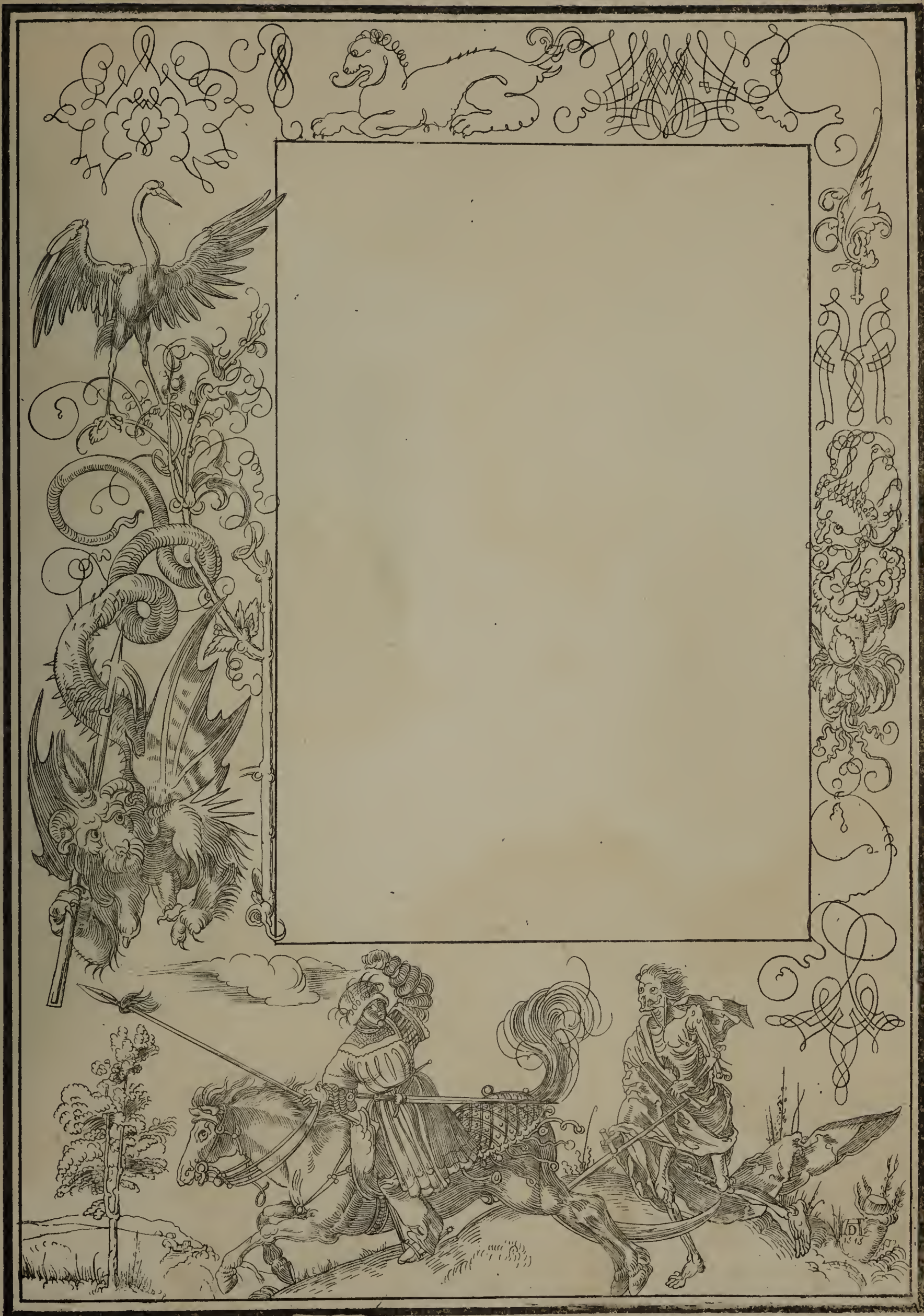


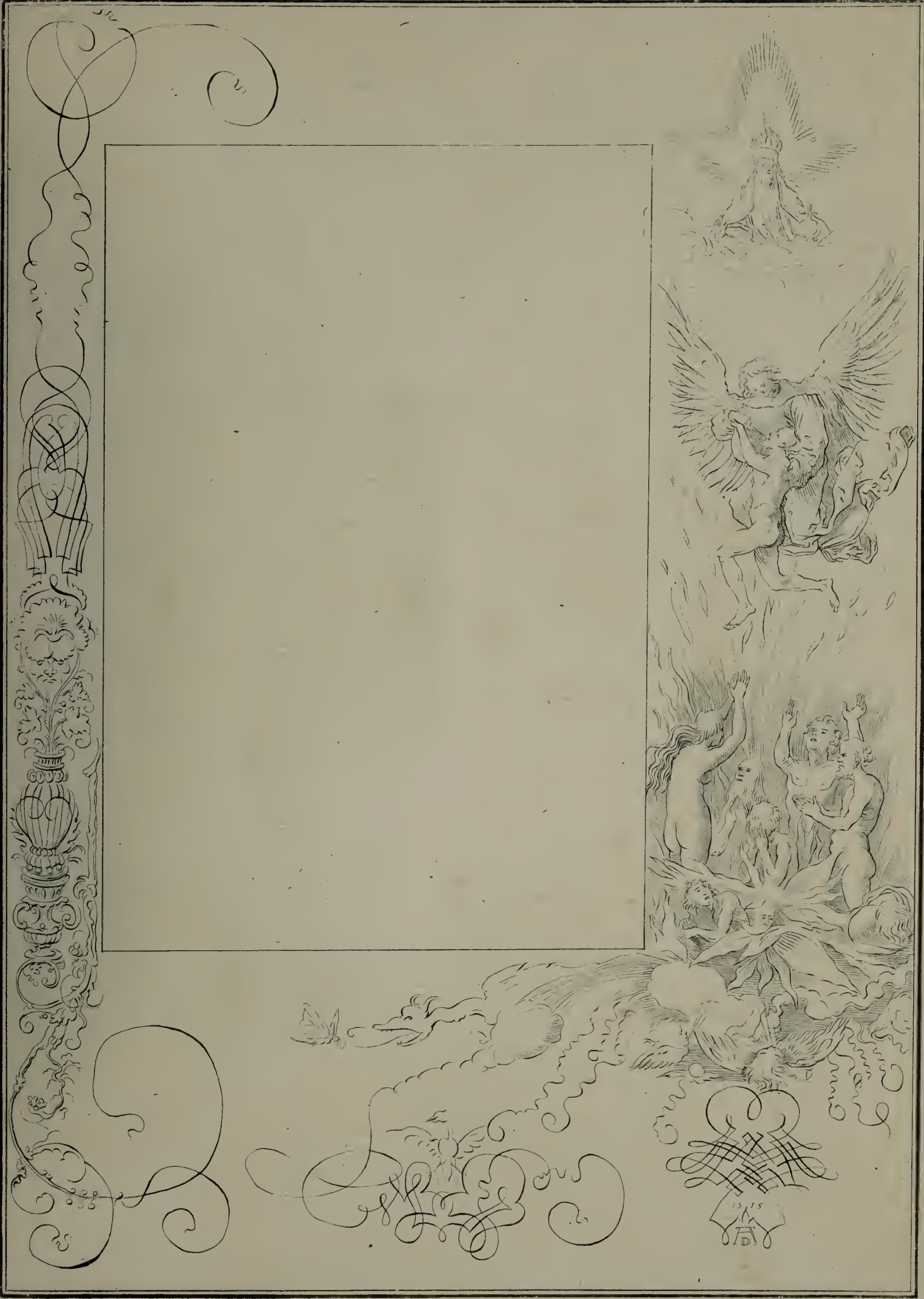


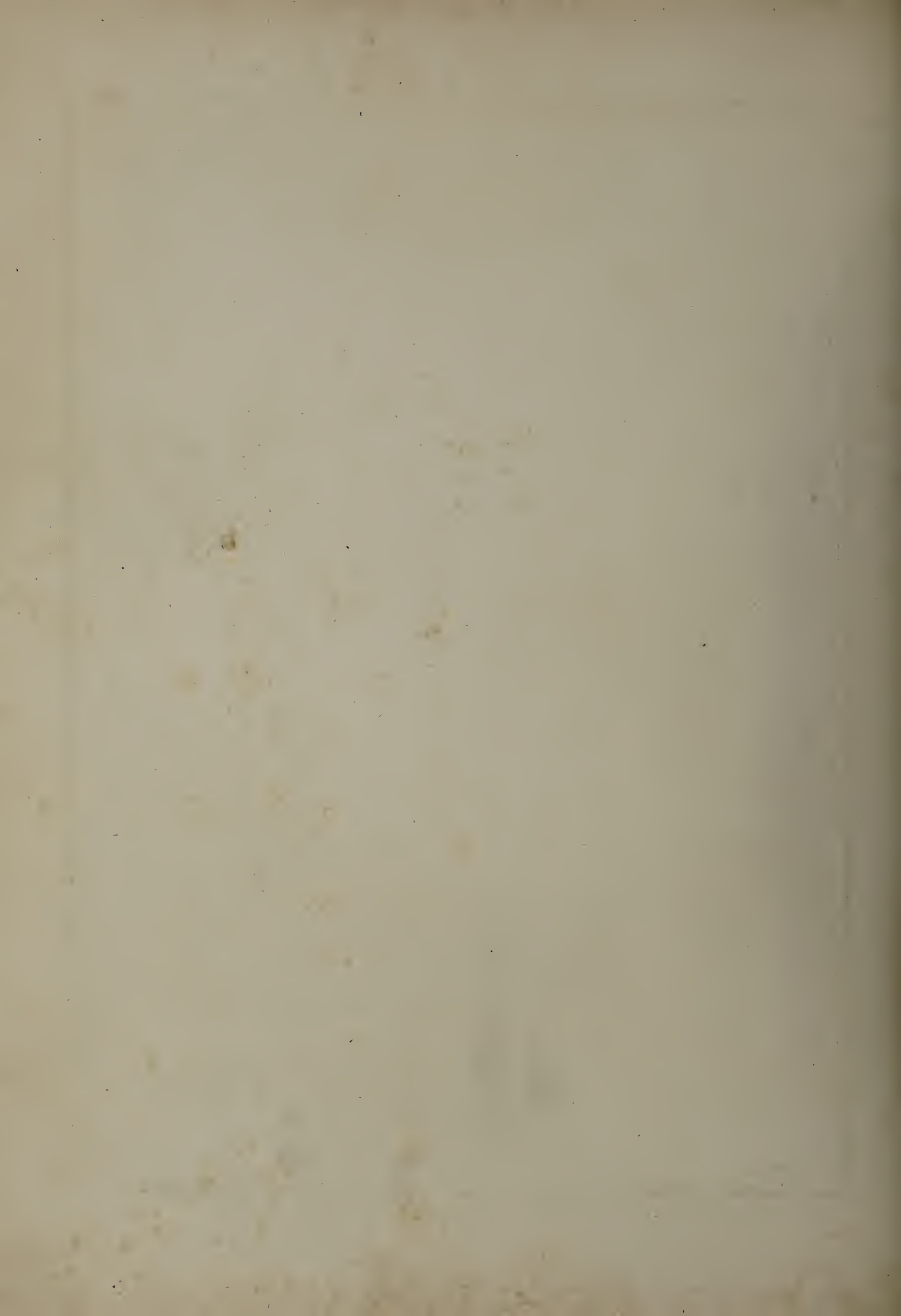


