CHRISTWAS IN GERMANY.

Calculating the historical age of man at five thousand years, and assuming that speech at that time ago consisted of one universal language, it is astonishing how many varieties in the method of expressing thought have arisen since then. The influences of climate, the various aspects and surroundings of nature, have effected so many changes on the original unit of intellect. and, to a certain degree, on the physical formution of man, that it has become a matter of serious doubt as to whether the human races really do originate in one common stock. Where time, therefore, works so remarkable changes in such important features as the very form and speech of man, it is scarcely less surprising, though no less remarkable, that such should be the case in such minor points as the observance of Christmas. The customs observed at this period of the year are those of a number of nations, ranging from the supny, palm-girt shores os the Mediterranean to the bleak, rocky, ice-bound coasts of Norway and "uitima Thule," Christmas, in our minds, is always associated with the glittering snows and icicles of winter; the glossy, dark-green leaves and bright scarlet berries of the holly and the pater colors of the mystic mistletoe; with the bright blaze and deep-red glow of the yule log roaring up the capacious chimney; and last, but not least, with an unlimited supply of the good things that cheer the heart of man. Christmas, without these accessories, would seem strange and foreign to our ideas. I well remember arriving at Alexandria on the 25th of December, 1863, in the good ship Ceylon, Captain Evans [commander. The sea, the sky, were both bright blue; the fiery sun burnt down upon us as hot as in the hottest days of last July; and as we sailed into the harbor we were greeted with three hearty cheers from the Ripon, which was lying there at anchor, gaily decorated with garlands and festoons of graceful feathery palms, a snow-white tent spread out on deck, and all colors flying. The scene was festive enough; but it was more like a summer fete al fresco than a bona fide Christmas Day, with its waits and carols, in spite of the grog, plumpudding, and roa t-beef with which an attempt was made to keep up the character of the day, It was no more like Christmas than a picnic to the Devil's Dyke in August. And to make the incongruity of the scene more giaring still, there was the black, dingy hull of the old Arladne, in which Captain Marryat penned so many of those tales and novels which have made his name familiar throughout the world, and which is now used as a storeship by the P. and O. Steam Navigation Company, Fancy the shades of "Peter Simple" and "Jacob Faithful" wandering about amongst the divers casks of salt pork and biscuit, under the broiling sun of Alexandria! And again, in the very home and birthplace of the Saviour, in the city of David-Bethlehem itself-how different the festivities of Christmas to our preconceived notions! The bright Syrian sky, the palms, and the varied costumes of the priests, pilgriming in procession to the Church of the Nativity; the waxen doll, the "Bambine Santo," representing the Fisherman of Galillee in his tofancy, lain in the rights adopted gratte gilttering with gold. the richly adorned grotto, glittering with gold, silver, and precious stones-form the component parts of a scene as far removed from our ideas of Christmas as the countries themselves.

In all the Southern Italian churches, and along the Dalmatian coast, the altar is adorned at Christmas and Easter with revolving silhouettes-little black figures within a transparence -representing at Christmas the birth of Christ, the adoration of the Magi, the flight into Egypt, and various other incidents in the life of our Lord. From morning to night the churches are crowded with men, women, and children gaping at and bowing before these creations of the priestly imagination-these ecclestastical marionettes—anidst all the mystic accessories of tapers, garlands, silks, and satins, and the stupefying clouds of incense rolling through the canopled dome. And similar to our own Punch and Judy, these revolving transparencies are shown about the streets, extorting copious homage and veneration from the assembled crowds, in the shape of divers genufications, uncoverings of the head, and in coin of the empire. It was before one of these exhibitions, shown round by two mendicant friars in the town of Spalato, that I witnessed a scene one Christmas Eve I shall never forget. I had been visiting the magnificent remains of Diocletian's palace, and, strolling through the town with my compagnon de voyage, entered a cafe in order to have a game of billiards. But on taking up the cues the padrone came up to us, saying:-

"Scura, signori, oggi e festa e non e per messe di giocare."--You cannot play to asy; it is forbidden."

