

SCRAPS FROM MY JOURNAL.

NO. I.—MARIENBURG.

Early one spring, it was several years ago, I set out from Scotland to make, in company with an old school-fellow, a summer's tour through the countries which border on the Baltic Sea.

Previous to our undertaking this excursion we consulted, both together and separately, every book of travels we could hear of which was likely to guide us in our rambles; and I remember very well that we both agreed that though we were likely to meet with much that was interesting, and even with something that was ornamental, yet there was small chance of our finding out anything so romantic as to compensate us for visiting those hyperborean regions instead of turning our steps to the south.

Lounging, however, one day in a drawing room in St. Petersburg, I happened to take up a volume of Baron Reisbeck's Travels in Germany, and turning to that part of it which describes what is usually called Polish Prussia, I then found that many interesting remains of antiquity were still to be found at Marienburgh, a town near the Vistula, which was formerly the principal fortress and chief palace of the Teutonic Knights. These valiant worthies composed a body of fighting monks, which was formed in Palestine during the Crusades, and much about the same time as the associations of their brethren of the Temple and of Malta. When the arms of Saladin put an end to the vocation of these gowned warriors in the Holy Land, the Teutonic Knights, thinking that they could perform the next best service to Christianity by attempting to convert, after the manner of Charlemagne, the rude and wandering tribes of Northern Russia, Livonia, and Courland, established themselves at Marienburgh, and, by virtue of their own prowess and the Pope's Bulls, soon conquered for themselves a goodly territory.

After the lapse of many years, Albert, Margrave of Brandenburg, and ancestor of the present royal family of Prussia, being elected Grand Master, succeeded in making the title hereditary in his family, in virtually abolishing the order, and in annexing their dominions to his own. Still, however, the celebrity of these gallant Knights was familiarised to us: we were still impressed with the prestige of their bold and manly bearing; and finding that their ancient seat and headquarters was still in existence, we delighted ourselves with the idea that here, in the north of Europe, we might find relics of chivalry quite as important and interesting as if we were strolling through the ruins of Rhodes, or wandering among the Gothic pinnacles and orange groves of Valletta.

It was nearly sunset on rather a fine evening in September when we drove into Marienburgh. It is now but a small town; there is no suburb to it; and even within the fortifications there is many a garden and more than one field where we may readily suppose that a busy population once had their homes. It is situated upon the Nogat, a branch of the Vistula, and but a short distance below the place where this separates from the main stream of the river. The country around is not bold but undulating; the banks are beautifully wooded; and from several parts of the ramparts and watch-towers you can see the undivided waters of the Vistula, and their separation. There, as I looked in the bright moonlight, both the magnificent parent river and its offspring glittered with silver radiance: all was still serene and lovely; and I could not help thinking of the departure from his father's house of a youth blessed in his innocence and glorying in his strength.

Early in the morning I sallied forth to view the town. It has been very strongly fortified according to the ancient plan,—with a high wall encircled completely by double ditches, broad and deep, and which could be easily filled from the river. At short intervals the walls are strengthened by projecting towers, while at some of the corners and near the principal gates these towers are built of so much greater strength, and are reared so high, that they seem to have been intended not only for defence but also as look-out places for watchmen,—whence they could spy danger at a distance and, by exchanging signals, alarm the whole city. Upon one of these high towers, and at a considerable elevation, is fixed a plate of iron, with an inscription, detailing that on the 26th March, 1717, in the "administration" of John Cassimir, the waters of the Nogat, during an inundation, rose so high. The inundation must have been a fearful one, and have laid nearly all Marienburgh under water.

The whole town seems as if it must have been built in a florid Gothic style, and have had at one time the appearance almost of a city of Palaces. In several places considerable ranges of houses still remain, with a broad footway in front covered with arcades, very much like the celebrated "Rows" at Chester. It is probable that both may have been built about the same time.—The streets seem to me to have been laid out with a kind of radiation from the chief palace and halls of justice of the Knights, as being the place of eminence,—the sun of their lives was to call forth not only food and necessities for their existence, but to warm and protect them, and to guide them in each and all of their higher aspirations. There is a good deal of antique carving on many of these arcades, and mingled as they are among cottages of a more modern date and more mean appearance, they proclaim more distinctly of grander days than do even the remains of the chief Palace itself.

