

DRACHENFELS.

Halt—hear ye not the matin bell? it is the holy hour!
 What sanctuary so meet for prayer as this old vintage bower?
 Cheer the browsing mules to rest beside the chiming mountain rill,
 While Holy Mary bends above our cell serene and still!

AVE MARIA!

Now while the breeze is singing through the dark embowering vine,
 Where its tendrilled tresses wind around in many a fairy twine:
 While the purple Rhine sweeps on beneath like a sea-king to his home,
 And the eagle in the far blue air proclaims his halidome.
 I'll tell a tale of glamourie, of old unholy spells,
 That a Nixie o'er a Yager threw by haunted Drachenfels.

'Tis said those gaunt and grisly crags, whose shadows fall like night,
 And from the fearful Lurlee-Beg frown back the blessed light,
 Where fiends that prowled on Hallowmas, and fettered by a word,
 Stood still for ever, locked in stone, beneath Ithuriel's sword.
 Grim sentinels! what have they seen amid that gloom profound,
 Where the yawning whirlpool weaves its lure for ever round and round?

Dark Max the hunter, loved from youth each silent solitude,
 That shadowed forth his dreaming world and fed his wayward mood.
 He shunned the household merriment, the jousts by daring won,
 To seek, like an unquiet ghost, the solemn night alone.
 And he hearkened with a fierce delight the Nixie's silvery spell,
 As she sailed adown the moonbeam like a wreath of asphodel.

"Lurlee! Lurlee!" so ran the chant—"our ocean halls are fair,
 No taint of earth, no chill of death, no weary sound is there.
 Outblazed by many a lovelier light the diamond feebly shines,
 And shrinking from our red, red wine, the faded ruby pines.
 The gnomes of earth in vain have watched their donjon stores of gold,
 For broadly 'neath our pearly feet they're like a carpet rolled.

"Lurlee! Lurlee! the warlike Jarls, the stormy ocean lords,
 Are dancing with our merry maids and shouting at our boards.
 The golden browed and belted of the noble German line,
 Are throned on our eternal thrones and quaff our deathless wine!
 Lurlee! Lurlee! oh, fearless heart! 'tis sweet with us to stray,
 Amid our rich romantic realms, undimmed by dull decay."

The huntsman gazed with straining eyes down through the shadows grim,
 And saw her floating like a flame, above the cauldron's brim—
 While like a drowy nightingale, as soft as soft might be,
 Still faltered up her silvery call—" 'Tis sweet to roam with me."
 And wild desires rose fiercely up and banished holy fear,
 While Rûbezahl, the foe of souls, hung whispering at his ear.

He heard his mother's Ranz-de-vache, his brother's folding horn,
 And the Kloster's solemn vespers from the vine-trailed slopes upborne;
 But he turned away with longing ears to list the elvish thing,
 That o'er the seething Lurlee-Beg was brightly lingering.
 "Lurlee! Lurlee! come roam with me," still rang the witching strain,
 He plunged into the fatal depths—and ne'er was seen again!

Montreal, February, 1847.