

Walter Scott

WALLADMOR :

“ FREELY TRANSLATED INTO GERMAN
FROM THE ENGLISH OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.”

AND NOW

FREELY TRANSLATED
FROM THE GERMAN INTO ENGLISH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

(Translated by Dr. Luning)

My root is earthed ; and I, a desolate branch,
Left scattered in the highway of the world,
Trode under foot, that might have been a column
Mainly supporting our demolished house.—*Massinger.*

VOL. I.

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE READER.

The following novel was originally produced in the German language, as a *soi disant* translation from Sir Walter Scott, to meet the demands of the last Easter fair at Leipsic.

In Germany, from the extreme difficulties and slowness of communication between remote parts of the country, it would be

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altogether impossible to effect the publication of books, upon the vast scale of the current German literature, without some such general rendezvous and place of depôt and exchange as the Leipsic fair presents to the dispersed members of the publishing body. By means of this fair (which is held half-yearly—at Easter and Michaelmas) a connexion is established between the remotest points of the German continent—which, in a literary * sense, comprehends many parts of Europe that politically are wholly distinct from Germany. The publishers of Vienna, Trieste, and Munich, here meet with those of Hamburg and Dresden, of Berlin and Königsburg: Copenhagen and Stockholm send

* Many literary men of Russia, Denmark, &c. write indifferently in their native or the German languages.

their representatives: and the booksellers of Warsaw and even of Moscow are brought into direct contact with the agents of the foreign booksellers in London.

Hence, as may be supposed, it is an object of much importance that all books, which found any part of their interest upon their novelty, should be brought out at this time: and something or other is generally looked for from the pen of every popular writer as a means of giving zest and seasoning to the heavy Mess-Catalog. If it happens therefore upon any account that an author fails to meet these expectations of the Leipsic fair,—obliging persons are often at hand who step forward as his proxy by forging something in his name. This pleasant hoax it was at length judged convenient to practise upon the author of

Waverley; the Easter fair offering a favourable opportunity for such an attempt, from the circumstance of there being just then no acknowledged novel in the market from the pen of that writer which was sufficiently recent to gratify the wishes of the fair or to throw suspicion upon the pretensions of the hoaxer. These pretensions, it is asserted, for some time passed unquestioned; and the good people of Germany, as we are assured, were universally duped. A work, produced to the German public and circulated with success under such assumptions, must naturally excite some curiosity in this country; to gratify which it has been judged proper to translate it.

It may be as well to add that the name "*Walladmor*" is accented upon the first

syllable, and *not* upon the penultimate, by the German author; who may reasonably be allowed to dictate the pronunciation of names invented by himself.

DEDICATION

TO

W * * * s, the German 'Translator' of *Walladmor*.

SIR,

Having some intention of speaking rather freely of you and your German 'Translation' in a postscript to the second volume of my English one—I am shy of sending a presentation copy to Berlin: neither you, nor your publisher, Herr Herbig, might relish all that I may take it into my head to say. Yet, as books sometimes travel far,—if you should ever happen to meet with mine knocking about the world

in Germany, I would wish you to know that I have endeavoured to make you what amends I could for any little affront which I meditate in that Postscript by dedicating my English translation to yourself.

You will be surprised to observe that your three corpulent German volumes have collapsed into two English ones of rather consumptive appearance. The English climate, you see, does not agree with them: and they have lost flesh as rapidly as Captain le Harnois in Chapter the Eighth. The truth is this: on examining your ship, I found that the dry rot had got into her: she might answer the helm pretty well in your milder waters; but I was convinced that upon our stormy English seas she would founder, unless I flung overboard part of her heavy ballast, and cut away some of her middle timbers, which (I assure you) were mere touchwood.

I did so ; and she righted in a moment : and now, that I have driven a few new bolts into her—‘calked’ her—and ‘payed’ her, I am in hopes she will prove sea-worthy for a voyage or so.

