

Faust: A Tragedy

Goethe



FUNDACIÓN
Carlos Slim



Faust

Goethe

Play

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DR. HENRY FAUST, a scholar.

WAGNER, Faust's servant.

MEPHISTOPHELES, a Devil.

MARGARET, Faust's love. Also called Gretchen.

MARTHA, Margaret's neighbour.

ELIZA, an acquaintance of Margaret's.

VALENTIN, Margaret's brother.

ALTMAYER, BRANDER, FROSCH, SIEBEL, patrons of Auerbach's Wine Cellar.

Students, Spirits, Women, Angels, Servants, Beggars, Soldiers, Peasants, Cat-Apes, Witches, Director of the Theatre, Leader of the Orchestra, Idealist, Realist, Sceptic, etc.

DEDICATION

Prefixed to the Later Editions of Faust.

YE hover nigh, dim-floating shapes again,
That erst the misty eye of Fancy knew!
Shall I once more your shadowy flight detain,
And the fond dreamings of my youth pursue?
Ye press around!—resume your ancient reign,—
As from the hazy past ye rise to view;
The magic breath that wafts your airy train
Stirs in my breast long-slumbering chords again.

Ye raise the pictured forms of happy days,
And many a dear loved shade comes up with you;
Like the far echo of old-remembered lays,
First love and early friendship ye renew.
Old pangs return; life's labyrinthine maze
Again the plaint of sorrow wanders through,
And names the loved ones who from Fate received
A bitter call, and left my heart bereaved.

They hear no more the sequel of my song,
Who heard my early chant with open ear;
Dispersed for ever is the favouring throng,
Dumb the response from friend to friend so dear.
My sorrow floats an unknown crowd among,
Whose very praise comes mingled with strange fear;
And they who once were pleased to hear my lay,
If yet they live, have drifted far away.

And I recall with long-unfelt desire



The realm of spirits, solemn, still, serene;
My faltering lay, like the Æolian lyre,
Gives wavering tones with many a pause between;
The stern heart glows with youth's rekindled fire,
Tear follows tear, where long no tear hath been;
The thing I am fades into distance grey;
And the pale Past stands out a clear to-day.

PRELUDE AT THE THEATRE.

MANAGER of a Strolling Company.—STAGE-POET—MERRYFELLOW.

MANAGER.

YE twain, in good and evil day
So oft my solace and my stay,
Say, have ye heard sure word, or wandering rumour
How our new scheme affects the public humour?
Without the multitude we cannot thrive,
Their maxim is to live and to let live.
The posts are up, the planks are fastened, and
Each man's agog for something gay and grand.
With arched eyebrows they sit already there,
Gaping for something new to make them stare.
I know the public taste, and profit by it;
But still to-day I've fears of our succeeding:
'Tis true they're custom'd to no dainty diet,
But they've gone through an awful breadth of reading.
How shall we make our pieces fresh and new,
And with some meaning in them, pleasing too?
In sooth, I like to see the people pouring
Into our booth, like storm and tempest roaring,
While, as the waving impulse onward heaves them,
The narrow gate of grace at length receives them,
When, long ere it be dark, with lusty knocks
They fight their way on to the money-box,
And like a starving crowd around a baker's door,
For tickets as for bread they roar.
So wonder-working is the poet's sway
O'er every heart—so may it work to-day!

POET.

O mention not that motley throng to me,
Which only seen makes frightened genius pause;
Hide from my view that wild and whirling sea
That sucks me in, and deep and downward draws.

No! let some noiseless nook of refuge be
My heaven, remote from boisterous rude applause,
Where Love and Friendship, as a God inspires,
Create and fan the pure heart's chastened fires.

Alas! what there the shaping thought did rear,
And scarce the trembling lip might lisp say,
To Nature's rounded type not always near,
The greedy moment rudely sweeps away.
Oft-times a work, through many a patient year
Must toil to reach its finished fair display;
The glittering gaud may fix the passing gaze,
But the pure gem gains Time's enduring praise.

MERRYFELLOW.

Pshaw! Time will reap his own; but in our power
The moment lies, and we must use the hour.
The Future, no doubt, is the Present's heir,
But we who live must first enjoy our share.
Methinks the present of a goodly boy
Has something that the wisest might enjoy.
Whose ready lips with easy lightness brim,
The people's humour need not trouble him;
He courts a crowd the surer to impart
The quickening word that stirs the kindred heart.
Quit ye like men, be honest bards and true,
Let Fancy with her many-sounding chorus,
Reason, Sense, Feeling, Passion, move before us,
But, mark me well—a spice of folly too!

MANAGER.

Give what you please, so that you give but plenty;
They come to see, and you must feed their eyes;
Scene upon scene, each act may have its twenty,
To keep them gaping still in fresh surprise:
This is the royal road to public favour;
You snatch it thus, and it is yours for ever.
A mass of things alone the mass secures;
Each comes at last and culls his own from yours.

Bring much, and every one is sure to find,
In your rich nosegay, something to his mind.
You give a piece, give it at once in pieces;
Such a ragout each taste and temper pleases,
And spares, if only they were wise to know it,
Much fruitless toil to player and to poet.
In vain into an artful whole you glue it;
The public in the long run will undo it.

POET.

What? feel you not the vileness of this trade?
How much the genuine artist ye degrade?
The bungling practice of our hasty school
You raise into a maxim and a rule.

MANAGER.

All very well!—but when a man
Has forged a scheme, and sketched a plan
He must have sense to use the tool
The best that for the job is fit.
Consider what soft wood you have to split,
And who the people are for whom you write.
One comes to kill a few hours o' the night;
Another, with his drowsy wits oppressed,
An over-sated banquet to digest;
And not a few, whom least of all we choose,
Come to the play from reading the Reviews.
They drift to us as to a masquerade;
Mere curiosity wings their paces;
The ladies show themselves, and show their silks and laces,
And play their parts well, though they are not paid.
What dream you of, on your poetic height?
A crowded house, forsooth, gives you delight!
Look at your patrons as you should,
You'll find them one half cold, and one half crude.
One leaves the play to spend the night
Upon a wench's breast in wild delight;
Another sets him down to cards, or calls
For rattling dice, or clicking billiard balls.
For such like hearers, and for ends like these

Why should a bard the gentle Muses tease?
I tell you, give them more, and ever more, and still
A little more, if you would prove your skill.
And since they can't discern the finer quality,
Confound them with broad sweep of triviality—
But what's the matter?—pain or ravishment?

POET.

If such your service, you must be content
With other servants who will take your pay!
Shall then the bard his noblest right betray?
The right of man, which Nature's gift imparts,
For brainless plaudits basely jest away?
What gives him power to move all hearts,
Each stubborn element to sway,
What but the harmony, his being's inmost tone,
That charms all feelings back into his own?
Where listless Nature, her eternal thread,
The unwilling spindle twists around,
And hostile shocks of things that will not wed
With jarring dissonance resound,
Who guides with living pulse the rhythmic flow
Of powers that make sweet music as they go?
Who consecrates each separate limb and soul
To beat in glorious concert with the whole?
Who makes the surgy-swelling billow
Heave with the wildly heaving breast,
And on the evening's rosy pillow,
Invites the brooding heart to rest?
Who scatters spring's most lovely blooms upon
The path of the beloved one?
Who plaits the leaves that unregarded grow
Into a crown to deck the honoured brow?
Who charms the gods? who makes Olympus yield?
The power of man in poet's art revealed.

MERRYFELLOW.

Then learn such subtle powers to wield,
And on the poet's business enter
As one does on a love-adventure.



They meet by chance, are pleased, and stay
On being pressed, just for a day;
Then hours to hours are sweetly linked in chain,
Till net-caught by degrees, they find retreat is vain.
At first the sky is bright, then darkly lowers;
To-day, fine thrilling rapture wings the hours,
To-morrow, doubts and anguish have their chance,
And, ere one knows, they're deep in a romance.
A play like this both praise and profit brings.
Plunge yourself boldly in the stream of things—
What's lived by all, but known to few—
And bring up something fresh and new,
No matter what; just use your eyes,
And all will praise what all can prize;
Strange motley pictures in a misty mirror,
A spark of truth in a thick cloud of error;
'Tis thus we brew the genuine beverage,
To edify and to refresh the age.
The bloom of youth in eager expectation,
With gaping ears drinks in your revelation;
Each tender sentimental disposition
Sucks from your art sweet woe-be-gone nutrition;
Each hears a part of what his own heart says,
While over all your quickening sceptre sways.
These younglings follow where you bid them go.
Lightly to laughter stirred, or turned to woe,
They love the show, and with an easy swing,
Follow the lordly wafture of your wing;
Your made-up man looks cold on everything,
But growing minds take in what makes them grow.

POET.

Then give me back the years again,
When mine own spirit too was growing,
When my whole being was a vein
Of thronging songs within me flowing!
Then slept the world in misty blue,
Each bud the nascent wonder cherished,
And all for me the flowerets grew,

That on each meadow richly flourished.
Though I had nothing then, I had a treasure,
The thirst for truth, and in illusion pleasure.
Give me the free, unshackled pinion,
The height of joy, the depth of pain,
Strong hate, and stronger love's dominion;
O give me back my youth again!

MERRYFELLOW.

The fire of youth, good friend, you need, of course,
Into the hostile ranks to break,
Or, when the loveliest damsels hang by force,
With amorous clinging, from your neck,
When swift your wingèd steps advance
To where the racer's prize invites you,
Or, after hours of wheeling dance,
The nightly deep carouse invites you.
But to awake the well-known lyre
With graceful touch that tempers fire,
And to a self-appointed goal,
With tuneful rambling on to roll,
Such are your duties, aged sirs; nor we
Less honour pay for this, nor stint your fee;
Old age, not childish, makes the old; but they
Are genuine children of a mellower day.

MANAGER.

Enough of words: 'tis time that we
Were come to deeds; while you are spinning
Fine airy phrases, fancy-free,
We might have made some good beginning.
What stuff you talk of being in the vein!
A lazy man is never in the vein.
If once your names are on the poet's roll,
The Muses should be under your control.
You know our want; a good stiff liquor
To make their creeping blood flow quicker;
Then brew the brewst without delay;
What was not done to-day, to-morrow
Will leave undone for greater sorrow.

Don't stand, and stare, and block the way,
But with a firm, set purpose lay
Hold of your bright thoughts as they rise to view,
 And bid them stay;
Once caught, they will not lightly run away,
Till they have done what in them lies to do.

Among the sons of German play,
Each tries his hand at what he may;
Therefore be brilliant in your scenery,
And spare no cost on your machinery.
Let sun and moon be at your call,
And scatter stars on stars around;
Let water, fire, and rocky wall,
And bird and beast and fish abound.
Thus in your narrow booth mete forth
The wide creation's flaming girth,
And wing your progress, pondered well,
From heaven to earth, from earth to hell.

PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

THE LORD—THE HEAVENLY HOSTS: afterwards MEPHISTOPHELES.

RAPHAEL.

THE Sun doth chime his ancient music
'Mid brothered spheres' contending song.
And on his fore-appointed journey
With pace of thunder rolls along.
Strength drink the angels from his glory,
Though none may throughly search his way:
God's works rehearse their wondrous story
As bright as on Creation's day.

GABRIEL.

And swift and swift beyond conceiving
The pomp of earth is wheeled around,
Alternating Elysian brightness
With awful gloom of night profound.
Up foams the sea, a surging river,
And smites the steep rock's echoing base,
And rock and sea, unwearied ever,
Spin their eternal circling race.

MICHAEL.

And storm meets storm with rival greeting,
From sea to land, from land to sea,
While from their war a virtue floweth,
That thrills with life all things that be.
The lightning darts his fury, blazing
Before the thunder's sounding way;
But still thy servants, Lord, are praising
The gentle going of thy day.

ALL THE THREE.

Strength drink the angels from thy glory,
Though none may search thy wondrous way;

Thy works repeat their radiant story,
As bright as on Creation's day.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sith thou, O Lord, approachest near,
And how we fare would'st fain have information,
And thou of old wert glad to see me here,
I stand to-day amid the courtly nation.
Pardon; no words of fine address I know,
Nor could, though all should hoot me down with sneers;
My pathos would move laughter, and not tears,
Wert thou not weaned from laughter long ago.
Of suns and worlds I've nought to say,
I only see how men must fret their lives away.
The little god o' the world jogs and jogs on, the same
As when from ruddy clay he took his name;
And, sooth to say, remains a riddle, just
As much as when you shaped him from the dust.
Perhaps a little better he had thriven,
Had he not got the show of glimmering light from heaven:
He calls it reason, and it makes him free
To be more brutish than a brute can be;
He is, methinks, with reverence of your grace,
Like one of the long-leggèd race
Of grasshoppers that leap in the air, and spring,
And straightway in the grass the same old song they sing;
'Twere well that from the grass he never rose,
On every stubble he must break his nose!

THE LORD.

Hast thou then nothing more to say?
And art thou here again to-day
To vent thy grudge in peevish spite
Against the earth, still finding nothing right?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

True, Lord; I find things there no better than before;
I must confess I do deplore
Man's hopeless case, and scarce have heart myself
To torture the poor miserable elf.

THE LORD.

Dost thou know Faust?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The Doctor?

THE LORD.

Ay: my servant.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Indeed! and of his master's will observant,
In fashion quite peculiar to himself;
His food and drink are of no earthly taste,
A restless fever drives him to the waste.
Himself half seems to understand
How his poor wits have run astrand;
From heaven he asks each loveliest star,
Earth's chiefest joy must jump to his demand,
And all that's near, and all that's far,
Soothes not his deep-moved spirit's war.

THE LORD.

Though for a time he blindly grope his way,
Soon will I lead him into open day;
Well knows the gardener, when green shoots appear,
That bloom and fruit await the ripening year.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What wager you? you yet shall lose that soul!
Only give me full license, and you'll see
How I shall lead him softly to my goal.

THE LORD.

As long as on the earth he lives
Thou hast my license full and free;
Man still must stumble while he strives.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My thanks for that! the dead for me
Have little charm; my humour seeks
The bloom of lusty life, with plump and rosy cheeks;

For a vile corpse my tooth is far too nice,
I do just as the cat does with the mice.

THE LORD.

So be it; meanwhile, to tempt him thou art free;
Go, drag this spirit from his native fount,
And lead him on, canst thou his will surmount,
Into perdition down with thee;
But stand ashamed at last, when thou shalt see
An honest man, 'mid all his strivings dark,
Finds the right way, though lit but by a spark.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, well; short time will show; into my net
I'll draw the fish, and then I've won my bet;
And when I've carried through my measure
Loud blast of trump shall blaze my glory;
Dust shall he eat, and that with pleasure,
Like my cousin the snake in the rare old story.

THE LORD.

And thou mayst show thee here in upper sky
Unhindered, when thou hast a mind;
I never hated much thee or thy kind;
Of all the spirits that deny,
The clever rogue sins least against my mind.
For, in good sooth, the mortal generation,
When a soft pillow they may haply find,
Are far too apt to sink into stagnation;
And therefore man for comrade wisely gets
A devil, who spurs, and stimulates, and whets.
But you, ye sons of heaven's own choice,
In the one living Beautiful rejoice!
The self-evolving Energy divine
Enclasp you round with love's embrace benign,
And on the floating forms of earth and sky
Stamp the fair type of thought that may not die.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

From time to time the ancient gentleman

I see, and keep on the best terms I can.
In a great Lord 'tis surely wondrous civil
So face to face to hold talk with the devil.

FAUST.

ACT I.

Scene I.

NIGHT.

FAUST discovered sitting restless at his desk, in a narrow high-vaulted Gothic chamber.

FAUST.

THERE now, I've toiled my way quite through
Law, Medicine, and Philosophy,
And, to my sorrow, also thee,
Theology, with much ado;
And here I stand, poor human fool,
As wise as when I went to school.
Master, ay, Doctor, titled duly,
An urchin-brood of boys unruly
For ten slow-creeping years and mo,
Up and down, and to and fro,
I lead by the nose: and this I know,
That vain is all our boasted lore—
A thought that burns me to the core!
True, I am wiser than all their tribe,
Doctor, Master, Priest, and Scribe;
No scruples nor doubts in my bosom dwell,
I fear no devil, believe no hell;
But with my fear all joy is gone,
All rare conceit of wisdom won;
All dreams so fond, all faith so fair,
To make men better than they are.
Nor gold have I, nor gear, nor fame,
Station, or rank, or honoured name,
Here like a kennelled cur I lie!
Therefore the magic art I'll try,

From spirit's might and mouth to draw,
Mayhap, some key to Nature's law;
That I no more, with solemn show,
May sweat to teach what I do not know;
That I may ken the bond that holds
The world, through all its mystic folds;
The hidden seeds of things explore,
And cheat my thought with words no more.

O might thou shine, thou full moon bright,
For the last time upon my woes,
Thou whom, by this brown desk alone,
So oft my wakeful eyne have known.
Then over books and paper rose
On me thy sad familiar light!
Oh, that beneath thy friendly ray,
On peaky summit I might stray,
Round mountain caves with spirits hover,
And flit the glimmering meadows over,
And from all fevered fumes of thinking free,
Bathe me to health within thy dewy sea.

In vain! still pines my prisoned soul
Within this curst dank dungeon-hole!
Where dimly finds ev'n heaven's blest ray,
Through painted glass, its struggling way.
Shut in by heaps of books up-piled,
All worm-begnawed and dust-besoiled,
With yellowed papers, from the ground
To the smoked ceiling, stuck around;
Caged in with old ancestral lumber,
Cases, boxes, without number,
Broken glass, and crazy chair,
Dust and brittleness everywhere;
This is thy world, a world for a man's soul to breathe in!

And ask I still why in my breast,
My heart beats heavy and oppressed?
And why some secret unknown sorrow
Freezes my blood, and numbs my marrow?
'Stead of the living sphere of Nature,
Where man was placed by his Creator,
Surrounds thee mouldering dust alone,
The grinning skull and skeleton.

Arise! forth to the fields, arise!
And this mysterious magic page,
From Nostradamus' hand so sage,
Should guide thee well. Thy raptured eyes
Shall then behold what force compels
The tuneful spheres to chime together;
When, taught by Nature's mightiest spells,
Thine innate spring of soul upwells,
As speaks one spirit to another.
In vain my thought gropes blindly here,
To make those sacred symbols clear;
Ye unseen Powers that hover near me,
Answer, I charge ye, when ye hear me!
[He opens the book, and sees the sign of the Macrocosm.]
Ha! what ecstatic joy this page reveals,
At once through all my thrilling senses flowing!
Young holy zest of life my spirit feels
In every vein, in every nerve, new glowing!
Was it a God whose finger drew these signs,
That, with mild pulse of joy, and breath of rest,
Smooth the tumultuous heaving of my breast,
And with mysterious virtue spread the lines
Of Nature's cipher bare to mortal sight?
Am I a God? so wondrous pure the light
Within me! in these tokens I behold
The powers by which all Nature is besouled.
Now may I reach the sage's words aright;
"The world of spirits is not barred;
Thy sense is shut, thy heart is dead!

Up, scholars, bathe your hearts so hard,
In the fresh dew of morning's red!"
[He scans carefully the sign.]
How mingles here in one the soul with soul,
And lives each portion in the living whole!
How heavenly Powers, ascending and descending,
From hand to hand their golden ewers are lending,
And bliss-exhaling swing from pole to pole!
From the high welkin to earth's centre bounding,
Harmonious all through the great All resounding!

What wondrous show! but ah! 'tis but a show!
Where grasp I thee, thou infinite Nature, where?
And you, ye teeming breasts? ye founts whence flow
All living influences fresh and fair?
Whereon the heavens and earth dependent hang,
Where seeks relief the withered bosom's pang?
Your founts still well, and I must pine in vain!
[He turns the book over impatiently, and beholds the sign of the Spirit of the
Earth.]

What different working hath this sign?
Thou Spirit of the Earth, I feel thee nearer;
Already sees my strengthened spirit clearer;
I glow as I had drunk new wine.
New strength I feel to plunge into the strife,
And bear the woes and share the joys of life,
Buffet the blasts, and where the wild waves dash,
Look calmly on the shipwreck's fearful crash!
Clouds hover o'er me—
The moon is dim!
The lamp's flame wanes!
It smokes!—Red beams dart forth
Around my head—and from the vaulted roof
Falls a cold shudder down,
And grips me!—I feel
Thou hover'st near me, conjured Spirit, now;
Reveal thee!
Ha! how swells with wild delight

My bursting heart!
And feelings, strange and new,
At once through all my ravished senses dart!
I feel my inmost soul made thrall to thee!
Thou must! thou must! and were my life the fee!

[He seizes the book, and pronounces with a mysterious air the sign of the Spirit. A red flame darts forth, and the Spirit appears in the flame.]

SPIRIT.

Who calls me?

FAUST. [turning away]

Vision of affright!

SPIRIT.

Thou hast with mighty spells invoked me,
And to obey thy call provoked me,
And now——

FAUST.

Hence from my sight!

SPIRIT.

Thy panting prayer besought my might to view,
To hear my voice, and know my semblance too;
Now bending from my native sphere to please thee,
Here am I!—ha! what pitiful terrors seize thee,
And overman thee quite! where now the call
Of that proud soul, that scorned to own the thrall
Of earth, a world within itself created,
And bore and cherished? that with its fellows sated
Swelled with prophetic joy to leave its sphere,
And live a spirit with spirits, their rightful peer.
Where art thou, Faust? whose invocation rung
Upon mine ear, whose powers all round me clung?
Art thou that Faust? whom melts my breath away,
Trembling even to the life-depths of thy frame,
Like a poor worm that crawls into his clay!

FAUST.

Shall I then yield to thee, thou thing of flame?
I am that Faust, and Spirit is my name!

SPIRIT.

Where life's floods flow
And its tempests rave,
Up and down I wave,
Flit I to and fro!
Birth and the grave,
Life's hidden glow,
A shifting motion,
A boundless ocean
Whose waters heave
Eternally;

Thus on the sounding loom of Time I weave
The living mantle of the Deity.

FAUST.

Thou who round the wide world wendest,
Thou busy Spirit, how near I feel to thee!

SPIRIT.

Thou'rt like the spirit whom thou comprehendest,
Not me! [Vanishes.]

FAUST.

Not thee!
Whom, then?
I, image of the Godhead,
Dwarfed by thee! [Knocking is heard.]
O death!—'tis Wagner's knock—I know it well,
My famulus; he comes to mar the spell!
Woe's me that such bright vision of the spheres
Must vanish when this pedant-slave appears!

Scene II.

Enter WAGNER in night-gown and night-cap; a lamp in his hand.

WAGNER.

Your pardon, sir, I heard your voice declaiming,
No doubt some old Greek drama, and I came in,
To profit by your learned recitation;
For in these days the art of declamation
Is held in highest estimation;
And I have heard asserted that a preacher
Might wisely have an actor for his teacher.

FAUST.

Yes; when our parsons preach to make grimaces,
As here and there a not uncommon case is.

WAGNER.

Alack! when a poor wight is so confined
Amid his books, shut up from all mankind,
And sees the world scarce on a holiday,
As through a telescope and far away,
How may he hope, with nicely tempered skill,
To bend the hearts he knows not to his will?

FAUST.

What you don't feel, you'll hunt to find in vain.
It must gush from the soul, possess the brain,
And with an instinct kindly force compel
All captive hearts to own the grateful spell;
Go to! sit o'er your books, and snip and glue
Your wretched piece-work, dressing your ragout
From others' feasts, your piteous flames still blowing
From sparks beneath dull heaps of ashes glowing;
Vain wonderment of children and of apes,
If with such paltry meed content thou art;
The human heart to heart he only shapes,
Whose words flow warm from human heart to heart.

WAGNER.

But the delivery is a chief concern
In Rhetoric; and alas! here I have much to learn.

FAUST.

Be thine to seek the honest gain,
No shallow-tinkling fool!
Sound sense finds utterance for itself,
Without the critic's rule.

If clear your thought, and your intention true,
What need to hunt for words with much ado?
The trim orations your fine speaker weaves,
Crisping light shreds of thought for shallow minds,
Are unrefreshing as the foggy winds
That whistle through the sapless autumn leaves.

WAGNER.

Alas! how long is art,
And human life how short!
I feel at times with all my learned pains,
As if a weight of lead were at my heart,
And palsy on my brains.
How high to climb up learning's lofty stair,
How hard to find the helps that guide us there;
And when scarce half the way behind him lies,
His glass is run, and the poor devil dies!