Being thus thrown back on our own resources, we strolled into the cathedral, where we were surprised by the sight of the mario-nettes just mentioned, and, on turning through one of the massive portais of the old Roman palace, wandered down to the quay, and seating ourselves outside a cafe, broached a bottle of Vugava. There we sat, luxuriously sipping the golden liquid, when two friars brought one of their revolving silhouettes, and began displaying their exhibition. The crowd attracted by it increased quickly, and there were at least some two hundred assembled, when a stout, burly friar drew near. His approach was quickly noticed, and his appearance soon engaged our own. Black, shaggy eyebrows overhung his glittering eyes like penthouses. The expression of his features was indescribably mobile; there was a hard determination about his mouth, and in fact in his whole manner, that stamped him at once for an original, if not remarkable, man. His name, 'Padre Luigi! Padre Luigi!" went round from mouth to mouth; but, totally ignoring the commotion which his advent caused, and apparently insensible to the obsequious change in the demeanor of the two friare, he stood calmly contemplating their exhibition. Suddenly a change came o'er the spirit of the man, and stepping forward before the two showmen, thundered out to them, "Silence!" and then, elevating the cruciffx, continued in a voice

that made the place re-echo:—
"Eccolo, ii vero Policenello!"—"Behold the
true Punch and Judy!" Ridiculous as the words were, and profane when brought into connection with so sacred a subject, there was not a smile upon a single face. The gentlewen were quiet and dignified, the commoner herd awed and in a tremble at the voice and gestures of the redoubted orator. "Ecco il vero Policenelto!" he repeated. "Now let me see if ye know what ye see; see whether ye are all hypocrites, or whether ye are ripe for repentance. All ye that can vow and swear ye are repentant and penitent, and ready to abjure all your heinous sins and crimes, lift up your right hands for an oath and

Almost every one present stretched forth his

"Now, holy St. Michael," thundered the monk, "by your Lord and Master! by the Holy Virgin herself! cut off each hand that is raised in hypocrisy and decet! Cut it off, and cast it into hell fire!"

Like a shot, every hand disappeared; there was not one left extended. And now the monk began his sermon in earnest. It was far into the night before the crowd separated; and the murmuring of the waves, gleaming in the golden light of the yellow moon, took up the pater's sermon—bat preached, I fear me much, only to the rocks and stones along the shore, with the echo from the ancient rules for an

wooded mountain ranges and dense forests of sombre pine, and the bleaker climate of Germany, is a long step in distance; and the difference in the intellect and character of the lamatian and the German no less marked than the difference of scene. In the cast and the south, Christmas is a festival for the adult—a

period when price:ly ce emontal and ecclesias-tical astuteness selze upon the event of the greatest importance to mankind in order to strengthen their dominion and tighten the web strengthen their dominion and lighten the web they have woven bround the imaginative mind of their flock. But in Germany, where the imagination, though just as strong, and the poctry of supersition more developed than in any other nation, is kept within its own bounds by the stronger hand of reason, Christmas—the celebration of the birth of a child; of Him wao said, "Suffer little children to come unto me"—is purely the festival of children; the season to which all look for ward with pleasure and impationce the whole year through.

tience the whole year through.

As the ancient Grecians invested all the objects of nature with a conscious living spirit, and every rock, tree, and fountain had its faun, drysd, and nymph, so does the Teuton with his Lorelei, Ilse, and Undine; and then proceeding even farther still, after having created his ideal, seeks to personify it. Thus the grand romantic rock jutting out into the eddying Rhine was invested with somewhat of the same character as Scylla and Charybdis were; but in addition, the spirit pervading the rock was personified in the form of a lovely, golden-haired maiden, luring the mariners below to destruction on the rocky base at her feet. In similar manner the spirit of Christmas has been personified under the names "Knecht Ruprecht," "Der Aite Nikolaus," "Der Weihnachtsmann," who are to be looked upon as the precursors of the "Christ-kindlein," and to decide whether the child or children of a family have so behaved during the year as to deserve a visit from the infant Saviour. In the north of Germany, "Der Alte Nikolaus" is the name given to this personage, who, dressed up as an old man with a long white beard, a sack on his back and a ro! in his hand, knocks at the door, and in a gruff hollow voice inquires whether there are any children withis, and if they are good or naughty. Thereupon he enters, and extorting promises from the cul-prits 'not to do it again," unfolds his sack, and prits "not to do it again," unfolds his sack, and distributes a quantity of gingerbread, apples and nuts amongst the juveniles. Then, saying that the "Christ kindlein" will come presently, he takes his leave, generally to the satisfaction of the children, who can never quite get over the terrible rod in his hand. In the meantime, the "Christ-baum," Christmes tree, has been got in realiness, and the children are led to it by their parents, and soon forget "Knecht Reprecut" at the sight of the tree glittering with lights and gold and silver, and the presents laid on the table at the base, among which the rod never fails, which is thus given formally to the child, so that it is

