

THE HARZ.¹

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The Harz Mountains are situated in Prussia about one hundred miles southwest of Berlin and about the same distance south by east of Hamburg. They occupy an area about sixty miles long in a northwest-southeast direction and about one third as wide. They are made of old slates and graywackes (with igneous intrusions), which have been turned up on edge and truncated. While the Harz are called mountains, it would be more proper to speak of the area as the dissected Harz plateau. To the north lies the North German lowland, to the southward are the Thu-



FIG. 1. A VALLEY IN THE HARZ PLATEAU.

ringian plains. On all sides except the east the rise to the plateau surface from the surroundings is abrupt and is marked by a fault along which movement has taken place leaving the plateau high above its surroundings and making the Harz what the Germans

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call a Horst. Above the plateau surface there are conspicuous elevations like the Brocken; below it, the streams have trenched their courses in deep, narrow, and picturesque valleys like the Bodethal. To the fugitive observer some of the conspicuous elevations seen in the distance on ascending the Brocken show a significant even summit level and raise the question whether or not there are base levels represented other than that of the plateau surface. The steep slopes and much of the plateau surface are

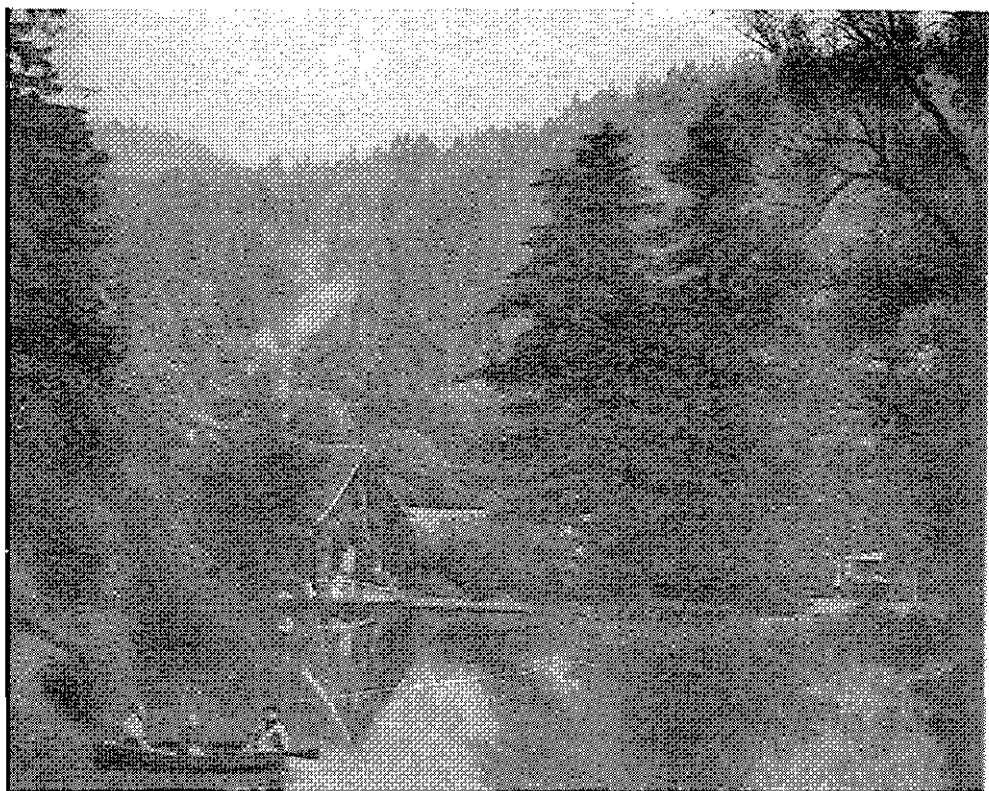


FIG. 2. IN THE HEART OF THE HARZ.