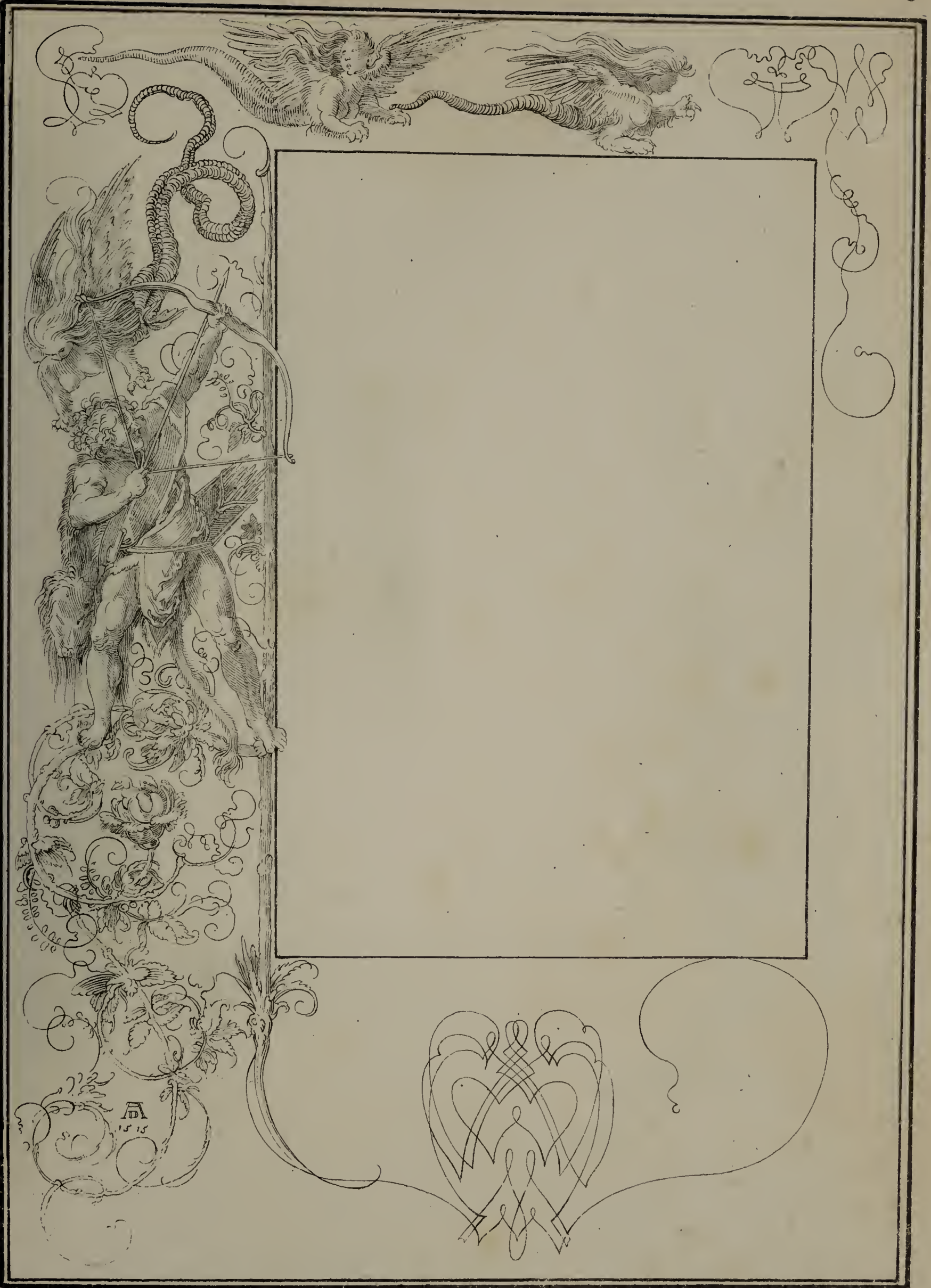










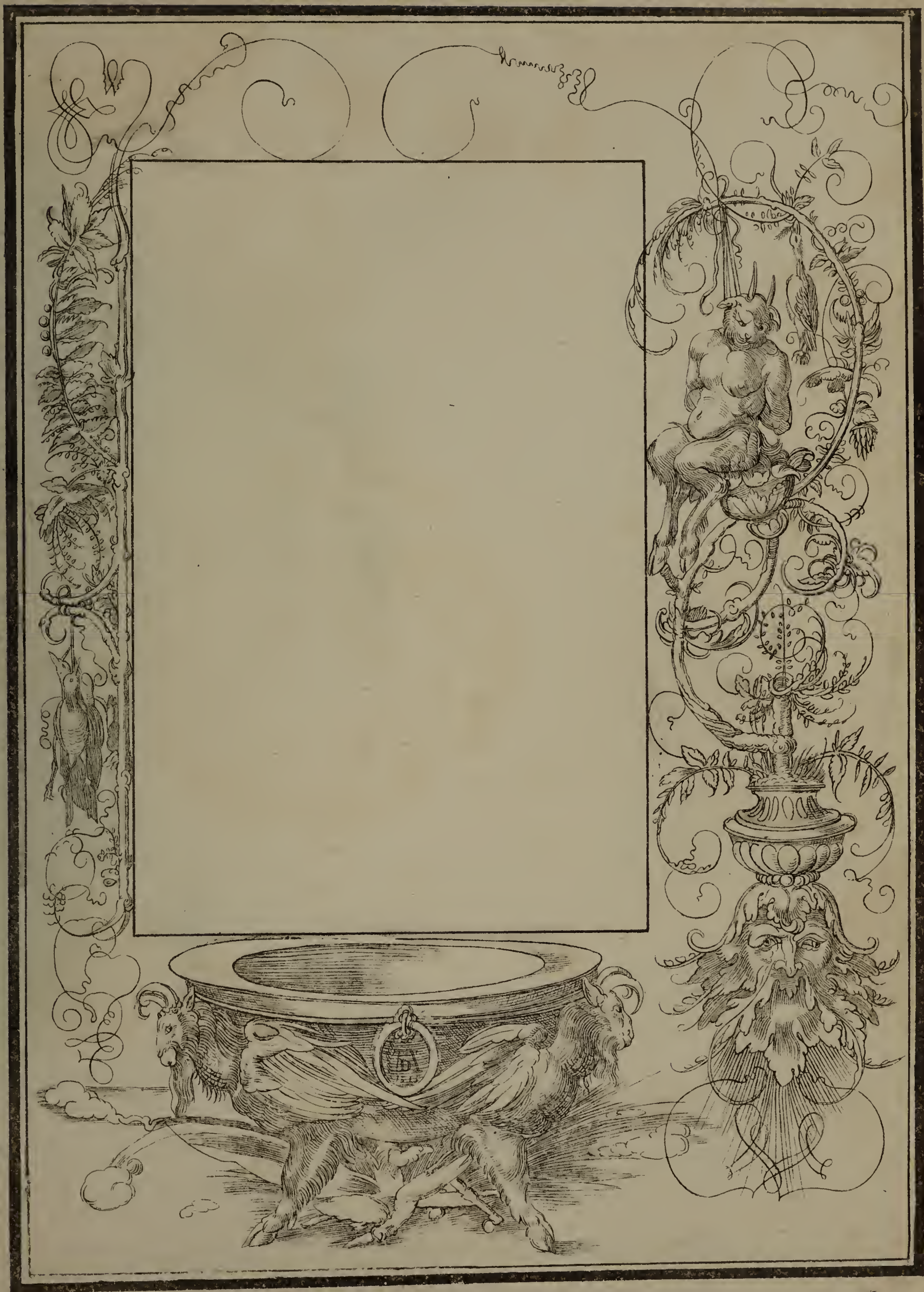




