

A Tour through Holland, along the right and left Banks of the Rhine 1806

[Auszug]

von John Carr

A Tour through Holland, along the right an left Banks of the Rhine, to the South of Germany, in the Summer and Autumn of 1806. By Sir John Carr, of the Honorable Society of the Middle Temple, Author of the Strangers in Ireland; a northern Summer, or A Tour round the Baltic etc. London; printed for Richard Phillips, No.6, Bridge-Street, Blackfriars. 1807

bearbeitet von Norbert Flörken

Reiseberichte vom Rhein. Alltag und Kultur zwischen Mainz und Düsseldorf 1783 - 1816

Folge 15

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Zu dieser Reihe

Diese Reihe stellt 15 Reiseberichte aus den Jahren 1783 bis 1816¹ vor, die dem geneigten Publikum die Schönheiten und Sehenswürdigkeiten des Rheintals zwischen Mainz und Düsseldorf, auch in Teilstücken, schilderten. Vier Autoren sind Briten, ein anderer Italiener; zwei Autoren sind weiblich. Die Autoren und das Jahr ihrer Reise:

1. Schoenebeck (DE) 1783
2. Bertola (IT) 1787
3. Gardnor (GB) 1787
4. Lang¹ (DE) 1789
5. Forster (DE) 1790
6. Cogan (GB) 1791/92 (deutsch + englisch)
7. Wakkerbart (DE) 1791
8. Janscha/Ziegler (AT/CZ) 1792
9. NN (Godesberg) (DE) 1792
10. Ann Radcliffe (GB) 1794
11. Becker (DE) 1798
12. Arndt (DE) 1799
13. Klebe (DE) 1801
14. Schreiber (DE) 1806
15. Carr (GB) 1806
16. Johanna Schopenhauer (DE) 1816

Die Reihe beginnen SCHOENEBECK (DE), BERTOLA (IT) und GARDNOR (GB), die unmittelbar vor dem Schicksalsjahr 1789 den Rhein bereisen und von denen der eine oder andere Schriftsteller später ausdrücklich oder heimlich abschreibt. Bei ihnen und ihren Nachfolgern kommen zusammen

- a) der Drang nach enzyklopädischem Wissen,
- b) das Reisebedürfnis höherer gebildeter Schichten,

¹ Nicht aufgenommen – oder nur in kurzen Abschnitten – wurden die Berichte des Schweden Jakob Jonas BJÖRNSTÄHL († 1779) aus den 1760er Jahren, des Franzosen Emmanuel Duc DE CROY († 1784): (Björnstaehl, 1782) und (Croy, 1906). Spätere Autoren auch bei (Stader, 1973).

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- c) in Teilen das Aufkommen der Mittelalter-Begeisterung (Burgruinen, Ritterthemen),
- d) die Aufgeschlossenheit und Begeisterung für die Erscheinungen der Natur – im Vorgriff auf die Romantik,
- e) in Teilen die Auseinandersetzung mit dem *ancien régime* am Rhein – zunächst als Rechtfertigung, später als Abrechnung.

Einige Berichte sind um die Abschnitte, die sich nicht mit dem Rheintal befassen, gekürzt worden, z. B. (Forster, 1791).

Schönheiten: Überschwenglich werden die Schönheit des Rheintals gepriesen, die Natur, die Architektur und die Werke der bildenden Kunst. Gelobt wird zuweilen der Fleiss der Menschen, ihre Umgänglichkeit und Freundlichkeit – abgesehen von den groben und bigotten Költern.

Mißstände: Die drei Kurfürsten und ihre unmittelbaren Vorgänger werden von mehreren Autoren regelrecht gelobt für ihr soziales Engagement, die Förderung der bildenden Kunst und der Wissenschaften und vereinzelt sogar für ihre liberale Einstellung. Der Adel kommt unterm Strich – Einzelfälle ausgenommen – auch noch glimpflich davon. Erschreckend negativ wird durchgängig der Klerus – Mönche, Nonnen, Priester – bewertet: Fresser, Säufer, Hurenböcke, Volksverdummer, Dummschwätzer sind die Etiketten, die ihnen von mehreren angeheftet werden – mit entsprechenden Belegen. Ähnlich miserabel sind die französischen Emigranten von Adel und Klerus dargestellt: Durch Ignoranz und Arroganz fallen sie auf.

Frankreich: Nur sehr versteckt, und dann auch nur von den Klubbisten, wird dem Eroberer Frankreich in den späteren Berichten dafür gedankt, dass die Grundrechte im Rheinland eingeführt wurden. Die real existierenden Franzosen vor Ort, in Mainz, Koblenz, Bonn oder Köln werden als egoistisch, raffgierig oder Banausen dargestellt; ihr Betragen sei der republikanischen Idee abträglich.

Einzelne Themen werden sehr ausführlich behandelt: der Vulkanismus in der Eifel und am Rhein; der Weinbau mit seinen sozioökonomischen Begleitumständen; die Historie, die durchaus von der Sage geschieden wird, für die römische Zeit jedoch unscharf ist (Überbewertung des Drusus); die Namensherleitung, die zeitbedingt meist fehlerhaft ist

(Hunsrück, Bacharach, Godesberg); vereinzelt Schlachten am Rhein. Juden werden nur am Rande – z. B. in Köln – erwähnt. Breiten Raum nimmt die Gemeinde der Herrnhuter ein, deren Bewertung unterschiedlich, überwiegend aber doch negativ, ausfällt.

In die 1790er Jahre fällt die Expansion der französischen Republik, die die sozialen und ökonomischen Verhältnisse auf dem linken Rheinufer mächtig durcheinander wirbelt. Die Berichte spiegeln diese Umwälzung wider: während der eine (SCHREIBER) noch bedauernd die pittoreske Ärmlichkeit der Landleute schildert, wettern andere (BECKER und KLEBE) über die erbärmliche, durch die Kirche verursachte Rückständigkeit der Bauern. Überhaupt schaut der in Koblenz geborene BECKER, der zu den Mainzer Republikanern gehörte, viel genauer hinter die besschauliche Kulisse als die anderen Autoren.

1806

CHAPTER XXII.

[Bonn]

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Imperial Regulation necessary to be known; the Director of the Bureau des Diligences par Eau; Singular Adventure; A Scrape; A Strategem; Passage to Bonn; A Discovery; Excellent Effect of Brandy; The City of Bonn; The Mall; Effect of black; Present State of Bonn; The seven Mountains; The Monastery; Anecdote of the Empress Josephine; Beautiful Scenery.

In consequence of having been informed the preceding evening that an imperial decree had passed, by which strangers entering the French empire were permitted to bring as much money into it as they chose, but were not suffered to take out of it more than what certain officers appointed for that purpose considered necessary for the prosecution of their journey, the surplus passing in the nature of a forfeiture to the crown, I concealed about thirty ducats, which fell within this description of overplus, in my cravat, and at five o'clock in the morning, marched from my hotel to the *bureau des diligences par eau*, a distance full two English miles, to be searched for this superfluity of cash, previous to my ascending the Rhine. At this house a scene took place which perhaps has not often occurred to travellers, in consequence of the temporary apprehension <392> which it excited, the ridiculous situation in which it placed me, and the retributive chastisement which it inflicted for thus venturing upon an hostile shore. I was introduced into a room

looking upon the Rhine; at the bureau sat the Director, a man who wore spectacles, with a strongly marked, expressive countenance, apparently about fifty years of age; upon my bowing to him he demanded of me, in German, who I was ? I requested him to address me in French, which he did, repeating the question. I told him I was an American going to the Frankfort fair, upon which he put down his spectacles, and running up to me, squeezed my hand with a violence of compression infinitely more painful than agreeable, and exclaimed in very good English, „how happy is this day to me ! for I too am an American.” I was obliged to return the affectionate salutation, and also to express my delight in having, so far from our native home, met with a countryman, he then asked me from what part of America I came? „From Baltimore,” was the answer. „Happier and happier!” cried he renewing his embrace, „for I was born there too.” At this moment I wished, for the first time in my life, all the force of the *amor patriae* at the devil; but there was no time to be lost in meditating upon the peril and awkwardness of my situation. To prevent, as much as possible his interrogating me further about my adopted country, I addressed with all possible fluency, as <393> many questions as I could suggest respecting Cologne, the Rhine, the war; in short, I touched upon every subject but what had an American tendency. To my observations he bowed, to my questions he gave very brief answers, and continued expressing his delight in seeing me, a delight which was very far from being reciprocal. After ordering his servants to bring breakfast for me, which I did not decline, although I had already taken that meal at my hotel, for fear of offending him, he made many inquiries after some persons whom he named, and mentioned to be of

the first consequence in Baltimore. I gave him to understand that I had left that city when quite a boy; but upon his assuring me that I must remember or have heard of the persons he had named, I gave him to understand that my recollection of them was very imperfect, but that I believed they had perished by the yellow fever; upon hearing which he expressed great affliction, observing they were the dearest friends he had in Baltimore before he quitted it, about fifteen years since. In this uncomfortable situation I sat *vis-à-vis* with my tormentor, who continued, during breakfast, to overload me with expressions of kindness. At last the skipper of the Rhine boat made his appearance, with the welcome information that the boat was ready, upon which the director ordered him to make up a bed for me on board if I wished it, and to shew me every possible attention, adding, that I was his particular <394> friend and countryman. I now thought the hour of my deliverance was arrived, and that an adventure which promised so adversely would terminate in the display of the civilities I have enumerated; but it was determined that my correction was not yet sufficient, for as the director looked out of the window, he exclaimed, „here comes my secretary, a very steady young man, who can attend to the office for the day,” and then turning round to me, added, „and I can now have the happiness of going half a day’s journey with you, which I am resolved to do; yes, I will shew to you how dear my countrymen are to me, by going as far as Bonn with you.” Distressed and embarrassed beyond measure at this fresh proof of his provoking and perplexing regard for America and me, I tried in vain to prevail upon him not to think of carrying his politeness so far, and expressed my strong sense of the attentions, with which he had already

completely overwhelmed me: all that I urged appeared only to redouble the warmth of his expressions, and to confirm him in his determination.

