

Kaub.

Castle Gutenfels.

In the middle of the 13th century the castle at Kaub was inhabited by Count Philipp of Falkenstein with his extremely beautiful sister Guta. A number of young knights from far and near courted the maiden: however none could boast of the least success, for the countess was insensible to all suitors and refused all decidedly.

At that time there was held at Cologne a magnificent Tournament, to which knights from the farthest districts of Germany were invited, and a great multitude of spectators were attracted. Among the nobles present at the diversion, was a knight from England. Nobody besides the Archbishop of Cologne knew him; but the Bishop assured that the foreigner was fit for the Tournament. He was of the Britons a man of the handsomest, most powerful figure, of the most engaging, finest manners, and therefore for the assembled ladies an object of particular attention. The truly royal accoutrement, in which he strode about, the golden lion on his shield, and the excellent charger, which carried him, increased the interest for him. Besides he obtained the most brilliant victories, and the most valiant knight lowered his lance before him.

Also the Falkensteiner and his sister were present, and Guta, who did not remain an uninterested

spectator of the acts of the foreigner, wished the time of the Festival past, so that she could regard his face. This good fortune she enjoyed in the highest degree; but from this moment she lost her peace of mind. She felt an unconquerable passion for the handsome Englishman; she longed for an opportunity, to speak with him and win his regard.

But the enigmatical knight appeared to have regarded Guta and to feel for her — and as she was destined, whether by her own arrangement or by chance, to hand the prize to the Victor, he clearly made the maiden understand his feelings. In the surprise of the moment she dropped her glove, of which the foreigner took quickly possession, in begging her to allow him, to keep it as a remembrance of that fine hour. He expressed himself more explicitly the same evening, in the banquetting saloon while the music resounded and he was Guta's inseparable companion. He begged secretly for her love, swore to be hers, and in three months return from his country, where duty now called him, and to come to her brother's castle. Then he would publicly sue for her and declare his name, which circumstances bade him still keep secret. Guta could scarcely reply, but her glances were sufficiently eloquent. With secret pressure of the hands the lovers separated.

Five months were already passed, and the Briton had not yet fulfilled his promise. Germany was at that time (the house of Hohenstauf being

extinct), more than ever the battle-field of the party-struggles for the election of the Emperor. Alphons of Castile, and Richard of Cornwallis, brother of Henry 3rd king of England, were at last proposed, and Richard having received the most influential votes, chosen for Emperor. After he had been solemnly crowned at Aix-la-chapelle, he began his journey into the interior of the country, subject to his sceptre.

On a beautiful spring morning, Guta sat solitary and sad in her chamber. She thought of the foreign knight, whom she believed never to see again, and whom she now accused of the most culpable imprudence, now fancied fallen in battle, and as all hope to possess him, disappeared, she renounced the joys of this life and took the firm resolution, to retire to a convent. Trumpets sounded from the high road, and a splendid procession stopped before the castle. Guta concealed herself, not to be obliged to show her weeping face. But count Falkenstein received the brilliant visit with hospitable kindness and conducted it into the state-room. Here he recognised on entering the English knight, and was much astonished as he addressed him thus: „I am Richard of Cornwallis, chosen German Emperor, and come to solicit the hand of your sister, the countess Guta, of whom I became enamoured by the Tournament at Cologne, and with whom I am now resolved to share my throne. I beg you, let her be called, so that she

can decide concerning my demand.“ „My Imperial Master“, replied the knight, „my sister Guta has been ill since months; a secret grief seems to afflict her, threatening to wither her youthful bloom, and she appears most unwillingly before strangers.“ „Bring her“, added the Emperor, „this glove, and say, the bearer wishes to speak with her.“

This surprising message and the sight of her glove changed Guta's mourning into the most lively joy. Impetuously she hastened to the beloved, and not yet knowing his high title, she flew to his arms. But after the first moments of this happy salutation, she remembered that the knight had not once mentioned his name or country, and indescribable was her astonishment, as her brother told her whom she embraced as her future husband. She regarded this declaration as joking, and even when Richard assured her, that her brother had spoken the truth, she still doubted, till finally the splendour of the numerous and noble retinue, and the honours which were shown to the beloved, fully convinced her. With Imperial pomp the wedding-festival was celebrated after a few weeks, and the highly blessed Count Falkenstein from that time named his castle near Kaub, in honour of his beloved sister, Gutenfels.
