

A SUMMER DAY.

The flowers lay sleeping beneath the dew—
But the Mother had watched the whole night through.

The wild sweet carol of one small bird
Was the sound that the weary watcher heard.

And the summer dawn grew into the Morn,
But still she sat weeping beside her first-born.

Life was fading from cheek and brow,
And the Mother's heart was hopeless now.

Not one sound in the chamber of death
Was heard—save the Maiden's labouring breath.

No word of murmur the Mother spake;
Silent and calm are the hearts that break.

Morning passed—and the Noon so still
Bathed in warm loveliness wood and hill.

Slumbrous airs from the West went by
And the Mother watched for her child to die.

Afternoon came—and the Maiden lay
Lifeless and soulless—a mould of clay!

Rain came down as from eyes that wept,
Watching was over—the Maiden slept.

Through the quiet falling of evening rain
The bird's soft carol stole in again!

Then the Mother said: " 'Tis a message for me.
To tell me, O child, that 'tis well with thee!"

And the Summer day ended, for 'late or long,
Every day weareth to even-song."

A STROLL IN THE HARZ.

The Harz Mountains, the most northerly of the Central European heights, is a spot which has been strangely neglected by English tourists. Murray's Guide strongly advises them against it, calling it a mere molehill that will not bear comparison with Switzerland. This is true enough in a way, but molehills may have their charms, as even the writer in Murray is forced to admit; nay, he once so far forgets himself as to compare a certain drive in the Harz with the Trossachs. Still the whole account of this region is written in a bad tempered strain, as though the writer had been suffering from a bilious attack, and seen the world *pro tem.* with jaundiced eyes. And yet this little district well repays a visit; and the holiday-seeker who desires to combine the attractions of beautiful scenery with good air and economy will do well to turn his attention to the spot. He who would come with wife and child, and pitch his tent for some weeks, will be repaid, as well as he who desires to take a walking tour, but is not up to the great fatigues and occasional danger of a Swiss pedestrian expedition. The Harz has the further charm of containing all its attractions within a small compass; a short visit will exhaust all there is to be seen; and though many of its beauties tempt the lingerer, and every fine day reveals views and walks in a new light, a new charm, still we are freed from harassing sense that there is a great deal of regulation sight-seeing that must be "done." This alone is repaying to body and mind.

The district known as the Harz is the old Hercynian Forest of which Caesar has left such terrifying accounts, strangely at variance with its modern aspect. It covers an area of seventy miles by thirty, and divides itself in the Upper and Lower Harz. Both have beauties of their own. The Upper Harz is wilder, its rock scenery more grotesque, its water-scooped valleys more sombre and precipitous; pines and fir-trees clothe its mountain-sides in thicker pride. The Lower Harz, on the other hand, is gentler and softer of aspect; there are more fields and pastures; the distant plains are visible, and furnish a less confined perspective; the hills are lower, the mountainous character less pronounced. For this is a curious feature about the Harz, that although its highest mountain, the Brocken, is only 3,700 feet high, yet the whole region has a markedly Alpine character as regards vegetation and meteorological phenomena. Indeed, this little district has a character *sui generis*, underground, on the ground, and overground. Underground, because it is one of the most interesting of unsolved geological problems; and for the lover of mineralogy and the student of geology here is a fine field for working with the hammer. The mineral wealth of the Harz is proverbial; its gnomes and kobolds live in legendary lore; its minerals designated by Mr. Ruskin as the aristocrats of their genus. This quaint writer contends that there is rank among minerals as among men, and that you "may recognize the high caste and breeding of these crystals wherever you meet them, and know at once that they are Harz born." He further adds, "If you want to see the gracefulness and happiest caprices of which dust is capable, you must go to the Harz; not that I ever mean to go there myself, because I want to retain the romantic feeling about the name." This romantic feeling clings around what we have called its overground characteristics, the witch and wild huntsman associations that linger round its name. The Harz is the home of all the weirdest legends of Northern Germany, the scene of Goethe's *Walpurgis Nacht*, the home of cloud myths and storms. The lover of legends will become almost satiated here; every rock, every hill, every prominent spot, has its story.

On the ground there is much that is charming and picturesque. If perchance the Cumberland lakes, the Scotch highlands, the Welsh hills equal, or at times surpass, the Harz in

scenic attractions, they cannot offer that ineffable fascination produced by a foreign land, in which the people and their ways also offer new points of interest to the eye and mind. By all means let us not neglect to visit our native land, but it is idle to pretend that the mental and physical changes are as great and beneficial as those produced by a foreign sojourn.