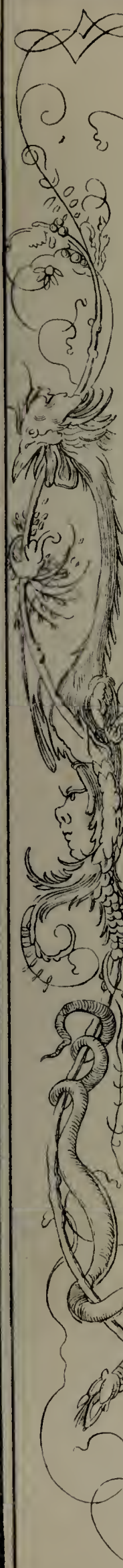
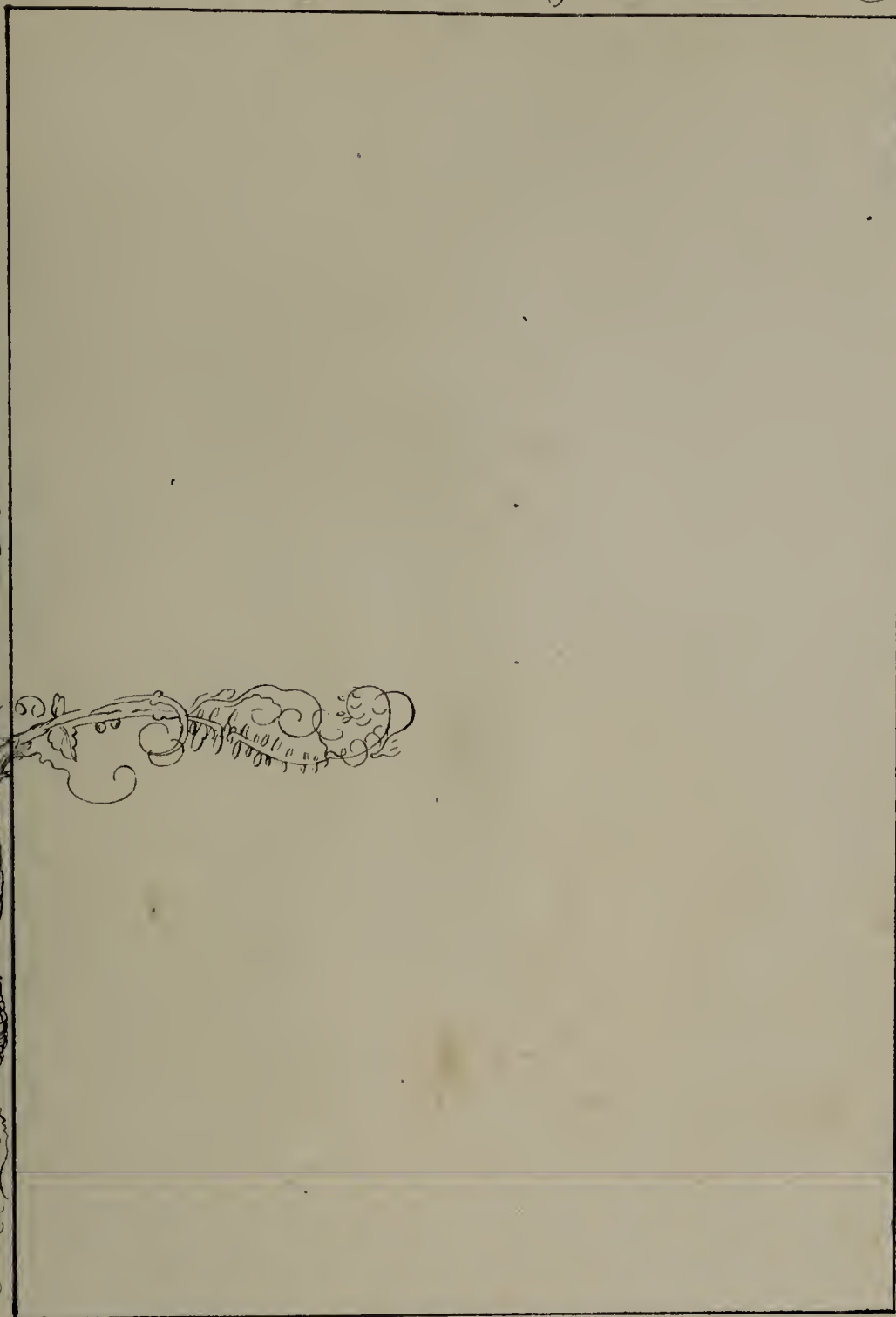
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