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An Autumn near the Rhine; or Sketches of courts, society, scenery, &c. in some of the German states bordering on the Rhine

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Letter XXVIII.

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LETTER XXVIII.

OUR voyage from Boppart was not so interesting as that of the preceding day. The banks of the river though still mountainous and fertile, became gradually tamer and less striking as we descended. The mountains on each side are lower and more regularly rounded and flattened, and often recede from the river, leaving flat and not very picturesque plains on its banks. The vineyards are not so frequent nor cultivated with equal care. Just by the little village of Rhense, on the right bank, the boatmen pointed out the spot on the mountain where stood a famous stone called the Königstuhl, or royal seat, where the four Electors of the Rhine used to meet and deliberate on the affairs of Germany. Several peaces have been concluded here, and resolutions formed for the election and deposition of different Emperors. The Königstuhl was placed

on a spot where the territories of the four Rhenish Electors, of Mayence, Treves, Cologne, and the Palatinate touched each other, so that each could retire in a minute into his own kingdom. The town of Rhense was charged with keeping it in repair, for which it enjoyed considerable privileges. The French destroyed it in the revolutionary war, offended by its name, or the legitimacy of the purposes it served.

The immediate banks of the river were now flat and smiling, as if to give greater effect to the black mass of the famous Ehrenbreitstein rock which presently rises perpendicularly with a rugged grandeur opposite to the white palace and town of Coblenz. The mountain now presents only a black chaos of shapeless ruins and rocks. The Prussian workmen were busily employed in repairing the ruined fortifications, which, after sustaining various blockades in the wars of the revolution, were finally demolished after the peace of Luneville. The mines, rocks, walls and towers were blown up and fell with a tremendous crash into the river and the valley below. The little town of Thal Ehrenbreitstein, or Ehrenbreitstein Valley, at the

foot of the mountain, which has been several times burnt in the bombardments of the fortress, now looks cheerful and restored in the security of peace. The siege by the French during the congress at Rastadt was the most dreadful it has sustained. It was garrisoned by the troops of the Elector of Mayence, who were driven by a cruel famine to capitulate in 1799—many persons died from want—a cat sold for one florin and a half, and horse-flesh for thirty kreutzers a pound. Just out of Coblentz at a little hamlet on the other side of the Moselle some French officers were amusing themselves (in the late war) at billiards, in an hotel by the side of the Rhine. The Austrians in possession of the fortress opposite, resolved to disturb the gaiety of their enemies by a few shells; their bombs carried so exactly that they fell into the billiard room, to the consternation of the unthinking Frenchmen, who made their escape, leaving their game unfinished.

Coblentz is a handsome neat town, standing in the nook formed by the confluence of the Rhine and the Moselle. Its regular streets, white buildings, and hand-

some palace, and avenues, have an elegance and refinement, saddened by that dreary air of desertion and degradation common to many towns on the continent, whose consequence is now transferred to upstart rivals. The French converted the handsome Palace on the Rhine, built by the Elector Clement, with its Ionic portico, into a caserne; and the Prussian Hussars were cleaning their horses, and brushing their spatter-dashes, under the windows of the Palace, and smoking in one of the stately wings, now a guard-room. Several thousand troops are stationed here, and it is the ordinary residence of the Generals and Governor of the district.

We breakfasted at Coblenz, at an inn on the Quay, opposite the massy Ehrenbreitstein, to and from which a flying bridge was conducting motley collections of passengers. Here a peasant's waggon, drawn by a couple of oxen, and crammed with trim maidens and dowagers, and cocked-hatted lads, in their Sunday apparel; there a travelling Baron in his calèche, with postillions in the Prussian uniform, surrounded by pedestrian groups

of all qualities and descriptions, biped and quadruped. The bridge is a spacious round platform, railed in, and placed upon a couple of stout barges. It is attached by a long chain to a boat moored higher up in the middle of the river, so that it swings in the stream at this chain's length. When filled with passengers, it is shoved off from the Quay, and its own impulse carries it to the other side, its streamers flying from long posts striped with the loyal Prussian blue and white. In this way it keeps up its monotonous swing, like the pendulum of a clock.

A handsome stone bridge crosses the Moselle, which is enlivened by a little cluster of shipping employed in the trade in wine, and other articles, which its situation enables the town to carry on.

