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The upper Rhine

the scenery of its banks and the manners of its people

Mayence to the lake of Constance

Mayhew, Henry

London, 1858

§ 1. Customs at Marriage, Courtship, and Betrothal-Puplic Love-Making-"Dutzening"-The "Polter-Abend" (the Bridal Eve)-The "Aus-statung" (the Marriage-Dowry) and "Hoch-zeit" (Wedding-Feast)

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V.

FAMILY CUSTOMS.

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§ 1.

Customs at Marriage, Courtship, and Betrothal—Public Love-Making—"Dutzening"—The "Polter-abend" (the Bridal Eve)—The "Aus-statung" (the Marriage-Dowry) and "Hoch-zeit" (Wedding Feast).

There is no better mode of judging of a nation than by observations as to the treatment of its women, its care for the young, and its veneration for the dead.

The emotions which connect, or rather *should* connect, the stronger with the weaker sex, the parent with the child, and the living with the deceased, make up so large a part of what is noble, pure, and cordial in our natures, that wherever such qualities are found to be deficient *there* assuredly must exist a degraded type of humanity.

Let us begin, therefore, with a consideration of the marriage customs prevalent in Rheinland.

No young lady is allowed to appear in society till she has been confirmed; indeed, it will be seen hereafter that confirmation, or taking your sins upon yourself, constitutes an important epoch in German life.

Again, German children are never allowed to dance; for grown-up ladies tell you they do not think it proper to see

little things polking and waltzing together,—a remark which gives us a profound insight into German character: for dancing, surely, rightly considered, is but joyousness expressed in muscular activity, and unless obscene ideas be connected with that which is really a healthful and graceful exercise, we cannot understand why it should not form the special pastime of the young, who are all gaiety, and whose very physical development requires a certain amount of bodily exertion. The Germans, however, seem to look upon dancing onl, as the means of inflaming the passions, and hence find impropriety in allowing *children* to indulge in the amusement. In England, however, we seem to have less prurient ideas on the subject, and, therefore, can trust our little ones to waltz with one another without fear of contamination.

"I hear," said a German lady, "that at Christmas and holiday-times you English have parties made up of none but children. Dear me, how strange it must be! Are you not afraid to trust the boys and girls together?"

The above remark will enable the reader to understand the tone of moral feeling existing in Germany, and, in a measure, prepare him for the statement that the Deutschers, like the French, deem it *indecent* for a lady to take the arm of a gentleman unless she be either betrothed or married to him—a sentiment which plainly shows the indelicate state of the female mind among continental nations.

But not only is it believed to be dangerous to a young lady's chastity even to be allowed to *touch* one of the opposite sex, but the act of shaking hands with a gentleman is considered to be of so inflammatory a tendency among these sensual-minded people, that it is regarded as downright profligacy for an unmarried or unaffianced couple to say good-bye to one another in the cordial English fashion.

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Nevertheless, *we* English can afford to let our girls dance with boys when they are children, and walk arm-in-arm when they are grown up, or even shake hands on parting, with gentlemen to whom they are neither engaged nor related. Yet, for true delicacy of feeling and real innocence of heart, we would fearlessly compare the daughter of an English gentleman with any continental maiden in existence.

In Germany it seems to be admitted, that there are fewer love-matches than with us. The father, as in France, has more the character of a despot, than a friend or adviser among the young members of his family; and the child is trained to such a sense of slavish obedience, that parents choose the husbands for their daughters, rather than their daughters being allowed to have any choice in the matter themselves.

True, the system of paternal authority hardly runs to the extreme in Prussia that it does in France, where the father brings home a spouse for one of his daughters in the same off-hand manner as he would present her with a new dress or shawl; whereupon the girl, with all due respect, proceeds to admire the gentleman as she would some fresh trinket.

This servile state of filial submission hardly holds good, we say, in Prussian society; and yet, on the other hand, runaway-matches are seldom or never heard of—not only because it would be impossible to *run* away by the "*Schnell-post*" (and but few German lovers could afford a more expeditious mode of travelling), but because no young gentleman or lady in Rheinland would ever have spirit enough to prove so domestically rebellious.

Most of the matrimonial introductions in Prussia take place, as with us, at balls. At the Coblenz Casino there are six "grand balls" given in the winter; and during Carnival time, some of the wealthier gentry indulge in the same entertainment at their own houses.

