Remarks on Tieck's translation of Shakspere's Macbeth (Act I.).

A critical study,

preceded by some hints towards Shakspere and his relations to the literatures of foreign countries, especially to that of Germany.

Stratford is the name of a little town that is situated in the heart of old England, in Warwickshire, on the „soft flowing" Avon. In former times it is said to have been a renowned commercial place, at the present day, however, little is still to be seen of its mercantile pursuits of yore. It has rather been reduced to a mere market-town of no great extent, but, though deprived of its ancient importance, it is, nevertheless, the aim of innumerable pilgrims wandering thither every year. This fact may seem strange, indeed, as the surges of active life do not reach Stratford, and as busy existence is almost unknown to it now-a-days. It will seem the more so, as we must add that neither the little town itself, though certainly notorious for its cleanliness and neatness, nor its environs, though they will gratify the taste of every one who is fond of a rich rural scenery pleasing with the combination of stream and forest, glade and valley, pastures and trim fields dotted with cattle or yellow with corn, have exerted any attractive power upon those visitors.

To be sure, no motive of the kind exists, the true one must be sought for else where. And yet it seems almost superfluous to mention it expressively. For, who — at least among the literary men of any civilized nation — should not be initiated into the mystery that makes Stratford a sanctuary venerated and frequented by all who worship Genius? Who does not know that the very name of Stratford, of the Avon, yea, that every thing here is associated with the idea of the greatest poetical genius of England, of the whole world perhaps?

Here Englands pride, the immortal William Shakspere was born on the 23d of April 1564, here he spent his childhood and youth, hither he returned after a glorious, though not always undisturbed career, as „the infant does to his mother's arms to sink in sleep", here he died at the age of fifty-two, and here he was buried in the venerable parish church that is standing on the banks of the „gentle" Avon.

It is to this her excellent son that Stratford owes her being so widely famed and resorted to; he has, as we may be allowed to say, hallowed the very ground of his birth place, so that truly the words of Goethe, our great German poet, may be applied to it:

„Die Stätte, die ein guter Mensch betrat,
Ist eingeweiht, nach hundert Jahren klingt
Sein Wort und seine That dem Enkel wieder."

And, indeed, though not one, but nearly three centuries have elapsed, since he has entered this world of ours, his words, too, have lost nothing of their magic charm, of that gigantic power that made them take possession of the whole literary world. His poems translated into so many tongues have become teachers of Wisdom and Humanity in almost every country of the Orb; they will, as they have done till now, continue to bear witness of a poetical grandeur not yet surpassed, nay, not even rivalled, and will prove that Genius is living and working for Eternity.

If, however, it is not to be denied that even the productions of Genius can fall into oblivion, yet, this can be their fate only for a while, for they will soon reconquer the lost territory and ever again win such appreciation as is due to them. Such, at least, has been the case with Shakspere. Really, there has been a time, where he seems to have been wholly neglected, where he has been forgotten even in his own country. Those violent convulsions occasioned by the civil disturbances that agitated England some twenty years after his death, proved, as it is easily to be supposed from their peculiar character, not the least favourable to Poetry at all. Especially the religious troubles did not suffer the existence of fine arts; in those peevish times the ascetic Puritan would abhor them as diabolical schemes. The times that followed the Commonwealth and Protectorate, during the disastrous reign of the Stuarts, offer an aspect which, as to literary works, is likewise far from being pleasing. The Restoration, then, instead of healing such wounds as the Revolution had inflicted upon literature, brought in evils of other kinds, which propagated for several generations and prevented an original and national poetry. The Court and its aristocratic adherents had followed the example given by the court of the french monarch Louis XIV. Besides, a depravation of Moral in which they equalled, if they did not surpass their french models, they had reimported a taste for french literature, that has prevailed for more than one century in England. It was but by degrees that the frivoloussness of public and private life which had infected and corrupted the people, too, disappeared, that the shallowness of their literary views made room to such as were able of allowing them to recognize and appreciate the hidden treasures of their own home-bred but long time disregarded Poetry.

About the middle of the eighteenth century a man, more qualified perhaps to conceive the beauties of the Shaksperian Muse than any person else, gave the first impulse of interesting his country-men for the literary merits of their most illustrious poet. This man was David Garrick, one of the best dramatic performers that England has to boast of. Though, indeed, single voices [1]) that had here and there undertaken to point at Shakspere's poetical accomplishements, had, in general, met with no sympathetic feelings of the people that had become insensible, as it were, to that kind of poetry, yet they scarcely deserve to be noticed, and it was but upon Garricks instigation that a universal acknowledgement of the literary merits of the nation's greatest Bard took place, when the two-centurial jubilee of the poet's birthday, was celebrated in the most solemn manner, being arranged by him at Shakspere's native town, Stratford on Avon, in the year 1764. From this day, we may rate Shakspere again to have gained the favor of his country.

It is a matter of course, however, that we are not at all disposed, by mentioning Garrick's undeniable merits about the reinstalment of Shakspere, to maintain that it is only to him that England owes to have become again acquainted with Shakspere, we needs must admit of a signal share falling to the happy concurrence of different circumstances, among which me need but name the revival of the national Life in England which had been, as we have already intimated, wholly suffocated hitherto by the exceeding preponderance of the french influence, and which now, when the political state of the country had settled upon the solid ground of the German-Protestant Succession, began to shake off the foreign yoke that had fettered this national development.