FAUST.

The parchment-roll is that the holy river,
From which one draught shall slake the thirst for ever?
The quickening power of science only he
Can know, from whose own soul it gushes free.

WAGNER.

And yet the spirit of a bygone age,
To re-create may well the wise engage;
To know the choicest thoughts of every ancient sage,
And think how far above their best we've mounted high!

FAUST.

O yes, I trow, even to the stars, so high!
My friend, the ages that are past
Are as a book with seven seals made fast;
And what men call the spirit of the age,
Is but the spirit of the gentlemen
Who glass their own thoughts in the pliant page,
And image back themselves. O, then,
What precious stuff they dish, and call't a book,
Your stomach turns at the first look;
A heap of rubbish, and a lumber room,
At best some great state farce with proclamations,
Pragmatic maxims, protocols, orations,
Such as from puppet-mouths do fitly come!

WAGNER.

But then the world!—the human heart and mind!
Somewhat of this to know are all inclined.

FAUST.

Yes! as such knowledge goes! but what man dares
To call the child by the true name it bears?
The noble few that something better knew,
And to the gross reach of the general view,
Their finer feelings bared, and insight true,
From oldest times were burnt and crucified.
I do beseech thee, friend,—'tis getting late,
'Twere wise to put an end to our debate.

WAGNER.

Such learned talk to draw through all the night
With Doctor Faust were my supreme delight;
But on the morrow, being Easter, I
Your patience with some questions more may try.
With zeal I've followed Learning's lofty call,
Much I have learned, but fain would master all. [Exit.

Scene III.

FAUST. [alone]

Strange how his pate alone hope never leaves,
Who still to shallow husks of learning cleaves!
With greedy hand who digs for hidden treasure,
And, when he finds a grub, rejoiceth above measure!

Durst such a mortal voice usurp mine ear
When all the spirit-world was floating near?
Yet, for this once, my thanks are free,
Thou meanest of earth's sons, to thee!
Thy presence drew me back from sheer despair,
And shock too keen for mortal nerve to bear;
Alas! so giant-great the vision came,
That I might feel me dwarf, ev'n as I am.

I, God's own image that already seemed
To gaze where Truth's eternal mirror gleamed,
And, clean divested of this cumbering clay,
Basked in the bliss of heaven's vivific ray;
I, more than cherub, with fresh pulses glowing,
Who well nigh seemed through Nature's deep veins flowing
Like a pure god, creative virtue knowing,
What sharp reproof my hot presumption found!
One word of thunder smote me to the ground.
Alas! 'tis true! not I with thee and thine
May dare to cope! the strength indeed was mine
To make thee own my call, but not
To chain thee to the charmèd spot.
When that blest rapture thrilled my frame,
I felt myself so small, so great;
But thou didst spurn me back with shame,
Into this crazy human state.
Where find I aid? what follow? what eschew?
Shall I that impulse of my soul obey?

Alas! alas! but I must feel it true,
The pains we suffer and the deeds we do,
Are clogs alike in the free spirit's way.

The godlike essence of our heaven-born powers
Must yield to strange and still more strange intrusion;
Soon as the good things of this world are ours,
We deem our nobler self a vain illusion,
And heaven-born instincts—very life of life—
Are strangled in the low terrestrial strife.

Young fancy, that once soared with flight sublime,
On venturous vans, ev'n to th' Eternal's throne,
Now schools her down a little space to own,
When in the dark engulfing stream of time,
Our fair-faced pleasures perish one by one.
Care nestles deep in every heart,
And, cradling there the secret smart,
Rocks to and fro, and peace and joy are gone.
What though new masks she still may wear,
Wealth, house and hall, with acres rich and rare,
As wife or child appear she, water, flame,
Dagger, or poison, she is still the same;
And still we fear the ill which happens never,
And what we lose not are bewailing ever.

Alas! alas! too deep 'tis felt! too deep!
With gods may vie no son of mortal clay;
More am I like to worms that crawl and creep,
And dig, and dig through earth their lightless way,
Which, while they feed on dust in narrow room,
Find from the wanderer's foot their death-blow and their tomb.

Is it not dust that this old wall
From all its musty benches shows me?

And dust the trifling trumperies all
That in this world of moths enclose me?
Here is it that I hope to find
Wherewith to sate my craving mind?
Need I spell out page after page,
To know that men in every age
And every clime, have spurred in vain
The jaded muscle and the tortured brain,
And here and there, with centuries between,
One happy man belike hath been?

Thou grinning skull, what wouldst thou say,
Save that thy brain, in chase of truth, like mine,
With patient toil pursued its floundering way
By glimmering lights that through dim twilight-shine?
Ye instruments, in sooth, now laugh at me,
With wheel, and cog-wheel, ring, and cylinder;
At Nature's door I stood; ye should have been the key,
But though your ward be good, the bolt ye cannot stir.
Mysterious Nature may not choose
To unveil her secrets to the stare of day,
And what from the mind's eye she stores away,
Thou canst not force from her with levers and with screws.
Thou antique gear, why dost thou cumber
My chamber with thy useless lumber?
My father housed thee on this spot,
And I must keep thee, though I need thee not!
Thou parchment roll that hast been smoked upon
Long as around this desk the sorry lamp-light shone;
Much better had I spent my little gear,
Than with this little to sit mouldering here;
Why should a man possess ancestral treasures,
But by possession to enlarge his pleasures?
The thing we use not a dead burden lies,
But what the moment brings the wise man knows to prize.

But what is this? there in the corner; why

Does that flask play the magnet to mine eye?
And why within me does this strange light shine,
As the soft nightly moon through groves of sombre pine?
I greet thee, matchless phial; and with devotion
I take thee down, and in thy mellow potion
I reverence human wit and human skill.
Fine essence of the opiate dew of sleep,
Dear extract of all subtle powers that kill,
Be mine the first-fruits of thy strength to reap!
I look on thee, and soothed is my heart's pain;
I grasp thee, straight is lulled my racking brain,
And wave by wave my soul's flood ebbs away.
I see wide ocean's swell invite my wistful eyes,
And at my feet her sparkling mirror lies;
To brighter shores invites a brighter day.

A car of fire comes hovering o'er my head,
With gentle wafture; now let me pursue
New flight adventurous, through the starry blue,
And be my wingèd steps unburdened sped
To spheres of uncramped energy divine!
And may indeed this life of gods be mine,
But now a worm, and cased in mortal clay?
Yes! only let strong will high thought obey,
To turn thy back on the blest light of day,
And open burst the portals which by most
With fear, that fain would pass them by, are crossed.
Now is the time by deeds, not words, to prove
That earth-born man yields not to gods above.
Before that gloomy cavern not to tremble,
Where all those spectral shapes of dread assemble,
Which Fancy, slave of every childish fear,
Bids, to the torment of herself, appear;
Forward to strive unto that passage dire,
Whose narrow mouth seems fenced with hell's collected fire;
With glad resolve this leap to make, even though
That thing we call our soul should into nothing flow!

Now come thou forth! thou crystal goblet clear,
From out thy worshipful old case,
Where thou hast lain unused this many a year.
In days of yore right gaily didst thou grace
The festive meetings of my grey-beard sires,
When passed from hand to hand the draught that glee inspires.
Thy goodly round, the figures there
Pictured with skill so quaint and rare,
Each lusty drinker's duty to declare
In ready rhyme what meaning they might bear,
And at one draught to drain the brimming cup,—
All this recalls full many a youthful night.
Now to no comrade shall I yield thee up,
Nor whet my wit upon thy pictures bright;
Here is a juice intoxicates the soul
Quickly. With dark brown flood it crowns the bowl.
Let this last draught, my mingling and my choice,
With blithesome heart be quaffed, and joyful voice,
A solemn greeting to the rising morn!

[A sound of bells is heard, and distant quire-singing.]

QUIRE OF ANGELS.

Christ is arisen!
Joy be to mortal man,
Whom, since the world began,
Evils inherited,
By his sins merited,
Through his veins creeping,
Sin-bound are keeping.

FAUST.

What sweet soft peals, what notes, so clear and pure,
Draw from my lips the glass perforce away?
Thus early do the bells their homage pay,
Of holy hymning to new Easter day!
Already sing the quires the soothing song
That erst, round the dark grave, an angel throng

Sang, to proclaim the great salvation sure!

QUIRE OF WOMEN.

With spices and balsams
All sweetly we bathed Him;
With cloths of fine linen
All cleanly we swathed Him;
In the tomb of the rock, where
His body was lain,
We come, and we seek
Our loved Master, in vain!

QUIRE OF ANGELS.

Christ is arisen!
Praised be His name!
Whose love shared with sinners
Their sorrow and shame;
Who bore the hard trial
Of self-denial,
And, victorious, ascends to the skies whence
He came.

FAUST.

What seek ye here, ye gently-swaying tones,
Sweet seraph-music 'mid a mortal's groans?
Soft-natured men may own that soothing chaunt;
I hear the message, but the faith I want.
For still the child to Faith most dear
Was Miracle: nor I may vaunt
To mount, and mingle with the sphere
Whence such fair news floats down to mortal ear.
And yet, with youthful memories fraught, this strain
Hath power to call me back to life again.
A time there was when Heaven's own kiss,
On solemn Sabbath, seemed to fall on me,
The minster-bell boomed forth no human bliss,
And prayer to God was burning ecstasy.
A dim desire of inarticulate good
Drove me o'er hill and dale, through wold and wood,
And, while hot tears streamed from mine eyes,

I felt a world within me rise.
This hymn proclaimed the sports of youthful days,
And merry-makings when the spring began;
Now Memory's potent spell my spirit sways,
And thoughts of childhood rule the full-grown man.
O! sound thou on, thou sweet celestial strain,
The tear doth gush, Earth claims her truant son again!

QUIRE OF THE DISCIPLES.

By death untimely, though
Laid in the lowly grave,
Soars He sublimely now
Whence He came us to save.
He on His Father's breast,
Fountain of life and light;
We on the earth oppressed,
Groping through cloudy night;
Comfortless left are we,
Toiling through life's annoy,
Weeping to envy thee,
Master, thy joy!

QUIRE OF ANGELS.

Christ is risen
From Death's corrupting thrall,
Break from your prison
And follow His call!
Praising by deeds of love
Him who now reigns above,
Feeding the brethren poor,
Preaching salvation sure,
Joys that shall aye endure,
Knowing nor doubt nor fear,
While He is near.

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II.

Scene I.

Before the gate of the town.
Motley groups of people crowding out to walk.

SOME JOURNEYMEN.

Brethren, whither bound?

OTHERS.

To the Jægerhaus.

THE FIRST.

We to the mill.

A JOURNEYMAN.

At Wasserhof best cheer is to be found.

A SECOND.

But then the road is not agreeable.

THE OTHERS.

And what dost thou?

A THIRD.

I go where others go.

A FOURTH.

Let's go to Burgdorf; there you'll find, I know,
The best of beer, and maidens to your mind,
And roaring frolics too, if that's your kind.

A FIFTH.

Thou over-wanton losel, thou!
Dost itch again for some new row?
I loathe the place; and who goes thither,
He and I don't go together.

A SERVANT GIRL.

No! no! back to the town I'd rather fare.

ANOTHER.

We're sure to find him 'neath the poplars there.

THE FIRST.

No mighty matter that for me,
Since he will walk with none but thee,
In every dance, too, he is thine:
What have thy joys to do with mine?

THE OTHER.

To-day he'll not come single; sure he said
That he would bring with him the curly-head.

STUDENT.

Blitz, how the buxom wenches do their paces!
Come, let us make acquaintance with their faces.
A stiff tobacco, and a good strong beer,
And a fine girl well-rigged, that's the true Burschen cheer!

BURGHERS' DAUGHTERS.

Look only at those spruce young fellows there!
In sooth, 'tis more than one can bear;
The best society have they, if they please,
And run after such low-bred queans as these!

SECOND STUDENT. [to the first]

Not quite so fast! there comes a pair behind,
So smug and trim, so blithe and debonair;
And one is my fair neighbour, I declare;
She is a girl quite to my mind.
They pass along so proper and so shy,
And yet they'll take us with them by and by.

FIRST STUDENT.

No, no! these girls with nice conceits they bore you,
Have at the open game that lies before you!
The hand that plies the busy broom on Monday,
Caressed her love the sweetest on the Sunday.

A BURGHER.

No! this new burgomaster don't please me,
Now that he's made, his pride mounts high and higher;
And for the town, say, what does he?
Are we not deep and deeper in the mire?
In strictness day by day he waxes,
And more than ever lays on taxes.

A BEGGAR. [singing]

Ye gentle sirs, and ladies fair,
With clothes so fine, and cheeks so red,
O pass not by, but from your eye
Be pity's gracious virtue shed!
Let me not harp in vain; for blest
Is he alone who gives away;
And may this merry Easter-feast
Be for the poor no fasting day!

ANOTHER BURGHER.

Upon a Sunday or a holiday,
No better talk I know than war and warlike rumours,
When in Turkey far away,
The nations fight out their ill humours.
We sit i' the window, sip our glass at ease,
And see how down the stream the gay ships gently glide;
Then wend us safely home at even-tide,
Blessing our stars we live in times of peace.

THIRD BURGHER.

Yea, neighbour, there you speak right wisely;
Ev'n so do I opine precisely.
They may split their skulls, they may,
And turn the world upside down,
So long as we, in our good town,
Keep jogging in the good old way.

OLD WOMAN. [to the Burghers' Daughters.]

Hey-day, how fine! these be of gentle stuff,
The eyes that would not look on you are blind.
Only not quite so high! 'Tis well enough—

And what you wish I think I know to find.

FIRST BURGHER'S DAUGHTER.

Agatha, come! I choose not to be seen
With such old hags upon the public green;
Though on St. Andrew's night she let me see
My future lover bodily.

SECOND BURGHER'S DAUGHTER.

Mine too, bold, soldier-like, she made to pass,
With his wild mates, before me in a glass;
I hunt him out from place to place,
But nowhere yet he shows his face.

SOLDIERS.

Castles with turrets
And battlements high,
Maids with proud spirits,
And looks that defy!
From the red throat of death,
With the spear and the glaive,
We pluck the ripe glory
That blooms for the brave.

The trumpet invites him,
With soul-stirring call,
To where joy delights him,
Nor terrors appall.
On storming maintains he
Triumphant the field,
Strong fortresses gains he,
Proud maidens must yield.
Thus carries the soldier
The prize of the day,
And merrily, merrily
Dashes away!

Scene II.

Enter FAUST and WAGNER.

FAUST.

The ice is now melted from stream and brook
By the Spring's genial life-giving look;
Forth smiles young Hope in the greening vale,
And ancient Winter, feeble and frail,
Creeps cowering back to the mountains grey;
And thence he sends, as he hies him away,
Fitfullest brushes of icy hail,
Sweeping the plain in his harmless flight.
But the sun may brook no white,
Everywhere stirs he the vegetive strife,
Flushing the fields with the glow of life;
But since few flowers yet deck the mead
He takes him gay-dressed folk in their stead.
Now from these heights I turn me back
To view the city's busy track.
Through the dark, deep-throated gate
They are pouring and spreading in motley array.
All sun themselves so blithe to-day.
The Lord's resurrection they celebrate,
For that themselves to life are arisen.
From lowly dwellings' murky prison,
From labour and business' fetters tight,
From the press of gables and roofs that meet
Over the squeezing narrow street,
From the churches' solemn night
Have they all been brought to the light.
Lo! how nimbly the multitude
Through the fields and the gardens hurry,
How, in its breadth and length, the flood
Wafts onward many a gleesome wherry,
And this last skiff moves from the brink
So laden that it seems to sink.
Ev'n from the far hills' winding way

I' the sunshine glitter their garments gay.
I hear the hamlet's noisy mirth;
Here is the people's heaven on earth,
And great and small rejoice to-day.
Here may I be a man, here dare
The joys of men with men to share.

WAGNER.

With you, Herr Doctor, one is proud to walk,
Sharing your fame, improving by your talk;
But, for myself, I shun the multitude,
Being a foe to everything that's rude.
I may not brook their senseless howling,
Their fiddling, screaming, ninepin bowling;
Like men possessed, they rave along,
And call it joy, and call it song.

Scene III.

PEASANTS. [beneath a lime-tree]

The shepherd for the dance was dressed,
With ribbon, wreath, and spotted vest,
Right sprucely he did show.

And round and round the linden-tree
All danced as mad as mad could be.

Juchhe, juchhe!
Juchheisa, heisa, he!
So went the fiddle bow.

Then with a jerk he wheeled him by,
And on a maiden that stood nigh
He with his elbow came.
Quick turned the wench, and, "Sir," quoth she,
"Such game is rather rough for me."

Juchhe, juchhe!
Juchheisa, heisa, he!
"For shame, I say, for shame!"

Yet merrily went it round and round,
And right and left they swept the ground,
And coat and kirtle flew;
And they grew red, and they grew warm,
And, panting, rested arm in arm;

Juchhe, juchhe!
Juchheisa, heisa, he!
And hips on elbows too.

And "Softly, softly," quoth the quean,
"How many a bride hath cheated been
By men as fair as you!"
But he spoke a word in her ear aside,
And from the tree it shouted wide

Juchhe, juchhe!
Juchheisa, heisa, he!
With fife and fiddle too.

AN OLD PEASANT.

Herr Doctor, 'tis most kind in you,
And all here prize the boon, I'm sure,
That one so learned should condescend
To share the pastimes of the poor.
Here, take this pitcher, filled ev'n now
With cooling water from the spring.
May God with grace to slake your thirst,
Bless the libation that we bring;
Be every drop a day to increase
Your years in happiness and peace!

FAUST.

Your welcome offering I receive; the draught
By kind hands given, with grateful heart be quaffed!

[The people collect round him in a circle.

OLD PEASANT.

Soothly, Herr Doctor, on this tide,
Your grace and kindness passes praise;
Good cause had we whileome to bless
The name of Faust in evil days.
Here stand there not a few whose lives
Your father's pious care attest,
Saved from fell fever's rage, when he
Set limits to the deadly pest.
You were a young man then, and went
From hospital to hospital;
Full many a corpse they bore away,
But you came scaithless back from all;
Full many a test severe you stood
Helping helped by the Father of Good.

ALL THE PEASANTS.

Long may the man who saved us live,

His aid in future need to give!

FAUST.

Give thanks to Him above, who made
The hand that helped you strong to aid.

[He goes on farther with WAGNER.

WAGNER.

How proud must thou not feel, most learnèd man,
To hear the praises of this multitude;
Thrice happy he who from his talents can
Reap such fair harvest of untainted good!
The father shows you to his son,
And all in crowds to see you run;
The dancers cease their giddy round,
The fiddle stops its gleesome sound;
They form a ring where'er you go,
And in the air their caps they throw;
A little more, and they would bend the knee,
As if the Holy Host came by in thee!

FAUST.

Yet a few paces, till we reach yon stone,
And there our wearied strength we may repair.
Here oft I sat in moody thought alone,
And vexed my soul with fasting and with prayer.
Rich then in hope, in faith then strong,
With tears and sobs my hands I wrung,
And weened the end of that dire pest,
From heaven's high-counselled lord to wrest.
Now their applause with mockery flouts mine ear.
O could'st thou ope my heart and read it here,
How little sire and son
For such huge meed of thanks have done!
My father was a grave old gentleman,
Who o'er the holy secrets of creation,
Sincere, but after his peculiar plan,
Brooded, with whimsied speculation.
Who, with adepts in painful gropings spent

His days, within the smoky kitchen pent,
And, after recipes unnumbered, made
The unnatural mixtures of his trade.
The tender lily and the lion red,
A suitor bold, in tepid bath were wed,
With open fiery flame well baked together,
And squeezed from one bride-chamber to another;
Then, when the glass the queen discovered,
Arrayed in youthful glistening pride,
Here was the medicine, and the patient died,
But no one questioned who recovered.
Thus in these peaceful vales and hills,
The plague was not the worst of ills,
And Death his ghastly work pursued,
The better for the hellish brewst we brewed.
Myself to thousands the curst juice supplied;
They pined away, and I must live to hear
The praise of mercy in the murderer's ear.

WAGNER.

How can you with such whims be grieved?
Surely a good man does his part
With scrupulous care to use the art
Which from his father he received.
When we, in youth, place on our sire reliance,
He opes to us his stores of information;
When we, as men, extend the bounds of science,
Our sons build higher upon our foundation.

FAUST.

O happy he who yet hath hope to float
Above this sea of crude distempered thought!
What we know not is what we need to know,
And what we know, we might as well let go;
But cease; cheat not the moment of its right
By curious care and envious repining;
Behold how fair, in evening's mellow light,
The green-embosomed cottages are shining.
The sun slants down, the day hath lived his date,
But on he hies to tend another sphere.

O that no wing upon my wish may wait
To follow still and still in his career!
Upborne on evening's quenchless beams to greet
The noiseless world illumined at my feet,
Each peaceful vale, each crimson-flaming peak,
Each silver rill whose tinkling waters seek
The golden flood that feeds the fruitful plain.
Then savage crags, and gorges dark, would rein
My proud careering course in vain;
Ev'n now the sea spreads out its shimmering bays,
And charms the sense with ecstasy of gaze.
Yet seems the god at length to sink;
But, borne by this new impulse of my mind,
I hasten on, his quenchless ray to drink,
The day before me, and the night behind,
The heavens above me, under me the sea.
A lovely dream! meanwhile the god is gone.
Alas! the soul, in wingèd fancy free,
Seeks for a corporal wing, and findeth none.
Yet in each breast 'tis deeply graven,
Upward and onward still to pant,
When over us, lost in the blue of heaven,
Her quavering song the lark doth chaunt;
When over piny peaks sublime
The eagle soars with easy strain,
And over lands and seas the crane
Steers homeward to a sunnier clime.

WAGNER.

I too have had my hours of whim,
But feeling here runs over reason's brim.
Forest and field soon tire the eye to scan,
And eagle's wings were never made for man.
How otherwise the mind and its delights!
From book to book, from page to page, we go.
Thus sweeten we the dreary winter nights,
Till every limb with new life is aglow;
And chance we but unroll some rare old parchment scroll,
All heaven stoops down, and finds a lodgment in the soul.

FAUST.

Thou know'st but the one impulse—it is well!
Tempt not the yearning that divides the heart.
Two souls, alas! within my bosom dwell!
This strives from that with adverse strain to part.
The one, bound fast by stubborn might of love,
To this low earth with grappling organs clings;
The other spurns the clod, and soars on wings
To join a nobler ancestry above.
Oh! be there spirits in the air,
'Twixt earth and heaven that float with potent sway,
Drop from your sphere of golden-glowing day,
And waft me hence new varied life to share!
Might I but own a mantle's fold enchanted,
To climes remote to bear me on its wing,
More than the costliest raiment I should vaunt it,
More than the purple robe that clothes a king.

WAGNER.

Invoke not rash the well-known spirit-throng,
That stream unseen the atmosphere along,
And dangers thousandfold prepare,
Weak men from every quarter to ensnare.
From the keen north in troops they float,
With sharpest teeth and arrow-pointed tongues;
From the harsh east they bring a blasting drought,
And feed with wasting greed upon thy lungs.
When from the arid south their sultry powers
They send, hot fires upheaping on thy crown,
The West brings forth his swarms with cooling showers,
To end in floods that sweep thy harvests down.
Quick-ear'd are they, on wanton mischief bent,
And work our will with surer bait to ply us;
They show as fair as heaven's own couriers sent,
And lisp like angels when they most belie us.
But let us hence! the air is chill,
The cold grey mists are creeping down the hill,
Now is the time to seek the bright fireside.
Why standest thou with strange eyes opened wide?

What twilight-spectre may thy fancy trouble?

FAUST.

See'st thou that swarthy dog sweeping through corn and stubble?

WAGNER.

I saw him long ago—not strange he seemed to me.

FAUST.

Look at him well—what should the creature be?

WAGNER.

He seems a poodle who employs his snout
Now here, now there, to snuff his master out.

FAUST.

Dost thou not see how nigher still and nigher
His spiral circles round us wind?
And, err I not, he leaves behind
His track a train of sparkling fire.

WAGNER.

A small black poodle is all I see;
Surely some strange delusion blinds thee!

FAUST.

Methinks soft magic circles winds he,
About, about, a snare for thee and me.

WAGNER.

I see him only doubtful springing round,
Having two strangers for his master found.

FAUST.

He draws him closer—now he comes quite near!

WAGNER.