optional with him whether it is to be used or not. Sometimes the rod of the year previous has never been used. It is then a virgin rod, and is again used for the next year, the date of the past one being salixed to it by a string binding it up. I have seen such a remarkable curiosity as a virgin rod seven years of age; but such a relic is a "rara avis", indeed. But the most characteristic feature of the German Christmas is the Christmas-tree. The pines and firs lof Germany seemed to have exercised a singular influence on the development of the national The pointed picturesque form, character. shooting up straight from the earth below and rearing itself towards the heavens, has been petrified into the Gothic form of architecture. and in its sempiternal verdure has become a sign of the everlasting endurance of Christianity, and has become a symbol of refreshment, ever to being adopted by the wayside inn for a sign

and a mark denoting the place of rest and re-freshment within. When I was a schoolboy at Keilbau, an incient youth fresh from the traditions of snap-dragon, roast beef, and plum pudding. I reverently determined to keep up my first Christmas abroad in good old Eaglish style, and to that end wrote a receipt for a plum pudding and mince pies. I took some of the Teuton youth into my confidence, and imparted to them my secret plans, but to my surprise and annoyance they could not see it. Disgusted at their insensibility, I half determined to give my cherished plan up; but finding one solitary exception to the general opinion, I persevered, and the result was a well-shaped, proper minded pudding, a complete success in all culinary respects. But, to tell the truthest was a failure. The novelties of the German Christmas entirely swallowed up my traditional ideas of the festive season. And this is how I spent my first Christmas in

About six weeks before Christmas, the German master of our class, instead of distributing our exercise and theme books which he had taken in the last lesson to correct, took out his pocket-book, and fixing his eye upon me, said:
"Nuu Kleckser, was willst du zum Weihnachten?" (Now, Blotter, what do you want for Christmas!) Kleckser, Blotter, was my euphonious nickname, given to me in consequence of a certain juvenile propensity to blot whatever I put my pen to; and the question, so different to put my pen to; and the question, so different to the remarks I generally met with from Herr Seminarist Frank, a conceited dolt of a heavy German, such as "dummer Junge," "Esel," and such like derogatory appellations, took me quite by surprise. My neighbor, however, quickly explaining that whatever I wished for I should have at Christmas, immediately suggested a host of things, amongst which I chose a small handsledge, a pair of skates, a couple of books, and a cross-bow. Herr Seminarist Frank noted all these down in his pocket-book, charitably saying he wished I might get them, and went on to the next boy. For Herr Seminarist Frank had a spite against me, because in one of my themes I had yaunted the British nation above the German, being then in my youth and of small wisdom, which, however, does not make Herr Seminarist Frank any the cleverer. The various wishes were all soon taken down, and Christmas was now the end and goal of all our thoughts and speculations as to whether our wishes would all be granted, or which of them. For Barop, our director, always was obliged to convoke a solemn council of all the masters, when they determined in secret confidence whe-

Time supped by to within a week of Christ-mas Eve. It was on a Tuesday, and I was just construing a quaint, old-fashioned ode our Latin master had raked up somewhere, when Barop entered. For the sake of curiosity, I will insert the poem. I found it amongst my old school-papers the other day:—

ther any, and which, of our wishes were to be

"A vete sollindinie Claustrique mites incolse Qui pertulistis implos Cottas farentis tartari. "Gemmas et auri pondera Et d'goltatum colmina Calcastis et lædissima, Que mundus offert gaudis. "Vobis olus cibaria Fuere vei i-gumina, Potumque iympha præbuit, Humusque dara tectulum, "Vixiatis inter aspides Savisque com disconibas Fortenia nec teterrima Vos terruere demonum. 'Rebus procul mortalibus Meus avolabat fervida