This chief Palace was built in the form of a very large quadrangle. Entering it from the side next to our Inn, and opposite to the small chapels, the principal buildings appear to have been on the right hand; and these, I still think, must have contained the Halls of audience and of justice. Two of these were so perfectly entire, and one of such size and loftiness, that during the wars with France at the beginning of the French Revolution, the King of Prussia converted them into magazines, where could be collected the grain which came down the Vistula, and whence it might be doled out afterwards for the supply of his armies. They were in progress of removing this desecration when I visited Marienburgh. I call it desecration, and well do I think was Prussia ripe for its punishment under the iron sway of Napoleon when it could coolly so deface and so demean the monuments of that chivalrous government, which drove Odin and Thor from their groves on the Vistula, and reared temples to a beneficent and crucified Redeemer.

One of these Halls is particularly striking. The ceiling is so lofty that there was height enough to make four stories of warehouses under it. It runs in beautiful arches, all of which spring from three slender granite pillars. The other Hall is smaller but of nearly equal height, and the beautiful and complicated arching of the roof springs from one slender pillar by which it is supported in a surprising manner. In one of these Halls, but I forget which, a low stone bench or divan runs round three sides in the oriental fashion.

But the chapels formed to me the chief points of interest. The lower one is very small and highly ornamented, and being immediately above the vaults, may well be supposed to have been used solely as a place for performing the last duties to departed valour. These

vaults seem to have attracted in an especial manner the curiosity or cupidity of the French, for a great many bodies of the Knights and their Priests have been removed, and were lying strewn about among their broken coffins in an adjoining vaulted room. They were a disgusting spectacle: they had undergone a process of embalming, but the skin and flesh which had thus been dried and tanned, had now, by exposure to the air, begun to moulder from the bones. Many of these are of great size.

The upper Chapel is nearly in the same state as in the "olden time." The stained glass has indeed given way in many places, and been replaced by common window glass, but the ornaments and paintings in the interior are still much as we may suppose them to have been three or four hundred years ago. There are the benches at which sat the Knights, and many is the notch and many the initial, which, after the laudable practice of their schoolboy days, they have cut upon them. At one side near the end, and very near also to the entrance from the lower Chapel, there is a small altar, upon which there are still laid some pieces of pasteboard or parchment with sentences from the Bible written upon them in black letter. Here the Knights received the communion and took their vows of chivalry. Above this altar is a large crucifix of wood,—the body as large as the natural size. This crucifix is encircled by a heart upon which it rests. Above our Saviour's head is "INRI," and above this again, in the hollow of the heart, is a chauffer, with bright flame issuing from it. Under the whole is a scroll with this inscription, "Amor crucifixus."

I had long been fond of studying the history of the middle ages; to read descriptions of jousts and tournaments was to me a most delightful occupation, and many a time have I pored over the beautiful chapters of Gibbon which narrate the perils and conquests of the Crusaders. I thought I knew something of the nature of Chivalry. I thought I could enter into the spirit and feelings of its Knights. But when I saw this crucifix I absolutely started back. I felt as if I had been all along in utter ignorance, and that only now had I acquired any idea of that extraordinary mixture of gallantry and devotion,—of that fealty to God and the Ladies,—of that mixed feeling of opinion and sentiment. "It is this which has given its character to modern Europe."—It was this which, without confounding ranks, had produced a noble equality, and handed it down through all the gradations of social life. It was this opinion which mitigated Kings into companions, and raised private men to be fellows with Kings. Without force, or opposition, it subdued the fierceness of pride and power; it obliged Sovereigns to submit to the soft collar of social esteem, compelled stern authority to submit to eloquence, and gave a domination vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by manners."