A dog, be sure, and not a ghost, is here.
He growls, and looks about in fear,
And crouches down, and looks to you,
And wags his tail—what any dog will do.

FAUST.

Come hither, poodle!

WAGNER.

'Tis a drollish brute;

When you stand still, then stands he mute,

But when you speak, he springs as he would speak to you;

He will bring back what you let fall,

And fetch your stick out of the water.

FAUST.

You are quite right. There's no such matter.

No trace of ghost—a dog well trained, that's all!

WAGNER.

A well-trained dog may well engage

The favour of a man most sage;

This poodle well deserves your recognition;

Few students learn so much from good tuition.

[Exeunt, going in through the gate of the city.]

Scene IV.

FAUST'S Study.

FAUST. [entering with the POODLE.]

Now field and meadow lie behind me,
Hushed 'neath the veil of deepest night,
And thoughts of solemn seeming find me,
Too holy for the garish light.
Calm now the blood that wildly ran,
Asleep the hand of lawless strife;
Now wakes to life the love of man,
The love of God now wakes to life.

Cease, poodle! why snuff'st and snifflest thou so,
Running restless to and fro?
Behind the stove there lie at rest,
And take for bed my cushion the best!
And as without, on our mountain-ramble,
We joyed to see thy freakish gambol,
So here, my hospitable care,
A quiet guest, and welcome share.

When in our narrow cell confined,
The friendly lamp begins to burn,
Then clearer sees the thoughtful mind,
With searching looks that inward turn.
Bright Hope again within us beams,
And Reason's voice again is strong,
We thirst for life's untroubled streams,
For the pure fount of life we long.

Quiet thee, poodle! it seems not well
To break, with thy growling, the holy spell
Of my soul's music, that refuses

All fellowship with bestial uses.
Full well we know that the human brood,
What they don't understand condemn,
And murmur in their peevish mood
At things too fair and good for them;
Belike the cur, as curs are they,
Thus growls and snarls his bliss away.

But, alas! already I feel it well,
No more may peace within this bosom dwell.
Why must the stream so soon dry up,
And I lie panting for the cup
That mocks my lips? so often why
Drink pleasure's shallow fount, when scarce yet tasted, dry?
Yet is this evil not without remeid;
We long for heavenly food to feed
Our heaven-born spirit, and the heart, now bent
On things divine, to revelation turns,
Which nowhere worthier or purer burns,
Than here in our New Testament.
I feel strange impulse in my soul
The sacred volume to unroll,
With honest purpose, once for all,
The holy Greek Original
Into my honest German to translate.
[He opens the Bible and reads.]
"In the beginning was the WORD:" thus here
The text stands written; but no clear
Meaning shines here for me, and I must wait,
A beggar at dark mystery's gate,
Lamed in the start of my career.
The naked word I dare not prize so high,
I must translate it differently,
If by the Spirit I am rightly taught.
"In the beginning of all things was THOUGHT."
The first line let me ponder well,
Lest my pen outstrip my sense;
Is it Thought wherein doth dwell

All-creative omnipotence?
I change the phrase, and write—the course
Of the great stream of things was shaped by FORCE.
But even here, before I lift my pen,
A voice of warning bids me try again.
At length, at length, the Spirit helps my need,
I write—"In the beginning was the DEED."

Wilt thou keep thy dainty berth,
Poodle, use a gentler mirth,
Cease thy whimpering and howling,
And keep for other place thy growling.
Such a noisy inmate may
Not my studious leisure cumber;
You or I, without delay,
Restless cur, must leave the chamber!
Not willingly from thee I take
The right of hospitality.
But if thou wilt my quiet break,
Seek other quarters—thou hast exit free.
But what must I see?
What vision strange
Beyond the powers
Of Nature's range?
Am I awake, or bound with a spell?
How wondrously the brute doth swell!
Long and broad
Uprises he,
In a form that no form
Of a dog may be!
What spectre brought I into the house?
He stands already, with glaring eyes,
And teeth in grinning ranks that rise,
Large as a hippopotamus!
O! I have thee now!
For such half-brood of hell as thou
The key of Solomon the wise
Is surest spell to exorcise.

SPIRITS. [in the passage without]
Brother spirits, have a care!
One within is prisoned there!
Follow him none!—for he doth quail
Like a fox, trap-caught by the tail.
But let us watch!
Hover here, hover there,
Up and down amid the air;
For soon this sly old lynx of hell
Will tear him free, and all be well.
If we can by foul or fair,
We will free him from the snare,
And repay good service thus,
Done by him oft-times for us.

FAUST.
First let the charm of the elements four
The nature of the brute explore.
Let the Salamander glow,
Undene twine her crested wave,
Silphe into ether flow,
And Kobold vex him, drudging slave!

Whoso knows not
The elements four,
Their quality,
And hidden power,
In the magic art
Hath he no part.

Spiring in flames glow
Salamander!
Rushing in waves flow
Undene!
Shine forth in meteor-beauty
Silphe!
Work thy domestic duty

Incubus Incubus!
Step forth and finish the spell.
None of the four
In the brute doth dwell.
It lies quite still with elfish grinning there.
It shall know a stronger charm,
It shall shrink from sharper harm,
When by a mightier name I swear.

Art thou a fugitive
Urchin of hell?
So yield thee at length
To this holiest spell!
Bend thee this sacred
Emblem before,
Which the powers of darkness
Trembling adore.

Already swells he up with bristling hair.

Can'st thou read it,
The holy sign,
Reprobate spirit,
The emblem divine?
The unbegotten,
Whom none can name,
Moving and moulding
The wide world's frame,
Yet nailed to the cross
With a death of shame.

Now behind the stove he lies,
And swells him up to an elephant's size,
And fills up all the space.
He'll melt into a cloud; not so!

Down, I say, down, proud imp, and know
Here, at thy master's feet, thy place!
In vain, in vain, thou seek'st to turn thee,
With an holy flame I burn thee!
Wait not the charm
Of the triple-glowing light!
Beware the harm
If thou invite
Upon thy head my spell of strongest might!

[The clouds vanish, and MEPHISTOPHELES comes forward from behind the
fireplace, dressed like an itinerant scholar.]

Scene V.

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What's all the noise about? I'm here at leisure
To work your worship's will and pleasure.

FAUST.

So, so! such kernel cracked from such a shell!
A travelling scholar! the jest likes me well!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I greet the learned gentleman!
I've got a proper sweating 'neath your ban.

FAUST.

What is thy name?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What is my power were better,
From one who so despises the mere letter,
Who piercing through the coarse material shell,
With Being's inmost substance loves to dwell.

FAUST.

Yes, but you gentlemen proclaim
Your nature mostly in your name;
Destroyer, God of Flies, the Adversary,
Such names their own interpretation carry.
But say, who art thou?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I am a part of that primordial Might,
Which always wills the wrong, and always works the right.

FAUST.

You speak in riddles; the interpretation?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I am the Spirit of Negation:
And justly so; for all that is created
Deserves to be annihilated.
'Twere better, thus, that there were no creation.
Thus everything that you call evil,
Destruction, ruin, death, the devil,
Is my pure element and sphere.

FAUST.

Thou nam'st thyself a part, yet standest wholly here.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I speak to thee the truth exact,
The plain, unvarnished, naked fact,
Though man, that microcosm of folly deems
Himself the compact whole he seems.
Part of the part I am that erst was all,
Part of the darkness, from whose primal pall
Was born the light, the proud rebellious Light,
Which now disputeth with its mother Night,
Her rank and room i' the world by ancient right.
Yet vainly; though it strain and struggle much,
'Tis bound to body with the closer clutch;
From body it streams, on body paints a hue,
And body bends it from its course direct;
Thus in due season I expect,
When bodies perish, Light will perish too.

FAUST.

Hold! now I know thy worthy duties all!
Unable to annihilate wholesale,
Thy mischief now thou workest by retail.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And even thus, my progress is but small.
This something, the big lumpish world, which stands
Opposed to nothing, still ties my hands,
And spite of all the ground that I seem winning,
Remains as firm as in the beginning;
With storms and tempests, earthquakes and burnings,

Earth still enjoys its evenings and mornings,
And the accursèd fry of brute and human clay,
On them my noblest skill seems worse than thrown away.
How many thousands have I not buried!
Yet still a new fresh blood is hurried
Through fresh young veins, that I must sheer despair.
The earth, the water, and the air,
The moist, the dry, the hot, the cold,
A thousand germs of life unfold;
And had I not of flame made reservation,
I had no portion left in the creation.

FAUST.

And thus thou seekest to oppose
The genial power, from which all life and motion flows,
Against Existence' universal chain,
Clenching thy icy devil's fist in vain!
Try some more profitable feats,
Strange son of Chaos, full of cross conceits.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The hint is good, and on occasion,
May well deserve consideration;
Meanwhile, with your good leave, I would withdraw.

FAUST.

My leave! do I make devil's law?
The liberty, methinks, is all your own.
I see you here to-day with pleasure,
Go now, and come back at your leisure.
Here is the door, there is the window, and
A chimney, if you choose it, is at hand.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Let me speak plain! there is a small affair,
That, without your assistance, bars my way,
The goblin-foot upon the threshold there—

FAUST.

The pentagram stands in your way!

Ha! tell me then, thou imp of sin,
If this be such a potent spell
To bar thy going out, how cam'st thou in?
What could have cheated such a son of hell?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Look at it well, the drawing is not true;
One angle, that towards the door, you see,
Left a small opening for me.

FAUST.

So so! for once dame Fortune has been kind,
And I have made a prisoner of you!
Chance is not always blind.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The cur sprang in before it looked about;
But now the thing puts on a serious air;
The devil is in the house and can't get out.

FAUST.

You have the window, why not jump out there?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

It is a law which binds all ghosts and sprites;
Wherever they creep in, there too they must creep out;
I came in at the door, by the door I must go out.

FAUST.

So so! then hell too has its laws and rights,
Thus might one profit by the powers of evil,
And make an honest bargain with the devil.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

The devil, sir, makes no undue exaction,
And pays what he has promised to a fraction;
But this affair requires consideration,
We'll leave it for some future conversation.
For this time, I beseech your grace,
Let me be gone; I've work to do.

FAUST.

Stay but one minute, I've scarce seen your face.
Speak; you should know the newest of the new.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'll answer thee at length some other day;
At present, I beseech thee, let me loose.

FAUST.

I laid no trap to snare thee in the way,
Thyself didst thrust thy head into the noose;
Whoso hath caught the devil, hold him fast!
Such lucky chance returns not soon again.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

If 'tis your pleasure so, I will remain,
But on condition that the time be passed
In worthy wise, and you consent to see
Some cunning sleights of spirit-craft from me.

FAUST.

Thy fancy jumps with mine. Thou may'st commence,
So that thy dainty tricks but please the sense.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou shalt, in this one hour, my friend,
More for thy noblest senses gain,
Than in the year's dull formal train,
From stale beginning to stale end.
The songs the gentle Spirits sing thee,
The lovely visions that they bring thee,
Are not an empty juggling show.
On thine ear sweet sounds shall fall,
Odorous breezes round thee blow,
Taste, and touch, and senses all
With delicious tingling glow.
No lengthened prelude need we here,
Sing, Spirit-imps that hover near!

SPIRITS.

Vanish ye murky

Old arches away!
Through the cloud curtain
That blinds heaven's ray
Mild and serenely
Look forth the queenly
Eye of the day!
Star now and starlet
Beam more benign,
And purer suns now
Softlier shine.
In beauty ethereal,
A swift-moving throng,
Of spirits ærial,
Are waving along,
And the soul follows
On wings of desire;
The fluttering garlands
That deck their attire,
Cover the meadows,
Cover the bowers,
Where lovers with lovers
Breathe rapturous hours.
Bower on bower!
The shoots of the vine,
With the leaves of the fig-tree,
Their tendrils entwine!
Clusters of ripe grapes,
Bright-blushing all,
Into the wine-press
Heavily fall;
From fountains divine
Bright rivers of wine
Come foaming and swirling;
O'er gems of the purest,
Sparkling and purling,
They flow and they broaden
In bright vista seen,
To deep-bosomed lakes
Lightly fringed with the green,

Where leafy woods nod
In their tremulous sheen.
On light-oaring pinions
The birds cut the gale,
Through the breezy dominions
As sunward they sail;
They sail on swift wings
To the isles of the blest,
On the soft swelling waves
That are cradled to rest;
Where we hear the glad spirits
In jubilee sing,
As o'er the green meadows
Fleet-bounding they spring:
With light airy footing,
A numberless throng,
Like meteors shooting
The mountains along;
Some there are flinging
Their breasts to the seas,
Others are swinging
In undulant ease,
Lovingly twining
Life's tissue divine,
Where pure stars are shining
In beauty benign!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He sleeps! well done, ye airy urchins! I
Remain your debtor for this lullaby,
By which so bravely ye have sung asleep
This restless spirit, who, with all his wit,
Is not yet quite the man with cunning cast,
To hook the devil and hold him fast.
Around him let your shapes fantastic flit,
And in a sea of dreams his senses steep.
But now this threshold's charm to disenchant,
The tooth of a rat is all I want;
Nor need I make a lengthened conjuration,

I hear one scraping there in preparation.

The lord of the rats and of the mice,
Of the flies, and frogs, and bugs, and lice,
Commands you with your teeth's good saw,
The threshold of this door to gnaw!
Forth come, and there begin to file,
Where he lets fall this drop of oil.
Ha! there he jumps! that angle there,
With thy sharp teeth I bid thee tear,
Which jutting forward, sad disaster,
Unwilling prisoner keeps thy master.
Briskly let the work go on,
One bite more and it is done! [Exit.

FAUST. [awakening from his trance]

Once more the juggler Pleasure cheats my lip,
Gone the bright spirit-dream, and left no trace,
That I spake with the devil face to face,
And that a poodle dog gave me the slip!

Scene VI.

FAUST'S Study as before.

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

Who's there to break my peace once more? come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis I!

FAUST.

Come in!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou must repeat it thrice.

FAUST.

Come in.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thus with good omen we begin;

I come to give you good advice,
And hope we'll understand each other.
The idle fancies to expel,
That in your brain make such a pother,
At your service behold me here,
Of noble blood, a cavalier,
A gallant youth rigged out with grace,
In scarlet coat with golden lace,
A short silk mantle, and a bonnet,
With a gay cock's feather on it,
And at my side a long sharp sword.
Now listen to a well-meant word;
Do thou the like, and follow me,
All unembarrassed thus and free,
To mingle in the busy scenes
Of life, and know what living means.

FAUST.

Still must I suffer, clothe me as you may,
This narrow earthly life's incumbrancy;
Too old I am to be content with play,
Too young from every longing to be free.
What can the world hold forth for me to gain?
Abstain, it saith, and still it saith, Abstain!
This is the burden of the song
That in our ears eternal rings,
Life's dreary litany lean and long,
That each dull moment hoarsely sings.
With terror wake I in the morn from sleep,
And bitter tears might often weep,
To see the day, when its dull course is run,
That brings to fruit not one small wish,—not one!
That, with capricious criticising,
Each taste of joy within my bosom rising,
Ere it be born, destroys, and in my breast
Chokes every thought that gives existence zest,
With thousand soulless trifles of an hour.
And when the dark night-shadows lower,
I seek to ease my aching brain
Upon a weary couch in vain.
With throngs of feverish dreams possessed,
Even in the home of sleep I find no rest;
The god, that in my bosom dwells,
Can stir my being's inmost wells;
But he who sways supreme our finer stuff,
Moves not the outward world, hard, obdurate, and tough.
Thus my existence is a load of woes,
Death my best friend, and life my worst of foes.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And yet methinks this friend you call your best,
Is seldom, when he comes, a welcome guest.

FAUST.

Oh! happy he to whom, in victory's glance,
Death round his brow the bloody laurel winds!
Whom, 'mid the circling hurry of the dance,

Locked in a maiden's close embrace he finds;
O! would to God that I had sunk that night
In tranceful death before the Spirit's might!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yet, on a certain night, a certain man was slow
To drink a certain brown potation out.

FAUST.

It seems 'tis your delight to play the scout.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Omniscient am I not; but many things I know.

FAUST.

If, in that moment's wild confusion,
A well-known tone of blithesome youth
Had power, by memory's dear delusion,
To cheat me with the guise of truth;
Then curse I all whate'er the soul
With luring juggleries entwines,
And in this gloomy dungeon-hole
With dazzling flatteries confines!
Curst be 'fore all the high opinion
The soul has of its own dominion!
Curst all the show of shallow seeming,
Through gates of sense fallacious streaming!
Curst be the hollow dreams of fame,
Of honour, glory, and a name!
Curst be the flattering goods of earth,
Wife, child, and servant, house and hearth!
Accursed be Mammon, when with treasures
To riskful venture he invites us,
Curst when, the slaves of passive pleasures,
On soft-spread cushions he delights us!
Curst be the balsam juice o' the grape!
Accursed be love's deceitful thrall!
Accursed be Hope! accursed be Faith!
Accursed be Patience above all!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS. [invisible]

Woe! woe!
Thou hast destroyed it!
The beautiful world,
With mightiest hand,
A demigod
In ruin has hurled!
We weep,
And bear its wrecked beauty away,
Whence it may never
Return to the day.
Mightiest one
Of the sons of earth,
Brightest one,
Build it again!
Proudly resurgent with lovelier birth
In thine own bosom build it again!
Life's glad career
Anew commence
With insight clear,
And purgèd sense,
The while new songs around thee play,
To launch thee on more hopeful way!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

These are the tiny
Spirits that wait on me;
Hark how to pleasure
And action they counsel thee!
Into the world wide
Would they allure thee,
In solitude dull
No more to immure thee,
No more to sit moping
In mouldy mood,
With a film on thy sense,
And a frost in thy blood!

Cease then with thine own peevish whim to play,
That like a vulture makes thy life its prey.
Society, however low,
Still gives thee cause to feel and know
Thyself a man, amid thy fellow-men.
Yet my intent is not to pen
Thee up with the common herd! and though
I cannot boast, or rank, or birth
Of mighty men, the lords of earth,
Yet do I offer, at thy side,
Thy steps through mazy life to guide;
And, wilt thou join in this adventure,
I bind myself by strong indenture,
Here, on the spot, with thee to go.
Call me companion, comrade brave,
Or, if it better please thee so,
I am thy servant, am thy slave!

FAUST.

And in return, say, what the fee
Thy faithful service claims from me?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Of that you may consider when you list.

FAUST.

No, no! the devil is an Egotist,
And seldom gratis sells his labour,
For love of God, to serve his neighbour.
Speak boldly out, no private clause conceal;
With such as you 'tis dangerous to deal.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I bind myself to be thy servant here,
And wait with sleepless eyes upon thy pleasure,
If, when we meet again in yonder sphere,
Thou wilt repay my service in like measure.

FAUST.

What yonder is I little reck to know,

Provided I be happy here below;
The future world will soon enough arise,
When the present in ruin lies.
'Tis from this earth my stream of pleasure flows,
This sun it is that shines upon my woes;
And, were I once from this my home away,
Then happen freely what happen may.
Nor hope in me it moves, nor fear,
If then, as now, we hate and love;
Or if in yonder world, as here,
An under be, and an above.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, in this humour, you bid fair
With hope of good result to dare.
Close with my plan, and you will see
Anon such pleasant tricks from me,
As never eyes of man did bliss
From father Adam's time to this.

FAUST.

Poor devil, what hast thou to give,
By which a human soul may live?
By thee or thine was never yet divined
The thought that stirs the deep heart of mankind!
True, thou hast food that sateth never,
And yellow gold that, restless ever,
Like quicksilver between the fingers,
Only to escape us, lingers;
A game where we are sure to lose our labour,
A maiden that, while hanging on my breast,
Flings looks of stolen dalliance on my neighbour;
And honour by which gods are blest,
That, like a meteor, vanishes in air.
Show me the fruit that rots before 'tis broken,
And trees that day by day their green repair!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A word of mighty meaning thou hast spoken,
Yet such commission makes not me despair.

Believe me, friend, we only need to try it,
And we too may enjoy our morsel sweet in quiet.

FAUST.

If ever on a couch of soft repose
My soul shall rock at ease,
If thou canst teach with sweet delusive shows
Myself myself to please,
If thou canst trick me with a toy
To say sincerely I ENJOY,
Then may my latest sand be run!
A wager on it!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Done!

FAUST.

And done, and done!

When to the moment I shall say,
Stay, thou art so lovely, stay!
Then with thy fetters bind me round,
Then perish I with cheerful glee!
Then may the knell of death resound,
Then from thy service art thou free!
The clock may stand,
And the falling hand
Mark the time no more for me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Consider well: in things like these
The devil's memory is not apt to slip.

FAUST.

That I know well; may'st keep thy heart at ease,
No random word hath wandered o'er my lip.
Slave I remain, or here, or there,
Thine, or another's, I little care.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My duty I'll commence without delay,
When with the graduates you dine to-day.

One thing remains!—black upon white
A line or two, to make the bargain tight.

FAUST.

A writing, pedant!—hast thou never found
A man whose word was better than his bond?
Is't not enough that by my spoken word,
Of all I am and shall be thou art lord?
The world drives on, wild wave engulfing wave,
And shall a line bind me, if I would be a knave?
Yet 'tis a whim deep-graven in the heart,
And from such fancies who would gladly part?
Happy within whose honest breast concealed
There lives a faith, nor time nor chance can shake;
Yet still a parchment, written, stamped, and sealed,
A spectre is before which all must quake.
Commit but once thy word to the goose-feather,
Then must thou yield the sway to wax and leather.
Say, devil—paper, parchment, stone, or brass?
With me this coin or that will pass;
Style, or chisel, or pen shall it be?
Thou hast thy choice of all the three.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What need of such a hasty flare
Of words about so paltry an affair?
Paper or parchment, any scrap will do,
Then write in blood your signature thereto.

FAUST.

If this be all, there needs but small delay,
Such trifles shall not stand long in my way.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [while Faust is signing the paper]
Blood is a juice of most peculiar virtue.

FAUST.

Only no fear that I shall e'er demur to
The bond as signed; my whole heart swears
Even to the letter that the parchment bears.

Too high hath soared my blown ambition;
I now take rank with thy condition;
The Mighty Spirit of All hath scorned me,
And Nature from her secrets spurned me:
My thread of thought is rent in twain,
All science I loathe with its wranglings vain.
In the depths of sensual joy, let us tame
Our glowing passion's restless flame!
In magic veil, from unseen hand,
Be wonders ever at our command!
Plunge we into the rush of Time!
Into Action's rolling main!
Then let pleasure and pain,
Loss and gain,
Joy and sorrow, alternate chime!
Let bright suns shine, or dark clouds lower,
The man that works is master of the hour.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To thee I set nor bound nor measure,
Every dainty thou may'st snatch,
Every flying joy may'st catch,
Drink deep, and drain each cup of pleasure;
Only have courage, friend, and be not shy!

FAUST.

Content from thee thy proper wares to buy,
Thou markest well, I do not speak of joy,
Pleasure that smarts, giddy intoxication,
Enamoured hate, and stimulant vexation.
My bosom healed from hungry greed of science
With every human pang shall court alliance;
What all mankind of pain and of enjoyment
May taste, with them to taste be my employment;
Their deepest and their highest I will sound,
Want when they want, be filled when they abound,
My proper self unto their self extend,
And with them too be wrecked, and ruined in the end.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou art, do what thou wilt, just what thou art.
Heap wigs on wigs by millions on thy head,
And upon yard-high buskins tread,
Still thou remainest simply what thou art.

FAUST.

I feel it well, in vain have I uphoarded
All treasures that the mind of man afforded,
And when I sit me down, I feel no more
A well of life within me than before;
Not ev'n one hairbreadth greater is my height,
Not one inch nearer to the infinite.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My worthy friend, these things you view,
Just as they appear to you;
Some wiser method we must shape us,
Ere the joys of life escape us.
Why, what the devil! hands and feet,
Brain and brawn and blood are thine;
And what I drink, and what I eat,
Whose can it be, if 'tis not mine?
If I can number twice three horses,
Are not their muscles mine? and when I'm mounted,
I feel myself a man, and wheel my courses,
Just as if four-and-twenty legs I counted.
Quick then! have done with reverie,
And dash into the world with me!
I tell thee plain, a speculating fellow
Is like an ox on heath all brown and yellow,
Led in a circle by an evil spirit,
With roods of lush green pasture smiling near it.

FAUST.

