

**LETTERS FROM
GERMANY
AND BELGIUM**

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Letters From Germany and Belgium by Anonymous

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BY

AN AUTUMN TOURIST.

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PREFACE.

THE following Letters were written in fulfilment of a promise, made previous to the commencement of the tour they describe, to some friends residing in distant parts of the world ; and the writer's intention was simply to communicate to them such information and impressions as he received during the journey, in the briefest possible manner. It is therefore hoped that these pages may be considered to be, as they really are, notes, or hasty sketches,—intended chiefly to gratify personal friends, and making no pretension to the character of finished productions, such as the public usually look for.

The larger portion of their contents having indeed been published in two of the monthly

magazines, soon after they were written, it is principally in order to have an opportunity of correcting a multitude of errors, with which both the author and the printer are chargeable, that they have been made to assume their present form.

LONDON, *June*, 1839.

LETTERS FROM GERMANY.

HAMBURG, JULY 1836.

THE reminiscences of a stormy passage from Hull to Hamburg offer nothing sufficiently agreeable for remark; nor need the latter place impose any very severe tax on my descriptive powers. Hamburg may be considered the Liverpool of Germany, and, as you are sufficiently familiar with the latter, it will be unnecessary for me to describe the former with much minuteness.

The banks of the Elbe are particularly flat and uninteresting until you approach within a few miles of the city, when the Holstein side, which is prettily ornamented by the villas of the Hamburg and Altona merchants, redeems the monotony of the scene by some glimpses of beauty. The right bank, or Hanover side, however, maintains the same low and unvaried appearance all the way up. One of the first peculiarities which must, even on landing, strike any English traveller familiar with the commercial dépôts of his own

country, is the absence of docks. Thousands of vessels are continually to be found lying in the Elbe, and being liable to be drifted against each other by every change of wind or tide, they must thus necessarily sustain frequent injury.

Exclusive of this, the expense to the merchants of lighterage, losses by delay, damage to goods, &c., must be enormous ; so that it is probable, that the saving of waste thus incurred would, in a few years, amount to a sum sufficient to repay the expense of erecting very spacious docks. The commander of the steamer which conveyed us to Hamburg expressed his opinion that the town was peculiarly well situated for such works, and that their erection would, in some measure, protect the city from the inundations to which it is at present occasionally subject. Their non-existence, therefore, would seem to afford a good illustration of the unspeculative disposition of the German people.

In Great Britain, acts of parliament are eagerly sought for the erection of docks, even at places where there is no trade, and little prospect that much can arise ; while in Hamburg, which has a commerce superior to that of any of the British ports, with the exception of two, the merchants are content to carry on their business, in this respect, in the same manner in which it was managed two centuries ago. The city abounds with wealth, which renders the above want, as well as some