

**THE LAY OF THE BELL (DAS
LIED VON DER GLOCKE) AND
OTHER BALLADS. TRANSLATED
INTO ENGLISH METRE**

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The Lay of the Bell (Das Lied von der Glocke) and Other Ballads. Translated into English Metre
by Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller & Andrew Wood

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JOHANN CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER & ANDREW WOOD

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THE LAY OF THE BELL

(*DAS LIED VON DER GLOCKE*)

AND OTHER BALLADS

BY
Handwritten signature
SCHILLER

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH METRE

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

GREAT and fascinating as Schiller is as a dramatic poet, not less great and fascinating is he as a lyrical poet; and all those who, whether in the original or through translations, know his *Gedichte*—his Ballads and Poems—know what a wealth of intellectual power and poetical beauty they comprise, and what a wealth of enjoyment the perusal of them is calculated to bestow on those who read them. They have, as might be expected, found various translations into many languages. In our own language, Lytton Bulwer, the first Lord Lytton, has pre-eminently signalized himself by a very fine rendering of the whole of them, which originally appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*. 'The Lay of the Bell' found, years ago, in Lord Francis Egerton, afterwards Earl of Ellesmere, a very able translator; and more

recently, Mr. Merivale, Mr. Arthur Mills, and others have published good translations of that magnificent poem. I venture, in all humility, in the present little volume to produce a new translation not only of the 'Lay of the Bell,' but also of a few other of the ballads which have always seemed to me to be peculiarly beautiful. For the sake of German scholars I have also placed in juxtaposition with the translations the original German.

In this Introduction I proceed to give such brief notices of those ballads which I have translated as may perhaps tend in some measure, however imperfectly, to illustrate and explain them.

THE LAY OF THE BELL (*Das Lied von der Glocke*).

Within the compass of a poem which is not of great length, Schiller, in his 'Lay of the Bell,' has comprised a marvellous amount of poetry, of pathos, and of philosophy. From the nature of this poem, it is clearly not one to be dashed off in a short time, but one which required much thought and reflection, and much revision; and as a fact we know, that though

the original idea of the poem was first entertained by the poet in 1797, it was not till 1800 that it was published. It has taken a strong hold on the German mind in the original, and in translation, though of course any translation must come infinitely short of the original, it has been universally admired wherever it has been read. The conception and the execution are equally skilful and effective. As a running bass, as it were, to the varied melodies of the song, are conveyed in a series of symmetrical stanzas the details of the founding of the Bell, from the forming of the mould by the master founder, until at length complete it is hoisted into the belfry, whence for many generations it is destined to send forth all around, in irregular alternation, tones of joy and of sorrow, of peace and of strife.

Schiller must have carefully and industriously inquired into, and personally observed, the various stages of the process of the casting of the Bell, else he could not so accurately and graphically have described them in his Lay.

We have first the fixing firmly in the ground the mould formed of burnt clay, which the genius and skill of the master has devised and executed. Both