But how shall we commence?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We start this minute:

Why, what a place of torture is here,

And what a life you live within it!
Yourself and your pack of younkers dear,
Killing outright with ennui!
Leave that to honest neighbour Paunch!
Thrashing of straw is not for thee:
Besides, into the best of all your knowledge,
You know 'tis not permitted you to launch
With chicken-hearted boys at College.
Ev'n now, methinks, I hear one on the stair.

FAUST.

Send him away: I cannot bear—

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Poor boy! he's waited long, nor must depart
Without some friendly word for head and heart;
Come, let me slip into your gown; the mask
Will suit me well; as for the teaching task,
[He puts on FAUST'S scholastic robes.]
Leave that to me! I only ask
A quarter of an hour; and you make speed
And have all ready for our journey's need. [Exit.]

MEPHISTOPHELES. [solus]

Continue thus to hold at nought
Man's highest power, his power of thought;
Thus let the Father of all lies
With shows of magic blind thine eyes,
And thou art mine, a certain prize.
To him hath Fate a spirit given,
With reinless impulse ever forwards driven,
Whose hasty striving overskips
The joys that flow for mortal lips;
Him drag I on through life's wild chase,
Through flat unmeaning emptiness;
He shall cling and cleave to me,
Like a sprawling child in agony,
And food and drink, illusive hovering nigh,
Shall shun his parchèd lips, and cheat his longing eye;
He shall pine and pant and strain

For the thing he may not gain,
And, though he ne'er had sold him to do evil,
He would have damned himself without help from the devil.

Scene VII.

Enter a STUDENT.

STUDENT.

I am but fresh arrived to-day,
And come my best respects to pay,
To one whose name, from boor to Kaiser,
None, without veneration, mention.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I feel obliged by your attention!
You see a man than other men no wiser:
Have you made inquiry elsewhere?

STUDENT.

Beseech you, sir, be my adviser!
I come with money to spend and spare,
With fresh young blood, and a merry heart,
On my college career to start:
My mother sent me, not without a tear,
To get some needful schooling here.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A better place you could not find.

STUDENT.

To speak the truth, 'tis not much to my mind.
Within these narrow cloister walls,
These antiquated Gothic halls,
I feel myself but ill at ease;
No spot of green I see, no trees,
And 'mid your formal rows of benches,
I almost seem to lose my senses.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That all depends on custom. Don't you see
How a young babe at first is slow
To know its mother's breast; but soon

With joy it strains the milky boon;
So you anon will suck nutrition
From Wisdom's breasts with blest fruition.

STUDENT.

I yearn to do so even now;
But, in the first place, tell me how?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My help is yours, or great or small;
But choose your Faculty, first of all.

STUDENT.

I aim at culture, learning, all
That men call science on the ball
Of earth, or in the starry tent
Of heaven; all Nature high and low,
Broad and deep, I seek to know.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

There you are on the proper scent;
Only beware of too much distraction.

STUDENT.

With soul and body I'm girt for action,
And yet I cannot choose but praise
A little freedom and merriment,
On pleasant summer holidays.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Redeem the time, for fast it fleets away,
But order rules the hour it cannot stay.
Therefore 'tis plain that you must pass
First of all through the logic class.
There will your mind be postured rightly,
Laced up in Spanish buskins tightly,
That with caution and care, as wisdom ought,
It may creep along the path of thought,
And not with fitful flickering glow
Will o' the wisp it to and fro.
There, too, if you hear the gentleman through

The term, to every lecture true,
You'll learn that a stroke of human thinking,
Which you had practised once as free
And natural as eating and drinking,
Cannot be made without one! two! three!
True, it should seem that the tissue of thought
Is like a web by cunning master wrought,
Where one stroke moves a thousand threads,
The shuttle shoots backwards and forwards between,
The slender threads flow together unseen,
And one with the others thousand-fold weds:
Then steps the philosopher forth to show
How of necessity it must be so:
If the first be so, the second is so,
And therefore the third and the fourth is so;
And unless the first and the second before be,
The third and the fourth can never more be.
So schoolmen teach and scholars believe,
But none of them yet ever learned to weave.
He who strives to know a thing well
Must first the spirit within expel,
Then can he count the parts in his hand,
Only without the spiritual band.
Encheiresis naturæ, 'tis clept in Chemistry,
Thus laughing at herself, albeit she knows not why.

STUDENT.

I must confess I can't quite comprehend you.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In this respect time by and by will mend you,
When you have learned the crude mixed masses
To decompose, and rank them in their classes.

STUDENT.

I feel as stupid to all he has said,
As a mill-wheel were whirling round in my head.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

After logic, first of all,

To the study of metaphysics fall!
There strive to know what ne'er was made
To go into a human head;
For what is within and without its command
A high-sounding word is always at hand.
But chiefly, for the first half year,
Let order in all your studies appear;
Five lectures a-day, that no time be lost,
And with the clock be at your post!
Come not, as some, without preparation,
But con his paragraphs o'er and o'er,
To be able to say, when you hear his oration,
That he gives you his book, and nothing more;
Yet not the less take down his words in writing,
As if the Holy Spirit were inditing!

STUDENT.

I shall not quickly give you cause
To repeat so weighty a clause;
For what with black on white is written,
We carry it home, a sure possession.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But, as I said, you must choose a profession.

STUDENT.

With Law, I must confess, I never was much smitten.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I should be loath to force your inclination,
Myself have some small skill in legislation;
For human laws and rights from sire to son,
Like an hereditary ill, flow on;
From generation dragged to generation,
And creeping slow from place to place.
Reason is changed to nonsense, good to evil,
Art thou a grandson, woe betide thy case!
Of Law they prate, most falsely clept the Civil,
But for that right, which from our birth we carry,
'Tis not a word found in their Dictionary.

STUDENT.

Your words have much increased my detestation.
O happy he, to whom such guide points out the way!
And now, I almost feel an inclination
To give Theology the sway.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I have no wish to lead you astray.
As to this science, 'tis so hard to eschew
The false way, and to hit upon the true,
And so much hidden poison lurks within,
That's scarce distinguished from the medicine.
Methinks that here 'twere safest done
That you should listen but to one,
And jurare in verba magistri
Is the best maxim to assist thee.
Upon the whole, I counsel thee
To stick to words as much as may be,
For such will still the surest way be
Into the temple of certainty.

STUDENT.

Yet in a word some sense must surely lurk.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes, but one must not go too curiously to work;
For, just when our ideas fail us,
A well-coined word may best avail us.
Words are best weapons in disputing,
In system-building and uprooting,
To words most men will swear, though mean they ne'er so little,
From words one cannot filch a single tittle.

STUDENT.

Pardon me, if I trespass on your time,
Though to make wisdom speak seems scarce a crime;
On medicine, too, I am concerned
To hear some pregnant word from one so learned.
Three years, God knows, is a short time,
And we have far to go, and high to climb;

A wise man's fingers pointing to the goal
Will save full many a groan to many a labouring soul.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [aside]

I'm weary of this dry pedantic strain,
'Tis time to play the genuine devil again.
[Aloud.] The spirit of Medicine 'tis not hard to seize:
The world, both great and small, you seek to know,
That in the end you may let all things go
As God shall please.
In vain you range around with scientific eyes,
Each one at length learns only what he can;
But he who knows the passing hour to prize,
That is the proper man.
A goodly shape and mien you vaunt,
And confidence, I guess, is not your want,
Trust but yourself, and, without more ado,
All other men will straightway trust you too.
But chiefly be intent to get a hold
O' the women's minds: their endless Oh! and Ah!
So thousandfold,
In all its change, obeys a single law,
And, if with half a modest air you come,
You have them all beneath your thumb.
A title first must purchase their reliance,
That you have skill surpassing vulgar science;
Thus have you hold at once of all the seven ends,
Round which another year of labour spends.
Study to press the pulse right tenderly,
And, with a sly and fiery eye,
To hold her freely round the slender waist,
That you may see how tightly she is laced.

STUDENT.

This seems to promise better; here we see
Where to apply and how to use the knife.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Grey, my good friend, is every theory,
But green the golden tree of life.

STUDENT.

I vow I feel as in a dream; my brain
Contains much more than it can comprehend;
Some other day may I come back again,
To hear your wisdom to the end?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What I can teach all men are free to know.

STUDENT.

One little favour grant me ere I go;
It were my boast to take home on this page
[Presenting a leaf from his album.]
Some sapient maxim from a man so sage.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Right willingly.

[He writes, and gives back the book.

STUDENT. [reads]

ERITIS SICUT DEUS SCIENTES BONUM ET MALUM.

[He closes the book reverently, and takes his leave.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Follow the ancient saw, and my cousin, the famous old Serpent,
Right soon shalt thou have cause, at thy godlike knowledge to tremble!

Enter FAUST.

FAUST.

Now, whither bound?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Where'er it pleases you;
The world, both great and small, we view.
O! how it will delight, entrance you,
The merry reel of life to dance through!

FAUST.

My beard, I am afraid, is rather long;

And without easy manners, gentle breeding,
I fear there is small chance of my succeeding;
I feel so awkward 'mid the busy throng,
So powerless and so insignificant,
And what all others have I seem to want.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Bah! never fear; the simple art of living
Is just to live right on without misgiving!

FAUST.

But how shall we commence our course?
I see nor coach, nor groom, nor horse.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We only need your mantle to unfold,
And it shall waft us on the wind.
Who makes with me this journey bold
No bulky bundle busks behind;
A single puff of inflammable air,
And from the ground we nimbly fare.
Lightly we float. I wish the best of cheer
To Doctor Faustus on his new career.

END OF ACT SECOND.

ACT III.

Scene I.

Auerbach's Wine-Cellar. Leipzig.

A Bout of Merry Fellows.

FROSCH.

Will no one sing? none crack a joke?
I'll teach you to make saucy faces!
Like old wet straw to-day you smoke,
While bright as flame your wonted blaze is.

BRANDER.

The blame lies with yourself, for you have given us
To-day no fun nor frolic to enliven us.

FROSCH. [throwing a glass of wine over his head]

There hast thou both!

BRANDER.

Double swine!

FROSCH.

You asked a joke—I gave it you in wine!

SIEBEL.

Out at the door with all who dare to quarrel!
Give all your pipes full play! this is no place to snarl.
Up! hollo! ho!

ALTMAYER.

Woe's me! the devil and his crew are here!
Some cotton, ho! he makes my ear-drum crack.

SIEBEL.

Roar on! for, when the vault loud echoes back,
The deep bass notes come thundering on the ear.

FROSCH.

Right, right! out with each saucy fellow!
A! tara lara da!

ALTMAYER.

A tara lara da!

FROSCH.

Our throats are now quite mellow.
[Sings.] The holy Roman empire now,
How does it hold together?
A clumsy song!—fie! a political song!
A scurvy song! thank God, with each to-morrow,
The Roman empire can give you small sorrow;
For me, I deem I'm wealthier and wiser
For being neither Chancellor nor Kaiser.
Yet even we must have a head to rule us;
Let's choose a pope in drinking well to school us,
Come, well you know the qualification
That lifts a man to consideration.

FROSCH. [sings]

Mount up, lady nightingale,
Greet my love ten thousand times!

SIEBEL.

No, sir, not once,—I'll hear no more of this.

FROSCH.

But you shall hear!—A greeting and a kiss!
[He sings.] Ope the door in silent night.
Ope and let me in, I pray;
Shut the door, the morn is bright,
Shut it, love, I must away!

SIEBEL.

Yes! sing and sing! belaud her, and berhyme!
I'll have my laugh at that—all in good time!
She jilted me right rarely; soon
She'll make thee sing to the same tune;
'Twere fit a Kobold with his love should bless her,

On some cross road to cocker and caress her;
Or that some old he-goat, that tramps away
From merry Blocksberg on the first of May,
Should greet her passing with a lusty baa!
An honest man of genuine flesh and blood
Is for the wench by far too good.
Batter her doors, her windows shiver,
That's all the serenade I'd give her!

BRANDER. [striking the table]

Gentlemen, hear! only attend to me,
You'll see that I know how to live.
If love-sick people here there be,
To honour them, I'm bound to give
A song brim-full of the most melting passion.
I'll sing a ditty of the newest fashion!
Give ear! and with full swell sonorous,
Let each and all ring forth the chorus!

[He sings.] In a pantry-hole there lived a rat,
On bacon and on butter,
It had a paunch as round and fat
As Doctor Martin Luther.
The cook placed poison in its way,
It felt as straitened all the day,
As if it had love in its body.

CHORUS. [shouting]

As if it had love in its body.

BRANDER.

It ran within, it ran without,
And sipped in every puddle;
And scratched and gnawed, but bettered not
The fever of its noddle.
With many a twinge it tossed and tossed,
Seemed ready to give up the ghost,
As if it had love in its body.

CHORUS.

As if it had love in its body.

BRANDER.

It left its hole for very pain,
Into the kitchen crawling,
And snuffling there with might and main,
Upon the earth lay sprawling.
The cook she laughed when she saw it die;
"It squeaks," quoth she, "with its latest sigh,
As if it had love in its body."

CHORUS.

As if it had love in its body.

SIEBEL.

How the hard-hearted boys rejoice!
As if it were a trade so choice
To teach the rats and mice to die!

BRANDER.

Rats find great favour in your eyes.

ALTMAYER.

The oily paunch! the bald pate! he
Has eyes of sorrow for the creature:
For why? he could not fail to see
In the swoll'n rat his own best feature!

Scene II.

Enter FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

First thing of all I bring you here,
Into a company of jolly cheer,
That you may learn how men contrive
Without much thought or care to live.
These fellows feast their lives away
In a continual holiday;
With little wit and much content
Their narrow round of life is spent,
As playful kittens oft are found
To chase their own tails round and round.
So live they on from day to day,
As long as headache keeps away,
And by no anxious thought are crossed,
While they get credit from the host.

BRANDER.

These gentlemen are strangers; in their face
One reads they lack the breeding of the place;
They're not an hour arrived, I warrant thee.

FROSCH.

There you are right!—Leipzig's the place, I say!
It is a little Paris in its way.

SIEBEL.

What, think you, may the strangers be?

FROSCH.

Leave that to me!—I'll soon fish out the truth.
Fill me a bumper till it overflows,
And then I'll draw the worms out of their nose,
As easily as 'twere an infant's tooth.
To me they seem to be of noble blood,
They look so discontented and so proud.

BRANDER.

Quack doctors both!—Altmayer, what think you?

ALTMAYER.

'Tis like.

FROSCH.

Mark me! I'll make them feel the screw.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to FAUST]

They have no nose to smell the devil out,
Even when he has them by the snout.

FAUST.

Be greeted, gentlemen!

SIEBEL.

With much respect return we the salute.
[Softly, eyeing MEPHISTOPHELES from the one side.]
What! does the fellow limp upon one foot?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

With your permission, we will make so free,
As to intrude upon your company.
The host's poor wines may keep us in sobriety,
But we at least enjoy your good society.

ALTMAYER.

Our wine is good; and, for to speak the truth,
Your mother fed you with too nice a tooth.

FROSCH.

When left you Rippach? you must have been pressed
For time. Supped you with Squire Hans by the way?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We had no time to stay!
But when I last came by, I was his guest.
He spoke much of his cousins, and he sent
To you and all full many a compliment.
[He makes a bow to FROSCH.]

ALTMAYER. [softly]

You have him there!—he understands the jest!

SIEBEL.

He is a knowing one!

FROSCH.

I'll sift him through anon!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

As we came in, a concert struck my ear
Of skilful voices in a chorus pealing!
A gleesome song must sound most nobly here,
Re-echoed freely from the vaulted ceiling.

FROSCH.

Perhaps you have yourself some skill?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

O no! had I the power, I should not want the will.

ALTMAYER.

Give us a song!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A thousand, willingly!

SIEBEL.

Only brand-new, I say!—no thread-bare strain!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We are but just come from a tour in Spain,
The lovely land of wine and melody.
[He sings.] There was a king in old times
That had a huge big flea—

FROSCH.

Ha, ha! a flea!—he seems a man of taste!
A flea, I wis, is a most dainty guest?

MEPHISTOPHELES. [sings again]

There was a king in old times

That had a huge big flea,
As if it were his own son,
He loved it mightily.
He sent out for the tailor,
To get it a suit of clothes;
He made my lord a dress-coat,
He made him a pair of hose.

BRANDER.

Be sure that Monsieur le Tailleur be told
To take his measure most exact and nice,
And as upon his head he puts a price,
To make the hose without or crease or fold!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In velvet and in silk clad
He strutted proudly then,
And showed his star and garter
With titled gentlemen.
Prime minister they made him,
With cross and ribbon gay,
And then all his relations
At court had much to say.

This caused no small vexation
At court; I tell you true—
The queen and all her ladies
Were bitten black and blue.
And yet they durst not catch them,
Nor crack them, when they might,
But we are free to catch them,
And crack them when they bite.

CHORUS. [shouting]

But we are free to catch them
And crack them when they bite!

FROSCH.

Bravo, bravo!—his voice is quite divine.

SIEBEL.

Such fate may every flea befall!

BRANDER.

Point your nails and crack 'em all!

ALTMAYER.

A glass to liberty!—long live the vine!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'd drink to liberty with right good will,
If we had only better wine to drink.

SIEBEL.

You might have kept that to yourself, I think!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I only fear our host might take it ill,
Else should I give to every honoured guest
From our own cellar of the very best.

SIEBEL.

O never fear!—If you but find the wine,
Our host shall be content—the risk be mine!

FROSCH.

Give me a flowing glass, and praise you shall not want,
So that your sample, mark me! be not scant;
I cannot judge of wine, unless I fill
My mouth and throat too with a goodly swill.

ALTMAYER. [softly]

I see the gentlemen are from the Rhine.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Give me a gimlet here!—I'll show you wine.

BRANDER.

What would the fellow bore?
Has he then wine-casks at the door?

ALTMAYER.

There, in the basket, you will find a store
Of tools, which our good landlord sometimes uses.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [Taking the gimlet.]
[To FROSCH.] Now every man may taste of what he chooses.

FROSCH.
How mean you that? Can you afford?

MEPHISTOPHELES.
No fear of that; my cellar is well stored.

ALTMAYER. [to FROSCH]
Aha! I see you smack your lips already.

FROSCH.
I'll have Rhine wine; what fatherland produces
Is better far than French or Spanish juices.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [boring a hole in the edge of the table where FROSCH is sitting]
Fetch me some wax, to make the stoppers ready.

ALTMAYER.
He means to put us off with jugglery.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to BRANDER]
And you, sir, what?

BRANDER.
Champagne for me!
And brisk and foaming let it be!

[MEPHISTOPHELES bores; meanwhile one of the party has got the stoppers
ready, and closes the holes.

BRANDER.
To foreign climes a man must sometimes roam,
In quest of things he cannot find at home;
For Frenchmen Germans have no strong affection,
But to their wines we seldom make objection.

SIEBEL. [while MEPHISTOPHELES is coming round to him]

I have no taste for your sour wines to-day,
I wish to have a swig of good Tokay.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [boring]

That you shall have, and of the very best.

ALTMAYER.

No, gentlemen!—'tis plain you mean to jest;
If so, in me you much mistake your man.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ha! ha!—no little risk, methinks, I ran,
To venture tricks with noble guests like you.
Come! make your choice, speak boldly out, and I
Will do my best your wish to gratify.

ALTMAYER.

Give me what wine you please!—only not much ado.

[After having bored and stopped up all the holes.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [with strange gestures]

Grapes on the vine grow!
Horns on the goat!
The wine is juicy, the vine is of wood,
The wooden table can give it as good.
Look into Nature's depths with me!
Whoso hath faith shall wonders see!
Now draw the corks, and quaff the wine!

ALL. [drawing the corks, and quaffing the out-streaming liquor each as he had
desired]

O blessed stream!—O fount divine!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Drink on! only be cautious in your hurry.

[They drink freely.

ALL. [singing]

No king of cannibals to day
More bravely rules the drinking bout,

Than we, when, like five hundred swine,
We drain the brimming bumpers out!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to FAUST]

Look at the fellows now!—are they not merry?

FAUST.

I feel inclined to go!—'tis getting late.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Soon shall we have a glorious revelation
Of the pure beast in man, if you but wait.

SIEBEL. [drinks carelessly; the wine falls to the ground and becomes flame]
Help! fire! the devil's here! death and damnation!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [Addressing himself to the flames]

Peace, friendly element! be still!
[To the company.] This time 'twas but a spurt of purgatorial flame.

SIEBEL.

What's that?—you little know your men; we'll tame
Your impudence, you juggling knave, we will!

FROSCH.

'Twere dangerous to repeat such gambols here!

ALTMAYER.

Methinks 'twere best to whisper in his ear
That he had better leave the room.

SIEBEL.

What, sirrah? do you then presume
To play your hocus-pocus here?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Peace, old wine-cask!

SIEBEL.

You broomstick, you!
Must we then bear your insolence too?

BRANDER.

Wait! wait! it shall rain blows anon!

ALTMAYER. [draws a stopper from the table, and fire rushes out on him]

I burn! I burn!

SIEBEL.

There's witchcraft in his face!
The fellow's an outlaw! strike him down!

[They draw their knives and attack MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [with serious mien]

False be eye, and false be ear!
Change the sense, and change the place!
Now be there, and now be here!

[They look as thunderstruck, and stare at one another.

ALTMAYER.

Where am I? in what lovely land?

FROSCH.

Vineyards! can it be so?

SIEBEL.

And grapes too quite at hand!

BRANDER.

And here beneath this shady tree,
This noble vine, these blushing clusters see!

[He seizes SIEBEL by the nose. The rest seize one another in the same manner,
and lift up their knives.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [as above]

Let Error now their eyes unclose,
The devil's joke to understand!

[He vanishes with FAUST. The fellows start back from one another.

SIEBEL.

What's the matter?

ALTMAYER.

How now?

FROSCH.

Was that your nose?

BRANDER. [to SIEBEL]

And yours is in my hand!

ALTMAYER.

It was a stroke shot through my every limb!
Give me a chair!—I faint! My eyes grow dim!

FROSCH.

Now tell me only what has been the matter?

SIEBEL.

Where is the fellow? Could I catch him here,
His life out of his body I should batter!

ALTMAYER.

I saw him just this instant disappear,
Riding upon a wine-cask—I declare
I feel a weight like lead about my feet.
[Turning to the table.]
I wonder if his d——d wine still be there!

SIEBEL.

There's not a single drop; 'twas all a cheat.

FROSCH.

And yet methinks that I was drinking wine.

BRANDER.

And I could swear I saw a clustered vine.

ALTMAYER.

Let none now say the age of miracles is past!

Scene III.

Witches' Kitchen.

A cauldron is seen boiling on a low hearth. Numbers of strange fantastic figures tumbling up and down in the smoke. A Mother-CAT-APE sits beside the cauldron, taking off the scum, and keeping it from boiling over. An Old CAT-APE beside her warming himself with his young ones. Roof and walls are covered over with a strange assortment of furniture, and implements used by witches.

Enter FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

I cannot brook this brainless bedlam stuff!
And must it be that I shall cast my slough
In this hotbed of all unreasoned doing?
Shall an old beldam give me what I lack?
And can her pots and pans, with all their brewing,
Shake off full thirty summers from my back?
Woe's me, if thou canst boast no better scheme!
My brightest hopes are vanished as a dream.
Has Nature then, and has some noble Spirit,
No balsam for the body to repair it?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

My friend, with your great sense I cannot but be smitten!
Nature, too, boasts a plan to renovate your age;
But in a wondrous volume it is written,
And wondrous is the chapter and the page.

FAUST.

But I must know it.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Good! the poorest man may try it,
Without or witch, or quack, or gold to buy it;
And yet it works a certain cure.
Go take thee with the peasant to the moor,

And straight begin to hew and hack;
Confine thee there, with patient mood,
Within the narrow beaten track,
And nourish thee with simplest food;
Live with the brute a brute, and count it not too low
To dung the corn-fields thine own hands shall mow;
Than this I know on earth no med'cine stronger,
To make, by fourscore years, both soul and body younger!

FAUST.

I was not trained to this—was never made
To labour with the pick-axe and the spade;
Such narrow round of life I may not brook.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Then you must look into another book,
And be content to take the witch for cook.

FAUST.