We have a story in England, rather trite here, and a sort of philosophic common-place, like Buridan’s ‘Ass between two bundles of hay,’ but possibly unknown in Germany : and, as it is pertinent to the case between ourselves, I will tell it : the more so, as it involves a metaphysical question ; and such questions, you know, go up to you people in Germany from all parts of Europe as to “the courts above.”
——Sir John Cutler had a pair of silk stockings : which stockings his housekeeper Dolly continually darned for the term of three years with worsted : at the end of which term the last faint gleam of silk had finally vanished, and Sir John’s *silk* stock-

ings were found in their old age absolutely to have degenerated into *worsted* stockings. Now upon this a question arose among the metaphysicians—whether Sir John’s stockings retained (or, if not, at what precise period they lost) their “personal identity.” The moralists also were anxious to know whether Sir John’s stockings could be considered the same “accountable” stockings from first to last. And the laywers put the same question in another shape by asking—whether any felony, which Sir John’s stockings could be supposed to have committed in youth, might lawfully be the subject of an indictment against Sir John’s stockings when superannuated : whether a legacy, left to the stockings in the second year, could be claimed by the stockings at the end of the third : and whether the *worsted* stockings could be sued for the debts of the silk stockings. — Some such question, I con-

ceive, will arise upon your account of St. David's Day, as darned by myself.

But here, my good Sir, stop a moment : I must not have you interpret the precedent of Sir John and Dolly too strictly : Sir John's stockings were originally of silk, and darned with worsted : but don't conceit *that* to be the case here. No, no, my good Sir ;—I flatter myself the case between us is just the other way : your *worsted* stockings it is that I have darned with silk : and the relations, which I and Dolly bear to you and Sir John, are precisely inverted.

What could induce you to dress good St. David in an old threadbare coat, it passes my skill to guess : it is enough that I am sure it would give general disgust ; and therefore I have not only made him a present of a new coat, but have also put a little embroidery upon it. And I really think I shall astonish the good folks in

Merionethshire by my account of that saint's festival. In my young days I wandered much in that beautiful shire and other shires which lie contiguous : and many a kind thing was done to me in poor men's cottages which to my dying day I shall never be able to repay individually : hence, as occasions offer, I would seek to make my acknowledgments generally to the county. Upon Penmorfa sands I once had an interesting adventure, and I have accordingly commemorated Penmorfa. To the little town of Machynleth I am indebted for various hospitalities : and I think they will acknowledge that they are indebted to me exclusively for their mayor and corporation. And there are others in that neighbourhood that, when they read of St. David's day, will hardly know whether they are standing on their head or their heels. As to the Bishop of Bangor of those days, I owed his

lordship no particular favor: and I have here taken my vengeance on that see for ever by making it do suit and service to the house of Walladmor.

But enough of St. David's day. There are some other little changes which I have been obliged to make in deference to the taste of this country. In the case of Captain le Harnois it appears to me that, from imperfect knowledge of the English language, you have confounded the words 'sailor' and 'tailor'; for you make the Captain talk exactly like the latter. There is however a great deal of difference in the habits of the two animals according to our English natural histories: and I have therefore slightly retouched the Captain, and curled his whiskers. I have also taken the liberty, in the seventh chapter, of curing Miss Walladmor of an hysterical affection: what purpose it answered, I believe you

would find it hard to say: and I am sure she has enough to bear without that.

Your geography, let me tell you, was none of the best: and I have repaired it myself. It was in fact a damaged lot. Something the public will bear: topographical sins dwindle into peccadilloes in a romance; and no candid people look very sharply after the hydrography of a novel. But still it did strike me—that the case of a man's swimming on his back from Bristol to the Isle of Anglesea, was more than the most indulgent public would bear. They would not stand it, Sir, I was convinced. Besides, it would have exposed me to attacks from Mr. Barrow of the Admiralty, in the Quarterly Review: especially as I had taken liberties with Mr. Croker in a note.—Your chronology was almost equally out of order: but I put *that* into the hands of an eminent watchmaker;

and he assures me that he has ‘regulated’ it, and will warrant its now going as true as the Horse Guards’.

