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EXHIBITION OF THE ROYAL
ACADEMY.

[EIGHTH NOTICE.]

(164) "Lenore." In this work Mr. A. Elmore, R.A., has braced himself to a prodigious romantic effort. The result possibly may be caviare to the general; but the endeavour is not the less commendable and exemplary. Mr. Elmore and Mr. Poole are nearly the only professedly romantic painters of note we possess. It is sufficiently remarkable, that, although Sir Walter Scott made a vivid, but too loose, translation of Bürger's ghastly ballad, and that more recently a much more faithful version was executed by the late Mr. Albert Smith, "Lenore" has never attained more than a very feeble grasp on the English mind. It is less known than Schiller's "Song of the Bell," less known than the "Revenge of the Flowers." It is certainly less known than "There was a King in Thule," or Mignon's song in "Wilhelm Meister," "Know'st thou the land?" The reason may be that to the practical British intellect "Lenore" has no *raison d'être*. What had Wilhelm the Dragoon done that he could not rest in his grave comfortably? He had never been false to Lenore. And why should that lorn maiden have been dragged out of her warm bed at daybreak, mounted behind a grisly trooper, and carried off on a hard-trotting horse to a burial-ground which, in the course of nature, she would not have visited for fifty years to come? She had never jilted Wilhelm. What was all the pother about? In "Alonzo the Brave and the fair Imogene," there is a definite story of faithlessness to be avenged and vengeance to be exacted. The Dragoon in "Lenore" seems to argue on the same principle as that adopted by the ghost of Giles Scroggins in his midnight colloquy with Molly Brown. He tells her that she must come with him "unto the grave her love to cool." "Says she"—very pertinently—"I am not dead, you fool! Says the ghost, says he, That aren't no rule. Right fol de riddle ril de rol." There is absolutely "no rule" why this cadaverous light-cavalry man should carry off Lenore to the cemetery; and indeed the whole poem seems to have been composed—after much beer and many pipes—by Bürger, first with the intent of introducing that marrow-freezing refrain of "The Dead ride fast," and next with affording the Herr Professor Moritz Retsch with an opportunity of executing a sumptuous series of etchings. Mr. Elmore has taken, not the horrible, but the romantic view of the subject. His phantoms are *Willis* and not ghoules, and Lenore is more like Undine than the sweetheart of a Uhlan. Beauty—tender, pure, exquisite beauty—fancy and symmetry shine throughout the whole graceful composition. It is lyrical to the very highest degree.