

Generally there are a few large, fine houses, sometimes the country places of rich Germans, and often we find living here old pensioned officers who have come hither to spend the quiet evening of life. An air of peace pervades everything, and the great busy world seems no longer to exist. The lovely gardens blooming with Mareschal Niel and Gloire de Dijon roses, and all kinds of sweetest flowers, have the magic power of the lotus and make us feel we would wish to remain here forever. And what are the people like? The men are generally fair-haired and blue-eyed, which combination harmonizes delightfully with their large light-blue smocks. The women are all bare-headed, many with their shapely arms bare, and all wearing very short dresses. Everyone knows everyone else and on every side one hears the cheerful "Guten Tag!" The postman, the butcher boy and the sewing machine agent all receive the same cordial greeting at each house. This excessive, and, as we may say, democratic cordiality is a feature of daily life. When a man enters a shop he removes his hat, and at once enters into conversation with the salesman. To go out without buying anything is an unpardonable breach of etiquette. The Greek idea that the tradesman is a public servant has not yet penetrated thus far. And this same hospitality they extend to strangers. In fact, the unusual interest they take in a foreigner is at times trying. When one is questioned minutely by a complete stranger regarding one's age, family antecedents and other private matters, it is apt to become just a trifle tedious, however kindly meant these questions may be. But this, I suppose, is to be attributed to the charming simplicity of the people, whose life revolves with ever the same unchanging flow, so that even a conversation with a stranger, being somewhat of a rarity, is greatly enjoyed. Especially if a stranger comes from America is he a great treat, for unfortunately the ideas concerning our country have been to a large extent obtained from wildly exaggerated sources, and to the German peasant America is yet practically undiscovered. A guileless boy requested me to send him a piece of bear's meat from Toronto; he thought they existed there in their primitive strength. The same simplicity is shown in the way they cling to old superstitious beliefs. The Harz Mountains are notably a stronghold of legend, and the peasants sturdily maintain the truth of the fantastic stories, such as the dance of the witches and all the infernal powers on the Brocken, on the night of May the first. One of the loveliest spots in the Harz is called the "Rosztrapper," a great gorge which the peasants say a princess, pursued by giants, leapt over with her horse; and in proof of this, they point out the shape of a horseshoe in the rock, whence the name of the spot.

Let us now glance at the life of one of these Harz villagers. Setting aside the few grandees and men in authority we will watch how the ordinary people live. At once we notice the extreme economy that pervades every detail of life. And although the wife does not hold a very high position, nevertheless her part in the management of the house is very considerable. For housekeeping is here a veritable science and everything moves under fixed rules and with great precision. Every penny is used to the best advantage. And among many of the best educated Germans we hear the cry, "Let our wives be good housekeepers, this is enough." It is certainly strange that when the part of the house-wife is so impor-

tant, she should occupy such a subordinate position as she does. The wife ever gladly looks on her husband as lord and master, and is most happy when she obeys. Hand in hand with economy goes moderation in pleasure, and the Harz villagers' recreation is most modest. Women and men alike work from dawn till dark and so of necessity, pleasure must be a secondary thought. Sunday is only to a certain extent observed, as regards rest from labour. The man who takes a holiday on Sunday afternoon wends his way to his favorite beer-garden, perhaps a walk of half an hour from his house. Here he is sure to find some of his friends with whom he sits, and calling for his glass of beer spends the rest of the afternoon there in lazy and contented bliss. There may be a dance going on, but the hard-working man is only an onlooker. Rather strange for Sunday, of course, but we must take into consideration what German ideas are on such a subject, and that pleasure which they regard as innocent is innocent they hold, on all days alike. And besides the German religion is so excessively humanitarian. One of the great events of the year takes place on a Sunday, that is the so-called "Fest." It practically corresponds to a country fair and has all the essentials such as gingerbread stalls, shooting galleries and so on. It is a general re-union of old and young, and all take part in the dancing which, continuing all Sunday afternoon and night, breaks up at six o'clock on Monday morning; then the maidens go home and attend to domestic duties till twelve o'clock, when they all return to the dance. But Sunday is the "first night," so to speak, and one sees then the middle-aged woman persuading her little child by means of a piece of gingerbread to stand still for a few moments and hold her parasol and her husband's hat while they join the merry dance and their thoughts fly back to a happy "Fest" on a memorable Sunday twenty years ago. Mingling with the people is often to be seen the old pastor of the village, who is as a father to his flock. Rather strange for Sunday, of course. "But," says the old pastor, "the pleasure in itself is innocent, and my children must work all week, so Sunday is their only day for recreation." As the German cannot exist without music, there is a good supply at the "Fest," as on every other great occasion, notably at the "Jahrmakrt" another species of Country Fair, which differs from the "Fest" in that the latter takes place generally all on one spot on the village green, while a "Jahrmakrt" is stretched out on all sides. We are made aware of its presence by the music of some dozen organ-grinders who break loose upon the village at 5 o'clock in the morning. The next striking feature is the occupation of all available space by travelling tradesmen, who go the round of all these fairs. Every imaginable article is for sale, and the country people flock in to invest in clothing, confectionery and jewellery. It lasts about a week and then the confectioner packs up his cakes that have seen so many Fairs that they are quite *blasé*, and moves on to the next village Fair to parade the merits of cake "baked especially for the occasion." Accompanying all this there are on the public green the stock amusements, such as the merry-go-round, so arranged that in its revolutions it produces strange and wonderful melodies, so that during the week there is a carnival of music. All is carried on in a very orderly way, showing the power these people have of entering into simple