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Groschens form, with the Germans, the chief inducement for entering into the marriage state. "*Wie schwäre ist sie?*"—(How heavy is she?)—is the invariable inquiry of every Prussian on hearing of any marriageable young lady; for *Thalers* to these people are far preferable to either beauty or goodness. The taint of money, indeed, colours the whole complexion of a German's soul, as deep as the jaundice does one's body and blood. "Oh, no! we should not mind if she the daughter of a chimney-sweep was, so long as she the groschens had," said one of our German friends.

Hence the daughters of the old Rheinländers, who are generally the merchants and tradesmen of the principal towns, are preferred to those of the Prussians, who constitute the government officers of such places. The former, though a little bit less refined than the others, have generally a few hundred *Thalers* or so given them by way of marriage-portion, whilst the latter affect to be intensely genteel, and are, at the same time, excruciatingly poor: so that, like many of the over-educated young ladies with us (and we suffer quite as much from the *over*-education of certain classes as we do from the *under*-education of others), they have acquired expensive habits without possessing the means of gratifying them, and, therefore, bring nothing to their husbands but a little beauty, perhaps, and a great deal of helplessness and extravagance.

One of these *Preussichen* young ladies waited upon us, in the hope of being assisted to a situation as governess in an English family, and though her father was merely an *ex*-tax-collector (he was tried afterwards for embezzlement), and she herself, we had been told, had to work her fingers raw to earn her sixpence a-day at "fine needle-work," she came in white kid gloves—coloured "hand-shoes," as the Germans call them, not being considered *highly* fashionable in Coblenz.

Of courtship there is scarcely any, for if the father and mother on both sides be agreeable to the match, the betrothal, or "*Verlobung*," takes place as soon after the introduction as possible.

The betrothal ceremony usually consists of a grand feast given in the evening, to which all the friends of both parties are invited. Many of the guests bring flowers in baskets, whilst pine-apples soaked in champagne, and Rhenish wine, constitutes the favourite drink at such assemblies, the potations being often continued the whole night through.

At the table the betrothed always sit beside each other, and in the course of the evening they exchange rings, when their healths are drunk and all the guests go round to clash their wine-glasses with those of the happy couple.

The betrothal rings consist of a very thick plain gold hoop, and remind one of those ugly galvanic affairs that were, some few years back, popular among our gouty and rheumatic old ladies and gentlemen. These rings are worn on the left hand, by the women on the third finger, and by the men on the little one, and are re-exchanged when the marriage takes place.

This ceremony will remind classical scholars of the Athenian ἐγγύησις, which was made by the κυρίος—the natural or legal guardian—of the bride elect, and attended by the relations of both parties as witnesses. It also bears so close a resemblance to the Roman "*Sponsalia*," as to lead us to believe that the Rhenish custom is of Latin origin; for at the *Sponsalia* not only did the man place a ring on the finger of his betrothed as a pledge of his fidelity, but the ceremony was considered to constitute an agreement to marry, made in such form as to give each party a right of action in case of the non-fulfilment of the pledge by either.

In Germany, too, the "*Verlobung*" is regarded as being

so close akin to marriage, that it requires a process similar to a divorce in order to free the parties from the contract. Moreover, such publicity is given to the engagement, that it becomes almost impossible for a man, with any sense of shame, to go from his word. Hence such things as broken vows, and, maybe, broken hearts (if we can imagine such calamities where scarcely any marry from affection), are placed almost beyond the bounds of probability in Prussia, so that it would seem that we might really take a lesson from the Germans in this respect.

Immediately after the ceremony of the betrothal, a letter is sent round to each of the friends of the couple, containing the following announcement:—

Our Betrothal is hereby made known.

Emilie F——

Lawrence F——

Cöln and London,

the 15th August, 1855.

At the same time an advertisement is inserted in the paper of the town, making a like announcement to the public generally. Here is one such advertisement, cut at random from the Cöln paper:—

Betrothal-Announcement.

Prof. Dr. Med. Karsch,

Catharina Spriess.

Munster and Cöln, the 1st September, 1855.

In return for the above-mentioned letters, it is customary for the friends to send ornamental cards, on which is printed either "Ich gratulirte"—(I congratulate you),—or "Gluck und Segen"—(Happiness and blessings).