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[1]) John Dryden (1631—1700) f. i had paid a tribute of warm admiration to Shakspere in his „Essay of Dramatic Poetry".

No sooner, however, England had resuscitated „the old wizard“ from his tomb than he began a triumphant march through Europe. But of all nations there were but the Teutonic races that immediately prepared a kind and cordial reception for him. They felt not only his kinsmen with respect to their common origin, but there existed, no doubt, an incontestable congeniality between them. Though a selection of his dramatic pieces had been translated into the French language [1]) some years before the first German translation [2]) came out, and though soon after a new french translation [3]) followed to which the notes of the best English Editors and Commentators were added, yet the French, accustomed and devoted as they were to the regular drama based upon a formal observance of those three unities falsely imputed to Aristotle, were then fully incapable of getting a taste for those powerful productions of Shakspere. Besides, it is not to be forgotten that at that time the french Parnassus was ruled by the Olympian Voltaire who in his famous letter adressed to the French Academy, [4]) by a conceited and insipid critic, tried to undo Shakspere's merits whose large and comprehensive soul he, perhaps, was the least able to understand. Nevertheless, at length, Shakspere has made his way in spite of Voltaire; and France, at the present day, does not remain far behind in worshiping Skakspere's Genius. Among his truest votaries we encounter a great deal of literary men, and among them names of high renown f. i. Guizot, Havard, Chénédollé, Nizard, Michel Laroche, Alf. de Vigny, Ph. Chasles, Chateaubriand, V. Hugo [5]) a. s. o. These men have in the most eloquent manner endeavored to interpret Shakspere's writings to their own nation which was once possessed with such prejudices as we have mentioned, and as indeed were not easy to be removed, because they were in too strict a repugnance with their former literary views. But, nevertheless, if we dare not say that Shakspere is quite endenized in France, it is sufficient that we may boast of his having gotten a footing there, and that it is confidently to be expected that the circle of his french friends will soon enlarge.

The other nations of Roman origin have likewise not been able to hide themselves from the influence of his Genius, though the interest they have taken in the great British Poet is comparatively a small one Nor was it immediately after his literary resurrection that Shakspere attracted their attention. Modern times, however, have produced a perceptible advance. For, in proportion as the reasons which hitherto more or less opposed Shakspere's being introduced into these countries, cease to exist, reasons, which chiefly depend on Shakspere's individuality contrasting with the national character, the number of those who begin to value Shakspere for his productive power as well as for the strength and variety of his imagination increases every year. As it has been reserved to the present days to establish an international intercourse in so many respects, in peace to make up so many differences, they seem also to be called upon for realizing an exchange of the literary treasures of the different nations, so that they become the common property of the whole civilized world. Italy, the mother of those „Romanish“ nations, in former times the nurse and guardian of the liberal arts, has not abstained from studying the „unequalled English Dramatist“, and we meet, indeed, with a good deal of works concerning him, (among which there are several excellent translations), [6]) whilst, on the other hand,

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[1]) Théatre anglais par de la Place. 8. Paris 1745—48. — [2]) Shakespeare W. theatralische Werke Aus dem Englischen von Chr. M. Wieland. 8 Bände gr. 8. Zürich 1762—66. This translation was shortly after remodelled and completed by Eschenburg. Shakespeare W. theatralische Werke, herausgegeben von Eschenburg. 13 Bände gr. 8. Zürich 1775—1782. — [3]) Shakespeare traduit de l'Anglais (en prose) par Le Tourneur (le Comte de Catuelan et Fontaine Malherbe) 20 Vol. 8. Paris 1776—83. — [4]) Lettre de Mr. de Voltaire à l'académie française lue dans cette Académie à la solemnité de la St. Louis le 25 Août 1776. In this letter Voltaire presumes to prove that by introducing Shakspere into France by means of the above quoted translation the true dramatic taste of the nation would be corrupted. It is superfluous to squander a word about the author's insolent and prepossessed critic. — [5]) V. Hugo is preparing an essay on Shakspere's genius that is to be published on occasion of the approaching Jubilee. — [6]) Besides a great number of single plays, some of which we find repeatedly turned into the Italian f. i Hamlet, Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth, Othello a. s. o. we have to mention among the complete translations of Shakspere's

Spain[1]) and Portugal have shown a great reserve. A trifle, however, are all these performances with regard to those which give evidence to the intense and lasting interest that, as above mentioned, the Teutonic races have taken in Shakspere, among which the German nation surpasses all her sisters, although it is not to be denied that the Dutch[2]) as well as the Scandinavians[3]) have both with skill and zeal tried to familiarize their respective literatures with Shakspere, too.

„Germany is Shakspere's second fatherland, — yea, it is his real native land", so you hear everywhere in this our country. Goethe our most distinguished poet asserts that Shakspere has been appreciated by our nation more than by any other and perhaps also more than by his own.[4]) And, indeed, it is unquestionable that German industry and erudition have, in the highest degree, contributed to bring to light the treasures of his Genius.

