

his hand upon every heart, and felt a response beat, and he cannot be said to belong to any nation; he has the noblest, the most extended birth-right; no sea-girt island, no vast continent can call him her own; but all the islands from Iceland to Magellan, and all the lands from the shores of America, to the confines of Asia are his; and yet he was rocked, and expanded his all-embracing powers in this hut, which has thus become the shrine of genius, whither all, gentle or simple, learned or unlearned, go up to pay their hearty orisons. In striking contrast to the home of the poet, appears the stately mansion of the Lueys, to which Shakespeare himself has given no very enviable notoriety.

So delightful are these graphic tableaux, that we would fain linger over them; but the conjurer is by our side, and at his breath all these exquisite English visions fade away from the mirror. We have not time to ask what comes next, ere we are once more led across the channel, and a German scene is again presented; but not now the wild reckless life of the student, with its own little world of pleasures and pains; but the whole of Germany is pictured before us; the good and true German heart is laid bare to our gaze.

For none of Howitt's works do we feel so much indebted to him, as for this—"Rural and Domestic Life in Germany." A great and growing interest, both here and in England, has been felt for Germany and its people. German philosophy, German theology, German poetry, have been eagerly sought for; Goëthe, Schiller, Kant, Herder, have become to us household names; we are made familiar with their writings; but a mysticism has surrounded the people, which we could not penetrate; they have, in our minds been so shrouded in their own metaphysics, and so associated with their own wild and improbable legends, that they loomed up before us like giants in a mist; their forms undefined, possessing much Titanic grandeur, but utterly beyond our power to grasp. Our tourists have told us they are a happy people, have described their amusements, and daily occupations, but none have shown us the penates of their households. We have long been familiar with the wild and fierce spirits which people their forests and their mountains. The horn of the wild hunter has echoed in our ears. The voice of the erle king has sounded its fearful summons across the waters; and the song of Undine and her sister nymphs has flouted with magical sweetness on the breeze, to tell us of those, who guard and people the bright rivers of Germany. Their cobolds and witches, their black demons and white spirits, have been given to us in a thousand different forms; but never before have we seen that one which sanctifies the

whole—the beautiful *home spirit*, which standing by their doors, blessing their tables, consecrating fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, each to their respective duty, makes German life the admirable thing it is; and for this introduction we are indebted to Howitt. He has gone with us to the German home, arranged for us the Christmas tree; he has hung with lovely garlands, gathered from their own gardens, the whole pathway of German life, the flowers which wreath it are not exotics, not gorgeous and oriental, but fragrant and enduring.

Howitt had great advantages for entering into and appreciating the German character: his long residence among them, his perfect familiarity with their language, and their literature, has given him the opportunity of a thorough acquaintance with them, and he has imparted his impressions, in a fresh, natural manner, most calculated to interest and improve the reader. He has not struck off random sketches from a day's sojourn among the sublime and magnificent scenery of the country; or formed his judgment of character from a passing introduction to a few of the most distinguished men, as most of our tourists do; but he has learned them well, studied their springs of action, watched the effect of their present political policy, their system of education, and marked the tendencies of the age, and we can generally rely upon the inference his cool and dispassionate judgment draws.

He makes us enter Germany by the Rhine, that magnificent river whose

"Breast of waters broadly swells,
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine."

So much has been written of this noblest of rivers, that Howitt does not dwell upon it, though with a few of his expressive words he sketches its broad and bold outline, its lofty crags, picturesque ruins, and wood crowned summits. Travellers have dwelt so enthusiastically upon the beauty and richness of the Rhine land, that our general impression of the face of the whole country, and the aspect of its natural scenery has been wholly derived from them, and we are scarcely prepared for the bare and meagre prospect which, after his brief tribute to the perfections of the Rhine, our author draws for us. His first two chapters he devotes to the impressions made upon him in travelling through the country, witnessing its external life and scenery; and the contrast he draws between it and the poetically beautiful rural life of his own highly cultivated land, is not very favorable to Germany: