

The Emperor Henry IV. at Bingen.

The castle of Klopp at Bingen, which many writers assert to have been the prison in which the emperor Henry IV. was confined, is built on the ruins of a Roman fortress, erected by Drusus Germanicus, 13 years before Christ, at the confluence of the Nahe and Rhine. For the historical details of this castle, at present the property of M. Faber, an advocate at Bingen, and who has embellished it with some agreeable pleasure grounds, we refer the reader to Schreiber's interesting and useful *Manual for Travellers* (p. 201); we shall here confine ourselves merely to the circumstances relating to the detention of the above unfortunate prince, who fell a victim to the cruel persecutions of an unnatural son.*)

Henry, the son of the emperor, instigated by the priests who were hostile to this monarch, raised the standard of rebellion against him, in imitation of his deceased brother Conrad, but afterwards, at Coblenz, pretended to seek a reconciliation with his father, who, deceived by his hypocritical tears, consented to pardon him. They set out together towards Mentz where the emperor had convoked a Diet with the view of justifying himself in the presence of his enemies. Young Henry represented to his father the danger which threatened his personal liberty in repairing to Mentz, with his feeble retinue, without first ascertaining whether a sufficient number of his adherents were already there, and advised him to remain at the castle of Bingen, till the messenger whom he had despatched to Mentz were

returned. The emperor, trusting to these perfidious representations, entered the castle and found himself detained as a prisoner. Barre quotes the following passage from a letter which this monarch is thought to have written some time afterwards to Philip I. king of France, informing him of his detention and entreating assistance against his son. „But as soon as I had entered the castle of Bingen, I found myself a captive, together with three of my attendants Not only has the sword been drawn against me, but, what I can never forget, I was compelled to pass the holy Christmas day in this prison without partaking of the blessed sacrament, without hearing mass or attending any divine service.“

He was shortly afterwards deposed by the Diet of the empire assembled at Mentz, and the regal scepter was decreed to his ungrateful and inhuman son. The emperor was forcibly stripped of the imperial insignia by the archbishops of Mentz and Cologne, and the bishop of Worms, at Ingelheim, whither he had been conveyed from Bingen.

Later, however, this ill-fated monarch, by the aid of his guards, succeeded in making his escape, and we shall again find him in this work while seeking an asylum at Hammerstein.

Henry V. of execrated memory, died in 1225 without any male descendant, detested even by all his former allies, friends and followers. Lothaire II. succeeded him on the throne of Germany.

*) Vide Barre's History of Germany — Vol. 2, page 377.

The lithographic design, which represents the historical fact above mentioned, presents to us the interior of the court of Klopp castle, in which is seen the captive emperor, surrounded by his enemies who are preparing to load him with irons. His faithful followers, disarmed and wounded, are stretched at the feet of the unfortunate monarch, who, overcome by the

depth of despair, pronounces his paternal malediction against his unnatural son. The latter is discovered at one of the windows of the castle looking with indifference at the revolting scene.

The groups in this design are admirably distributed; nor is the expression of the individual figures less successful.

The Mouse-Tower.

The vulgar tradition which has existed for ages concerning the Mouse Tower cannot but find a place in the present collection.

Bodmann *) has given a tolerably detailed account of it, as also of the origin of the tower which at present appears on a rock in the middle of the Rhine. It was built in the 13th century, being coeval with the castle of Ehrenfels which stands at some distance on the declivity of the mountain of Rudesheim, and appears to have been formerly a military station, furnished with artillery, for the protection of the tolls on the Rhine. This insulated tower, rising mournfully from the bosom of the tide, gives an additional charm to the romantic character of the scenery; its preservation, therefore, well deserves attention.

According to a tradition, which has been handed down to the present times, Archbishop Hatto, from a feeling of avarice, caused all those poor wretches, who during the time of a famine were clamorous for bread, to be burnt; the prelate, in consequence, was pursued

by mice even into this tower, where he was devoured by them.

The imagination of the artist, in accordance with the conception of the poetess, has embodied this tradition under the form of a vision — the most appropriate that could be conceived, since it is devoid of the least historical foundation.

At a short distance from the Mouse Tower roars the Bingerloch. Ancient and popular belief represented this once dangerous passage as another Charybdis, for what had been swallowed up in this whirlpool was said afterwards to reappear in that of the Goarbank, a rock lying in the middle of the Rhine near St. Goar. The present safety of the navigation of the Bingerloch is due to the wise measures of the Prussian government, at whose order the masses of sunken rock which obstructed this passage were blown up in 1830, and two following years. A monument, erected on the left bank of the river, perpetuates the remembrance of this difficult and important work.

*) Antiquities of the Rheigues. (Rheingauische Alterthümer) Vol. I p. 148.