Supposing, then, our tourist to have decided upon a visit to the Harz, it remains to decide how to reach it. If economy be included in his programme, he cannot do better than procure from Messrs. Gaze a return-ticket to Brunswick, which he can reach, *vid* Rotterdam or Flushing, within thirty hours of leaving London. At Brunswick he will do well to halt, and devote a day to this quaint old city. If he be an antiquarian, or have an eye for the picturesque, he will be well repaid; for within the ramparts of this one-thousand-year-old city is enclosed a town of as mediæval a character as Nürnberg, Lübeck, or Danzig. From Brunswick the railway goes in two hours to Harzburg, the best halting-place for the exploration of one side of the Harz. Here are some very good *pensions*, where intending sojourners can be boarded for the moderate cost of from four to five shillings a day. Clean and tidy lodgings can, however, be obtained in the village at a much cheaper rate, while the unencumbered tourist can certainly put up for a much lower figure. Harzburg is situated at the foot of the hills that rise gradually towards the Brocken, and at the opening of a fine valley, the Radauthal, whose floor is watered by a true mountain brook, that rushes and babbles along. The fragrant odour of fir-trees pervades the whole air, and adds to the salubrity of the spot. There are many quarries worked along this valley, and this reminds us that we are in a working country; but even work is picturesque in the Harz, and the hand of man has not disfigured Nature. This arises probably from the fact that machinery is not employed in these above-ground operations, and that the means of transit are still of a primitive kind. Even the frequent blasting is not disturbing; it only wakes the echoes among the hills. In the woods, which are all under government control and carefully preserved, we often come upon charcoal-burners plying their murky trade, and looking so swarthy and picturesque that imagination easily calls up some of the local traditions. They are, however, like all the natives, the most harmless and gentle of men; a little melancholy and silent, like most mountaineers, but true-hearted-sterling natures.

Harzburg abounds in pretty walks into the woods, on to the hills, or out among the fields where flowers grow in abundance. Not the least charming of these is the ascent of the Burgberg, whose summit is gained in an hour, and where a pretty hotel makes a good halting-place for the pedestrian who wishes to explore the neighbouring woods. Here are the ruins of a former stronghold of the Emperor Henry IV., and hence starts the wild huntsman on his nightly rides, pursued by fiendish dogs. From the top is obtained a fine view over the plains, down upon Harzburg, and over the chain of mountains; the cone-shaped Brocken rising above the rest, its head usually enveloped in cloud.

It rests with the tourist's disposition whether he will "do" Harzburg in a day, or linger a week and longer beside its woods and streams. We should next advise him to visit Goslar, which he can now reach by rail, and where he will once more find himself in a mediæval town, in no wise behind Brunswick for quaint beauty. Its market-place and Guildhall are indeed even finer; and the historical recollections that cluster round this old imperial city, now fast falling into decay, no less interesting. South of the city rises the Rammelsberg, rich in all manner of ores. Gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, sulphur, and alum are all contained within the bowels of this bluff, a rare medley rarely packed in so small a space.

From Goslar to Oker is an affair of ten minutes by rail. The village looks plague-stricken; sulphur-fumes hang over it; not even grass will grow in this tainted air. Here all the Rammelsberg ore is smelted. But soon a sharp turn of the road hides it from sight, and reveals the beautiful Oker valley. Its mountain-sides are thickly wooded with fir and beech, through which a footpath winds; while here and there jut barren gray crags of granite that seem to threaten destruction to all who pass, and down beneath foam the dark-coloured waters of the Oker. Every turn of the sinuous road, which is entirely blasted out of the living rock, reveals new beauties. Steadily ascending, it reaches at last red-roofed Clausthal, a town of 1740 feet above the sea, yet bearing all the aspect of an Alpine site. Corn will not grow, though the altitude is not really great; the winters are long and severe. Here the centre of activity is underground, and whoever would see the admirable mining operations of this country should visit one or other of its famous shafts—the Dorothea or the Caroline.