From Coblenz to Andernach is the least interesting part of the voyage. The Rhine flows through a wide unvaried plain; the dreary mountains of the *Westerwald*, running at some distance from the right bank, and the chain of the *Hundsdruck* receding far from the left. Passing the village of *Weisse Thurm*, (White Tower,) with a monument to the French General Hoche,

who crossed the Rhine here, opposed by the Austrians, in 1797, the pretty little Palace, and modern houses of Neuwied, appeared on the right, shaded by a fine avenue of trees.

This busy place, the capital of the Princes of Neuwied, now mediatized subjects of the King of Prussia, has a character of diminutive consequence, quite peculiar to itself. It looks like the miniature model of a splendid city. It is built with a nice regularity, and the white slated town, which would stand in one of our squares, has an air of regular grandeur and elegance. It carries on considerable trade, and is still a rendezvous for persons of all religious persuasions, whom the liberality of the Princes first invited. The Moravians have a considerable establishment here, among whom are some artists of skill; and its schools and public institutions are in good repute. The good sense of its Princes, and the reputation for industry, religious toleration, and freedom of the press which this little place has acquired, make it an object of more curiosity

to travellers than the garrison towns of many greater Princes.

After passing Neuwied, the country begins to resume its picturesque features. The ranges of mountains gradually approach the banks. On the right, on a fine wooded elevation, is perched the pleasant little chateau of *Mon Repos*, a country seat of the Prince of Neuwied; and before us, at the mouth of a sort of gulf, between the almost united chains of mountains, rose the old Gothic towers of Andernach, where we stopped a moment to pay toll. The massy ramparts, portals, and portcullises of this once considerable place, still remain to give it an air of sombre antiquity. Andernach was one of the frontier forts of the Romans, by the name of *Artonacum*; the portal towards Coblenz is said to be of their construction; and the old Frankish Kings had a palace here, from the windows of which, according to *on dit*, they used to catch salmon in the Rhine. It is still remarkable throughout Europe for its trade in two articles procured from the mountains in the neighbourhood—tuff-stone, which, when ground, forms an excellent cement, and which it trans-

ports in great quantities to Holland, and sometimes to America and the East Indies; and mill-stones of a superior quality. At Andernach we again entered narrow defiles of mountains, picturesquely chequered with vineyards and wood, but neither so lofty nor so luxuriantly fruitful as those higher on the river.

There is an almost unvarying uniformity of character in the Rhine scenery. The villages and towns, with a blue slated look, and half constructed of the slate which abounds in the mountains, stand thickly at their base washed by the river. A narrow valley invariably opens behind them, out of which a little stream or river finds its way through the village into the Rhine, while the ruins of the old seignorial chateau are perched on the vine-covered mountain above. Immediately beneath is the town or village, once inhabited by the Knights' dependants, and now by the peasant proprietors of a few acres of the precious vineyard. The churches and walls of the town often appear nearly as ancient as the old towers on the mountains. They have no architectural beauty, but present ge-

nerally plain round, or octagon turrets, and square massive walls, with a grotesque *melange* of slated pinnacles, minarets, and spires, which give the general character of the massy Saxon foundation, embellished by a quaint, detailed Gothic, of later date. You can easily conceive the singular and interesting character which the scene acquires from these well preserved vestiges of the days of knighthood. How is it that, in spite of their rudeness, their barbarity, and ferocity, the memorials of these our unpolished ancestors take a hold on the imagination, perhaps even stronger than the influence exercised by the chaste relics of their classical predecessors? If you will be frank, you will confess that, in spite of school prejudices, and Addison, and Sir Christopher Wren, you care more about a Gothic tower than a Roman pavement, and that the gloomy vaults of a Gothic cathedral inspire you with a stronger interest than the chaste pillars of a temple. You know our friend ——— insists that the *dark* ages ought to be called “the *light* :” but without quite going this length, we are unquestionably beginning to think the mailed

heroes of chivalry fine gallant fellows, and their mistresses nearly as peerless and as interesting dames as the Helens, the Andromaches, and the Didos, who used to monopolise all admiration. The associations of the classical ages are, in fact, now growing dim and obsolete. They relate to a people whose grandeur and refinement we must admire, but who belong to an age with which we have nothing in common, neither religion, ancestry, nor habits. But the more powerful cause is probably the highly coloured contrast which the rude manners of the days of chivalry present to the refined systems of modern society—a contrast which exists in a much less striking degree between the modern and classical times. The Romans and the Greeks were great and polished nations, like ourselves—with wise governments, refined institutions, and settled social systems, like our own. There is nothing romantic in such a state of society; and its relics of magnificence only come near to what we are in the habit of observing daily in our own productions. But when we want, for the sake of poetical interest, something the farthest re-