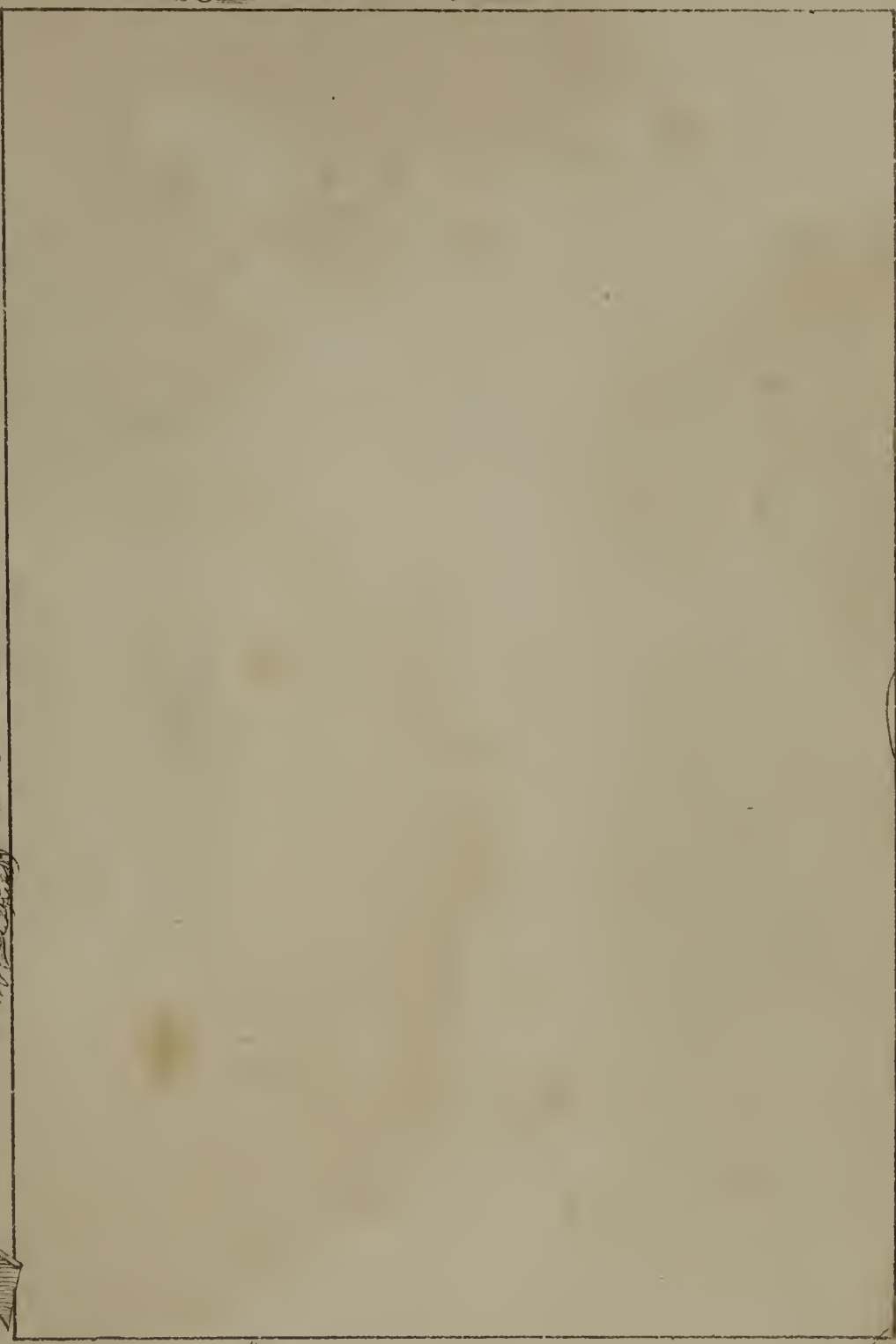




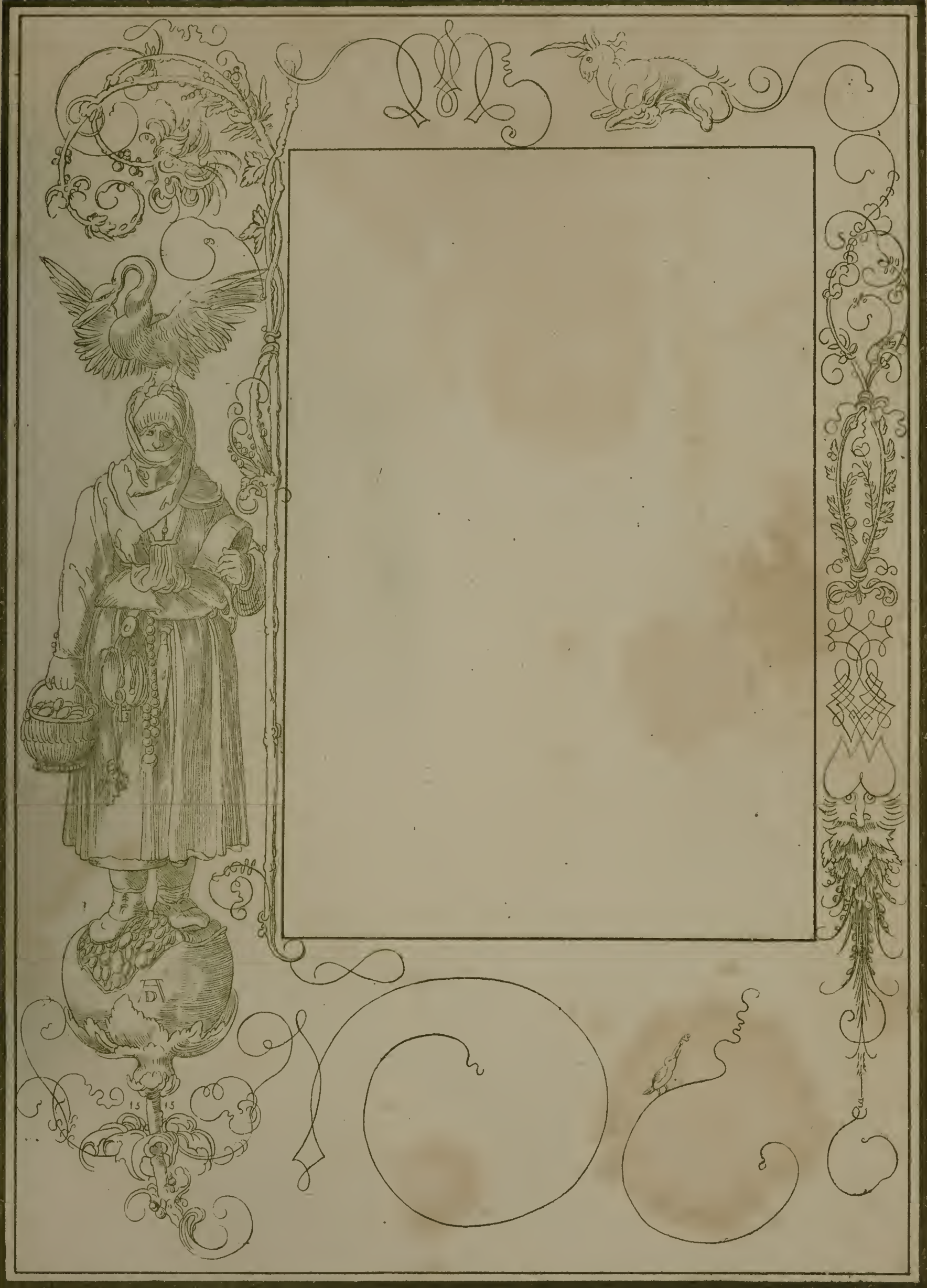
Handwritten text in a decorative, cursive script, possibly a title or dedication, located at the top of the page.