With a heavy heart and a light countenance we walked arm in arm down to the shore, and ascended the boat, over which, as well as all the other Cologne passage boats, it appeared he had complete sovereignty by virtue of his office, and in a minute afterwards the towing horse advanced at a rate of about two English miles and a half in an hour on the <395> French side of the river. The director made me sit next to him in the cabin, telling the passengers, who appeared to be very respectable, that I was an American and his countryman, and that that was the happiest day he had experienced for fifteen years. In the course of conversation with him, from the gasconade stories which he related of his own exploits, I was induced to entertain suspicions of his character; he told me that he was one of the most conspicuous characters in the French revolution; that General Custine owed all his glory in the field to him; that he had long resided at Berlin, where he had, by his intrigues, maintained for some time a complete ascendancy in the Prussian cabinet; that he was engaged in a vast literary work, in which all the great events that had agitated the world for the last ten years, would be unfolded in a manner never before developed; that he had entered into the service of the French Emperor, solely to promote the interest of the empire. He observed, after engaging my word to keep the matter secret until I reached my own country, that the Emperor was abhorred throughout the empire, that he was a remorseless tyrant, and that he could prove him to be a coward.

To the latter part of his assertion I took care to offer no remark, but under the pretence of wishing to view the city of Cologne at a distance, the river and the country, <395> and also to gain a little respite from such a rapid succession of untoward circumstances, I ascended the top of the cabin and refreshed myself by making the sketch engraved. The tower, the mighty mass of the unfinished cathedral, the numerous spires, the shores on either side, the rapid motion of the vessels descending the Rhine, the singing of those on board, the clear brilliancy of the sky, afforded reanimating delight to my mind.

About ten o'clock my persecutor raised his head through the cabin door, to announce that dinner was ready, and to request my company: upon descending I found some soup, and beef roasted after the German fashion, and that the director had, while I was above, been taken ill, from the occasional agitation of the boat, that to allay his sickness he had asked one of the gentlemen on board for some brandy, and of which he had evidently taken a great deal too much: the spirit rapidly operated upon his head, and a more abominable nuisance in the shape of man I never beheld: incapable of sitting at table with such a miscreant, I resumed my old place where I had not been seated long before I heard him abusing all the passengers, except myself, for whom he again expressed „the assurance of his high consideration”, and threatening to order them all to be thrown overboard, which he seemed to be perfectly able to do himself, for he was one of the most powerful men I <398> certain my liberty was, and to preserve it, I thought that something should be immediately done: accordingly I a(n)scended the top of the cabin, where all the passengers were assembled in a state of considerable

uneasiness, from one of whom I borrowed a bottle of brandy and a coffee-cup, with which I returned to the director, and insisted upon drinking his health in some excellent spirit, and raising my hand and the bottle in a manner which, in his state, prevented him from seeing what I poured out, I affected to fill and drink it off; I then gave him a bumper, which I several times repeated in a similar manner, until the miscreant dropped under the table, where he continued in a state of utter insensibility, and with little appearance of life, until we arrived, which we did in about six hours, at Bonn, when he was taken out of the vessel by some men, conveyed to a house near the banks of the river, and, thank heaven! I saw no more of him, but proceeded with the rest of the passengers to a very neat inn a little way in the city, where we had an excellent dinner and some good white Rhine wine. The stream of the Rhine became less rapid as we approached Bonn, where its waters are shallower than in the neighbourhood of Cologne, where all large vessels ship their cargoes which are destined for any of the towns higher up, into craft constructed peculiarly for the purpose, and which draw much less water. As I determined to sleep at Bonn, I had a favorable opportunity of seeing <399> this beautiful little city, which enabled the former Electors of Cologne to display their taste by selecting it for their residence. It was elegantly and justly observed by a French lady onboard of the boat as we approached the city, „*Voilà Bonne! c'est une petite perle!*“ no expression could describe it better; when I made my view of it, the dark clouds behind it set off the pearl-like appearance of the palace and buildings. I saw no spot on the Rhine in the shape of a town with which I was so much delighted; it consists of little more than 1,000

houses and 8,000 inhabitants. In the neighbourhood the country begins to undulate, and the vines make a luxuriant appearance. The wine made here and in the adjacent parts is tolerably good; that which grows upon the black basalt hills, further to the southward, is infinitely preferable, black being a powerful agent to attract and retain heat; hence the rents of hills are rather high. So powerful is this colour in attracting and retaining the heat, that a very intelligent friend of mine, who resided for some time in China, informed me, that for the purpose of ripening their fruits as early as possible, the Chinese gardeners paint their garden walls black, and lately in some parts of England this plan has been followed. Every thing in and about the city bears testimony to the enlightened liberality and refined taste of the last of the Electors of Cologne, who was cordially beloved and admired by all classes of his subjects. The building which <400> was once his palace, is very extensive; it stands just without the city upon an elevation of ground, and commands a most enchanting prospect, embracing the windings of the majestic Rhine, part of the village of Poppledorff, the ci-devant monastery of Gruizberg crowning the summit of a hill, and at a distance the Seven Mountains, cloathed with vineyards, and the spires of Coblenz. This beautiful building is now applied to government purposes; in the left wing towards the orange garden, which is prettily disposed, the French Emperor has preserved the Lyceum for instructing boys in Latin, Greek, German, French, mathematics, and philosophy: the professors are very able men, and the institution is in a flourishing condition: this is one amongst the many noble establishments founded by the last Elector, which in his reign was kept in another quarter of the city: this

elegant pile of building, which is now stripped of all its valuable ornaments, was raised by the elector Clement Augustus in 1777, upon the same site on which no less than four preceding palaces had fallen victims to the flames: there is a beautiful walk under a quadruple row of lime trees, which leads to a small country palace: this walk forms the fashionable parade of the city, and was graced by a number of beautiful and elegantly dressed ladies. Some very pleasant French officers, with whom I was walking in this place, expressed their surprise at seeing an Englishman amongst them, and I was obliged to find refuge again in my American adoption. <401>

Through a beautiful and romantic country, by a short walk a little beyond Gruizberg, towards the south, is the picturesque hill of Godesberg, or Godshill, so called from a sanative mineral spring flowing close to it, which contains fixed air, iron, magnesia, and salt: the last Elector who never omitted any thing which could add to the comfort and happiness of his people, erected an assembly and other rooms, and also pleasure gardens for recreation close to the spring, and by some very wise regulations, encouraged the building of lodging houses. At this place, many of the unhappy French emigrants, after the revolution, found a little relief from the miserable recollections of their fallen fortunes and altered fate: the court of the prince bishop was remarkable for the elegance, hospitality, and refined freedom which reigned throughout it, and in return in every visitor he beheld a friend. The influence of this scene of courtly felicity upon the manners of the people had not as yet subsided. A peculiar air of refinement distinguished the deportment of the inhabitants: after an exquisite ramble, I returned through the

square, a spacious irregular area, where the French troops quartered in the place were exercising, and where a very ancient Gothic town-house stands, to supper at my hotel, at the *table d'hôte* of which I again smarted for the temerity of trespassing upon this delightful spot. During our repast, which, abounded with a great variety of choice and excellent dishes, and which was <402> attended by many French officers, a German lady who sat opposite to me, always addressed and alluded to me by the perilous name of „*Monsieur Anglois*,” which excited, some considerable attention amongst the company towards me; at last a French officer whose physiognomy did not present the most pleasing collection of features, rose up, eyed me all over, and went out: I expected nothing less than being obliged to take shelter once more under my American alliance, but after waiting in the room an hour, I saw nothing more of him, and went to bed. Whilst acrue and savage state of hostility between man and man thus embarrassed the progress of a traveller, whose only object was to contemplate the beautiful face of nature, never did the divine object of his pursuit appear more arrayed in the smiles of peace and loveliness. The government of Bonn, as well as Cologne, and all the other cities on the left bank of the Rhine is vested in a governor appointed by Napoleon, and is purely military. Under a clear and cloudless sky I bade adieu to Bonn with sweat reluctance, and embarked on board of the passage-boat bound to Cassel. As we passed the lofty towers of Plittersdorff, on our right, the Rhine unfolded itself in all its glory. On our left the seven mountains - Sieben Geburge - called the Drakenfels, Wolkenbourg, Rolandsekke, Löwenburgh, Nonnenstromberg, Hoke Oehlbey, and Hemmerick, arose with uncommon grandeur,

crowned with convents and the <403> venerable ruins of castles. In distant ages, many a German baron bold resided in rude dignity with his martial followers, upon the summit of these mountains, from whence they waged war against each other, and many of their remains of antiquity are the work of Valentinian in the fourth century, who overthrew the Germans, and who fell a victim to his inordinate passion, for when the Quadi sent to him to make a peace, the awkward appearance of some of the ambassadors so enraged him, that in his anger he burst an artery.

