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ON AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TRANSLATION  
OF BÜRGER'S *Lenore*.

*To the Editors of Mod. Lang. Notes.*

SIRS :—In an interesting article on English translations of Bürger's *Lenore* (*Modern Quarterly of Language and Literature*, Vol. II, pp. 13–28), W. W. Greg has corrected some of Brandl's mis-

takes in a note on the same subject appended to Erich Schmidt's *Charakteristiken* (Vol. I, pp. 244-48) but has himself erred in attempting to correct Brandl in regard to William Taylor's translation of *Lenore*. Greg writes as follows, commenting on a list of translations:

"Taylor 2. Ellenore, Norwich, 1796. (Brandl mentions an edition of this date at London, which according to him contains a stanza from Spencer(1) I have not been able to find any trace of such an ed.)."

The Spencer referred to is another translator of *Lenore*. *The Monthly Mirror* (Vol. II, p. 480) gives the title of Taylor's translation as follows:

"Ellenore, a Ballad, originally written in German, by G. A. Buerger, Norwich, March. London, Johnson."

Plainly, then, the ballad was published or at any rate distributed both at Norwich and at London. Greg, unaware of this, thinks that Brandl refers to a different edition, whereas both are calling the same edition by different names.

Notwithstanding Greg's exclamation point Brandl is also right in regard to Taylor's borrowing from Spencer. In the first place, Brandl speaks of the copying of a "Vers" which means "line" and not "stanza" as Greg has translated it. *The Critical Review* (New Series, Vol. XXII, p. 455) quotes Taylor's own words in regard to page 7 of this ballad that "he has availed himself of the highly finished translation of Mr. Spencer." Unfortunately this London and Norwich edition of Taylor's translation of *Lenore* is not in the British Museum and possibly not in existence to-day, so it is not possible to prove that this disputed passage is on page 7, tho it is extremely probable. We have other pretty conclusive evidence of the borrowing however. Taylor published a translation of *Lenore* in the *Monthly Magazine* for March, 1796, which we will term (a). By June of that year (see *Critical Review*, Vol. XVII, pp. 803-08) W. R. Spencer's translation (b) had appeared. At the end of this year was published in pamphlet form another translation of *Lenore* by Taylor (c). The version printed in Taylor's *Survey of German Poetry* (Vol. II, p. 40 of 1829 ed.) is undoubtedly, as Brandl and Greg state, a reprint of (c). We will call it (c'). It is at any rate different

from (a). The stanza in which the borrowed line occurs runs in the original and in the various versions as follows:

"Sag an, wo ist dein Kämmerlein?  
Wo? Wie dein Hochzeitbettchen?"  
"Weit, weit von hier! Still, kühl und klein!  
Sechs Bretter und zwei Brettchen!"

(a)

"And where is, then, thy house and home;  
And where thy bridal bed?"  
"'Tis narrow, silent, chilly, dark;  
Far hence I rest my head."

(b)

"Say where the bed, and bridal hall?  
"What guests our blissful union greet?"  
"Low lies the bed, still, cold and small;  
"Six dark boards, and one milk white sheet."

(c')

"And where is then thy house, and home,  
And bridal bed so meet?"  
"'Tis narrow, silent, chilly, low,  
Six planks, one shrouding sheet."

The similarity of the last lines in (b) and (c') seems conclusive proof that the latter was borrowed from the former, since the original contains no reference to a "milk white sheet." If then, as Brandl and Greg suppose, the version in the *Survey of German Poetry* is a reprint of Taylor's 1796 London and Norwich edition, Brandl is right in stating that this edition "contains a line from Spencer."

W. A. COLWELL.

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