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J. BAYARD TAYLOR

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VIEWS A FOOT.

PART II.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MUNICH.

June 14.—I thought I had seen every thing in Vienna that could excite admiration or gratify fancy; here I have my former sensations to live over again, in an augmented degree. It is well I was at first somewhat prepared by our previous travel, otherwise the glare and splendor of wealth and art in this German Athens might blind me to the beauties of the cities we shall yet visit. I have been walking in a dream where the fairy tales of boyhood were realized, and the golden and jeweled halls of the Eastern genii rose glittering around me—"a vision of the brain no more." All I had conceived of oriental magnificence, all descriptions of the splendor of kingly halls and palaces, fall far short of what I here see. Where shall I begin to describe the crowd of splendid edifices that line its streets, or how give an idea of the profusion of paintings and statues—of marble, jasper and gold?

Art has done every thing for Munich. It lies on a large, flat plain, sixteen hundred feet above the sea, and continually exposed to the cold winds from the Alps. At the beginning of the present century it was but a third-rate city, and was rarely visited by foreigners. Since that time its population and limits have been doubled, and magnificent edifices in every style of architecture erected, rendering it scarcely secondary in this respect to any capital in Europe. Every art that wealth or taste could devise, seems to have been spent in its decoration. Broad, spacious streets and squares have been laid out, churches, halls and colleges erected, and schools of painting and sculpture established, which draw artists from all parts of the world. All this was principally brought about by the taste of the present king, Ludwig I., who began twenty or thirty years ago, when he was

Crown Prince, to collect the best German artists around him and form plans for the execution of his grand design. He can boast of having done more for the arts than any other living monarch, and if he had accomplished it all without oppressing his people, he would deserve an immortality of fame.

Now, if you have nothing else to do, let us take a stroll down the Ludwigstrasse. As we pass the Theatiner Church, with its dome and towers, the broad street opens before us, stretching away to the north, between rows of magnificent buildings. Just at this southern end, is the *Schlusshalle*, an open temple of white marble terminating the avenue. To the right of us extend the arcades, with the trees of the Royal Garden peeping above them; on the left is the spacious concert building of the Odeon, and the palace of the Duke of Leuchtenberg, son of Eugene Beauharnois. Passing through a row of palace-like private buildings, we come to the Army Department, on the right—a neat and tasteful building of white sandstone. Beside it stands the Library, which possesses the first special claim on our admiration. With its splendid front of five hundred and eighteen feet, the yellowish brown cement with which the body is covered, making an agreeable contrast with the dark red window-arches and cornices, and the statues of Homer, Hippocrates, Thucydides and Aristotle guarding the portal, is it not a worthy receptacle for the treasures of ancient and modern lore which its halls contain?

Nearly opposite stands the Institute for the Blind, a plain but large building of dark red brick, covered with cement, and further, the Ludwig's Kirche, or Church of St. Louis. How lightly the two square towers of gray marble lift their network of sculpture! And what a novel and beautiful effect is produced by uniting the Byzantine style of architecture to the form of the Latin cross! Over the arched portal stand marble statues by Schwanthaler, and the roof of brilliant tiles worked into mosaic, looks like a rich Turkey carpet covering the whole. We must enter to get an idea of the splendor of this church. Instead of the pointed arch which one would expect to see meeting above his head, the lofty pillars on each side bear an unbroken semicircular vault, which is painted a brilliant blue, and spangled with silver stars. These pillars, and the little arches above, which spring

from them, are painted in an arabesque style with gold and brilliant colors, and each side-chapel is a perfect casket of richness and elegance. The windows are of silvered glass, through which the light glimmers softly on the splendor within. The whole end of the church behind the high altar, is taken up with Cornelius's celebrated fresco painting of the "Last Judgment,"—the largest painting in the world—and the circular dome in the centre of the cross contains groups of martyrs, prophets, saints and kings, painted in fresco on a ground of gold. The work of Cornelius has been greatly praised for sublimity of design and beauty of execution, by many acknowledged judges; I was disappointed in it, but the fault lay most probably in me and not in the painting. The richness and elegance of the church took me all "aback;" it was so entirely different from anything I had seen, that it was difficult to decide whether I was most charmed by its novelty or its beauty. Still, as a building designed to excite feelings of worship, it seems to me inappropriate. A vast, dim Cathedral would be far preferable; the devout, humble heart cannot feel at home amid such glare and brightness.

As we leave the church and walk further on, the street expands suddenly into a broad square. One side is formed by the new University building and the other by the Royal Seminary, both displaying in their architecture new forms of the graceful Byzantine school, which the architects of Munich have adapted in a striking manner to so many varied purposes. On each side stands a splendid colossal fountain of bronze, throwing up a great mass of water, which falls in a triple cataract to the marble basin below. A short distance beyond this square the Ludwigstrasse terminates. It is said the end will be closed by a magnificent gate, on a style to correspond with the unequalled avenue to which it will give entrance. To one standing at the southern end, it would form a proper termination to the grand vista. Before we leave, turn around and glance back, down this street, which extends for half a mile between such buildings as we have just viewed, and tell me if it is not something of which a city and a king may boast, to have created all this within less than twenty years.

