

BY THE SILVERY RHINE.

DUSSELDORF, THE BEAUTIFUL, AS SEEN BY A STRANGER.

Life in Germany Described by a Lady Student from St. John—Where the Art of the Great Composers and Artists Enters Into Every Day Existence.

DUSSELDORF, Feb. 11.—Just where the Rhine loses its romance and forgoes its high castle covered banks, legends and watch towers, and settles down to a more practical and prosaic existence among the far stretching flat fields and red roofed farm houses which ensue immediately after Cologne is passed, stands the handsome little town of Dusseldorf. Seen from the Rhine in the summer, it becomes a veritable bit of romance, breaking the flat monotony of the surrounding country. Its crowded buildings give a hint of the very life that flows through its streets, and higher up where the trees of its Hof Garten cluster to the water's edge, with the numerous church spires rising apparently from the midst of them, the noble town appeals to one's fancy like a many sided nature living its everyday life busily and happily in spite of its monotony, yet preserving an intense love of beauty and nature with many a holy aspiration heavenwards.

Inside the city its charm is still powerful and exists in all seasons. Its citizens have done much for it and adorned it nobly with gardens, allees, statues, and fountains; the old part has its narrow irregular streets quaint looking, white shuttered, old fashioned houses, which give it a picturesque value that the months may alter but not destroy.

But it is the people that crowd the streets that make the chief charm in the eyes of a stranger. The faces alone, so characteristically German, are sufficient to produce the sense of unusualness, and therefore become a perennial source of entertainment. Dashing Hussars, and Uhlands—with palpable corsets, but otherwise delightful—blue-bloused, sabot-shod peasants; sober-looking citizens; fresh-faced German girls, generally well dressed except for their hats, which are invariably fearful to behold; military policemen with swords clanking at their sides, bare-headed servants, callow students, together with an indiscriminate mixture of children, artist folk, and English people, each contributing a mite towards the variety of the scene, and succeeding in making it exceedingly lively. Gradually one feels oneself getting fond of these people. They are so amusing.

Dusseldorf is the art centre of the Rhine provinces, and is therefore pre-eminently a city of artists. "I don't wonder that it is so," said a lady to me the other day, as we walked through the Hof Garten, which was indescribably beautiful in its covering of flawless white, with long yellow, slanting shafts of sunlight piercing the depths of its woods, and making the snow aglitter with millions and millions of sparkles. "I should think it would be an education to the eyes, only to get accustomed to the streets here."

I agreed with her as my eyes wandered over the scene before me. In the foreground a group of skaters contributed vivid touches of color to relieve the brilliant purity of earth and sky. In the background was the Kunsthalle, yet not so far back as to make its front of exquisitely colored mosaic indiscernible; and further on the spire of Tambertus Kirche rose in the air, a slender line of black against the tense blue of the sky, faintly veiled by a dusky network of branches where a group of trees intervened. That Hof Garten is a thing of beauty, and consequently a joy forever in Dusseldorf. An immense piece of ground, planted with every variety of tree that will grow in a temperate climate,—a paradise of shady avenues and sylvan picturesqueness. The trees are old, for the grounds were laid out sometime in the middle of the eighteenth century, and so it goes without saying that they are of noble size and extreme beauty. From April to October the place shows every phase of loveliness from blossom time to the changing of the leaf. In the winter it is none the less beautiful. Through the leafless boughs one catches vivid dramatic glimpses of passionate crimson and glowing gold—the wonderful sunsets that gleam across the Rhine.

The effect is marvellous. Involuntarily one thinks of Oswald Achenbach whose pictures enrich all the galleries here. Sunlight is his specialty, and wonderfully faithful is his reproduction of it. A realism so simple and exact that it is ideal—veritable crumbs of truth dropped from the Master's great table of nature.

Both the Achenbachs still live and paint here, as also does the inimitable Vautier, that master of detail. Nor are they the only remarkable ones among the painters of Dusseldorf. In the Kunsthalle—where the pictures are changed once a fortnight—or in the Schulte or Morshausen's galleries, the splendid figure pictures of the brothers John, Jacobin and Paterin Flambourg's moonlight scenes, Munthe's fog studies and Rochal's battle pictures are always to be seen, as well as other pictures by men and women who have either already obtained pre-eminence or are fast gaining it. Seele, Daeker—who died last year—Sinkel, Fraulen Pryer and Fraulen Darling, Van Gebhardt, Maceo and Flam, are a few of the painters whose names are already household words here, and who are all specialists.