forested and the forests are cared for in the thrifty German way. When the trees are cut from an area and the wood is harvested, it is quickly replanted with young trees. The trees may be seen in all stages of growth, from bright green patches of them that have just been planted, to areas that have a dark green color and are ready to harvest or are in the process of being cut. They do not waste much in Germany, except human labor. Near the

cities, the tree branches are stacked up in neat piles and the peasant women may be seen carrying on their backs to their homes for firewood great bundles of them that reach from high

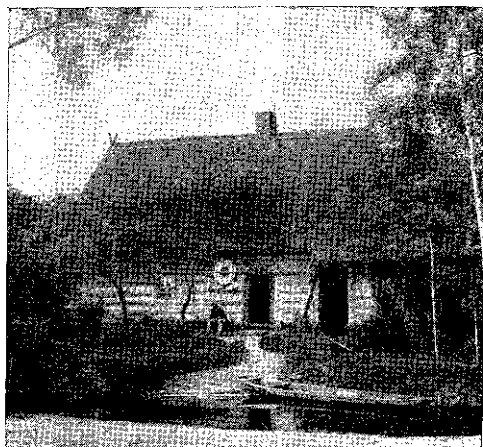


FIG. 3. A THATCHED PEASANT HOME.

overhead to the ground on which they trail. At a distance from the villages some of the wood is made into charcoal.

The Harz region is not more thickly settled than would be expected in a much forested area. It is not attractive for agriculture but there is some good pasture ground. The region is famous for its canary birds. "In Andreasberg more than two hundred thousand are raised every year, the best singers being kept as choirmasters." Mining has been important since the tenth century in some localities, but in other localities the mines have been worked out and as is inevitable where no new industry

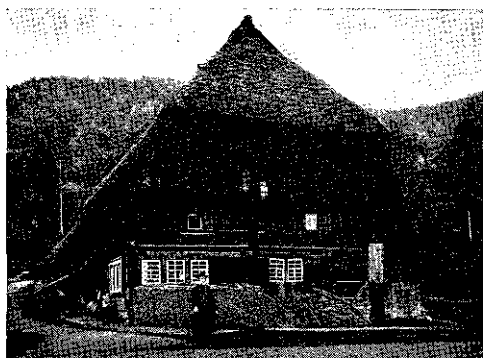


FIG. 4. PEASANT HOME, DANKERODE.

arises to take the place of mining, the towns have gone to decay. Silver, lead, copper, and zinc have been the chief minerals obtained from the mines. In the interior lie the mining towns of Klausthal-Zillerfeld and Andreasberg. Near the borders of the plateau the towns are situated, as along the Rhine, where the valleys open out upon the lowland. Ballenstedt, Thale, Blanken-



FIG. 5. BAD HARGBURG, THE SARATOGA OF THE REGION.

burg, Wernigerode, Bad Harzburg and the quaint old imperial city Goslar, are so situated on the north edge of the plateau.

While not on the main lines of travel for most tourists, the Harz region is made accessible to summer visitors by many lines of railroad, stage-roads, and trails, and traveling on foot through them is made easy for the stranger by the numerous guide posts which mark the way, and by the excellent maps which one may obtain for a small price. One of the favorite places visited is Thale at the point where the Bode with its entrenched meanders (map inference) emerges from the plateau onto the plains. Here one may climb by a zigzag pathway up the edge of the plateau to the "Hexentanzplatz" (Witches' Dancing Place). We climbed it at dusk. The pleasing strains of music from the German band

of a Kurhaus were wafted up to us from the village in the plain as we climbed upwards or rested on the benches stationed at places along the pathway commanding the best views. At the top of the plateau, there is a comfortable hotel to which we were guided through the darkness by a friendly German. In the stiff breezes of the night, the witches with which legend fills the region were heard holding high carnival. They were off on their broomsticks before morning for their favorite haunts on the Brocken while we waited for breakfast, which we ate out of doors at a

