

HOME & SCHOOL

VOL. II.]

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 27, 1884.

[No. 20.]

Heidelberg and Scenes in Germany.

BY THE EDITOR.

The picture on this page gives in the centre a view of the famous Castle of Heidelberg, and characteristic views of German students with their long pipes, German peasants in their picturesque costumes, a dog team, and winter scene.

The great attraction of Heidelberg is the castle, once the finest in Europe, and now, next to the Alhambra, says Longfellow, the most magnificent ruin of the middle ages. Its older portions date from 1249, but it was frequently enlarged till it became of vast extent and extraordinary magnificence. It is a charming walk through the quaint old town and up the castle hill, now terraced into a stately pleasure-ground. The deep, wide moat, the massy walls and ivy-mantled towers — at once a fortress and a palace — have an air of stern feudal grandeur that I have seen nowhere else. After being the abode of kings and electors for four hundred years, it was captured by the French, consumed by fire, blown up by powder, and left the magnificent ruin we now behold. Beneath a grim portcullis, with its grate drawn up, we enter the great courtyard shown in the initial cut of this paper, once gay with tilt and tourney, with martial array or bridal train. All around are stately façades of various ages and of splendid architecture adorned with exquisite arabesques, garlands of fruit and flowers, mouldings and fluting and lacework admirably carved in stone. In niches on the wall stand rows of knights in armour, and on the front of the Rittersaal the heroes of Jewish history and classic fable; but all, alas! marred and dismembered by the iron mace of war. We are led through vaulted corridors; through roofless ban-



HEIDELBERG AND SCENES IN GERMANY.

quet halls, where kings once feasted; through a ruined chapel and up stone winding-stairs to the bower-chambers of fair queens and princesses—now open to the owls and bats. In the great kitchen is a huge fire-place, big enough to roast an ox, an evidence of the royal hospitality of ancient days. The *Gesprenge Thurm*, or "shattered tower," was, as its name signifies, blown up by the French. One-half of its cliff-like wall, twenty-one feet in diameter, fell into the moat, and, after two hundred years, still lies an unbroken mass. On the ruined "Elizabeth Tower," built for the daughter of James I. of England, grows a tall linden, and in her bridal chamber the swallows make their nests. An air of desolation mantles over all.

In an old gallery is preserved a collection of historic portraits, relics, and antique furniture, china, embroidery, ornaments and weapons of former inmates of the castle. I was specially interested in the portraits of the fair English princess, Elizabeth, the hapless mistress of these stately halls; of Maria Theresa, of Luther and his wife, and in the wedding-ring with which he espoused the gentle nun.

From the castle terrace overhanging the valley, I enjoyed a glorious sunset view of the lovely Neckar, winding among the vine-clad slopes of the forest-billowed Odinald — the ancient haunt of the "Wild Huntsman of Rodenstein" — and the more remote "Blue Alsatian Mountains." Of course nobody leaves without seeing in the castle vaults the "great tun," which will hold eight hundred hogsheads of wine. It lies on its side, is as high as a two-storey house, and one goes up a ladder to a platform, twelve by eighteen feet on the top, on which many a dancing party has been held. The hogshead shown in front of the tun, gives