THE INFANT'S GRAVE.

The wife of the Missionary, who came home last spring, brought with her from the far country where she had been long a sojourner, three noble boys. But they were not all her children. Her youngest was not with her. Did he sleep, then, under the stately mimosa, or the beautiful palm tree; beneath the shadow of the church raised to the name of the Christian's God in the land of idols? There, perhaps, his swarthy nurse sits on his grave, and tells how the gentle white lady devoted her child to her Saviour in baptism, and found comfort when he died, and how she, poor heathen as she had been, had learnt submission from the Christians' book, and now, having faith in Christ, lived in the calm hope of meeting again those her kind instructors, and that her foster son. No! the Missionary's child is not buried there: he died on the voyage home; he was buried in the deep sea: so neither nurse nor mother may look upon his grave; but his little coffin was made as neatly as circumstances permitted, and the ceremony of his funeral was conducted with all that attention to order and propriety which it is the last comfort of our survivors to pay. All the children, and there were many on board beside his own little brothers, went on deck, and stood round the corpse whilst the beautiful service was read; and it was solemnly and affectionately read, by the beloved friend and fellow-labourer, who had been a stranger with them in the strange land. It was sad to be obliged to take the last look at the dear child even before "the first day of death was fled." There was something inexpressibly melancholy in the plunge with which the lost treasure sunk down, deeper and deeper, to the depths which no line has sounded; and the waves rolled on, and the gallant ship hastened on her course, so that the eye of man might never again know the place of his rest. But thou, Lord, art the hope of them that remain in the broad sea! So thought his mother while she wept in silence; but she looked for the resurrection of the body, when the sea shall give up her dead, and she was calm.—*Scenes in our Parish.*

THE RECTOR OF ST. GEORGE'S.

Mr. Macmahon, the Rector of St. George's [in Grenada], is a good and interesting old man. In the insurrection of 1795 he, with many others, was placed in a room previously to being summoned to execution by the slaves. He saw all his companions taken out and shot one by one, but having had the luck of Ulysses to stand last, he determined to make a bold push for his life. Macmahon is a tall and was then an uncommonly strong man, and the moment he walked out he leaped upon the slave-general and clung round his neck so tightly that they could not force him away for a long time. The struggle produced a pause and an enquiry who he was, and when he was known to be the parson, there was a common cry for saving his life, as he had always been a kind and charitable man to every one connected with his cure. The worthy rector tells the story with a deserved satisfaction.—*Coleridge's Six Months in the West Indies.*

CHURCH IN SWEDEN.

On Sunday morning I attended divine service. The language, it is true, was unintelligible; yet there is a pleasure in being within the sanctuary where God's people are met together to honour his holy day. There is little difference, as you are aware, on essential points between the Lutheran and the English Churches.—Their temples are more studded with images than we should like, and a crucifix is generally placed over the altar; but, with the true spirit of the great reformer, they abhor the Romish idolatry. The priests wear a long robe trailing on the ground, with a lappet behind, resembling that of the undergraduates at Cambridge.—The men and women sit in different parts of the Church. The service is conducted much like our own, but there is more singing; and some part (I suppose the Psalms) is chaunted by the minister alone, who does not join the congregation in the rest. The ceremonies of marriage and baptism are also similar to ours. In the one, however, no ring is given, as far as I could observe. In the other, water is placed thrice on the head of the infant, instead of the forehead being marked with a cross.—The parishes are very large; twenty, thirty, and even forty miles is the common extent of one. The people have necessarily to go a long way to church. At Wall

the environs of the building were crowded with little cars; and four or five hundred men were collected in the churchyard, though the village itself did not seem to contain ten houses. There would probably have been a still larger assembly, but it rained nearly the whole day.—*Elliott's Letters from the North of Europe.*

The Garner.

THE TRINITY IN THE CREATION.

