LEONORA

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649318896

Leonora by Gottfried Augustus Bürgher

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd. Cover @ 2017

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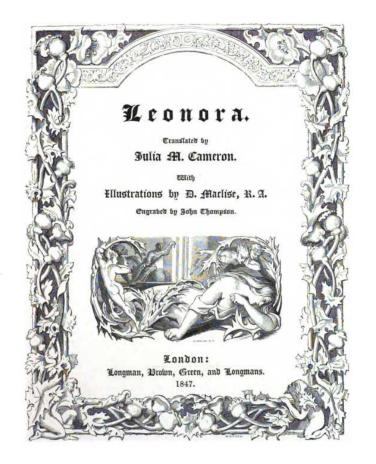
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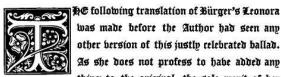
LEONORA



Leonora.



Brefact.



was made before the Author had seen any other bersion of this justly celebrated ballad. As she does not profess to habe added any

thing to the original, the sole merit of her

bersion (if it habe any) must consist in accurately and bibidly representing the German poem; for she has endeaboured not only to exhibit the spirit, but to follow where it was possible the bery words, of Bürger; and, in consequence of the common origin of the two languages, this can frequently be done in translating from German into English, or from English into German, as has been well eremplified in their translation of our Shakspeare.

The bersion had been lying upwards of a year in a port-

folio, when the Author became acquainted with the celebrated translations of Walliam Taylor of Porwich and Walter Scott. These distinguished men have infused their own genius into their translations; and Bürger is forgotten, whilst Scott and Taylor arrest the attention, and disell muon the memory as for ever associated with his

their own genius into their translations; and Bürger is forgotten, whilst Scott and Taylor arrest the attention, and dwell upon the memory as for ever associated with his popular ballad. In this instance the case will be found to be far different. Bürger must here be felt throughout. The deep pathos and the simplicity of the dialogue, and the mystery, the terror, and the supernatural rapidity of the ride and its conclusion, if they are found here at all, are his. Beep feeling finds its bent in the simplest words, and thus it is that Bürger ercels Scott and Taylor in describing the broken-heartedness of the afflicted maden. The twenty-second stanza is, in this translation, quite literal; and, in the whole circle of our English poetry, never was the passion of lobe more faithfully painted. Scott's translation is incomplete; and, like Taylor's, its effect, whatever else it may be, is not that of the German poem. Masters of their own

art, they could not be tied down to copp a portrait which

another master had painted. They could not strike their lyre to sing without variation the song of a brother bard. An humbler disciple of the art can best do this; and the present Cranslator, not aspiring to create, has studied only to catch the likeness of a beautiful picture, and to copy faithfully each feature and expression of the original. One only deviation must be acknowledged, bis, the changing of the metre where the spectral career begins. It was thought that the rapidity of the action would be better represented by rhymed couplets of equal length, than by the stanza which had been previously adopted.

The lines,

"Tramp tramp across the land they rode, Hylash splash across the sea,"

which habe attracted so much attention to the poem, do not appear in this translation. They are Taylor's own; and Scott, fascinated with their bibly reality, embodied them in his own bersion with confession and apology. Pot being Bürger's, they are not in this translation, which may at

Preface.

first probe a disappointment to the reader: but the Author does not fear the sacrifice of them; for Bürger in his own strength can stand alone, and, as he has laid the scene of his poem in the interior of Germany, the introduction of the sea would have been incongruous. Peither is the epoch changed, as in the bersions in question, which make the lober a victim of the crusade of Frederick Barbarossa, instead of one of the slain in a war between "the Empress and the King." In a word, it has been the aim of this translation to let Bürger speak to the English reader as nearly as possible in his own phrase, and to tell his own tale.

Leonora.