

THE MARKET-PLACE IN NUREMBERG



The Market-place in picturesque old Nuremberg, with the peaked gables of its tall and broad houses turned towards the street, carries us back to the Middle Ages. But not all these houses are old, for most of the citizens of Nuremberg, in building new houses, are careful to imitate the old ones, red-tiled roofs and all.

In their earliest form the Arabic numerals were not Arabic at all, but came from the Hindus of far-off India. The first trace that we have of them (without the nought, however) is in some rock-cut inscriptions in Central India, which go back almost to 300 B.C. In Europe we find some examples of the nine digits (again no nought) in manuscripts which date from early in the Middle Ages, probably derived from contact with the Saracens who then ruled Spain.

Meeting of East and West

But the real introduction of the Arabic system into Europe came with the rise of commerce which followed the Crusades. Then for the first time West and East were brought into continual contact, and we may consider the new system of notation as one of the many gains of Europe from the activities of the Italian merchants. The nought was now an established part of the system. The old and cumbersome Roman system, however, was not entirely replaced by the Arabic until the 16th century. (See Arithmetic.)

NUREMBERG, BAVARIA. In this city we get both the old and the new. The old city walls and turrets, the great gateways flanked by massive towers, the irregular streets, and quaint gable-faced houses, all carry us back hundreds of years to the time when Nuremberg (German *Nürnberg*) was the gateway through which passed much of the rich goods of the East on their way to northern Germany.

Over the doorway of one of these houses

appears an inscription showing that there Hans Sachs, the great poet and playwright of the 16th century, wrote his comedies and songs at the same time that he made shoes for the citizens of Nuremberg. The quaint little Brattwurstglöcklein, where he met his neighbours, is built against a church, and beer and sausages are still served in the place. Another of the old mansions pointed out now as one of Nuremberg's most treasured relics is that in which Albrecht Dürer, the painter, lived.

The Home of German Art

It was Dürer and his companion artists of the "Nuremberg school" who made this city "the home of German art," and here we can see many specimens of their work. But most of Dürer's paintings have been sold, and one must go to Munich and Berlin to see them. At St. Sebald's Church are the Twelve Apostles, the masterpiece of Peter Vischer, Germany's great worker in bronze. And at the church of St. Lorenz are to be seen the work of Wohlgemuth, the master of Dürer, and of Adam Krafft, the stone and wood carver. The large art museum houses many other treasures.

High above this ancient section of the city towers the old castle with its underground passages and its "chamber of horrors," in which are mediæval instruments of torture. It was during the reign of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa that the castle assumed the form that is preserved to this day.

For its greatness as a mediæval centre of