Drackenfels has infinitely the advantage of situation; it rises perpendicularly from the river to a stupendous height, crowned with the roofless remains of an ancient castle, brown with antiquity; midway it is covered with luxuriant vines, whilst all above is red and grey rock. The other mountains, which recede to a great distance, appeared to be clothed with the clustering grape, on the opposite side the vineyards, sloping close to the water's edge, extended as far as the eye could reach; every where the genius of this terrestrial paradise seemed as if with tasteful finger he had

- led the vine

To wed her el – she sponseed about him wines

Her marriageable arms ! and with her brings

Her dower, the adopted clusters to adorn

Her barren leaves.

Milton.

<404> As we advanced, a beautiful island in the centre of the river, covered with poplars, walnut trees and elms, from the bosom of which

arose the roof and belfry of the monastery of Nonen Werth, or worthy Nuns, formed the back scene: the bosom of the river was enlivened with the peasants of the neighbourhood moving in boats worked and steered with paddles, and the banks of the French territory with groups of French soldiers bathing, and singing their national songs.

As we passed the monastery the matin bells rung, and gave a romantic interest to the scene: this pious seclusion is included in the French line of sovereignty, and was condemned by Buonaparte to change its owners and its nature for ever; but at the earnest intercession of the Empress Josephine, he consented to suffer the sisterhood to enjoy it during their lives, after which it will devolve to the empire. Wherever power could effect and policy justify the measure, Buonaparte has displayed his decided hostility to monastic establishments of every description; he considers them as so many sinks of sloth, in which all the noble principles and purposes of life become stagnant. In Paris only one convent, that of the Blue Nuns, is permitted to remain. The numerous convents which adorn the French side of the Rhine with the most picturesque appearance are either converted into fabrics, or suffered to <405> run to dilapidation: the river, from its meanderings, is land-locked all the way, every turning of which surprised and captivated me with some new beauty. Here, behind a line of walnut, lime and beech trees, just skirting the margin of the river, a stupendous pyramidal cliff appears, with every projection upon which the cultivator could lodge a layer of vegetable mold, supporting a little growth of vine; there, mountains of vineyards, relieved by mouldering castles, and convents rising from masses of rock shooting forwards, or piercing the sky from their pointed

pinnacles, arrest the attention. Sometimes a torrent brightens before the beholder, and distantly roars upon the ear; at others the naked bed of one appears, or a rude gap, through which the eye penetrates into ranges of other vine-clad mountains, variegated with majestic ruins, is seen. At the base of the hills on the sides of the river numerous towers and villages constantly appear, defended by ancient walls and turrets, adorned with venerable churches, brown with age, surmounted with lofty spires, every where inviting the reflection of the moralist, the investigation of the antiquary, the song of the poet, and the pencil of the painter. <406>

CHAPTER XXIII.

[Koblenz]

Basalt Mountains; Andernach; Anecdote of General Hoche; Rhenish Floats; Singular Accident; French Police; Neuweid; The Rhine Boat; Tomb of General Marceau; Anecdote of French Heroism; Coblenz; Its Surrender to the French Arms; Anecdote of French Vivacity; The Rock and Fortress of Ehrenbreitstein; The Griffon; Stupendous French Roads; Boppart.

Almost all the immense mass of mountains which extend from Bonn to Andernach, is composed of the basalt and slate; the former has a more artificial appearance than almost any other mineral production. In no form can it puzzle the philosopher more than at the Giant's Causeway, in Ireland, where it assumes a columnar shape, which has every appearance of having been chiselled by the hand of a skilful mason, and of having been regular granite cooling after fusion, and formed

into regular masses by crystallization. In the small cavities of these mountains the martins and swallows find refuge, and in a comfortable state of torpidity pass through the cold and cheerless weather of winter. The children of the peasantry amuse themselves in discovering their retreats, at an apparent exposure of their own lives. <407>

In an amphitheatre of vast dusky basalt mountains, the sombre gates, towers and pinnacles of Andernach appeared: in consequence of the river making a long sweep, I landed with an intention of rejoining the boat at a village named by the skipper; a more solemn scene of gloom and grandeur, I never contemplated: the ruins of this town towards Coblenz are of great antiquity. The inhabitants insist upon it, that the remains of the Emperor Valentine are deposited in one of their churches, and that Julius Caesar when he so victoriously fought against the Suabians, passed over the Rhine at this spot, where Drusus, the general of Augustus, built one of those fifty castles which are erected on the banks of the Rhine: but the French, who narrowly investigated every part of the river which their victorious arms enabled them to visit, with great acuteness, and with the assistance of history, believe that this celebrated landing was effected a little higher up the river, a short distance from Engers, at a place called the White Tower – *der Weisse Thurm* – , the venerable front of which I saw as I afterwards advanced on our right, in the centre of a sudden recess of the river, where it has the appearance of having served the united purposes of a castle and a watch-tower; at its base is a considerable village, which formerly belonged to the Elector of Treves: this situation is from a combination of local advantages, peculiarly favorable to the completion of such a passage, and

in confirmation <408> of the opinion, a great number of Roman antiquities have been found there. General Hoche, at the head of an immense army, aided by the obscurity of the night, crossed the Rhine at this place in 1797, and astonished the imperial troops the next morning by their presence.

This was the last exploit of that general. Near this tower there are deposited his remains, over which a mausoleum has been erected. This young commander died of an enlargement of the heart at Wetzlar. His funeral was conducted with uncommon military pomp. The procession moved from the place where he died, across the Rhine to the White Tower, amidst the discharge of cannon, which were fired every quarter of an hour.

The trade of the Rhine is here very flourishing, for exclusive of the neighbouring vineyards which produce fine wines, and the basalts of the adjoining mountains used for building and paving, this city derives considerable wealth from the *lapis tophaceus* or tuf stone, the harder sort of which form excellent mill-stones; vast quantities are shipped for Holland, to construct or repair its dykes with, and the more friable is used for building, whilst its powder mixed with lime forms the hardest and most durable cement. I saw the cabins of several treck-schuysts in Holland covered with it, which were perfectly <409> impervious to the rain: the Germans also use it to floor their houses with. This stone is considered to be a species of the pumice-stone, or imperfect lava, and of volcanic production.

On the banks leading to this city, I saw part of one of those amazing floats of timber which are formed of lesser ones, conveyed to this city

from the forests adjoining the Rhine, the Moselle, the Maine, &c.; these floats are attached to each other, and form a platform generally of the enormous dimensions of eight hundred feet in length, and one hundred and sixty in breadth, upon which a little village containing about eighty wooden houses is erected for the accommodation of those who are interested in, and assist in navigating this stupendous raft, frequently amounting to seven and eight hundred persons, men, women, and children; besides these buildings, there are stalls for cattle, slaughtering houses, and magazines for provisions: the float is prevented from striking against the shores, where the turnings are abrupt, by the application of thirty or forty anchors, which with the necessary cables are conveyed in fourteen or fifteen boats which precede it, and its course is safely directed by German and Dutch pilots, who are hired for the purpose.

After great rains when the current is rapid, the whole is <410> entrusted to its propelling force, otherwise several hundred persons are employed in rowing, who move their oars at a given word of command. The whole of these wonderful moving masses is under the entire direction of a governor or superintendant, and several officers under him. Sometimes they are months in performing their voyage, in consequence of the water being low, in which case they are obliged to wait till the river is swelled by the rains. In this manner they float from the high to the low countries, and upon their arrival at the place of destination, the whole is broken up, and finds a ready market. About twelve of them annually arrive at Dort, in Holland, in the months of July and August, where these German limber-merchants having converted their floats

into good Dutch ducats, return to their own country with their families, to enjoy the produce of their labour and enterprise.