A specimen of such cards of congratulation is here subjoined; in the original, however, the printing is in gold and many colours:—

Now the ceremony of betrothal makes an important alteration in the conduct of the lady and gentleman to one another. If it were not permitted to the damsel, whilst in an unaffianced state, to take the arm of her sweetheart, and if it were considered, moreover, highly indecent on her part even to touch his hand, at least all such prudish squeamishness vanishes directly the two are duly plighted to each other. For then society allows them to fly to the opposite extreme, and grants innocent-minded girls the license to indulge *publicly* in acts of amorousness that even a wanton in our country would be decent enough to perform in private.

No sooner is a young lady engaged, than she may be kissed and slobbered in the presence of others without even so much as a blush being expected of her; whilst the liberty of hugging one another, and sitting on each other's knees before company, is conceded by all to the affianced without a murmur. Indeed the betrothed may be even seen to indulge in fond embraces whilst standing in front of shop-windows in the streets, or whilst seated in the public boxes at the theatre, or supposed to be listening to some concert at the Gymnasium.

The Germans, as we said before, seem to have no sense of such feelings as secret emotions. But why, it may be asked, should people be so ashamed of being in love with one another that they should slink away to some retired place to give vent to their affection?

We answer, that all deep emotions are necessarily secret ones. Not only does an absorbing passion overpower the mind so as to unfit it for social converse, but the heart instinctively knows that it cannot expect sympathy from what, in such cases, is termed "the unfeeling world," and that the very profundity of its emotion cannot but appear absurd to those who are engaged in the active business of life.

It is thus in profound grief. No person thinks of making his tears public; and, indeed, he cannot help feeling ashamed that he is susceptible of being overwhelmed by his affection. Hence it is the custom for persons in extreme sorrow to shut up their house, and to refuse to see all but those who can share in their misery.

In states of profound veneration, again, how secret and silent is the worship that fills the heart! It is for this reason that the early devotees built their altars in the recesses of forests: for who that has ever entered the reverend solitude of a dense wood, or stood alone at night, peering far into the starry mysteries of space, has not experienced a feeling of

adoration steal over his entire soul, as if it were congenial to the very privacy of the scene or time?

Indeed we might run over every profound emotion of which humanity is susceptible, and show that, whenever the heart is *deeply* touched, the being withdraws from the public gaze as if conscious that he and the mere money-hunting community have nothing in common.

Be assured, therefore, that when men publish their grief or their religious sentiments, or indeed their love, they really feel little of any such emotions.

But if this public love-making in Germany be hateful, as evidencing no real affection between the couples, it becomes positively loathsome on account of its violation of all the rules of social decency. Love, in its spiritual quality, is beautiful enough; but when it has the least animal taint with it, the exhibition of the passion becomes—like the gratification of any inordinate appetite,—grossly offensive for other persons to contemplate. In the intensity of the desire, Nature throws an exquisite veil over the disgusting character of such acts to the enamoured pair themselves; but still, a decent-minded man—and much more, a modest-natured woman—would blush to indulge in any amorous exhibition in the presence of others. Surely there is hardly any difference between "public women" and those who indulge in public love-making; for is it not the *publicity*—the shamelessness of such creatures—the unblushingness with which they allow themselves to be fondled and caressed before others, that offends our moral sense?

Still, if this public indulgence in acts, that in even the most degraded forms of savage life are performed in privacy, do not offer any violence to the common notions of propriety in Germany, what possible excuse can we frame for fathers standing idly by while their daughters are indelicately mauled in their presence? If such scenes occurred in the "upper

boxes" of our theatres as are every day tolerated with the betrothed couples in Deutschland, the police would consider it necessary, for public morals, to remove the offending parties from the house; and yet Rhenish parents will permit their daughters to be treated like wantons under their very eyes, without even hinting to the girl that it is the act of virgin Modesty to shrink from a man's touch, and that only brazen-faced Vice can bear to be hugged before others without a blush crimsoning the cheeks.