But why this self-same ugly Jezebel?
Could you not brew the drink yourself as well?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A precious pastime that indeed! meanwhile
I had built bridges many a German mile.
Not art, and science strict, are here enough,
But patience too, and perseverance tough.
A thoughtful soul toils on through many a silent year.
Time only makes the busy ferment clear,
Besides that the ingredients all
Are passing strange and mystical!
'Tis true the devil taught them how to do it,
But not the devil with his own hands can brew it.
[Looking at the CAT-APES.] Lo! what a tiny gay parade!
Here's the man, and there's the maid!
[Addressing them.] It seems that your good mother has gone out?

THE CAT-APES.

Up the chimney,
Went she out,

To a drinking bout!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Is it her wont to gossip long without?

THE ANIMALS.

As long as we sit here and warm our feet.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to FAUST]

What think you of the brutes? are they not neat?

FAUST.

I never saw such tasteless would-be-drolls!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pooh! pooh!—I know no greater delectation
On earth, than such a merry conversation.
[To the brutes.] Now let us hear, you pretty dolls,
What are you stirring there in the pot?

THE BRUTES.

Soup for beggars, hissing and hot,
Thin and watery, that's the stew.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Your customers will not be few.

THE FATHER CAT-APE. [comes up and fawns upon MEPHISTOPHELES]

Come rattle the dice,
Make me rich in a trice,
Come, come, let me gain!
My case is so bad,
It scarce could be worse:
Were I right in my purse,
I'd be right in my brain!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

How happy would the apish creature be,
To buy a ticket in the lottery!

[Meanwhile the young CAT-APES have been playing with a large globe, and roll it forwards.]

THE FATHER CAT-APE.

Such is the world,
So doth it go,
Up and down,
To and fro!
Like glass it tinkles,
Like glass it twinkles,
Breaks in a minute,
Has nothing within it;
Here it sparkles,
There it darkles,
I am alive!
My dear son, I say,
Keep out of the way!
If you don't strive,
You will die, you will die!
It is but of clay,
And in pieces will fly!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What make you with the sieve?

THE FATHER CAT-APE. [bringing down the sieve]

When comes a thief,
On the instant we know him.

[He runs off to the MOTHER CAT-APE, and lets her look through the sieve.]

Look through the sieve!
See'st thou the thief,
And fearest to show him?

MEPHISTOPHELES. [coming near the fire]

And this pot?

FATHER CAT-APE AND HIS WIFE.

The silly sot!
He knows not the pot!
And he knows not
The kettle, the sot!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You ill-bred urchin, you!

THE FATHER CAT-APE.

Come, sit thee down,
We'll give thee a crown,
And a sceptre too!

[He obliges MEPHISTOPHELES to sit down, and gives him a long brush for a sceptre.]

FAUST. [Who, while MEPHISTOPHELES was engaged with the animals, had been standing before a mirror, alternately approaching it and retiring from it.]

What see I here? what heavenly image bright,
Within this magic mirror, chains my sight?
O Love, the swiftest of thy pinions lend me,
That where she is in rapture I may bend me!
Alas! when I would move one step more near,
To breathe her balmy atmosphere,
She seems to melt and disappear,
And cheats my longing eye.
Oh she is fair beyond all type of human!
Is't possible; can this be simple woman?
There lies she, on that downy couch reposing,
Within herself the heaven of heavens enclosing!
Can it then be that earth a thing so fair contains?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Of course: for when a god has vexed his brains
For six long days, and, when his work is done,
Says bravo to himself, is it a wonder
He should make one fair thing without a blunder?
For this time give thine eyes their pleasure;
I know how to procure you such an one,
Whence thou mayst drink delight in brimming measure,
And blest the man, for whom Fate shall decide,
To lead home such a treasure as his bride!

[FAUST continues gazing on the mirror. MEPHISTOPHELES stretches himself on the arm-chair, and, playing with the brush, goes on as follows.]

Here, from my throne, a monarch, I look down:
My sceptre this: I wait to get my crown.

THE ANIMALS. [Who had in the interval been wheeling about with strange antic gestures, bring a crown to MEPHISTOPHELES, with loud shouts.]

O be but so good,
With sweat and with blood,
Your crown to glue,
As monarchs do!

[They use the crown rather roughly, in consequence of which it falls into two pieces, with which they jump about.]

O sorrow and shame!
'Tis broken, no doubt:
But we'll make a name,
When our poem comes out!

FAUST. [gazing on the mirror]

Woe's me! her beauty doth my wits confound.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [pointing to the Brutes]

And even my good brain is whirling round and round.

THE BRUTES.

And if we well speed,
As speed well we ought,
We are makers indeed,
We are moulders of thought.

FAUST. [as above]

I burn, I burn! this rapturous glow
Consumes me sheer!—come, let us go!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [as above]

One must, at least, confess that they
Are honest poets in their way.

[The kettle, which had been neglected by the Mother CAT-APE begins to boil over: A great flame arises, and runs up the chimney. The Witch comes through the flame, down the chimney, with a terrible noise.]

THE WITCH.

Ow! ow! ow! ow!
Thou damnèd brute! thou cursèd sow!
To leave the kettle and singe the frow!

Thou cursed imp, thou!
[Turning to FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.]
What's this here now?
Who are you? who are you?
What's here ado?
Ye are scouts! ye are scouts!
Out with the louts!
A fiery arrow
Consume your marrow!

[She plunges the ladle into the kettle, and spurts out flame on FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and the Brutes. These last whine.]

MEPHISTOPHELES. [Who, in the meantime, had turned round the butt-end of the brush, now dashes in amongst the pots and glasses.]
In two! in two!
There lies the broth!
The glass and the kettle,
Shiver them both!
'Tis a jest, thou must know,
Thou carrion crow!
'Tis a tune to keep time,
To thy senseless rhyme.

[While the Witch, foaming with rage and fury, draws back.]
What! know'st me not? thou scrag! thou Jezebel!
Thy lord and master? thou should'st know me well.
What hinders me, in all my strength to come
And crush you and your cat-imps 'neath my thumb?
Know'st not the scarlet-doublet, mole-eyed mother?
Bow'st not the knee before the famed cock's feather?
Use your old eyes; behind a mask
Did I conceal my honest face?
And when I come here must I ask
A special introduction to your Grace?

THE WITCH.

O my liege lord! forgive the rough salute!
I did not see the horse's foot:
And where too have you left your pair of ravens?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

For this time you may thank the heavens
That you have made so cheap an escape;
'Tis some time since I saw your face,
And things since then have moved apace.
The march of modern cultivation,
That licks the whole world into shape,
Has reached the Devil. In this wise generation
The Northern phantom is no longer seen,
And horns and tail and claws have been.
And for my hoof, with which I can't dispense,
In good society 'twould give great offence;
Therefore, like many a smart sprig of nobility,
I use false calves to trick out my gentility.

THE WITCH. [dancing]

Heyday! it almost turns my brain
To see Squire Satan here again!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Woman, you must not call me by that name!

THE WITCH.

And wherefore not? I see no cause for shame.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That name has had its station long assigned
With Mother Bunch; and yet I cannot see
Men are much better for the want of me.
The wicked one is gone, the wicked stay behind.
Call me now Baron, less than that were rude—
I am a cavalier like other cavaliers;
My line is noble, and my blood is good;
Here is a coat of arms that all the world reveres.

[He makes an indecent gesture.]

THE WITCH. [laughing immoderately]

Ha! ha! now I perceive Old Nick is here!
You are a rogue still, as you always were.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [aside to FAUST]

My friend, I give you here, your wit to whet,
A little lesson in witch-etiquette.

THE WITCH.

Now say, good sirs, what would you have with me?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A glass of your restoring liquor,
That makes an old man's blood run quicker:
And bring the best out from your bins;
With years the juice in virtue wins.

THE WITCH.

Most willingly. Here I have got a phial
Of which myself at times make trial:
'Tis now a pleasant mellow potion;
You shall not meet with a denial.
[Softly.] Yet if this worthy man drinks it without precaution,
His life can't stand an hour against its strong infection.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Leave that to me; he's under my protection,
Ripe for the draught; no harm will come to him.

[The WITCH, with strange gestures, draws a circle and places many curious things within it; meanwhile the glasses begin to tinkle, and the kettle to sound and make music. She brings a large book, puts the CAT-APES into the circle, and makes them serve as a desk to lay the book on, and hold the torches. She motions to FAUST to come near.

FAUST. [to MEPHISTOPHELES]

Now say, what would she with this flummery?
These antic gestures, this wild bedlam-stuff,
This most insipid of all mummery,
I know it well, I hate it well enough.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pshaw, nonsense! come, give up your sermonising,
And learn to understand what a good joke is!
Like other quacks, she plays her hocus-pocus;

It gives the juice a virtue most surprising!

[He obliges FAUST to enter the circle.

THE WITCH. [declaiming from the book with great emphasis]

Now be exact!
Of one make ten,
Then two subtract,
And add three then,
This makes thee rich.
Four shalt thou bate,
Of five and six,
So says the Witch,
Make seven and eight,
And all is done.
And nine is one,
And ten is none;
Here take and spell, if you are able,
The Witches' multiplication table.

FAUST.

This is a jargon worse than Babel;
Say, is she fevered? is she mad?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

O never fear! the rest is quite as bad;
I know the book, and oft have vexed my brains
With bootless labour on its rhymes and rules;
A downright contradiction still remains,
Mysterious alike for wise men and for fools.
My friend, the art is old and new;
Ancient and modern schools agree
With three and one, and one and three
Plain to perplex, and false inweave with true.
So they expound, discourse, dispute, debate;
What man of sense would plague him with their prate?
Men pin their faith to words, in sounds high sapience weening,
Though words were surely made to have a meaning.

THE WITCH. [Goes on reading from the book]

The soul to know
Beneath the show,
And view it without blinking;
The simple mind
The craft will find,
Without the toil of thinking.

FAUST.

What flood of nonsense now she's pouring o'er us?
She'll split my skull with her insensate chatter.
I feel as if I heard the ceaseless clatter
Of thirty thousand idiots in a chorus.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Enough, kind Sibyl; thanks for thy good will!
Now bring your jug here, and the goblet fill
With this prime juice, till it be brimming o'er.
My friend here is a man of high degrees,
And will digest the draught with ease.
He has swilled many a goodly glass before.

[The WITCH, with many ceremonies, pours the beverage into a cup. While
FAUST brings it to his mouth a light flame arises.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Come, quaff it boldly, without thinking!
The draught will make thy heart to burn with love.
Art with the Devil hand and glove,
And from a fire-spurt would'st be shrinking?

[The WITCH looses the circle. FAUST steps out.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Come quickly out; you must not rest.

THE WITCH.

I hope the swig will wonders work on thee!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And you, if you have aught to beg of me,
Upon Walpurgis' night make your request.

THE WITCH.

Here is a song! at times sung, you will find
It hath a wondrous working on your mind.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to FAUST]

Come, yield thee now to my desire;
Be meek for once, and own the bridle.
You must keep quiet, and let yourself perspire,
That through your inmost frame the potent juice may pierce.
When we have time to spare, I will rehearse
Some lessons on the art of being nobly idle;
And soon thy heart with ecstasy shall know,
How Cupid 'gins to stir, and boundeth to and fro.

FAUST. [Turning again towards the mirror]

Indulge me with one glance!—one moment spare!
It was a virgin-form surpassing fair!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No! No! with my good aid thou soon shalt see
The paragon of women bodily.
[Aside.] Anon, if this good potion does its duty,
He'll see in every wench the Trojan beauty.

Scene IV.

A Street.

FAUST. MARGARET passes over.

FAUST.

My fair young lady, may I dare
To offer you my escort home?

MARGARET.

Nor lady I, good sir, nor fair,
And need no guide to show me home. [Exit.

FAUST.

By heaven, this child is passing fair!
A fairer never crossed my view;
Of such a modest gentle air,
Yet with a dash of pertness too,
And girlish innocent conceit;
Her lips so red, her cheeks so bright,
Forget I could not, if I might.
How she casts down her lovely eyes
Deep graven in my heart it lies,
And how so smartly she replied,
And with a sharp turn stepped aside,
It was most ravishingly sweet!

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

Hark! you must get the girl for me!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Which one?

FAUST.

She's just gone by.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! she?

She's only now come from confession,
Where she received a full remission.
I slinked close by the box, and heard
The simple damsel's every word;
'Tis a most guileless thing, that goes
For very nothing to the priest.
My power does not extend to those.

FAUST.

Yet she is fourteen years of age at least.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You speak like Jack the debauchee,
Who thinks each sweet flow'r grows for me;
As if his wish sufficed alone
To make each priceless pearl his own:
But 'tis not so; and cannot be.

FAUST.

My good Sir Knight of pedantry,
Lay not thou down the law to me!
And this, for good and all, be told,
Unless, this very night, I hold
The sweet young maid in my embrace,
'Tis the last time that you shall see my face.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Bethink thee!—what with here, and what with there,
The thing requires no little care.
Full fourteen days must first be spent,
To come upon the proper scent.

FAUST.

Had I but seven good hours of rest,
The devil's aid I'd ne'er request,
To mould this fair young creature to my bent.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You speak as if you were a Frenchman born;
But though the end be good, we must not scorn

The means; what boots the mere gratification?
It is the best half of the recreation,
When, up and down, and to and fro,
The pretty doll, through every kind
Of fiddle-faddle sweet flirtation,
You knead out first, and dress up to your mind—
As many an Italian tale can show.

FAUST.

I need no tricks to whet my zest.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I tell thee plainly without jest,
As things stand here, we cannot win
The fort by hotly rushing in;
To gain fair lady's favour, you
Must boldly scheme, and gently do.

FAUST.

Fetch me something that breathed her air!
Her home, her chamber, plant me there!
A kerchief of her chaste attire!
A garter of my heart's desire!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

That you may see how I would fain
Do all I can to ease your pain,
We shall not lose a single minute;
I know her room—thou shalt enjoy thee in it.

FAUST.

And I shall see her?—have her?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No!

She'll be with a neighbour—better so.
Meanwhile, unhindered thou may'st go,
And on the hope of joys that wait thee,
Within her atmosphere may'st sate thee.

FAUST.

Can we go now?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No; we must wait till night.

FAUST.

Go fetch a present for my heart's delight. [Exit.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Presents already! good!—a lover should not loiter!

I know some dainty spots of ground,
Where hidden treasures can be found;
I will go straight and reconnoitre. [Exit.

Scene V.

A small neat Chamber.

MARGARET. [Plaiting and putting up her hair.]

I wonder who the gentleman could be,
That on the street accosted me to-day!
He looked a gallant cavalier and gay,
And must be of a noble family;
That I could read upon his brow—
Else had he never been so free. [Exit.

Enter FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Come in—but softly—we are landed now!

FAUST. [after a pause]

Leave me alone a minute, I entreat!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [looking round about]

Not every maiden keeps her room so neat. [Exit.

FAUST. [looking round]

Be greeted, thou sweet twilight-shine!
Through this chaste sanctuary shed!
Oh seize my heart, sweet pains of love divine,
That on the languid dew of hope are fed!
What sacred stillness holds the air!
What order, what contentment rare!
[He throws himself on the old leathern armchair beside the bed.]
Receive thou me! thou, who, in ages gone,
In joy and grief hast welcomed sire and son.
How often round this old paternal throne,
A clambering host of playful children hung!
Belike that here my loved one too hath clung
To her hoar grandsire's neck, with childish joy
Thankful received the yearly Christmas toy,
And with the full red cheeks of childhood pressed

Upon his withered hand a pious kiss.
I feel, sweet maid, mine inmost soul possessed
By thy calm spirit of order and of bliss,
That motherly doth teach thee day by day:
That bids thee deck the table clean and neat,
And crisps the very sand strewn at thy feet.
Sweet hand! sweet, lovely hand! where thou dost sway,
The meanest hut is decked in heaven's array.
And here! [He lifts up the bed-curtain.]
O Heaven, what strange o'ermastering might
Thrills every sense with fine delight!
Here might I gaze unwearied day and night.
Nature! in airy dreams here didst thou build
The mortal hull of the angelic child;
Here she reposed! her tender bosom teeming
With warmest life, in buoyant fulness streaming,
And here, with pulse of gently gracious power,
The heaven-born bud was nursed into a flower!

And thou! what brought thee here? why now backshinks
Thy courage from the prize it sought before?
What wouldst thou have? Thy heart within thee sinks;
Poor wretched Faust! thou know'st thyself no more.

Do I then breathe a magic atmosphere?
I sought immediate enjoyment here,
And into viewless dreams my passion flows!
Are we the sport of every breath that blows?
If now she came, and found me gazing here,
How for this boldfaced presence must I pay!
The mighty man, how small would he appear,
And at her feet, a suppliant, sink away!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [coming back]

Quick! quick! I see her—she'll be here anon.

FAUST.

Yes, let's be gone! for once and all be gone!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here is a casket, of a goodly weight;
Its former lord, I ween, bewails its fate.
Come, put it in the press. I swear
She'll lose her senses when she sees it there.
The trinkets that I stowed within it
Were bait meant for a nobler prey:
But child is child, and play is play!

FAUST.

I know not—shall I?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Can you doubt a minute?
Would you then keep the dainty pelf,
Like an old miser, to yourself?
If so, I would advise you, sir,
To spare your squire the bitter toil,
And with some choicer sport the hour beguile
Than looking lustfully at her.
I scratch my head and rub my hands that you—
[He puts the casket into the cupboard, and locks the door again.]
Come, let's away!—
With this sweet piece of womanhood may do,
As will may sway;
And you stand there,
And gape and stare,
As if you looked into a lecture-room,
And there with awe
The twin grey spectres bodily saw,
Physics and Metaphysics! Come!

[Exeunt.

Enter MARGARET, with a lamp.

MARGARET.

It is so sultry here, so hot! [She opens the window.]
And yet so warm without 'tis not.
I feel—I know not how—oppressed;

Would to God that my mother came!
A shivering cold runs o'er my frame—
I'm but a silly timid girl at best!
[While taking off her clothes, she sings.]

There was a king in Thule,
True-hearted to his grave:
To him his dying lady
A golden goblet gave.

He prized it more than rubies;
At every drinking-bout
His eyes they swam in glory,
When he would drain it out.

On his death-bed he counted
His cities one by one;
Unto his heirs he left them;
The bowl he gave to none.

He sat amid his barons,
And feasted merrily,
Within his father's castle,
That beetles o'er the sea.

There stood the old carouser,
And drank his life's last glow;
Then flung the goblet over
Into the sea below.

He saw it fall, and gurgling
Sink deep into the sea;
His eyes they sank in darkness;

No bumper more drank he.

[She opens the cupboard to put in her clothes, and sees the casket.]

How came the pretty casket here? no doubt

I locked the press when I went out.

'Tis really strange!—Belike that it was sent

A pledge for money that my mother lent.

Here hangs the key; sure there can be no sin

In only looking what may be within.

What have we here? good heavens! see!

What a display of finery!

Here is a dress in which a queen

Might on a gala-day be seen.

I wonder how the necklace would suit me!

Who may the lord of all this splendour be?

[She puts on the necklace, and looks at herself in the glass.]

Were but the ear-rings mine to wear!

It gives one such a different air.

What boots the beauty of the poor?

'Tis very beautiful to be sure,

But without riches little weighs;

They praise you, but half pity while they praise.

Gold is the pole,

To which all point: the whole

Big world hangs on gold. Alas we poor!

Scene VI.

A Walk.

FAUST going up and down thoughtfully; then enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

By all the keen pangs of love! by all the hot blasts of hell!
By all the fellest of curses, if curse there be any more fell!

FAUST.

How now, Mephisto? what the devil's wrong?
I ne'er beheld a face one half so long!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But that I am a devil myself, I'd sell
Both soul and body on the spot to hell!

FAUST.

I verily believe you've got a craze!
Beseems it you with such outrageous phrase,
To rage like any bedlamite?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Only conceive! the box of rare gewgaws
For Margaret got, is in a parson's claws!
The thing came to the mother's sight,
Who soon suspected all was not right:
The woman has got a most delicate nose,
That snuffling through the prayer-book goes,
And seldom scents a thing in vain,
If it be holy or profane.
Your jewels, she was not long in guessing,
Were not like to bring a blessing.
"My child," quoth she, "ill-gotten gear
Ensnares the soul, consumes the blood;
We'll give it to Mary-mother dear,
And she will feed us with heavenly food!"
Margaret looked blank—" 'tis hard," thought she,

"To put a gift-horse away from me;
And surely godless was he never
Who lodged it here, a gracious giver."
The mother then brought in the priest;
He quickly understood the jest,
And his eyes watered at the sight.
"Good dame," quoth he, "you have done right!
He conquers all the world who wins
A victory o'er his darling sins.
The Church is a most sharp-set lady,
And her stomach holds good store,
Has swallowed lands on lands already,
And, still unglutted, craves for more;
The Church alone, my ladies dear,
Can digest ill-gotten gear."

FAUST.

That is a general fashion—Jew,
And King, and Kaiser have it too.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Then ring and ear-ring, and necklace, and casket,
Like a bundle of toad-stools away he bore;
Thanked her no less, and thanked her no more,
Than had it been so many nuts in a basket;
On heavenly treasures then held an oration,
Much, of course, to their edification.

FAUST.

And Margaret?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sits now in restless mood,
Knows neither what she would, nor what she should;
Broods o'er the trinkets night and day,
And on him who sent them, more.

FAUST.

Sweet love! her grief doth vex me sore.
Mephisto, mark well what I say!

Get her another set straightway!
The first were not so very fine.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

O yes! with you all things are mere child's play.

FAUST.

Quick hence! and match your will with mine!
Throw thee oft in her neighbour's way.
Be not a devil of milk and water,
And for another gift go cater.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes, gracious sir! most humbly I obey.

[Exit FAUST.]

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Such love-sick fools as these would blow
Sun, moon, and stars, like vilest stuff,
To nothing with a single puff,
To make their lady-love a show!

Scene VII.

MARTHA'S House.

MARTHA. [alone]

In honest truth, it was not nobly done,
In my good spouse to leave me here alone!
May God forgive him! while he roams at large,
O'er the wide world, I live at my own charge.
Sure he could have no reason to complain!
So good a wife he'll not find soon again. [She weeps.]
He may be dead!—Ah me!—could I but know,
By a certificate, that 'tis really so!

Enter MARGARET.

MARGARET.

Martha!

MARTHA.

What wouldst thou, dear?

MARGARET.

My knees can scarcely bear me!—only hear!
I found a second box to-day
Of ebon-wood, just where the first one lay,
Brimful of jewels passing rare,
Much finer than the others.

MARTHA.

Have a care

You keep this well masqued from your mother—
'Twould fare no better than the other.

MARGARET.

Only come near, and see! look here!

MARTHA. [decking her with the jewels]

Thou art a lucky little dear!

MARGARET.

And yet I dare not thus be seen
In church, or on the public green.

MARTHA.

Just come across when you've an hour to spare,
And put the gauds on here with none to see!
Then promenade a while before the mirror there;
'Twill be a joy alike to thee and me.
Then on a Sunday, or a holiday,
Our riches by degrees we can display.
A necklace first, the drops then in your ear;
Your mother sees it not; and should she hear,
'Tis easy to invent some fair pretence or other.

MARGARET.

But whence the pretty caskets came? I fear
There's something in it not right altogether. [Knocking.]
Good God!—I hear a step—is it my mother?

MARTHA. [looking through the casement]

'Tis a strange gentleman. Come in!

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I hope the ladies will not think me rude,
That uninvited thus I here intrude.
[Observing MARGARET, he draws back respectfully.]
I have commands for Mistress Martha Schwerdtlein.

MARTHA.

For me? what has the gentleman to say?

MEPHISTOPHELES. [softly to her]

Excuse my freedom. I perceive that you
Have visitors of rank to-day;
For this time I shall bid adieu,
And after dinner do myself the pleasure
To wait upon you, when you're more at leisure.

MARTHA. [aloud]

Think, child! of all things in the world the last!
My Gretchen for a lady should have passed!

MARGARET.

The gentleman is far too good;
I'm a poor girl—boast neither wealth nor blood.
This dress, these jewels, are not mine.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

'Tis not the dress alone that I admire;
She has a mien, a gait, a look so fine,
That speak the lady more than costliest attire.

MARTHA.

And now your business, sir? I much desire——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Would God I had a better tale to tell!
Small thanks I should receive, I knew it well.
Your husband's dead—his last fond words I bear.

MARTHA.

Is dead! the good fond soul! O woe!
My man is dead! flow, sorrow, flow!

MARGARET.

Beseech thee, dearest Martha, don't despair.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now hear my mournful story to the end.

MARGARET.