Divumque juncta cœtul Hierebat inser sidera." Having accomplished my task pretty fairly, Barop said, "Now, who wants to come into the woods to cut the trees and branches for Christmas You, Kleckser, don't care about it, do you

You would sooner construe Latin with Hear "Would I though!" I exclaimed; "just try

"Well, then, come along all of you (we were the first class), and take your batchets and ropes

Full of gice and delight, we threw our books pell-mell into the de-ks and started off. snow was a foot deep on the ground, but hard and glittering, so most of us took our handsledges and started off up the mauntain sides into the dark-green forests, with their pure glittering canopies of dazzling snow. Here we set to work. Twelve beautifully-grown pines, each sixteen teet in height, were chosen for the Christmas trees, and carefully carried down into the village. I with some others were engaged in culting branches of "Weisstanne," white pine, for the garlands and bowers with which the grand salorn was to be embellished. When each had collected as large a bundle as when each had collected as large a bundle as he could conveniently transport, it was laid upon the sledge, and the owner, mounting on the top, started off down the mountain's side, guiding it with his feet and gliding among the trees, over ruts and stones, with many a joit and upset, till the road becoming clear, we went off at the rate of twenty miles an hour.

The whole yard was strews with the branches, and we, the invored autocrats of the dist class, were chosen to make the garlands, of which we were chosen to make the garlands, of which we required to less than 380 test. Thus, want with winding garlands, cutting fresh branches, and collecting bright-green moss to lay round the base of the trees, and to entwine with the garlands, four or five days quickly passed, during which time we were no slight objects of envy to the jounger or stupider part of the community that were not included among the "First." But the evenings brought a pleasure and a rioting amusement that was shared by all alike. For gredually the boxes and chests of Christmas presents sent by fond mammas and capas, began presents, sent by fond mammas and papas, began to arrive in the post town, thudolstad, whence they had to be felched by Barop's own man, and from time immemorial it had been the custom in Keilhau for the boys to assemble at the door and endeavor to gain po-session of the boxes, which of course were opened and put in the places devoted to each in the grand saloon the places devoted to each in the grand saloon where the "Berchecrung" took place. As soon as the cry "Freidrich kommt!" Frederick is coming (Barop's coachman), was heard rechoing through the house, one and all rushed to the door, which was already defended by Barop and Schaffner, one of the masters, and son-in law of Barop's, each armed with a trenendous birch-broom, which they had to wield with unflagging energy and adroitness on the backs and shoulders of the attacking party. Great was the glee and deatening the uproar when two or three of the strongest fell over an unusually large chest and gained a temporary possession of it. But it was a very temporary one indeed, for Barop, a man six feet six inches in height, and proportionately muscular, soon rained down a shower of birch on the devoted backs like a hail-storm, and quickly raised the

After the boxes had once been brought in, the grand saloon was forbidden ground to any one except the old masters and one or two of the boys who were old Keilhauers, and were required to assist in arranging the presents and writing the names of the various recipients on strips of paper, which were then laid in each respective place.

Christmas Eve arrived. Contrary to the usual custom throughout Germany of having the "Bescheerung," lighting up the tree and making the presents on the 24th, we in Keilhau had it on the Christmas morn at seven o'clock. But on the preceding evening we were regaled with the national dish for that day, to wit, herring salad, consisting of pickled herring, potatoes sliced thin like cucumber, endive and ontons, all mixed up together with the due proportions of oil, vinegar, pepper, and salt.