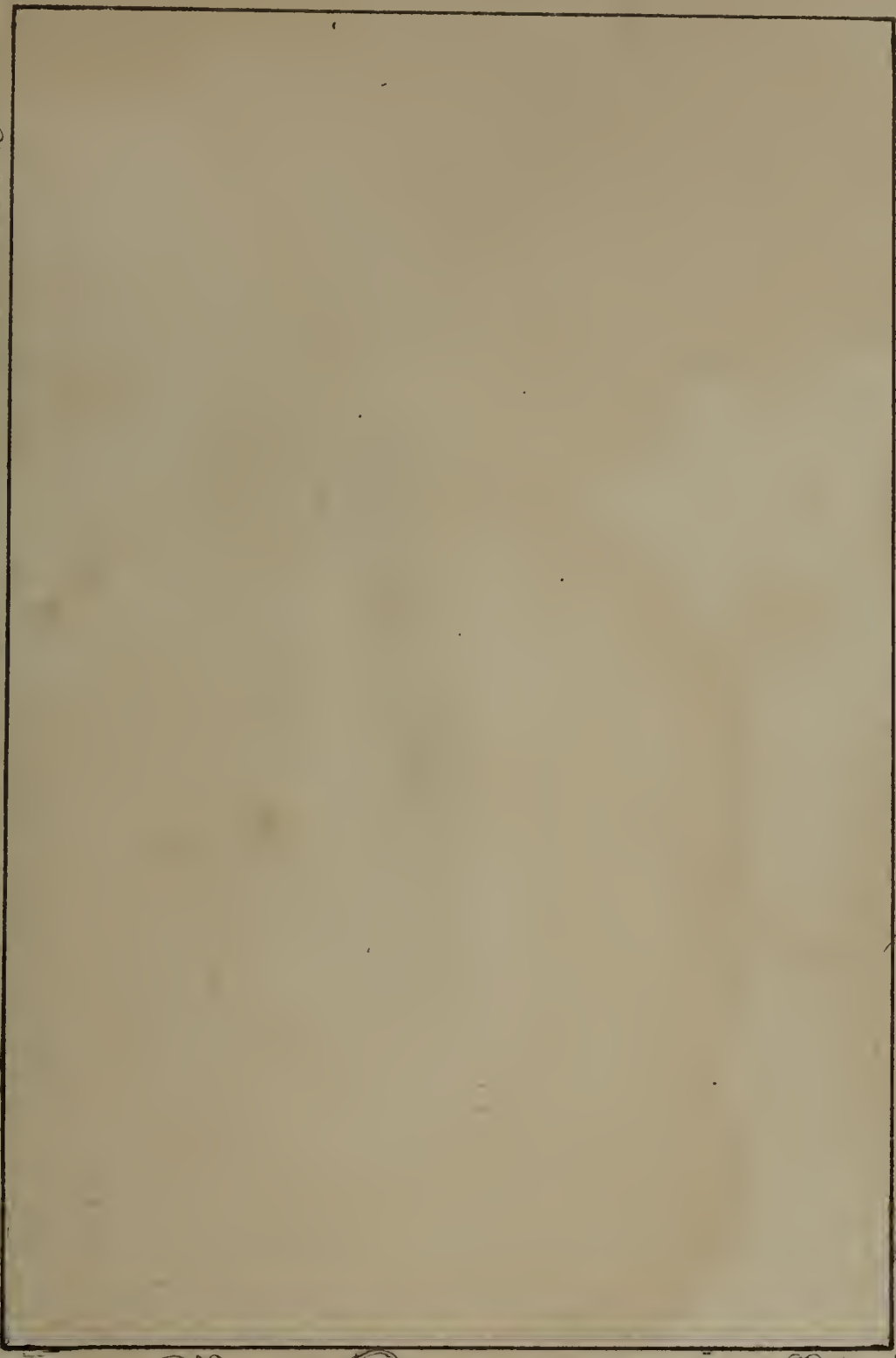
Small decorative mark or signature, possibly a monogram, located at the bottom left of the illustration.