moved from the common-place refinement, and every-day luxury, of our own *ultra-civilized* system, the wild legends, the massy piles, the savage life, and the dark superstitions of the middle ages at once present themselves to the imagination. The graceful temple is a monument of the magnificence and luxury to which we are accustomed : but the rude hold of a robber knight, and the dark aisles of an abbey, are the true regions of poetry and romance to minds habituated to all that is snug, secure, and luxurious.

A little below Andernach, the little village of Namedy appears on the left bank under a wooded mountain. The Rhine here forms a little bay, where the pilots are accustomed to unite together the small rafts of timber floated down the tributary rivers into the Rhine, and to construct enormous floats, which are navigated to Dordrecht, and sold. These machines have the appearance of a floating village, composed of twelve or fifteen little wooden huts, on a large platform of oak and deal timber. They are frequently eight or nine hundred feet long, and sixty or seventy in breadth.

The rowers and workmen sometimes amount to seven or eight hundred, superintended by pilots, and a proprietor, whose habitation is superior in size and elegance to the rest. The raft is composed of several layers of trees, placed one on the other, and tied together; a large raft draws not less than six or seven feet of water. Several smaller ones are attached to it, by way of protection, besides a string of boats, loaded with anchors, and cables, and used for the purpose of sounding the river, and going on shore. The domestic economy of an East Indian is hardly more complete. Poultry, pigs, and other animals, are to be found on board — and several butchers are attached to the suite. A well-supplied boiler is at work night and day in the kitchen; the dinner hour is announced by a basket stuck on a pole, at which signal the pilot gives the word of command, and the workmen run from all quarters to receive their messes. The consumption of provision in the voyage to Holland is almost incredible; sometimes amounting to forty or fifty thousand pounds of bread; eighteen or twenty thousand of fresh, besides a

quantity of salted meat; and butter, vegetables, &c. in proportion. The expences are so great that a capital of three or four hundred thousand florins is considered necessary to undertake a raft. Their navigation is a matter of considerable skill, owing to the abrupt windings, the rocks, and shallows of the river; and some years ago the secret was thought to be monopolised by a boatman of Rudesheim and his sons.

We stopped to dine at the little industrious town of Lintz, on the right bank, the walls and buildings of which are chiefly composed of black basalt. This little place was formerly distinguished by the privileges of a free city, and an Archbishop Engelbert of Cologne, built the castle, of which the remains are still standing near the Rhine, to enforce the payment of tolls and protect the town from the attacks of their enemies, the inhabitants of Andernach. The tall Prussian soldiers, were lounging about the streets, and flirting with the women laughing through their quaint black silk caps, brought down under the chin — their necks displaying a cluster of old-fashioned orna-

ments, which with long stiff waists and neatly pinned kerchiefs, gave them an air of primitive simplicity to which the neighbourhood of Prussian grenadiers, I apprehend, is rather dangerous. The streets, or lanes, of these diminutive walled towns are narrow and lofty, the portals low—and every thing is dark, squalid, and mouldering. The butchers' shops hardly look more inviting than shops in London of a similar description, for the service of a useful domestic quadruped—and the baker's is announced by a little dirty wired safe, projecting from the window with a few musty rolls. This air of dirty gloom, accompanied in little German towns and villages, by an atmosphere impregnated with odours, among which tobacco is a perfume, is singularly contrasted with the decent dress and demeanour of the inhabitants. You seldom see them ragged or dirty—the peasant walks out of his filthy habitation with his ample blue coat, cut after the court fashion, his cocked hat and his stick, in appearance as respectably stately as a Greenwich pensioner. Is it possible that this preference of exterior decorum to