The introduction of Shakspere into Germany dates, as we have already referred to, from the time of his revival in England. Before this period, we may say, he has scarcely been known in our country.[5]) But about that time Wieland published his translation of a selection of Shakspere's plays, which in spite of the many faults that were attached to it — the translation was written in prose and defeated by a good deal of insipid annotations[6]) — induced Lessing our illustrious critic to take his part and to defend him against the reproaches of some fault-finding censurers who, taking no notice of the great difficulty of such an undertaking, did not acknowledge its incontestable merits, but blamed only its weaknesses and defects.[7])

Writings: 1) Shakspere Tragedie recate in versi italiani da Michele Leoni. 8 Vol. 8 Pisa e Firenze 1815. A second revised and corrected Edition of this unfinished work was published under the same title at Verona 1819—22 (14 Vol.) 2) Shakspere, Teatro completo, tradotto dall' originale inglese in prosa italiana da Carlo Rusconi. 8. Padove 1831. (The second edition followed 1837 and the third 1840).

[1]) Of the Spanish Shakspere literature we can but record a translation of Shakspere's Hamlet we once have seen with our own eyes, bearing the title: Shakespeare's Hamlet, tragedia traducidada y ilustrada con la vida del autor y notas criticas por J. Celenio. 4 Madrid 1798. — [2]) There exists a dutch translation of Shakspere's complete works, which we dare not omit, being published at the end of the last century, when Shakspere again was brought into vogue everywhere: Will. Shakespeare's Toneelspelen. Mit te Bronwollen en Aantekeningen van verscheide beroemde Schryveren. 8. 5 Deelen. Te Amsterdam by A. Borchers 1778—82. Though we can not dwell on the single plays which have come out in Dutch language, yet we must point to the following: De moor van Venetie uit het engelsch van W. Shakespeare vertaald door J. Moulin. Te Kampen by de erven A. Valckenier. Among critic works we name: Levensberigt van den engelschen Dichter Shakespeare en over het eigenhaardige van zyne genie. 8. Zutphen 1824. — [3]) We cannot forbear quoting some Danish and Swedish Shakspere translations, too: 1) Shakespeare W. dramatiska Vaerker overs. af P. Foersom og P. F. Wulf 9 Deelen 8. Kjöbenhaven 1807—1825. 2) Shakespeare W. Lystspiel in 1 Deel overs. ved S. Meisling. 12. Kjöbenhaven 1810. 3) Shakespeare's dramatiska Arbeten ofversatta af C. A. Nagberg. 12 Vol. Stockholm 1847—51. — [4]) „Wahrheit und Dichtung" P. 3. — [5]) To prove how little Shakspere was known in Germany before this period, it must be mentioned, that he is passed over in silence by Gottsched, when speaking of the English Dramatists (Krit. Dichtkunst 2. Edition p. 696) and that Bodmer (in 1740) does not even know how to write his name, terming it Sasper as well as Saspar. — Probably Morhoff was the first of all German authors who has named Shakspere; for he makes mention of him together with Beaumont and Fletcher in a work, published in 1682, concerning the precepts of the German language, avows however, at the same time, never to have read any one of his plays. (Chapt. 4 „Der Engellaender Poeterey") — Julius Caesar was, as it seems, the first of Shakspere's plays that has been translated into our tongue. The author of this translation, once minister of the King of Prussia, Caspar Wilhelm von Bork, had entitled it: Versuche einer gebundenen Uebersetzung des Trauerspiels von dem Tode des Julius Caesar. Aus dem englischen Werke des Shakespeare. — Further particulars referring to this subject are to be found in „Koberstein, Grundriss der Geschichte der deutschen National-Literatur. II. Vol. p. 1341 sqq. (4. Edition). — [6]) Goethe says with respect to this translation: „Wir sahen Wielanden — der uns als Uebersetzer so grossen Vortheil gebracht, nunmehr als Kritiker launisch, einseitig und ungerecht." — („Wahrheit und Dichtung" P. 3.) — [7]) Cf. Lessing. Hamburg. Dramaturgie Vol. I. p. 14. — „Wir haben eine Uebersetzung von Shakespeare. Sie ist noch kaum fertig geworden und Niemand bekümmert sich schon mehr darum. Die Kunstrichter haben viel Böses davon gesagt, ich hätte grosse Lust, sehr viel Gutes davon zu sagen; nicht, um die Fehler zu vertheidigen, welche sie darin bemerkt haben, sondern weil

