

from the sisters, and the boat continued its course. But what happened! While the ashamed and deceived knights followed the mockers with inflamed looks, a sudden storm arose, the boat rocked more and more, struck violently on a hidden rock, and was wrecked, so that the collective Transgressors were drowned.

On the spot, where this occurred, there soon arose above the surface of the water seven rocks, which to the present day, are called the seven sisters, there stand all the Prudes as warning and terror to all Navigators.

L u r l e i.

Lorelei.

As Antiquity willingly peopled its mountains and castles its fields and rivers with fairies and magical-beings, and to these ascribed benevolent or pernicious influence on Men, so it has been especially to the Rhine to which are connected many a fine and romantic legend of Water-witches, Nymphs and Gnomes, recited from father to son, and so preserved to our Times.

But no country of our fatherland is more adapted to give a certain consistence and color to narrations, of which the foundation is partly historical,

than the sometimes uncommonly lovely, occasionally terribly wild banks of the Middle and Upper Rhine. By regarding the heaven-aspiring as it were out of the stream rising rocks with their perpendicular, oft projecting walls, by the singular formation of the mountains, by the noise, with which the waves force their way through rocky passages, and rush through the once precipitated stone-mass, one easily believes himself placed in a Fairy-land, and if anywhere, so was here the favourite place of that Being, with which the Imagination occupied itself so willingly.

One of the most known and charming Legends is that of the Water-nymph Lore, which at Ley, a rock situated above St. Goarshausen, had her residence, from which therefore she was called the Lorelei. To the shippers she appeared on the top of this rock, in the loveliest most charming figure. Picturesquely flowing Garments and Veil of the color of the green waves surrounded her tenderly formed limbs; long blond hair waved from her shoulders, and who regarded her face could never more forget the glance of her animated eyes.

As benevolent Fairy she gave favor and happiness to all the good inhabitants of the country, but to the evil-doers she showed herself inimical, and many who pertly rowed to the foot of the rock, and ventured to mock her power were seized by the raging waves and drawn into the abyss. Who impudently climbed to her favorite place, were

cast into the shallows, or were seduced by her and lost themselves in thorns and bushes, where all paths disappeared, so that only after several days exertions could they find their right way.

In those times lived in the Rhin-palatinate, the near magnificent island-castle, Palatinate Count Bruno and his only son Hermann, a handsome young man of twenty years, who was the flower of Chivalry and the delight of his father. Often and much the young knight had heard of the enchanting Lore at Lei, and every time, when he perceived the projecting rocks, he wished, to see the water-nymph, to whom he felt himself drawn by an irresistible power. Scarcely a day passed, that he had not this inexplicable feeling when near the mysterious Ley, he wished to be able to announce the feelings of his heart in an affecting manner, in hunting through the neighbourhood or with his Zither seek out a quiet concealed place.

Once already very late in the evening, nearer, than he had ever ventured to the foot of the mountain, in a grotto, he expressed his Longing in low singing, and casting his glances to the height, suddenly there hovered round the top of the rock a brightness of unequalled clearness and color, which, in increasingly smaller circles thickened, was the enchanting figure of the beautiful Lore. An unintentional cry of joy escaped the youth, he let his Zither fall, and with extended arms he called out the name of the enigmatical Being, who seemed

to stoop lovingly to him, and beckon to him in a friendly manner; indeed, if his ear did not deceive him, she called his name with unutterable sweet whispers, proper to love. Beside himself with delight the youth lost his senses and sank senseless to the earth. Only with the morning-dawn did he recover his senses, and in feverish excitement he hastened to his father's castle.

From this moment Hermann was as if changed. Like a dreamer he wandered about, only thinking on the beautiful fairy. He directed, as often as he left his father's dwelling, his steps only to Lei, and if the pleasures of the chase sometimes led him to a distance from the eastern woods, so in returning he was magically drawn to the vicinity, and he never approached, without saluting the place, where she had appeared to him and had since occupied all his thoughts.

