

Preface.

ix

was hewn by the Druid priests. In the Scandinavian mythology Wodan's white steed was worshipped as well as the god himself.

When Charlemagne, in the eighth century, compelled the people of this district to embrace Christianity (by fire and sword) the wild mountaineers are supposed to have fled before his victorious forces, and to have entrenched themselves on the Ross-trappe, where traces of their rude fortifications may still be seen. They had no white steed to worship in this retreat, hence probably, the priests cut this rut of a horse-hoof, and invented the story of Brünhilda and the Giant's White Horse, in order to impress the people with the mighty power of the Thunder-god, and prevent them from entertaining any sympathy for the new religion.

From this point the echoes of the horn through the mountains are indescribably beautiful.

In the charming *Ilseenthal*, or valley of the Ilse, we found the home of the fascinating Princess Ilse, who is fabled to dwell in unearthly splendor in the mountain, the Ilsenstein, at the foot of which the transformed offenders of the Princess sigh and moan in the form of fir-trees. Should you, my dear reader, ever enjoy their refreshing shade, may Princess Ilse be as gracious to you as she was to me, and may your *Dream under Princess Ilse's Firs* prove still more pleasant than mine.

TOOFIE LAUDER.