

You may as well give up the task:
 Heavy as lead these feet of mine
 Are grown.—[Turning towards the table.] We've lost our
 well of wine.

Sie. All was deception—trick—design!

Fro. Yet, what I drank, I thought was wine!

Bran. The ripe grapes too—did they deceive?
 Who after this can but believe?

VI

WITCH'S KITCHEN

On a low hearth a large caldron is on the fire—in the thick smoke are discovered several strange figures. A FEMALE CAT-APE (little long-tailed monkey) is sitting beside the caldron, to skim it, and take care it does not boil over. THE MALE CAT-APE, with the young ones, sits near, warming himself;—fantastic articles of furniture, suitable to the place, seen hanging from the walls, &c.

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES

Faust. This senseless witchcraft sickens and disgusts me—

And, sayest thou that I shall recruit life's powers,
 Here, in this loathsome den of filthy madness?—
 Shall I petition an old hag for counsel?
 And can the nauseous puddle of that pot
 Make me a younger man by thirty winters?
 There's little hope if thou hast nothing better—
 My expectation is already gone!
 —Is there in Nature no restorative
 But this? Has Spirit never yet devised
 Means different to restore the spring of life?

Meph. Now do I recognize my friend's good sense;—
 Yes! there are also natural means, by which
 Life's bloom and vigour may again be given;
 But in a different book this lesson lies,
 And it forms an odd chapter.

Faust. I will learn it.

Meph. There is a means, and it requires not gold,
 Magic, or medicine ;—away with you
 Into the fields—begin to hew and delve—
 Confine yourself, and limit every wish
 Within a narrow circle—feed upon
 Meats, simple, undisguised—and live, in short,
 Beast-like, 'mong beasts—deem it no degradation
 Thyself to spread the dung upon the field
 The growth of which thou art to reap—this is
 Indeed the best way to repair life's powers,
 And wear at eighty a hale countenance.

Faust. This cannot be—I am not used to it—
 Nor can I learn to take up now the spade—
 Such narrow life would never do for me.

Meph. We must recur then to the witch.

Faust.

Why so ?

—What's the particular use of an old hag
 In the matter ? Can't you cook the draught yourself ?

Meph. That were a pretty waste of time—why, man,
 A thousand bridges might be built, before
 'Tis done—it asks not skill and science only,
 But patience must brood over it—the spirit
 In silence must remain for years fermenting ;
 Time, and time only, clears and strengthens it,—
 All things belonging to it are mysterious—
 Its powers and its ingredients wonderful—
 True—'twas the devil that first invented it,
 But yet the devil can't make it—look—look, yonder—
 What a handsome crew they are—both maid and man.—
 [*To the APES.*] It seems the mistress is from home.

The Apes. Gone from home—to the rout,
 Through the chimney she went out ;
 Gone to carouse
 On the chimney stone on the top of the house !

Meph. Will she stay
 Long away ?

Apes. 'Twixt the time she comes and goes,
 We can scarcely warm our toes.

Meph. What think you of these dear young creatures ?

Faust. All makes me sick—voice, form, and features !

Meph. Well, I must own, I greatly relish
 The graces which their style embellish. [*To the APES*
 Tell me, execrable baby,

What the mess yon mingle may be—
And the lumps, my pretty jewel!
That are floating in the gruel.

Apes. A beggar's dish—we boil and stew it.

Meph. And most men, without knowing, chew it.

Old Ape [*fawning upon MEPHISTOPHELES*]. Throw the
dice—begin, begin—

I am poor, so let me win—
Me to win, and you to lose,
Is the way that I would choose—
Money's all in all;—the witch
Is made honest, if made rich.
Give me gold, and by that rule,
Who will say I am a fool?

Meph. As the Ape talks of gold, see his lips growing
watery,

I wish we could get him a share in the Lottery.

The Old Ape [*while the young cat-apes are playing and
rolling round a large bowl*].

Such is the world!
So is it twirled,
Now rolling onward,
Now rolling downward,
Ceaselessly, restlessly,
Still does it spin;
Like glass it is brittle,
And broken by little,
Glimmering, shimmering,
Hollow within—

Living am I—

Stop, my dear son,
Thy sporting have done,
Think thou must die!

All is clay,
And must crumble away!

Meph. What's the purpose of the sieve?

Ape. If a man comes here to thieve,
With this eye-glass thus we view him;
Raise it thus, and thus look through him.

[*Runs to the FEMALE, and makes her look through it
at MEPHISTOPHELES*

Through the sieve look there—look strait—
Read his features—read his fate.

Answer, if thou art not deaf—
Dost thou know him—the old thief?
Dost thou dread, from fear or shame,
To name him by his proper name?

Meph. And what's the meaning of the pot?

Ape. How silly a sot,
To ask what's what;
The fool knows not
The use of the pot—
The use of the kettle—

Meph. Unmannerly wittol,
Be quiet a little.

Ape. Be brisk—take the whisk,—and sit down on the
settle. [*Forces MEPHISTOPHELES to sit down*

Faust [*who has been all this time before a glass, now
approaching, and now standing off from it*]. What is
this that I see—how heavenly fair

The form that shines in this enchanted glass!
Oh! lend me, Love, thy swift and silent wings,
That I may fly away to where she is!
Near me she seems, yet hopelessly removed,
And living in another atmosphere!
Alas! if from this spot I do but stir,
If I but venture to approach more near,
There seems a dusky cloud to gather o'er her;—
Image of woman, beyond woman fair,
Oh! beautiful transcendently—has Earth
Charms such as this—in that reclining form,
Say rather that all charms of many heavens
United are.—Can this indeed be woman?
Can this, indeed, be a created being?

Meph. Fine cause of wonderment!—after seven days
Of work, if he who made this pretty world,
And who admired his workmanship, made something,
Worth looking at! Ay, gaze on her in rapture—
This, by the way, is one of these same treasures
That I am pretty safe in promising:
Blessed the man who brings the fair bride home!

[*FAUST continues looking into the glass.—MEPHIS-
TOPHELES, lolling on the settle, and with the whisk
in his hand, continues speaking*

Here on my kingly throne I sit me down,
With sceptre too—I only want a crown.

The Apes [who have been playing all kind of fantastic gambols, bring MEPHISTOPHELES a crown with loud acclamations].

Monarch proud—

With sweat and blood

Smear it—wear it—

[They handle the crown awkwardly, and break it in two pieces, with which they go dancing about

'Tis done—'twas to be ;

We speak and we see—

We hearken—we listen—

We rhyme and we reason.

Faust [still before the glass]. Alas ! I feel my senses leaving me.

Meph. And stranger still, even my head's growing giddy !

Apes. We have words, and we can link

Syllables that chime and chink ;

Sense unsought—thus is caught ;—

Every jingle is a thought—

Every word with meaning fraught—

Language, glib and random, thus

Does the work of thought for us ;

Let but your own fancy mingle

With the jargon and the jingle,

As you listen to the lays ;

Bring the meaning you are gleaning,

Give the poet all the praise.

Faust [as before]. My heart's on fire—let us depart.

Meph. This is the true poetic art—

And I have never met with prettier poets,

Could they but keep the secrets of their trade.

[The caldron, which the FEMALE CAT-APE has forgotten to attend to, begins to boil over—a great blaze arises, and streams up the chimney.—THE WITCH comes down through the flame with horrid screams

The Witch. Ou ! Ou ! Ou ! Ou !

Damned beast ! cursed sow !—

The pot has boiled over—the broth's overturned,

The liquor is lost, and the Mistress is burned !

Damned beast—

And what is this ?

[Seeing FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES

And who are ye ?

What brings ye here ?

Who sent ye here?
 May fiery pain
 Burn bone and brain!

[Dips the skimming ladle in the caldron, and sprinkles the flames at FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and the cat-apes—the apes whine

Meph. [flourishes the fan, and breaks pots and glasses].

Broken, broken!
 Hell-broth splashing,
 Glasses crashing,
 Payment for the words you've spoken!
 It is all in sport, my honey!
 Nothing but a frolic funny!
 Keeping time, old carrion odious,
 Fitly with thy voice melodious!

[The WITCH steps back with rage and astonishment

Knowest thou no more than that o' me,
 Thou raw-boned old Anatomy!
 Skeleton! the devil blast her!
 —Know you not your Lord and Master?
 Shall I dash the old deceiver's
 Bones into a thousand shivers?
 Smash her, and cats, and crocks together?
 —Know ye not my vest's red leather?
 Know ye not the cock-tail feather?
 What mask is there upon my features,
 To hide me thus from my own creatures?
 And am I called upon to mention
 My name, my rank, and my pretension?

The Witch. Pardon, my Lord, this rough salute;
 I do not see the cloven foot,—
 And where are your two ravens?—Where—

Meph. Enough, old fool,—for once I spare;—
 'Tis long since we have met, and strange
 Has been, in such a time, the change—
 The world's grown wise—in every movement
 Is seen the Spirit of Improvement;
 Reform to every thing extended—
 Among the rest the devil is mended;
 For court has left his wildernesses,
 Thrown off his ancient savage dresses;
 The curling tail and talons horrid,
 And horns to guard the wrinkled forehead.

All gone—the northern phantom's vanished,
 By modern education banished!
 —As to the foot—against my will,
 I bear that witness with me still;
 'Twould injure me in the good graces
 Of some who figure in high places;
 So, what I can, I do to hide it,
 And for the purpose, am provided
 With padded calves—and thus am able
 To limp no more than's fashionable—
 Many young men, that I might mention,
 Avail themselves of the invention.

The Witch. Satan again—my own old boy,
 Once more with me!—I'll die with joy.

Meph. Woman, that name—I beg to be excused—
 Call me not so again.

The Witch. And why? and wherefore? what the mis-
 chief ails
 The good old name?

Meph. It has been too much used,
 And sounds like something in the fairy tales;
 Is so familiar, that men deem it fable;
 Men believe nothing now above the level
 Of every-day experience—they are able
 To disprove all things;—don't believe a letter
 That speaks of me,—are they for this the better?
 —Devils that they are, they don't believe a devil!
 Call me Lord Baron—no one can object
 To that, or some such title of respect.
 I am a cavalier, as good
 As any—am of ancient blood;
 Look at my scutcheon, all who doubt it—
 See here—I never go without it.

[*Struts about with pompous gestures*

The Witch [*laughing immoderately*]. Ha! ha!—this is
 so like you—is so clever—
 You're, after all, the same gay rascal ever!

Meph. [*to FAUST*]. This, every day's experience teaches
 Is the true way to deal with witches.

The Witch. What, gentlemen, would you desire
 To drink?

Meph. I thank you—we require
 A bumper—one will be enough—

Of—you know well the right old stuff.

Give us the oldest you have here.

[*To FAUST.*] Its strength is doubled every year!

The Witch. Most willingly—you need not ask
A second time—here is a flask.

I taste myself, now and again—

You'll not find any smell remain.

Here—take a dram—but if I give it

To him—you know he can't outlive it

An hour, unless some charm protect

His life from the assured effect.

Meph. He is a friend, 'twill do him good—

Thrives like yourself on witches' food—

There's nothing you can give that is

Too strong for such a stomach as his.

Come—chalk your circle—chant your charm—

Fill high the cup, 'twill do no harm.

[*The WITCH, with extraordinary gestures, describes a circle, and places strange things within it. Meantime the glasses begin to chime and ring; the caldron to sound and make music. Lastly, she brings a great book, places the cat-apes within the circle; one is made to serve her for a reading-desk, others hold torches. She signs to FAUST to approach*

Faust [*to MEPHISTOPHELES*]. No, no! I'm sick of the
whole scene!

What good is it? what can it mean?