Lessing interceding so warmly in favor of Wieland has, at the some time, rendered the most important service to his country. Whosoever is acquainted with the course the german literature has taken in the eighteenth century, will, no doubt, avow that, as to dramatic poetry, there was reigning the greatest depravation of taste imaginable. France had prompted to our play-writers the pattern which they were anxious enough to imitate, and in so strict a manner, that their works were nothing more than the poor likenesses of their foreign models. Moreover, all poetical feelings had, as it seems, forsaken them; there scarcely existed poets, there were but versifiers, the whole art of whom was confined to that declamatory manner which makes appear a play as a series of recitations more or less pathetic. Besides these inconveniencies [1]) which adhere to the german dramatic literature in the former half of the preceding century, we had, to be sure, to quote still many other, but, as the inquiry into these improprieties would force us to enter into such details, as lie beyond the competency of this sketch, it will be sufficient to have pointed to that pitiful state of things. So, we shall be enabled to understand and to value Lessings merits the better, and thus, as they deserve to be valued. For, to his energic and penetrating mind we are principally indebted for the deliverance of our literature — and especially of the dramatic department in it — from the pernicious influences which had nearly empoisoned all its natural dispositions. At the same time, however, when he commenced his attacks upon those of his compatriots who were but the mere mimicks of their french idols, and among whom Gottsched [2]) made the principal figure, he, on the other hand, showed them the way upon which they had to proceed in order to get a national drama. Whilst, in the most convincing manner, he proved that the German national character abhorred totally from the rigorous principles upon which the regular french tragedy is founded as well as from their consequences which exhibit an oppressive predominancy of conventional notions and forms over natural emotions, he demanded that the german dramatists might enter into a connexion with the old English Stage, [3]) that, above all, they might study Shakspere whom he considered as an inexhaustible spring whose limpid waters were to refresh and to fertilize the barren and waste wilderness of their own literature, and, at last, that they might imitate him, though, of course, neither in a slavish nor tasteless manner. [4]) Lessing's counsel was followed, though it was neither immediately nor easily that those inveterate prejudices prevailing upon most of the literary men of that age, were to be extirpated, and really, it proved beneficial to our imaginative literature in general.

It is not difficult to evince the amount of these influences that have come from Great-Britain,

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ich glaube, dass man von diesen Fehlern nicht so grosses Aufheben hätte machen sollen. Das Unternehmen war schwer, ein jeder Andere hätte in der Eile noch öfter verstossen und würde aus Unwissenheit und Bequemlichkeit noch mehr überhüpft haben, aber was er gut gemacht hat, wird schwerlich Jemand besser machen. So wie er uns den Shakespeare geliefert hat, ist es noch immer ein Buch, das man uns nicht genug empfehlen kann. Wir haben an den Schönheiten, die es uns liefert, noch lange zu lernen, ehe uns die Flecken, mit welchen er sie liefert, so beleidigen, dass wir nothwendig eine bessere Uebersetzung haben müssten." —

[1]) With respect to these inconveniences we refer to Lessing who has drawn an exquisite image of the disgraceful condition of the German Stage of that time. Cf. Lessing „Briefe die neueste Literatur betreffend" Brief 17. — [2]) Lessing says in the 17. letter of his „Briefe die neueste Literatur betreffend": Es wäre zu wünschen, dass sich Herr Gottsched niemals mit dem Theater vermengt hätte. — — Er wollte nicht sowohl unser altes Theater verbessern, als der Schöpfer eines ganz neuen sein. Und was für eines neuen? Eines Französirenden; ohne zu untersuchen, ob dieses französirende Theater der deutschen Denkungsart angenehm sey oder nicht. Er hätte aus unsern alten dramatischen Stücken hinlänglich abmerken sollen, dass wir mehr in den Geschmack der Engländer als der Franzosen einschlagen etc. — — — [3]) Lessing ibid. „Wenn man die Meisterstücke des Shakespeare mit einigen bescheidenen Veränderungen unsern Deutschen übersetzt hätte, ich weiss gewiss, es würde von bessern Folgen gewesen sein, als dass man sie mit dem Corneille und Racine bekannt gemacht hat." — [4]) Lessing. Hamb. Dramaturgie Vol II. Lect. 13. „Shakespeare will studiert, nicht geplündert sein. Haben wir Genie, so muss uns Shakespeare das sein, was dem Landschaftsmaler die Camera obscura ist; er sehe fleissig hinein, um zu lernen, wie sich die Natur in allen Fällen auf eine Fläche projectirt, aber er borge nichts daraus."

and by which the Intellect of our nation, all those men of genius who at the end of the preceding century constitute the most brilliant era of our literature, have more or less been affected. Shakspere is standing in the foreground. He, far more than any poet else, has strongly worked upon the „meditative Teutons" and has stirred up their productive powers.[1]) Therefore, he has due claims to the gratitude of our nation. That they will be complied with admits of no doubt, and, indeed, there are unequivocal symptoms enough which prove that they are already. For, as we have above mentioned, Germany, too, has highly interested itself for Shakspere, after having received him, according to the common saying, with open arms. Then, there has arisen a singular correlativeness between our nation and the great British poet, honorable for both parties. The latter has indicated the path our dramatic art had to choose, whilst, in return, many of our greatest thinkers have well deserved of him, explaining the potent genius to his countrymen by a sagacious and profound criticism in such a striking manner, as they had never been acquainted with hitherto. No English work, at least, is entitled to rival the performances of men as Lessing, Herder, Goethe, Schlegel, Tieck, Gervinus, and even of many others who, though inferior in reputation, nevertheless have, in respect to Shakspere, cultivated the field of Criticism with great success. The merit of the English critical works is, however, not to be underrated. It consists chiefly in their having carefully collected the abundant materials and in having accurately examined them, whereas our countrymen have signalized themselves by an acute and profound poetical criticism, on which they have known to impress a real philosophical stamp.

