

lowed him ; he shut himself up in Bingen, which was surrounded with walls, but the rats gained access by creeping under them. Then the despairing bishop caused a tower to be erected in the middle of the Rhine, and took refuge in it ; the rats swam over, climbed up the tower, gnawed the doors and windows, the walls and ceilings, and, at last, reaching the palace, where the miserable archbishop was hidden, devoured him. At present the malediction of Heaven and of man is upon this tower, which is called Mausethurm. It is deserted—it is crumbling into ruins in the middle of the stream ; and sometimes at night a strange red vapour is seen issuing from it resembling the smoke of a furnace :—it is the soul of Hatto, which hovers round the place. There is one thing remarkable. History, occasionally, is immoral ; but legends are always moral, and tend to virtue. In history the powerful prosper, tyrants reign, the wicked conduct themselves with propriety, and monsters do well ; a Sylla is transformed into an honourable man : a Louis the Eleventh and other such die in their beds. In tales Hell is always visible. There is not a fault that has not its punishment—not a crime, which leads not to inquietude—no wicked men but those who become wretched. Man, who is the inventor of fiction, feels that he has no right to make statements and leave to vague supposition their consequences : for he is groping in darkness—is sure of nothing : he requires instruction and counsel, and dares not relate events without drawing immediate conclusions. God, who is the originator of history, shows what he chooses, and knows the rest.

Mausethurm is a convenient word, for we may find in it what ever we desire. There are individuals who believe themselves capable of judging of every thing, who chase poesy from everything, and who say, as the man did to the nightingale—“ Stupid beast ! won't you cease to make that noise.” These people affirm that the word Mausethurm is derived from *maus* or *mauth*, which signifies “ custom-house ; that in the tenth century, before the bed of the river was enlarged, the Rhine had only one passage and that the authorities of Bingen levied, by means of this tower, a duty upon all vessels that passed. For these grave thinkers these wise-acres the cursed tower was a *douane*, and Hatto was a custom-house officer.

According to the old women, with whom I freely associated, Mausethurm is derived from *maus* or *mus*, which signifies a *rat*. The pretended custom-house is the Rat Tower, and its toll-keeper a spectre.

After all these two opinions may be reconciled. It is not altogether improbable, that towards the sixteenth and seventeenth century, after Luther, after Erasmus, several burgomasters of nerve made use of the tower of Hatto for a custom-house. Why not ? Rome made a custom-house of the temple of Antonius, the *doyana*. What Rome did to History, Bingen might well do to Legend.

In that case *Mauth* might be right, and *Mause* not be wrong. Let that be as it may, one thing is certain—that since the old servant told me the story of Hatto, Mausethurm has always been one of the familiar visions of my mind. You are aware that there