From Clausthal we can ascend the Brocken. It is the wildest, but not the most beautiful, ascent; for there are many ways of reaching this famous summit. To do so, we must cross the bleak plateau of the Upper Harz, and pass the curious Rehberger Graben and Oderteich; the latter, an artificial reservoir of the waters that rise on the moors of the Brocken; the former, the viaduct that conveys these waters to Clausthal and Andreasberg to work the mines, water not being obtainable in any abundance nearer at hand. Hence over the Brockenfeld,

where lie in wild confusion those great masses of rock whence the mountain derives its name (*Brocken*, pieces broken off). He who would follow in the footsteps of Goethe must make a *détour* by Andreasberg, a matter of thirteen miles, to ascend by way of the swamps of Schierke and Elend, and see the road immortalised in "Faust," but much tamed since the poet's time. On the summit, where the witches hold their Sabbath, is an inn, inhabited all the year round, though the snow in winter often lies twenty feet high, and even in summer there are places where it never melts. The plateau is small, and almost absorbed by the massive, low, ship-like hotel, in which fires burn all the year round. The view from here, if seen, is very fine, and we ourselves had the rare good fortune to behold it. All the Harz lay at our feet, and our eyes could penetrate far into the plain. Too soon, however, one of the thick driving mists that haunt this spot blotted out the whole; and this is the usual fate of the traveller.

He who has ascended as we proposed must descend by way of the Ilsebethal, the enchanting valley celebrated in song by Heine, and not easily forgotten by any who have ever traversed it. The brooklet rushes down from the Brocken, in an almost unbroken succession of little waterfalls, through a narrow, rocky, wooded defile. At one point a wild mass of red granite rears its head above the rest. This is the Ilsestein, whence a fine extensive view over a wild landscape is obtained. Ilseburg, a little lower down, is a small town, charmingly situated, where excellent *iron objets d'art* are cast. A road leads thence to Wernigerode; but the pedestrian and lover of beauty must retrace his steps a little back into the valley, and reach sleepy old-fashioned Wernigerode by way of the Steinerne Renne, where the waters of the Holzemme dash down a steep incline over huge blocks of stone.

At Wernigerode the traveller will linger or no, according to his inclination. For ourselves, we were charmed with this Sleepy Hollow and its fine specimens of mediæval timber architecture. In any case Elbingerode must be his next goal; for thence he reaches Rubeland, rich in stalactite caverns, of which in especial the Baumannshöhle well repays a visit.

We are now nearing the culminating point of wild beauty which the Harz can boast, the gorge of the Bode. This can be approached from two sides, either by way of Blankenbueg and Thale, or across the hills to Treseburg and down the valley to its foot. We recommended the latter, which, though the rougher and less frequented road, well repays any little extra fatigue or discomfort. From Treseburg, where the gorge begins, to Thale, where it ends, the walk, which occupies about two hours and a half, presents one unbroken series of scenes increasing in boldness as they near Thale, a reason the more for obtaining the effect downwards. At first the Bode seems a wide placid river, but gradually it gets wedged in closer and closer by rocky walls, until at last it has to cut its way by force, brawling and foaming along through a narrow defile of majestic cliffs of fantastic shape, now tree-grown, now bare. Close by Thale a magnificent wall of rock closes in the valley. This is called the Rosstrappe, and affords a splendid view down into the gorge, a thousand feet beneath. A steep zigzag path brings us once more into Thale, where are to be found the best, but also the dearest, inns in the Harz.

The traveller has now exhausted rapidly all the stock-sights of the Upper Harz but one, the Hexentanzplatz, a perpendicular cliff opposite the Rosstrappe, and which affords a yet finer view over the whole mountain chain of the Harz. This he can see by ascending some two thousand rough rock-cut steps, or he can combine it with a day's excursion that will give him a good general idea of the less grand but idyllic scenery of the Lower Harz. For this purpose he should take a carriage and start early from Thale; driving through Suderde and Gernrode, two light sunny little spots that lie close together; ascend the Stubenberg, whence he will obtain a pretty view into the plain. Hence he can drive to the Madgesprung, and through the pretty Selkethal, whose characteristic is soft-wooded slopes, to Alexisbad, a little watering-place sunk in the hollow of the hills. From here a carriage road, chiefly through thick forest, will take him back to the Hexentanzplatz, the witches' dancing-floor, whence he will see the superb view we have mentioned above, and thus worthily close his Harz excursion. The railroad from Thale will take him in eight hours to Dresden, or to any other spot he chooses. If, as Murray words it, he be bent on making the entire tour of the Harz, there are still many pretty spots he can explore besides those we have briefly indicated.

Such approximately is the trip we should recommend. It is difficult to speak of costs, these depend so much upon individual habits. It is quite possible to live in the Harz at the rate of from five to ten shillings a day. Guides are quite needless, except for the Brocken, where the swampy nature of the ground and the frequent dense mists render them desirable. Neither are carriages nor mules required, except by the feeble; and he is but a poor pedestrian who cannot manage his own knapsack.

