

Howitt's first few chapters are thus devoted to graphic sketches of the natural face of the country, and the out of door life of the peasant; these form the general features, the rough outline of the picture, the nooks and corners of which are to be filled up and made life-like with delicate tracery; a touch here and there, giving some new aspect, which, when all combined, form a perfect whole. His descriptions of the kirchweigs or wakes, are spirited and full of life; they remind us of those expressive pictures of Teniers, on looking at which, you almost fancy you hear the heavy footfall of the boor, as with awkward dives and leaps he keeps time to the quaint old music. It is like seeing a moving panorama of the things he describes; indeed, what he says of Goethe seems most applicable to himself—"He has completely transferred to this book the popular life of Germany, his descriptions of both country and people come before us continually with delightful surprise."

What he considers one of the peculiar features of the outer life of the German people, comes in beautiful relief after the sketch given of the hard labour of the peasant life;

But we must come to the great and prominent out-of-door life of Germany. It is not then in their riding, fishing, hunting, or in such public games as racing, cricketing, rowing, &c.; but in the enjoyment of walking, of public gardens, of coffee and wine-drinking in such places, and, above all, in open-air concerts. The enjoyment of music and social pleasures in the open air is the grand summer enjoyment of Germany. It is the universal passion from one end of the country to the other. It is the same in every village, in every town, in every capital. Public walks, public music, cafés and cassinos, coffee and wine-drinking and smoking and knitting under trees, call out the whole population, high and low, great and small, old and young; and there does not seem a cure from Berlin to Strassburg, from Cologne to Pesth. Nay, much as the French live out of doors, the Germans far excel them in this species of life. All their musical art is called forth, and their greatest masters are employed to give a charm to this mode of social existence. Every means is adopted to give facility to the enjoyment of this taste. The heart of the Germans, too, is bound to the heart of nature with a deeper and hotter feeling than that of the French! It is true that they have not the true and perfect and permanent country life that we have. The habits and institutions of their country do not allow it; but they have not less love of nature than we have, nor do they enjoy it less in their way than we do. Nay, in some respects, they enjoy it far more, for they have taken measures to bring the beauty of nature to their very doors, to introduce it into the suburbs and very heart of their towns, and to unite it to all the charms of art and of social life.

There is one advantage that their towns universally possess over ours; and that is, in the abundance of public walks, and public gardens and promenades, where every citizen can wander, or can sit and rejoice with his family and his friends. All round their towns, in general, you find these ample public walks and promenades planted with trees and furnished with seats. The old walls and ramparts, which formerly gave security to the inhabitants, are now converted into sources of their highest pleasures,

being thus planted and seated, and made scenes of the gayest resort, and whence the finest views are obtained over the surrounding country. The suburbs and neighbourhood of all large cities again, are full of public gardens; with alleys, and extensive woodland walks, where the people all summer flock out, and find refreshments at coffee houses, and bands of music, presided over by the first masters of Germany. The cities being seldom very large, the people thus enjoy a sort of half city, half rural life, but refined and beautified with social and artistic influences, of which ours is too much stripped. In England, every man takes care of himself, and makes his own nest snug; besides lighting and paving, little seems to be done for the public in our towns. Here, on the contrary, the public enjoyment seems to be the favourite and prevailing idea, and you see around you perpetual evidences of its working. The people have in the outskirts of their cities, their vineyards and their summer houses in them, where they can go with their families and friends. But they have, again, their great public gardens and woodlands all round their large towns, to ten or a dozen miles' distance. They have similar places of rustic resort, often on the most beautiful mountain heights and in mountain valleys, to which they pour out on all Sundays and leisure days, in carriages and by railroads, by thousands. Here they have wine, and cards, and often dinners. Here they even come with their families, taking whole troops of children with them; and there you find them in old orchards, amid castle ruins, under the trees, and, in short, through all the surrounding hills and valleys. They dine in great family groups—the men sitting often in their shirt sleeves; the children rolling in the grass; and the handmaids hurrying about, dealing out plates and viands to hungry people, in a broil of what seems hopeless hurry. They afterwards smoke their pipes, drink their coffee, and go home at an early hour as happy as this earth can make them.

In every country town and village it is the same. You can go into few or none of the former, where you will not find public walks and gardens; and will not hear of charming places, some four, six, or ten miles distant, where all the world goes in the summer, in parties, to walk about, to drink coffee, or to picnic in the woods, and so on. There is not a country inn in a pleasant place, but it has its orchard and its garden fitted up with seats and tables for this simple, rural festivity. There is not a ruin of a castle, or old jager-house, where you do not find walks and seats, and every provision for popular enjoyment. Everywhere the Germans have seized on all those picturesque points and scenes of rural beauty which afford means of carrying out and cultivating this mingled love of nature and of social pleasure. You come upon seats in wild spots, where you would otherwise never have dreamed of sitting besides yourself coming, and there you are sure to find that before you lies a beautiful view.

All royal gardens too are open, and the people walk in them, and stream around the palaces, passing in many instances, through their very courts and gateways, just as if they were their own. Nay, the royal and ducal owners walk about amongst the people with as little ceremony as any of the rest. The Emperor of Austria, or the King of Prussia, does the very same. You may meet them anywhere; and little more ceremony is used towards them than is used towards any other individual, simply that of lifting your hat in passing, which is done to all your acquaintance, and is returned as a mark of ordinary salutation. You will see princes sitting in public places with their friends, with a cup of coffee, as unsummoningly and as little stared at as any respectable citizen. You may sometimes see a Grand Duke come into a coun-