

Knight Rolland, scouring the Rhine in search of adventure, found himself the guest of Count Heribert, Lord of the Seven Mountains, at his castle of Drachenfels. According to custom the daughter of the host, the peerless Hildegunde, welcomed him with the offering of bread, wine and fish. Her beauty riveted the gaze of the young knight, and Hildegunde and Roland were shortly affianced lovers. But their happiness was brief. Roland was summoned by Charlemagne to the crusade. Time sped on and most anxiously did Hildegunde await his return. But sad rumors came. The brave Roland was said to have fallen by the hands of the infidels, and the world no longer possessing any charm for the inconsolable Hildegunde, she took refuge in the convent on the adjacent island. The rumors, however, of the death of her betrothed were unfounded. Although desperately wounded, he recovered, and hastened to the halls of Drachenfels to claim his bride, but instead of being welcomed back by her fondly remembered smile, he found that she was forever lost to him. In despair he built the castle which looks down upon the convent, and there lived in solitude, catching an occasional glimpse of a fair form passing to and fro to her devotions in the little chapel of the convent. At length he missed her, and soon the tolling of the bell and a mournful procession conveyed to him the heart-rending intelligence that his beloved Hildegunde was now indeed removed forever. From that moment Roland never spoke; for a short time he dragged on his wretched existence, but his heart was broken, and one morning his sole attendant found him rigid and lifeless, his glassy eye still turned towards the convent chapel."

Of a somewhat different character is the story suggested by

THE MOUSE TOWER,

which stands on a rock in the middle of the Rhine, and marks the spot—so the well-known legend goes—where the cruel Archbishop Hatto was devoured by mice. Hava caused a number of poor people to be burned in a barn during a famine, whom he com-

pared to mice bent on devouring the corn, he was immediately attacked by mice which tormented him day and night. He then sought refuge on this island, but was followed by his persecutors, and soon eaten up alive.

But perhaps there is no rock which tourists on the Rhine rush so eagerly upon the deck of the steamer to see as

THE LORELEI,

so-called; for on this rock the siren is said to have had her dwelling, who, like the sirens of old, enticed sailors and fishermen to their destruction in the rapids at the foot of the precipice,—a legend long a theme for the poet and painter.

In a beautiful poem of Heine's he represents the charming Loerlei, when the top of the mountain is bathed in the rays of the declining sun, as sitting thereon, radiant in her sparkling jewels, and combing her golden hair, at the same time singing a bewitching song. The sailor on the Rhine below hears her voice and turns his eye upward to see whence it comes, but as he listens and gazes, he forgets his boat which is dashed upon the rocks.

I will take the liberty of quoting this poem in its original form, following each stanza with a free English translation.

Ich weiss nicht, was soll es bedeuten,
Das ich so traurig bin;
Ein Märchen aus alten Zeiten,
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn.

I know not what it means
That I am so sad;
A story of the olden times
Is ever coming into my mind.

Die Luft ist kuhl und es dunkelt
Und ruhig fliesst der Rhein;
Der Gipfel des Berges flunkelt
Im Abendsonnenschein.

The air is cool and it grows dusky,
And peacefully flows the Rhine;
The top of the mountain sparkles
In the evening sunshine.

Die schonste Jungfrau sitzt,
Dort oben wunderbar;
Ihr goldenes Geschmeide blitzet,
Sie kammt ihr goldenes Haar.

The beautiful virgin sits,
Up yonder (on the mountain) in wonderful
fascination;
The lustre of her ornaments flashes,
She combs her golden hair.