Another peculiar privilege conferred by the "*Verlobung*" is the right it gives the couple of "*dutzening*," or, as the French say, "*tutoi*"-*ing* one another. In England, where all classes of individuals are personally addressed as "*you*," and the "thou" form of speech is adopted only by Quakers and poets, it seems extraordinary that any great social distinction should be made to depend upon the use of the different pronouns which stand, on the one hand for the second person singular, and on the other for the second person plural. The chief pronominal difference observed in our country is limited to the "*For-word*," as the Germans call it, for the *first* person, the plural form of which is the special property of monarchs and editors.*

In Deutschland, however, there are no less than four forms of pronominal address to an individual, and these are about equivalent to our *thou, you, he,* and *they;* the last of them being applied only to a distant acquaintance or a worldly-great man—of whom it is the fashion to say, with

* In addressing one another, Ollendorf tells us, the Germans make use of the second person singular (du), and third person plural (sie). Du is used as a mark of respect and affection. In polite conversation, persons always address each other with Sie. "The third personal singular (er), and the second person plural also (Ihr)—especially the former—are," he adds, "frequently used towards inferiors and servants."—*German Grammar*, p. 82.

all the dignity of the monarchical plural, "I have the honour to wish *them* a good morning;"—"Have *they* well slept?"

"My Fräulein!" exclaimed a shopkeeper to our little girl, who, in the thoughtlessness of youth, had said to the worthy, "Dost *thou* candy-sugar sell?" "My Fräulein!" and the "*conditor*" raised his eyebrows in utter astonishment at the little maid's speech;—"in Germany, children always say *they* to an elder."

A child may "*thou* and *thee*" anybody until it has been to school; but after that it is expected to change its form of address to "*they* and *them*." On the other hand, the child itself is addressed as "*thou*" till it has been confirmed, when it immediately advances to the dignity of being spoken to as "*they*," though fellow-confirmee's retain through life the privilege of "*tu-toi*"-ing each other.

The *you*, or plural form of the second pronoun, is reserved for servants and work-people, and "to every one, indeed," said one of these Teutonic jackasses to us, "whom we consider to be our inferiors."

"*Haben Sie Befehle für mich, Herr Koniglich-Spuchnapf-bewahrer?*" a workman will say to a government official.

"*Nein! Ich habe für euch nichts,*" will be the marked reply.

Now, as the pronoun used for our second person plural conveys no sense of degradation, it is impossible to give the English reader a sense of the social distinctions implied in these different forms of speech, except by translating the preceding question into,—"Have *they* any orders for me, Mr. Keeper-of-the-King's-Spittoons?" and rendering the answer as, "No! I have nothing for *it*."

Another form of pronominal degradation is implied in the use of the German *er*, which stands for the third person singular This is popular among angry sergeants in the army

when addressing common soldiers; as, for instance, an under officer on being passed by a private, who has neglected to touch his cap to him, will call the man back, and shout contemptuously at him, "*Will er denn nicht grüssen?*" literally, "Will *he* not salute then?"

The Quaker form of speech, on the other hand, we are told in the grammars, is used, (1), in addressing the Supreme Being; (2), in poetry; (3), among friends and family relatives. "In general," it is said, "it implies familiarity, founded on affection and fondness."

Indeed it is the custom for servants, on entering an establishment, to make a special request to be permitted to say "*thou*" to the younger branches of the family; and before one German uses "*du*" to another, for the couple, if they be not related by blood or marriage, to go through a special ceremony, which consists in drinking together, and in linking the arms one within another, while they clash their glasses and swear eternal friendship. This is styled the ceremony of fraternising, or, in German, "*Bruderschaft-schlagen.*"

Be assured, moreover, if you hear a young man "*dutzen*" a damsel who is no family relation of his, that the couple are "*verlobt.*"

Among the customs peculiar to the time of courtship, we may mention that it is usual for lovers to tie large bunches of hawthorn to the windows of their sweethearts on the first of May. Those young ladies, however, who have not yet been fortunate enough to have obtained an offer, get a few handfuls of chaff strewed by the spiteful or the jocular over their thresholds; and it is by no means uncommon for the fair creatures who are thus treated to take the hawthorn from the casements of their rivals in the night, and, tying them to the sash of their own, to oblige them with some of

their chaff in return,—a custom which may probably have given rise to our vulgar idiom of "*chaffing*" an old maid. It is customary also for swains to go to the windows of their fiancées, and, firing off a pistol, to wish them a happy new year.