household comfort in the peasants, can proceed from the same feeling which makes the worthy Baron often more careful of his equipage than his dinner? — Both surely arise from a formal ostentation and a phlegmatic coldness of relish for substantial enjoyments. The discomfort of the *menage* is carried to an extraordinary pitch in the higher ranks. More than one glittering lady whom I know, whose husbands dine daily at court, by virtue of their offices, invariably, when not also of the party, sit down to a meagre dish, *tête à tête* with their *femme de chambre* by way of economically avoiding two meals. The establishment of a Prime Minister of my acquaintance, consists of one female who equally presides at the spit, the toilet of the Baroness, and over the ducks and chickens of the *basse-cour*. A no less serviceable man unites the functions of *valet de chambre*, gardener, and footman; and the household is completed by a coachman, who is permitted to concentrate his faculties in the care of a pair of iron greys and an elegant chariot, whose exhibition every Sunday at Court, amply remunerates the Baron and his lady

for the *soupe maigre* and discomforts of the week.

Our companions, the London broker and the fat Prussian captain were most happily assorted in tastes. The little broker was returning in high glee to England, after a successful cruise in quest of orders among his German correspondents; and he seemed to make a point of sparing himself no costly enjoyments at the inns, sure of all being debited to the partnership account, on his return to Swithin's-lane. As to fine scenery, he had never dreamt of its being, by possibility, a source of pleasure; the most picturesque spots on the river appeared to him far behind his snug villa at Hornsey, which he described with extacy. At Lintz, the Captain and he, after dispatching their bottle at dinner took in a couple more of the most expensive on the card, to regale in the boat. The broker was of course well supplied with segars, which he was active in recommending to the few passengers without pipes, as "*best Havannahs.*" Thus fanned by his favourite odours from all parts of the cabin, he would sometimes dose with his pipe in his mouth

while his broad faced comrade snored cheek by jowl by his side. The attractions of the scenes we passed overbalanced those of this society. We generally therefore remained *sub dio*; while the Swiss merchant, who, though far removed from the Bacchanalian tastes of the two comrades, was yet a man who looked more after manufactures than mountains, divided his time between depreciating the scenery we passed by comparisons with the St. Bernard and the Furca, and studying the account of the Birmingham nails and Manchester cottons, in his German itinerary of our island.

Passing a turn in the river, below the little town of Remagen, the ragged tops of the famous Seven Mountains appeared in the distance, far above the smooth regular chains which lined the nearer banks. After passing the village of Unkel opposite which is a dangerous projection of basalt rocks into the river barely concealed by the water, the stream spreads into a glassy lake. The blue minarets and roof of the convent of Nonnenworth appear embosomed in trees on a beautiful island dividing the river. Immediately above, the

conical masses of the mountain of Rolandseck rise perpendicularly on the right bank, crowned by the scanty relics of a castle. This mountain, which is a striking object in one of the most picturesque scenes on the Rhine, takes its name of Rolandseck from Roland the nephew of Charlemagne, who according to tradition lived here in melancholy seclusion. The tale is so pretty that I send it you, at the end of this letter, with another specimen of the many romantic traditions attached to the castles and scenes I have feebly described.

We glided along between the mountain and the convent—a spacious handsome edifice shaded by willows and shrubs, with a little village adjoining. The building is said to be on the scite of that in which the *belle* of Roland sought a retreat. We found ourselves presently passing immediately under the irregular heights of the seven mountains—a cluster of rocky elevations whose wild heads, brown with forest, tower one over the other. “The castled crag of Drachenfels,” (to use the accurate phrase of our poetical pilgrim)—not the highest but the most striking of the seven,

rises perpendicularly from the river, in barren rocky majesty. — The grey ruin on the summit might be mistaken for a shapeless pile of rock. — The mountain of Wolkenburg or Castle of the Clouds appears just behind; and the Stromberg with its round head, covered with thick wood, out of which peeps the belfry of a little chapel, rises on the right near the river. — Behind them you distinguish the heads of the Löwenberg, the Nieder Stromberg, the Oelberg, and the Hemmerich. The Löwenberg (Lion's mountain) which is the highest of the seven, is about 1896 feet in height. — The remains of castles are visible on all, sometimes almost buried in the thick brushwood, the only vegetation they bear. — Several of the castles are said to have been erected by the Emperor Valentinian, in the fourth century; and the Emperor Henry V. is charged with burning those of Wolkenburg, Drachenfels, and Rolandseck. — The chapel of St. Peter, on the Stromberg, was built by Didier of Schwartzeneck, a valiant knight of the neighbourhood in performance of one of those pious vows so often made by

crusaders in Palestine, to be executed on a safe return to Europe.

