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## **Excursions along the banks of the Rhine**

**Hugo, Victor**

**London, 1843**

Part II.

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## PART II.

## THE BIRD PHENIX, AND THE PLANET VENUS.

THE happy couple so adored each other that it was a pleasure to see them. Pecopin had in his armoury at Sonneck a picture painted on a golden ground, representing the nine heavens, every planet with its peculiar colour and name inscribed beside it in vermilion; Saturn in lead, white; Jupiter, clear, but inflamed and sanguine; Venus oriental, radiant with fire; Mercury sparkling; the Moon, with her silver ice; the Sun, with its dazzling rays. Pecopin effaced the name of Venus, and substituted that of Bauldour.

So also had Bauldour, in her perfumed chamber, hangings of real tapestry, upon which was a bird the size of an eagle, with a golden neck, the body purple, the tail blue, interspersed with carnation plumes, and its head surmounted with a noble crest. Above this marvellous bird was inscribed the Greek word "Phœnix." Bauldour erased that word and substituted "Pecopin!"

Meanwhile the wedding day approached. Pecopin rejoiced at the thought, and Bauldour's heart was content. Among the huntsmen of Sonneck, there was a pricker, free of tongue and evil counsel, named Erilangus. This man, once a renowned

bowman, had been an object of ambition to several rural heiresses of the country round Lorch. But he heeded them not, preferring the joys of the chace. Pecopin one day asked him the reason, when Eri- langus replied, "My good lord, hounds have seven kinds of madness, women have a thousand." Another time on learning the approaching wedding of his master, he came to him boldly, and said, "My lord, my lord, what tempts you to marry?" Whereupon Pecopin dismissed him his service.

This might have afforded cause of uneasiness to the knight, for Eri- langus was of a subtile mind and good memory. But, unknown to Pecopin, the pricker had already installed himself master of the hounds at the court of the Marquis of Luzace, and nothing more was heard of him at Sonneck.

The week preceding the marriage, as Bauldour was spinning in the recess of the window, her dwarf came to announce to her the visit of Pecopin; and she was about to fly to meet him, when, in rising from her chair, her foot became entangled in the thread of her spindle. She fell, but rose again unhurt. Remembering, however, that just such an accident had befallen the lady Liba, her heart sunk within her.

But lo! when Pecopin entered and spake of their marriage and prospects, the clouds hovering over her soul dispersed, and all was joy.