

ACROSS SOUTHERN GERMANY.

BY R. F. BUMPAS.

Strasburg was the first German city we visited. Spending the Sabbath here, we attended services at the Lutheran Cathedral of St. Peters, the hour being 9.30. The service was simple, and while we understood very little, we thoroughly enjoyed it, the service in Protestant Germany being in everything in such striking contrast to that of Catholic Italy. The large church, seated at least three times as many as Centenary, New Bern, being full of people who, by every token, had come to worship God. On entering their pews every person, young and old, stood for a moment with bowed head in silent prayer. All the people sang. There was no choir or leader. Simply the great organ. The music was plain—no operatic music, no display—and the old men and women sang as well as the boys and girls. The minister spoke with animation for thirty-five minutes, and the people were attentive. An atmosphere of devotion pervaded the service. Near me I noticed a German officer in uniform and wearing his sword, joining heartily in the service. Two men stood at each door to receive our contributions as we passed out.

We visited the Cathedral, begun in the eleventh century, and still unfinished. It suffered greatly during the bombardment of the Germans in the war of 1870, the base of the unfinished tower being used by the French officers as a place of observation. The Germans trained their guns upon it. Fortunately, the famous astronomical clock in the South Transept escaped injury. It is a truly wonderful piece of mechanism, indicating not only the hour of the day, but the days of the week, the phases of the moon, and the revolution of the planets. The clock is fifty or more feet high. At the end of the first quarter of the hour, childhood marches in front of the clock, a figure of death strikes one on the bell, and childhood disappears. The second quarter, youth appears and death strikes two; at the third quarter manhood comes and death strikes three; then old age and death strikes four. At noon, the twelve apostles march before Christ who blesses them. When Peter appears, a huge cock on a tower thrice flaps his wings and crows, an angel reverses an hour-glass, seven chariots representing the days of the week, appear each in its turn; a globe, half light and half dark, shows the phases of the moon. The sun is represented, surrounded by all the planets visible to the naked eye, each of which performs its revolution in its appointed time.

Canal and river intersect the city, spanned by numerous bridges. In many of the cities through which we passed we saw people fishing—in some they had to pay for the privilege, but strange to say, we never saw anyone catch a fish, nor any evidence that they had caught anything. It seemed a profitless amusement.

Storks are numerous in Strasburg. They enjoy the freedom of the city,

and build their nests beside the chimneys on the roofs.

From Strasburg we proceed down the valley of the Rhine, past the fashionable watering place, Baden Baden, and the Black Forest, to the university city of Heidelberg. We find the city gay with flags, and at the university they are busy with elaborate and extensive decorations for celebrating the centenary of the reopening of the institution by the Elector Frederick. The Grand Duke is to participate in the festivities, and on the Rhine we passed the boat conveying him and his suite.

A drive over the mountain gave a fine view of the city with the river Neckar flowing through it, and the Rhine in the distance. Longfellow thought that next to the Alhambra at Granada, Heidelberg castle was the finest ruin that had come down to us from the Middle Ages. It is extensive and requires quite a little time to inspect its various parts. The newest is that erected in 1615 for the Princess Elizabeth of England, daughter of James I, who, when her husband shrank from accepting the throne of an impoverished kingdom, which was tendered him, said she would rather eat dry bread and be the wife of a king, than revel in luxury as the wife of a duke. History records that she enjoyed the experience she coveted. We looked into the bakery where the bread was cooked, and into the kitchen where an ox was roasted whole on the spit. We saw the little ton and the great ton capable of holding 49,000 gallons of wine, and which was three times filled; the statue of the court jester whose daily portion of wine was eighteen bottles, and the jester's clock, which, when you pull the string, flies open to strike you in the face with a fox's tail. The upper part of the tower, whose walls are twenty feet thick, was blown off in a gunpowder explosion by the French and fell unbroken into the moat where it still lies. The stone statues of the lords and mistresses of this castle for centuries past, which once occupied the niches in the walls of the court, are now preserved in one of the rooms. The old banquet hall has been rehabilitated, and workmen were busy putting in hundreds of electric lights in various colors and arranging the decorations for the banquet at the approaching festivities.

From the castle we rode back to the town by an ancient church, a part of which is now used as a place of worship by the Catholics and a part by the Protestants, across the Neckar by the old bridge and along its banks to the new town—a beautiful drive, returning to the city by the new bridge and through the park ornamented with statues and fountains.

From Heidelberg we came down the Rhine valley to Mayence, passing the city of Worms, where Martin Luther defended the faith before the Emperor and Diet. In this region are many manufacturing towns.