These raving gestures? and this rapid

Torrent of nonsense? filthy—vapid

And loathsome cheat.—I've seen such stuff

Before; and hated it enough!

Meph. 'Tis pure professional farce—mere fudge—

You should not be so hard a judge!

She is but acting the physician;

This hocus-pocus exhibition

Assists the cure—makes the draught operate

With good effect, and at the proper rate.

[*She makes FAUST enter the circle*

The Witch [*with a strong emphasis, begins to declaim from the book*].

Understand me let all men!

Of one make ten,

Let two go then:

Bid three
 Now be
 The square of three ;
 Thus the witch
 Makes you rich :
 Drop four
 From your score :
 From five and six
 You should fix
 To take seven and eight away,
 Then all is clear as day.
 And nine is one,
 And ten is none,
 This is the witch's one-times-one.

Faust. She seems in earnest, old deceiver !
 —How like the ravings of a fever !

Meph. There is an endless volume of this stuff—
 I ought to know it—I've lost time enough
 Puzzling it out—for downright contradiction
 Is, to the wise and fools, an equal mystery.
 My friend, in the old almanack of history,
 You'll find such jumbles made of fact and fiction ;
 And by the help of this, or some such juggle,
 Errors spread wide ;—truth suffers in the struggle.
 Doctrines are lisped by infants ; taught in schools,
 And are believed : for who contends with fools ?
 To customary words men still will link
 Their faith—poor dolts—imagining they think !

The Witch. The height, the might,
 Of wisdom's light,

The knowledge from the wide world hidden,

Cheers humblest minds :

Who seeks not finds :

The welcome guest is the unbidden.

Faust. This nonsense, so like meaning, splits
 My skull. I soon would lose my wits :
 Methinks, a million fools in choir
 Are raving and will never tire.

Meph. Enough ! enough ! incomparable sibyl !
 Hand us the drink—fill the cup to the brim—
 No thimblefuls for us—no niggard dribble—
 Fear not—such draught will never injure him,
 He is one of us, and of the highest grade :

Has drunk deep before now—be not afraid!

[*The WITCH, with many ceremonies, pours the drink into a cup: as FAUST raises it to his mouth, a light flame rises*

Off with it fast—why should you fear it?

—Once down, 'twill warm your heart and cheer it.

How's this? *my friend*, and much the same

As one of us—afraid of flame?

[*The WITCH dissolves the circle. FAUST steps out*

Meph. [to FAUST]. Now! out at once! you must not rest!

Witch [to FAUST]. Much good may it do! [*Aside.*] I hope the best!

Meph. [to the WITCH]. If I can serve you, sure you might

Command me, on Walpurgis night.

The Witch. Here is a song—a pretty glee.

Hum it a few times,—you will see

Some merit in it, and effect

More than you would at first expect.

Meph. [to FAUST]. Come, quick! be for the present guided:

This draught will do you good, provided

It gets fair play; but it requires

Brisk motion till the frame perspires,

And its full force is felt to dart

At once through each and every part.

And then, not sooner, will I teach

What joys the lazy hand can reach,

Of indolent voluptuousness.

The pleasures that our nobles bless;—

Soon in thy cheery heart, I trow,

Will Cupid rock him to and fro.

Already the young urchin lurks

Within, and in the spirit works.

Faust. Once more!—one other look into the glass!—

Fair form—too fair more than a form to be!

Meph. Come! come! no form the beauties can surpass,

That soon in living woman thou shalt see!

With this draught in him he will meet

[*Aside*

A Helena in every street!

VII

THE STREET

FAUST. MARGARET *passing by*

Faust. Fair lady, may I offer you my arm ;
And will you suffer me to see you home ?

Marg. I am no lady—and I am not fair,
I want no guide to show me the way home.

[*Disengages herself, and exit*

Faust. By Heaven, she is a lovely child ;
A fairer never met my eye,
Modest she seems, and good and mild,

Though something pert was her reply—
The red lips bright—the cheek's soft light—
My youth hath not departed quite !
She passed, her timid eyes declining,
Deep in my heart they still are shining—
And her light spirits' lively play
Hath stolen me from myself away !

MEPHISTOPHELES *enters*

Faust. Hearken here, sir, get me the girl ; and fast.

Meph. The girl !—what girl ?

Faust. She that this moment passed.

Meph. What—she ? she was but now at church
At her confession—I was there.

And, hid by the confession chair,
Was listening to her from my lurch.

Poor thing—she is all innocence—
Had nothing in the world to tell !

With such to meddle is not well.

Her purity is a defence,
That leaves the tempter no pretence.

Upon this child I have no power.

Faust. She's passed fourteen, if she's an hour !

Meph. Could Liederlich be worse than this ?
The profligate, whose folly is,
To think each flower of beauty his.
Calls it a purchasable trifle,
And every charm he sees would rifle ;
Thinks truth and honour but a name—
My friend, give up this hopeless game.

Faust. Sound doctrine this, most reverend,
I hope your sermon's at an end :
Now, once for all, conceited fellow,
I am determined on't, and tell you,
She must, this very night, be mine :
You and I part, if you decline.

Meph. Compose yourself—be reasonable—
If in a fortnight I be able
To make out opportunities !

Faust. A fortnight ! give me but seven hours !
I want no devil to help me then,
And ask no aid from any powers
But those belonging to all men,
To fool a child like this with ease,
And make her anything I please.

Meph. How like a Frenchman ! I regret
To see you discontented ; yet
Why thus impatient ? the delight
Is, after all, less exquisite,
Than when with some delay and doubt,
And difficulty fenced about,
You win the treasure guarded long ;
Play with the pretty thing awhile,
And toy and trifle and beguile,
And to your will the soft wax mould,—
As witness many a story told,
Of true love in Italian song.

Faust. But, fortunately, I require
No such incentives to desire.

Meph. Now, not to take or give offence,
Believe me, here all violence
Is useless—in a little while
The damsel may be won by guile ;—
A stratagem, perhaps, may gain
The fortress—storming it were vain !

Faust. Give me, meanwhile, some little thing

Of hers—a garter or a ring—
A kerchief from her snowy breast—
Show me the chamber of her rest!

Meph. To prove how sensibly I feel
Your pangs, and, if I could, to heal;
I gratify, without delay,
Your wish, and take you there to-day.

Faust. And shall I see her? have her?

Meph. No!

She to a neighbour's has to go,
And when I find that she is gone,
You may indulge yourself alone;
Breathe in the very room where she
Hath slept, and dream of joys to be.

Faust. May we go now?

Meph. It scarce were pleasant
So early.

Faust. Make me out some present.

Meph. Presents so soon! this promises
Speedy success—they all love dress!
Oh, I know many a place of pleasure,
Where such things are, and many a treasure
Buried of old, and soon will find
Some lure to win the young thing's mind.

VIII

EVENING

A NEAT LITTLE ROOM

Margaret. I would give something now to know
The gentleman who met me, though;
He had a proud and princely air,
Is one of the nobility;
Look on his brow, you read it there,
And if he were not, he would stare
With somewhat more civility. [Exit

MEPHISTOPHELES *and* FAUST

Meph. Come in—tread softly—but come in.

Faust [*after a pause*]. Leave me, now leave me, I entreat.

Meph. [*prying about*]. The place is tidy and quite clean ;
—Not every damsel's is so neat. [*Exit*

Faust [*looking round*]. How calm ! how happy dwells
the tender light

In this still sanctuary reposing here,
And the sweet spirit of peace pervading all,
And blessing all.—Spirit of peace and love,
I give myself to thee ! Oh, love, whose breath
Is fed on the delicious dew of hope,
Be thou henceforth my life !

How round us breathe

In every thing the same prevailing quiet
And neatness, and the feeling of contentment !
—In low estate what more than riches are,
And this poor cell how very, very happy !

[*He throws himself on the leathern arm-chair beside the bed*
Receive me, thou who hast with open arm,
Year after year, the generations gone
Welcomed in joy and grief : how many a swarm
Of children round this patriarchal throne
Gathering have clung—perhaps beside this seat
A happy child—I well can fancy it—
Even now she scarce is more—on Christmas eve
My love has bent her at her grandsire's feet ;
'Mong the good children each year to receive
The gifts that heaven's dear child comes down to give.
Kissing the good old man I see her stand,
Her young round cheeks pressed on his withered hand.

The spirit of contentment, maiden dear,
Is breathing in thy very atmosphere ;
I feel it sway me while I linger here.
The sense of neatness, felt in every thing,
Speaks with a mother's voice, and bids thee spread
The little table with its covering,
The floor with crisp sand crackling to the tread.
Every where round the hand beloved I trace,
That makes a paradise of any place.

Here could I linger hours on hours,
 Where dreams and meditative thought,
 And, Nature, thy benignant powers
 Within her virgin bosom wrought,
 As day by day each influence pure,
 Of heaven and earth her heart mature,
 And fain would welcome forth, and win
 To light, the angel from within.

[*He lifts one of the bed-curtains*

Here lay the slumbering child, her tender breast
 Filled with the warmth of happy life; and here
 The heavenly image, on the soul imprest,
 Came out, as clouds past off, divinely clear.

And thou? what brings thee hither now?
 In this mad moment what art thou?
 These softenings of the heart! and then
 This rage of wild desire again!
 Poor Faust! has some magic cloud
 Befooled thine eyes? thy reason bowed?
 Else why this burning passion strange?
 And why to love this sudden change?
 Are we the sport of every breath of air?

And, should she now return and meet
 Thee here, how would the boaster shrink
 Into the coward! at her feet
 In what confusion sink!

Meph. [*entering*]. Away—I see her at the door.

Faust. I go, and I return no more.

Meph. This casket, with its jewels rare,
 I got it—but no matter where—
 Or—what was to be given instead,—
 Some things are better left unsaid;—
 Quick—put it in the press—'twill seize on
 Her fancy—lull asleep her reason;
 Then, guess you, how the dream will end.
 I got them for another friend:
 The casket and the trifles in it
 He thought might buy a happy minute;
 And he was one who knew the fashion
 In which to woo, and woman's passion;

But child is child, and maid and lover
Play the same game the wide world over.

Faust. I know not; ought I?

Meph.

Can you ask it?

Perhaps you wish to keep the casket;
If so—and that 'tis avarice—
I wish you joy of this cheap vice
I'm glad the momentary bubble
Of love has burst—it saves me trouble;
And easier pastimes you may find
Than practising upon her mind.
My poor brain scarcely understands
What you are at—I rub my hands
And scratch my head.

[*Places the casket in the press, and closes the lock*
Come—come—what do you mean? the object is
To wind this sweet young child to your wish and will.
And now—as I live—you're looking starched and chill,
As if you were going up to your lecture-chair
With Physics in the body standing there,
And Metaphysica in her grey hair.
Come! come!

[*Exeunt*

Enter MARGARET, with a lamp

Marg. It feels so close, so sultry here,
Yet out of doors I thought it chill.
—When will my mother come? A thrill
Runs through my frame—I am, I fear,
A foolish, foolish woman.

[*She begins to sing as she undresses herself*

There was a king in Thulé,
And he loved an humble maid;
And she who loved him truly,
When she came to her death-bed,

A golden cup she gave him,
Which none could better prize;
And ever, as he drank of it,
Tears dimmed his flowing eyes.

And when he came to die,
To his heirs his wealth he told;
Left all without a sigh
But his mistress' cup of gold.

As at the royal banquet
 Among his knights sate he,
 In the high hall of his fathers,
 In their fortress o'er the sea,

Up stood the gay old monarch ;
 For the last time up he stood ;
 For the last time drained the blessed cup,
 And threw it in the flood.

He saw it falling, filling,
 And sinking in the sea ;
 His eyes lost sight of it, and sank,
 And never more drank he.

