

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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FRANKFORT ON THE MAIN.

BY THE EDITOR.

FRANKFORT is, after Rouen, the most quaint old city I saw in Europe. It dates from the time of Charlemagne, who held here a convocation of notables of the Empire in 794. It was a rallying-place for the Crusaders, and the tradeemporium of Central Europe. Here, for centuries, the German Emperors were elected and crowned. Its great fairs, in which merchants from all parts of Europe assembled, have, through the growth of the railway system, lost their importance; but it is still one of the great money-markets of the world, with a population of 100,000.

I lodged at the magnificent Hotel Schwann, in which the final treaty of peace between France and Germany was signed by Jules-Favre and Bismarck, May 10th, 1871. I was shown the handsome *salon* in which this historic act took place, the inkstand and table used, and Bismarck's room. The city abounds in splendid streets, squares, public buildings, art galleries, and gardens. But to me its chief attraction was its ancient, narrow alleys between the time-stained timbered houses, with their quaintly-carved fronts, with grotesque figures supporting the projections and roof; the old historic churches and halls, and the mouldering gates and watch-towers of its walls; and the old inn courtyards, with huge, long-armed pumps.

One of the most picturesque of these streets is the Judengasse, or Jews' Quarter. Though much improved of late, it is still very crowded and squalid. Hebrew signs abound—I saw that of A. Rothschild, the father of the house—and keen-eyed, hook-nosed Shylocks were seen in the narrow shops. Till the year 1806 this street was closed every night, and on Sundays and holidays all day, with lock and key, and no Jew might leave this quarter under a heavy penalty. They had to wear a patch of yellow cloth on their backs, so as to be recognized. In the Römerberg, an



FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAIN.

ancient square, was the inscription: "Ein Jud und ein Schwein darf hier nicht herein"—"No Jews or swine admitted here." Such were the indignities with which, for centuries, the children of Abraham were pursued.

I tried to get into the old Jewish Cemetery, a wilderness of crumbling mounds and mouldering tombstones, but after crossing a swine market and wandering through narrow lanes around its walls, I could not find the

entrance, and could not comprehend the directions given me in voluble German gutturals. There are now 7,000 Jews, many of them of great wealth, in the city, and the new synagogue is very magnificent.

The most interesting building, historically, in Frankfort, is the Römer, or town hall, dating from 1406. It has three lofty crown-stepped gables toward the Römerberg. I visited the election room decorated in red, where the Emperors were chosen by the electors, and the Kaisersaal, in which the newly-elected Emperor dined in public, and showed himself from the windows to the people in the squares. On the walls are portraits of the whole series of Emperors for over a thousand years—from Charlemagne down—the Karls, Conrads, Seigfrieds, Friederichs, and many another, famous men in their day, long since turned to the dust and almost forgotten.

The Roman Catholic churches are decorated in a wretched florid manner, and everywhere we read, "Heilige Maria, bitt fur uns"—"Holy Mary, pray for us." Livid Christs, stained with gore, harrow the feelings and revolt the taste.

Of special interest to me was a very picturesque carved house in which Luther lodged, from whose window he preached when on his way to Worms. It bore a curious effigy of the Reformer. The quaint corner oriel was very striking.

The engraving accompanying this article, also those on pages 4 and 5, are specimens of a large number to appear in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine* entitled, "Here and There in Europe," with pictures of many of the most interesting and important scenes and cities in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Holland and Belgium. Other illustrated articles will be, "Our Own Country," describing with copious pictorial illustration, an extended visit to and

through the Maritime Provinces of the Dominion; "Picturesque Ireland," with numerous superb engravings, describing and illustrating some of the finest scenery in the counties of Antrim, Londonderry, Donegal,