

together. Each of them has a stirring history, and each is the scene of legendary romance.*

We soon reach Coblenzt, where the gentle Moselle flows into the Rhine. This is the "Confluentes" of Cæsar's commentaries, and its antiquity stretches back to Cæsar's day. Opposite the town is the famous fortress of "Ehrenbreitstein"—the German Gibraltar of the Rhine. It stands on a rock 490 feet high, and is accessible on only one side, and that is defended by three lines of fortifications, so that it is almost impregnable. It is connected with Coblenzt by a bridge of boats.†

We pass on again through our panorama of beauteous nature and charming antiquity. At St. Goar, the river takes a sudden turn round an almost perpendicular precipice. A small gun is fired off from the deck of our vessel, and the rock answers back, the hills take up the sound, and it lingers long in the valley before it dies away. This is the Lorley, at the base of which the siren has her home, fatal to luckless sailors. On the summit of the rock she used to appear in irresistible loveliness, clad in garments of white, alluring with her heavenly harp-tones the passing sailors.

Passing the castle of the Schonburg, we enter "Bingen, sweet Bingen on the Rhine." In the river, just opposite the town, stands the famous Mouse-tower, where, so the story goes, Archbishop Hatto, of Mayence, was devoured by the rats as a retribution for his cruelty. Bingen is a most charming spot, just on the bend of the river, at the mouth of the Nahe, over which is an ancient bridge, built by the Romans.

After paying a flying visit to the fine old castle and the Rochus chapel, 360 feet above the Rhine, whither the faithful make pilgrimages still, we hurry on again per steamer up the

* The old castle of Drei Exen—the "Three Towers"—shown on page 103, is a characteristic example of the hoary ruins of the Rhine Valley. It illustrates the old Alsatian proverb, which says :—

Three castles on one hill;
Three churches in one church-yard;
Three cities in one valley—
Such is Alsace everywhere.—ED.

† A characteristic feature of the navigation of the Rhine is the number of rafts one meets conveying the forest wealth of the mountains to the sea. The general aspect of these rafts is shown in cut on page 115.—ED.