

high hill, covered with short broom. In all my excursions upon the banks of the Rhine, I saw nothing so beautiful. As far as the eye could reach were prairies, waters, and magic forests resembling bunches of green feathers. It was one of those places where we imagine we see the tail of that magnificent peacock which we call Nature.

Behind the hill on which I was seated, on the summit of a mount covered with fir and chesnut trees, I perceived a sombre ruin, a colossal heap of brown basalt, in the form of a citadel. What castle was it? I could not tell, for I did not know where I was. To examine a ruin at hand is my *mania*; therefore, at the expiration of a quarter of an hour, I was wandering through it, searching, foraging, and turning over huge stones, with the hope of finding an inscription which would throw some light upon this venerable ruin.

On leaving the lower chamber, the corner of a stone, one end buried in the rubbish, struck my view. I immediately stooped, and with my hands and feet cleared everything away, under the impression of finding upon it the name of this mysterious ruin. On this large block of stone the figure of a man, clothed in armour, but without a head, was sculptured: and under his feet were the following lines:—

*"Vae tacit perit lux.
Nec rit et rit umbra vir caret in tumba pro caret effigies."*

I was still in ignorance. This castle was an enigma. I had sought for words; I had found them: that is, an inscription without a date—an epitaph without a name—a statue without a head. While buried in reflection, a distinct sound of voices reached me. I listened. It was a quick dialogue, a few words only of which I could distinguish mid the shouts of laughter and of joy. These were, "*Fall of the mountain—Subterranean passage—Very bad foot-path.*" On rising from the tombstone, I beheld three young girls, clothed in white, with fair faces, smiling cheeks, and bright blue eyes. Nothing could be more magical, more charming, for a *revoir*, so situated, than this apparition. It would have been pardonable for a poet to have taken them for angels, or saints of Heaven; I must affirm that, to me, they were only three English girls.

It suddenly crossed my mind that by profiting by these angels, I might find without farther trouble, the name of the castle. They spoke English; therefore, I concluded they belonged to that country. To give me countenance, I opened my portfolio, called to my aid the little English of which I was master, then began to look into the ravine, murmuring to myself, "Beautiful view! very fine! very pretty waterfall!" &c., &c.

The young girls, surprised at my sudden appearance, began, while stifling their laughs, to whisper to each other. They looked charming, but were evidently laughing at me. I summoned up