The old count saw with affliction this change-ment in his son. He did not know the cause, but he concluded it was some unhappy passion, and therefore resolved to distract the inexperienced youth by serious occupation, and to open to him an active future. For this purpose he wished to send him to the Imperial-camp where the youth could win his knight's spurs.

Herman was obliged, however unwillingly, to obey his father's commands; for it would have been a disgrace to him to withdraw from a struggle, which every knight zealously wished and obliged to

undergo manfully. It was on the evening before his departure, as he wished still once to visit the grotto, and offer to the Nymph of the Rhine his sighs, the tones of his Zither, and his songs. He went, this time accompanied by a faithful squire, whom he had let into the secret, down the stream. The moon shed her silvery light over the whole country; the steep bank mountains appeared in the most fantastical shapes, and the high oaks on either side bowed their branches on Hermann's passing. As soon as he approached the Lei, and was aware of the surf-waves, his attendant was seized with an inexpressible anxiety and he begged permission to land; but the knight swept the strings of his guitar, directed his looks to the rocky summit and sang:

Once I saw thee in dark night,
In supernatural Beauty bright;
Of Light-rays, was the Figure wove,
To share its light locked-hair strove.

Thy Garment color wave-dove,
By thy hand the sign of love,
Thy eyes sweet enchantment,
Raying to me, oh! entrancement.

Oh wert thou but my sweetheart
How willingly thy love to part!
With delight I should be bound
To thy rocky house in deep ground.

Scarcely had these tones sounded, everywhere there began, tumult and sound, as if of voices above and below the water. On the Lei rose flames, the Fairy stood above, as that time, and beckoned with her right hand clearly and urgently to the infatuated knight, while with a staff in her left she called the waves to her service. They began to mount heavenward; the boat was upset, mocking every exertion; the waves rose to the gunwale, and splitting on the hard stones, the boat broke into pieces. The youth sank into the depths, but the squire was thrown on shore by a powerful wave.

As he, pale with anxiety and terror brought the strange narrative to the unhappy father, the old Count was overpowered with grief and anger. He swore, to be revenged on the Fairy, to seize her if possible with his own hands, and to deliver her to death by fire. For this purpose he hastened, the following night, with some bold comrades to Lei, surrounded and ascended the mountain, to search through it. There he saw, not without terror, the nymph on the top, standing perpendicularly above the water, plaiting her long tresses, the stranger regarded the Fairy with gloomy looks.

„Where is my son?“ cried the Count beside himself. Lore pointed to the depths, in singing with low, scarcely audible tones, like the sound of a distant Aeolian-harp:

There below stands in the wave's womb
Crystal-clear my fine castle tomb,
There conducted I my darling expected,
Whom already long since I have selected.

When she had finished she threw a glittering stone into the waves; immediately a wave rose and received the Fairy and conducted her below into the stream, where she disappeared to the eyes of the astonished pursuer.

The Fairy was never more seen; but her enchanting tones have often been heard. In the beautiful, refreshing, still nights of spring, when the moon pours her silver light over the country, the listening shipmen hear from the rushing of the waves, the echoing clang of a wonderfully charming voice, which sings a song from the crystal castle, and with sorrow and fear he thinks on the young count Herman, seduced by the nymph.

But the rock of the water-nymph, formerly Lorelei, now named Lurlei, yields since that event, a beautifully repeating echo which is ever admired and praised as a gift of the Fairy.

The Lore-Lei.

I do not know what it signifies,
That I am so sorrowful?
A fable of old Times so terrifies,
Leaves my heart so thoughtful.

The air is cool and it darkens,
And calmly flows the Rhine;
The summit of the mountain hearkens
In evening sunshine line.

The most beautiful Maiden entrances
Above wonderfully there,
Her beautiful golden attire glances,
She combs her golden hair.

With golden comb so lustrous,
And thereby a song sings,
It has a tone so wondrous,
That powerful melody rings.

The shipper in the little ship
It effects with woes sad might;
He does not see the rocky clip,
He only regards the dreaded height.

I believe the turbulent waves
Swallow at last shipper and boat;
She with her singing craves
All to visit her magic moat.

H. Heine.