

The Castles of Brömser, near Rudesheim.

The memory of the once illustrious family of Brömser, and of their five castles, the partial ruins of which are still visible near Rudesheim, has been preserved by several eminent writers, as Bodmann, Vogt, Braun, (voyage of the Rhine) Gerning, Dahl, Schreiber etc. The ancient castle of Brömserburg, called also, from its low situation on the Rhine, Niederburg, has been considered by some antiquaries, as an ancient Roman fortress; a conjecture which has acquired some weight by the discovery, a few years since in one of the subterranean vaults, of cinerary urns, vases, lamps, and other articles in use among the Romans.

The present owner of the castle is Count Ingelheim, who, in the modern arrangement of the interior has displayed equal taste and ingenuity, availing himself of the open spaces left to build various apartments on. The castle itself, which is of a square form, and surrounded by walls of an immense thickness, is situated close to the river at the north east extremity of Rudesheim, and affords from its summit, where a neat little garden has been formed, a most enchanting view. Following the river in the direction of its source, are seen the rich vineyards of the Rheingau, with numerous shrubby islets which float upon the bosom of the majestic stream; opposite rises the Rochusberg (mountain of Roch) surmounted by its chapel, and at the entrance into the

gorge of the mountains we discern Bingen with its ancient gray castle of Klopp. The Brömserhof, situated higher up in the town, and whose construction belongs to a later period, has become, within these few years, the property of a private individual. In the chapel and different apartments of this edifice several interesting objects were formerly to be seen; among others, various family portraits, ancient furniture, the fetters worn by John Brömser during his captivity in Palestine, etc. all of which are now preserved in the castle of Johannisberg, the splendid residence of Prince Metternich.

The knight Brömser, according to the legend, pledged himself by a solemn vow to devote his daughter to a convent if it should please heaven to deliver him from captivity. His prayer was granted; but on his return to Rudesheim he found his daughter already the betrothed bride of a young knight. This is the scene which the artist has portrayed with such striking fidelity. The inflexibility of the paternal will is admirably marked in the features of the old crusader, who, pointing to the image of the Redeemer, displayed on the banner, intimates to his daughter the fate to which she is doomed; nor is the grief and consternation of the two lovers at beholding their hopes annihilated at the moment they conceived them about to be accomplished, less touching and effective.