

Let us hope that those nations with more intelligence and refined feelings will make a beginning, and then by force of example induce the Germans to do the same.[8] Meanwhile, hear what Thomas Hood says of them (_Up the Rhine)_: "_For a musical people they are the most noisy I ever met with_" That they are so is not due to their being more prone to making a noise than other people, but to their insensibility, which springs from obtuseness; they are not disturbed by it in reading or thinking, because they do not think; they only smoke, which is their substitute for thought. The general toleration of unnecessary noise, for instance, of the clashing of doors, which is so extremely ill-mannered and vulgar, is a direct proof of the dulness and poverty of thought that one meets with everywhere. In Germany it seems as though it were planned that no one should think for noise; take the inane drumming that goes on as an instance. Finally, as far as the literature treated of in this chapter is concerned, I have only one work to recommend, but it is an excellent one: I mean a poetical epistle in _terzo rimo_ by the famous painter Bronzino, entitled "_De' Romori: a Messer Luca Martini_" It describes fully and amusingly the torture to which one is put by the many kinds of noises of a small Italian town. It is written in tragicomic style. This epistle is to be found in _Opere burlesche del Berni, Aretino ed altri_, vol. ii. p. 258, apparently published in Utrecht in 1771.