The term of betrothal is of different durations. In some cases it lasts only for a short period; but in others it continues for many years. It is frequently the custom for a lady to be betrothed to a young man filling some subordinate situation under government, upon the understanding that they are not to be married until the youth's salary reaches an amount that is deemed sufficient for the maintenance of the pair.

Officers, again, are often betrothed during their ensigncy, though every one in Prussia knows that the full-grown "children in arms" are not allowed to marry until they reach the rank of captain,—unless, indeed, they be able to deposit the sum of 12,000 thalers (about 1800*l.*), in the hands of the government; the interest of which is, under such circumstances, duly paid to the little boy for the maintenance of his wife.

The State, however, does not limit its paternal care to officers alone; it has a like regard for the interests of *all* persons of limited means, and will not allow them to commit matrimony until they can give good evidence that they have the wherewithal to support a family.

In Coblenz, for instance, no one can become a Benedick unless he can purchase his citizenship. This, a little while ago, cost only 8 thalers (about 24 shillings); but the poorer families were found to increase so rapidly at these moderate terms, that the richer determined upon raising the purchase-money for the city-freedom to 36 thalers (upwards of 5 guineas), so as to offer every obstruction they could to marriages among the humbler portion of the community.

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The intended bridegroom was, at the same time, expected to furnish the town authorities with some such document as the following:—

"*Testimony as to means of Subsistence before Marrying.*

"Jacob H—— has work from me as a weaver, and earns 15*s.* a-month; and it is more than probable that he will continue in my service, as I intend to increase his work; and hereby do I certify, by my signature, that he is possessed of the requisite means of subsistence to entitle him to marry.

"A—— W——,
"Cloth Manufacturer.*

"Elberfeld, 22 July, 1833."

Still it came to be well known that little trust was to be placed in such documents; since any workman, desirous of taking to himself a wife, could easily obtain a certificate from some of the people who employed him, and masters seldom objected, for such a purpose, to make out that a man in their service earned more than he really did. Thus the poor got to press inconveniently on the rich, despite the matrimonial restrictions; and the authorities, therefore, determined on making the cost of citizenship five-fold dearer than previously.

This, we are told, has proved so successful a barrier to wedlock, that now most of the poorer classes cohabit rather than marry; so that the official wiseacres of Prussia, who watch so narrowly after the welfare of the people, have reduced, perhaps, the number of paupers, but proportionately increased the number of *Deutsch grisettes* in the place.

Before the marriage ceremony takes place, there is another grand assembly of friends, called the "*Polter-abend*," and at

* The above is copied from the "*Universal Briefsteller*" before alluded to.

which there is another great feast. This seems, again, to correspond with the Roman "*Cœna nuptialis;*" a repast that, it will be remembered, was given to the whole train of relatives and friends. The *Polter-abend* has also some affinity to the Greek ἐπαυλια, the period at which the friends sent the customary presents to the couple; for on the evening preceding the nuptials in Rhenish Prussia, every guest is expected to come laden with some present for the future household. The more distant friends bring china cups, emblazoned with certain congratulatory mottoes, whilst others present ornaments and trinkets, and some relatives articles of furniture.

Those, however, who are of a jocular, and not over-decent turn of mind, offer a small sugar model of a stork—that bird being commonly said to bring the children in Germany; and in illustration of the popular pseudodox, the ornithological piece of confectionery not unfrequently bears in its beak a sugar representation of what is called a "*Wickel-kind;*" that is to say, a wretched little German baby bound up in its swaddling-clothes, after the manner of a miniature mummy. The introduction of this puerperal sweetmeat by the funny man is, of course, the signal for intense mirth, the Germans still being in that novitiate state, as regards humour, which believes that indelicacy is wit.

The presents given at the *Polter-abend* are generally arranged on a table by themselves; and whilst the eating and drinking are going on (and the quantities eaten and drunk on such occasions are almost worthy of the "Samoiedes"), if the couple are unlucky enough to have any enemies in the town, all kinds of disgusting insults are perpetrated by the populace outside the house—utensils of the filthiest description being broken against the street-door, and other like indignities offered to the parties within.