The seven mountains close, with an impressive grandeur, the exquisite scenery on the Rhine. — They are the highest and wildest on its banks, and the want of the green fertility of the luxuriant mountains in the Rhingau increases the rude dignity of their grotesque shapes. The chains on each side now gradually diminish, till the white handsome town of Bonn stands at the entrance of the vast unsheltered flat which stretches for leagues on all sides. The words of our bard, who has seized the character of these delightful scenes with a topographical accuracy, shall close the description to which I have done such poor justice.

————— the wide and winding Rhine,
 Whose breast of water broadly swells
 Between the banks which bear the vine,
 And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
 And fields which promise corn and wine;
 And scattered cities crowning these,
 Whose far white walls along them shine. —

Adieu to thee again, a vain adieu.
 There can be no farewell to scenes like thine;
 The mind is coloured with thine every hue,
 And if reluctantly the eyes resign

Their cherished gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine,
'Tis with the thankful glance of parting praise —
More mighty spots may rise, more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attracting maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft — the glory of old days.

Traditions on the Banks of the Rhine.

The tradition concerning the castle or rather hermitage of Rolandseck says, that it was christened after Roland the gallant nephew of Charlemagne, who, as the story goes, set out one day from his uncle's palace at Ingelheim on a picturesque tour, on the banks of the Rhine. — He dropped in at the Chateau of a valiant knight, who received him with a friendly squeeze of the hand; while his daughter (who like other young ladies in those good days, was not above being useful) ran to fetch him some home-made bread and wine. As she poured out the wine, with the grace of a Hebe, into a goblet adorned with the arms of the old Chatelain, and presented it with a blush to the nephew of the great king, he was struck with her beauty and modest grace; and was soon surprised to find certain enig-

matical sensations creeping about him which he had never experienced before. His arm trembled as he took the goblet, and he involuntarily said to himself — “this never happened to me in presence of the enemy, or when opposed to the thick swords of the Saracens.” At night Roland could not close his eyes for the image of the beautiful Hildegonda, which stood constantly before him. In the morning, when about to take leave, his kind host demanded his name. The modest Roland blushed as he gave it, for it was the glory of the whole country; and the knight was so enchanted at the distinction of his visitor, that he begged him to stay another day — Hildegonda said not a word — but her looks were eloquent, and Roland wanted little persuasion.

The fate of the young knight's heart was decided by his stay, and he only waited for an opportunity to declare himself. Such opportunities generally present themselves — and Roland, as he walked in the garden, found the young lady sitting in a pensive reverie, in which a bolder modern beau would have flattered himself he had a place. Roland's timidity, however, made

him awkward in accosting her; and the young lady to conceal her own embarrassment, stooped to gather a rose just by. — The knight begged her to give it him — lamenting that as yet no emblem of happy moments adorned his casque; and that when his comrades boasted the beauty and virtue of their belles, he was obliged to look down and be silent. Hildegonda with a blush complied, saying, as she presented it to him — “all that is beautiful endures but for a moment.” — Roland no longer hesitated to declare his passion — they swore to each other eternal fidelity; and the knight promised to return immediately after the campaign in Palestine, to lead his mistress to the altar.

After Roland's departure, Hildegonda led a retired and pensive life. The fame of her lover's achievements reached her, and gladdened her heart. One evening a travelling knight demanded hospitality at the castle — He had served in Charlemagne's army, and Hildegonda trembled as she demanded intelligence of Roland. “I saw him fall gloriously by my side, covered with

wounds," said the knight; — Hildegonda turned pale at his words and was motionless as a statue. Ten days afterwards she asked permission of her father to take the veil; and she entered the convent of Frauenworth, in an island in the Rhine. The bishop of the diocese who was her relation, allowed her to abridge her noviciate and profess herself at the end of three months.

Roland, who it seems had been left for dead on the field and had afterwards recovered of his wounds, came soon after to her father's castle to claim the hand of Hildegonda. In his grief at the tidings he received, he built a hermitage on a rock immediately above the island of Frauenworth, and called it Rolandseck, (Roland's corner.) Here he passed the remainder of his days, sitting at the gate of his hermitage, looking down on the convent which held his beloved object. When the matins bell roused him he would rise and listen to the chaunting of the nuns, fancying he could distinguish the voice of his Hildegonda; and when at night the lights glimmered in the cells of the convent, his ima-

gination saw Hildegonda praying to Heaven for him.