A tolerably comprehensive expression of Nature and Life is given by these artists, and a walk through the galleries makes one feel respectfully towards German art in general and the little band of artists on the banks of the Dussel in particular. The famous Academy here was founded by the Elector Charles Theodore in 1767, but in 1813 grand old Peter Cornelius assumed the direction of it, and under him and his successor, Schadow, it received its first impetus towards its present excellence. Consequently the shades of these two artists seem to brood protectingly over the entire organization of art here, as Gog and Magog are said to preside over the civic constitution of London. The Cornelius Platz, a pretty square of gardens, is adorned with a statue of the artist, which is one of the most noticeable objects of the town. A short distance from it is the Schadow Platz, a curving entrance to the Schadow Strasse, one of the finest business streets.

The artists and the military are the main ingredients of society here. It is a partnership of Apollo and Mars, the latter giving appearance and patronage to the efforts of the former, which has the executive ability and presides over all the public demonstrations of gaiety. Their grandest and best known festivity is the Kunstler Ball, a large public fancy dress affair, which takes place next week and initiates the gaities of the Carnival. We are looking forward to it with no small degree of eagerness, for it is said to be one of the best Carnival balls on the continent, and the days intervening between it and Ash Wednesday, when Prince Carnival rules supreme and folly is delightfully rampant are said to be experiences not easily to be forgotten. For in spite of the good nature and absence of vulgarity which render them inoffensive, the scenes of those days are so spoken of that one is inclined to think that Pandemonium might pose in history as a model of decorum by comparison.

Those who have seen Dusseldorf and have read Jessie Fothergill's "First Violin" will have no difficulty in identifying this town with the Elberthal of the book. The action of the story is immediately prior to, during and after the Franco-Prussian war, but Dusseldorf cannot have changed very much during these twenty years or more. The descriptions tally well with its present aspect and to have read the story gives one a fresh interest in the city and an idea of its possibilities as a setting for modern romance. Gradually, for us the spirit of the exceedingly beautiful heroine pervades the place, especially the particular scenes that proved the stage of such very important events in her history. Skating out in Dusselthal we think of her. It is there she once broke through the ice and would have been drowned if it had not been for the prompt aid of the hero who was of course on the spot—though how she managed to get in danger there is a mystery, as the water there is only an inch deep. We are also reminded of her when we take our walks abroad in the direction of the Schon Aus Licht a pleasant little vantage point in the Hof Garten from which one can view the Rhine. There one can see the Schiff Brucke, or bridge of boats, which crossing the river forms a link between Dusseldorf and Oberassel. Once during a spring overflowing of the Rhine the adventurous lady was again in imminent danger of a watery death, as she was swept away towards Rotterdam on one of the boats. How she escaped drowning was the mystery for it is said to be one of the best in Germany, praise implying no mean degree of merit. It is certainly wonderful, and a constant source of pleasure to those who live here, as it is easily accessible, its performances frequent and its repertoire apparently limitless. For a sum equal to sixteen cents per concert, one can go three evenings in a week to the Tonhalle, and listen while those eighty good men and true, every one of them a trained musician, interprets all the great masters in a way that makes the listener feel as if a new spirit had entered into him—a spirit which had entered into the holiest part of his soul and set vibrating those chords of emotion which were originally intended to thrill with appreciation of heaven.

The present "First Violin" may not have all the perfectness of Eugene Courvoisier, the hero of Jessie Fothergill's book, but as a violinist he leaves very little to be desired, even by the most critical and fastidious; and a solo by Reibold is something to listen to with bated breath, so passionately expressed is it, so sweetly sad even in its gaiety. Wagner, of course, is the favorite composer here, as he may be said to be in all Germany. There may still be many of his opposing party left here, but they are decidedly in the minority, for a selection from Wagner will bring forth a round of applause when other comment than the popping of corks, and a gurgling sound as the "golden Rhine wine" is poured into the squat, jolly-looking, gouty-legged goblets in order to lend its indispensable material aid to the apprecia-

