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THE STORIED RHINE.

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RHINE GATE, CONSTANCE.

I.

THE Rhine is swift like the Rhone," says Victor Hugo, "broad like the Loire, pent up between high banks like the Meuse, winding like the Seine, clear and green like the Somme, historical like the Tiber, majestic like the Danube, weired like the Nile, glittering with gold like an American river, and peopled with fables and phantoms like an Asiatic stream."

To the above poetical statement add that the Rhine is composed of about twenty thousand streams,

drains an area of seventy-five thousand square miles, is between seven and eight hundred miles long, falls nearly eight thousand feet, connects the Alps with the sea, and that it is one of the principal waterways of Europe.

Rising in Switzerland, the headwaters of this stream flow from about one hundred and fifty glaciers, remains of the ice age. The main feeder, the Vorder Rhine, rises on Mount Saint Gotthard (not very far from the sources of the Rhone), and falling more than twelve hundred feet within the first twelve miles of its course, forms numerous picturesque cascades. It winds through wild ravines and gathers the waters of many small streams as it dashes along its way. At Chur the united waters of the three Rhine streams first become navigable. After broadening out to form the Lake of Constance, the Rhine plunges over the Jura barrier in three falls fifty to sixty feet high. The deafening roar—still very awe-inspiring—and the rainbow effects of the spray, were first mentioned by early Latin writers.

The falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen are by far the largest in Europe, but they are not to be mentioned in the same day with our own Niagara. Nevertheless, they are very picturesque and beautiful. The cliff overhanging the fall has a quaint old castle inn, and pavilions and galleries command superb