

settle down here in this part of Zion, and help to build up its waste places.

We have about twenty families located here, they all take the "Deseret News" and Juvenile Instructor, and nearly all take the Improvement Era. We have not been visited by that grim monster (as he is called) death, during the past year, and no sickness to speak of. No poor in our midst, that needs to draw support from the Bishop. We are about giving up our water ditch and substituting the boiler and engine to pump up our water from the river. We hope for success in this change, for we have had a white elephant and by the tail at that, in the other method, for some seventeen years. Success to the "News."

F. A. HAMMOND.

HOLIDAYS IN GERMANY.

Stettin, Germany, Jan. 6th, 1898.

Very few holidays are universally celebrated by the various nations upon the earth's surface. While we Americans are showing our patriotism and liberty-loving spirit by celebrating Independence Day the rest of the world are hardly aware of its existence, but wherever we travel as long as we confine ourselves to the realms of Christianity we find one day as common to all as is the light of day and the darkness of night. From the time that the heavenly messengers sang praises to God and brought to earth peace and good will toward all mankind, yea from the time that the new star appeared as an announcement of the birth of the lowly Nazarene, down to the present era, Christmas has been The Day of all days, and I do not believe that any other race of people do more in the observance of this day or enter into its enjoyments with more real genuine pleasure than do the Germans.

Weeks beforehand the show windows in the different establishments put on quite a different appearance and it requires a skilled artist to arrange such tasty decorations as are depicted.

On the wider streets of the larger cities, in the market places and secluded corners are found vendors of various wares of every possible description, noticeable among these being the beautiful German toys of such world renowned fame; these are the regular Christmas markets, and at night when illuminated they present a novel appearance to the unaccustomed eye, as the thousands and thousands of buyers pass from one stand to another; and if you do not intend buying keep out of bounds of these wily merchants, for they are most as hard to get rid of as a pot of glue after becoming mixed up with the clothing.

A special feature of attraction are the beautiful Christmas trees which occupy most of the remaining available space in the city.

The German dames and lassies, fathers and sons, are all watching for a good bargain, and proud is the one who can bear the beautiful evergreen off in triumph to the humble home, for those of the better class will always have a servant to transfer it to the dwelling.

I have seen boys and girls with their little wooden shoes racing over the pavement to see who would first reach the tree market, and no matter what the ways are, some kind of a tree must be had in every family.

If you visit the house of a friend the children will amuse you by rehearsing their little recitations and songs prepared especially for the Christmas feast.

The Weihnachts Baum or as we say Christmas tree is first lighted on Heiligabend, the same as our New Year Eve, the various colored candles cast-

ing their light upon the lovely trimmings and beautiful hangings of gold and silver appearance, now reflecting upon the glass decorations of such quaint workmanship, or perchance throwing a ray of light upon the group of presents near the tree, cause an angelic smile to illuminate the countenance of the little ones as they pass in from the adjoining room to view their favorite display. Songs and recitations are now given, the family indulge in a nice social chat, coffee and cake is sure to appear, the presents are distributed, soon the candles are extinguished, all depart to their night's rest.

It is the custom among many of the people to reserve the presents until the morning following Heiligabend.

On Christmas the family form a group about the tree the candles are again lighted and that beautiful song Taunenbaum is rendered by all. The songs of the Germans for this special time of the year are indeed grand, and the spirit and life placed therein make them all the more appreciative.

Such songs as Heilige Nacht, Taunenbaum, Weihnacht, etc., are rendered by all classes alike, they are the melodies which have grown ripe with age, but as is ever the case, old songs are always the best.

Speech-making and singing again go the rounds of the little ones, and unlucky in the youngster who is not prepared with his part, if for any reason one fails to respond, he lives in fear of the Weihnachtsmann (Santa Claus) returning and claiming the little presents he has received, but very few failures are noticeable on such an occasion.

Throughout the whole of Germany two days are observed for Christmas, the 25th and 26th of December both are national holidays, and during this time business of all kinds are suspended. The second holiday is celebrated quite similar to the first, and with some a third day is observed, but this is only among certain societies.

