

men, that a great number of curious nuptial observances yet linger amongst them, and vary in the different provinces, although the main ceremonies differ little from the Swiss and Spanish customs, which we have already described. Among these varieties is one common amongst the Romans, and still kept up by the Morlachians, of presenting the bride, after the marriage is consummated, with a sieve full of walnuts or almonds, which she throws amongst the bystanders, to signify that plenty will prevail in her house. The Illyrians usually appear well armed, and have their hats adorned with peacock's feathers, in compliance with ancient prejudices, on nuptial occasions; and, even now, bloody encounters are too common, when rival suitors insist on such trials of skill. As their wedding lasts several days, each guest is daily furnished with a small tub of water, wherewith to wash himself, and each leaves in the tub some money for the bride, which thus augments her little dowry of one cow and her wearing-apparel. In some districts, a ridiculous custom is observed, of the parents depreciating their daughter in set speeches, before she is conducted to the house of the bridegroom. "No says, in return, to the young wife, "Well, I shall find means to bring you to reason, and to begin with you in time. I shall let you feel the weight of my arm." He then pretends to beat her, though this part of the business is not always confined to a mere form. Another curious ceremony at Illyrian weddings is during the wedding-dinner, in the midst of which all the company rise up, and the bride is expected to throw over her husband's house a cake, made of hard coarse dough; the higher she can do this, the happier will the marriage prove; and if the cake falls on the other side without breaking, it is considered a convincing proof that she will make a good housewife. The firing of pistols is common in these provinces on festive occasions; and sometimes for a week before the wedding, the bride is expected to kiss all the men who come to see her, in token of the regard which she shall henceforth feel for the sex of her husband; and the day of her marriage the bridegroom's friends ride forward and present her with a white silk handkerchief, which she returns, and the messengers then gallop back to the rest of their party, amongst whom the kerchief is divided, and who, ranging themselves in a circle, partake of refreshments amidst

the discharge of fire-arms. On arriving at the bride's abode the attendant maidens fasten an apple, encircled with flowers, to the standard-bearer's lance; and, on reaching church, the bride is the last to alight, though she has the privilege of assisting her father-in-law to dismount.

The marriage-ceremonies of the Tyrolese are more interesting, for they are evidently dictated by far truer sensibility. It is usual when an enamoured swain of this nation beseeches the sanction of his parents to his choice, for them to reply, "Go, earn thy wife. To be a good father, a man must be able to get bread for his children;" and the young man dutifully obeys the mandate, the operation of which frequently banishes him to distant countries, with merchandise to dispose of, or other commissions, entailing the expenditure of a long period of time, much trouble and patience. If, after this trial, he persists in his constancy, the father and son array themselves in their best apparel, and with presents of honeycomb, laid on sweet-scented plants, fine fruits, and cakes, made by some beloved sister, they visit the future bride, to whom the father says, "God bless thee, lovely girl, who remindest me of the days of my youth. I have a son; he loves thee. Wilt thou make my declining years happy?" she modestly replies, and the lover is then introduced, and lays his gifts at the feet of his mother-in-law, when singing by the young maidens present, and a frugal repast, follow; and in the evening the lover serenades the fair one for whom he has so long waited. Music forms an important item in the wedding-day festivities, on which occasion the schoolmaster addresses a complimentary speech to the bride, who afterwards delivers to her future spouse the ribbons for his garters in token of submission. In church, before the priest pronounces the final benediction, the white-robed bride and gaily-decked bridegroom kneel to receive their parents' blessing; and after the marriage-dinner, the head of the family offers up a solemn prayer for the happiness of the young couple, and as the evening wears on, dancing begins, and the bride, in return for their congratulations, presents flowers to each of the young men; while the bridegroom, in like manner, gives different colored ribbons to the fair maidens, who in turn, have offered him their good wishes.

It said, and it is greatly to her credit, that in no country are matches of interest less common than in Holland. When a