

been an hour before me, had tried to masticate it, but had left off in disgust. I did not reply haughtily, as Marshal de Crequi did before the fortress of Gayi—"What Barberousse cannot take, Karbegrise will take;" but I ate of the leg of mutton.

I set out as the sun was declining, and soon left the Gothic chapel of St. Clement behind me. My road lay along the base of several mountains, on the summits of which were situated three castles—Reichenstein, Rheinstein (both of which were demolished by Rodolph of Hapsburg, and rebuilt by Count Palatine, and Vaughtsberg inhabited in 1848 by Kuno of Falkenstein, and repaired by Prince Frederick of Prussia). My thoughts turned upon a ruin that I knew lay between the place where I was and Bingen—a strange, unsightly ruin, which, between the conflux of the Nahe and the Rhine, stands erect in the middle of the river.

I remember from childhood a picture that some German servant had hung above my bed: it represented an old, isolated, dilapidated tower, surrounded with water; the heavens above it were dark, and covered with heavy clouds. In the evenings, after having offered up my prayers to God, and before reposing, I looked attentively at the picture. In the dead of the night I saw it in my dreams, and then it was terrible. The tower became enormous, the lightning flashed from the clouds, the waters roared, the wind whistled among the mountains, and seemed every moment as if about to pluck them from their base. One day I asked the servant the name of the tower, and she replied, making the sign of the cross upon her forehead,—“Mausethurm.” Afterwards she told me the following story:—

At one time, there lived at Mayence a cruel archbishop named Hatto—a miserly priest—who, she said, was “readier to open his hand to bless than to bestow in charity.” That one bad harvest he purchased all the corn, in order to sell it again at a high price: money was the sole desire of this wicked priest. That at length famine became so great that the peasants in the village of the Rhine were dying of hunger—that the people assembled in the town of Mayence, weeping and demanding bread—and that the archbishop refused to give them any. The starving people did not disperse, but surrounded the palace, uttering frightful groans. Hatto, annoyed by the cries of starvation, caused his archers to seize the men and women, old and young, and to shut them up in a granary, to which he set fire. “It was,” added the old woman, “a spectacle that might have caused the stones to weep.” Hatto did nothing but laugh, and as the wretched sufferers screamed in agony, and were expiring in the flames, he exclaimed—

“Do you hear the squeaking of the rats?”

The next day the fatal granary was in ashes, and there were no longer any inhabitants in Mayence. The town seemed dead and deserted; when suddenly a swarm of rats sprang—like the worms in the ulcers of Assuerus—from the ashes of the granary, coming from under the ground, appearing in every crevice, swarming the streets, the citadel, the palace, the caves, the chambers, and the alcoves. It was a scourge, an affliction, a hideous *fourmillement*. Hatto, in despair, quitted Mayence, and fled to the plains, but the rats fol-