

The rock of the seven Sisters.

The castle of Schoenberg, the beautiful ruins of which are seen towering amidst the mountains of Oberwesel, was, according to tradition, once inhabited by seven fair sisters, who, as a punishment for their haughty and disdainful disposition, were metamorphosed by the Naiad of the Rhine into seven rocks.

The lithographic design represents the nymph Lurley on the agitated waves of the Rhine about to revenge the death of the youthful bard Walter of Schoenberg, whom the cruelty of Adelgonda, one of the seven sisters, had driven to seek refuge in the bosom of the tide. The cruel beauties, in expiation of their disdain, still

await their deliverance under the form of seven rocks, at whose feet they see the merry groups as they float along upon the stream. Those who have made the pilgrimage of the Rhine will instantly recognise in the design the rocks of Lurley, the spot at which the ears of the wanderer are greeted by the multiplied echo of a blast from the bugle-horn.

Schoenberg was the residence of a race of knights who flourished as early as the 11th century, and from whom was descended the celebrated Frederick, count of Schoenberg, who met an heroic death at the battle of the Boyne, in 1690. *)

*) Vide Hubner's Geographical Tables. Part 4. tab. 1223.

Tradition of the nymph Lurley.

The inventive imagination of the dwellers on the Rhine has given birth to various fictions concerning the narrow passage formed by the rocks of Lurley. Saints, spirits, and sometimes even demons are mixed up in these popular narrations. Among the most interesting is that of the Naiad Lurley, whose dwelling is here beneath the waters of the Rhine. The stupendous rock which bears the same name proudly towering above the stream affords, with its fantastic shape and numerous

clefts, a striking specimen of the picturesque and grand. When, from the middle of the river or from the opposite bank, a pistol is discharged or a horn blown, it reverberates the sound from its massy sides in multiplied echoes; whilst the river straightened, and hemmed in by the giant rock seems striving to make its way to some more smiling region. On both banks salmon fisheries are established at this spot which prove extremely productive.

The Rhenan nymph Lurley, according to the vulgar tradition, became enamoured of a youthful warrior of the district. The beautiful lithographic sketch represents the son of the Count Palatine Albert pursuing a roebuck, which he had just before struck with his dart, into the purlieu of the Naiad, who suddenly appears and takes the wounded animal under her protection. Struck with the appearance of the young palatine she conceives a passion for him and invites him to share her chrysal throne beneath the waters of the Rhine. The youthful warrior whose heart is already devoted

to a terrestrial beauty, incurs, by his refusal, the anger of the nymph, who causes him to be hurried away by the impetuous waves to her subteraquean palace. The tender emotion, however, which rekindles within her saves him from her meditated vengeance. She orders him to be borne back to the upper world where, after a long and anxious search, he is discovered by his father and his mistress placidly sleeping on the bank of the river. Marner, a troubadour and contemporary of the celebrated Meissen, surnamed Fraencloh, makes mention of Lurley as early as the 13th century.

The miraculous tomb of St. Goar.

The holy hermit and early propagator of the Christian faith Goar lived in the time of Sigebert, king of Austrasia, by whom he was invited to the archiepiscopal see of Treves; he preferred, however, the obscurity of an ascetic life and died in 611 at the place where afterwards was built the neat little town which bears his name.

On the banks of the Rhine, between the towns of St. Goar and Oberwesel, is seen a square cavity in a rock which is still called St. Goar's bed. The memory of this pious anchorite deserves to be held in veneration; for he not merely preached the word of God, but exemplified in himself the duties of christian charity

and hospitality; he rescued many a bark-founded wanderer, and frequently acted himself as pilot across the whirlpool known at present by the name of St. Goar's bank. The religious enthusiasm of those days did not stop with merely honoring the memory of this worthy hermit — it attributed to his bones the power of working miracles. The vaults of a monastery soon rose over his grave, to which, for several centuries, numerous trains of pilgrims resorted. The convent was soon enriched by considerable donations, which enabled its monks to exercise at all times the duties of hospitality towards pilgrims and travellers. *)

According to an ancient legend the reconciliation

*) Detailed accounts of this monastery as well as of the ancient quaint ceremonies of initiation, etc. will be found in a work on the antiquities of the Rhine. (*Antiquities of the Rhine*, p. 701) in that of Vogt on the history and traditions of the Rhine, (*Rheinische Geschichte und Sagen*, Vol. III. p. 160) and in Schreiber's *Traveller's Manual of the Rhine*. (Handbook for Rheinarbeiter; p. 346.)