*[She opens the press to put in her clothes, and
 perceives the casket*

How came this brilliant casket here ?
 I locked the press, I'd almost swear.
 The cover's beautiful—I wonder
 What it may be that lies under ?
 Some pledge for money by my mother
 Lent to somebody or other.
 I think I'll open it—and, see,
 Attached to it, and tempting me,
 A riband with a little key.
 How very beautiful it is !
 I've never seen the like of this !
 Jewels and pearls !—At mask or ball
 'Twould grace the proudest dame of all
 Who glitter at high festival.
 I wonder how 'twould look on me ?
 Whose can the glorious splendour be ?

[She puts on the jewellery, and stands before the mirror

Oh, if I had these ear-rings only !
 Drest thus, I seem a different creature !
 What good are charms of form and feature
 Though poor maids are
 Both mild and fair,
 The world for ever leaves them lonely—
 Man may praise,
 Yet half he says
 Seems less like kindness than compassion—
 For gold he strives,
 For gold he wives—
 Alas ! the *poor* are not in fashion !

IX

PROMENADE

FAUST *walking up and down in thought.* To him

MEPHISTOPHELES

Meph. By Love, which I contemn, and Hell's
Essence of fire—things can't be worse :
Oh, that I could be something else
Than what I am, that I might curse !

Faust. What ails thee now ? What pinches thee so sore ?
A face like that I never saw before.

Meph. I'd damn myself to everlasting evil,
But that I am myself the devil.

Faust. This frantic scene—what can it mean ?

Meph. Think, only think, that splendid set
Of pearls, I got for Margaret,
A priest has made his own of them.
Her mother, soon as she detected
The treasure, something wrong suspected.
The old hag o'er her book of prayer
Sits moping, mumbling, grumbling there.

Or, for she has a fine sharp nose,
Through the house prowling, prying goes,
On the scent to ascertain,
For the smell decides right well

What is holy, what profane,
She snuffed at the chain and gem,
Found not the smell she likes in them.

"My child," she said, "things thus unholy,
Or suited not for one so lowly,
Will seize and fasten on the heart,
And hold it till health, peace, depart.

To the Virgin Mary bring
These in humble offering ;—
Sinful things of earth we give,

And receive from Heaven, instead,
Heaven's own food restorative,
That our precious souls may live

Fed on manna—angels' bread!"

At this poor Madge looked far from pleasant,
Provoked at having lost the present:

Why, thought she, is the gift rejected?

Or he, who gave it me, suspected?

The giver is a rich man—must

Be generous—and therefore just

And good—and why should we distrust?

The mother strait sends for the priest;

He comes, and he enjoys the jest.

His features brighten up with rapture,

And thus he preaches o'er his capture:—

"You feel the matter right, dear madam;

These pearls—'twere wrong the poor child had 'em:

To them who strive is grace accorded,

And he who conquers is rewarded.

The Church will feel (we cannot question)

No difficulty of digestion;

Will swallow without fear of surfeit

The ill-got goods that sin makes forfeit;

Whole realms, their produce and their profit,

She eats up, and thinks nothing of it:

The Church alone, with conscience quiet,

Can thrive upon this doubtful diet."

Faust. That this is false each day evinces,
Or true as well of Jews and princes.

Meph. On this, he swept into his pocket

Ear-rings and bracelet, chain and locket,

And made no more of pearls and casket,

Than if he pocketed a basket

Of nuts,—then treats them with a lecture

On vanity,—states his conjecture

Upon the uses of affliction,

And leaves them with his benediction.

Faust. And Margaret——

Meph.

Sits in restless mood—

Does nothing—knows not what she should—

Thinks night and day on what she lost,

But dwells on him who gave them most.

Faust. Poor thing! her grief goes to my heart!

Bring more gems—come—come—no delay—
The first, coarse common things were they.

Meph. [*in affected vexation*]. Mere trinkets flung in sport
away!

—My toil is nothing, nor the value
Of what I give!—

Faust. Be silent, shall you
Thus mock at me and my affection?
Act for my ends, by my direction.
Court thou the widow—tax invention
For sweet things—draw off her attention—
Come—come—you're dull as water-gruel,—
Up—up—away for chain and jewel!

Meph. My lord, I cheerfully obey. [Exit FAUST

How a man fooled with love will fling away
Sun, stars, earth, heaven, upon the chosen lady—
All cheap as presents to a child on May-day! [Exit

X

THE NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE

MARTHA (*alone*)

Martha. God help and pity me, and pardon
My poor old man! he treats me badly;—
Thus to go off—'tis very hard on
A wedded wife,—here pining sadly
Am I upon my lonely straw.
I loved and doted on him so,
His very will to me was law;
And for no reason thus to go
And die abroad [*weeping*]
—he must have died—
Yet 'twould be satisfactory
If I could have it certified.

Enter MARGARET

Marg. Martha.

Mar. My little Margery!
Sweet child, what can the matter be?

Marg. My knees are sinking under me.

I've found another casket, one
 Like that so lately had and gone,
 Laid in my press—of ebony—
 The rings and jewels in it are
 More brilliant than the former far.

Mar. Your mother must not hear it, though,
 Or straightway to the priest they go.

Marg. Look at them, only look at them.

Mar. Fortunate girl.

Marg. Alas, one gem
 I cannot—can I?—ever dare
 Put on in church or anywhere.

Mar. Come here as often as you please,
 And try them on where no one sees :
 Before the glass be whole hours spent
 Adjusting every ornament.
 We will enjoy their full effect,
 With none your secret to suspect ;
 Then as occasions come, a ball,
 A dance, a day of festival,
 We let them one by one appear—
 A chain, a pearl-drop in the ear—
 And coin some story or another
 To keep the matter from your mother.

Marg. Twice to have had such caskets brought,
 There's something in it more than ought ! [A knock
 Good God ! my mother ! I'll be seen.

Mar. 'Tis a strange gentleman.—Come in.

MEPHISTOPHELES enters

Meph. I've come unceremoniously ;
 But, ladies, you will pardon me.

[Retreats respectfully before MARGARET
 To Martha Schwerdtlein was my visit :
 I'm told this is her lodging. Is it ?

Mar. Sir, I'm the person. What's your pleasure ?

Meph. I'll call when you are more at leisure :
 You have a guest of consequence ;
 I'll call again in three hours hence.

Mar. [to *Marg.*]. The funniest thing I ever knew—
 The gentleman imagined you
 To be some lady of high rank.
 I can't but laugh.

Marg. I have to thank
The gentleman's extreme good nature.
I am a poor young humble creature :
These ornaments are not my own.

Meph. I did not judge by them alone ;
'Tis something in your mien and glance.
My visit was a lucky chance.

Mar. [*aside*]. To know what brings him, I am dying.

Meph. I wish I had news more gratifying ;
But blame me not, though sad it prove.
Your husband's dead, and sends his love.

Mar. Is dead ! the faithful creature dead !
My husband—would 'twere I instead.

Marg. Friend, let thy strong good sense prevail
O'er grief—

Meph. And hear the sad detail.

Marg. I fear at all to think of love,
Such loss my certain death would prove.

Meph. Grief waits on joy—joy follows grief.

Mar. Tell on ; it will be some relief.

Meph. In Padua, at St. Anthony's,
In consecrated earth he lies !
A cool bed under the church floor,
Where he sleeps soundly.

Mar. Nothing more ?

Meph. Oh, yes ! a death-bed legacy :
His last commission was to thee,
To have three hundred masses said,
With requiem service for the dead.
His last was a religious thought :
This is the whole of what I brought.

Mar. What, not a coin, no trinket token,
Nothing to soothe his poor heart-broken ?
Why, the most paltry artisan,
The veriest wretch in form of man,
Some small memorial still will hoard,
Some little pledge in secret stored,
To show his love is not forgot—
Will starve—will beg—but parts it not !

Meph. Madam, I'm sorry for his blindness
To the true value of your kindness :
'Tis your mistake, to think he squandered
His money—as he died, he pondered

The past—and, as his heart relented,
His sins and his bad luck repented.

Marg. Unhappy men! I weep for them!
He shall not want my requiem!

Meph. The sweet child! what a tender touch of
True feeling! that's the girl for me—
I take it you deserve to be
Out of hand married, and made much of.

Marg. Time long enough 'twill be till then.

Meph. You'll find admirers 'mong the men:
A husband in due course, no doubt,
I'll see to bring it soon about,
And if not married out and out,
With a gallant we can mayhap
Fill up as pleasantly the gap.

Marg. 'Tis not the custom of the place.

Meph. Custom or not, it is the case.

Mar. Tell on.

Meph. I stood at his bedside;
The rotting straw on which he died,
—Something less foul than dung, not much,
Infectious to the smell and touch.—
He died a Christian, and in debt,
Settled his scores with Heaven;—the trifle
Due at the wine-shop, is due yet.

“Alas,” said he, “I used my wife ill.—
Would die at peace, did she forgive.”

Mar. Poor man! I long ago forgave.

Meph. “But 'twas her folly, as I live.”

Mar. What! standing on the very grave
Did he say this? assert this lie?
And did he tell you it was I,
I who was wrong?—

Meph. He did: but out
The truth has come, and leaves no doubt,
He lied: your very countenance
Decides the matter at a glance!—
“Mine was hard work, you may conjecture,
(Thus ran his peevish death-bed lecture),
First, all her children to be fed;
And while I toiled to make them bread,
Not let to eat my crust in peace.”

Mar. What, will his slanders never cease?

Love, Honour, Truth, forgotten quite ;
Our tenderesses day and night.

Meph. Not so : he thought of you with great affection.
“ As I,” said he, “ was late from Malta sailing,
I found myself in prayer ; a sudden rapture,
Following a burst of tender recollection
Of wife and children, and the prayer prevailing
Was heard on high. That day we made a capture ;
A Turkish vessel laden with rich treasure
For the great sultan : ’twas a gallant fight,
And valour triumphed, and was well rewarded :
And when they came the shares of each to measure,
I got, to say the least of it, my right.”

Mar. What ? how ? a prize ? think you, he buried it ?

Meph. Who knows where heaven’s four winds have scattered it ?

Bury it ?—no, his heart was far from sordid ;
That his death proves, his generous nature hurried it.
A lady, one of your nice Neapolitans,
As he was loitering in their pleasant city,
Looked on his loneliness, kind soul, with pity,
And saw his vanity—and soothed and flattered it—
Fastened upon him, led him such a jolly dance,
That with his cash, and him, all was soon over.
Marks of affection, too, she gave her lover,
Of such a kind, that to the blessed hour
In which your poor saint died, he felt their power.

Mar. Scoundrel, to use his wife and children so !
Ought not the poverty, which his neglect
Had heaped on us, his shameless course have checked ?

Meph. It ought ; and he is punished for it now :
But as this will not mend the case
I would, if I were in your place,
Put on my mourning, keep a good eye out,
And wed again, when the year came about.

Mar. Where could I find, in this wide world of men,
Any thing like my own poor man again ?
There could not be a creature kinder, fonder ;
His only fault was, he from home would wander ;
And when I think of him, my eyes are swimming ;
He was so good, without a single vice,
Except his taste for foreign wines and women ;
And the society they bring—and dice.

Meph. Well! if on his side he had only made Allowances as just and generous,
Your quarrels had been easily allayed.
Why, I myself—if you indulge me thus—
With such good sense—in a few little things—
Am tempted to propose exchanging rings.

Mar. Oh, sir, you are a pleasant gentleman:—
Sure you were speaking but in jest.

Meph. [*aside*]. I'd best be off: this vile old pest
Has her brains turned already with the plan
Of marrying me at once outright!
My only safety is in flight.
Damn her! she'll keep the devil to his word. [*To MARGARET*
How goes it with your heart?

