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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

[Text]

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Visual Library

Interpolated Rhenish Scenes.

(4.)

SPEIER.

The "Kaiserdom" (Imperial Cathedral) at Speier, is one of the most notable edifices in all Germany: that of Köln (or Cologne, to adopt the French corruption of the name) is remarkable for the grace of its architecture—that of Worms, for the charm of its associations with the first "decisive battle" of the Reformation—and that of Speier, as being the gaudiest bit of gilt plaster-work in Rhineland.

The little toy Cathedral of Apollinaris-kirche at Remagen (hardly bigger than a park lodge) is, as it were, a mere painted plaything of a temple—a gewgaw model of an ecclesiastical doll's house built for some puppet saint.

Still the miniature character of the shrine serves, in a measure, to sober the tawdriness of the interior down to something like barbaric prettiness. The gilt walls of the choir and nave, though gay as a harlequin's jacket with the glitter and many colours of their frescoes, belong to such a mere "*bijou*" of an edifice—a little thing that seems fit as an ivory man-of-war to be put under a glass-case—that they remind one more of the illuminated missals of the old monks than, as the Kaiserdom does, of the savage splendour of an Indian temple beplastered with mud, jewels, and gold.

At Speier, however, the eye is dazzled to surfeit with the acres of gold-leaf and long panoramas of apotheoses in fresco covering the walls; so that what had almost the grace of a cabinet picture at Apollinaris-kirche becomes vulgar as a theatrical pageant at the Kaiserdom: and no sooner do we

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