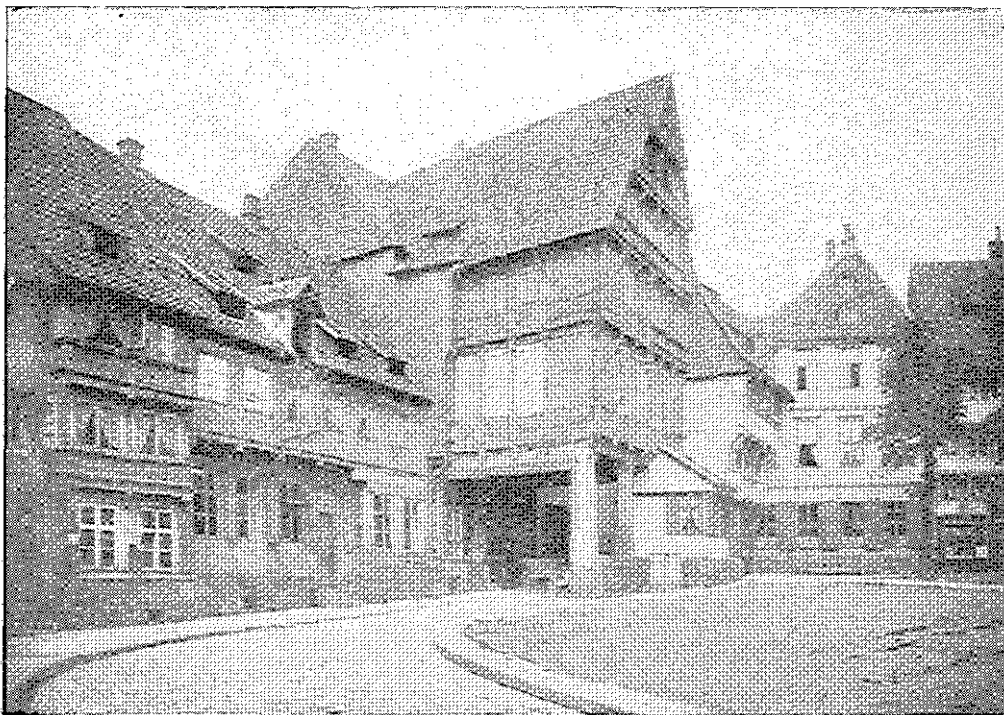


FIG. 6. HOUSE IN QUIANT OLD GOSLAR, AN OLD WALLED CITY,
"THE LEADVILLE OF THE TENTH CENTURY."

table overlooking the deep gorge of the Bode river, before we took the more roundabout route by rail to the top of the Brocken. Before leaving we had a view looking across the plains north of the plateau. The fields of the German plains appear like a gigantic yellow and green checkerboard with elongated rectangles instead of squares. The aspect is very different from that of the great American fields. This difference has a deeper significance which cannot be discussed here.

