THE SPELL OF NÜRNBERG: BY PHILIP VAN
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It may be as you step out of the train at Nürnberg—in spite of all the trolleys you have taken to shrines of the past—that the waiting trams, the sense of busy life about the station, will come to you with a sense of shock. Perhaps for you the name of Nürnberg calls up images of gorgeous processions of the guilds between high gabled houses and along the banks of the river, the serene figure of Hans Sachs in the arched doorway of his house, the austere face of Albrecht Dürer bending over his work beside one of the mullioned windows we see in his pictures. Yet, after all, there is the rugged Frauenthor close to the modern station. We must pass under it as of old to enter the town. And that is typical of the Nürnberg that was and is. The Nürnberg of today is a prosperous modern town, but the past is there beside it, under it, through it. The first shock of that impression of modernity is, one realizes, a superficial impression. It is in a sense the same Nürnberg as of old; the atmosphere is full of memories of which there are visible reminders at every step. Nürnberg was always busy and prosperous, and after a while it comes to one that it is more right and suitable that it should preserve its traditions and contribute its share to the world’s work today instead of being merely a monument to its beautiful past.

Nürnberg, it must be remembered, was a free city of the empire until eighteen hundred and six. Since then it has belonged to Bavaria. Its castle, the Kaiserburg, which dates from the eleventh century, belongs in common to the Bavarian and Prussian royal families, and it is there they stay when visiting the city. It is a fine, simple old structure, not the least interest of which lies in its beautiful old paneled ceilings and old porcelain stoves—though the chapel contains some pictures by the elder Holbein, Wohlgemuth and Krafft.

If Nürnberg is one of the places you have visited in your dreams before your feet have actually walked its streets, you will not want to go sight seeing at once, or begin by following your excellent and indispensable Baedeker. You will just want to walk through the strong old Frauenthor up the Königstrasse past the thirteenth century church of St. Lorenz—noting its sculptured portal perhaps without studying its detail, and saving the beautiful old glass windows and sculpture and carvings within for a later time. You pass some beautiful old houses with dark carved wood ornamentation, and you pass over the bridge where the policeman will let you stop and dream over the reflections of the houses in the Pegnitz, provided you follow
traffic rules and keep to the right-hand path. A few years ago one of the parallel bridges that had little houses built upon it all the way across was declared unsafe and torn down. You are fortunate if your first visit to Nürnberg was before this picture making landmark disappeared.

You pass the Frauenkirche, reserving enjoyment of its treasures also for a future hour, but you stop to smile at the quaint little "Goose Man," a small bronze figure of a peasant carrying a goose, which stands over a fountain. It is one of the characteristic monuments of Nürnberg. You pass the Schöner Brunnen with its numerous bronze statues and the Rathaus, which was built in the seventeenth century. (Quite a modern building!) You pass St. Sebaldrus and the little chapel of St. Moritz, and you may want to stop at once at the little Bratwurst Glöcklein which leans cosily against the chapel, a little beer and sausage resort of ancient origin. Patrons can barely squeeze into the narrow room, where newly cooked sausages steam at the entrance, and the best of Bavarian beer is served in steins that look as though they might be survivals from the days of Hans Sachs. Indeed Sachs’ own stein is solemnly exhibited to you, as well as those of other local celebrities centuries long since gone into dust, but whose names live after them.

Then you walk all about the little town, lingering longest, perhaps, by the ancient fortifications and the oldest and crookedest streets—a poor part of the town now—where the houses are centuries old and you more than half expect to meet Eva Pogner around the corner arm in arm with her father, where you can easily imagine the riot following upon Beckmesser’s serenade and the scandalized night-capped heads appearing at all those high windows against a background of candle light. Then when you have seen it all you are ready to wander about the dim aisles of the old churches, to spend hours in the indescribably wonderful old museum which is a suppressed Carthusian monastery of the fourteenth century, and examine at your leisure the treasures it contains. If you want to appreciate to the utmost the achievement of Nürnberg’s artist- artisans, you will realize it there. Not to speak of the wonderful wood sculptures, the old wrought iron locks alone are sufficient material for an important museum. A school of design might be founded upon its examples. You will want to visit St. Catherine’s Church which was long used by the Meistersänger as their school and where, you remember, Eva Pogner met young Walther von Stolzung, and where the apprentices teased David and Walther with their delectable taunting song—for if you love “Die Meistersinger” it must be inextricably mixed up with all your sense of Nürnberg.
"THE NÜRNBERG MADONNA": A RARE PIECE OF WOOD CARVING IN THE OLD CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY.
The river which runs through Nürnberg is spanned here and there by picturesque old buildings.
OLD NÜRNBERG HOUSES WITH BEAUTIFUL WOODEN BALCONIES AND TILED ROOFS.