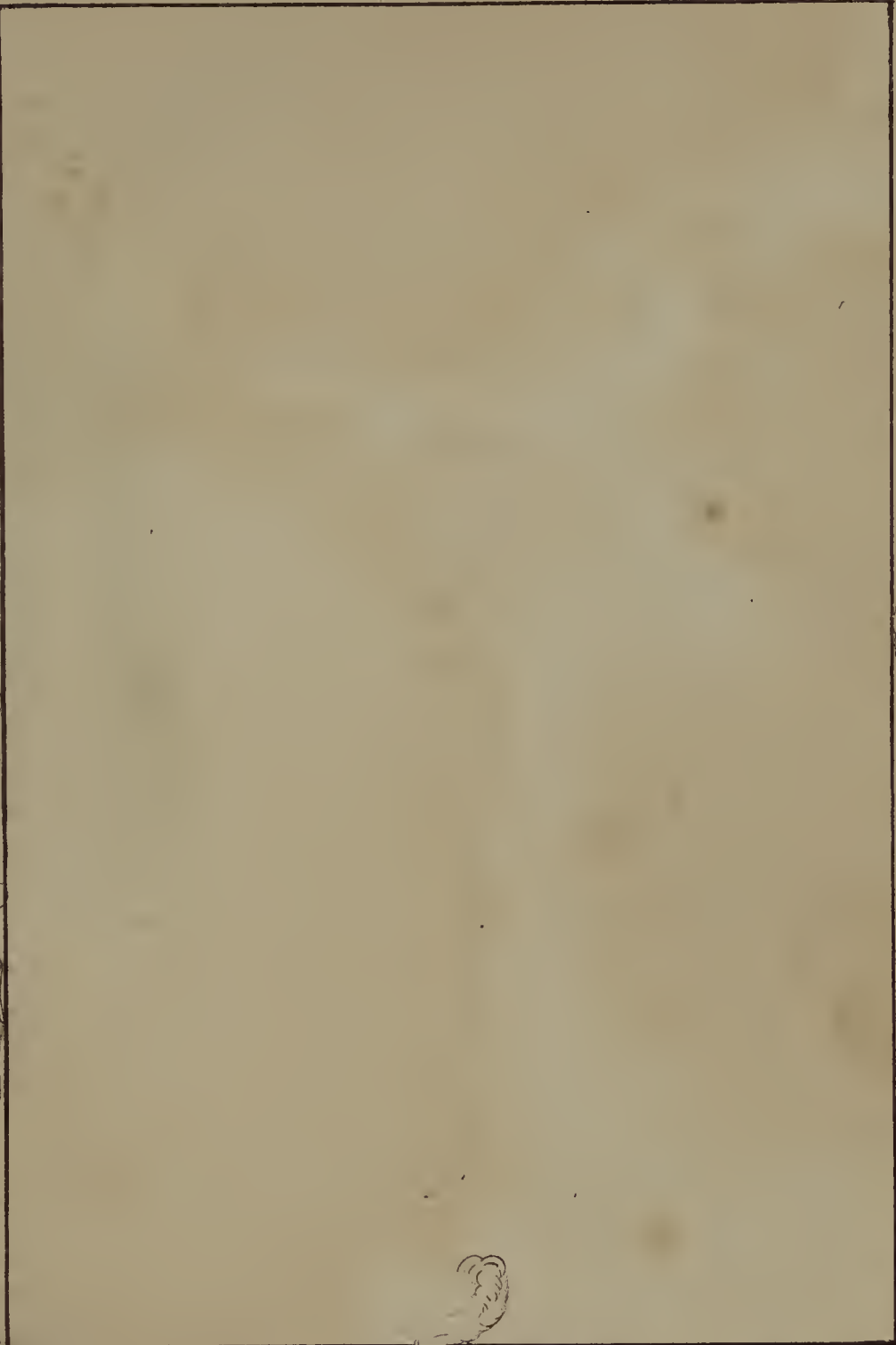
Handwritten decorative flourishes and calligraphy at the top of the page.



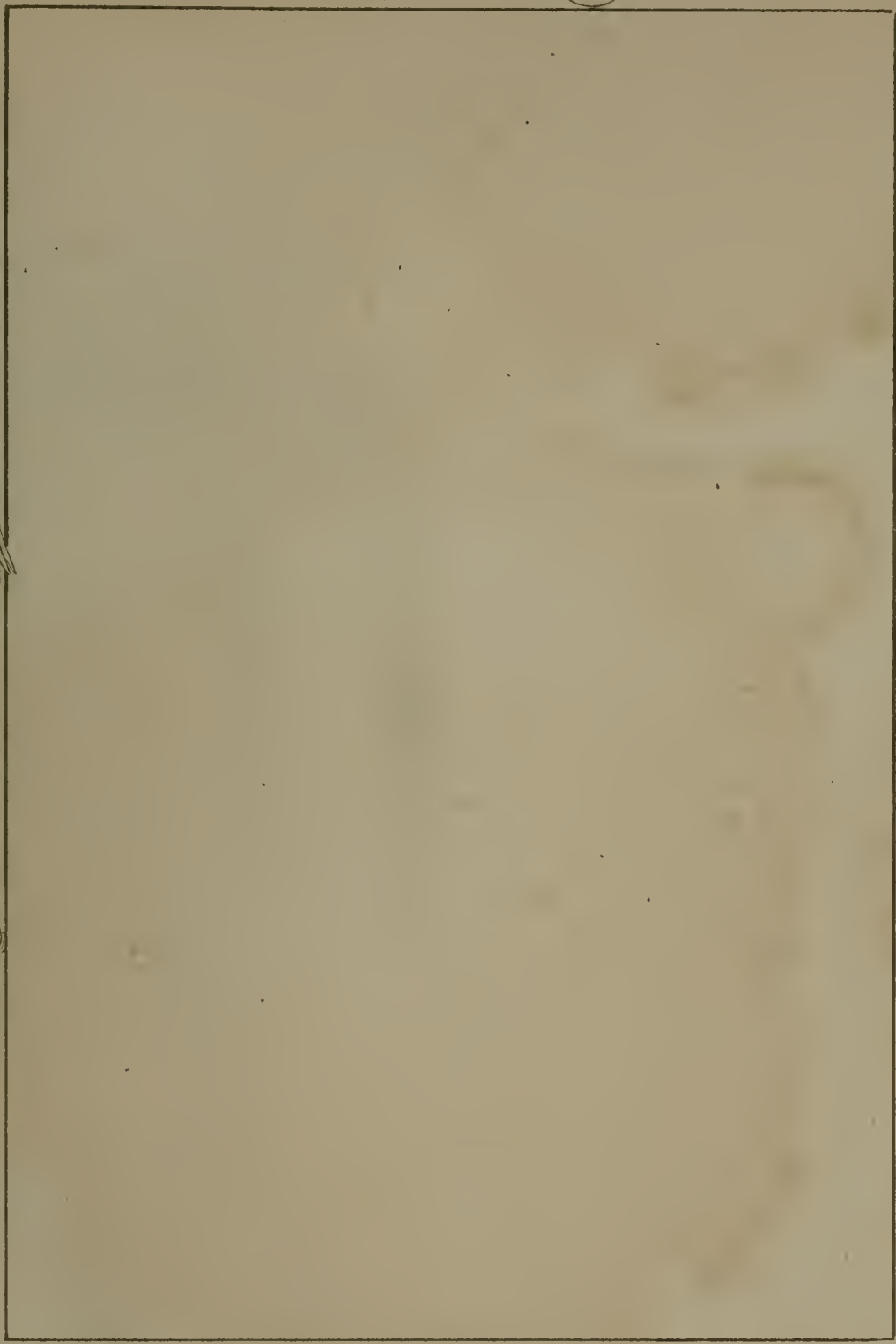




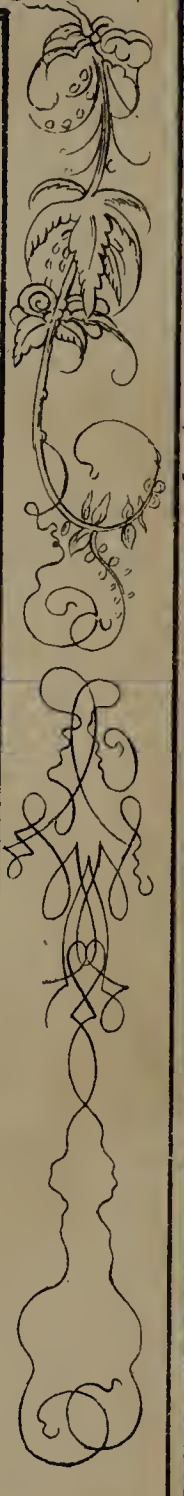
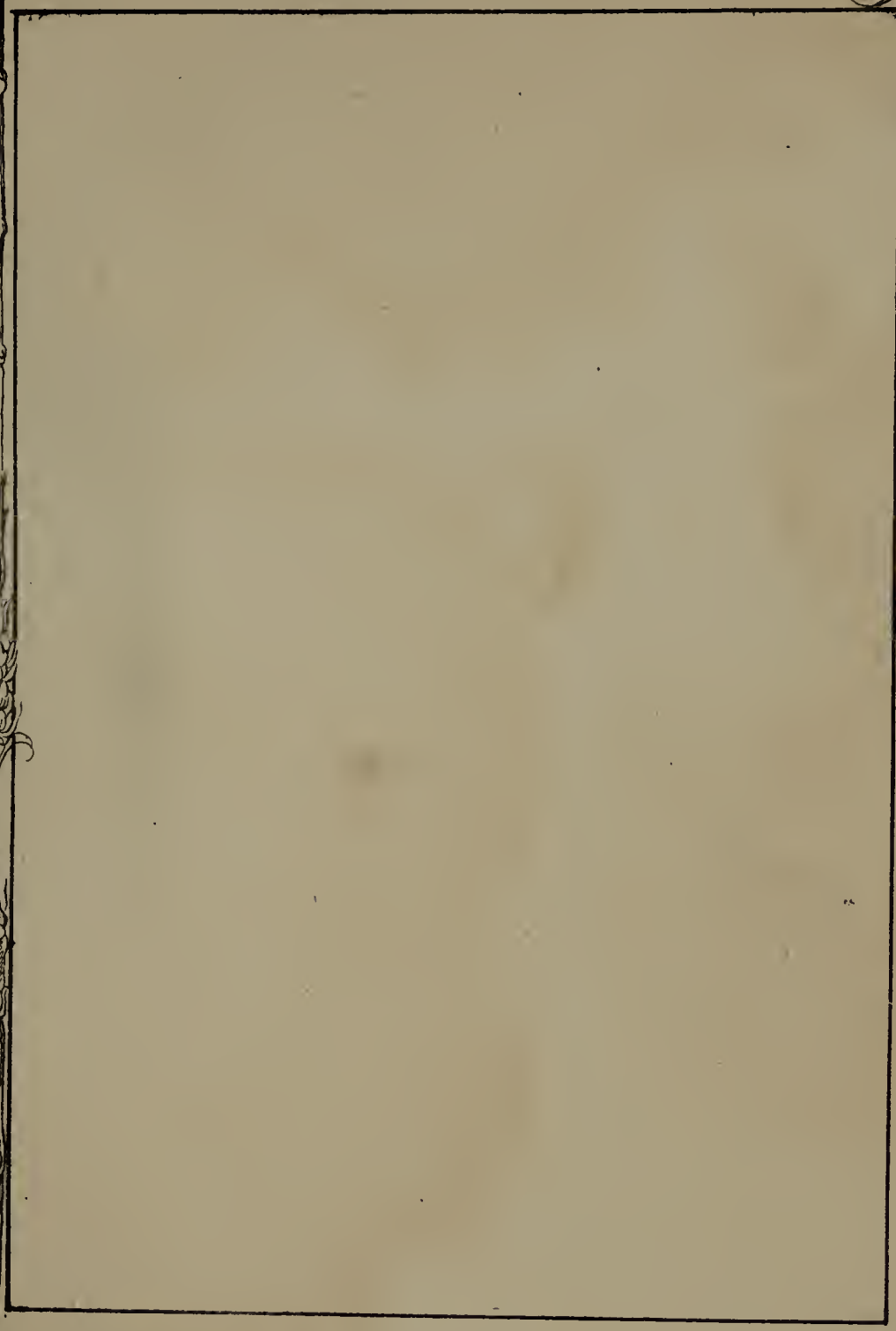
EA
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Handwritten decorative flourishes at the top of the page, including a large, stylized initial 'L'.



Handwritten text in a decorative frame at the top of the page.



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