What should hinder us from accepting the solution, given by the best expositors, ancient and modern, and drawn from this consideration, that, in the unity of the Divine Essence, there is a plurality of Persons, co-eternal and co-equal, who might say, with truth and propriety, "Let us make man;" and, "Man is become like one of us?" O, such a personality revelation informs us; it is that upon which the economy of man's redemption is founded; his creation, as well as that of the world, is in different passages attributed to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; what more natural, therefore, than that, at its production, this form of speech should be used by the Divine Persons? What more rational, too, to suppose, that a doctrine so important to the human race, as communicated from the beginning, that men might know whom they worshipped, and how they ought to worship? What other good and sufficient reason can be given, why the name of God, in use among believers from the first, should likewise be in the plural number, connected with verbs and pronouns in the singular? It is true, we Christians, with the New Testament in our hands, may not want these arguments to prove the doctrine; but why should we overlook, or slight, such very valuable evidence of its having been revealed and received in the Church of God from the foundation of the world? It is a satisfaction, it is a comfort, to reflect that, in this momentous article of our faith, we have patriarchs and prophets for our fathers; that they lived and died in the belief of it; that the God of Adam, of Noe, and of Abraham, is likewise our God; and that, when we adore him in three persons, and give glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, we do as it was done in the beginning, is new, and ever shall be.—*Bishop Horne.*

RELIGIOUS EXCITEMENT.

This spirit of excitement usually extends from the week-day scene to the temple of God, and the day of holy rest. It is carried from the world into religion; and instead of faith, hope, and charity, which were the three graces that occupied the Christian pulpit, men now ask for stimulating speculations; plain scriptural doctrine is dull; a holy life is legal; faith in Christ, and the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart, are but milk for babes; and men will come in crowds to listen to any new phantasy; and they will not ask whether the preacher preach Christ and him crucified, and watch souls as one that must give account, but whether he can entertain and stimulate their weary and feverish faculties; and, provided he can do that, he may follow every mental vanity, he may discover unheard of meanings in the plainest texts, he may distort prophecy, he may even soar to miracles, and proceed till hand they who follow him fall into fearful delusions, and make sear of their faith. Yet all this is tolerated, nay admired, because it satisfies the cravings of an excited spirit; and, instead of stilling the throbbing pulse, causes it to bound with new exiles of fever. And thus the Spirit of God, speaking after to manner of men, straitened; because, instead of seeking him the way of his own appointment, we wished to urge him to take the track of a vain and worthless popularity. Can we expect a blessing if, instead of keeping close to the cross of Christ, we seek out for specious novelties, which only lead us to it? The doctrine which lays not deeply the foundations of religion in a sense of human guilt and corruption—which leads thither as a penitent to the only source of hope,—the only fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness,—which raises the highest superstructure of all that is holy, and lovely, and of good report to the heart and life—grounded on love to God, and faith in Christ; this may not be the most exciting, it may not be the most popular; but, if it do not attract idle crowds, it will interest and edify true worshippers, and be attended with that blessing which all who are vain. Under many a simple village discourse to which men in these our excited scenes would think it scorn to listen, has the Holy Ghost shown that he is not straitened and repentance, and tears, and love and joy, have told that soul were wending their way to heaven. The cross of the Redeemer has never been the theme of human admiration; and if we take Christ as our portion, we must take him with his meekness and his quietude—with his reproaches and his stripes—with his tears of agony, and his crown of thorns.—*Rev. S. C. Willis.*

THE RULE OF CHARITY.