The only remaining peculiarity in connexion with the pre-

liminaries of a German marriage is the bride's "*Aus-statung*," as it is called (literally, the marriage "out-fit," or dowry). This usually consists of all the linen that may be requisite, not only for the bride herself, but for her house as well. The laying up of this stock is begun by the mother of the girl at the very earliest age; so that it is not unusual for a little thing of four years old to have a large press filled with linen for its use in after marriage—the hoard having been commenced even from the very cradle. In the country, a girl is continually occupied with knitting a store of stockings, as well as spinning the thread for a large supply of under-linen and sheets for her "*aus-statung;*" and these articles are usually of such substantial textures, that English ladies are astonished to hear of home-made flannel petticoats that have been in continual wear from fifteen to twenty years. In almost all cases, too, the bride brings with her the furniture for the entire house.

It is usual for the bride—even if too poor to contribute towards the tables and chairs of the house—to bring her own bed at least. The poorest servant-girl in Germany would rather spend every penny of her earnings than be married without taking her bed with her to her new home,—for it would be considered the greatest possible degradation if a girl's husband could say to her in a fit of anger, "Get out of *my* bed!" Often, too, a wife, after a quarrel with "her man," may be heard to exclaim, "Let me have my bed, and I won't trouble you any longer!" Indeed, so thoroughly established does every daughter believe her right to this article of furniture on her leaving home, that many a girl will tell her father that if he will only give her *her* bed—she'll go.

The marriage costume for the bride differs little from that of other countries, with the exception that black bridal dresses are peculiar to the Prussian Protestants, and a myrtle wreath is worn with a white veil by persons of all creeds.

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This, again, to those acquainted with the Roman mythology, will afford another token of the Latin connexion with the German race; for it is well known to every schoolboy that the Goddess of Love among the Romans was surnamed "*Myrtea*," the title being said to be indicative of the fondness of Venus for the myrtle-tree (*Myrtus*).

During our stay at one of the Rhenish hotels the niece of the proprietor was married, and on the wedding morning a message from the bride was sent to us by our little girl, who had begged to be present at the ceremony, requesting us (though we had never set eyes on the lady) to stand at the door and see her go by in her wedding-dress, on her way to the "*wagen*" below. Accordingly, the portal of our sitting-room was thrown open, and presently we were startled whilst occupied at the table by the appearance of the "*dame blanche*," veiled from head to foot, curtseying and smiling, with thorough simplicity, on our door-mat.

There is nothing peculiar in the marriage ceremony itself, with the exception that when the parties are rich enough to indulge in such a luxury, it is accompanied with a long-winded prosy admonition from the priest—as full of moral platitudes as a copy-book—the male friends being ranged on one side of the altar and the female on the other, and with the bride and bridegroom to finish the group, kneeling on cushions in the centre. When the ceremony is ended the bride proceeds to kiss all her friends, and the bridegroom his.

After the marriage ceremony begins the "*Hoch-zeit*" (high-time).

This consists of gorging to an extent that, to English minds, appears to partake of the disgusting character of barbarian feasts. Nor is the gluttony confined only to the gentlemen, but the bride and bridemaids alike stuff themselves to

surfeit. In some cases the voracious guzzling is continued for a week, and in every case it lasts nearly one *entire* day, the bride remaining at the table all the time.

On the occasion of the wedding at the hotel above alluded to, the bridal party returned from church to partake of an early German dinner—which, it should be remembered, consists at a *Gasthof* of upwards of a dozen courses. This was followed by dessert, at which the company continued drinking their bowls of "*cardinal*,"—first made with red peaches, then with pine-apples and champagne, and then flavoured with the peel of green oranges,—till four o'clock arrived; then the feast changed to "coffee-drinking," with a countless multitude of cakes, of which the gentlemen and ladies all partook, in quantities that would have fairly affrighted one of the serving-girls at our Farrance's. At eight o'clock came the supper, which was certainly not the "light meal" recommended by the faculty, but a solid, substantial, second edition of the dinner, even down to hot puddings, and "*Baiser-tourte*," and "*Marzapane*." After this the entire company fell to playing all kinds of childish games; and, finally, settled down to good serious drinking, at which they continued until a late hour of the night, the bride and bridemaids sitting at the table the while till morning —even though many of the gentlemen had long before grown, from the wine they had imbibed, unfit for female society.