tion of the ideal. Apparently German sentiment very sensibly recks not of an ethereal ideality independent of the material. On the contrary, it simply and frankly relies upon the body to assist the enthusiasms of the soul, and that is doubtless why the people can sit so calmly, eating a substantial meal while that wonderful orchestra is discoursing Beethoven or Schubert, as if every musician in it was a "seraph strayed" who had learned his art in a higher world than this. It is hard to resist the Wagner enthusiasm, and gradually one ceases to try. Without troubling oneself as to whether his influence upon the age is healthy or otherwise, we find it possible to enjoy him as simply and naturally as one would the finest of the Italians. Brunhild, Siegfried, Lohengrin, and Tannhauser take their places in the list of one's "fiction friends and a chance list of the melodies suddenly heard "Mein liebes Schwam" or "On mein holder Abend Stern" is sufficient to set one's pulses throbbing.

Wagner operas are frequently given on Sunday here, and that is proof in itself of the high appreciation in which they are held. Sunday is the day above all others in which the German goes in for enjoyment, all the more so of late since the Kaiser had a virtuous fit and ordered the closing of the shops for half the day. And so the theatre plays a prominent part in the day's entertainment.

The German public always demands the best. It is intelligent and fastidious and has had its taste formed by familiarity with its fatherland's greatest achievements in all departments of art, music and the drama, than which the world can furnish no better examples. For this is a land where the ideal is cultivated seriously and systematically, and modern achievements judged only by the standard of past excellence. In consequence, life here is very pleasant—pictures, music and the drama, the appreciation of which is aided by an insight into a literature which is the grandest in the world. The charm grows daily and will last long after, when Germany and the Rhine are but memories, made doubly gracious and beautiful by the recollection of pleasant experiences and images of the kind friends I have known here. N. J.

THE STORY OF A JEWEL.

It Commemorates the Deliverance of an Englishman from Death.

BURGHILL, Hereford, Feb. 14.—We have been on a visit to the County of Norfolk, in the neighborhood of Sandringham,—the home-like house of the Prince of Wales—a neighborhood in which he is especially and deservedly popular; we did not see him, but we heard his gun, as he was shooting with his son-in-law, the Duke of Fife, who owns the adjoining estate (once belonging to the Howards) of Castle Rising; all his game is given away; 2000 pheasants went off the day before to the station masters, porters and guards on the lines of railway by which he travels, and hospitals and asylums are not forgotten.

But I did not sit down to write about the generous Prince, but to tell you, for your readers, a story of the days of Queen Elizabeth. The gentleman with whom we were staying is the last direct male representative of the hero of the story, and possesses the jewel of which I send you a copy. Mr. Barbor was, in the latter end of Queen Mary's reign, brought to the stake in order to his suffering for the protestant religion; but while he was taking leave of some friends, news came of the Queen's death which deterred the authorities from proceeding to execution and he was immediately liberated by Queen Elizabeth. In commemoration of this great deliverance he caused her effigies to be engraved on an onyx and adorned with other precious stones forming a costly jewel, which at his death he desired might be handed down to his latest posterity, together with the name of his deliverer which has been observed to the 7th generation. Miss Elizabeth Barbor married to Henry Prescott Blencowe Esq., of Tholby Priory Essex, and of Blencoe in Cumberland—owned it in 1838—Her daughter Elizabeth (unmarried) then owned it, at her death it came to her only surviving brother Rev. Edward Everard Blencowe, Vicar of Stow-Bardolph and Wimbotsham. Our host and my dear friend for 45 years. May add I have a copy of a miniature of Mr. Barbor. D. C. M.

Best Chance Yet to Learn to Dance.

