

stately, high-browed Landgravines, and minstrels sang, and lords and ladies feasted and made love, in days when chivalry was in full bloom. Could the old walls speak, they might divulge many a state secret as well, for these banquets played their parts in the affairs of State. Often important alliances and friendships were formed, kings' crowns disposed of, and a love for startling adventure and chivalrous deeds encouraged by songs of minstrels and tales of warriors. Songs from the *Nibelungen Lied* are still sung in the castle with many a note, no doubt, that has reverberated from the far-off olden times, and links forever the beautiful home-life of the present Duke of Saxe-Weimar with the old romantic days of Hermann of Thuringia.

Going out of the castle and crossing the court by way of a lovely, vine-covered arbour, where in true German fashion the ducal family sometimes take their coffee, we enter, through a rude doorway, an ancient knight's house, in which, during the stormy days of the Reformation, Martin Luther was held in "friendly bondage" by the brave-hearted Elector of Saxony.

More than three hundred years have passed since Luther went up and down the rickety stairs, but the small square room is just the same, save, perhaps, more time-worn and nearer decay. A deep recessed window looks out upon the Thuringian forest, where we can imagine he often sat gazing out over the barriers that separated him from his friends at Wittenburg, until, impatient with his bondage, he broke forth to Melancthon in those turbulent letters that contain all the fire and restlessness of his rebellious spirit. On the floor is the large vertebra of a whale which Luther used as a footstool.

On the wall is the ink-spot that Coleridge says "every traveller, unless he is incurious or supercilious, informs himself by means of his penknife whether or not it is proof against destruction." We, however, made no such searching investigation, quite satisfied that the solitary student suffering from an overwrought brain might, either in his waking or sleeping hours, have imagined himself in deadly conflict with Satan, and, tired of his companionship, hurled at him his only weapon of defence—being the leaden inkstand that he had used in Biblical translation.

Coleridge is, perhaps, the only pilgrim to the Wartburg who has gone into a philosophic explanation of what at best seems mythic; but being himself a seer of visions, anything that touched upon the supernatural had for him the fascination of a dream.

The room, we are glad to say, is not "filled up," and contains only a few quaint pieces of furniture, with portraits of Hans and Gretha Luther done with Cranach's masterly power. The miner's