INNER COURT IN THE OLD TUCHER HOUSE IN NÜRNBERG.
THE SPITTLERTHOR, NÜRNBERG: WITH A DWELLING HOUSE IN THE OLD WALL.
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Another place in which to linger and dream dreams is the Albrecht Dürer house, which, except for its lack of complete furniture and household utensils, probably looks as it did in the great artist’s time. You can buy beautiful prints of his engravings there for a mark apiece. There are other houses in Nürnberg equally wonderful, and it is not difficult to obtain permission to see them. The simple kindly Bavarians are proud of their past and its relics, and if courteously approached will show the utmost kindness and hospitality to the stranger.

The guide books will tell you about the pictures by Albrecht Dürer and von Kulmbach, the carved wood and bronze statues of Wohlgemuth, Riemenschneider, Krafft and Veit Stoss, the stained glass and the wonderful smith work of Nürnberg; one cannot very well experience the aesthetic joy of them without seeing them, but if you have not yet seen Nürnberg and yet divine that you will love it and want to picture it, imagine instead the time-stained houses, the steep red-brown roofs, the turrets and strong stone towers and walls, the slow brown river upon whose banks the Meistersanger met for their contests of verse and song. There are fascinating junk shops, too, along the banks of that river where occasional treasures may be found. You may see a woman lean out of the window and draw up a pail of water from the river for her needs, and it makes modern plumbing seem a poor thing, although, alas, the woman would probably prefer the brass faucet if she had it! There are places other than museums and cathedrals where you want to linger, and which are just as true a part of Nürnberg past and present. There are the toy shops, for one thing. Did you realize that Germans were the first organized manufacturers of children’s toys and that they have always been a specialty of Nürnberg? The most fascinating objects for small children are to be found there—very different from the unimaginative marvels of modern toy structures with which our toy shops are filled.

Nürnberg has its comfortable modern hotels, not so grossly pretentious as to offend—just comfortable. It has quaintier and cheaper quarters that are clean and satisfactory. It has interesting and inexpensive old restaurants like the Goldene Posthorn. Then there are other memories of Nürnberg, unimportant yet somehow persistent when important facts escape the mind. There is the Tiefer Brunnen near the Vestnordthor Thurm where the stone dropped does not send up its ghostly splash in the water for several seconds. There are the grim torture chambers in the Kaiserburg where the dread Iron Virgin still stands, a hollow iron figure lined with spikes into which the victim was thrust; and there are other equally grisly re-
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minders of a picturesque but less humanitarian age. There is that old lime tree in the castle court said to have been planted in ten hundred and two by the wife of the Emperor Henry the Second—and how the perfume of lime trees is bound up with all one's memories of Germany!

Nürnberg is not one of those ancient European cities where one feels the dominance of the kings and nobles and of the rich luxurious class. It is noted for what is called its domestic architecture, and that fact speaks volumes. For while the government was originally in the hands of its patrician families, it was wrested from them by the civic guilds in the fourteenth century. It is true the nobles won it back again, and bitter feuds continued for some time to exist between the two parties—which however seemed not to interfere in the least with the growth and development of the town both in art and industries. Nürnberg was obviously never a poor city. The happiness of a moderate and relatively equal prosperity is impressed upon it. It will be remembered that at that wonderful period, the beginning of the sixteenth century, it was, like Augsburg, one of the chief depots of trade between Germany, Venice and the East, and we can imagine in one of their impressive religious ceremonials or one of those gorgeous processions of the guilds, that strange wonderful Oriental stuffs were worn by its citizens as well as the beautiful native fabrics.

How is one to give any adequate impression of the art treasures of Nürnberg! Continental cities contain many of greater importance in one sense. Perhaps it is only when one is in love with Germany and under the spell of Mediævalism that Nürnberg seems so unique, so rare, so different from any other place. It is small, for one thing, and one can realize it intensely without the fatigue that the most interesting of sight seeing must cause when wonder is piled on wonder. You can sit in the beautiful old St. Lorenz under the many colored light of its fifteenth century windows, you can marvel at the wonderful sense of life imprisoned in the old wooden carvings, you can dream over the look of the enduring old walls in the late sunlight, you can wander in the subdued light of the beautiful stone cloisters of the museum. It is a place for dreams—one of the places where one feels convinced of the truth of that Eastern belief that the spirits of persons and events live on in some inexplicable way in the atmosphere and the stone walls that sheltered them. Albrecht Dürer, Adam Krafft, Veit Stoss, Peter Vischer, the brass founder, Michael Wohlgemuth, Hans Pleydenwurff, Hans Sachs, the cobbler-poet, each and all have left something behind them more than their tangible works. Perhaps that is the real spell of Nürnberg.