

**VERSE TRANSLATIONS FROM THE
GERMAN: INCLUDING BÜRGER'S
LEONORE, SCHILLER'S SONG
OF THE BELL, AND OTHER POEMS**

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Verse Translations from the German: Including Bürger's Leonore, Schiller's Song of the Bell, and Other Poems by William Whewell

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WILLIAM WHEWELL

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P R E F A C E.

THE English admirers of German poetry cannot help requiring that translations of their favourite poems should unite several very various merits. The relation of the two languages and of their literature naturally suggests this expectation: for the languages have the same original stock, the same rhythm, in a great measure the same familiar constructions; and the modern German poets have caught their style and manner (except in their hexameters and elegiacs) from the same models as the English. No translation of a German poem into English quite satisfies us, which does not present to us all that the original contains, and no more, with a similar character of style, a similar movement of versification, and along with all this, a freedom of expression as complete as if it were not a translation, but an original.

These are severe requirements, and it is not hoped that they are attained in the following attempts: but that we cannot help looking for such translations, is a reason why new attempts of this kind may be received

with indulgence, though there may already exist in the language very meritorious translations of the same poems. It is, however, right to state that the attempts now printed were written principally before the author had seen other translations of the same poems, and in all cases without any reference to or recollection of the other translations.

I have added a few Notes, mainly referring to the history of the poems; they are in a great measure borrowed from Hoffmeister's *Life of Schiller*, and other sources.

I have inserted in the Notes several extracts from the poems here translated, in order that the German reader who does not happen to recollect the original poem, may have the opportunity of immediately seeing the degree of fidelity which the translations attain.

APRIL 23, 1847.

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