During the wedding-feast it is customary for the "poet" of the company (and there is mostly one gentleman in every German circle who is given to rhyming) to start on his legs, and proceed to read a copy of verses filled with schoolboy allusions to "Amor" and Hymen, after the manner—"and a long way after it, too"—of the classic "*Epithalamium*."

Printed copies of these verses are generally distributed among the guests, and we here append a *literal* translation of one presented to ourselves:—

To the Marriage

of Mr.

J. PH. HERM. H——

with Miss

ELEONORE B——

On the 15th March, 1855.

When two hearts on which the Spring (of life) still smiles have found each other,
If to each other they be inwardly bound under Amor's enchanting power;
If they be submissive to the god, who alone can shed a blessing on the heart;
Who through the paths of our first life twines the garlands of his beauty,

Happy are they: but yet the compact wants consecration from Hymen's hand,
For he is god of all sincerity; and he binds with still a firmer tie.
In the busy hum of worldly cares, and in changes without number,
Only Love's delight continues under the rays of Hymen's torch.

You who have won this happiness, that once lay far distant from you,
All your doubts have now departed; call down blessings on this day.
In the solemnest of hours ye have bound yourselves in compact,
Till far beyond the end of life; and devoted yourselves in love to each other.

May it be that you may continue life in the light of an ever-unclouded sunshine.
May you in harmonic union walk hand-in-hand, inspired with joy,
Along the paths of future life, as if through ever-flowering meadows;
For with Power have Peace and Beauty joined themselves in matrimony.

Therefore let the will of Fate endure up to Time's most future period;
And all our best wishes are given to you that such happiness may be fulfilled.
Now let us raise our glasses high, and knock them all with one heart.
Long may the happy couple live, and their happiness be most perfect!

Dedicated by F. W. B——

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Baden-Württemberg

Nor must it be imagined that these disgusting wedding-feasts are common only to "*Gasthof*" society. We have described such an one merely because it was the first that came under our observation, and therefore the one that made the strongest impressions on our minds. The same over-gorging, however, belongs to all classes who can afford the indulgence, and among the wealthy it may be said, that the excesses at such times are even greater than among the poor.

Immediately after the conclusion of the *Hoch-zeit*, printed letters are despatched to distant friends, announcing that the couple are man and wife.*

Our this-day-consummated-matrimonial-alliance we do ourselves the honour hereby respectfully to make known.

Hermann H——

Eleonore H——

born B——

Coblenz, 15th March, 1855.

Simultaneously with the above announcement, or maybe some week or two afterwards, something like the following

* The Germans, however, never use such words — the ordinary terms applied to a married lady and gentleman being simply "*Frau*" and "*Mann*." To English ears it sounds as unpleasant to hear a German wife continually talking of her "*man*," as it does to listen to a French husband discoursing of the virtues of his "*woman*." An Italian Count married an English lady, and after spending the honeymoon abroad, the couple came to England. Cards were issued announcing that the bride and bridegroom would be "At Home" on a certain day; as the company assembled, however, the Count, who could speak a little English, horrified his wife by introducing her to his English friends as his "*woman!*" We had this story, indirectly, from the lady herself.

BLB BADISCHE LANDESBIBLIOTHEK Baden-Württemberg

advertisement is inserted in the local paper, for the benefit of the public in general:—

Marriage-Announcement.

(Delayed.)

To our foreign friends and acquaintances hereby (is made) the respectful announcement of our to-day-solemnized-matrimonial alliance.

Mulheim-on-the-Rhine, and Burrig, 6th June, 1843.

Dr. M. H. E——
M. G. E——
born B——

Interpolated Rhenish Scenes.

(9.)

RHEINFELDEN.

A few miles above Basel the Rhine ceases to be navigable. The broad, smooth, and placid flood dwindles into a narrow, foaming, and fretful rivulet, and the barges and steamers disappear from its surface, which now looks as desolate as a German street, with nothing but the boats belonging to an occasional ferry or a rude covered bridge to give the least life to its banks.

The journey to the Rhine Falls may be performed by diligence along either side of the Rhine. On the right bank the direct route is from Freiburg to Schaffhausen, and lies through the loveliest parts of the *Schwarz-Wald*—traversing the sublime ravine of the *Höllenthal* (Hell Valley), where the rocks tower so high, so steep, and so close on either side of the