Mayence, on the Rhine, is quite a pretty city, with many handsome residences. Here it was that Constantine is said to have had the vision of the cross in the sky bearing the words: "By this sign thou shalt conqueror." There is here an ancient cathedral. In the square around it is an open market place where the women display fruits and vegetables on tables and in baskets, but chiefly on the pavement. Near by is a bronze statue to Gutenberg, the inventor of printing with movable type, who was a native. In another square is a statue of Schiller, represented as looking upward.

A DAY ON THE RHINE.

The romantic and picturesque part of the river Rhine famed in song and story, the birthplace of so many legions, lies between Mayence and Cologne, and the trip down the river occupies a day. So far, fortune has favored me with fine weather, and this day is no exception to the rule. The breeze is a little stiff and cool, but the sun is bright and the sky clear. On either side of the river rise hills and mountains, and every peak and crag, castle and ruin, has its story of true love or disappointed affection, of strife and valor, of adventure or tragedy.

Bingen, on the Rhine, has been immortalized in song. Near by on an island is the mouse tower, whose story has often been told; how Bishop Hotte, whose granaries were full, when appealed to by the starving peasantry for bread, shut them in one of his barns which he fired, saying, "They are rats, let them die like rats." Next day an army of rats poured into his tower and picked his flesh from his bones—a warning to all who would rob the poor by a corner in bread stuffs.

The Lorelei is a lofty cliff rising from the river, and at its base is a whirlpool dangerous to small craft. At the midnight hour tradition says, a beautiful siren, the Lorelei sat upon its summit combing her hair and luring to certain ruin all who listened to her song. Heine has put it in verse:

"And yonder sits a maiden,
The fairest of the fair;
With gold her garments glittering,
And she combs her golden hair:
With a golden comb she combs it,
And a mild song singeth she,
That meets the heart with a wondrous
And powerful melody."

Near to each other are two ruined castles. Liebenstein and Sternberg, perversely loved the same maiden, fought a duel, built a high wall between two castles, a lasting monument to their enmity. Each met a tragic fate.

Rolandseck, where the brave knight Roland sat and watched the convent into which his love Hildegard had taken refuge, on hearing that he had fallen in the Spanish wars, and when she sickened and died he watched her grave day by day until he too died.

The national monument erected to commemorate the victories of Germany in the Franco-Russian war, rises on the hillside high above the river and is seen at a great distance.

Rheinstein is the property of the present Emperor William, and one of his favorite summer retreats. We scanned the horizon searchingly for the celebrated Konings Stuhl where in the olden days the seven Electors met to choose the Emperor. We thought it must be perched upon an eminence, when lo! we beheld it in a valley near the brink of the river.

Of the many celebrated cathedrals visited, I was more impressed with the majesty and beauty of the Cathedral of Cologne than of any other. It is pure gothic. The height of the spires is equalled by the length of the building. For fifteen or twenty miles down the river we could see the great building with its twin spires standing out above all other buildings of the city in bold relief against the sky.

There is here a unique and appropriate statue to Bismark, and a bronze equestrian statue to Frederick the Great, and on the pedestal there are the life-size statues of distinguished persons. The Church of St. Ursula is said to be founded on the spot and to contain the bones of eleven thousand virgins, slaughtered in the fifth century by the Huns. These bones are arranged on the walls of the chapels in a fantastic manner after the fashion of the Capuchins in Rome.

Personal Comparisons.

C. H. WETTERBE.

There is a great proneness in people of all classes to compare themselves with one another. I think that this practice is owing to the weakness and variety of human nature, even in its best conditions. There is no reason to believe that the holy angels ever make any comparisons among themselves. And it is notable that Christ did not compare himself with any human beings. He never said: "I am very hoity, and you are very sinful."

In 2 Cor. 10: 12, R. U., Paul, writing for himself and other apostles, says: "We are not bold to number or compare ourselves with certain of them that commend themselves; but they themselves measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves, are without understanding."

Dr. Adam Clarke, in commenting on that verse, and having reference to the boastingness, says: "They are full of pride and self-conceit; they look within themselves for accomplishments which their self-love will soon find out; for, to it, real and fictitious are the same."

This is not only a proper interpretation of that text, but it is also a true view of the workings of human nature, even in Christians who suppose that they have attained to a degree of piety which is far superior to that of the most of other Christians. These people compare themselves with others who have a humble estimate of their spiritual state, and they say that they themselves are on a much higher ground of piety than the others are.

Hence it is that the self-praised ones are constantly declaring that the churches as a whole are in a fearfully low condition. Why, even the most of the pastors, and also church officials of the highest standing, are said to be well-nigh dead as to spirituality! O, the pride and conceit!