Well, to conclude : I am not quite sure but we ought to be angry at your taking these sort of hoaxing liberties with our literati ; and I don’t know but some of us will be making reprisals. What should you say to it in Germany if one of these days for example you were to receive a large parcel by the ‘*post-wagen*’ containing Posthumous Works of Mr. Kant. I won’t swear but I shall make up such a parcel myself : and, if I should, I bet you any thing you choose that I hoax the great Bavarian professor* with a treatise on the “Categorical Imperative,” and “The last words of Mr. Kant on Transcendental Apperception.” —Look about you, therefore, my gay fel-

* Mr. Schelling : for whom however, without any joke at all, I profess the very highest respect.

lows in Germany: for, if I live, you shall not have all the hoaxing to yourselves.

Meantime, "mine dear Sare," could you not translate me back again into German; and darn me as I have darned you? But you must not "sweat" me down in the same ratio that I have "sweated" you: for, if you do that, I fear that my "dimensions will become invisible to any thick sight" in Germany; and I shall "present no mark" to the critical enemy. Darn me into two portly volumes: and then I give you my word of honor that I will again translate you into English, and darn you in such grand style that, if Dolly and Professor Kant were both to rise from the dead, Dolly should grow jealous of me—and Kant confess himself more puzzled on the matter of personal identity by the final Wallad-mor than ever he had been by the Cutlerian stockings.

Jusqu'au revoir ! my dear principal :
hoping that you will soon invest me with
that character in relation to yourself ; and
sign, as it is now *my* turn to sign,

Your obedient

(but not quite faithful)

TRANSLATOR.

GERMAN "TRANSLATOR'S"

DEDICATION

TO

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

SIR,—Uncommon it may certainly be, but surely not a thing quite unheard of, that a translator should dedicate his translation to the author of the original work: and, the translation here offered to your notice—being, as the writer flatters himself, by no means a *common* one,—he is the more encouraged to take this very uncommon liberty.

Ah Sir Walter!—did you but know to what straits the poor German translator

of Walter-Scottish novels is reduced, you would pardon greater liberties than this. *Ecoutez.* First of all, comes the bookseller and cheapens a translator in the very cheapest market of translation-jobbers that can be supposed likely to do any justice to the work. Next,—the sheets, dripping wet as they arrive by every post from the Edinburgh press, must be translated just as they stand with or without sense or connexion. Nay it happens not unfrequently that, if a sheet should chance to end with one or two syllables of an unfinished word, we are obliged to translate this first instalment of a future meaning; and, by the time the next sheet arrives with the syllables in arrear, we first learn into what confounded scrapes we have fallen by guessing and translating at hap-hazard. *Nomina sunt odiosa*: else—but I shall content myself with reminding the public of the well-known and sad mishap that occurred in the translation of Kenilworth. In another

instance the sheet unfortunately closed thus: —“ *to save himself from these disasters, he became an agent of Smith-;*” and we all translated—“ *um sich aus diesen trübseligkeiten zu erretten, wurde er Agent bei einem Schmiedemeister;*” that is, “ *he became foreman to a blacksmith.*” Now sad it is to tell what followed: we had dashed at it, and waited in trembling hope for the result: next morning’s post arrived, and showed that all Germany had been basely betrayed by a catch-word of Mr. Constable’s. For the next sheet took up the imperfect and embryo catch-word thus: —“ *field matches, or marriages contracted for the sake of money;*” and the whole German sentence should have been repaired and put to rights as follows: “ *Er negocierte, um sich aufzuhelfen, die sogenannten Smithfields heirathen oder Ehen, welche des Gewinnstes wegen geschlossen werden:*” I say, it *should* have been: but woe is me! it was too late: the translated

sheet had been already printed off with the blacksmith in it (lord confound him!); and the blacksmith is there to this day, and cannot be ejected.