The clergy and monks in Andernach used to be, to use a good-humoured homely expression of a late illustrious statesman, upon an application made to him for a place under his administration as thick as five in a bed beside six vicars belonging to a large parish church, there were no less than five crowded convents, and the population did not exceed four thousand souls: the convents are now converted into garrisons for French soldiers, and <411>storehouses for tradesmen. After viewing the city, I set off on the road to Coblenz, with a view of meeting the boat at the place appointed, and after walking about two miles. I lost all traces of the river; however, observing about three parts of a mile the tops of a long semicircular line of poplars, I concluded the river flowed by them, and I accordingly endeavoured to penetrate to the bank through a large willow wood, in which I soon lost myself. At last, however, I succeeded in forcing a way into a little footpath, in pursuing which I suddenly came upon a Frenchman, poorly cloathed in green, with a book in his hand; he courteously addressed me, remarked that I looked rather warm, and conducted me to a recess in the wood, close to the water, where there was a bed of straw and a gun: at first I regarded him as a robber, but he soon gave me to understand that he was a link in a vast chain, composed of forty thousand soldiers, placed in this, sort of ambuscade at the distance of a gun shot from each other, by the orders of the government of France, to guard the left bank of the Rhine from smugglers; and that to prevent contraband practices, no boat is suffered to pass either up or down the river after sunset, without being

fired upon; that they are always cloathed in a sombre dress, to prevent observation, and are concealed in this manner wherever the sides of the river will admit of it.

<412>

Upon my informing him that I had lost my way and my boat, he politely assured me that it had not yet ascended the river, and hailed a little punt passing by, which enabled me to regain the vessel, then very fortunately just approaching. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the French police, the rafts I have described carry on a considerable contraband trade in the Rhine wines and Seltzer water.

Opposite to the spot where this occurrence took place, at the bottom of a range of hills, is the delightful town and palace of Neuwied, built of white stone, at one end of the line of poplars which I have mentioned, and almost the only town I saw without walls or any sort of fortification on the Rhine. Nothing could exceed the air of happiness and prosperity which seemed to reign in this delectable little capital, which looked perfectly fresh and new, the prince of which receives, because he deserves, the affections of his subjects; every one on board, with great vivacity, spoke of the toleration, the liberal extension of the rights of citizenship to foreigners, and the public spirit of its ruler. The place is enriched by several flourishing iron works, steel, paper, and cotton manufactures – the latter, the first introduced into Germany –, printing, watch, and ingenious cabinet-making. Before the last war, in the forges and foundries, and different fabrics, not less than <413> four thousand persons were employed, and their circulation at a fair has been known to amount to forty or fifty thousand florins. There is an

establishment of Moravian brethren here more numerous than that at Zeyst. The last and the present wars have of course considerably reduced the number of workmen, by forcing many of them into the army; but, notwithstanding, there is no town on the Rhine in a more enviable condition, for every thing which can impart content and felicity to man. It was a curious and highly interesting circumstance to see in Neuwied and Andernach, almost opposite to each other, the most modern and the most ancient city on the Rhine. The price of freight upon the Rhine is rather high: before the French united together so many petty sovereignties it was much higher, owing to the number of tolls which were paid to each; previous to that event there were no less than twelve tolls to discharge between Cologne and Amsterdam.

We had a very good *table d'hote* on board, at a moderate price, abundance of Rhine crabs, excellent grapes, and a variety of other fruits, which, as well as the most delicious bread I ever tasted, we purchased at the different towns where we stopped. I had the comfort of being attended by an intelligent, animated fellow, who had been in the service of the immortal Nelson on board of <414> one of the ships which he commanded, and afterwards with the English army in Egypt, who offered his services on board the boat at a very reasonable rate. The richness, novelty, and majesty of the scenery, kept me constantly on the roof of the cabin, from the early hour of starting till the hour of nine at night, when, for the reason stated, we always stopped at some town or village till morning. In these stoppages we entirely depended upon the variable velocity of the current, not to say a word of the caprice of our skipper, or the influence which the residence of any particular favourite or friend

might have upon him; the consequence of which was, that we arrived at places to sup and sleep where we were not expected, and of course our patience was put to a little, but never a considerable trial. Within three or four miles of Coblenz, on our right in ascending the river, we passed a pyramidal mausoleum, erected to the memory of the French general Marceau, who distinguished himself at the battle of Mons and Savenai, and died of the wounds which he received at the battle of Altenkirchen in 1796.

At Bendorf, a romantic village on our left, upon a branch of the river, a terrible battle was fought between the French army, commanded by General Hoche, and the Austrians, after the former had effected the passage I have before mentioned, from the white tower, which, after a ~~415~~ tremendous slaughter on both sides, terminated in the retreat of the imperial troops. In this battle an extraordinary instance of prowess and enthusiasm occurred, which is said to have decided the fate of the day: the French had frequently attacked an Austrian redoubt, the possession of which was of great consequence to them, and had as often been repulsed with great carnage; at last a French general rode up to the grenadiers commanded by Captain Gros, and exclaimed, „Soldiers, swear to me that yon will make yourselves masters of that redoubt?” – „We swear,” replied Gros, holding up his hand, and his soldiers doing the same: they returned to the attack with redoubled fury, and the havoc became dreadful: the French troops were upon the point of again giving way, when their leader had his right arm crushed by a grape shot, upon which, with a smile of triumph, he grasped his sabre with his left, rallied his men and carried the redoubt.

As we turned a considerable meander of the river by Neuendorff, one of the grandest spectacles I almost ever contemplated opened upon me: the mighty rock of Ehrenbreitstein, formerly called the Gibraltar of the Rhine, with its dismantled batteries and ruined castles, rose with awful and unexampled majesty on the south; at its base was the palace formerly belonging to the Elector of Treves, and the town bearing the name of this wonderful fortification; and immediately opposite to it, as we advanced a little farther, the beautiful <416> city of Coblenz appeared. Here we were obliged to be separated from our horse, on account of the Moselle, which discharges itself into the Rhine at this place, the mouth of which we crossed by the assistance of our boatmen's poles. Over this river there is a handsome stone bridge of many arches, and formerly there was a bridge of boats from this city to Ehrenbreitstein, which has been most judiciously removed, and succeeded by one of the flying bridges before described, by which a more convenient communication is kept completely open, and the navigation is not impeded. Coblenz is a very ancient city; it was the seat of the Roman emperors, and of the kings of the Franks, and a favourite residence of the arch-bishops and electors of Treves, who, in ancient times of broil and peril, resided in the castle which crowns the majestic rock opposite to the city. Before the French revolution there were three parish churches, two colleges, a church belonging to the Jesuits, four convents of monks, dominicans, Carmelites, franciscans, and capuchins, and three nunneries. At that period the population of the inhabitants, of the garrison, and the vale of Ehrenbreitstein, was calculated at 13.000 souls; at present it is not supposed to exceed nine thousand. The city has many good and

some handsome buildings, and is further recommended by its supplies of excellent mines, pit-coal, wood, and lime. Its best square is the Clemensstadt; there are several handsome hotels, of <417> which the ancient hotel, the vast rock which formerly protected it, and the antiquity of its buildings, cast a gloomy grandeur over the whole place, which never exhibited so much gaiety as in the winter of 1791, when the French princes and their followers were nobly entertained and protected here by the Elector, before they marched to Champagne, to experience those disasters which finally confirmed the overthrow of their devoted house.

Coblentz derives its name by not a little meander of etymology, from the confluence of the Rhine and the Moselle at its base. Ausonius, one of the most celebrated of the Latin poets of the fourth century, wrote five hundred verses in commemoration of this river, which, compared with the majesty of the river into which it rolls and is lost, is scarcely worthy of such an honor: the view from its banks is also in an equal degree of comparative inferiority, and by the unceasing agitation of its confluence, it has the reputation of having alarmed the tender nerves of the river-fish, of which the inhabitants of this city are not so well supplied as the neighbouring towns.

One of the most beautiful objects in this place is the new palace, built to the south of the city, close to the Rhine, by that splendid and amiable prince, the Elector Clement Vencelas; it is of brick stuccoed, to resemble <418> stone, has a noble Ionic *portico*, and including its wings, extends one hundred and eighty yards. A further description of its exterior, as I have made a drawing of it, and moreover as it is now converted into an hospital, were useless. Its grand stair-case, its

apartments consisting of a chapel, an audience-hall, concert-room, library, cabinet, dining room, besides an immense number of other rooms, excited the admiration of every visitor, by their magnitude, magnificence, or elegance. Its furniture, its mantle-pieces, its tapestry, and inlaid floors, all corresponded in taste and splendor with the rest of the building; now not a vestige of its consequence or original destination remains, but what its walls display. Most of the windows are broken, stuffed with hay, or further disfigured by having linen hanging out to dry from them; the area before the grand front, which was formed into an elegant promenade, is now broken, and its graceful plantation totally destroyed. A little way further to the southward, on the opposite side, under the impending rocks of Ehrenbreitstein, is the old palace, a sombre building, which the Elector Clement quitted almost entirely on account of its gloom, and the humidity of its situation.