pleasure with their whole hearts, yet preserving order and moderation. Their everyday pleasures are naturally slight and by no means varied. A great event is an open air concert when the family indulges in a little dissipation, the older children accompanying the father and mother as a great treat. Such a concert takes place generally in the garden of a hotel. The little party go early and choose a good table, numbers of which are scattered through the garden, order some refreshments, the parents beer for themselves and perhaps one cup of coffee for the children. There they sit for two or three hours listening to the music, and watching the different scenes about them, here a noisy party of students, here two veterans, each content with a single glass of beer, but thinking as they watch the students of the palmy days gone by when the twentieth glass was a trifle.

There may be a hall used as a theatre, but only in the more important places, and performances are few and far between, and naturally looked forward to. There is always a certain amount of "Upper Ten" in these villages, generally headed by the military, if there be any, if not, by the faculty of the "gymnasium." But such a set is naturally small, and all the rest are much like a large family. And thus life rolls quietly along for these people, who live apart from the world, devoted to their fatherland and Emperor, and not concerning themselves much about anything else. A. A. MACDONALD.

THE DEATH OF THE POET.

At morn, my masters, cradled in the mist
The day awoke to life, yet scarce to life
So deep a gloom lay over all the world.
The very winds that waited on its birth
Spoke low, as those who stand about and wait
The end of one who swiftly nears the end;
And as it stepped adown the eastern hills,
Within the vale that leads afar to night,
It found all weeping and disconsolate.
A veil of tears, my son, in which it stepped,
Aye, masters, men have long time called it so.
It seemed a multitude was gathered there,
With all their gaze fixed on the single form
Of one who walked alone, as in old days
Weak mortals watched the struggles of the gods
Who joined the combat 'neath the walls of
Troy.

Fearless he looked before where lay a sea
Wide, dark and dreamless as the void of space,
Sunlets, without a star; and as he walked
The wail of those who watched him rose and
fell

As lost winds rise and fall on unknown seas.
Some were in plumed armour; some were
dressed

In rustic garb of simple countrymen,
And maids and matrons wept amid that throng
Where all were bowed as weighed upon with
woe.

Upon the hills that closed the valley in
There stood apart another multitude
That looked with stricken faces in the vale.
And then the wonder grew upon me so
At this so strange and sorrowful a sight,
I turned to one who stood apart and said:
"My friend, who is this man and who are
they

That watching him thus spend themselves in
tears?

And who are they that stand upon the hills?"
He raised his glance to mine and made reply:
"He is our sweetest singer come at length
Down to the edge of life, for yonder strand
Whereon the waves of that dark ocean roll
Within the shadow, is the verge of time,
And they who watch him thus within the vale
Are children of his mighty brain and heart
Whom he himself created. Look, the one,
Strong, brave and dauntless, with his lance in
rest,