Marg. What means my lord?

Meph. [*as if to himself*].—The good sweet innocent
child! [*aloud*]. Ladies, farewell!

Marg. Farewell!

Mar. Sir! sir! don't leave us till you tell
One little matter more: I want a witness
To prove his death and burial—how—when—where—
Formally proved; and you will see the fitness
Of having it on record—'twould be pleasant
To have it in the papers of the week.

Meph. "At the mouth of two witnesses the matter
Shall be established."—By good luck, at present
There's one in town, who to the fact can speak—
A man of character and high condition.
He'll make the necessary deposition—
I'll bring him in the evening.

Mar. Don't be later.

Meph. And this young woman—shall we find her here?
She will so please him—nay, I do not flatter;—
A fine young man—has travelled far and near—
Is so admired—and so admires the sex,
And has so true a feeling of decorum.

Marg. I feel afraid—to meet him would perplex
And so confuse—I'd blush to death before him.

Meph. Were he a king—should it be thus?

Mar. The garden, then, behind my house—
We shall expect both gentlemen
This evening there—farewell till then.

XI

THE STREET

FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES

Faust. How fare you? goes it swimmingly on and swift?

Meph. Hurrah! my friend—I'm glad to see your heart On fire—she shall be yours in less than no time: This evening, we all meet at Neighbour Martha's. Of all the women that I ever saw She is the veriest gipsy—is the one To mould his Margaret to the doctor's purpose.

Faust. All promises well so far.

Meph. But we are asked For something in return.

Faust. That's reasonable— As one good turn, they say, deserves another.

Meph. We are only asked to make a deposition, In proper form, that her dead husband's bones Are lying decently interred in Padua, Quietly resting there in holy ground.

Faust. Mighty fine doings! what a pretty jaunt You have contrived for us!

Meph. *Sancta simplicitas!* Why should we go? we are asked but to make oath— This may be done without the toil of travel, Or trouble of any kind.

Faust. Is this your plan? If you have nothing better to propose, The scheme is at an end.

Meph. Oh, holy man! Is it there you are now? Doctor, is this your scruple? Is this the first time in your life that you Have borne false witness? have you lectured on God—and the world—and all that moves therein— On Man—and on "how thought originates,"

And that enigma, man's mysterious nature,
The intellectual and the moral powers—
Have you not dealt in formal definitions,
With forehead unabashed, and heart undaunted?
Yet, if you did but own the truth, your conscience
Must tell you—does it not?—you know no more
Of all these matters than of Schwerdtlein's death.

Faust. Thou art, and wert, and thou wilt ever be
A liar and sophist.

Meph. Yes; if by appearances
Only you judge; you, a philosopher,
Should look a little deeper—you yourself,
Ere two days pass—will you not?—all in honour,
As you would call it—fool this poor child's fancy,
And swear,—your casuistry will then be silent—
How from your soul you love her—love her ever.

Faust. Yes, and such oath is true—

Meph. —As any other;—
And then of everlasting faith and love
Will be the talk,—of all-absorbing passion—
Of the one feeling—felt but once—for one:
Will this, too, be a language that the heart
Can recognize as true?

Faust. Peace, fiend! it will,
If that I feel, and if for the emotion—
The frenzy call it, rather—I still seek
A name and can find none—if through the world
My fancy ranging seeks analogies
That are, and ever must remain, imperfect—
If words that speak of time be insufficient
Even feebly to express this burning feeling,
And that, thus forced, I call it endless—deathless—
Eternal—yes, eternal—say you that
Language like this is a Satanic lie?

Meph. Yet I am right.

Faust. Hark ye—take this with you—
I'll spare my lungs, and cease to argue further—
But, as I said, take this with you;—no matter
What side a man adopts, or of what subject—
If he has but a tongue, he'll not want reasons
To prove him in the right: as now, for instance;—
I'm tired of talk—you then are in the right—
You must be, sure, I have no help for it.

XII

THE GARDEN

MARGARET *on* FAUST'S *arm*, MARTHA *with* MEPHISTOPHELES.

—Walking loiteringly up and down

Marg. You do but play with my simplicity,
And put me to the blush. A traveller
Learns such good nature—is so pleased with all things
And every body:—my poor talk, I know,
Has no attraction, that could for a moment
Engage the attention of a man, who has
Seen so much of the world——

Faust. One glance—one word—
One little word from thee, I value more
Than all the wisdom of th' world's wisest ones.

[*Kisses her hand*

Marg. How could you think of it? How could you
kiss it?

It is so coarse—so hard—is spoiled with all work
On every day—how could it but be coarse?
My mother's habits are too close—my tasks
Are too severe.

[*They pass on*

Mar. And are you—are you always travelling thus?

Meph. Alas! that claims of business and of duty
Should force me to it. We feel pangs at parting
From many a spot where yet we may not loiter.

Mar. In youth's wild days, it cannot but be pleasant
This idle roaming round and round the world,
With wildfire spirits, and heart disengaged:
But soon comes age and sorrow; and to drag,
Through the last years of life, down to the grave
A solitary creature—like the wretch,
Who moves from prison on to execution—
This must be bad for body and for soul.

Meph. You make me shudder at the dreary prospect.

Mar. Be wise—secure yourself in time. [*They pass on*

Marg. Yes!—out of sight, soon out of mind.
I feel this courtesy is kind;—
That you, who must have many a friend
Highly informed, should condescend
To speak with one in my poor station.
Of such neglected education
—In every thing so unimproved—

Faust. Believe me, dearest, best beloved,
That, which the world calls information,
Is often but the glitter chilling
Of vanity and want of feeling.

Marg. How?

Faust. Ah! that—singleness of heart,
And absence of all artifice,
—Gifts, as they are, above all price,
Heaven's holiest blessing—should be thus
Of their own worth unconscious!
That—meekness, gentleness, the treasure
Which Nature, who doth still impart
To all in love, and lavish measure,
Gives to the child, whom she loves dearest,—
Should——

Marg. Think of me when you are gone,
A moment now and then—of you
I shall have time enough to think.

Faust. Your time is passed, then, much alone!

Marg. Why, yes; and then our house affairs,
Poor though they be, bring many cares.

We have no servant maid, and I
Must cook, knit, sew, must wash and dry;
Run far and near—rise ere the light,
And not lie down till late at night.

And then my mother's temper's such,
In every thing she asks so much;

Of saving has so strict a sense,
And is so fearful of expense;

So anxious, so particular:

—Not that our circumstances are
So limited, as not to give

The means like other folk to live.

The property my father had,

And died possessed of, was not bad:

A house, and garden here, that yields

Something worth while, and some town fields
Just at the gates. My days, somehow,
Are tolerably quiet now—

My brother earns a soldier's bread
Abroad;—my little sister's dead.
Trouble enough I had with her,
Yet cheerfully would I incur
Ten times the toil—so dear was she.

Faust. A very angel, if like thee!

Marg. Even from its birth, the child I nurst—
And so it loved me from the first.
Born to distress—its father torn
Away by death, ere it was born.
My mother, worn out with disease—
We long had given her up for gone—
Recovering faintly by degrees,
Came slowly, very slowly on.
She had no strength—she could not think
Of nursing it—and so, poor thing,
I reared it; for its natural drink,
With milk and water tried to bring
The creature on—and thus my own
It seemed to be, and mine alone—
Lay on my arm, and on my breast
Would play and nestle, and was blest.

Faust. This must have been the purest joy.

Marg. Yet were there hours of great annoy—
Its cradle was by my bedside:
It kept me half the night awake,
To make it quiet when I tried.—
At times must I get up, to take
The little urchin into bed;
This would not do—then must I rise,
Walk up and down with measured tread,
And seek with songs to hush its cries.
Then daylight brought its tasks to me:
Ere dawn must I at washing be—
Trudge to the market—light the fire;
And if I felt the trouble tire
On one day, 'twas the same the next.
I felt dispirited and vext
At times; but I was wrong in this;
For, after all, his labour is

What gives a poor man's food its zest,
And makes his bed a bed of rest. [*They pass on*]

Mar. We women are the sufferers: who can make
Any thing of a dissolute old rake?

Meph. Yet have I perfect faith in woman's skill;
You may, for instance, make me what you will.

Mar. But tell me plainly, have you never met
One whom you loved?—thought you of marriage yet?

Meph. A blessed state—in Proverbs we are told,
A good wife better is than pearls or gold.

Mar. But is there none with preference you would
name?

Meph. All are polite and every where the same.

Mar. Have you no one in seriousness addressed?

Meph. With ladies can you think that I would jest?

Mar. You still mistake me.

Meph. I regret to find
How slow I am; but one thing to my mind
Is clear, that you are very, very kind. [*They pass on*]

Faust. And so thou didst, my angel—didst thou not?—
The moment that I came into the garden,
Remember me again, upon the spot?

Mar. Did you not see it?—I held down my eyes

Faust. And thou dost,—dost thou not?—the freedom
pardon

Which, as you passed from the Cathedral home,
I rashly took?

Marg. I felt so much surprised,
And was, I scarce can tell you, so confused,
And trembled like a guilty thing accused.
“Into his head could such a thought have come?—
What must he think of thee?—there must have been
Something improper in thy walk or mien;
Something that gave this gentleman to see,
Here is a girl with whom you may make free.”
Yet must I own I did not then detect
How my heart pleaded for thee, nor suspect
I with myself was angry, that, with thee,
As angry, as I ought, I could not be.

Faust. Sweet love!

Marg. One moment wait.

[*She plucks a star-flower, and picks off the leaves
one after another*]

Faust. Why pluck the star-flower?
—Do you wish a bunch of flowers?

Marg. No, I just fancied
Trying a little game of chance.

Faust. What mean you?

Marg. You will laugh at me.

[*She plucks off the leaves, and murmurs to herself*

Faust. What are you murmuring?

Marg. [*half aloud*]. He loves me—loves me not.

Faust. Angelic creature!

Marg. He loves me—not—He loves me—not—

[*As she plucks off the last leaf with eager delight*
He loves me!

Faust. Yes, my child, deem this language of the flower
The answer of an oracle—"He loves thee!"

Dost thou know all the meaning of "He loves thee?"
[*Holds both her hands*

Marg. I am all over trembling.

Faust. Tremble not!

Oh, let this look, this pressure of the hands,
Say, to thee, what no words can say: henceforth
Be our whole being lost in one another
In overflowing joy—that lives and lives
For ever and for ever! could it end,
It were—but no, it cannot, cannot end!

[*MARGARET presses his hands; disengages herself from
him, and runs away. He stands for a moment,
thoughtful, and follows her*

Mar. The night is coming on.

Meph. We should be going.

Mar. I would invite you to stay longer, but
We live in a censorious neighbourhood.
They seem to have nothing to think of or to do
But watch the doors, and who go in and out:
Do what you will, your doings will be misconstrued:
But our young couple—saw you them?

Meph. They've flown
Up yonder walk—gay butterflies—

Mar. He seems
Caught.

Meph. And she too. 'Tis the way of the world.

XIII

A SUMMER HOUSE

MARGARET runs in ; conceals herself behind the door ; holds the tip of her finger to her lips, and peeps through the crevice

Marg. He comes.

Faust. Ah, rogue ! and do you thus provoke me ?
I've caught you at last. [Kisses her

Marg. [embracing him, and returning the kiss]. Dearest and best, with my whole heart I love thee.

[MEPHISTOPHELES knocks

Faust [stamping]. Who's there ?

Meph. A friend.

Faust. A brute.

Meph. Full time to go.

Mar. [comes up]. 'Tis late, my lord—

Faust. May I not see you home ?

Marg. My mother would—farewell.

Faust. Must I then go ?

Farewell.

Mar. Adieu !