The Elector of Treves excited the indignation of the French against him very early in the French revolution, by encouraging the expatriated French princes to reside <419> and hold their counter-revolutionary councils at Coblenz. In September, 1794, General Jourdan, with his accustomed energy, compelled the Austrians to retreat to Hervé, and afterwards to Aix la Chapelle, when, supported by the main body of the army, the French attacked all the enemy's posts from Ruremonde to Juliers: at this eventful period, General Clairfayt having occupied a strong position upon the Roer, resisted the French for some time, but their ardor and numbers at length compelled the Austrians to retire into Germany, leaving behind them ten thousand of their comrades, killed or taken prisoners, in the short space of three days; and soon afterwards

a detachment of the French army, under the command of General Moreau, entered Coblenz as victors, Cologne being already in their possession, and Mainz, or Mayence, the only city in the possession of the allies on the left bank of the Rhine.

I was informed by some French officers who were in the boat with me, that the society in Coblenz was very elegant; that a number of families lived in splendor; and also, that Bonaparte had continued with some modifications the colleges, and most of the public institutions, which the Electors of Treves had at various times established in that city. The vast and celebrated monastery, called in German Karthaus, or La Chartreuse, situated on a high mountain, in the neighbourhood to the <420> west of Coblenz, from which the countries of Treves, Mayence, Cologn[e], Darmstadt, d'Anspach, and Wied, may be seen, is converted into an observatory, and a place of very agreeable recreation.

Upon my return, in descending the Rhine, I had an opportunity of more closely seeing Ehrenbreitstein, which I was enabled to do from the following circumstance: the Rhine *schuyt* was uncommonly crowded, and late in the evening we arrived at a hamlet on the right bank of the river to sleep: the house in which we were to pass the night was not able to furnish beds more than barely sufficient for the ladies on board, which at once determined a French officer, one of the party, who had not placed his head upon a pillow for three preceding nights, and who was a wretched invalid, apparently in the last stage of a decline, to hunt amongst the cottagers for a tidier, to whose miserable sounds this epitome of his nation, with several other officers and petty German merchants, danced till the dawn of day, *pour passer le tems*, and the

boat was ready to proceed. Having found by moon-light a nook in a peasant's nest, in the most romantic situation under Heaven, I lay down, and never awoke till an hour after the boat had departed, in which dilemma I was obliged to hire a punt with two paddles, and by the assistance of a couple of sturdy peasants overtook the passage-boat, <421> which lay off Coblenz, during which I visited Ehrenbreitstein. At its base there is a pretty town and an excellent hotel; opposite to the palace is a walk of limes, close to which was moored the electoral state yacht, or barge, in shape and size resembling our Lord Mayor's, but not quite so gaudy. The ascent to this stupendous rock, which is eight hundred feet in a perpendicular line above the level of the river, is by a very narrow, steep, and winding path: the noble fortification on its sides, and the castles, arsenals, barracks, and batteries upon its summit, from whence the eye can behold, the mountains of Lorraine, the meanders of the Rhine, and the countries through which it flows to a vast distance, and from which the beholder might almost think he could step into the clouds, are all roofless and dismantled. The citadel was erected by the order of the Prince Bishop Herman Hillinus, in the 12th century, upon the ruins of an ancient Roman building.

In the centre of the square, or parade upon the top, was formerly mounted the celebrated cannon, called „the Griffon”, as well known to the Germans as that called „Queen Anne's pocket-piece”² is to the English. The former merits the national pride which it has excited. It was cast at Frankfort by the order of the Elector, Richard Greifenklau, weighed thirty thousand <422> pounds, and was capable of projecting

a ball of one hundred and eighty pounds, to a distance of sixteen miles. Close to the touch-hole there was the following inscription:

*Vogel Greif heis ich, meinem gnädigen herrn von
Trier dien ich, wo er mich heist gewanten, da will
ich Thoren und mauren Zerspalten. Simon gos
mich, 1528.*

In English

*Griffon is my name, I serve my gracious master of
Treves, I shatter gates and walls, whenever he com-
mands me to exert my force. Simon cast me, 1528.*

This rock was supplied with water from a well 280 feet deep, which occupied three years in digging, in the year 1481, and has a subterranean communication with Coblenz, dug out of the solid rock: the fortress was justly deemed, when properly garrisoned, impregnable. In the time of the Swedish war, the attacks of eighty thousand French troops on the southern side of it, and of forty thousand on the northern, could make no impression upon it; however, still maintaining its invulnerable character, it was destined to bend to a foe, before which all local advantage is useless, and all enterprize unavailing: after bravely sustaining a blockade for a whole year, by the troops of the French republic, the garrison having endured with the greatest fortitude almost every description of privation and misery, were obliged to surrender to famine, and capitulated on the 28th January, 1799; soon after which the French covered this mighty rock with the <423> ruins of those wonderful

fortifications, which had employed the skill of the ablest engineer to complete, and which, but for the want of food, would have defied the force of her assailing enemy to the end of time. The *thal*, or valley below, is justly celebrated for its fertility and romantic beauty.

Soon after our departure from Coblenz, we passed the island of Obe[r]werth; and a little further on, on our left, the disemboguement of the river Lahn, which flows between two ancient and picturesque towns, called the Upper and Lower Lahnsteins, where the Rhine forms a considerable curve, and expands into the resemblance of a placid lake, adorned with two vast mountains, one crowned with a hoary watch tower, and the base of the other half encircled by a village, and the whole adorned by the captivating combinations of forest scenery, rich meadows, and hanging vineyards and orchards, amidst which, half embosomed in their foliage, the peasant's peaceful dwelling every now and then gladdened the eye. This lovely view was soon exchanged for one of gloomy magnificence; before we reached Boppart, we entered a melancholy defile of barren and rugged rocks, rising perpendicularly from the river to an immense height, and throwing a shade and horror over the whole scene; here all was silent, and no traces of man were to be found but in a few dispersed fishermens' huts, and crucifixes. Fear and superstition, <424> „when the day has gone down, and the stars are few”, have long filled every cave with banditti, and every solitary recess with apparitions.

In the course of my passage I frequently, when the boat came very near the land, sprung on shore with two or three other passengers, and varied the scene by walking along the banks for a mile or two, and

during these excursions had frequently an opportunity of admiring the astonishing activity and genius of the French, who have, since they became masters of the left bank of the Rhine, nearly finished one of the finest roads in the world, extending from Mayence to Cologne, in the course of which they have cut through many rocks impending over the river, and triumphed over some of the most formidable obstacles Nature could present to the achievement of so wonderful a design. This magnificent undertaking, worthy of Rome in the most shining periods of her history, was executed by the French troops, who, under the direction of able engineers, preferred leaving these monuments of indefatigable toil and elevated enterprize, to passing their time, during the cessation of arms, in towns and barracks, in a state of indolence and inutility.

The sombre spires of Boppart, surrounded by its black wall and towers, presented a melancholy appearance to <425> the eye, relieved by the rich foliage of the trees in its vicinity, and the mountains behind it irregularly intersected with terraces covered with vines to their very summits. The antiquity of this city is very great; it was one of the fifty places of defence erected on the banks of the Rhine by Drusus Germanicus, and in the middle ages was an imperial city.

Not far from Boppart we saw, on the right bank of the river, a procession of nuns and friars returning to a convent, the belfry of which just peeped above a noble avenue of walnut-trees; they were singing, and their voices increased the solemn effect of the surrounding scenery. We put up for the night at a little village, amid mountains half covered with vineyards, tufted with forests, and chequered with convents and

ruined castles. The evening was stormy, and a full moon occasionally brightened the scene: frequently we were enveloped in solemn gloom,

*When the broken arches are as black as night,
And each shafted Oriel glimmers white,
When the cold light's uncertain show's
Streams on the ruin'd central tow'r.*

Lay of the last Minstrel³.

<426>

CHAPTER XXIV.

[St. Goar]

The young Conscript; Singular French Anecdote; St. Goar; Its History; Oberwesel; The Palatinate; A celebrated Vineyard; A Regale; Bacharach; Bacchus; The Rhyngau Song; Rüdesheim; Roman Derivations; The Priory of Johannesberg; Vineyards classed; Grapes classed.