As it would, however, be impossible, within any reasonable bounds, to specialize the philological pursuits of the above named heroes in the German literature, we must, for the original purposes of this sketch, — though we are sorry to do so — avoid dwelling upon them any longer.

From the same motive, we must pass over the modern publications treating the same subject, and we must indeed do so, by so much the more, as among the great number of them there are but a few that are to be called standard ones, and, therefore, are worth being considered. But, nevertheless, we are far from being displeased with these performances which in our eyes are nothing but gratifying symptoms of the incessant and even increasing sympathy our nation feels for Shakspere. Moreover, we are inclined to look upon them as an endeavor for popularizing the great poet. And really, we can not be supposed to have said too much, if we pretend that this endeavor has succeeded as far as even such classes of society have become acquainted with him as do not belong neither to the privileged body of the literary aristocracy nor to the great public of the middle classes which, in our nation, at least, relish literary productions since long. For, by our own experience we can assure, that Shakspere has had a fair passage even among those men who are forced to get their livelihood by their own hands.

If, however, Shakspere has, as we have established, grown so intimate to our nation, it is to be expected that the approaching three-centurial anniversary of his birth day (April 23d 1864) will excite a general and cheerful sympathy among our countrymen.

All the English newspapers have since long already been filling their columns with discussions about a due and solemn celebration of that day, and, no doubt, England will make every effort, will unfold such pomp and grandeur as, on one side, correspond with the importance of him whom it esteems worthy of such an honor and, on the other side, are adequate to the means of so wealthy a nation. In some places of Germany, too, there have already been made attempts of moving the public to celebrate the Jubilee of Shakspeare in a similar manner as it has done Schiller's, some years ago. But it is to be feared that in spite of all the sympathy by which our nation feels animated, the actual

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[1]) Lessing says in the above quoted letter: „Ein Genie kann nur von einem Genie entzündet werden; und am leichtesten von so einem, das alles blos der Natur zu danken zu haben scheint und durch die mühsamen Vollkommenheiten der Kunst nicht abschreckt."

political conjunctures, especially those of our own country, are too much averse to pageants and festivals of any kind. However, it may be probable, or rather it is sure that in those towns which enjoy a stationary stage, on this day, one or another of Shakspere's plays will be performed. In other places, on the contrary, the solemnization will be much restrained perhaps, but nowhere, we suppose, it will be wholly neglected. Nor do we believe that any School of our fatherland should on this day not be mindful of the great Genius to whom we must impose the enormous development of our modern poetical literature. At least the German „Realschule" can not stand behind, when pious duties like this arise. For it feels attached to Shakspere not only for the above mentioned reason. There are rather intimate relations existing between them. The English language constituting an essential object of instruction in the „Realschule", Shakspere, of course, as some of his plays are read here, begins to exert his direct and therefore irresistible influence upon the scholar and works upon him as Homerus and Sophocles joined together work upon the pupil of the „Gymnasium". There are, indeed, but few scholars who are so little susceptible of poetical beauties at all, as do not turn enthusiasts, when they become acquainted with Shakspere who, as Johnson styles him the poet of nature, from this very motive seems so very easily to win the uncorrupted hearts of young people. For „the heart will always understand him", says Washington Irving, „he writes from the heart, whilst others write from the head". —

So, it would indeed be an unpardonable wrong to Shakspere, if the „Realschule" would take no notice of the memorable day which impends, of his birthday which is returning for the threehundreth time; it would be a wrong to its pupils too, if this institution in no way endeavored to remind them of the immortal „heaven-illumined" Bard, who has known „to transmit the pure light of poetical intelligence from age to age."

Therefore, it scarcely requires any further explication, why we have chosen to place Shakspere's name at the head of this sketch which opens the Annual Report of our School. It shall neither give a trivial eulogium upon the poet, nor does it pretend to impart any new and significant particulars about Shakspere. Relying upon the researches of renowned literary men and critics it claims not at all to the title of originality. It only wished to be considered as an expression of the fervent veneration we feel for the great poet, as a token of the strong interest our School takes in him who has bestowed such an exceeding benefit upon our literature and who exerts the highest influence upon our pupils' minds.

But in the following we have endeavored to give a proof of our own Shakspere studies, which, though properly they were not intended for being published, must now stand in lieu of an extensive treatise that could not be finished for want of literary expedients.