I would not love a man on earth, to rend
Me thus with grief, when he might hap to die.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Joy hath its sorrow, sorrow hath its joy;
Twin sisters are they, as the proverb saith.

MARTHA.

Now let me hear the manner of his death.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Where Padua's sacred turrets rise,
Above the grave of holy Antony,
On consecrated ground thy husband lies,
And slumbers for eternity.

MARTHA.

No further message? is this all?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes! one request, and that not small.
For his soul's peace, your good man wanted
Three hundred masses to be chanted.
This is the whole of my commission.

MARTHA.

What! not a jewel? not a coin?
No journeyman, however poor,
However wild, could make such an omission,
But in the bottom of his pouch is sure
To keep some small memorial for his wife,
And rather beg, and rather pine
Away the remnant of his life——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Madam! for your hard case I greatly grieve,
But your good husband had no gold to leave.
His sins and follies he lamented sore—
Yes! and bewailed his own mishap much more.

MARGARET.

Alas for all the miseries of mankind!
He shall not want my oft-repeated prayer.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to MARGARET]

Thou, gentle heart, dost well deserve to find
A husband worthy of a bride so fair.

MARGARET.

Ah no!—for that, it is too soon.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A lover, then, might in the mean time do.
'Tis bounteous Heaven's choicest boon
To fondle in one's arms so sweet a thing as you.

MARGARET.

Such things are never done with us.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Done or not done!—it may be managed thus:—

MARTHA.

Now let me hear!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

By his death-bed I stood.
It was a little better than of dung,
Of mouldy straw; there, as a Christian should,
With many a sin repented on his tongue,
He died.—“Oh! how must I,” he said,
“Myself detest so to throw up my trade,
And my dear wife abandon so!
It kills me with the simple memory, oh!
Might she but now forgive me, ere I die!”

MARTHA. [weeping]

Good soul! I have forgiven him long ago.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [continuing his interrupted narrative]

And yet was she, God knows, much more to blame than I.

MARTHA.

What! did he lie? on the grave's brink to lie!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He fabled to the last, be sure,
If I am half a connoisseur.
“In sooth, I had no time to gape,” he said,
“First to get children, then to get them bread,
To clothe them, and to put them to a trade,
From toil and labour I had no release,

And could not even eat my own thin slice in peace.”

MARTHA.

Can it then be? has he forgotten quite
My fag and drudgery, by day and night?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Not quite! attend the sequel of my tale.
“When last we sailed from Malta”—so he said,
“For wife and children fervently I prayed,
And Heaven then blew a favourable gale.
We came across a Turkish ship that bore
Home bullion to increase the Sultan’s store,
And soon, by valour’s right, were masters
Of all the Infidel piastres;
The precious spoil was shared among the crew,
And I received the part that was my due.”

MARTHA.

But where and how?—has he then buried it?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Who knows where the four winds have hurried it!
A lady took him under her protection
At Naples, as he wandered to and fro;
She left him many a mark of her affection,
As to his life’s end he had cause to know.

MARTHA.

The knave, to treat his helpless orphans so!
To all our misery and all our need,
Amid his reckless life, he gave no heed!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And for that cause he’s dead. If I were you,
Now mark me well, I tell you what I’d do;
I’d mourn him decently for one chaste year,
Then look about me for another dear.

MARTHA.

Alas! God knows it would be hard to find

Another so completely to my mind.
A better-hearted fool you never knew,
A love of roving was his only vice;
And foreign wine, and foreign women too,
And the accursèd gambling dice.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Such marriage-articles were most convenient,
Had he to you been only half so lenient.
On terms like these myself had no objection
To change with you the ring of conjugal affection.

MARTHA.

You jest, mein Herr!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [aside]

A serious jest for me!
I'd better go; for, if I tarry here,
She'll take the devil at his word, I fear.
[To MARGARET.] How stands it with your heart then?—is it free?

MARGARET.

I scarce know what you mean.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sweet guileless heart!
Ladies, farewell!

MARGARET.

Farewell!

MARTHA.

One word before we part!
I fain would have it solemnly averred,
How my dear husband died, and where he was interred.
Order was aye my special virtue; and
'Tis right both where and when he died should stand
In the newspapers.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes, when two attest,

As Scripture saith, the truth is manifest.
I have a friend, who, at your requisition,
Before the judge will make a deposition.
I'll bring him here.

MARTHA.

Yes, bring him with you, do!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And we shall meet your fair young lady too?
[To MARGARET.] A gallant youth!—has been abroad, and seen
The world—a perfect cavalier, I trow.

MARGARET.

'Twould make me blush, should he bestow
A single look on one so mean.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

You have no cause to be ashamed before
The proudest king that ever sceptre bore.

MARTHA.

This evening, in the garden then, behind
The house, you'll find warm hearts and welcome kind!

Scene VIII.

A Street.

FAUST.

How now? what news? how speed your labours?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Bravo! 'tis well you are on fire;
Soon shall you have your heart's desire.
This evening you shall meet her at her neighbour's;
A dame 'tis to a nicety made
For the bawd and gipsy trade.

FAUST.

'Tis well.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

But you must lend a hand, and so must I.

FAUST.

One good turn deserves another.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

We must appear before a judge together,
And solemnly there testify
That stiff and stark her worthy spouse doth lie,
Beside the shrine of holy Antony.

FAUST.

Most wise! we must first make a goodly travel!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Sancta simplicitas! what stuff you drivell!
We may make oath, and not know much about it.

FAUST.

If that's your best, your best is bad. I scout it.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

O holy man that would outwit the devil!
Is it the first time in your life that you
Have sworn to what you knew could not be true?
Of God, the world, and all that it contains,
Of man, and all that circles in his veins,
Or dwells within the compass of his brains,
Have you not pompous definitions given,
With swelling breast and dogmatising brow,
As if you were an oracle from heaven?
And yet, if the plain truth you will avow,
You knew as much of all these things, in faith,
As now you know of Master Schwerdtlein's death!

FAUST.

Thou art, and wert, a sophist and a liar.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes, unless one could mount a little higher.
To-morrow I shall hear you pour
False vows that silly girl before,
Swear to do everything to serve her,
And love her with a quenchless fervour.

FAUST.

And from my heart too.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Oh! of course, of course!
Then will you speak, till you are hoarse,
Of love, and constancy, and truth,
And feelings of eternal youth—
Will that too be the simple sooth?

FAUST.

It will! it will!—for, when I feel,
And for the feeling, the confusion
Of feelings, that absorbs my mind,
Seek for names, and none can find,
Sweep through the universe's girth
For every highest word to give it birth;

And then this soul-pervading flame,
Infinite, endless, endless name,
Call you this nought but devilish delusion?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Still I am right!

FAUST.

Hold! mark me, you
Are right indeed! for this is true,
Who will be right, and only has a tongue,
Is never wrong.
Come, I confess thee master in debating,
That I may be delivered from thy prating.

END OF ACT THIRD.

ACT IV.

Scene I.

MARTHA'S Garden.

MARGARET on FAUST'S arm; MARTHA with MEPHISTOPHELES, walking up and down.

MARGARET.

I feel it well, 'tis from pure condescension
You pay to one like me so much attention.
With travellers 'tis a thing of course,
To be contented with the best they find;
For sure a man of cultivated mind
Can have small pleasure in my poor discourse.

FAUST.

One look from thee, one word, delights me more
Than all the world's high-vaunted lore.

[He kisses her hand.

MARGARET.

O trouble not yourself! how could you kiss it so?
It is so coarse, so rough! for I must go
Through all the work above stairs and below,
Mother will have it so.

[They pass on.

MARTHA.

And you, sir, will it still
Be your delight from place to place to roam?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

In this our duty guides us, not our will.
With what sad hearts from many a place we go,

Where we had almost learned to be at home!

MARTHA.

When one is young it seems a harmless gambol,
Thus round and round through the wide world to ramble:
But soon the evil day comes on,
And as a stiff old bachelor to die
Has never yet done good to any one.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I see ahead, and fear such wretched fate.

MARTHA.

Then, sir, take warning ere it be too late!

[They pass on.]

MARGARET.

Yes, out of sight, and out of mind!
You see me now, and are so kind:
But you have friends at home of station high,
With far more wit and far more sense than I.

FAUST.

Their sense, dear girl, is often nothing more
Than vain conceit of vain short-sighted lore.

MARGARET.

How mean you that?

FAUST.

Oh that the innocent heart
And sweet simplicity, unspoiled by art,
So seldom knows its own rare quality!
That fair humility, the comeliest grace
Which bounteous Nature sheds on blooming face——

MARGARET.

Do thou bestow a moment's thought on me,
I shall have time enough to think of thee.

FAUST.

You are then much alone?

MARGARET.

Our household is but small, I own,
And yet must be attended to.
We keep no maid; I have the whole to do,
Must wash and brush, and sew and knit,
And cook, and early run and late;
And then my mother is, in every whit,
So accurate!
Not that she needs to pinch her household; we
Might do much more than many others do:
My father left a goodly sum, quite free
From debt, with a neat house and garden too,
Close by the town, just as you pass the gate;
But we have lived retired enough of late.
My brother is a soldier: he
Is at the wars: my little sister's dead:
Poor thing! it caused me many an hour of pain
To see it pine, and droop its little head,
But gladly would I suffer all again,
So much I loved the child!

FAUST.

An angel, if like thee!

MARGARET.

I nursed it, and it loved me heartily.
My father died before it saw the light,
My mother was despaired of quite,
So miserably weak she lay.
Yet she recovered slowly, day by day;
And as she had not strength herself
To suckle the poor helpless elf,
She gave't in charge to me, and I
With milk and water nursed it carefully.
Thus in my arm, and on my lap, it grew,
And smiled and crowed, and flung its legs about,
And called me mother too.

FAUST.

To thy pure heart the purest joy, no doubt.

MARGARET.

Ay! but full many an hour
Heavy with sorrow, and with labour sour.
The infant's cradle stood beside
My bed, and when it stirred or cried,
I must awake;
Sometimes to give it drink, sometimes to take
It with me to my bed, and fondle it:
And when all this its fretting might not stay,
I rose, and danced about, and dandled it;
And after that I must away
To wash the clothes by break of day.
I make the markets too, and keep house for my mother,
One weary day just like another;
Thus drudging on, the day might lack delights,
But food went lightly down, and sleep was sweet o' nights.

[They pass on.]

MARTHA.

A woman's case is not much to be vaunted;
A hardened bachelor is hard to mend.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A few apostles such as you were wanted,
From evil ways their vagrant steps to bend.

MARTHA.

Speak plainly, sir, have you found nothing yet?
Are you quite disentangled from the net?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A house and hearth, we have been often told,
With a good wife, is worth its weight in gold.

MARTHA.

I mean, sir, have you never felt the want?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A good reception I have always found.

MARTHA.

I mean to say, did your heart never pant?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

For ladies my respect is too profound
To jest on such a serious theme as this.

MARTHA.

My meaning still you strangely miss!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Alas, that I should be so blind!
One thing I plainly see, that you are very kind!

[They pass on.]

FAUST.

You knew me, then, you little angel! straight,
When you beheld me at the garden-gate?

MARGARET.

Marked you it not?—You saw my downward look.

FAUST.

And you forgive the liberty I took,
When from the minster you came out that day,
And I, with forward boldness more than meet,
Then ventured to address you on the street?

MARGARET.

I was surprised, I knew not what to say;
No one could speak an evil word of me.
Did he, perchance, in my comportment see
Aught careless or improper on that day,
That he should take me for a worthless girl,
Whom round his little finger he might twirl?
Not yet the favourable thoughts I knew,
That even then were rising here for you;

One thing I know, myself I sharply chid,
That I could treat you then no harshlier than I did.

FAUST.
Sweet love!

MARGARET.
Let go!

[She plucks a star-flower, and pulls the petals off one after another.]

FAUST.
What's that? a nosegay? let me see!

MARGARET.
'Tis but a game.

FAUST.
How so?

MARGARET.
Go! you would laugh at me.

[She continues pulling the petals, and murmuring to herself.]

FAUST.
What are you murmuring now, so sweetly low?

MARGARET. [half loud]
He loves me, yes!—he loves me, no!

FAUST.
Thou sweet angelic face!

MARGARET. [murmuring as before]
He loves me, yes!—he loves me, no!
[Pulling out the last petal with manifest delight.]
He loves me, yes!

FAUST.
Yes, child! the fair flower-star hath answered YES!
In this the judgment of the gods approves thee;
He loves thee! know'st thou what it means?—He loves thee!

[He seizes her by both hands.

MARGARET.

I scarce can speak for joy!

FAUST.

Fear thee not, love! But let this look proclaim,
This pressure of my hand declare
What words can never name:
To yield us to an ecstasy of joy,
And feel this tranceful bliss must be
Eternal! yes! its end would be despair!
It hath no end! no end for thee and me!

[MARGARET presses his hands, makes herself free, and runs away. He stands still for a moment thoughtfully, then follows her.

MARTHA. [coming up]

'Tis getting late.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes, and we must away.

MARTHA.

I fain would have you stay;
But 'tis an evil neighbourhood,
Where idle gossips find their only good,
Their pleasure and their business too,
In spying out all that their neighbours do.
And thus, the whole town in a moment knows
The veriest trifle. But where is our young pair?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Like wanton birds of summer, through the air
I saw them dart away.

MARTHA.

He seems well pleased with her.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And she with him. 'Tis thus the world goes.

Scene II.

A Summer-house in the Garden.

[MARGARET comes springing in, and hides herself behind the door of the summer-house. She places the point of her finger on her lips, and looks through a rent.

MARGARET.
He comes!

FAUST. [coming up]
Ha! ha! thou cunning soul, and thou
Would'st trick me thus; but I have caught thee now!

[He kisses her.

MARGARET. [clasping him and returning the kiss]
Thou best of men, with my whole heart I love thee!

[MEPHISTOPHELES heard knocking.

FAUST. [stamping]
Who's there?

MEPHISTOPHELES.
A friend!

FAUST.
A beast!

MEPHISTOPHELES.
'Tis time now to remove thee.

MARTHA. [coming up]
Yes, sir, 'tis getting late.

FAUST.
May I not take you home?

MARGARET.

My mother would—farewell!

FAUST.

And must I leave you then?

Farewell!

MARTHA.

Adieu!

MARGARET.

Right soon to meet again!

[Exeunt FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.]

MARGARET. [alone]

Dear God! what such a man as this
Can think on all and every thing!
I stand ashamed, and simple yes
Is the one answer I can bring.
I wonder what a man, so learned as he,
Can find in a poor simple girl like me. [Exit.

Scene III.

Wood and Cavern.

FAUST. [alone]

Spirit Supreme! thou gav'st me—gav'st me all,
For which I asked thee. Not in vain hast thou
Turned toward me thy countenance in fire.
Thou gavest me wide Nature for my kingdom,
And power to feel it, to enjoy it. Not
Cold gaze of wonder gav'st thou me alone,
But even into her bosom's depth to look,
As it might be the bosom of a friend.
The grand array of living things thou mad'st
To pass before me, mad'st me know my brothers
In silent bush, in water, and in air.
And when the straining storm loud roars, and raves
Through the dark forest, and the giant pine,
Root-wrenched, tears all the neighbouring branches down
And neighbouring stems, and strews the ground with wreck,
And to their fall the hollow mountain thunders;
Then dost thou guide me to the cave, where safe
I learn to know myself, and from my breast
Deep and mysterious wonders are unfolded.
Then mounts the pure white moon before mine eye
With mellow ray, and in her softening light,
From rocky wall, from humid brake, upfloat
The silvery shapes of times by-gone, and soothe
The painful pleasure of deep-brooding thought.
Alas! that man enjoys no perfect bliss,
I feel it now. Thou gav'st me with this joy,
Which brings me near and nearer to the gods,
A fellow, whom I cannot do without.
All cold and heartless, he debases me
Before myself, and, with a single breath,
Blows all the bounties of thy love to nought;
And fans within my breast a raging fire
For that fair image, busy to do ill.

Thus reel I from desire on to enjoyment,
And in enjoyment languish for desire.

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! not yet tired of meditation?
Methinks this is a sorry recreation.
To try it once or twice might do;
But then, again to something new.

FAUST.

You might employ your time some better way
Than thus to plague me on a happy day.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, well! I do not grudge you quiet,
You need my aid, and you cannot deny it.
There is not much to lose, I trow,
With one so harsh, and gruff, and mad as thou.
Toil! moil! from morn to ev'n, so on it goes!
And what one should, and what one should not do,
One cannot always read it on your nose.

FAUST.

This is the proper tone for you!
Annoy me first, and then my thanks are due.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Poor son of Earth! without my timed assistance,
How had you ever dragged on your existence?
From freakish fancy's fevered effervescence,
I have worked long ago your convalescence,
And, but for me, you would have marched away,
In your best youth, from the blest light of day.
What have you here, in caves and clefts, to do,
Like an old owl, screeching to-whit, to-who?
Or like a torpid toad, that sits alone
Sipping the oozing moss and dripping stone?
A precious condition to be in!
I see the Doctor sticks yet in your skin.

FAUST.

Couldst thou but know what re-born vigour springs
From this lone wandering in the wilderness,
Couldst thou conceive what heavenly joy it brings,
Then wert thou fiend enough to envy me my bliss.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A supermundane bliss!
In night and dew to lie upon the height,
And clasp the heaven and earth in wild delight,
To swell up to the godhead's stature,
And pierce with clear miraculous sight
The inmost pith of central Nature,
To carry in your breast with strange elation,
The ferment of the whole six days' creation,
With proud anticipation of—I know
Not what—to glow in rapturous overflow,
And melt into the universal mind,
Casting the paltry son of earth behind;
And then, the heaven-sprung intuition
[With a gesture.] To end—I shall not say in what—fruition.

FAUST.

Shame on thee!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes! that's not quite to your mind.
You have a privilege to cry out shame,
When things are mentioned by their proper name.
Before chaste ears one may not dare to spout
What chastest hearts yet cannot do without.
I do not envy you the pleasure
Of palming lies upon yourself at leisure;
But long it cannot last, I warrant thee.
You are returned to your old whims, I see,
And, at this rate, you soon will wear
Your strength away, in madness and despair.
Of this enough! thy love sits waiting thee,
In doubt and darkness, cabined and confined.
By day, by night, she has thee in her mind;

I trow she loves thee in no common kind.
Thy raging passion 'gan to flow,
Like a torrent in spring from melted snow;
Into her heart thy tide gushed high,
Now is thy shallow streamlet dry.
Instead of standing here to overbrim
With fine ecstatic rapture to the trees,
Methinks the mighty gentleman might please
To drop some words of fond regard, to ease
The sweet young chick who droops and pines for him.
Poor thing, she is half dead of ennui,
And at the window stands whole hours, to see
The clouds pass by the old town-wall along.
Were I a little bird! so goes her song
The live-long day, and half the night to boot.
Sometimes she will be merry, mostly sad,
Now, like a child, weeping her sorrows out,
Now calm again to look at, never glad;
Always in love.

FAUST.

Thou snake! thou snake!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to himself]

So be it! that my guile thy stubborn will may break!

FAUST.

Hence and begone, thou son of filth and fire!
Name not the lovely maid again!
Bring not that overmastering desire
Once more to tempt my poor bewildered brain!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What then? she deems that you are gone for ever;
And half and half methinks you are.

FAUST.

No! I am nigh, and were I ne'er so far,
I could forget her, I could lose her never;
I envy ev'n the body of the Lord,

When on the sacred cake her lips she closes.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes! to be honest, and confess my sins,
I oft have envied thee the lovely twins
That have their fragrant pasture among roses.

FAUST.

Avaunt, thou pimp!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Rail you, and I will laugh;
The God who made the human stuff
Both male and female, if the book don't lie,
Himself the noblest trade knew well enough,
How to carve out an opportunity.
But come, why peak and pine you here?
I lead you to the chamber of your dear,
Not to the gallows.

FAUST.

Ah! what were Heaven's supremest blessedness
Within her arms, upon her breast, to me!
Must I not still be wrung with agony,
That I should plunge her into such distress?
I, the poor fugitive! outlaw from my kind,
Without a friend, without a home,
With restless heart, and aimless mind,
Unblest, unblest, ever doomed to roam;
Who, like a waterfall, from rock to rock came roaring,
With greedy rage into the cauldron pouring;
While she, a heedless infant, rears
Sideways her hut upon the Alpine field,
With all her hopes, and all her fears,
Within this little world concealed.
And I—the God-detested—not content
To seize the rocks, and in my headlong bent
To shatter them to dust, with ruthless tide
Her little shieling on the mountain side
Bore down, and wrecked her life's sweet peace with mine.

And such an offering, Hell, must it be thine?
Help, Devil, to cut short the hour of ill!
What happen must, may happen when it will!
May her sad fate my crashing fall attend,
And she with me be ruined in the end!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Lo! how it boils again and blows
Like furnace, wherefore no man knows.
Go in, thou fool, and let her borrow
From thee, sweet solace to her sorrow!
When such a brainsick dreamer sees
No road, where he to walk may please,
He stands and stares like Balaam's ass,
As if a god did block the pass.
A man's a man who does and dares!
In other points you're spiced not scantily with the devil;
Nothing more silly moves on earth's wide level,
Than is a devil who despairs.

Scene IV.

MARGARET'S Room.

MARGARET alone, at a Spinning-wheel.

MARGARET.

My rest is gone,
My heart is sore;
Peace find I never,
And never more.

Where he is not
Life is the tomb,
The world is bitterness
And gloom.

Crazed is my poor
Distracted brain,
My thread of thought
Is rent in twain.

My rest is gone,
My heart is sore;
Peace find I never,
And never more.

I look from the window
For none but him,
I go abroad
For only him.

His noble air,

His bearing high,
The smile of his mouth,
The might of his eye,

And, when he speaks,
What flow of bliss!
The clasp of his hand,
And ah! his kiss!

My rest is gone,
My heart is sore;
Peace find I never,
And never more.

My bosom swells,
And pants for him.
O that I might clasp him,
And cling to him!
And kiss him, and kiss him
The live-long day,
And on his kisses
Melt away!

Scene V.

MARTHA'S Garden.

MARGARET and FAUST.

MARGARET.

Promise me, Henry!

FAUST.

What I can.

MARGARET.

Of your religion I am fain to hear;
I know thou art a most kind-hearted man,
But as to thy belief I fear——

FAUST.

Fear not! thou know'st I love thee well: and know
For whom I love my life's last drop shall flow!
For other men, I have nor wish nor need
To rob them of their church, or of their creed.

MARGARET.

That's not enough; you must believe it too!

FAUST.

Must I?

MARGARET.

Alas! that I might work some change on you!
Not even the holy mass do you revere.

FAUST.

I do revere 't.

MARGARET.

Yes, but without desire.
At mass and at confession, too, I fear,
Thou hast not shown thyself this many a year.

Dost thou believe in God?

FAUST.

My love, who dares aspire
To say he doth believe in God?
May'st ask thy priests and sages all,
Their answer seems like mockery to fall
Upon the asker's ear.

MARGARET.

Then thou dost not believe?

FAUST.

Misunderstand me not, thou sweet, angelic face!
Who dares pronounce His name?
And who proclaim—
I do believe in Him?
And who dares presume
To utter—I believe Him not?
The All-embracer,
The All-upholder,
Grasps and upholds He not
Thee, me, Himself?
Vaults not the Heaven his vasty dome above thee?
Stand not the earth's foundations firm beneath thee?
And climb not, with benignant beaming,
Up heaven's slope the eternal stars?
Looks not mine eye now into thine?
And feel'st thou not an innate force propelling
Thy tide of life to head and heart,
A power that, in eternal mystery dwelling,
Invisible visible moves beside thee?
Go, fill thy heart therewith, in all its greatness,
And when thy heart brims with this feeling,
Then call it what thou wilt,
Heart! Happiness! Love! God!
I have no name for that which passes all revealing!
Feeling is all in all;
Name is but smoke and sound,
Enshrouding heaven's pure glow.

MARGARET.

All that appears most pious and profound;
Much of the same our parson says,
Only he clothes it in a different phrase.

FAUST.

All places speak it forth;
All hearts, from farthest South to farthest North,
Proclaim the tale divine,
Each in its proper speech;
Wherefore not I in mine?

MARGARET.

When thus you speak it does not seem so bad,
And yet is your condition still most sad:
Unless you are a Christian, all is vain.

FAUST.

Sweet love!

MARGARET.