You see, Sir Walter, into what “sloughs of despond” we German translators fall—with the sad necessity of dragging your honor after us. Yet this is but a part of the general woe. When you hear in every bookseller’s shop throughout Germany one unanimous complaint of the non-purchasing public and of those great profit-absorbing whirlpools, the circulating libraries,—in short all possible causes of diminished sale on the one hand; and on the other hand the forestalling spirit of competition among the translation-jobbers, bidding over each other’s heads as at an auction, where the translation is knocked down to him that will contract for bringing his wares soonest to market;—hearing all this, Sir Walter, you will perceive that our old German proverb “*Eile mit Weile,*” (i. e. *Festina*

lente, or *the more haste, the less speed*) must in this case, where *haste* happens to be the one great qualification and *sine-quá-non* of a translator, be thrown altogether into the shade by that other proverb—“*Wer zuerst kommt mahlt zuerst*” (*First come first served*).

I for my part, that I might not lie so wholly at the mercy of this tyrant—*Haste*, struck out a fresh path—in which you, Sir, were so obliging as to assist me. But see what new troubles arise out of this to the unhappy translator. The world pretends to doubt whether the novel is really yours:*

* Oh! spirit of modern scepticism, to what shocking results art thou leading us! Already have Lycurgus, Romulus, Numa, &c. been resolved into mere allegorized ideas. And a learned friend has undertaken to prove, within the next 50 years, according to the best rules of modern *scepsis*, that no such banker as Mr. Rothschild ever existed; that the word *Rothschild* in fact was nothing more than a symbolic expression for a habit of advancing loans at the beginning of the 19th century: which indeed the word itself indicates, if reduced to its roots. I should not be surprized to hear that some man had undertaken to demonstrate the non-existence of Sir Walter Scott: already there are symptoms abroad: for the mysterious author of *Waverley* has in our own days been detected in the persons of so many poets and his-

people actually begin to talk of your friend Washington Irving as the author, and God knows whom beside. As if any man, poets out of the question, could be supposed capable of an act of self-sacrifice so severe as that of writing a romance in 3 vols. under the name of a friend.

All this tends to drive us translators to utter despair. However I, in my garret, comfort myself by exclaiming ‘Odi profanum—,’ if I cannot altogether subjoin —“et arceo.” From your obliging disposition, Sir Walter, I anticipate the gratification of a few lines by the next post establishing the authenticity of Walladmor. Should these lines even not be duly certified “coram notario duobusque testibus,” yet if transmitted through the embassy—they will sufficiently attest their own legitimacy as well as that of your youngest child Walladmor.

torians the most opposite to each other, that by this time his personality must have been evaporated and volatilized into a whole synod of men.—*Note of the Dedicator.*

Notwithstanding what I have said about *haste*, I fear that haste has played me a trick here and there. The fact is—we are in dread of three simultaneous translations of Walladmor from three different publishers: and you will hardly believe how much the anxiety lest another translation should get the start of us can shake the stoutest of translating hearts. The names of Lindau—Methusalem Müller—Dr. Spieker—Von Halem—and Loz* sound awfully in the ears of us gentlemen of the trade. And now, alas! as many more are crowding into this Quinquéviate.

Should it happen that the recent versions of your works had not entirely satisfied your judgment, and that mine of Walladmor *had*,—I would in that case esteem myself greatly flattered by your *again* sending me through the house of B—— a copy of the manuscript of your next romance; in

* Names of persons who have translated one or more of Sir Walter Scott's novels into German.

provision for which case I do here by anticipation acknowledge my obligations to you; and in due form of law bind myself over :

1. To the making good all expences of “ copy,” &c. ;

2. To the translation of both prose and verse according to the best of my poor abilities; that your eminent name may not fall into discredit through the translator’s incompetence ;

3. To all possible affection, friendship, respect, &c. in so far as you yourself shall be pleased to accept of any or all of these from

The German Translator of Walladmor.