

sions of novelty and strangeness with which one lands upon a foreign shore. It seemed as though I had passed, at a step, from the Europe of to-day into the mediæval times. The ancient gates and towers, the quaint houses, with their fantastic decorations, which line the narrow streets, the very footways, wrought with blue and yellowish limestone into arabesque patterns, are all more like the reproduction of sixteenth-century pictures than anything we have seen in the Europe of to-day. The language, too, aids the impression; utterly unlike, as it seems, in words and in construction, to any of our western tongues. It was absolutely unrecognisable. *Náměstí* for place (Platz), *Most* for bridge, *Chram* for cathedral, *Vchod* for entrance; and so on; I had to give it up! I bought a humorous paper, and tried, by help of the pictures, to understand the jokes; but it was of no avail.

These Bohemians seem very proud of their language, too; I have hardly ever seen a place where inscriptions in the vernacular on shop fronts and walls were more abundant, or where there was a greater display of placards of every kind. A few leisurely strolls through the streets of Prague would have almost served the purpose of grammar and dictionary; especially as several considerate persons had appended the German equivalent in a side translation. I suspect that this bilingual method is becoming more prevalent; but, as it has obvious inconveniences, it must end in one way. The weaker language must succumb, and by the law of the survival of the fittest, the German will become universal in the Austrian Empire, as in those of the northern federation. As it is, the two languages are taught in all the national schools; and every one above the poorest has to carry on business in both, a method which may make capital linguists, but is apt to be distracting.

The sights of Prague are chiefly in the streets, and these to the stranger are unfailing in their quaint attractiveness. There is nothing very picturesque in the costumes of the people, except, indeed, in the dress of the police, a dark-coloured long coat, with belt and a plume of dyed cocks' feathers in a dark felt hat. They stood about mournfully, as having little to do in a busy, good-tempered and well-conducted population. The number of book-shops was remarkable, in every quarter of the town; the photographs in the shop windows were literally innumerable.

It is from the Carlsbrücke, the ancient bridge over the Moldau, that the spectator best apprehends how beautiful for situation is this ancient city. A gateway and tower guards each end of the