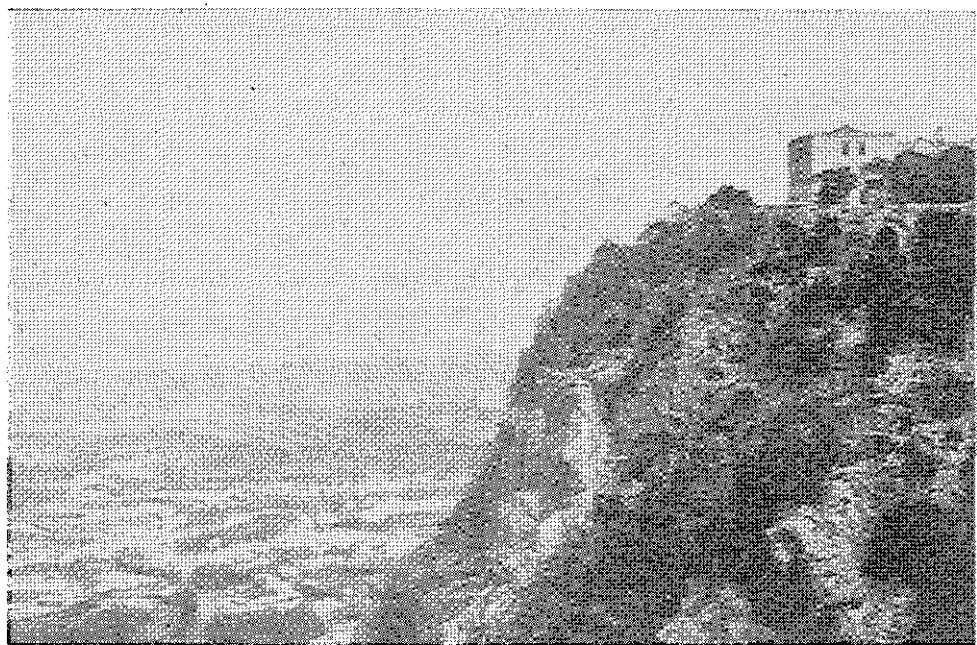


FIG. 7. THE HEXENTANTZPLANTZ HOTEL AT THE TOP OF THE PLATEAU. THALE IN THE VALLEY OF THE BODE WHERE IT OPENS ONTO THE PLAIN.



FIG. 8. THE STONE TOWER AT THE SUMMIT OF THE BROCKEN. A GROUP OF SCHOOL CHILDREN WEARING ON THEIR BACKS THE CHARACTERISTIC "SCHULMAPPE". COURTESY "AUS NAH UND FERN."

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The Brocken reaches an elevation of about 3,700 feet above the sea and less than half that altitude above the plateau surface. If the plateau represents a base level, this mountain is a monadnock. It is the highest mountain in north Germany and with other parts of the Harz is a favorite resort for the people of the north German cities, because of its nearness. Over thirty thousand tourists visit it every year. In clear weather its summit "commands a view with a radius of 100 miles comprising thirty cities, two or three hundred villages and one whole mountain district." But clear weather in the Brocken is rare and the writer cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement from personal



FIG. 9. A HARZ MOUNTAIN COSTUME.

observation. The "specter of the Brocken" is also famous, but with it the traveler is rarely favored. At the top of the Brocken a moderately high stone tower affords the traveler additional facilities for a good view. As is so often the case in Germany and Switzerland, the stranger is aided in identifying the various parts

of the landscape spread out before him, by arrows cut in stone or drawn on a horizontal brass plate and properly labeled. On the north edge of the plateau within easy walking distance of the Brocken are several towns. One of these towns is Bad Harzburg, the Saratoga of the Harz, with many beautiful summer homes and numerous hotels.

From the summit of the Brocken Bad Harzburg is reached by a four hours' walk. The path is well marked so that the traveler need not go astray. One leaves the treeless summit of the