I have before mentioned the excellent accommodations which I every where experienced at the different towns we stopped at. Although at the last place where we slept there were not above three or four houses, and we were not expected, we had an excellent supper, and clean comfortable beds. After our repast, as we were drinking some excellent hock⁴, many of the company present communicated the object of their voyage, and amongst the rest an elegant young Frenchman, about nineteen, who had charmed us all the way by his politeness and

inexhaustible flow of spirits, told us, to my no little surprize, that the object of his excursion would not admit of his returning when he pleased, for he was on his way to join part of the French army at Maynz, or Mayence, as a conscript, for which he had been drawn; and as his father who was a man of fortune at Aix-la-Chapelle, but was very fond of his money, would not put himself to the expence of <427> paying the substitution money for him, „*par consequence*,” said he with a smile of good humour, „*il me faut aller en personne*.” He told us that he had no hopes of raising himself from the ranks but by good conduct and equally good fortune, although his uncle was a general in the service, and commanded that part of the army into which he was soon to be incorporated. Whenever we stopped, he bestowed his money with liberality to beggars and chambermaids, alledging, that as he was about to be a soldier, he ought to live, when he became one, on a soldier’s pay, and that to have more till he was promoted, would only make him uncomfortable; adding, that on his arrival at head quarters, he should order a noble dinner, and give his clothes to the waiters, and surrender himself up to the captain of his company. He neither blamed the cruelty of his father, the tyranny of the conscription, nor repined at his unlucky fate, but idling a bumper, exclaimed, „*Tout ce qu’il me faut maintenant, c’est, de devenir bon soldat*.” – All that I have to do is to make myself a good soldier. I never saw a point more easily and comfortably settled in my life. Our young conscript had the best wishes of us all, for his happiness and speedy promotion. This elastic spirit of vivacity seems to be the common property of every Frenchman, and never did it appear more striking than in the following circumstance: <428> Upon an English

surgeon some years since visiting an hospital at Paris, he saw in one of the wards three Frenchmen who had received some very severe contusions by the fall of a scaffold a few days before, lying in bed; upon approaching them he found one dead, another dying, and the one in the middle sitting upright in the bed, fiddling to several invalids, who were dancing at the foot of it as well as they were able.

After a refreshing sleep we were called, upon the first intimation of the day's approach, and early in the morning arrived at St. Goar, after passing by the ancient gothic tower of Welmich, the white and venerable palace of Thurnburg, crowning the mountain behind it, and through most delicious and romantic scenery, every where profusely embellished with the hoary remains of piety and war, under the various tints of progressive day. In a minute after the boat had stopped, all the passengers disappeared to attend matins, it being Sunday, and left me to gaze in amazement upon the stupendous rock of Rheinfels, or the rock of the Rhine, which rises most majestically behind the town, and supports the remains of a vast fortress which bears its name, and which the French, demolished in the last war. This fortress was next in strength to that of Ehrenbreitstein; it was in the year 1245 converted from <429> a convent to a fortress, by Count Diether le Riche. In 1692 the Hessians, who were in possession of it, made a gallant defence, headed by Colonel Goerz, against the French, who were in superior force under the command of the celebrated Mareschal de Tallard, who was compelled to give up the siege. In the last war it experienced a different fate: the French troops took quiet possession of it, and though it ranked next to Ehrenbreitstein in strength and advantage, it partook

not of the glory of a similar resistance. At the foot of this enormous rock is a large barrack lately built, but now deserted. There was also a flying bridge here, but it has been removed.

In a bay of the river a little before we approached Oberwesel, there is a vast rock [=Loreley], which the passengers on the river never fail to address, for the purpose of hearing their own voices very closely imitated by its echoes. Almost all the way from St. Goar to Oberwesel, we were environed by enormous dark rocks covered with shattered fragments, impending over and embrowning the face of the river with their awful shadows. The gloom of the scene was enlivened only by a few fishermens' huts here and there interspersed, protected from the intense heat of the sun retained by and reflected from the rocks rising above them, by the foliage of scanty groups of trees. <430>

This melancholy defile prepared us for Oberwesel, a venerable city, filled with the solemnity of antient churches and deserted convents. In the time of the Emperor Henry the Seventh, this city was an imperial one; afterwards, and till the French seized it, it was in the possession of the Elector of Treves. The church of the Minorites had once a fine copy of Rubens' *Descent from the Cross*, by a disciple of his, which upon enquiry I found had been removed. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the situation of this town; the scenery to the south of it is luxuriant and romantic beyond imagination. Close to it, rising from an avenue of stately walnut-trees, is a prodigious rock, supporting the celebrated chateau de Schoenberg, which gave birth to the illustrious and ancient family of the name of Belmont, afterwards changed for the German name of Schoenberg or Beaumont: this place and the neighbourhood abound

with slate quarries. Immediately opposite, on the eastern bank, lofty mountains cloathed with hanging vineyards, and attended by the usual association of mural ruins perched upon their pinnacles, and of monastic buildings projecting from their sides, or rising from their base, presented their majestic forms to the Rhine. From Oberwesel we crossed over to Kaub, a fortified town a little away further to the south. Previous to this we had kept, during the whole of the <431> passage, on the left bank. In crossing the river we passed close to a large massy fortified tower, or fort, standing in the middle of the Rhine upon a rock, called the Pfalz or Palatinate. In distant times the Countesses of the Palatinate, when they were far advanced in that state which „Ladies wish to be who love their lords,” used to remove to this insulated spot of gloom for the purpose of lying-in; afterwards it was used as a state prison, and a place to watch the vessels-ascending or descending the Rhine, to prevent their eluding the tolls; it is now disused, but not likely very soon to run to decay for want of inhabitants. Enthusiastically as I admire the scenery of this part of the Rhine, I think I never saw a place where man or woman would less prefer to be confuted in, than the Pfalz.

At Kaub, a very antient but neat town, which stands at the base of a lofty mountain, in a handsome inn close to the river, we tasted some delicious wine, the produce of the neighbouring vineyards, for which we paid about ten pence English the bottle: and we were regaled gratuitously with some of the finest grapes, which a pretty girl produced as naturally as pipes and tobacco are introduced in similar places in Holland. The vineyards of Oberwesel, Kaub, and Bacharach, and the two hills of Vogtsberg and Kühlberg <432> near the last city, which abound

with blue slate, produce a vine remarkable for its odour and muscadelle flavour, and form one of the distinguished vine divisions of this enchanting region.

Upon leaving Kaub we proceeded through a scene of transcendant richness and beauty, where

*[Or] palmy hilloc, and the flow'ry lap
Of sonic irriguous valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose:
On either⁵ side umbrageous grots, and caves
Of cool recess, on which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape [and gently creeps]*

Miltons Paradise Lost [IV, 254 ff]

Our ears were delighted with the solemn choruses of the inhabitants of the villages returning in large crowded boats from their churches, and the bells of the convents, while the shores on either side were enlivened by the peasants in their sabbath dresses going to or returning from their respective places of worship. At length the hoary battlements of Bacharach opened upon us; part of this town slopes front the vine-clad mountain behind it, and the remainder is close to the water. This town is also very ancient, and as a proof of its antiquity, derives its name from Bacchus, to whom tradition relates an altar was raised upon a rock in the centre of the Rhine. Indeed we <433> might have supposed that he had been worshipped here in all the marvellous pomp ascribed to his original adoration, and that his priestess, by striking

the earth with their *thyrsi*, had caused rivers of milk, and honey, and wine to flow

*Et te, Bacche, vocant per carmina, laeta, tibique
Oscilla ex alta suspendunt mollia pinu.
Hinc omnis largo pubescit vinea faetu.*

Virgil, Georgica, III, 388 ff]

[*Rufen sie dich, o Bacchus, in fröhlichen Liedern und hängen
Dir an ragender Fichte herab die beweglichen Bilder.
Davon erblüht ringsum mit reichlicher Lese der Weinberg.*

Voß]

This insulated rock was admirably adapted for bearing upon one of its trees, if ever one grew upon it, those little wooden or earthen images of Bacchus, which from the smallness of their mouths were called *Oscilla*, and were considered as so many watch towers, from which the god might look after the vines, to prevent their receiving injury. I know of no situation where he could have performed his tutelar duties better than in this very spot.

The vine here has been long celebrated for its excellence, the Emperor Venceslas preferred four *fuder* of this wine – a fuder is equal to three hundred and sixty gallons – to ten thousand florins offered to him by the inhabitants of Nuremberg, to redeem their sequestered privileges; and even Pope Pius the Second imported for his table a fuder of this wine annually. These are illustrious authorities in favour of the Bacharach wine, but the best is its flavor. <434>

My laquais, a merry, good humoured fellow, and having no bad ear for music withal, announced our being opposite to Lorch, the first town where, in ascending the Rhine, the Rhingau commences, in which district the finest wines are produced, by singing a national song in honor of this vine-covered region, in which every person on board joined most cordially. It was a very long one, but the following, stanzas will serve as a specimen of it:

*Bekräntzt mit laub den liebe vollen becher,
Und trinkt ihn fröhlich leer;
In Ganz Europa ihr herren zecher,
Ist solch, ein ein nicht mehr.*

*Ihn bringt das Vaterland aus seiner fulle,
Wie wär er sonst so gut ?
Wie wär er sonst so edel, stille,
Und doch voll kraft und muth ?*

*Am Rhein, am Rhein, da wachsen unsre reben;
Gesegnet sey der Rhein!
Da wachsen sie am ufer hin, und geben
Uns diesen labe wein.*

*So trinkt ihn dann, und lasst uns alle wege
Uns freun, und fröhlich seyn;
Und wüsten wir, wo jemand traurig läge,*

Wir gäben ihm den wein.⁶

<435>

*With vine-leaves crown the jovial cup,
For, search all Europe round,
You'll say, as pleas'd you drink it up,
Such wine was never found.*

Such wine etc.

*Our Father's land this vine supplies,
What soil can e'er produce
But this, though warmed with genial skies,
Such mild, such generous juice ?*

Such mild etc.