Henry, it gives me pain,
More than my lips can speak, to see
Thee joined to such strange company.

FAUST.

How so?

MARGARET.

The man whom thou hast made thy mate,
Deep in my inmost soul I hate;
Nothing in all my life hath made me smart
So much as his disgusting leer.
His face stabs like a dagger through my heart!

FAUST.

Sweet doll! thou hast no cause to fear.

MARGARET.

It makes my blood to freeze when he comes near.
To other men I have no lack

Of kindly thoughts; but as I long
To see thy face, I shudder back
From him. That he's a knave I make no doubt;
May God forgive me, if I do him wrong!

FAUST.

Such grim old owls must be; without
Their help the world could not get on, I fear.

MARGARET.

With men like him I would have nought to do!
As often as he shows him here,
He looks in at the door with such a scornful leer,
Half angry too;
Whate'er is done, he takes no kindly part;
And one can see it written on his face,
He never loved a son of Adam's race.
Henry, within thy loving arm
I feel so free, so trustful-warm;
But when his foot comes near, I start,
And feel a freezing grip tie up my heart.

FAUST.

O thou prophetic angel, thou!

MARGARET.

This overpowers me so
That, when his icy foot may cross the door,
I feel as if I could not love thee more.
When he is here, too, I could never pray;
This eats my very heart. Now say,
Henry, is't not the same with thee?

FAUST.

Nay now, this is mere blind antipathy!

MARGARET.

I must be gone.

FAUST.

Oh! may it never be

That I shall spend one quiet hour with thee,
One single little hour, and breast on breast,
And soul on soul, with panting love, be pressed?

MARGARET.

Alas! did I but sleep alone, this night
The door unbarred thy coming should invite;
But my good mother has but broken sleep;
And, if her ears an inkling got,
Then were I dead upon the spot!

FAUST.

Sweet angel! that's an easy fence to leap.
Here is a juice, whose grateful power can steep
Her senses in a slumber soft and deep;
Three drops mixed with her evening draught will do.

MARGARET.

I would adventure this and more for you.
Of course, there's nothing hurtful in the phial?

FAUST.

If so, would I advise the trial?

MARGARET.

Thou best of men, if I but look on thee,
All will deserts me to thy wish untrue;
So much already have I done for thee
That now scarce aught remains for me to do. [Exit.

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Well, is the monkey gone?

FAUST.

And you—must I
Submit again to see you play the spy?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I have been duly advertised

How Doctor Faust was catechised:
I hope it will agree with you.
The girls are wont—they have their reasons too—
To see that one, in every point, believes
The faith, that from his fathers he receives.
They think, if little mettle here he shows,
We too may lead him by the nose.

FAUST.

Thou monster! dost not know how this fond soul,
Who yields her being's whole
To God, and feels and knows
That from such faith alone her own salvation flows,
With many an anxious holy fear is tossed,
Lest he, whom best she loves, should be for ever lost?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Thou super-sensual sensual fool,
A silly girl takes thee to school!

FAUST.

Thou son of filth and fire, thou monster, thou!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And then her skill in reading faces
Is not the least of all her graces!
When I come near, she feels, she knows not how,
And through my mask can read it on my brow
That I must be, if not the very Devil,
A genius far above the common level.
And now to-night—

FAUST.

What's that to thee?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What brings my master joy, brings joy to me.

Scene VI.

At the Well.

MARGARET and ELIZA, with water-pitchers.

ELIZA.

Have you heard nought of Barbara?

MARGARET.

Nothing at all. I seldom stray
From home, to hear of other folk's affairs.

ELIZA.

You may believe me every whit;
Sibylla told it me to-day.
She too has been befooled: that comes of it,
When people give themselves such airs!

MARGARET.

How so?

ELIZA.

'Tis rank!

She eats and drinks for two, not now for one.

MARGARET.

Poor girl!

ELIZA.

Well, well! she has herself to thank.
How long did she not hang upon
The fellow!—Yes! that was a parading,
A dancing and a promenading!
Must always be before the rest!
And to wines and pasties be pressed;
Began then to be proud of her beauty,
And was so reckless of her duty
As to take presents from him too.
That was a cooing and a caressing!

No wonder if the flower too be amissing!

MARGARET.

I pity her.

ELIZA.

Methinks you have not much to do.

When we were not allowed to venture o'er
The threshold, night and day kept close at spinning,
There stood she, with her paramour,
Upon the bench, before the door,
Or in the lane, and hour for hour
Scarce knew the end from the beginning.
'Tis time that she should go to school
And learn—on the repentance-stool!

MARGARET.

But he will take her for his wife.

ELIZA.

He marry her! not for his life!
An active youth like him can find,
Where'er he pleases, quarters to his mind.
Besides, he's gone!

MARGARET.

That was not fair.

ELIZA.

And if he should come back, she'll not enjoy him more.
Her marriage wreath the boys will tear,
And we will strew chopped straw before the door. [Exit.

MARGARET. [going homewards]

How could I once so boldly chide
When a poor maiden stepped aside,
And scarce found words enough to name
The measure of a sister's shame!
If it was black, I blackened it yet more,
And with that blackness not content,
More thickly still laid on the paint,

And blessed my stars, as cased in mail,
Against all frailties of the frail;
And now myself am what I chid before!—
Yet was each step that lured my slippery feet
So good, so lovely, so enticing sweet!

Scene VII.

An enclosed Area.

(In a niche of the wall an image of the Mater dolorosa, with flower-jugs before it.)

MARGARET. [placing fresh flowers in the jugs]

O mother rich in sorrows,
Bend down to hear my cry!
O bend thee, gracious mother,
To my sore agony!

Thy heart with swords is piercèd,
And tears are in thine eye,
Because they made thy dear Son
A cruel death to die.

Thou lookest up to heaven,
And deeply thou dost sigh;
His God and thine beholds thee,
And heals thine agony.

Oh! who can know
What bitter woe
Doth pierce me through and through?
The fear, the anguish of my heart,
Its every pang, its every smart,
Know'st thou, and only thou.

And wheresoe'er I wend me,
What woes, what woes attend me,
And how my bosom quakes!
And in my chamber lonely,

With weeping, weeping only,
My heart for sorrow breaks.

These flower-pots on the window
I wet with tears, ah me!
When with the early morning,
I plucked these flowers for thee.

And when the morn's first sunbeam
Into my room was shed,
I sat, in deepest anguish,
And watched it on my bed.

O save me, Mother of Sorrows!
Unto my prayer give heed,
By all the swords that pierced thee,
O save me in my need!

Scene VIII.

Night. Street before MARGARET'S door.

Enter VALENTIN.

VALENTIN.

When I sat with our merry men,
At a carousal, now and then,
Where one may be allowed a boast,
And my messmates gave toast for toast
To the girl they prized the most,
And with a bumper then swilled o'er
Their praise, when they could praise no more;
I'd sit at ease, and lean upon
My elbow, while they prated on,
Till all the swaggerers had done,
And smile and stroke my beard, and fill
The goodly rummer to my hand,
And say, All that is very well!
But is there one, in all the land,
That with my Margaret may compare,
Or even tie the shoe to her?
Rap, rap! cling, clang! so went it round!
From man to man, with gleesome sound,
And one cried out with lusty breath,
"Yes, Gretchen! Gretchen! she's the girl,
Of womanhood the perfect pearl!"
And all the braggarts were dumb as death.
And now,—the devil's in the matter!
It is enough to make one clatter,
Like a rat, along the walls!
Shall every boor, with gibe and jeer,
Turn up his nose when I appear?
And every pettiest word that falls
Me, like a purseless debtor, torture?
And though I bruised them in a mortar,
I could not say that they were wrong.

What comes apace?—what creeps along?
A pair of them comes slinking by.
If 'tis the man I look for, I
Will dust his coat so well he'll not,
By Jove! go living from the spot! [Retires.

Enter FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

As from the window of the vestry there,
The light of the undying lamp doth glare,
And sideways gleameth, dimmer still and dimmer,
Till darkness closes round its fitful glimmer,
So murky is it in my soul.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And I've a qualmish sort of feeling,
Like a cat on a rainy day,
Creeping round the wall, and stealing
Near the fireplace, if it may.
Yet am I in most virtuous trim
For a small turn at stealing, or at lechery;
So jumps already through my every limb
Walpurgis-Night, with all its glorious witchery.
The day after to-morrow brings again
The Feast, with fun and frolic in its train.

FAUST.

Is it not time that you were raising
The treasure there in the distance blazing?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Soon shall you sate your eyes with gazing,
And lift up from the urn yourself
A little mine of precious pelf.
I gave it a side-glance before—
Saw lion-dollars by the score.

FAUST.

Is there no gaud?—no jewel at all?
To deck my sweet little mistress withal.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

O yes! I saw some trinkets for the girls,—
A sort of necklace strung with pearls.

FAUST.

'Tis well that we have this to give her,
For empty-handed go I never.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And yet a wise man ought to learn
To enjoy gratis, as well as to earn.
Now, that the stars are bright and clear the sky,
I'll give you a touch of choicest melody;
A moral song—that, while we seem to school her,
With the more certainty we may befool her.

[Sings to the guitar.]

Why stands before
Her lover's door,
Young Catherine here,
At early break of day?
Beware, beware!
He lets thee in,
A maiden in,
A maiden not away!

When full it blows,
He breaks the rose,
And leaves thee then,
A wretched outcast thing!
Take warning, then,
And yield to none
But who hath shown,
And changed with thee the ring.

VALENTIN. [advancing]

Ho, serenaders! by the Element!

You whoreson rascals! you rat-catchers, you!
First, to the devil with the instrument,
And, after it, the harper too!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Donner and blitz! my good guitar is broken!

VALENTIN.

And your skull, too, anon: by this sure token!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Quick, Doctor! here's no time to tarry!
Keep close, as I shall lead the way.
Out with your goosewing! out, I say!
Make you the thrusts, and I will parry.

VALENTIN.

Then parry that!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Why not?

VALENTIN.

And that!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Of course!

VALENTIN.

I deem the devil is here, or something worse.
Good God! what's this?—my arm is lamed!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to FAUST]

Have at him there!

VALENTIN. [falls]

O woe!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Now is the lubber tamed!
But let's be gone! why stand you gaping there?
They'll raise a cry of murder! I can play

A game with the policeman, any day;
But blood spilt is a dangerous affair.

[Exeunt MEPHISTOPHELES and FAUST.]

MARTHA. [at the window]
Ho! murder, ho!

MARGARET. [at the window]
A light! a light!

MARTHA. [as above]
They bawl, they brawl, they strike, they fight.

THE PEOPLE.
And here lies one already dead!

MARTHA. [appearing below]
Where are the murderers? are they fled?

MARGARET. [below]
Who's this lies here?

THE PEOPLE.
Thy mother's son.

MARGARET.
Almighty God! my brother dead!

VALENTIN.
I die! I die!—'tis quickly said,
And yet more quickly done.
Why stand you, women, and weep and wail?
Draw near, and listen to my tale!
[They all come round him.]
My Margaret, mark me, you are young,
And in sense not overstrong;
You manage matters ill.
I tell thee in thine ear, that thou
Art, once for all, a strumpet,—now
Mayst go and take thy fill.

MARGARET.

My brother! God! what do you mean?

VALENTIN.

Leave the Lord God out of the jest;
Said is said, and done is done;
Now you may manage, as you best
Know how to help the matter on.
You commenced the trade with one,
We shall have two, three, four, anon,
Next a dozen, and next a score,
And then the whole town at your door.

When sin is born it shuns the light
(For conscience guilt may not abide it),
And they draw the veil of night
Over head and ears, to hide it;
Yea, they would murder it, if they might.
But anon it waxes bolder,
And walks about in broad day-light,
And, uglier still as it grows older,
The less it offers to invite,
The more it courts the public sight.

Even now, methinks, I see the day,
When every honest citizen,
As from a corpse of tainted clay,
From thee, thou whore! will turn away.
Thy very heart shall fail thee then,
When they shall look thee in the face!
No more shall golden chain thee grace!
The Church shall spurn thee from its door!
The altar shall not own thee more!
Nor longer, with thy spruce lace-tippet,
Where the dance wheels, shalt thou trip it!
In some vile den of want and woe,
With beggars and cripples thou shalt bed;

And, if from Heaven forgiveness flow,
Earth shall rain curses on thy head!

MARTHA.

Speak softly, and prepare thy soul for death,
Nor mingle slander with thy parting breath!

VALENTIN.

Could I but reach thy withered skin,
Thou hag, thou bawd, so vile and shameless!
For such fair deed I might pass blameless,
To score the black mark from my blackest sin.

MARGARET.

Brother, thou mak'st me feel a hell of pain!

VALENTIN.

I tell thee, all thy tears are vain!
When with thy honour thou didst part,
Thou dealt the blow that pierced my heart.
I go through death, with fearless mood,
To meet my God, as a soldier should. [Dies.

Scene IX.

A Cathedral.

Mass, Organ, and Song. MARGARET amid a crowd of people, EVIL SPIRIT behind her.

EVIL SPIRIT.

How different, Margaret, was thy case,
When, in thine innocence, thou didst kneel
Before the altar,
And from the well-worn book
Didst lisp thy prayers,
Half childish play,
Half God in thy heart!
Margaret!
Where is thy head?
Within thy heart
What dire misdeed?
Prayest thou for thy mother's soul, whom thou
Didst make to sleep a long, long sleep of sorrow?
Whose blood is on thy threshold?
—And, underneath thy heart,
Moves not the swelling germ of life already,
And, with its boding presence
Thee tortures, and itself?

MARGARET.

Woe, woe!
That I might shake away the thoughts,
That hither flit and thither,
Against me!

QUIRE.

Dies iræ, dies illa,
Solvat saeculum in favilla.

[The organ sounds.

EVIL SPIRIT.

Terror doth seize thee!
The trumpet sounds!
The graves quake!
And thy heart,
From its rest of ashes,
To fiery pain
Created again,
Quivers to life!

MARGARET.

Would I were hence!
I feel as if the organ stopped
My breath,
And, at the hymn,
My inmost heart
Melted away!

QUIRE.

Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet adparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.

MARGARET.

I feel so straitened!
The pillar shafts
Enclasp me round!
The vault
Is closing o'er me!—Air!

EVIL SPIRIT.

Yea! let them hide thee! but thy sin and shame
No vault can hide!
Air? Light? No!
Woe on thee! woe!

QUIRE.

Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
Quem patronum rogaturus?
Cum vix justus sit securus.

EVIL SPIRIT.

The blessèd turn
Their looks away,
And the pure shudder
From touch of thee!
Woe!

MARGARET.

Neighbour, help! help! I faint!

[She falls down in a swoon.

END OF ACT FOURTH.

ACT V.

Scene I.

Walpurgis-Night.

The Hartz Mountains. Neighbourhood of Schirke and Elend.

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Would you not like a broomstick to bestride?
Would God I had a stout old goat to ride!
The way is long; and I would rather spare me
This uphill work.

FAUST.

While my good legs can bear me,
This knotted stick will serve my end.
What boots it to cut short the way?
Through the long labyrinth of vales to wend,
These rugged mountain-steeps to climb,
And hear the gushing waters' ceaseless chime,
No better seasoning on my wish to-day
Could wait, to make the Brocken banquet prime!
The Spring is waving in the birchen bower,
And ev'n the pine begins to feel its power;
Shall we alone be strangers to its sway?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

No whiff I feel that hath a smell of May;
I am most wintry cold in every limb;
I'd sooner track my road o'er frost and snow.
How sadly mounts the imperfect moon!—so dim
Shines forth its red disk, with belated glow,
We run the risk, at every step, on stones
Or stumps of crazy trees, to break our bones.
You must allow me to request the aid

Of a Will-o-the-Wisp;—I see one right ahead,
And in the bog it blazes merrily.
Holla! my good friend! dare I be so free?
Two travellers here stand much in need of thee;
Why should'st thou waste thy flickering flame in vain?
Pray be so good as light us up the hill!

WILL-O-THE-WISP.

Out of respect to you, I will restrain,
If possible, my ever-shifting will;
But all our natural genius, and our skill
Is zigzag; straight lines go against the grain.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Ha! ha! hast learned from men how to declaim?
March on, I tell thee, in the Devil's name!
Else will I blow thy flickering life-spark out.

WILL-O-THE-WISP.

You are the master of the house, no doubt,
And therefore I obey you cheerfully.
Only remember! 'tis the first of May,
The Brocken is as mad as mad can be;
And when an ignis fatuus leads the way,
You have yourselves to blame, if you should stray.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, AND WILL-O-THE-WISP. [in reciprocal song]

Through the realms of fairy dreaming,
Through the air with magic teeming,
Guide us forward, guide us fairly,
Thanks to thee be rendered rarely;
Guide us quick, and guide us sure,
O'er the wide waste Brocken moor.

Trees on trees thick massed before us
Flit, and fling dark shadows o'er us,
Cliffs on cliffs in rugged masses
Nod above the narrow passes,
And each rock from jagged nose,

How it snorts, and how it blows!

Over turf and stone are pouring
Stream and streamlet, wildly roaring;
Is it rustling? is it singing?
Love's sweet plaint with gentle winging!
Voices of those days, the dearest,
When our light of hope was clearest!
And the echo, like the sounds
Of ancient story, back rebounds.

Oohoo! Shooohoo! what a riot!
Owl and pewit, jay and piet!
Will no bird to-night be quiet?
What is this? red salamanders,
With long legs and swoll'n paunches,
Weaving wreathy fire-meanders
Through the thicket's bristling branches!
And the trees, their roots outspreading
From the sand and rocky bedding,
Winding, stretching, twisting grimly,
Through the dun air darting dimly
Seek to seize us, seek to grasp us,
And with snaky coils enclasp us!
And the mice in motley muster,
Red and white, and blue and grey,
Thick as bees that hang in cluster,
Crowd along the heathy way.
And the fire-flies shooting lightly
Through the weirdly winding glade,
With bewildering escort, brightly
Lead the streaming cavalcade!

But tell me, in this strange confusion,
What is real, what delusion?
Do we walk with forward faces,

Or stand and halt with baffled paces?
All things seem to change their places,
Rocks and trees to make grimaces,
And the lights in witchy row,
Twinkle more and more they blow!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Hold me tightly by the cue!
From this hillock, we may view,
At leisure, with admiring gaze,
How Mammon in the mount doth blaze!

FAUST.

How strangely through the glooming glens
Dim sheen, like morning redness, glimmers!
Ev'n to the darkest, deepest dens
With its long streaky rays it shimmers.
Here mounts the smoke, there rolls the steam,
There flames through the white vapours gleam,
Here like a thread along the mountain
It creeps; there gushes in a fountain!
Here stretching out, in many a rood,
Along the vale, its veinèd flood,
And here at once it checks its flight,
And bursts in globes of studded light.
There sparks are showering on the ground,
Like golden sand besprinkled round,
And lo! where all the rocky height,
From head to foot is bathed in light!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Hath not old Mammon lit with goodly flame
His palace for the jubilee?
Thou art in luck to see the game;
Even now I scent the lusty company.

FAUST.

How the mad storm doth howl and hiss
And beats my neck with angry buffeting!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To the old mountain's hard ribs cling,
Or the strong blast will hurl thee down the abyss;
The night with clouds is overcast;
Hear in the woods the grinding of the blast!
How the frightened owlets flit!
How the massive pillars split
Of the dark pine-palaces!
How the branches creak and break!
How the riven stems are groaning!
How the gaping roots are moaning!
In terrible confusion all,
One on another clashing, they fall,
And through the clefts, where their wrecks are buried,
Hissing and howling the winds are hurried.
Sounds of voices dost thou hear?
Voices far, and voices near?
And, all the mountain side along,
Streams a raving wizard song.

WITCHES. [in chorus]

The witches to the Brocken ride,
The stubble is yellow, the corn is green;
A merry crew to a merry scene,
And good Sir Urian is the guide.
Over stock and stone we float,
Wrinkled hag and rank old goat.

A VOICE.

Old mother Baubo comes up now,
Alone, and riding on a sow.

CHORUS.

Honour to him to whom honour is due!
Lady Baubo heads the crew!
On the back of a sow, with the wings of the wind,
And all the host of witches behind.

A VOICE.

Sister, which way came you?

A VOICE.

By Ilsestein! and I looked into
An owlet's nest, as on I fared,
That with its two eyes broadly stared!

A VOICE.

The deuce! at what a devil's pace
You go; this march is not a race.

A VOICE.

It tore me, it flayed me!
These red wounds it made me!

WITCHES. [in chorus]

The road is broad, the road is long,
Why crowd you so on one another?
Scrapes the besom, pricks the prong,
Chokes the child, and bursts the mother.

WIZARDS. [semi-chorus]

We trail us on, like very snails,
The women fly with flaunting sails;
For, when we run Squire Satan's races,
They always win by a thousand paces.

SEMI-CHORUS.

Not quite so bad: the women need
A thousand paces to help their speed;
But let them speed what most they can,
With one spring comes up the man.

VOICE. [from above]

Come up! come up from the lake with me.

VOICES. [from below]

Right gladly would we mount with thee;
We wash, and wash, and cease from washing never;
Our skins are as white as white can be,
But we are as dry and barren as ever.

BOTH CHORUSES.

The wind is hushed, the stars take flight,
The sullen moon hath veiled her light,
The magic choir from whizzing wings,
Long lines of sparkling glory flings.

VOICE. [from below]

Stop, stop!

VOICE. [from above]

Who bawls so loud from the cleft?

VOICE. [from below]

Let me go with you! let me not be left!
Three hundred years I grope and grope
Round the base and up the slope,
But still the summit cheats my hope.
I fain would be a merry guest
At Satan's banquet with the rest.

BOTH CHORUSES.

On broomstick, and on lusty goat,
On pitchfork, and on stick, we float;
And he, to-day who cannot soar,
Is a lost man for evermore.

HALF-WITCH. [below]

I hobble on behind them all,
The others scarcely hear my call!
I find no rest at home: and here,
I limp on lamely in the rear.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.

The ointment gives our sinews might,
For us each rag is sail enough,
We find a ship in every trough;
Whoso will fly must fly to-night.

BOTH CHORUSES.

While we upon the summit ride,
Be yours to sweep along the side;
Up and down, and far and wide,

On the left, and on the right,
Witch and wizard massed together,
Scour the moor and sweep the heather,
Bravely on Walpurgis night!

[They alight.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What a thronging, and jolting, and rolling, and rattling!
What a whizzing, and whirling, and jostling, and battling!
What a sparkling, and blazing, and stinking, and burning!
And witches that all topsy-turvy are turning!—
Hold fast by me, or I shall lose you quite,
Where are you?

FAUST. [at a distance]

Here!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What! so far in the rear!
Why then 'tis time that I should use my right,
As master of the house to-night.
Make way! Squire Voland comes, sweet mob, make way!
Here, Doctor, hold by me!—and now, I say,
We must cut clear
Of this wild hubbub, while we may;
Even my cloth is puzzled here.
See'st thou that light on yonder mound quite near,
It hath a most peculiar glare,
We'll slip in there,
And watch behind the bush the humours of the Fair.

FAUST.

Strange son of contradiction!—may'st even guide us!
A rare conceit! of course you must be right;
This weary way we march on famed Walpurgis night,
Like hermits in a corner here to hide us!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Lo! where the flames mount up with bickering glee;
In sooth it is a goodly company.

In such a place one cannot be alone.

FAUST.

And yet a place I'd rather own
Upon the top, where whirling smoke I see;
There thousands to the evil Spirit hie,
And many a riddle there he will untie.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Yes: and for every knot he disentangles,
He'll make another to produce new wrangles.
Let the great world rant and riot,
We'll know to house us here in quiet;
In the great world 'tis a sanctioned plan,
Each makes a little world the best he can.
Look there; you see young witches without cover,
And old ones prudently veiled over;
Yield but to me, and I can promise thee,
With little labour, mickle glee.
I hear their noisy instruments begin!
Confound their scraping!—one must bear the din.
Come, come! what must be must be—let's go in!
With my good introduction on this night,
Thou shalt have laughter to thy heart's delight.
What say'st thou, friend? this is no common show,
A hundred lights are burning in a row,
You scarce may see the end;
They dance, they talk, they cook, they drink, they court;
Now tell me, saw you ever better sport?

FAUST.

Say, in what character do you intend
To appear here, and introduce your friend?
Devil or conjurer?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I love incognito,
Yet on a gala-day my order I may show;
And, though a garter here is but of small avail,
The famous horse's foot I ne'er yet knew to fail.