After supper we went up to our desks and cup-boards, and took whatever presents we intended o make our comrades or masters to Barop and Schaffner, for them to lay in their respective places, and then with joyful anticipations of the morrow, "off and to bed," as honest Pepys

hath it. Long before the first grey streak of morning appeared in the cold eastern sky, we were awake and awaiting the signal for rising, which was given by Barop and Schaffner singing a kind of carol, accompanied by the guitar, on which Schaffner was an accomplished virtuoso:-

"Auf, auf, lbr Buben Was schlaft lbr so lang? Die Nacht ist vorüber, Der Morgen bricht an Aut, auf und angt, Froblocket dem Herrn Das Christkindlein bringt, Euch was zum beschessen.

No lingering in bed and cats-pawing the frozen water on Christmas morning. In half the time ordinarily spent in getting ready we finished our toilet, and assembling in the ball, were marshalled two and two in procession. Then the doors of the saloon were thrown open, unfolding a scene to the eye compared to which the "vista dei Paradiso" in the Sixtine Chapel at Rome is a miserable failure. Tweive large trees were ranged round the room, reaching from the tables to the ceiling, and two bowers, devoted to Barop's and Frobel's families on each side, all ablaze with tapers and glittering with rosy-cheeked apples, gut walnuts, and all kinds of bright-colored ornaments. The windows were covered in with transparencies painted by a celebrated painter, once a pupil of the institution, and, though dimmed by the black of the countless tapers, flooded the whole scene when morning dawned with a rich, varied color, as in some Gothic cathedral. And as we entered the saloon a Christmas hymn arose from the choir, which was concealed behind an artificial shrubbery of pines and juniper bushes, and walking slowly round the room till we formed a circle, the chapiain took bis place in the midst and offered up the morning prayers, with an extra oration specially improvised for the occasion, to which, however, I am bound to say, our attention was not much directed. As say, our attention was not much directed. As soon as the much-wished-for Amen was pronounced, the "Gratulation" began, the Christmas congratulations, and every one, from the oldest to the youngest, hurried to find his place 2nd see what the Christ-kindlein had brought him. Each soon found out his especial nock, and long before the first flush of excitement was over the pale morning grey began to steal in, changed by the transparencies from its cold, cheerless appear. transparencies from its cold, cheerless appearance into a rich flood of golden light, becoming still more light and joyous when further illuminated by the cheerful, gladsome faces of the delighted juveniles. It was a scene enough to have converted any misanthrope and pessimist that ever lived, not even excepting old Schopensauer. The dark-green pines, the garlands and bowers, the snowy cloths, the glittering pre-sents, the bushels upon bushels of apples, nuts, and pear, and, above all, the joyous assemblag of youthful faces all tempered by the dim mystic light, exercise an influence upon the mind none can resist.

Such is Christmas in Germany, the land of pines, the land where the monklet, Luther, assembled his children around the first Christmas tree, whose lights shed a purer and a truer doctrine throughout the wide lands of the earth than ever since the first days after Calvary.

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hall, to be used for Concerts, Church Fairs, Festivals, Conventions, Agricultural Exhibitions, etc. It is understood that numerous institutions of a similar characte. in various parts of the country have been quite remunerative, and it is confidently believed

that this will not prove an exception. Further particulars can be obtained at our office. DE HAVEN & BROTHER.

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PHILADELPHIA. 12 17 1mrp SKATES! SKATES!! SKATES!!!— 1000 PAIRS FINE NEW AND SECOND-HAND SKATES AT ONE HALF THE USUAL PRICES, at the Broker's Office, N. W. coroer of THIRD and GASKILL Streets below Lombard 12 12 10t

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CHRISTMAS CONFECTIONS of the CHOICEST FLAVORS, BEST MATERIALS AND IN THE GREATEST VARIETY, manufactorist described to suit the CONSTANTLY INCREASING PATRONAGE of No. 1203 CHESNUT SCIENT. CHOCOLATES IN EVERY VARIETY. CARAMELS UNEQUALLED IN ANY ESTABLISHMENT IN THE CITY. FANOY BOXES IN GREAT VARIETY.

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N. E. corner of TENTH and WALNUT Streets,: has opened for the Holidays a new and varied collec-tion of Choice Confections, Pruits, etc. to which he invites an early inspection. The stock is large and well assorted, and, in addition to his special importa-tion of Fancy Roxes, etc., cannot fall to please all in search of Holiday Presents and decorations. [1:168trp

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