Among the various German translations of Shakspere's Works there is certainly none deserving our consideration in a higher degree than that which owes its existence to the combined efforts of two of those illustrious men we have named above, viz: of Schlegel and of Tieck.[1]) This translation which has been published under the auspices and with the actual cooperation of them, has undoubtedly neither been equalled nor surpassed till today. But though the names which we have instanced, answer for the excellence of the work, in general, yet we must confess that, in particular, we cannot everywhere agree with the expressions the translators have employed to render the meaning of some passages. Not being ignorant of our own insignificancy in comparison with these men of first water, it is yet not from a mere inclination for censuring that we have made a collection of such passages which seem, above all, worth being amended. And indeed we do not hope to be blamed for this boldly looking undertaking, as we do not the least undervalue the high merits of the renowned translation. We can even rely upon a certain declaration Tieck himself has pronounced in the post-scriptum added to the work, and which alone has encouraged us to utter our views freely.[2]) These, however, are only to be considered as a specimen; therefore, we have restricted them to the first act of Macbeth, which will give us occasion to many objections, and for so much the more as Macbeth is a play which, for itself, offers enormous difficulties to the translator; a fact which is granted by Tieck, too.[3])

As to the principles we follow in our studies, we have to notice that we shall only touch upon those cases in which, as we believe, Tieck's translation does not correspond with the meaning of the original text. But we shall also not pass over such instances in which the translator seems to have injured our native tongue, though it is a matter of course that we shall desist from discussing those passages which, when translated, display a certain stiffness resulting from a constraint of employing the rhyme or rendering a quibble a. s. o. Finally, thinking proper to correct also such passages which are relying on an untenable reading, we scarcely need mention that we shall exhibit the greatest discretion in our critical views about the text, which, generally, follow the footsteps of Delius, our famous German Shakspere connoisseur.

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[1]) The first edition of this really classical work was partly published in the years 1797—1810, partly in the years 1821—23, but the second part of the 9. Volume with which the first edition was previously achieved, was not published before 1830. The work consisted then of 9 volumes, but did not contain all the Plays of Shakspere. After being completed by Tieck, it was published in 9 volumes 1833. Now we have the 6. edition in our hands. As to the particular share each of the cooperators has taken in the work, there is to be remarked that about the moiety of the plays has been translated by A. W. von Schlegel, whilst to Tieck alone there may be attributed only the translation of Pericles, prince of Tyre (Altenglisches Theater Bd. I.) Of the remaining plays there have been translated about six by Dorothea, Tieck's daughter, the other rest by Count W. of Baudissin. These two persons seem to have been the assistants of Tieck, though indeed Tieck gave support to them. With respect to their mutual literary relations, we refer to the Post-Scriptum, which Tieck has subjoined to the last volume of the translation, and in which he gives all information to be desired. — [2]) After having pointed to the industry his cooperators, the Count Wolf of Baudissin and his own daughter Dorothea („the other translator, who wished not to be named") as well as he himself have bestowed upon the Shakspere translation, he declared that, if they had committed any errors, these must not be attributed to negligence nor to hurry; for they had often for hours been at work together in order to remove the roughness or impropriety of many expressions. He then continues: „Aber gerade bei einer Uebersetzung kann diese mühevolle Anstrengung schädlich werden, und vollends eines Dichters wie Shakespeare! — — So ist es möglich, dass mancher, der den Text nicht so genau kennt, als wir ihn studirt zu haben glauben, hie und da den Vers leichter machen, oder eine freiere Wendung finden kann, ohne der Kraft zu schaden, denn derjenige, der einem gründlichen Vorarbeiter folgt, hat den Vortheil, dass er das Mühselige schon abgethan findet und er mit frischem, unermüdetem Geist oft die Wendung leicht findet, die die Anstrengung des Fleisses verfehlt." — [3]) Cf. the annotations added to the translation of Macbeth: „Wenn viele Schauspiele des Dichters durch gesuchte Hofrede, andere durch wilde Leidenschaft, manche durch feinen Witz und Wortspiel schwer zu verstehen sind, so ist Macbeth durch jene sonderbare Darstellung fieberhafter Zustände, die vom Anbeginn sich dem Wahnsinn und Wahnwitz nähern, schwierig, weil der Dichter fast in allen Scenen dies durch dunkle Anspielungen, Bilder, die in einander übergehen und oft durch einen krampfhaften und übertriebenen Ausdruck hat nachahmen und darstellen wollen." —

Macbeth.[1])

Act I.

(Scene 1.) When the hurlyburly's done
When the battle's lost and won.

In Tieck's translation we find these verses tranlated as follows:

„Wenn der Wirrwarr stille schweigt,
Wer der Sieger ist, sich zeigt."

„Wirrwarr" is indeed a very suitable expression for hurlyburly and bears evidence to the art and taste of the translator, for the onomatope is fully correct. But we can not agree with „stille schweigt".

This is indeed a pleonasm, though a very common one in familiar intercourse, which however, as we are convinced, is only to be employed with respect to persons. You may say f. i. „Schweig stille, Kind", but never: „Der Lärm des Tages schweigt stille", instead of: „der Lärm des Tages schweigt", We, therefore, reject this translation and propose, in order to complete the verse, to put instead of „stille" an attribute to „Wirrwarr", by which this word will at the same time obtain a greater distinctness. So, we prefer to render the verse this way:

„Wenn des Krieges Wirrwarr schweigt."

The next verse, we suppose, is likewise wanting an emendation. Tieck mentions only the „Sieger", i. e. him who wins the battle, though Shakspere expressly names him, too, who loses the battle. Therefore, we cannot help taking notice hereof and, deciding upon the following translation:

„Niederlag' und Sieg sich zeigt"

we hope to have answered better to the meaning of the original text.