During the few remaining days of the year the children amuse themselves making visits, displaying their toys and in fact, enjoy themselves somewhat after the fashion of the little ones at home, if any special occasion presents itself, such as one family calling upon another, then the tree is lighted and a good social time is enjoyed, and so the tree continues to serve its purpose until after the holidays.

The new year is celebrated in all its splendor and among the young men especially is Sylvester Abend or New Year's Eve, looked forward to with interest, the young ladies, however, do not seem to think so much of this special evening, as their company in the sports are not particularly solicited, in fact, under ordinary circumstances, a respectable girl would hardly dare venture out on the street after the hour of ten. From this time on the main streets of the larger cities are crowded with a mass of humanity, silk hats, so very common in this section, are noted for their scarcity on this particular night, and if the wearer of one is noticed by a company of students or the members of a club, he will undoubtedly be followed until his "stovepipe" either makes its disappearance or the cane carried by one of the club has found its way to its silky head gear and driven the same over his ruffled countenance. The cry of police will now greet the ears of the bystanders, but no one knows who the guilty one is, and although a double force of officers are on duty very few arrests are made.

At the hour of midnight as the clocks on the various steeples chime the departing knell of the Old Year a deafening cry arises and is wafted through the chilly air and each one answers to the call of "Prosit Neujahr." From now on as you pass along the street your time is pretty well occupied by an-

swering this peculiar greeting, and no one is supposed to pass a person who has used these words without repeating the same, generally in as loud a manner as possible. If perchance a young lady is delayed at the house of a friend until a late hour on her returning home a company of students will march up to her, circle around her five or six deep and if not interrupted by an officer they will each kiss the fair one, it would be folly to become angry as worse treatment would be sure to follow. Many times the young people are apprehended by an officer and marched off for safe keeping, but their pluck is shown to the last as they generally depart with a cheery "Prosit Neujahr" to all.

In many of the narrower streets the people are only allowed to pass one way; in this manner, the members of the different societies are kept from surrounding the wearer of the cylinder and thus a "jam" is avoided.

Excitement often runs so high that the unfortunate is followed and many times he barely escapes by reaching a hack and being rapidly driven away.

The sport is often kept up all night long, especially is this the case in most of the beer-halls and I suppose more beer is used on this night than during the whole of an ordinary week. With those remain at home it is somewhat different; the mother of the family busies herself in preparing a kind of dough-nut, friends gather and the whole night is set apart for social enjoyment, the children many times will amuse themselves by filling a common thimble with salt, if they can balance the same so it will stand then they will live during the coming year.

There is a novel little game played by old and young alike, a glass of water is provided and into the same is slowly poured hot lead, as soon as it comes in contact with the water it hardens and many very beautiful figures are formed, the imagination will readily help one to classify and name the objects presented, in fact it is much like the viewing of the clouds on a nice summer day and noticing the various forms which are so easily detected and which are ever changing.

On New Years Day the usual calls are made, congratulations are extended and all are happy in the realization of the many blessings they enjoy.

J. COLLIE ROBISON.

IN THE EUROPEAN MISSION.

[Millennial Star, January 20.]

Arrivals—Apostle Anthon H. Lund and Elder Ferdinand F. Hintze arrived in Liverpool on January 18, 1898, on their way to Palestine and Turkey, where they are going on a special mission, as mentioned in the last issue of the Star. They expect to remain a few days in England.

Releases and Appointments—The following named missionaries have been honorably released to return home: Thomas J. Webster, traveling Elder in the Norwich conference, on January 27, 1898; Hyrum M. Smith, president of the Newcastle conference; John W. Crawford, president of the Sheffield conference; J. W. Grace, president of the Liverpool conference; William N. Davis, traveling Elder in the Leeds conference; Edwin D. Harrison, and Charles Measom, traveling Elders in the Birmingham conference; George Allan, traveling Elder in the Scottish conference, on February 10, 1898.

Elder Joseph B. Walton has been appointed to preside over the Newcastle conference; Elder Don B. Colton over the Sheffield conference; and Elder Jed Stringham over the Liverpool conference.

A man's feet may be of the regular pattern but his cloven breath always betrays him.