Marg. To meet again, and soon.

[Exeunt FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES

Marg. How many things a man like this

Must know ;—and I had but a " Yes,"

For every thing he said ;—confused

By every word ; yet he excused

Each fault of mine. What can it be,

That thus attaches him to me ?

XIV

FOREST AND CAVERN

FAUST (*alone*).

Faust. Yes! lofty Spirit, thou hast given me all.
 All that I asked of thee; and not in vain,
 In unconsuming fire revealed, hast thou
 Been with me, manifesting gloriously
 Thy presence—thou hast looked on me with love,
 —Hast given me empire o'er majestic Nature;
 Power to enjoy and feel! 'Twas not alone
 The stranger's short permitted privilege
 Of momentary wonder that thou gavest;
 No, thou hast given me into her deep breast
 As into a friend's secret heart to look;
 Hast brought to me the tribes of living things:
 Thus teaching me to recognize and love
 My brothers in still grove, or air, or stream.
 And when in the wide wood the tempest raves,
 And shrieks, and rends the giant pines, uproots,
 Disbranches, and, with maddening grasp uplifting,
 Flings them to earth, and from the hollow hill
 Dull moaning thunders echo their descent;
 Then dost thou lead me to the safe retreat
 Of some low cavern, there exhibiting
 To my awed soul its own mysterious nature!
 Of my own heart the depths miraculous,
 Its secret inward being all exposed!
 And when before my eye the pure moon walks
 High over-head, diffusing a soft light,
 Then from the rocks, and over the damp wood,
 The pale bright shadows of the ancient times
 Before me seem to move, and mitigate
 The too severe delight of earnest thought!—
 Alas! even now I feel Man's joys must be
 Imperfect ever. The ecstatic bliss,

Which lifts me near and nearer to the gods :
 This is thy gift ; but with it thou hast given,
 Inseparably linked, this vile associate,
 Whom I abominate, but cannot part :—
 Cold, insolent, malicious, he contrives
 To make me to myself contemptible ;
 And with a breath will scatter into nothing
 All these high gifts : with what officious zeal
 He fans my breast into a raging flame
 Of passion, to possess that perfect form
 Of loveliness ! Thus, from desire I pass
 On to enjoyment, and, uneasy still,
 Even in enjoyment languish for desire !

[MEPHISTOPHELES *enters*

Meph. Have you not had enough of this before ?
 A pretty kind of life to live for ever !
 Well enough for a trial. Come, come, let us
 Seek something new.

Faust. I wish you had something else
 To do than thus torment me when I'm quiet.

Meph. Well ! well ! and if you wish I'll leave you here
 To your delights—never say it again.
 Great loss to me, indeed, 'twould be to lose
 A petulant, unsocial, crazy creature
 Of a companion—kept the whole day long
 Busy, and never can make any guess
 From my lord's countenance, whether your worship
 Is pleased or is displeased by what I do.

Faust. Ay, there's the tone—that is so very like him :
 Tires me to death—expects me then to thank him !

Meph. Poor child of earth ! and couldst thou, then,
 have borne
 Thy life till now without my aid ? 'Twas I
 That saved thee from imaginations idle !
 I guarded thee with long and anxious care ;
 And, but for me, even now thou wouldst have been
 Idling in other worlds ! Why sittest thou there,
 Lingered in hollow cave, or rifted rock,
 Dull as the moping owl ? Why, like the toad,
 Dost thou support a useless life, deriving
 Subsistence from damp moss and dripping stone ?
 Sweet pastime this ! most charming occupation !
 I fear you've not forgotten your old trade.

Faust. Couldst thou conceive what added life is given
In hours like this, passed in the wilderness,
And couldst thou feel it—still thou wouldst remain
The devil thou art—still hate and poison it!
Wouldst grudge the short delight—

Meph. Delight indeed!
Yes, transcendental rapture!—mighty fine!—
In night and dew lying among the hills,
In ecstasy embracing earth and heaven—
To swell up till you are a kind of god—
To pierce into the marrow of the earth
In a fool's fancies—all the six-days' task
Of the creation in thy breast to feel—
And in the pride of conscious power enjoy
I know not what of bliss,—to cherish love
That has no limits, but must overflow
Till it loves everything that is—till earth
And man's poor nature, in the trance forgotten,
Has passed away—and then the glorious hour
Of intuition ending—how it ends
I must not say—

Faust. Fie, fie upon thee.

Meph. Yes!
“Fie, fie!”—it does not suit your taste, forsooth—
Fie, fie! this mannerly word sounds very well
In your mouth now. The modest ears are closed,
And will not hear of what the modest heart
Yet cannot go without. Good, good!—a word,
However, upon what you said—I grudge not
To you or any man such pleasure, as
He now and then may feel, in playing tricks
Of self-deception; pity 'twill not last.
You are already blown out of your course—
Are almost what you were when first we met;
And, if you don't take care, will fret yourself
Soon into actual madness—frenzy-fever,
Or melancholy horror. For your own sake
Have done with this: your love, poor creature! sits
Within there,—you should soothe her! All with her
Is sad and gloomy—out of her poor mind
You never are: she loves devotedly,
Poor thing!—on thee she thinks—thinks evermore.
First came the flood of thy o'erflowing passion,

As swells, when the snows melt, a mountain brook
 Above its banks—and thou into her heart
 Hast poured the sudden gush: and now the brook
 Is dry with thee again; methinks 'twere well,
 Instead of reigning here among the woods
 On an imaginary throne, that you
 Would comfort the young monkey, and requite
 The poor thing for her love,—to her the time
 Seems miserably long—she lingers at
 The window, gazes on the clouds that pass
 Slow o'er the old town-walls. “Oh that I were
 A little bird!” she cries. This is her song
 All the day long, and half the heavy night!
 One moment is she mirthful—mostly is
 Sad,—then she weeps till she can weep no more;
 Then, as 'twould seem, she is at rest again.
 But mirth or grief, whatever the mood be,
 This all is love—deep, tender, passionate love.

Faust. Serpent—vile serpent!

Meph. [*aside*]. Ay, and one that stings.

Faust. Infamous wretch, begone! name not her name—
 Pollute it not—stir not into desire
 My half-distracted senses.

Meph. What is this?—

She deems herself abandoned—and is right.

Faust. Off, viper!

Meph. You are raving—I am laughing:

What a hard task it is, forsooth—just think,
 And let it cure your spirits,—you are going
 Not—as to look at you one might believe—
 Not to the gibbet—but to a fond mistress!

Faust. What were the joys of Heaven, though with them
 blest

In her embrace?—could my disquiet be
 Stilled on her bosom? could it hush to rest
 This drear presentiment of her undoing?
 And am I not the outcast—the accurst—
 The homeless one,—whose wanderings never cease—
 The monster of his kind? No rest for me—
 No aim—no object; like the stream, that, nurst
 With swelling rains, foaming from rock to rock,
 Along its course of ruin,
 On to the inevitable precipice—

Plunges impatient down the blind abyss,
 And violently seeks the desperate shock.
 And—by the side of such mad stream—was she,
 —A child with a child's feelings ;—her low cot
 In the green field upon the mountain slope,
 And all that she could wish, or love, or hope,
 Her little world, all—all in that poor spot ;—
 And I—the heaven-detested !—was it not
 Enough, that the mad torrent grasped and tore
 The rocks, and shivered them to dust, and bore
 All, that opposed me, in my downward course
 On with me ?—Her, too, her—her peace—her joy—
 These must I undermine ?—these too destroy ?
 Hell ! hell !—this victim also !—Thy support,
 Devil ! and the dreadful interval make short !
 What must be, be it soon ! Let the crush fall
 Down on me of her ruin—perish all—
 She—I—and these wild thoughts together !

Meph. What ! in the fever-fit again ?
 How seethes and burns the muddy brain !
 —Idiot, go in, and comfort her.

Thus is it ever with the crazy pate,
 When difficulties thwart,
 Or unforeseen calamities occur :
 Fools, when they cannot see their way,
 At once grow desperate,
 Have no resource—have nothing to propose—
 But fix a dull eye of dismay
 Upon the final close.
 Success to the stout heart, say I,
 That sees its fate, and can defy !
 —Yet art thou, though of such soft stuff,
 In most things pretty devil enough ;—
 Of all insipid things, I least can bear
 That sickening dose—a devil in despair !

XV

MARGARET'S OWN ROOM

MARGARET. *Alone at the spinning-wheel. Sings*

My peace is gone,
And my heart is sore :
I have lost him, and lost him,
For evermore !

The place, where he is not,
To me is the tomb,
The world is sadness,
And sorrow and gloom !

My poor sick brain
Is crazed with pain.
And my poor sick heart
Is torn in twain !

My peace is gone,
And my heart is sore,
For lost is my love
For evermore !

From the window for him
My heavy eyes roam ;
To seek him, all lonely
I wander from home.

His noble form,
His bearing high,
The smiles of his lip,
And the power of his eye ;

And the magic tone
Of that voice of his,

His hands' soft pressure,
And oh! his kiss!

My peace is gone,
And my heart is sore;
I have lost him, and lost him,
For evermore!

Far wanders my heart
To feel him near,
Oh! could I clasp him,
And hold him here!

Hold him and kiss him,
Oh! I could die!
To feed on his kisses,
How willingly!

XVI

MARTHA'S GARDEN

MARGARET. FAUST

Marg. Promise me, Henry.

Faust. Be assured, my love.

Marg. Now tell me how you are as to religion?
You are a dear good man—but, I rather fear
You have not much of it.

Faust. Forbear, my child,
You feel I love you, and for those I love
I would lay down my life. I would not rob
Any one of his feeling, or his church—

Marg. 'Tis well—but more than that—we must believe.

Faust. Must we?

Marg. Oh, had I any influence!
You honour not the holy sacraments?

Faust. I honour them.

Marg. But you do not receive.—
At mass or shrift 'tis long since you have been.
Do you believe in God?

Faust. Forbear, my love ;
Who can say truly, " I believe in God ? "
—Ask it of priest or of philosopher,
And the reply seems but a mockery
Of him who asks.

Marg. Then thou dost not believe !

Faust. Misunderstand me not, thou best-beloved :
Who can name Him, and, knowing what he says,
Say, " I believe in Him ? " And who can feel,
And, with self-violence, to conscious wrong
Hardening his heart, say, " I believe him not ! "
The All-embracing, All-sustaining One,
Say, doth he not embrace, sustain, include
Thee ?—Me ?—Himself ?—Bends not the sky above ?
And earth, on which we are, is it not firm ?
And over us with constant kindly smile,
The sleepless stars keep everlasting watch !
Am I not here gazing into thine eyes ?

And does not All that is,
—Seen and unseen, mysterious all—
Around thee, and within,
Untiring agency,
Press on thy heart and mind ?

—Fill thy whole heart with it—and when thou art
Lost in the consciousness of happiness—

Then call it what thou wilt,
Happiness !—Heart !—Love !—God !

I have no name for it—Feeling is all ;
Name, sound and smoke
Dimming the glow of heaven !

Marg. This is all good and right ;
The priest says pretty much the same,
But in words somewhat different.

Faust. Every where,
All hearts beneath the universal Heaven,
In its own language each doth utter it—
Then why not I in mine ?

Marg. Made easy thus
'Tis plausible—yet must it be unsafe :
Thou art no Christian.

Faust. Hush, my child.

Marg. I grieve to see the company thou keepest.

Faust. What do you mean ?

Marg. The man whom thou hast ever at thy side,
I hate him from the bottom of my soul.
In my whole life, has nothing given my heart
So deep a wound, as that man's alien visage.

Faust. Beloved, fear him not.