(Scene 2.) — — — Doubtful it stood,
As two spent swimmers that do cling together
And choke their art — —

Tieck has tranlated:

— — — Es stand zweifelhaft.
So wie zwei Schwimmer ringend sich umklammern,
Erdrückend ihre Kunst — —

In Tieck's translation a word is omitted which the translator ought not to have passed over, as it essentially alters the sense of this passage. Shakspere says: The issue of the battle was uncertain. To explain better, why „it stood doubtful", he uses a metaphor by comparing the situation of the fighting armies with that of two swimmers contending with each other. As none of them can outdo the rival in spite of all efforts, as their forces begin to fail them, they seize the last expedient to dispute with each other for the victory by „clinging together and choking their art". So do the armies too. They are nearly exhausted, but none of them will leave the victory to the adversary, and therefore they continue the combat with the utmost exertion and exasperation. The match of the swimmers having nearly reached the point where it seems unavoidable that one or the other or perhaps both of them will perish, — it is easy to draw from their situation an inference about the doubtful state of the battle.

Putting the translation of this passage in comparison with the above standing explication, we soon shall perceive that they do not agree with each other, the former being contented with stating only that two swimmers match with each other, that they cling together and that, therefore, they render it impossible to each other to exert their art, or, if we may be allowed to analyze the trope, that the two armies are fighting with such a rage as to make the decision dubious. If this, however, would

[1]) This tragedy has been translated by Dorothea Tieck; as, however, her name is, as it were, not the official one, we have always preferred to notice the father's name as that of the author of this translation. At the same time we may be allowed to mention, that our quotations are taken of the second edition, 8., which has been published 1840.

have been Shakspere's meaning, we must indeed wonder at the poet's having chosen a simile, whose impropriety is striking. What f. i. should have adduced him to speak of swimmers, if they do not appear as rivals in swimming but as rivals in fighting, as mere pugilists?

But if already from this point of view which shows the metaphor to be unfit, we must doubt of the exactness of the translation, we must do so the more, finding that Tieck, as above mentioned, has not at all taken notice of the word „spent". And yet this word is of high importance, for it removes all uneasiness. Learning that the swimmers' forces are spent, we must needs conclude that they are so from their having exerted the art of swimming for a long time, and that, to make a last effort of vanquishing each other, they have now laid hold on their persons. Therefore, we propose the following translation, though we cannot help confessing that it is in some way insufficient, too:

— — — Es stand zweifelhaft;
Wie kampfesmüd' zwei Schwimmer sich umklammern,
Erdrückend ihre Kunst — — —

(ibid.) — — — The merciless Macdonwald
(Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him) — — —

We find these verses translated by Tieck in this manner:

— — — Der grause Macdonwald
(Werth ein Rebell zu sein; ihn so zu stempeln
Umschwärmen stets sich mehrend der Natur
Bosheiten ihn) — — —

We must confess that, though in the above quoted translation Shakspere's words are nearly litterally turned into our language, the translator yet has done such violence to it, that we feel obliged to look for an improvement. Before doing so, we must, however, declare that we reject Mr. Steevens' explication of the words: „to that" = „in addition to that", and that we prefer Mr. Malone's interpretation, who takes „to that" in the sense of „to that end". Besides, Tieck is of the same opinion as the latter.

Our translation of the passage runs this way:

— — — Der grause Macdonwald
(Werth ein Rebell zu sein, denn deshalb schwärmt
Um ihn naturgemäss der Laster Schaar,
Und mehrt sich stets) — — —

(ibid.) As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So, from that spring whence comfort seems to come
Discomfort swells.

Tieck: Wie wenn mit erstem Sonnenlicht zugleich
Schiffbrechende Stürm' und grause Donnerschläge —
So schwillt aus jenem Quell, der Trost verhiess,
Trostlosigkeit.

It is hardly to be conceived why Tieck has rejected the reading proposed by Pope who has added the verb „break" to the first line which else would have rested incomplete, instead of „breaking" which is to be found in the Second Folio Edition of 1632. Tieck prefers to follow the first Fol. Ed. which has a void here. This circumstance, however, would render the passage wholly unintelligible. It is true, Tieck who perceives this inconviniency very well, tries to persuade us that, as the wounded warrior — (whom, moreover, he styles „griefly" wounded, though this man has been able to make his way from the distant field of battle without succumbing to his wounds) is speaking in a violent ague-fit, it cannot seem strange at all that he makes a frequent use of fantastical and confused tropes. This we are willingly disposed to concede, but not that, for this reason, the poet should have made him

speak nonsense. For, though Tieck is eagerly endeavoring to interpret this passage according to the reading he has adopted even in spite of the violence he has done to the meaning of „whence" (cf. Tieck's Annotation referring to this passage) he does not succeed in the least. There reigns such a darkness in his explication, that we have preferred not to enter into it. Being, however, of opinion that even the most scrupulous translator enjoys such liberty as to admit of a reading, even if not incontestably settled by philological criticism, provided that it promotes a considerable advantage with respect to the intelligibility of the passage to be translated. From this motive we have adhered to Pope's reading „break", whether it be the due word or not, and whilst „adhuc sub judice lis est", we propose the following translation:

„Wie sich Gewitterstürme, schiffzertrümmernd
Erheben, wo der Sonne Bahn beginnt,
So schwillt aus jenem Quell, der Trost verhiess,
Trostlosigkeit." — —

(ibid.) „As sparrows eagles or the hare the lion,
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with doubled cracks;
So they doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe;"

Tieck has been obliged to render the preceding four verses in five lines. Though we feel not thoroughly disposed to assent to such a mode of proceeding, yet we cannot share the opinion of those who, once for all, insist upon demanding that the translator has strictly to accommodate himself to the number of verses he finds in the original. As for the translation of the passage in question f. i. we must declare that Tieck has done his best, but in the following two lines:

„Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds
Or memorize another Golgatha",

which he has turned into German as follows;

„Ob sie in heissem Blute baden wollten,
Ob auferbau'n ein zweites Golgatha",

we had preferred a translation more adequate to the meaning of „reeking" and of „memorize". Therefore, we are provoked to offer this version for consideration:

„Ob sie vermeint in rauchend Blut zu baden,
Ob zu erinnern gar an Golgatha", —

(ibid.) „Till that Bellona's bridegroom lapp'd in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons".

Tieck: Bis ihm Bellona's Bräut'gam kampfgefeyt
Entgegenstürmt mit gleicher Ueberkraft".

The expression: „kampfgefeyt" may be approved as nearly correspondent to the meaning of »lapped (lapt) in proof"; but what means „Ueberkraft" or rather „gleicher Ueberkraft"? We do not understand what may have impelled Tieck to coin and to employ this expression. Warburton says: „With self-comparisons i. e. gave him as good as he brought, shew'd he was his equal." Adopting this explication we translate those verses:

„Bis ebenbürtig ihm entgegenstürmt
Bellona's Bräutigam, der kampfgefeyte".

(ibid.) „No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest."

Tieck: „Nicht frevle länger dieser Than von Cawdor
An uns'rer Krone Heil." —

This translation seems to be a very free one. As to „bosom interest" we need but remind of the analogy existing in the German „Busenfreund" (bosom-friend). As our „Busenfreund" is such a friend

who is next to our heart, so our „bosom interest“ is such an interest as is likewise next to it. Wanting, however, the expression: „Busen-Interesse“ in German, we think best to render „bosom“ by „innig“ and „interest“, as it means here the interest the king has taken in the Thane of Cawdor, i. e. the confidence he has placed in him, by „Vertrauen“. Our translation, therefore, runs thus:

„Nicht täusche unser inniges Vertrauen
Der Than von Cawdor mehr.“ — —

(Scene 3.) „By each at once her choppy finger laying“. —

In this line Tieck translates „choppy“ with „stumpf“, which is, however, not the appropriate term, as „choppy“ signifies: full of fissures = rissig. Therefore we translate:

„Denn jede legt zugleich den riss'gen Finger“ — —

(ibid.) „You greet with present grace“ —

It is not to see why Tieck has preferred the word „Erb'“ to the word „Gunst“. We declare for the latter which is corresponding to the signification of the english word „grace“.

(ibid.) — — — and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend,
Which should be thine or his.

Tieck: — — — und wenn er liest,
Wie im Rebellenkampf du selbst dich preisgabst;
So stritten in ihm Staunen und Bewund'rung,
Was dir, was ihm gehört.

In the first place we have to blame the confusion which reigns here in the employment of the tenses. After having used the Present Tense in the Adverbial Sentence of Time: „when he reads“ („wenn er lies't“, instead of which we prefer: „als er lies't“), Tieck employs in the Principal Sentence the Imperfect Tense (so stritten). Then, we disapprove of the following translation:

„So stritten in ihm Staunen und Bewund'rung,
Was dir, was ihm gehört“ —

and chiefly, we do so from a point of view which is likewise concerning grammar. For we are not permitted to say in German: „Etwas streitet Etwas“, but we must say: „Etwas streitet in Jemanden um Etwas“. Besides, the translation „his wonders and his praises“ which is rendered by „Staunen und Bewunderung“, is not at all correct, because these two expressions are nearly synonymous, whilst „Lob“ and „Bewunderung“, as they are said to be in a contest, must be thought to be in opposition to each other. As the sense of this passage is: In Duncans mind, the admiration which is due to the deeds and exploits of Macbeth, and the praises he therefore must bestow upon him, contest for pre-eminence; we propose the following translation:

„So ringt in ihm mit Lob, das dir gebührt,
Das Staunen, das ihm ziemt.“ —

When we above pretended that we had in mind to discuss all those passages in the first act of Tieck's translation of Macbeth which, according to our meaning, from some motives or other, deserve to be rectified, we could by no means presume that we should fail in our intention. Circumstances, however, that could not be foreseen by us, suddenly oblige us to put an end to our work which we had been glad to see finished, as it is in the manuscript ready for being printed. We, therefore, regret deeply that some very interesting points must remain undiscussed. Yet we hope that in our next year's Program we may be allowed to compensate the inconveniencies that have prejudiced this treaty.