No less than thirty pearl divers in the Persian Gulf fell victims to the sharks during the last year. The fact that some £300,000 worth of pearls were found in 1879 explains how it is that men can be found to engage in this perilous occupation.

HEARTH AND HOME.

COMFORT.—The arrangement of our homes and the management of our hospitalities, to be truly agreeable and inviting, must not have cost an undue or painful effort. The elegantly-furnished drawing-room loses all its charm and attractiveness when we discover that it has been adorned at the expense of the family comfort, or health, or education. The splendour of an entertainment fascinates no longer when it is found to be the result of a mean parsimony and a persistent paring in other directions.

THE YOUNG.—To accustom the young to be and to do is even more important than to induce them to learn and to know. What they think out with their own thoughts and work out with their own hands is worth far more to them than any amount of passive reception of other men's thoughts or doings, even through the very best books or the very best teachers. Let the child feel, not merely that he is preparing for something in the future, but that he is also living a true and real life in the present, taking his own share of work and responsibility, strengthening his powers by continual action, and building up his character by continual well-doing.

UNFORTUNATE LIVES.—An unfortunate life is one of the leading causes of both physical and moral disease. One might write an entire volume upon this subject. Numerous examples of the effects of an unhappy life may be observed every day. Every child knows of them. An unhappy life is like dust in the machinery of a clock. It makes it go badly—even prevents it from going at all. But, when the dust has been removed, it goes once more as well as ever. When we are fortunate and happy, we are as sound as a fish in the water. An unhappy, unfortunate life prevents those changes from going on in the system which health requires—prevents good digestion, good circulation, and a comfortable action of the nervous system. If we wish to be healthy, we should endeavour to make our lives successful and happy.

HAPPINESS.—Mankind are always happier for having been happy; so that if you make them happy now, you make them happy twenty years hence, by the memory of it. A childhood passed, with a due mixture of rational indulgence, under fond and wise parents, diffuses over the whole of life a feeling of calm pleasure; and, in extreme old age, is the very last remembrance which time can erase from the mind of man. No enjoyment, however inconsiderable, is confined to the present moment. A man is the happier for life, from having made once an agreeable tour, or lived for any length of time with pleasant people, or enjoyed any considerable interval of innocent pleasure; and it is, most probably, the recollection of their past pleasures which contributes to render old men so inattentive to the scenes before them, and carries them back to a world that is passed, and to scenes never to be renewed.

THE SECRET OF BEAUTY.—The secret of beauty is health. Those who desire to be beautiful should do all they can to restore their health if they have lost it, or to keep it if they have it yet. No one can lay down specific rules for people in these matters. The work which one may do, the rest he must take, his baths, his diet, his exercise, are matters for individual consideration, but they must be carefully thought of and never neglected. As a rule, when a person feels well he looks well; and when he looks ill he feels ill, as a general thing. There are times when one could guess, without looking in the glass, that one's eyes are dull and one's skin is mottled. This is not a case for something in a pretty bottle from the perfumer's, or for the lotion that the circulars praise so highly. To have a fresh complexion and bright eyes, even to have white hands and a graceful figure, you must be well. Health and the happiness that usually comes with it are the true secrets of beauty.

BEAR AND FORBEAR.—Some housekeepers, who keep their houses in excellent order, have a very annoying way of talking about what they have done in detail. It is foolish of women to make their work the subject of conversation at all the meals and at the occasions for social intercourse in the evening hour, for it irritates the husband and children, although all are too respectful to say so. Women would do well to examine themselves in regard to this point, and avoid a persistent habit of telling over how much they have done. On the other hand, the husband should not forget that his wife is a faithful worker. How astonished some wives would be if, after a multifarious day's work, the husband should make some such remark as this: "How pleasant it is to come home at night and find the house so clean and tidy, the children so fresh, and the supper so deliciously cooked. You are a valuable woman, wife!" If a man should make such an appreciative remark, a wife would be foolish then to tire him with relating the details, while he would be careful not to express himself again. Bear and forbear, and a careful study of one another's necessities for sympathy, is needed to make domestic happiness. The wife should not expect too much estimation of her labour from the husband; neither should he leave her to struggle alone with her side of the difficulties of household life, especially where there is a family of young children.

It is expected that the Queen will visit Killybegs during the summer, and will be the guest of the Earl and Countess of Kenmare.