Two years passed in this manner had nearly consumed his strength. One morning looking as usual down on the convent, some people were digging a grave in the garden. — Something whispered to Roland that this grave was for Hildegonda. — On sending to enquire, his conjecture proved true — he stood and watched the funeral procession, saw her corpse let down into the grave and listened to the requiem chaunted over her — and he was found not long after sitting dead before his hermitage, his eyes turned towards the convent.

Near the little village of Hirtzenach, between St. Goar and Boppard, the ruins of the two old castles of Liebenstein and Sternfels stand close together on a fine mountain covered with vines on the right bank of the river. Their grey mouldering towers nod at each other with a sort of rival dignity; and they go by the name of the two brothers. — Tradition says they were formerly inhabited by an old knight who had two sons equally dear to him, and a rich and

beautiful young orphan, was also brought up under his protection. Her charms increased with her years; and, as was very natural, the young knights both fell in love with their fair play-fellow. — When she arrived at a marriageable age the father proposed to her to choose between his two sons; but she, knowing the sentiments of both, was unwilling to grieve either by preferring his rival. The elder son however believing that her heart a little inclined to his brother, resigned his pretensions, and besought her to declare in his brother's favour. — The old knight gave the young couple his blessing, but their union was delayed. — The elder brother saw without envy, but not without melancholy, the happiness of his rival. The charms of his beloved object increased in his eyes every day, and to fly from her presence he joined the Prince residing at Rhense, and was admitted into his suite.

Just at this time St. Bernard was preaching the cross on the banks of the Rhine. — There was not a *chateau* near the river that did not send a knight to Frankfort, where the Emperor Conrad presented the Saint to the people, who all took the cross. Al-

most every castle along the river, from Basle to Cologne, mounted a streaming flag with the holy symbol of Our Saviour's sufferings; and the river and roads in the country were thronged with joyous companies flocking towards Palestine. The young intended bridegroom caught the general flame, and resolved to visit the Holy Land before leading his bride to the altar. In spite of his father's displeasure and the ill-concealed tears of the young lady, he assembled his little troop and joined the Emperor's army at Frankfort.

The old knight dying soon after, the elder brother returned from Rhense to take possession of his ancestors' castle. Love was now ready to revive more strongly than ever in his breast; — but he overcame himself, and scrupulously treated the young lady with the kind protection of a brother. — Two years had elapsed when the news arrived that the younger brother was returning from Palestine, accompanied by a beautiful Grecian dame, to whom he was betrothed. This intelligence cut his deserted fair one to the heart; and, according to the custom of the age in such disappoint-

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ments, she resolved to take the veil. The elder son was indignant at this conduct of his brother; and, when a courier arrived at the castle to announce his approach, he threw down his glove, bidding him take that for answer.

The crusader arrived with his fair Grecian at the Castle of Sternfels, his paternal inheritance — and a bloody war took place between the brothers, which they were on the point of concluding by single combat, when the young lady interposed and pacified them by her persuasions. She afterwards quitted the abode of her infancy and took the veil.

Sadness and mourning now reigned in the Castle of Liebenstein — while joy and dissipation occupied the inhabitants of Sternfels. The beauties of the Grecian dame, and the graces of her conversation attracted around her all the gay knights of the neighbourhood; and she was by no means scrupulous in receiving their homage. The elder brother saw the disgrace of his brother before he himself was aware of it, and soon found an opportunity to convince him of his wife's infidelity. The young

knight would have sacrificed her to his vengeance; but she found means to escape. His elder brother pressed him in his arms as he was abandoning himself to his despair, saying—"Let us live henceforth together without wives, to do honour to the grief of our first love who is now passing the brightest days of youth in a convent." The younger brother agreed, and they remained bachelors and inseparable friends for the rest of their days. Their race expired with them—and their old ruined castles, which still retain the name of "The Brothers," remind the traveller of their history.

Almost every castle, and many of the mountains and rocks along the banks, and in the neighbourhood of the Rhine, have a tradition of this kind more or less credible and romantic connected with them. I have selected the two above as being somewhat more "within the prospect of belief," than many others, in which dragons, talkative birds, wonder-working saints, and other equivocal personages cut a conspicuous figure.