Marg. The very sight of him makes my blood thrill!
To most men I feel kindness—but him
Do I detest; and with a feeling strong,
Strong as my love for you—strong as my wishes
To have you with me—does a secret shudder
Creep over me when I behold this man.
He is—I cannot be deceived—he is
A villain;—God forgive me, if I wrong him!

Faust. He's a queer fellow—do not mind his oddities.

Marg. I would not—could not, live together with him.
If for a moment he comes to the door,
He will look in with such an air of mockery,
And a half scowl, and a face dark with anger
Kept down—you see he has no interest
In any thing—'tis written on his brow
He feels no love for any living soul—
And when I am so happy in thy arms,
In the sweet confidence of love forgetting—
Forgetting every thing but thee, then—then
He's sure to come, and my heart shrinks and withers!

Faust. Foreboding angel, these are weak misgivings!

Marg. The feeling overmasters me so wholly,
That if he does but join us, straightway seems it
As if I ceased to love thee—where he is
I could not pray. This eats into my heart,
Henry, it cannot be but that you feel
In this as I do.

Faust. This is antipathy.

Marg. I must away.

Faust. Alas! and may I never
Meet thee, where none can come to trouble us?
One little hour—and must it never be—
Heart prest to happy heart, and soul to soul!

Marg. Ah, that I slept alone! This very night
How gladly would I leave the door unbolted!
But then my mother's sleep is far from sound;
Did she awake and find you there, I should,
Methinks, drop dead upon the spot.

Faust. Dear angel, throw aside such fears; this phial
Take with you. Three drops of it only, poured
Into her drink, wrap nature up in sleep,
Deep tranquil sleep.

Marg. I must do as you bid.
Could I refuse you?—'Twill not injure her?

Faust. It will not: otherwise would I advise it?

Marg. Dearly beloved, if I but look on you
I must obey—I cannot hesitate:
There is a something not to be resisted,
Which overpowers me—makes your will my guide
In everything; and having gone so far
Already, is choice left me? Having given
So much, what is there for me to refuse?

Meph. [enters]. The monkey! is it gone?

Faust. Again
Spying?—

Meph. Yes, and I heard quite plain
The doctor schooled,—the catechumen
Getting a lesson in his creed
And catechism, from a young woman,
Just now;—I hope that it agreed
With you! The girl's anxiety
For sentimental piety
Is soon explained. The man, think they,
Who worships in the good old way,
When his priest bids him kneels and bows,
Is likely to obey his spouse:
This of itself ensures his wife
A quiet, fair, and easy life.
The women fancy, and the fact is
Confirmed, or often so, in practice,
That their admirers are most found
Where your religious men abound—
Love is almost the same emotion:
The devotee—such is their notion—
Thus for the sex feels true devotion,
Courts amorous thoughts and mystic dreaming,
Is led by priests, and follows women.

Faust. Oh! what a monster must thou be
To see not, or with scoffing see,
How this poor girl's affections lead
The pious creature thus to plead;

The faith, in which she moves and lives—
That which alone salvation gives—
So she believes—may make her fear
Danger to one whom she holds dear ;
Fear for the issue of a strife
Where more, she feels, is risked than life !

Meph. Most sentimental sensualist,
—Philosopher at once and beast,—
Led by the nose by a young flirt !

Faust. Abortion—spawn of fire and dirt !

Meph. [*scornfully*].—On Physiognomy she also lectures
Profoundly—feels, when I am present,
Sensations strange and most unpleasant :
—Suppressed malignity my smile betrays ;
I wear a mask, forsooth, I will not raise,
And what it hides she sapiently conjectures,
Something mysteriously allied to evil,
A genius—or, perhaps, the very devil.
To-night then.

Faust. What's to-night to thee ?

Meph. I've my amusements too—we'll see.

XVII

AT THE FOUNTAIN

MARGARET and LIZZY, with pitchers

Lizzy. Have you not heard of Hannah's pretty doing ?

Marg. No, not a word—I've been but little out.

Liz. Kate told it me to-day—there's not a doubt
Of its truth. This comes of airs and impudence,
I always said her pride would be her ruin.

Marg. What mean you ?

Liz. What I mean all know but you—
Why, when she eats and drinks she's feeding two.

Marg. Poor thing !

Liz. Poor thing, indeed ! great pity for her !
Why, she was always finding some pretence
To be in company with this adorer
Of hers ;—at every party—every walk—

How she made out a time for private talk!
 Would hang upon his arm, and still be seen
 For evermore with him, at booth or green.
 She thought herself so fine, none could come near her;
 And then their feastings—cakes and wine must cheer her
 After their rambles: then her vanity
 About her beauty almost like insanity—
 And then her meanness—think of her insisting
 Upon his making handsome presents to her—
 Then came soft words, when there were none to listen,
 Then all a girl can give she gave her wooer!

Marg. The poor, poor thing!

Liz. And do you pity her?
 When *we* were kept close to our wheels, and when
 Our mothers would not suffer us to stir
 Abroad at night, or loiter with the men,
 Then were they on the seat before the door,
 Or in the dark walk lingering evermore;
 Now for the stool and white sheet of repentance;
 For one, I feel no sorrow at her sentence.

Marg. Poor creature! but, no doubt, he'll marry her.

Liz. He:—he'll be no such fool—the de'il may carry her,
 For what he cares—they say that he is off;
 He'll find another market soon enough.

Marg. That is not fair.

Liz. 'Twill be almost as bad,
 We will so plague her—if she get the lad;—
 The wedding garland, should she think to wear it,
 From the mock virgin shall the children tear it;
 And, at her door, what fun we shall have, spreading
 Chopped straw, to greet the promise of their wedding. [*Exit*

Marg. [*returning home*]. How I would rail when some
 poor girl went wrong!
 How, when it was another's sin and shame,
 Words of reproach would rise up to my tongue!
 It was, it was black—oh how black, and I
 Blackened it more and more—no words of blame
 This virtuous scorn of mine could satisfy—
 Others might fall, but I more proud became—
 I blessed myself, and held myself so high,
 And I who thus could feel—am I the same?
 But could I—who could—have resisted here?
 All was so good! all was so very dear!

XVIII

ZWINGER

A Little Shrine

In a niche of the wall an image of the Mater Dolorosa with flowers before it.—MARGARET places fresh flowers in the bowls

Margaret

Mother benign,
Look down on me!
No grief like thine;
Thou who dost see
In his death-agony
Thy Son divine.

In faith unto the Father dost thou lift up thine eyes;
In faith unto the Father dost pray with many sighs.
The sword is piercing thine own soul, and thou in pain
dost pray,
That the pangs which torture him, and are thy pangs,
may pass away.

And who my wound can heal
And who the pain can feel,
That rends asunder brain and bone?
How my poor heart, within me aching,
Trembles and yearns, and is forsaken—
Thou knowest it—thou alone!

Where can I go? Where can I go?
Every where woe! woe! woe!
Nothing that does not my own grief betoken;
And when I am alone,
I moan, and moan, and moan,
And am heart-broken.

The flowers upon my window sill,
Wet with my tears since dawn they be ;
All else were sleeping, while I was weeping,
Praying and choosing flowers for thee.

Into my chamber brightly
Came the early sun's good-morrow ;
On my restless bed, unsightly,
I sate up in my sorrow.

Oh, in this hour of death, and the near grave
Succour me, thou, and save !
Look on me with that countenance benign.
Never was grief like thine,—
Look down, look down on mine !

XIX

NIGHT

STREET BEFORE MARGARET'S DOOR

VALENTINE (*a soldier—MARGARET'S brother*)

Till now, as round the canteen hearth,
My comrades, in their drunken mirth,
Would of their favourites gaily boast,
And pledge with soldiers' glee the toast ;
How on my elbow I would rest,
Smile as each swore his own the best,
And stroke my beard, and raise my glass,
And when my turn to name the lass
Came round, would say, "Each to his taste ;
In my own home my heart is placed.
Where is the maiden, any where,
That with my Margaret can compare ?
Is there than Madge's in the land
A truer heart or fairer hand ?"
Oh, then, how cups and goblets rang,
While voices rose with joyous clang :
"Right, right," in chorus, hundreds cried,

“ First of them all—the country’s pride—
 His sister is ”—and dumb and tame
 The boasters suddenly became.
 And now—oh, I could rend my hair,
 Could dash my brains out in despair ;
 Now must I feel my bosom gored
 By daggers in each casual word,
 And every ruffian’s sneering eye
 And scornful taunt my patience try ;
 Gnawing my wrath must I remain,
 And suffer and suppress my pain,
 Nor dare say any word again ;
 As hears the debtor gibe and curse,
 Who meets a claim with empty purse.
 Avenge it—what can vengeance do ?
 Must I not feel the taunt is true ?

See yonder ! sneaking out of sight,
 Two skulking scoundrels.—Am I right ?
 —’Tis he—would Heaven that it were he—
 He scarce shall ’scape me if it be.

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES

Faust. See, in the window of yon sacristy,
 How from its little lamp the constant light
 Streams up—while, at the sides, less and less bright,
 ’Tis fading—till it dies in the thick night
 That deepens round—and thus it is with me—
 Darkness on every side around me spreads.

Meph. And I am like the thievish cat that treads,
 Prowling along, up ladders and down leads—
 A nibble in the dark—there’s no harm in it—
 Or snatching on the roof a stolen love-minute.
 Already do I feel the power,
 The fun and frolic of the hour ;
 The advent of Walpurgis Night
 Bids every limb thrill with delight ;
 Another night—another day,
 And then the glorious First of May ;
 Then to the Brocken fare we forth,
 Then learn that life is something worth.

Faust. Behold yon blue light glimmering !

Is that the treasure? Lurks it there?
And will it from the dark earth spring?

Meph. Be patient—you shall shortly bring
The casket into open air:
I peeped into the secret hoard,
And saw the lion-dollars stored.

Faust. What! merely money? who would think it?
What good is this? no ring—no trinket?
No ornament for the dear girl?

Meph. Oh yes; there are some beads of pearl.

Faust. I am glad of it,—it is not pleasant
To go to her without some present.

Meph. Is there then no such thing as pleasure,
But what you may by payment measure?
I differ there with you—but see,
The heaven is hushed, and full of stars;
Now for a moment favour me
With silence—while I sing some bars
Of an old song—a sweet old air,
Touched with true skill—a moral song
That lures the heart and will along.

[Sings to the guitar

Why, Catherine, stay
At dawn of day,
At dawning gray,
Before the youngker's door?
The merry blade
Lets in the maid,
That out a maid
Never departeth more!
Beware—beware,
And guard, ye fair,
Your hearts with care.
Poor things, beware of men—
Oh, listen not to any thing
They may say, or swear, or sing,
Till on the finger is the ring—
Beware, say I again.

Val. [comes forward]. What brings ye here? whom
come ye to destroy,
Cursed rat-catchers?—to the devil with the lure—
To the devil with the scoundrels.

Meph. Well done, boy.
The poor guitar is cracked beyond all cure.

Val. Now for his skull.

Meph. Now, Doctor, now's your time.
Courage—stick close—that's a brave fellow;
Have at him—just do as I tell you—
Out with your duster—thrust away—
I'll parry.

Val. Parry that.

Meph. Child's play.
Easily done.

Val. And that.

Meph. As easy quite.

Val. The devil assists him in the fight—
My hand is wounded.

Meph. Now thrust home.

Val. Oh, torture!

Meph. The clown's done for—come,
We'd best be off—have not a minute
To lose—already is the cry
Of murder raised—and although I
Know the police, and have friends in it,
This is a very ugly scrape.
To manage it in any shape
Perplexes me.

Mar. [at the window]. Up!—Up!—

Marg. [at her window]. A light!

Mar. Railing and scuffling—how they fight!

People. [in the street]. One of them is already dead.

