

**THE SON OF THE
WILDERNESS; A
DRAMATIC POEM**

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The Son of the Wilderness; A Dramatic Poem by William Henry Charlton

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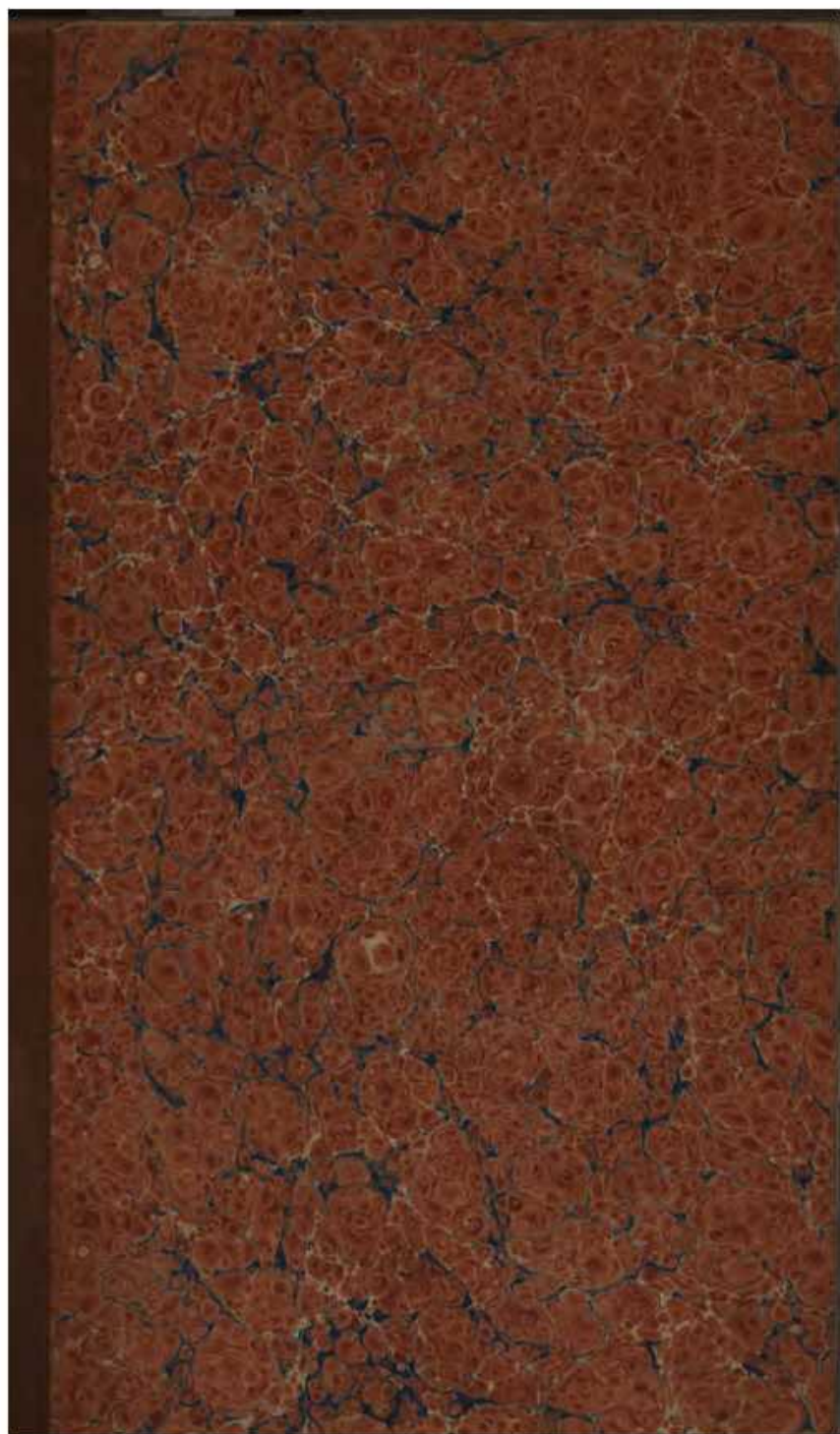
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WILLIAM HENRY CHARLTON

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THE
SON OF THE WILDERNESS;

A Dramatic Poem.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

FRIEDRICH HALM.



BY

WILLIAM HENRY CHARLTON.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY LUKE JAMES HANSARD,
NEAR LINCOLN'S INN-FIELDS.

1847.



P R E F A C E

BY THE TRANSLATOR.



THE author of the Drama, of which a translation is here offered to the public, has, for several years past, been highly appreciated on the continent as a dramatist and poet; but as he has hitherto been comparatively little known in England, the following account of himself and of his works may not prove altogether unacceptable.

Eligius Francis Joseph, Baron von Münch-Bellinghausen, who has preferred to conceal his name and rank under the literary appellation of *Friedrich Halm*, was born in the year 1806, at *Cracow*, then a part of the Austrian dominions. His father, *Cajetan*, was Counsellor of the Court of Appeal in that city; he became afterwards a Counsellor of State, and for his services in the judicial department stood high in the confidence and favour of the late Emperor, *Francis II.* Though destined by education to a career similar to that in which his father had already distinguished himself, *Eligius* shewed, from an early age, the most marked poetical and particularly dramatic predilections, and at the age of twenty had already written his first tragedy. It was not, however, till the year 1835, that he could

be prevailed upon to bring his productions under the eye of the public, when his drama of *Griseldis** was first acted at Vienna, and subsequently at most of the other theatres of Germany, with unequivocal success.

This was succeeded by *Der Adept* in 1836, by *Camoens* in 1837, by *Imelda Lambertazzi* in 1838, and by *Ein Milde Urtheil* in 1840. These dramas were all more or less successful, but their fame was eclipsed in 1842, when *Der Sohn der Wildniss*, the subject of the following pages, made its appearance, and was enthusiastically received not only at Vienna, and throughout Germany, but also in Denmark, where a Danish version of it was performed. The latest work of *Friedrich Halm* is *Sampiero*, a drama which first saw the light in 1844. Besides the above dramas, this author has translated or imitated the works of several foreign writers, among which we may instance the *Cymbeline* of *Shakspeare*, and two of the dramas of *Lope de Vega*. He has also written a few short poems in the lyric and epic styles, the excellence of which is sufficient to cause a regret that the powers of his muse have not been more frequently exercised in these species of composition. *Baron E. von Münch-Bellinghausen* resides at present at Vienna, where, since the year 1845, he has occupied the post of *Custos* or *Conservator* of the Imperial Library.

Whether a drama like the present one could be successfully adapted to the *English* stage, is, perhaps, more than doubtful,—so wide a difference exists between the dramatic taste of England, and that of Germany. The

* An English translation of *GRISELDIS* appeared in London in 1844.

PREFACE.

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translator, therefore, can only hope that the public will appreciate this Drama for perusal, and he trusts that while he has closely, but not servilely, adhered to the text of his author, he may have succeeded in preserving not only the moral beauty of many of the sentiments, but much also of the graceful poetry in which they are originally expressed.

W. H. C.

January 14th, 1847.