at Prof. Spencer's Standard Dancing Academy, Market Building, Germain street (entrance South Market street). I make the following offer in prizes to all who wish to learn to dance the best style. Young and old can come. First Prize, \$10.00; Second Prize, \$20.00; Third Prize, \$10.00; Fourth Prize, \$5.00; all in gold, to be guessed for in this way: The number of stamps in a sealed jar. The first, the right number or nearest to it; the next nearest, Second Prize; the next nearest, Third Prize; the next nearest, Fourth Prize. Any one can join the classes, afternoon or evening, by paying a regular term price. Each person or child will get a coupon with number to correspond with number of guess deposited. All who dance in Classes, Assemblies, Balls or Parties of any description, by paying not less than \$2.00 and upwards, whether it includes one or more dances, also anyone hiring Costumes, Wigs, or Whiskers to the amount of \$2.00, will be entitled to a guess, or any one who buys \$2.00 worth of Furniture and upwards, or any articles for sale in my premises; each purchase will entitle the buyer to a guess. The prize list will be open from January 3rd to April 5th, 1893. This is an opportunity to learn to dance in proper style, and still get pay for learning the fine art. Private Pupils will be entitled to two guesses, who take a course of 12 lessons. Now is the time to learn, and don't miss it. Remember the cheap Sale of Furniture is still going on, and parties will get some awfully good bargains in furniture, as well as other goods. Such as the best Lamp Burner in the world non-Explosive self-filling, filling self-extinguishing, and warranted to last ten years with reasonable care. Try one or more of these beautiful Burners. One branch of this business does not interfere with the other. Come and see and take a part in these Grand Offers. A committee of disinterested persons will count the stamps and pay the money to prize entrance. All the dances must be held in my Academy and the amounts paid to me. Musical Instruments; last but not least, Splendid Violins and other instruments at great bargains. Don't forget the entrance, South Market St., where you will see signs.

Private classes can be formed day or evening. New classes for beginners will be formed on Thursday, Jan. 5th. Afternoon and Evening, at regular prices. Assemblies, Balls, Parties, outside of regular classes will be done by invitation. I will give a guess on every 50cts. paid for dancing, hiring costumes, wigs and whiskers, or goods mentioned as above. A. L. SPENCER, Teacher.

On the Japanese Plan.

The usual dinner in a well-to-do Japanese family consists of rice, soup, fish and two or three vegetables, always served with shoya sause, a pickle very much like German sauerkraut, and other pickles of egg plant, cucumbers, turnips and radishes. The soup is made from fish. The fish itself is broiled, stewed or fried. Rice always takes the place of bread. The only meal at which sweet cakes are eaten is at the afternoon tea, between three and four o'clock. Some of these cakes are made from boiled beans made into paste, flavored and sweetened. Sponge cake is also very much liked.

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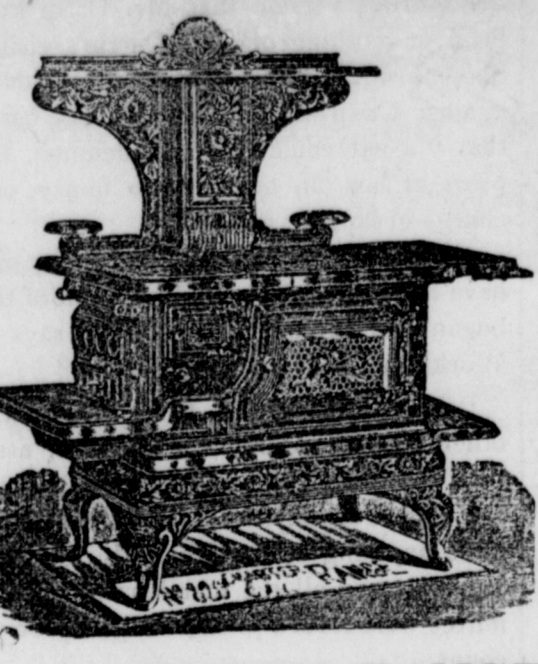
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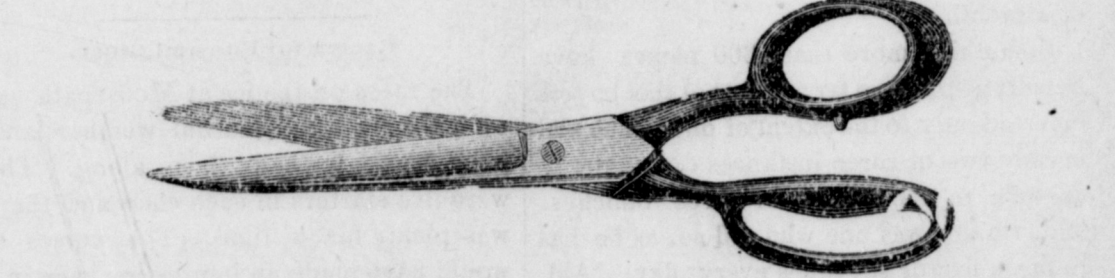
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