Let but a man imagine himself in the condition of that poor person who craves relief of him, and then set himself to consider what relief he should (as he thinks in reason) expect from those who were able to give it; and at the same time he will see what relief he ought in reason to afford to the person who craves it of him. For reason obliges all men alike; and, being in the same circumstances, it obliges them to the same things: so that what I should judge another man ought to do, who was in such circumstances as I am, that same thing I must judge myself (being indeed in those very circumstances) obliged to do. Let but a man, therefore, I say, reflect, what judgment he himself, if he was a poor man, should pass upon another who was in good circumstances, who seeing him almost ready to perish with hunger, or thirst, or cold, should deny him morsel of bread, or a cup of drink, or a cast of garment: let him but consider how cruel and cold-hearted he should think that person who should refuse to preserve his life, when he might do so without any sensible loss, or diminution of his own estate; and then he must judge himself to be like the cruel and hard-hearted man, if he denies such a cheap and easy succour to another, who he is well able to give it, and the other does greatly want it. Thus, I say, his imaginary supposal of himself in the condition of the poor man who begs his charity, will at the same time both direct him in the nature and measure of his bounty; and also convince him of the obligation he is under, to extend it to his indigent or distressed neighbour.—*Bishop Blackall.*

NOMINAL CHRISTIANS.

Such as, believing the Christian religion to be a divine one, and receiving the gospel as the rule of their behaviour, do yet lead their life unsuitably to their holy profession—these are condemned out of their own mouths, when they acknowledge that the Scriptures are their rule, and at the same time suffer their practice to be a direct contradiction to what is commanded there. The New Testament, it is true, contains a promise of forgiveness to penitent sinners, when they look up for it through faith in Christ; but it is this, which is an argument for their repenting, any excuse for their continuance in sin? What are all the promises recorded in Scripture to a man who will go on in a habit of vice and profaneness? They can be of no use, of no comfort to him, till he secures to himself a title to them,—and that can only be by his parting with his sin, and changing his whole life and conversation for the better. Though God be faithful and just to forgive sinners, yet one of this sad make, one habitually bad, is as wide of salvation, as if no covenant had been made, as if there had been no mediator between God and man. He has forfeited his share in the beneficial agreement: it is the same thing to him as if Christ had not died, or his precious blood not been shed in sacrifice for sin. Let the wicked consider this frequently, and seriously. Let them not please themselves, that they are members of the Church, and professors of the gospel; the gospel is their worst enemy, while they abide in enmity to the rulers of it: the Church has no honour or credit from such members, nor have they themselves any benefit and advantage in being of the Church; and Christianity, though it speaks glad tidings, speaks nothing but vengeance to them that "hold the truth in unrighteousness."—*Bishop Pearce.*

ANNUAL RULERS.

Let no vices of the person cause you to forget the dignity of the office. The authority of a sinful ruler is of God, and must be obeyed accordingly. Of this read Bishop Bilson at large in his excellent treatise on Christian Subjection, against the Papists that excommunicate and depose princes whom they account heretics, or favourers of them. Those sins which will damn a man's soul and deprive him of heaven, will not deprive him of his kingdom, nor dissolve the subjects from their obedience; an infidel or an ungodly Christian (that is, an hypocrite) is capable of being a prince, as well as of being a parent, husband, or master. And the apostle hath taught all, as well as servants, their duty to such. "Servants be subject to your masters with all fear; and not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward; for this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully; for what glory is it, if, when you are buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even heretofore ye were called." (1. Pet. ii. 18-21.) Though it be a rare mercy to have godly rulers, and a great judgment to have ungodly ones, it is such as must be borne.—*Baxter.*

VALUE OF A SINGLE SAINT.

One saint is more valued by God than the whole world of the wicked. God is the God of all creatures, but peculiarly the God of Abraham, and of his seed: one Abraham is more deeply rooted in his heart, than all the world; and he doth more entitle himself the God of Abraham, than the God of the whole world; in that style he speaks to Isaac, "I am the God of Abraham thy father," much more the God of Israel: the God of the whole church, of which Abraham was but a member, though the father of the faithful, and a feeble of the covenant. God hath a greater value for one sincere soul, than for a whole city; he saves a Lot and burns a Sodom; yea, that for a whole world; he drowns a world, and reserves a Noah. He secures his jewels, while he flings away the pebbles.—*Rev. S. Charnock.*

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Toronto, June 1, 1840. 49-6w.

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