Mar. Seize on the murderers—are they fled?

Marg. [coming out]. Who is it?—who?

People. Thy mother's son.

Marg. Oh, God!

Val. I die—said soon—soon done!
Women, why stand you wailing, crying?

Will you not listen? I am dying.

Margaret, take counsel, you are still

Young, and conduct your business ill;

I speak in confidence—you are

A strumpet—throw away pretence—

Be one in earnest—there were sense

In this—be one thing or the other.

Marg. My God! what can you mean, my brother?

Val. Best let the name of God alone!
 That which is done, alas! is done.
 The past is past—the wretched game
 You play is everywhere the same,
 Begins in folly—ends in shame.
 First one man visits—then, less private,
 Another; soon the coy beginner
 Will welcome all, till she arrive at
 The streets, and is a common sinner.

When Shame is born, she shrinks from sight,
 Draws over her the veil of night,
 Trembles at every stir, and tries
 Of hood and cloak the mean disguise,
 Yea—unfamiliar yet with sin—
 Would hush the warning voice within.
 On moves she unobserved, unknown;
 But bigger soon, and bolder grown,
 Walks, hand in hand, the broad highway,
 With Slander, in the eye of day,
 And as her features, marred and coarse,
 From hour to hour look worse and worse,
 While men behold her with affright,
 She stalks affronting the daylight.

Already do I see the day,
 When all, with loathing, turn away
 From thee, as from a plague-struck corse,
 I see the gnawings of remorse:
 —Abandoned outcast of the street,
 How wilt thou bear their eyes to meet?
 Never, as once, the golden chain
 To wear in pride—never again!
 Never again, that fairest face,
 To shine at church, in the high place.
 And never more the dance to grace;—
 No more in modest pride to deck
 With frills of snowy lace thy neck;
 But in some filthy nook to lie,
 'Mong strumpets live—'mong beggars die;
 And find, for thee, heart-broken one,
 Though God has mercy, Man has none.

Mar. Pray, dying man, for mercy; dread
 To heap God's curses on thy head!

Val. Fiend, could I tear thy leprous skin!
 Procuress! sordid slave of sin!
 Then might I rest, my conscience freed
 From every weight by that one deed.

Marg. My brother—oh, what agony—
 Brother, forgive—I grieve for thee.

Val. Cease weeping thus for me: thy fall—
 That was the sharpest wound of all.
 Fearless I go—as fits the brave—
 To God and to a soldier's grave.

[Dies

XX

CATHEDRAL

SERVICE—ORGAN AND ANTHEM

MARGARET *among a number of people.*—The EVIL
 SPIRIT *behind* MARGARET

Evil Spirit. How changed is everything
 With thee, poor Margaret,
 Since when, still full of innocence,
 Thou to this very altar
 Didst come, and from the little old thumb'd prayer book
 Didst lisp the murmured prayers;
 Half with the children out at play,
 In a child's happy fancies, thy young heart,
 And half with God in heaven.

And dost thou, canst thou think? . . .

Thy brain, where wanders it? . . .

In thy heart oh what a weight
 Of guilt, of evil done!

Prayest thou for thy mother's soul—

She who through thee did sleep and sleep away
 Into undying agonies?

And on thy door-stead whose the blood?

And in thy bosom is there not

A stirring, that is torture,

And with foreboding fears

Makes felt the present woe?

Marg. Woe, woe!
Oh that I could escape
These dark thoughts flitting over and athwart me,
And all accusing me!

Choir. *Dies iræ, Dies illa
Solvat sæclum in favilla!*

Evil Spirit. The judgment arrests thee—
The trumpet is sounding—
The graves are astir—
And thy heart,
From the sleep of its ashes,
For fiery torture
Created again,
Awakes up and trembles.

Marg. That I were out of this—
I feel as if the organ
Stifled my breathing,
And that the anthem was
Breaking my heart.

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

Marg. I feel so tightened here,
The pillars of the wall
Are grasping me;
The arch above
Weighs on me.—Air!

Evil Spirit. Hide thyself—sin and shame
Will find thee out—
O, never were they hidden—
Air—light—exposure—
Woe's thee!

Choir. *Quid sum miser tunc dicturus,
Quem patronum rogaturus,
Cum vix justus sit securus!*

Evil Spirit. From thee their countenances
The sons of light all turn.
To reach to thee their hands
Makes the pure shudder—
Woe!

Choir. *Quid sum miser tunc dicturus!*

Marg. [Fainting, to the girl next her]. Your flasket, friend.

XXI

WALPURGIS-NIGHT

THE HARTZ MOUNTAINS

District of Schierke and Elend

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES

Meph. Would not a broomstick be a good thing here
For a tired man to ride? I wish I had got
A buck-goat, rough and tough—neck thick, trot quick:
The road is long, and we are loitering,
The time just come—the place still far away.

Faust. While I feel firm upon my limbs, the road
Thus wild and intricate but pleases me;
And this knobbed staff affords support enough.
Why should we wish the way more short? To steal
Silently through the deep vale's labyrinth,
And issuing thence to climb these rocks, from which
The bubbling water gushes up for ever,
And streams a white precipitous cataract—
'Tis this—'tis this that makes such paths delightful.
The stirring breath of spring hath waked the birch,
And the slow pine already feels her power—
Shall we alone of all that live and breathe
Remain uninfluenced by her cheering spirit?

Meph. I can feel nothing of it—all within
With me is winter—give me the bleak snow,
And the cold ice upon my desolate path.
With what a red and melancholy light
The waning moon's imperfect orb is moving,
Casting faint, cold, unserviceable beams,
And making each step dangerous—lest the foot
Dash 'gainst some straggling tree or jutting rock;
I'll call a wildfire Will-o'-the-Wisp to light us.
See, there is one burns bright and merrily.

The freakish spark, look, how he flings away
 On the regardless night his spendthrift splendour.
 Holla! my friend, come join our company;
 Come, come, instead of wasting idly there,
 Come be the pilot of our perilous way,
 Move on, and light us through the desert moors.

Will-o'-the-Wisp. Yours most respectfully—I'll strive to
 serve you;

But it is struggling against nature—devious
 And zig-zag is our customary course.

Meph. Ha, ha!—ha, ha! he thinks to mimic man;
 Go straight—for once—in the devil's name, go straight—
 On, saucy spark, on—or I'll blow thee out,
 Poor gleam of marsh-light life.

Will-o'-the-Wisp. 'Tis plain to see
 That the master of the house is here—my lord,
 I will be all I can be, to oblige you,—
 But, think, the hill to-day is mad with magic;
 And, if we should not go the straightest road,
 Remember that your guide is but a meteor.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, WILL-O'-THE-WISP

[*In alternating song*]

Into the magic world, the centre
 Of fancies strange and dreamy science,
 By a meteor led, we enter,
 His wild light our best reliance.
 Then, Meteor, guide us on in haste,
 Through regions lonely, wide, and waste.

Woods—how swift they vanish by us!
 Trees on trees—how fast they fly us!
 And the cliffs, with antic greeting,
 Bending forward and retreating,
 How they mock the midnight meeting;
 Ghastly rocks grin glaring on us,
 Panting, blowing, as they shun us!

Trickling on, through sward and stone,
 Rill and rivulet run down—
 Murmuring and rustling near,
 Voices meet and mock the ear;

Sweet sounds greet us from above :
 Are they—are they words of love ?
 Tender tones, that from the wild wood
 Whisper back the days of childhood ?
 All that was, when we were young,
 Eden to the heart, now meets it ;
 And the rock, with airy tongue,
 Recalls, restores, the enchanted song,
 And lingering in love repeats it,
 How the song of echo chimes
 Like the voice of other times !

Tu-who !—Tu-who !—the owl's in view—
 Nearer, clearer, comes his hooting—
 Through the dusk air see him shooting—
 The long-horned owl, with pinions gray,
 The blind bat born in circles dizzy,
 The crow—the lapwing—and the jay,
 Are wakeful all—all out and busy—
 See lizards in the green twigs tender,
 With heavy paunch and long legs slender—
 Every where strange sights we see—
 Are they what they seem to be ?—
 Here's many a twining plant that flings
 Round rock and root its serpent strings,
 And seeks to dart, in eager watch
 The heedless journeyer's foot to catch,
 From close-compacted living masses
 Its angry fangs on each who passes ;
 Every where around us playing,
 Many-coloured mice are straying,
 Numberless, 'mong moss and heather ;
 And the fire-flies crowd together,
 With buzzing motion, swarming, crushing,
 Round our meteor leader rushing !

We be strangers here who stray,
 Natives of the hills are they,
 Gleesome creatures bright and gay,
 Merry guides ! hurrah ! hurrah !—
 Wild the escort—wild the way !

Tell me, tell me, where we are—
 We have wandered fast and far—

Is our wizard journey ended?
 Is the Brocken yet ascended?
 Round us every thing seems wheeling,
 Trees are whirling, rocks are reeling—
 All in rapid circles spinning,
 With motion dizzying and dinning,
 Every thing that round us races
 Makes grotesque and fiendish faces:
 Swelling, puffing, multiplying,
 On all sides wild-fire lights are flying.

Meph. Come, be alive—so far, so well;
 We're at the half-way pinnacle.—
 The worst is over now—catch fast
 My mantle, while we turn and cast
 A glance beneath us on the mines
 Where Mammon in the mountains shines!

Faust. What a strange glimmer stains the ground,
 Like the dull heavy clouds around
 The east, ere yet the sun ascends:
 Far down the dusky hue extends,
 For leagues below earth's surface spread.
 A gloomy—thick—discoloured red,
 Tinging the dreary sides of this
 Desperate, hope-deadening precipice—
 Here rises smoke, there vaporous whiteness,
 But yonder what a blaze of brightness
 On every object round is gleaming!—
 Now in a narrow thread 'tis streaming,
 And now the illuminating current
 Bursts sparkling like a winter torrent,
 Here, round the vale, you see it wind,
 In long veins delicate and slender,
 And there in bondage strict confined,
 It brightens into burning splendour!
 A thousand sparks, like gold-dust, sprinkling
 The waste air, are before us twinkling,
 And see the tall rock kindling, brightening,
 Glows with intensity of lightning—
 Turret,—'twould seem—and fence and spire
 Lit up at once with festal fire.

Meph. Well, is not Mammon's princely hall
 Lit gaily for our festival!
 I'm glad you've seen it—the wild night

Bodes storm, that soon will hide it quite—
 Already is it swept from sight—
 Wild work is on the winds—I see already
 Omens that say the boisterous guests are coming.

Faust. The angry gale blows insolently upon us:
 How keen and cold upon my neck it falls,
 Like strokes of some sharp weapon.

Meph. Firmly seize
 The old projections of the ribbed rock—
 Else it will blow you down into the chasm
 Yawning below us like a sepulchre.

Clouds frown heavily, and hearken
 How the wood groans as they darken,
 And the owls, in fear and fright
 At the stormy face of night,
 Beat the air in homeward flight;
 The halls of evergreen are shaking,
 And their thousand pillars breaking,
 Hearken how the tempest wrenches
 Groaning trunks and crashing branches,
 And the earth beneath is rifted,
 And the shrieking trees uplifted—
 Bole, and bough, and blossom cheerful,
 Fair trees fall in ruin fearful;
 —How the haughty forest brothers
 Bend and tremble!—how they fall!
 How they cling on one another's
 Arms!—each crushes each and smothers,
 Till, tangled, strangled, down come all;
 And the wild Winds through the ruin
 Are howling, hissing, and hallooing!
 Down the valleys how they sweep,
 Round and round, above and under,
 Rend the giant cliffs asunder,
 And, with shout and scream appalling,
 Catch the mighty fragments falling!
 How they laugh, and how they leap,
 As they hurry off their plunder!
 Headlong steep, and gorges deep,
 Gulf, and glen, and rock, in wonder,
 Echo back the stormy thunder!
 —List!—I thought I heard a ringing

In my ear of voices singing—
 Above—around us—faint, now clearer,
 Distant now—now warbling nearer—
 Now, all the haunted hill along,
 Streams the maddening, magic song!