*Then shall the Rhine our smiles receive,
For on its banks alone,
Can e'er be found a wine to give
The soul its proper tone.*

The soul etc.

*Come put the jovial cup around,
Our joys it will enhance,
If any one is mournful found,
One sip shall make him dance.*

One sip etc.

Every child in this part of Germany knows this song by heart.

Fronting the august ruins of the castle of Sannek, the Rhine presents the appearance of an ample lake, and the mountains, which hitherto were numerous and lofty, <436> recede as we approached the pretty village of Dryeckshausen², a little beyond which the river expands, and forms a noble curve near Asmanshausen, at the foot of a forest, celebrated for the convent of Aulenshausen, much frequented by devotees. Asmanshausen is known for the fine blecker which it produces.

Nearly opposite to Ruppertsberg the navigation of the Rhine becomes very much impeded, and rendered hazardous by some vast rocks which just raise their heads above the surface of the water, and which our boatmen informed us had frequently occasioned the loss of lives. Here the country again becomes rude and rocky, occasionally covered with forest oak, and profusely ornamented with dilapidated castles, where the steel-clad chieftains of other times used to blow their

— war note loud and long,
Till at the high and haughty sound
Rock, wood, and river rang around

Lay of the last Minstrel.

A visible change in the scenery to which we had been accustomed, commenced as we approached Bingen: the hills retire farther from the banks of the river, more modern towns, yet occasionally chequered with the remains of antiquity, attract the eye, the trees of the forest succeed

² in der Vorlage: „Drgeckshausen“.

to <437> the vines of the mountain, and in the room of stupendous rocks, rich meadows and corn fields present their novel charms.

Bingen, which I visited upon my return, stands at the base of a lofty mountain, on the summit of which the ancient castle of Klopp is erected: the river Nohe [=Nahe] disembogues itself by this city into the Rhine, over which there is a handsome stone bridge, called Drusus, from its having the reputation of having been constructed by Drusus Germanicus: this confluence of the two rivers enables Bingen to carry on a considerable trade in Rhenish wines, grain, and timber.

As the shades of evening descended, we passed Ehrenfels, and a little before nine arrived at Rüdesheim, where we supped at a very handsome hotel, and drank copiously of its wine, which is said to be superior to every other part of the Rhingau. Very early in the morning I visited the remains of a magnificent castle, which has the appearance of a Roman origin: this opinion is countenanced by the strong evidences of the same character which attach to the antiquities to be found in towns within the Rhingau. The situation of this august ruin, which is close to the river, is commensurate to its grandeur: the town of Rüdesheim is large, clean, and cheerful, and has few of those <438> features of awful gloom which characterize several of the cities on the lower sides of this river, which here widens to a great breadth, and is dotted over with luxuriant little islands.

Upon quitting this town we were more frequently retarded than we had been before, by the obstructions which terraces projecting into the river, and islands, offered to our towing horse, who, with the driver, was frequently belly deep in the water, which often forced our boatmen to

the tedious application of their poles. The towns of Geisenheim, St. Bartholomai, and Winkel, presented the same sprightly and agreeable aspect as Rüdesheim. I have observed that many towns in the Rhingau are of Roman derivation, in corroboration of which, many of their names are unquestionably so: as Winkel from Vinicella; Eltvil, from Alta Villa; and Lorch, or as the Germans pronounce it, Lorricker, from Laureacum, &c.

After quitting Rüdesheim, the noble priory of St. Johannesberg, proudly placed upon the summit of a vast mountain, surrounded with villages, hamlets, convents, nunneries, and other stately buildings, and having a back ground of distant hills covered with vines, commanded the admiration of all on board. This priory was founded in 1102, by Ruthard, second archbishop of Mayence, and in the devastating war of thirty years under Gustavus Adolphus, was razed to the ground. The land was afterwards <439> sold to the abbot of Fuld, who rebuilt it in its present modern style, and afterwards it was given to the late Prince of Orange as an indemnity, and now forms a part of the rich territory of the Prince of Nassau Usingen. In a cave or cellar belonging to the priory, several thousands of hogsheads of the choicest wines are kept. The red blecker of Johannesberg is celebrated all over the world, and is the juice of the vineyard of the priory only; but the finest produce of the Rhingau is from the grape of Asmanshauscn, Ehrenfels, and Rüdesheim, and particularly of some very small vineyards contiguous to them, called Rodtland, Hauptberg, and Hinterhausen, which rank the highest; and in this class also are included the numerous vineyards on the steep hills of Bingen, on the opposite shore. The second class embraces

the vines of Rothenberg, Geisenheim, and Kapellgarten. The third class includes the grapes of Johannesberg, and the Fuldische Schlossberg. The fourth, the vines of Hattenheim, and Marker Brunner. The fifth, those of the cloister of Eberbach. Sixthly, those of Kitterich and Grafenberg; and the seventh, those of Rauenthal, and the hills and spots adjacent. All these classes are included in the district of the Rhingau.

The celebrated hock, is the produce of the vineyards of Hochheim, or High-home, above Mayence, to the eastward. Of the grape, that called the Reislinge, the longest <440> known to these regions, ranks the highest; the Orleans grape, the orange or red Burgundy, and the Lambert, occupy the next place in the public estimation; and the Muscadelle and Kleimberg, which are frequently cultivated in private gardens, the third.

We still continued our course on the left bank of the Rhine, and passed by many beautiful villages, and the handsome towns of Haltenheim, Erbach, Elfeld, Steinheimerhof, Nieder or Lower Wallauf, where ancient churches and convents are interspersed amongst many handsome modern houses. We reached Nieder Wallauf, the last town of the Rhingau to the east, and afterwards Schierstein, a pretty town where, as our progress was so frequently delayed by the numerous islands which lie close to the bank, in company with a very pleasant, intelligent German, I quitted the boat, and walked to Biberich: the day was remarkably fine, and our road lay through luxuriant corn and pasture fields, vineyards, orchards, every where profusely adorned with castles, religious houses, picturesque cottages, and beautiful chateaus, behind which the vast forest of Landeswald extends to an immense distance: at length the

numerous spires, and the lofty towers and palaces of Mayence opened upon us, from the opposite side of the river, and had a very venerable, and majestic effect. <441>

CHAPTER XXV.

[Mainz]

Biberich; Charlemagne's Palace; Bridge of Boats; Mayence. Horrors of War; The Art of Printing; The Hockheim Hills; Remarks on old Hock; The Tooth-brush; Frankfort; Splendid Table d'Hote; Inauguration of the Prince Primate; Anecdotes of the French; The Fair.

Our entrance into an avenue of nearly a mile and a half in length, thickly lined with walnut, apple, pear, and plumb trees, loaded with fruit, announced our approach to Biberich, the superb palace of the Prince of Nassau Usingen. As I made a drawing of this palace and the adjacent town when I descended the Rhine, and the boat was in a central part of the river, it will be unnecessary to describe it. I had no time to view the apartments, but my laquais informed me, that they were grand, and furnished in a princely manner: the town is modern, small, and very handsome. As we skirted Ingelheim, we were informed that the illustrious Charlemagne, the great prototype of Bonaparte, selected this place for his favorite residence, where he built a magnificent

<442>

palace, which was supported by a hundred columns of Italian marble, and had an immense number of apartments, in which synods and

the most important councils of state were held: that his son Louis le Debonnaire⁷ died, broken-hearted here, in consequence of the rebellions of his sons Lotharius and Louis.

Not a vestige remains of this celebrated pile to prove that it once existed: but in the life of Louis le Debonnaire, Nigellus⁸ thus consecrates this building:

*Est locus ille situs rapidi prope flumina Rheni,
Ornatus variis cultibus et dapibus.
Quo domus alta putet, centum perfixa columnis,
Quo redditus varii tectaque multimoda,
Mille aditus, redditus, millenaque claustra domorum
Acta magistrorum artificumque manu.*

*[Es gibt jenen Ort an den Fluten des reissenden Rheines,
Reich an Bildung und Feiern.
Dort verfällt das hohe Haus, von 100 Säulen getragen,
Wo unterschiedliche Wohungen und vielfältige Zimmer,
Tausend Türen und tausend Zimmer,
Geschaffen von den Händen der Meister und Handwerker.]*

No doubt is entertained that that august pile once embellished this spot. Charlemagne could not have chosen a place more advantageous with regard to his political relations, or more beautiful in richness and variety of scenery, where Nature every where saluted him with wine, with fruit, and every desirable production of a genial soil, fit to make glad the soul of an emperor.