We went one morning to see the collection of paintings formerly belonging to Eugene Beauharnois, who was brother-in-law to the

present king of Bavaria, in the palace of his son, the Duke of Leuchtenberg. The first hall contains works principally by French artists, among which are two by Gerard—a beautiful portrait of Josephine, and the blind Belisarius carrying his dead companion. The boy's head lies on the old man's shoulder; but for the livid paleness of his limbs, he would seem to be only asleep, while a deep and settled sorrow marks the venerable features of the unfortunate Emperor. In the middle of the room are six pieces of statuary, among which Canova's world-renowned group of the Graces at once attracts the eye. There is also a kneeling Magdalen, lovely in her woe, by the same sculptor, and a very touching work of Schadow, representing a shepherd boy tenderly binding his sash around a lamb which he has accidentally wounded with his arrow.

We have since seen in the St. Michael's Church, the monument to Eugene Beauharnois, from the chisel of Thorwaldsen. The noble, manly figure of the son of Josephine is represented in the Roman mantle, with his helmet and sword lying on the ground by him. On one side sits History, writing on a tablet; on the other, stand the two brother-angels, Death and Immortality. They lean lovingly together, with arms around each other, but the sweet countenance of Death has a cast of sorrow, as he stands with inverted torch and a wreath of poppies among his clustering locks. Immortality, crowned with never-fading flowers, looks upwards with a smile of triumph, and holds in one hand his blazing torch. It is a beautiful idea, and Thorwaldsen has made the marble eloquent with feeling.

The inside of the square formed by the Arcades and the New Residence, is filled with noble old trees, which in summer make a leafy roof over the pleasant walks. In the middle, stands a grotto, ornamented with rough pebbles and shells, and only needing a fountain to make it a perfect hall of Neptune. Passing through the northern Arcade, one comes into the magnificent park, called the English Garden, which extends more than four miles along the bank of the Isar, several branches of whose milky current wander through it, and form one or two pretty cascades. It is a beautiful alternation of forest and meadow, and has all the richness and garden-like luxuriance of English scenery. Winding

walks lead along the Isar, or through the wood of venerable oaks, and sometimes a lawn of half a mile in length, with a picturesque temple at its farther end, comes in sight through the trees. I was better pleased with this park than with the Prater in Vienna. Its paths are always filled with persons enjoying the change from the dusty streets to its quiet and cool retirement.

The New Residence is not only one of the wonders of Munich, but of the world. Although commenced in 1826 and carried on constantly since that time by a number of architects, sculptors and painters, it is not yet finished; if art were not inexhaustible it would be difficult to imagine what more could be added. The north side of the Max Joseph Platz is taken up by its front of four hundred and thirty feet, which was nine years in building, under the direction of the architect Klenze. The exterior is copied after the Palazzo Pitti, in Florence. The building is of light brown sandstone, and combines an elegance and even splendor, with the most chaste and classic style. The northern front, which faces on the Royal Garden, is now nearly finished. It has the enormous length of eight hundred feet; in the middle is a portico of ten Ionic columns; instead of supporting a triangular facade, each pillar stands separate and bears a marble statue from the chisel of Schwanthaler.

The interior of the building does not disappoint the promise of the outside. It is open every afternoon in the absence of the king, for the inspection of visitors; fortunately for us, his majesty is at present on a journey through his provinces on the Rhine. We went early to the waiting hall, where several travelers were already assembled, and at four o'clock, were admitted into the newer part of the palace, containing the throne hall, ball-room, etc. On entering the first hall, designed for the lackeys and royal servants, we were all obliged to thrust our feet into cloth slippers to walk over the polished mosaic floor. The walls are of scagliola marble and the ceilings ornamented brilliantly in fresco. The second hall, also for servants, gives tokens of increasing splendor in the richer decorations of the walls and the more elaborate mosaic of the floor. We next entered the receiving saloon, in which the Court Marshal receives the guests. The ceiling is of arabesque sculpture, profusely painted and gilded. Passing

through a little cabinet, we entered the great dancing saloon. Its floor is the richest mosaic of wood of different colors, the sides are of polished scagliola marble, and the ceiling a dazzling mixture of sculpture, painting and gold. At one end is a gallery for the orchestra, supported by six columns of variegated marble, above which are six dancing nymphs, painted so beautifully that they appear like living creatures. Every decoration which could be devised has been used to heighten its splendor, and the artists appear to have made free use of the Arabian Nights in forming the plan.

We entered next two smaller rooms containing the portraits of beautiful women, principally from the German nobility. I gave the preference to the daughter of Marco Bozzaris, now maid of honor to the Queen of Greece. She had a wild dark eye, a beautiful proud lip, and her rich black hair rolled in glossy waves down her neck from under the red Grecian cap stuck jauntily on the side of her head. She wore a scarf and close-fitting vest embroidered with gold, and there was a free, lofty spirit in her countenance worthy the name she bore. These pictures form a gallery of beauty, whose equal cannot easily be found.

Returning to the dancing hall, we entered the dining saloon, also called the Hall of Charlemagne. Each wall has two magnificent fresco paintings of very large size, representing some event in the life of the great emperor, beginning with his anointing at St. Deny's as a boy of twelve years, and ending with his coronation by Leo III. A second dining saloon, the Hall of Barbarossa, adjoins the first. It has also eight frescoes as the former, representing the principal events in the life of Frederic Barbarossa. Then comes a *third*, called the Hapsburg Hall, with four grand paintings from the life of Rudolph of Hapsburg, and a triumphal procession along the frieze, showing the improvement in the arts and sciences which was accomplished under his reign. The drawing, composition and rich tone of coloring of these glorious frescoes, are scarcely excelled by any in existence.

Finally we entered the Hall of the Throne. Here the encaustic decoration, so plentifully employed in the other rooms, is dropped, and an effect even more brilliant obtained by the united use of marble and gold. Picture a long hall with a floor of