See even now that cautious creeping snail!
With her long feeling visage, she
Has smelt out something of hell in me.
Do what I can, they have a snout,
In this keen air to scent me out;
Come! come; from fire to fire we roam; the game
Be mine to start, and yours to woo the dame.
[To some who are sitting round a glimmering coal-fire.]
Why mope you here, old sirs, toasting your toes?
Methinks your Brocken hours were better spent
Amid the youthful roar and merriment;
One is enough alone at home, God knows.

GENERAL.

Who would rely upon the faith of nations!
They leave you thankless, when their work is done;
The people, like the women, pour libations
Only in honour of the rising sun.

MINISTER.

The liberties these modern changes bring,
I must confess I cannot praise;
The good old times, when we were everything,
These were the truly golden days.

PARVENU.

We, too, pushed forward with the pushing crew,
And for the need could stretch a point or two;
But now all's changed; and with the whirling bucket,
We lose the fruit, just when our hand would pluck it.

AUTHOR.

No solid work now suits the reading nation,
And year by year the world more shallow grows;
And, for the glib-tongued rising generation,
They hang their wisdom on their up-turned nose!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [Who all at once appears very old]

The people here seem ripe for Doom's day; I
Suspect the world is now on its last legs;

And, since mine own good cask is running dry,
Men and their ways, I guess, are near the dregs!

PEDLAR-WITCH.

Good sirs, I pray you pass not by,
Cast on my wares a friendly eye!
One cannot see such rich display
Of curious trinkets every day.
Yet is there nothing in my store
(Which far all other stores excels),
That hath not done some mischief sore
To earth, and all on earth that dwells;
No dagger by which blood hath not been shed,
No cup from which, through sound and healthy life,
Corroding fiery juice hath not been spread,
No gaud but hath seduced some lovely wife,
No sword that hath not made a truce miscarry,
Or stabbed behind the back its adversary.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Good lady cousin! you come rather late.
Your wares, believe me, are quite out of date;
Deal in the new and newest; that
Our palate smacks; all else is flat.

FAUST.

This is a fair that beats the Leipzig hollow!
My head is so confused, I scarce can follow.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

To the top the stream is rushing,
And we are pushed, when we think we are pushing.

FAUST.

Who, then, is that?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Look at her well.

'Tis Lilith.

FAUST.

Who?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Adam's first wife. Beware,
Art thou a wise man, of her glossy hair!
'Tis fair to look on, but its look is fell.
Those locks with which she outshines all the train,
When she hath bound a young man with that chain,
She'll hold him fast; he'll scarce come back again.

FAUST.

There sit an old and young one on the sward;
They seem to have been dancing somewhat hard.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

O! once begun, they'll go on like the devil.
Come, come! they rise again—let's join the revel.

[FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES join the dance; the former with the Young Witch as his partner; the latter with the Old one.]

FAUST. [dancing with the young Witch]

A lovely dream once came to me,
I saw in my sleep an apple-tree;
Two lovely apples on it did shine;
I clomb the pole to make them mine.

THE YOUNG WITCH.

For apples your sire in Paradise
And primal dame had longing eyes:
And, if your eyes are wise to see,
You'll find such apples on my tree.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [dancing with the old Witch]

An ugly dream once came to me,
I dreamed I saw a cloven tree;
In the tree there sat an ugly owl;
I called it fair, though it was foul.

THE OLD WITCH.

My best salute this night shall be,

Thou knight of the cloven foot, to thee;
A cloven tree with an ugly owl,
Am I for thee, or fair, or foul.

PROCTOPHANTASMIST. [to the dancers]
Listen to order, you presumptuous brood!
Have we not proved beyond disputing,
That ghosts on terra firma have no footing?
And yet you dance like any flesh and blood?

THE YOUNG WITCH. [dancing]
What wants he here, that rude-like fellow there?

FAUST. [dancing]
O, he is everywhere!
What others dance 'tis his to prize;
Each step he cannot criticise
Had as well not been made. But in the dance
It grieves him most when we advance.
If we would wheel still round and round in a ring,
As he is fond to do in his old mill,
He would not take it half so ill;
Especially if you take care to bring
Your praiseful offering to his master skill.

PROCTOPHANTASMIST.
What! still there, phantoms? this is past endurance!
In this enlightened age you have the assurance
To show your face and play your tricks undaunted;
We are so wise, and yet a man's own house is haunted.
How long have I not swept the cobwebs of delusion,
And still the world remains in the same wild confusion!

THE YOUNG WITCH.
Be quiet then, and seek some other place!

PROCTOPHANTASMIST.
I tell you, Spirits, in your face,
This intellectual thrall I cannot bear it;
I love to have a free unshackled spirit. [The dance goes on.]
To-day I see that all my strength is spent in vain;

I've had a tour, at least, to compensate my evils,
And hope, before I come to Blocksberg back again,
To crush, with one good stroke, the poets and the devils.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

He will now go, and, bare of breeches,
Sit in a pool with solemn patience;
And, when his buttocks are well sucked by leeches,
Be cured of ghosts and ghostly inspirations.
[To FAUST, who has just left the dance.]
Why do you let the lovely damsel go,
That in the dance with sweet song pleased you so?

FAUST.

Alas! while she so passing sweet was singing,
I saw a red mouse from her mouth outspringing.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Pooh! on the Brocken that's a thing of course;
Let not such trifles mar your sweet discourse.
Go, join the crew, and dance away;
Enough, the red mouse was not gray.

FAUST.

Then saw I——

MEPHISTOPHELES.

What?

FAUST.

Mephisto, see'st thou there
A pale yet lovely girl, in lonely distance fare?
From place to place she moveth slow;
With shackled feet she seems to go;
I must confess, she has a cast
Of Margaret, when I saw her last.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Let that alone! it brings thee certain harm;
It is bewitched, a bloodless, breathless form,
For men to look upon it is not good.

Excuse me, sirs,—no disrespect to you,
If I seem curt: I am the dilettante
To draw the curtain; and our time is scanty.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Just so; I only wish you were so clever
To know your home;
Then from the Blocksberg you would never
Have lust to roam!

Scene II.

Intermezzo.

Walpurgis-Night's Dream;
or
Oberon and Titania's Golden Hightide.

DIRECTOR OF THE THEATRE.

We players here may take our ease;
For all we need for scenery
Is mount and mead, and trees, and seas
Of Nature's leafy greenery.

HERALD.

The golden high-tide is it then,
When fifty years pass over;
But doubly golden is it when
All brawls and strifes they cover.

OBERON.

Ye spirits, who obey my law,
Are to this feast invited,
When Oberon and Titania
In love are reunited.

PUCK.

Puck comes in first, and turns athwart,
His merry circles wheeling;
And hundreds more behind him dart,
Loud shouts of laughter pealing.

ARIEL.

I fill the air with thrilling song
Of virtue quite enchanting;
Though ugly imps I lure along,
The fair are never wanting!

OBERON.

When man and wife begin to strive,

Just give them length of tether!
They will learn in peace to live,
When not too much together.

TITANIA.

When pouts the wife, and frets the man,
This cure is best in Nature,
Him to the Arctic circle ban,
And her to the Equator.

ORCHESTRA. [Tutti. Fortissimo]

Snout of fly, and nose of gnat,
Lead on the band before us!
Frog and cricket, cat and bat,
Join merry in the chorus!

SOLO.

A soap-bell for a doodle-sack,
The merry waters troubling!
Hear the snecke-snicke-snack,
From its snub-nose bubbling!

EMBRYO-SPIRIT.

Legs of spider, paunch of toad,
And wings, if you would know it;
Nor fish, nor fowl, but on the road
Perhaps to be a poet!

A PAIR OF DANCERS.

With many a nimble pace and spring,
Through honey-dew and vapour,
Trips o'er the ground the little thing,
But higher cannot caper.

INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.

Do I see a real thing,
Or is it all delusion?
Oberon, the fairy king,
Amid this wild confusion.

ORTHODOX.

Though neither tail nor claws are his,
'Tis true beyond all cavil,
As devils were the gods of Greece,
He too must be a devil.

NORTHERN ARTIST.

'Tis but a sketch, I must admit;
But what I can't unravel
To-night, I'll know, with larger wit,
From my Italian travel.

PURIST.

Alas! that I should see it too!
Here we a riot rare have!
Of all the crew, there are but two
That powder on their hair have.

YOUNG WITCH.

Powder and petticoat for grey
And wrinkled hags are fitting;
But I my lusty limbs display,
Upon a he-goat sitting.

MATRON.

To speak with such a shameless pack
We have nor will nor leisure;
Soon may your flesh rot on your back,
And we look on with pleasure!

LEADER OF THE ORCHESTRA.

Snout of fly, and nose of gnat,
Sting not the naked beauty!
Frog and cricket, cat and bat,
Attend ye to your duty!

WEATHERCOCK. [to the one side]

A goodly company! as sure
As I stand on the steeple;
With brides and bridegrooms swarms the moor,
The hopefulest of people!

WEATHERCOCK. [to the other side]
And opes not suddenly the ground,
To swallow one and all up,
Then, with a jerk, I'll veer me round,
And straight to hell I'll gallop.

XENIEN.
We insects keep them all in awe,
With sharpest scissors shear we!
Old Nick, our worthy Squire Papa,
Here to salute appear we.

HENNINGS.
See! how in merry circles they
Sit gossiping together;
The graceless crew have hearts, they say,
As good as any other.

MUSAGETES.
This witch and wizard crew to lead,
My willing fancy chooses;
More hopeful field is here indeed,
Than when I lead the Muses.

CI-DEVANT GENIUS OF THE AGE.
The Brocken has a good broad back,
Like the High-Dutch Parnassus;
The Jury here no man can pack,
Or with proud silence pass us.

INQUISITIVE TRAVELLER.
Say, who is he so stiff that goes,
That stately-stalking stranger?
He snuffs for Jesuits with sharp nose,
And cries—the Church in danger!

CRANE.
In muddy waters do I fish
As well as where it clear is,
And only for such cause as this
The pious man too here is.

WORLDLING.

Yes! though the saints declare that sin
And Blocksberg are identical,
Yet here, amid this demon din,
They'll set up their conventicle.

DANCER.

A sound of drums! a sound of men!
That wafted on the wind came!—
The weary bitterns in the fen
Are booming—never mind 'em!

DANCING-MASTER.

Lo! how they kick, and how they jump!
How well each figure shown is!
Springs the crooked, hops the plump!
Each thinks him an Adonis!

A GOOD FELLOW.

A sorry lot! What muffled ire
Their swelling breasts inflames here!
The beasts were tamed by Orpheus' lyre,
And them the bagpipe tames here!

PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

I let no one bamboozle me
With doubts and critic cavils;
The devil sure must something be,
Else whence so many devils?

IDEALIST.

Imagination travels free
Without or rein or rule here;
If I am all that now I see,
Myself must be a fool here.

REALIST.

That on the Brocken ghosts appear
Now scarce admits disputing;
Amid this hurly burly here
I've fairly lost my footing.

SUPERNATURALIST.

Into this swarming hellish brood
I come, without intrusion;
From evil spirits to the good,
It is a just conclusion.

SCEPTIC.

They chase the flame that flits about,
And deem them near their treasure;
Best rhymes with doubt this demon-rout,
And I look on with pleasure.

LEADER OF THE ORCHESTRA.

Snout of fly, and nose of gnat,
Ye stupid Dilettanti!
Frog and cricket, cat and bat,
Keep better time, why can't ye?

CLEVER SPIRITS.

Sans-souci is hight the crew
On limber limbs that ply it;
When on our feet it will not do,
Then on our heads we try it.

AWKWARD SPIRITS.

With once or twice a lucky throw
We tramped the road together;
But now we flounder on, and show
Our toes outside the leather!

IGNES FATUI.

Though born but with the sultry ray
This morn, in the morass all,
Yet now, amid the gallants gay,
We shine here and surpass all.

FALLING STAR.

Last night I shot from starry sky
And fell upon my nose here;
Will no one come where flat I lie,
And plant me on my toes here?

STOUT SPIRITS.

Make way, make way! and brush the dew
Right bravely from the lawn here;
Spirits we are, but Spirits too
Can show both pith and brawn here!

PUCK.

Why tramp ye so majestic
As cub of river-horse is?
The plumpest spirit of you all
Stout Puck himself of course is.

ARIEL.

If loving Nature's bounteous care
Hath fitted you with pinions,
Then cleave with me the yielding air
To rosy bright dominions.

ORCHESTRA.

The mist draws off, and overhead
All clear and bright the air is,
And with the rustling breeze are fled
The devils and the fairies!

END OF THE INTERLUDE.

Scene III.

A cloudy day. The Fields.

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES.

FAUST.

In misery! in despair! Wandering in hopeless wretchedness over the wide earth, and at last made prisoner! Shut up like a malefactor in a dungeon, victim of the most horrible woes—poor miserable girl! Must it then come to this? Thou treacherous and worthless Spirit! this hast thou concealed from me!—Stand thou there! stand!—Roll round thy fiendish eyes, infuriate in thy head! Stand and confront me with thy insupportable presence. A prisoner! in irredeemable misery! given over to evil Spirits, and to the condemning voice of the unfeeling world! and me, meanwhile, thou cradlest to sleep amid a host of the most vapid dissipations, concealing from my knowledge her aggravated woes!—while she—she is left in hopeless wretchedness to die!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

She's not the first.

FAUST.

Dog! abominable monster!—Change him, O thou infinite Spirit! change the reptile back again into his original form—the poodle that ran before me in the twilight, now cowering at the feet of the harmless wanderer, now springing on his shoulders!—Change him again into his favourite shape, that he may crouch on his belly in the sand before me, and I may tramp him underneath my feet, the reprobate!—Not the first! Misery, misery! by no human soul to be conceived! that more than one creature of God should ever have been plunged into the depth of this woe! that the first, in the writhing agony of her death, should not have atoned for the guilt of all the rest before the eyes of the All-merciful! It digs even into the marrow of my life, the misery of this one; and thou—thou grinnest in cold composure over the wretchedness of thousands!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Here we are arrived once more at the limit of our wits, where the thread of human reason snaps in sunder. Wherefore seekest thou communion with us, unless thou would'st carry it through? Would'st fly, and yet art not proof against giddiness? Did we thrust ourselves on you, or you on us?

FAUST.

Whet not thy rows of voracious teeth at me! I loathe it!—Great and glorious Spirit, who didst condescend to reveal thyself to me, who knowest my heart and my soul, wherefore didst thou yoke me to this vilest of complices, who feeds on mischief and banquets on destruction?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Art done?

FAUST.

Deliver her! or woe thee!—the direst of curses lie on thee for ever!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I cannot loose the bonds of the avenger, nor open his bars.—Deliver her! Who was it that plunged her into ruin? I or thou?

[FAUST looks wildly round.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [continues]

Would'st grasp the thunder? 'Tis well that you, poor mortals, have it not to wield! To smash the innocent in pieces is the proper tyrant's fashion of venting one's spleen in a dilemma.

FAUST.

Bring me to her! She shall be free!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

And the danger to which thou exposest thyself! Know that the guilt of blood from thy hand still lies upon the town. Above the spot where the slain fell, avenging Spirits hover and lie in wait for the returning murderer.

FAUST.

That too from thee? Murder and death of a world on thee, thou monster! Bring me to her, I say, and deliver her!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

I'll lead thee thither, and what I can do that I will do. Mark me! Have I all power in heaven and on earth? I will cloud the wits of the warder, and thou may'st seize the keys, and bring her out with the hand of a man. I wait for you with the magic horses to ensure your escape. This I can do.

FAUST.

Up and away!

Scene IV.

Night. The open Field.

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES.
(Galloping past on black horses.)

FAUST.

What are they about there, bustling round the Ravenstone?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Can't say what they are cooking and kitchening.

FAUST.

They hover up, they hover down, bending and bowing.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

A corporation of Witches.

FAUST.

They seem to be sprinkling and blessing something.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

On! on!

Scene V.

A Prison.

FAUST, with a bundle of keys in his hand and a lamp, before an iron door.

FAUST.

A strange cold shuddering dread comes o'er me, all
The up-heaped wretchedness of time.
Here dwells she now behind this damp cold wall,
And dear delusion was her only crime!
Fear'st thou to go to her?
Tremblest to meet her eye?
Quick! thy delay but brings her death more nigh.

[He seizes the lock. Singing heard from within.

My mother, the wanton,
That choked my breath!
My father, the villain,
That dined on my death!
My sister dear,
In the cool green shade
My bones she laid;
Then was I a glad little bird in the May;
Fly away! fly away!

FAUST. [opening the door]

She dreams not that her loved one is so near,
The clinking chains and rustling straw to hear.

MARGARET. [hiding herself on the bed]

Woe, woe! they come.—To bitter death they call.

FAUST. [softly]

Hush! hush! I come to free thee from their thrall!

MARGARET. [throwing herself at his feet]

Art thou a man? feel for my hapless plight.

FAUST.

Thy cries will wake the watchers of the night!

[He takes hold of the chains to unloose them.]

MARGARET. [on her knees]

Who gave thee, hangman, such a power
To drag me from my cell at midnight hour?
Have pity on me! Be not so harsh!—so rough!
Surely to-morrow morn is soon enough. [She stands up.]
So young, so very young, am I,
And must already die!
Once I was lovely too—'twas this that caused my fall.
Near was the friend, but far from me to-day;
Torn lies the wreath, the flowers are scattered all.
Oh tear me not so forcibly away!
Spare me! what have I done to injure thee?
Oh hear my prayer! for once compassion show!—
'Tis the first time I ever looked on thee.

FAUST.

That I should live to see such depth of woe!

MARGARET.

Thou hast me now completely in thy might.
Only first give me time to suckle my sweet child.
I hugged it the whole weary night;
They took't from me in very spite;
And now they say I murdered the sweet child,
And never more shall I be glad again.
They sing songs on me, too!
A wicked thing to do!
'Tis the refrain
Of a grim old melody:
Who taught them that its words were meant for me?

FAUST. [throwing himself down]

Here, at thy feet, behold who loves thee fall,
To strike thy shackles, and to break thy thrall!

MARGARET. [falling beside him on her knees]

Yes! let us kneel and call upon the Saints!
Beneath these steps,
I hear it well!
Beneath the threshold,
Boileth Hell!
The evil One
His fury vents,
With fearful yell!

FAUST. [loud]
Gretchen! Gretchen!

MARGARET. [attentive]
That was the loved one's voice!
[She springs up; the chains fall away.]
Where is he? where? I heard him call on me,
Now I am free! and none shall hinder me!
To his neck will I fly!
On his bosom lie!
He called me his Gretchen! he stood at the door.
Through the wild howling and hissing of Hell,
Through the loud-laughing scorn and the fiendish uproar,
Came the sweet voice of love that I know so well.

FAUST.
'Tis I!

MARGARET.
'Tis thou! O say it yet again! [Clasping him.]
'Tis he! 'tis he! Where now is all my pain?
Where all my prison's woe? my fetters where?
'Tis he! he comes to lift me from this lair
Of wretchedness! I'm free, I'm free!
Already the well-known street I see,
Where the first time I spake to thee,
And the pleasant garden, where
Martha and I did wait for thee.

FAUST. [striving forward]
Come, come!

MARGARET.

O stay, stay!

Thou know'st how pleased I stay where thou dost stay.

[Caressing him.]

FAUST.

Away, away!

Unless we haste,

Dearly we'll pay for these few moments' waste.

MARGARET.

How! giv'st thou me no kiss?

My friend, so very short a space away,

And hast forgot to kiss?

Why feel I now so straitened when I hold

Thee in my arms? It was not so of old,

When from thy words and looks, a heaven of bliss

Came down; and thou didst kiss

As thou would'st smother me. Come, kiss me! kiss!

Else kiss I thee! [She embraces him.]

O woe! thy lips are cold,

Are dumb;

Where is the love thy swelling bosom bore

Whilome for me? why are thy lips so cold?

[She turns away from him.]

FAUST.

Come with me, sweet love, come!

I'll hug thee ten times closer than before,

Only come with me now! Come, I implore!

MARGARET. [turning to him]

Art thou then he? Art thou then truly he?

FAUST.

'Tis I, in truth. Come, love, and follow me.

MARGARET.

And these vile chains thou breakest,

And me again unto thy bosom takest?
How canst thou dare to turn fond eyes on me?
Know'st thou then, Henry, whom thou com'st to free?

FAUST.

Come, come! the night sinks fast; come, follow me!

MARGARET.

My mother slept a sleep profound!
I drugged her to't;
My little babe I drowned!
Was it not heaven's boon to me and thee?
Thee, too!—'tis thou! I scarce may deem
My sense speaks true. Give me thy hand!
It is no dream!
Thy dear, dear hand!
Alas! but it is wet!
Wipe it; for it is wet
With blood! O God! what hast thou done?
Put up thy sword;
I pray thee put it up.

FAUST.

Let gone be gone!
Thou stabbest me with daggers, every word.

MARGARET.

No! thou shalt survive our sorrow!
I will describe the graves to thee,
Where thou shalt bury them and me
To-morrow.
The best place thou shalt give my mother;
Close beside her lay my brother;
Me a little to the side,
But at distance not too wide!
And my child at my right breast.—
These, and none else with us shall rest!
Me on thy loving side to press,
That was a heaven of blessedness!
But now, I cannot do it more;

I feel as I must force my love to thee,
And thou didst coldly fling me back from thee;
And yet 'tis thou!—as good, as loving as before.

FAUST.

'Tis I, even I, come, sweet love, come!

MARGARET.

Out there?

FAUST.

Into the open air.

MARGARET.

 If the grave be there,
And death there waits, then come!
Hence to my eternal home,
Not a step more.—
Thou leav'st me now?—would I might go with thee?

FAUST.

Thou canst, if thou but wilt. I have unbarred the door.

MARGARET.

I may not go; no hope for me remains;
They watch me close—my home is with my chains.
It is so sad to beg from door to door;
A guilty thing from human loves outcast,
A homeless earth to wander o'er;
And they are sure to find me out at last.

FAUST.

I will protect thee.

MARGARET.

Quick! Quick!
Save thy poor child!
Away, away!
Keep the path
Up the stream,
Across the bridge,

To the left hand,
Where the plank stands,
In the pond,
Seize it, quick!
It rises up,
It kicks! it lives!
O save it, save it!

FAUST.

Only bethink thee!
One step more, and thou art free.

MARGARET.

Would we were past that mountain gray!
There sits my mother on a stone—
I feel a hand that pulls me back
As cold as clay!
There sits my mother on a stone;
Her head sways heavily;
She winks not, she nods not, her head she may not raise.
She slept so long, she never more may wake.
She slept that we might our enjoyment take.
O these were happy days!

FAUST.

Here words and prayers will only make things worse;
Come! come; or I must hale thee hence by force.

MARGARET.

Let me alone! lay no rough hands on me!
Nor with such murderous clutches seize me!
Thou know'st I have done everything to please thee.

FAUST.

The day dawns. Come, my Gretchen, follow me!

MARGARET.

Day! yes, it is day! the Judgment-day breaks in!
My marriage-day it should have been!
Let no one know thou wert before with Margaret.
Woe to my wreath!

'Tis done! oh, pain!
We will meet again;
But not at the dance.
The thronging crowds advance
With bated breath;
No word is spoken;
The squares, the streets,
Cannot contain them all.
The bell doth call,
The staff is broken,
They bind me with cords, they drag me away,
And on the bloody block me lay;
And every trembling eye doth quake
At the blade that is brandished o'er my neck.
Mute lies the world as the grave!

FAUST.

O had I ne'er been born!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [appearing from without]

Up! or no help can save!

Profitless whining, whimpering, and prating!
Meanwhile my eager steeds are waiting,
Snuffing the scent of the morning air.

MARGARET.

What's that from the floor uprising there?
'Tis he! 'Tis he! O send his hateful face
Away! What seeks he in this holy place?
He comes for me!

FAUST.

No! thou shalt live.

MARGARET.

Judgment of God! to thee my soul I give.

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to FAUST]

Come, come! else will I leave you to your fate!

MARGARET.

Thine am I, Father! O shut not the gate
Of mercy on me!
Ye angels! ye most holy Spirits! now
Encamp around me! and protect me now!
Henry, I tremble when I think on thee.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
She is judged!

VOICE. [from above]
Is saved!

MEPHISTOPHELES. [to FAUST]
Hither to me!

VOICE. [from within, dying away]
Henry! Henry!

[The End]