In less than an hour after quitting Ingelheim we reached <443> Cassel [=Kastel], immediately opposite Mayence, to which it

communicates by an amazing long bridge, formed of a moveable platform, placed upon fifty-six lighters, two or three of which draw out at pleasure by means of ropes and pulleys, to open a passage for vessels ascending or descending the Rhine, and is three thousand eight hundred and thirty feet long; one very similar to this was built by order of Charlemagne at the same place: here our voyage terminated. On account of the search of the custom-house officers being very severe on the French side, the passengers prefer being landed at Cassel: where all the bustle of a populous city, and a great military station, presented itself. The bridge was crowded with beautiful and elegantly dressed women, French officers, soldiers, and various other persons, in carriages and on foot, going to or returning from Mayence, which, with its venerable cathedral and splendid buildings, extending themselves along the river, had a very grand effect. Our luggage was searched by a German custom-house officer, who behaved very politely; and I proceeded to a good hotel in Cassel, and sat down with several French officers to some excellent refreshments.

In my description of the Rhine as I ascended it, I have, from the desire of not fatiguing my reader, only noticed the principal towns and objects, some of which I visited then, and others on my return. I felt myself abundantly <444> rewarded by the unparalleled beauty and grandeur of those scenes, which so often, excited my admiration and amazement, for any little inconvenience, and perhaps some little hazard, to which I was occasionally exposed, and I regret, that I can only convey a very imperfect impression of them to those who have never had the good fortune, to form their personal opinion of them.

Having been previously warned not to attempt to enter Mayence, which, as it is now incorporated with France, I shall call by that name, on account of the unusual rigour exercised by the police towards strangers, in consequence of the city being the great military depot of the French on the Rhine, and the greatest skill of their engineers having been lavished on its fortifications, I was content to view it from Cassel, and to receive some little account of it from a very intelligent German, who had resided there some years, as we looked upon the city from our hotel window. The electoral palace, of red brick, by the side of which the Rhine flows, where Bonaparte resided during his stay in Mayence, in 1804, presented a very noble appearance. The dome or cathedral, which rose with awful dignity before us, is a vast gothic pile, having four unequal towers: it had once a lofty spire, but a thunder-storm, many years since, beat it down with lightning, and burnt a considerable part of the edifice. Few <445> cities have suffered more than this by the ravages of War; most of its civil and sacred buildings have been at one period or another damaged or destroyed by cannon, the ruins of which still remain. My intelligent friend informed me that this city was celebrated for the great beauty of its female inhabitants, and that before the French took possession of it the electoral court threw a brilliant lustre over the place, which was unrivalled by any city on the Rhine for its gaiety, elegance, and splendor; characteristics which have been impaired, but far from annihilated. It contains colleges, lyceums, a theatre, and ball and concert rooms, all of which continue to be well attended.

Mayence, from its having been always considered as one of the great bulwarks of Germany, suffered most dreadfully in the last war. In

October 1792, General Gustine compelled it to surrender after a slight bombardment, and under his administration the majority of the inhabitants who did not fly entered cordially into the views of the French revolutionists: he augmented the fortifications of the city, and placed a strong garrison in the suburbs of Gassel, which has always been considered as a place of great importance, and raised a number of redoubts and batteries there. In July, 1793, the Prussians, after seizing on Costheim, and defeating an army under <446> General Houchard, which was marching to succour the garrison of Mayence, reduced both that city and Cassel, the miserable inhabitants of which endured the greatest horrors, and many of the finest and most venerable buildings of the former were fired, and nearly destroyed, during the siege. Merlin, who acted as one of the commissioners to the French army during the siege, stated to the convention, that such was the scarcity of provisions, a pound of horse-fesh had been sold at two, and a dead cat at six livres, and that five thousand men had perished in defence of the place. Although Custine had no choice left but to capitulate, Barrere, by his report of the siege, led to his being denounced and decapitated. During this siege the palace of the provosts suffered terribly; the celebrated electoral palace called *La Favorite*, and seven churches, were totally destroyed; and scarce a house escaped without being pierced with cannon balls. Mutton sold for sixty sols a pound, and beef one hundred sols; and at last bell-metal and paper money were used: the following was the superscription of the latter:

Monnoye de siège.

10 sols,
à changer contre billon
ou monnoye du metal de siège.

(Signed) *Reubell. Houchard.*

Siège de Mayence,

*Mar[s] 1793 — [L'an] 2de. de la Rep[ublique]
Fran[caise]*

<447>

And, what an epicure will perhaps more regret, the whole vineyard of Hockheim was destroyed.

The French were highly indignant at the loss of so important a place, and resolved upon attempting the recovery of it from its victors, as soon as the mighty objects which claimed on all sides the activity and energy of their rulers and generals, were accomplished; and accordingly, in June 1795, the French army again blockaded this devoted city, during which it sustained a renewal of its suffering, from which it again was relieved by the successful operations of Mareschal Clairfayt, at the head of the Austrians against the revolutionary troops, who were attacked and routed upon the heights of Mombach, when the Mareschal appeared before Mayence, attacked and carried the entrenched camp of the enemy, upon which the skill of their ablest engineers had been exerted for eleven months to render it invulnerable. General Schaal, who occupied this strong position, on the retreat of Jourdan, with fifty-two battalions of infantry and five regiments of cavalry, was obliged to retire with great loss in cannon, ammunition, and men. In this bombardment

some Tyrol sharp-shooters displayed their wonted skill in an amazing manner, by killing, from the banks of Cassel, several French officers with their rifle-pieces, who were walking on the ramparts on the opposite side of the river, the~~448~~ breadth of which I have already ascertained by the length of the floating bridge. In the beginning of the year 1797 a better destiny smiled upon the French arms in this region, and Moreau and Hoche made both sides of the Rhine resound with their victories, when the troops which garrisoned Mayence, to prevent the entire and unavailing demolition of the city, relinquished its possession, and the French remained masters of it.

Volumes have been written upon the superior pretension of Mayence to the original invention of the art of printing, and to transfer the honors of the discovery from Lawrence Coster of Haarlem to John Guttenburg, a citizen of this place. A vast deal of special pleading has been displayed on both sides; and, to use a jockey phrase, these racers for the merited gratitude and admiration of all who followed them, reached the goal almost „neck and neck“, but the majority of judgments given appropriate the glory to Coster: his mode was the simplest, and therefore thought to be the earliest; his moulds were made of wood and immovable, and he stamped the paper only on one side: Guttenberg printed on both sides of the leaf with moveable metal types.

The extremity of the bridge towards Cassel, and all the ramparts and redoubts of the town, which are very strongly ~~449~~

fortified, were occupied by French soldiers. With two German gentlemen and a Dutch officer, I sat off for Frankfort, distant, eight *stunder* or hours, or four German miles, under a scorching sun, which did not

seem to have any effect upon a large party of monks and priests, and followers bearing the host, who were walking bare headed in procession to a monastery which we had just passed, near which I left the carriage to make a sketch of Mayence, upon a projecting bank of the river Maine, where I bade adieu to the Rhine. Our road lay through an avenue of walnut, apple, and pear trees, loaded with fruit, to which passengers helped themselves whenever inclination disposed them to do so; and part of the Hockheim hills, covered with the renowned vineyards, which produce what in England is called „old hock“. As many a saint, high in superstitious veneration, must have had at least ten sculls and one hundred toe nails, if no illusion has been practised by those who have exhibited them to the credulous in different eras and various regions, so nothing short of the power of transmuting water into wine, could produce from these vineyards the immense quantity of wine which passes under the title of hock. Certain it is, that the greater quantity of wine honored with that name, is from the grapes of both sides of the lower part of the Rhine, which, in the district where it is produced, very old genuine <450> Hockheim wine is sold at the rate of three, and sometimes five, shillings a bottle.

[...]

Nachwort zu dieser Folge

Sir John Carr (1772-1832) war ein englischer Anwalt und Reiseschriftsteller. Im Jahre 1806, als das linke Rheinufer französisches Staatsgebiet ist, gibt er sich dort als US-Amerikaner aus, was in Bonn beinahe als Fälschung entdeckt worden wäre. Carr bewegt sich mit offenen Augen und Ohren im Land, und hat offensichtlich weniger Probleme, mit den Einheimischen oder den Franzosen ins Gespräch zu kommen als sein Landsmann Gardnor 20 Jahre vor ihm. Seinen Landsleuten gibt er die üblichen (Kauf-)Tipps zum Rheinwein.

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Anmerkungen

¹ Die französische Fassung unter (Robineau, 1791) und (Robineau, 1792).

² Spitzname für eine Honigmelone.

³ Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832): "Melrose Abbey", 5 ff.

⁴ „Hock“ ist eine englische Verballhornung des Weines aus „Hochheim“, siehe unten Seite 439.

⁵ auch: „another“

⁶ Auszüge des „Rheinweinliedes“ von Matthias Claudius, zuerst 1777 in „Sämmtliche Werke des Wandsbecker Bothen“, Dritter Theil, S.116 ff.

⁷ Ludwig I. (genannt Ludwig der Fromme, französisch Louis le Pieux oder le Debonnaire; * 778 in Chasseneuil bei Poitiers; † 20. Juni 840 in Ingelheim am Rhein) war König des Fränkischen Reiches und Kaiser (813–840). Er war Sohn und Nachfolger Karls des Großen.

⁸ „In honorem Hludowici christianissimi Caesaris Augusti“, III, 181 ff.