

### ROTHENBURG.

Rothenburg, on the Tauber, is one of the oldest cities in Germany. It has remained a medieval town through the ages, and great care had been taken to prevent the introduction of new devices. The ancient appearance of the buildings has been preserved by careful repairs. It is surrounded by a high wall, a deep moat, now dry, and large towers around the walls for the purpose of defence. There is a remarkable story connected with the city, relating how one of the citizens took the greatest drink in history, and by doing it, saved the lives of fellow citizens.

During the Thirty Years War Rothenburg was attacked by no less a general than Tilly himself with his whole army. Nevertheless, the Rothenburgans felt fairly secure behind their large wall, their wide moat, and with an able body of soldier-citizens reinforced by a Swedish force of well-trained men. The siege commenced, and the men inside the walls found it impossible to silence the big guns of the enemy, but when they were attacked at a breach in the wall, in fierce hand-to-hand fighting, Tilly's men were beaten off.

At this fierce resistance Tilly was very wrath, and sent word that if any mercy was wanted the city must surrender at once. However, no thought of surrender entered the minds of the townsmen, and they bravely carried on the battle. At last, after repeated vain assaults, a lucky cannon shot exploded the powder magazine of the city and made a large breach in the wall. Fighting fiercely, they were beaten back and the enemies entered the town. Even then it was the mercenary troops who hung out the white flag of surrender.

Tilly, angered at the firm resistance of the town, allowed the surrounding Swedes to march out in safety, but he ordered all the members of the town council to be hanged. However, the pleas of the wives and daughters made him relent a little, and he said that only four would be hanged. He told them to cast lots to decide who would die. The council at once refused such mercy, and said that they all would die, or that they all would live, but they would not cast lots.

At this point a diversion took place, in the form of the town Pokal, the State beaker, a huge three-quart cup filled with the best wine.

Tilly and his officers all drank, and still the Pokal was not empty. Perhaps the wine softened Tilly's heart. At any rate, with a grim smile he said that if there was any man among the Rothenburgans who could empty the Pokal at one draft, all would go free.

Now, although the Rothenburgans were supposed to be as good drinkers as fighters, this seemed an impossible task. At last, George