

"By queenly Aix to pretty Bonn—
And then athwart the river,
In sheer idlesse we wandered on,
As fain to stray forever.

"In golden shine the royal Rhine
His dancing wave uplifted;
The rafts by Loreley's mountain shrine
And song-famed reefs were drifted.

"The glory fell on wood and dell,
On ruined shrine and fastness,
Where the stream-spirit weaves his spell
Of legendary vastness.

"For still with murmur and with roar
Ran on the storied river,
As if each robber-haunted shore
Should haunted be forever.

"Once more from his despairing height
Young Roland on his maiden
Gazed through the dim and mocking night
Bereft and sorrow-laden—

"While o'er the pale and broken nun,
With love-troth vainly plighted,
The Dragon Rock frowned sadly down
On heart and passion blighted.

"Once more the wild marauding bands
Broke law and fear asunder,
And wrought their death-work through the lands,
For vengeance or for plunder;

"And foreign force and foreign hosts
Brought sword and fire to pillage
The restful homes, the peaceful coasts,
The ingle in the village.

"The homes are gone—the hosts have passed
Into the great uncertain;
The fateful pall is o'er them cast,
The impenetrable curtain.

"The harsh steam-whistle calls and wakes
Their echoes shrill and lonely;
The busy traveller, passing takes
Note of the moment only.

"But, storm or shine, the rushing Rhine
Flows on—the deathless river,
Whose harmonies, by grace divine,
Reverberate forever."