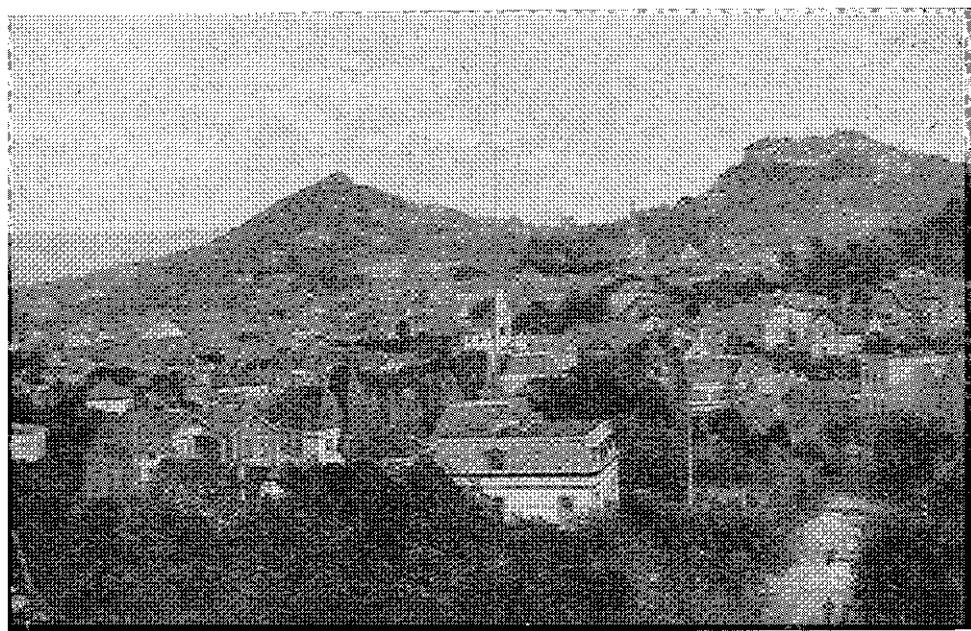


FIG. 10. BLANKENBURG. AT THE SUMMIT OF THE HILL ON THE RIGHT IS THE CASTLE—ONCE THE RESIDENCE OF THE EMPRESS MARIA THERESA, NOW THE SUMMER HOME OF THE DUKE OF BRUNSWICK.

Brocken where the railroad cuts and graded paths occasionally show a few feet of peat from which little streams of clear water flow, and soon reaches the region of small trees and thick undergrowth and then the pine forest with its impressive silence and somberness. The lofty red trunks rise from between the great moss covered blocks of rock which have given the name Blocksberg to the Brocken. Not infrequently one meets a party of

youthful Germans or a lone German youth with a long spiked staff in his hand and an alpine sack on his back, on his way to the summit. When half way down, we met one little party of three children, all under fourteen, on their way up to the summit with their father. They reached the summit, ate their lunch, enjoyed the view and returned in time to take the same train we took and yet the children were not too tired to talk freely after their shyness had disappeared. The traveler is impressed in Germany with the children. In museum, summer garden, or on a summer tramp, the children are there with their parents. Truly Germany is the land of roses and red-cheeked children!

Bad Harzburg is situated at the edge of the plateau where the valley of the Radau opens out onto the plain. Overlooking the town is the Burgberg, a hill which has been separated from the rest of the plateau by erosion. On this hilltop there is, of course, an old castle. Germany is full of them. Wherever there are butte-like outliers of a plateau in a strategic position, a castle occupies the summit. From the car window the traveler scarcely sees one disappear in the distance before another appears. On this particular hill Henry IV "built him a castle, and from this spot he started on that journey whose first stage was Canossa and whose last stage was a pauper's grave in a land of strangers." On the brow of this hill there is Bismarck Denkmal (what enterprising German town has not a Bismarck Denkmal built, building or projected?) which is inscribed with his famous saying, "To Canossa we will not go."

REFERENCES.—Grundzüge der Länderkunde by Dr. Alfred Hettner, Band I; The Bay View Magazine, February 1904; Millis' International Geography; Reclus, The Earth and Its Inhabitants.

PHYSICS CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA.

The fourth meeting of the newly formed Physics Club of Philadelphia was held at Central High School March 11, 1910, with President George A. Hoadley of Swarthmore in the chair. The secretary reported an enrolled membership of forty-three.

The program opened with a report on "The Magnetic Storm of September 25, 1909," by Dr. Paul R. Heyl of the Central High School. Dr. Heyl had had an opportunity to study this in connection with the telegraphic system of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and he made the discussion very valuable. Dr. S. T. Skidmore of Philadelphia Normal School then reported for the committee on demonstrating apparatus, and the remaining time was spent in the discussion of certain questions which had been placed in the hands of Dr. D. E. Owen of the William Penn Charter School for distribution. Among these was "What is the Nature of an Optical Image?" answered by Dr. H. C. Richards of the University of Pennsylvania. The president announced that on next Saturday morning the Club will make an excursion to the factories of the Leeds, Northrup Co. in Germantown.

GUY W. CHIPMAN, *Secretary*.