

**ALADDIN; OR, THE
WONDERFUL
LAMP. A DRAMATIC
POEM-IN TWO PARTS**

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Aladdin; Or, The Wonderful Lamp. A Dramatic Poem-In Two Parts by Adam Oehlenschläger
& Theodore Martin

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ADAM OEHLENSCHLÄGER & THEODORE MARTIN

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ALADDIN;
OR,
THE WONDERFUL LAMP.

A DRAMATIC POEM—IN TWO PARTS.

BY
ADAM OEHLENSCHLÄGER.

TRANSLATED BY
THEODORE MARTIN.

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WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS,
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MDCCLXIII.

PREFACE.

THE *Aladdin* of Oehlenschläger bears the marks of youth—but it is the youth of genius, rich in the exuberance of a fearless fancy, and revelling in the exercise of a newly-awakened power. When it was written, Oehlenschläger was in the first bloom of manhood; he was in love, and he had recently lost his mother. Aladdin's story seemed to have an affinity to his own. In the faculty of poetic creation which had begun to stir within him, he found, as he says in his *Autobiography*, a veritable Aladdin's Lamp. His own passion sought a vent in depicting Aladdin's for Gulnare, and his tears for a loving and much-loved mother overflowed as he wrote the Dirge of the Eastern boy at the grave of Morgiana. Thus heart and fancy were thrown intensely into the poem, and they give to it a vivid charm beyond that of his more mature and faultless works. The poet has not ventured to deviate from the familiar incidents of the Eastern tale. Indeed he follows them with such minuteness, that occasionally the action drags, and the dialogue labours. In a few instances the translator has ventured to compress passages which are open to this objection, more particularly where the humour

is of a texture too flimsy for the taste of a nation nursed in the schools of Shakspeare and Fielding. This liberty might, perhaps, have been carried further without injury to the poem; but even the flaws of a work of genius possess an interest for the student.

Those who have found delight in the original—and who has not?—will, it is thought, be well pleased to meet their old friend with this new face. If the tale have lost some of its local truth of colouring in the hands of the Northern bard, this is more than compensated by his masterly development of the character of Aladdin, by the exquisite pathos of much of the Second Part, and by the passages of great lyrical beauty which are scattered throughout the poem with liberal profusion.

Some portions of *Aladdin*, translated by Mr. R. P. Gillies, appeared in *Blackwood* in 1816; but the present is, so far as the translator is aware, the first English version of the complete poem. It is only necessary further to observe, that the metres of the original have been closely followed throughout.

TO GOETHE.

Boas in far northern clime,
Came to mine ears sweet tidings in my prime
 From fairy land;
Where flowers eternal blow,
Where power and beauty go,
 Knit in a magic band.

Of, when a child, I'd pore
In rapture on the ancient Saga lore;
 When on the wold
The snow was falling white,
I, shuddering with delight,
 Felt not the cold.

When with his pinion chill
The winter smote the castle on the hill,
 It fanned my hair;
I sat in my small room,
And through the lamp-lit gloom
 Saw Spring smile fair.

And though my love in youth
Was all for Northern energy and truth,
 And Northern feasts;
Yet for my fancy's feast
The flower-apparalled East
 Unveiled its sweets.

To manhood as I grew,
 From North to South, from South to North, I flew ;
 I was possessed
 By yearnings to give voice in song
 To all that had been struggling long
 Within my breast.

I heard bards manifold,
 But at their minstrelsy my heart grew cold ;
 Dhu, colourless became,
 My childhood's visions grand :
 Their tameness only fanned
 My wilder flame.

Who did the young bard save ?
 Who to his eye a keener vision gave,
 That he the child
 Amor beheld, astride
 The lion, far off ride,
 Carreering wild ?

Thou, great and good ! Thy spell-like lays
 Did the enchanted curtain raise
 From fairy land,
 Where flowers eternal blow,
 Where power and beauty go,
 Knit in a loving band.

Well pleased thou hearest long
 Within thy halls the stranger minstrel's song ;
 Taught to aspire
 By thee, my spirit leapt
 To bolder heights, and swept
 The German lyre.

Oft have I sung before,
 And many a hero of our Northern shore,
 With grave stern mien,

By sad Melpomene
Called from his grave, we see
 Stalk o'er the scene.

And greeting they will send
To friend Aladdin cheerly as a friend :
 The oak's thick gloom
Prevails not wholly, where
Warbles the nightingale, and fair
 Flowers waft perfume.

On thee, to whom I owe
New life, what shall my gratitude bestow ?
 Nought has the bard
Save his own song ! And this
Thou dost not, trivial as the tribute is,
 With scorn regard.