Witches in Chorus. On to the Brocken the witches are
 flocking—

Merry meet—merry part—how they gallop and drive,
 Yellow stubble and stalk are rocking,

And young green corn is merry alive,
 With the shapes and shadows swimming by,

To the highest heights they fly,

Where Sir Urian sits on high—

Throughout and about,

With clamour and shout,

Drives the maddening rout,

Over stock, over stone;

Shriek, laughter, and moan,

Before them are blown.

A Voice. Before the rest—beyond the best—

Who to lead the group is fitter?

In savage pride see Baubo ride

On her sow about to litter.

Chorus. Baubo—honour to whom honour—

Benediction be upon her—

Forward, mother!—as we speed us,

Who so fit as thou to lead us!

Forward—clear the way before us!

Then follow we in screaming chorus!

A Voice. Whence came you?

A Voice. Over Ilsenstein—

As I past I peeped into a nest,

And the night-owl, scared from her stupid rest,

Fixed her frightened eyes on mine!

A Voice. O go to the devil—why drive you so fast?

A Voice. She grazed my side as she hurried past,

And the skin is sore and the blast is chill:

Look there—see where—'tis bleeding still.

Chorus of Witches. The way is long, and weary, and

wide—

And the madman throng crowds on every side—

The pitchforks scratch, and the broomsticks scrape,

Will the child within escape,

When the mother, crushed to death,
Suffocating pants for breath?

Wizards and Warlocks [semichorus]. Like the lazy snail,
we linger and trail:

Our woman-kind, as fleet as the wind,
Have left us far and far behind—
On a road like this men droop and drivel,
While woman goes fearless and fast to the devil.

Wizards and Warlocks [semichorus]. Swift they go, and
swift they go,
And gain a thousand steps or so,
But slow is swift, and swift is slow.
Woman will bustle, and woman will justle,
But yet at the end will lose the day,
For hurry and hurry as best she may,
Man at one long bound clears the way.

Voices [from above]. Come with us—come with us from
Felsen-see,
From the lake of rocks to the eagle height
Of the hills—come with us—to-night—to-night!

Voices [from below]. To wander above is the thing we love.
Oh for one hour of this one night!
For one mad dance on the Brocken height!
When shall we join in the wild delight?
We have washed, and washed, and washed us white
Again and again—we are barren quite—
But our hearts are aglow, our cheeks are bright—
We have watched a-left—we have watched a-right,
And we hear the sound of the far-off flight
As they hurry away, and are swept from sight.

The Two Choruses. That wind that scattered the clouds
is dead,
And they thicken soon o'er the wandering moon:
She hides her head—and the stars are fled;—
With a whispering, whistling, drizzling sound,
And a fall of meteor fires around—

Onward, onward, hurry, skurry,
The hell-driven rout of wizards hurry,

Voice [from below]. Stop—stop—stop.

Voice [from above].

What voice is this

Calls to us from the abyss?
Seems it that the words just spoken
From the crannied rock have broken?

Voice [from below]. Stop—stop—stop—for me—for me—

Guarded and bound with slant rocks round—
 Stop—stop—stop—and make me free—
 Three hundred years moiling, three hundred years toiling,
 Hurry work—weary work—step after step;—
 I grasp and I grope, and in time I have hope
 To climb to the top—sisters, stop—sisters, stop—
 I anoint every joint, and I pray my own prayer,
 In the May-sabbath night, to the Prince of the air.—
 Are you not my kindred?—and why am I hind'red
 From mixing among you, and meeting him there?

Both Choruses. Brooms fly fast when warlocks ride 'em
 Rams, with those who know to guide 'em;
 Broken branches gallop lightly;
 Pitchforks, too, make coursers sprightly.

A buck-goat or boar is as good as the best of them;
 Each man for himself, and who cares for the rest of them?
 Many an egg-shell air-balloon,
 To-night will land at our saloon;
 He who fails in his endeavour
 To join us now, is gone for ever.

Half Witch [from below]. Far away I hear their laughter,
 Hopelessly I stumble after;
 Cannot rest at home in quiet—
 Here I cannot join the riot.

Witches in Chorus. Strength is given us by this ointment—
 We will keep to-night's appointment—
 We can speed on sea, no matter
 Were the sail a cobweb tatter;
 And a plank as weak and thin as
 Snail's abandoned shell our pinnace.
 He who cannot fly to-night,
 Will never soar a wizard's flight.

Both Choruses. And when we've reached the topmost
 bound,
 Like swallows skim the haunted ground;
 Far and wide upon the heath,
 Spread your circling guard beneath;
 Watch and ward 'gainst treachery,
 With all the hosts of witchery.

Meph. The air is heavy and oppressive,

And the whirling din excessive ;
 Rattling with the ceaseless babble
 Of the tumultuous hell-driven rabble ;
 Sultry, vaporous, and sickening ;
 To a denser substance thickening,
 Burning noisomely, and glittering
 With fiery sparks for ever frittering,
 Poisoning every thing it reaches,
 Atmosphere for fiends and witches.
 But cling more close to me, or we will lose
 Each other soon—where art thou ?

Faust [from a great distance]. Here I am !

Meph. What, lost already—torn away so far—
 Then must I show that I am master here !
 Make way, good people, for my young friend yonder :—
 Room for young Voland—room, sweet people, room.
 Here, Doctor, cling to me, and with one spring
 We'll rid ourselves of the whole set at once.
 They are too bad—this raving is too much
 Even for me.—Look yonder at the blaze
 Of brightness—a distinct and steady flame !
 How different from all the brimstone torches
 And wildfire lights that madden round the hill,—
 It tempts me to explore that distant copse—
 Come, let us steal away from this wild crowd.

Faust. Spirit of Contradiction—well, lead on !
 I cannot but admire the bright idea
 Of wandering to the Brocken in May-night,
 To enjoy, forsooth, the charms of solitude.

Meph. See, see the lights ! how cheerily they burn !
 There seems to be a merry set assembled,
 A little party met of choice gay spirits.

Faust. Yet would I rather be above—see ! see !
 Where through the whirls of smoke bursts the red light,
 And glows and triumphs—in what hurrying waves
 Numbers on numbers evermore increasing,
 The thickening throng streams onward—still—still on-
 ward—

All under the resistless fascination—
 All to the worship of the evil One—
 The clue to many a puzzling mystery
 May be found here—to-night will be unravelled
 Many a strange riddle.

Meph. And strange riddles, too,
 May be proposed to-night, and not unravelled—
 But leave we the great world and its distractions,
 While we enjoy our quiet corner here.
 'Tis quite established that, in all large parties,
 The guests divide in small and scattered circles—
 See the young witches all are naked there,
 And all the old ones with coy bashfulness,
 Veiling their timid charms—come, come, look pleasant,
 If it were only to oblige a friend—
 'Tis not much trouble, and we'll have rare sport.
 I hear the music—curse upon their scraping!—
 But 'twill sound better when we're used to it.
 Come, come, I must insist upon your coming—
 Come—I must introduce my honoured friend.
 Well now, what think you? Is not this a long
 And splendid room? You scarce can see the end!
 A line of fires—at least a hundred, shine
 Brilliantly: what a scene of gaiety
 Of all kinds—chatting, dancing, drinking here—
 Cooking, and making love—can any thing
 In the world be pleasanter?

Faust. In what character
 Are we to know you—devil, or conjuror?

Meph. I travel, usually, incognito;
 But upon gala days the great display
 Their stars and orders.—I've no need to sport
 A garter—for the horse's foot is here
 In high repute.—See you that sliding snail?
 Eye—smell—touch—all gathered up into one?
 Hither she creeps—her trembling feelers out—
 Instinctively she knows that I am here,
 And touching—smelling—eyeing, on prowls she,
 Crowding herself together—wide awake—
 Out of her frozen sleep suddenly roused.
 Even if I wished disguise, it here would be
 A thing impossible—come, come with me.
 Forward from fire we saunter on to fire:
 Play you the lover where I introduce you.

[As they pass on, MEPHISTOPHELES addresses a party
 sitting round a few dying embers]

Old gentleman, pray, how do you get on
 In the corner here? Why—sure you ought to be

Alive, and flirting in some merry circle.
See, where the gay young girls are giggling, yonder,—
If you are thus dull, you might have stayed at home.

General. Who may trust a people's favour,
Though he fight for them for ever?
To nations, as to girls ungrateful,
The young are dear, the old are hateful.

Ex-Minister. Little now to prize or praise;
—Give me back the good old days,
When kings and courts obeyed our call,
And ourselves were all in all.

Parvenu. I was one of Fortune's pupils,
Disregarded doubts and scruples;
Thus her golden gifts I found;
Then, alas! the wheel turned round.

Author. How public taste declines!—they never
Read works that once were counted clever;
—And then the critics—all invidious—
Pert, prating, ignorant, fastidious!

Meph. [*who has suddenly assumed the appearance of
extreme old age*]. I feel the world is waning into
age;
All things are ripening fast for the last day.
With feeble, tottering feet, for the last time,
I've climbed the witches' hill—the wine of life
Is low with me—and therefore 'tis that I,
An old man, think the world is on the lees.

Huckster-Witch. Who'll buy? who'll buy?—great bar-
gains going!
Rare things here to tempt the knowing!—
Stop and see them!—my collection
Well deserves minute inspection.
Such variety, in vain
Would you hope to meet again,
Of the curious articles,
Which your own old woman sells:
Rare and precious! every one
Hath on earth its business done.
Will you have the dagger knife,
That hath drained a brother's life?
Or the cup that held a draught,
Which was death for him that quaffed?
—This was from a royal feast,

And a queen had drugged the bowl :
 —This a chalice, and the priest,
 —On him a confiding soul
 Looked for comfort—poured in it
 Venom of the aconite :
 Here are trinkets—chain and gem—
 Young man, you should purchase them—
 Pearls, with which the wealthy donor
 Won vain woman to dishonour.
 Poor things ! poor things !—the best and kindest
 Fall soonest, for their heart is blindest,
 And feels, and loves, and does not reason—
 And they are lost—poor things ! poor things !
 —Here are swords, the gift of kings,
 That have done the work of treason ;
 Or pierced, some coward hand directing,
 The sleeping or the unsuspecting.

Meph. Old lady, you mistake the times we live in—
 Every one's heart to novelty is given :
 Throw out your box of relics—such antiques
 As these no creature fancies now or seeks.
 The past is dead and gone—the present passion
 Is novelty—this trash is out of fashion.

Faust. Scarce know I who I am or where—
 They crowd and rush as at a fair.

Meph. Forward the whirling crowd is striving,
 All driven along the stream and driving,
 All rushing on in one direction,
 And each enjoying the reflection
 That he to-night is his own sovereign,
 That his own thoughts his movements govern,
 Unconscious that the same broad river
 Bears down its wave each self-deceiver.

Faust. Who's that ?

Meph. Her features closely scan—
 'Tis the first wife of the first man.

Faust. Who, say you ?

Meph. Adam's first wife, Lilith.
 Beware—beware of her bright hair,
 And the strange dress that glitters there :
 Many a young man she beguileth,
 Smiles winningly on youthful faces,
 But woe to him whom she embraces !

Faust [looking at another group]. The old grey witch—
how she squats down—poor devil!
Panting for breath—half dead—fainting and floundering—
And the young vixen with her finds the revel
Rather too much for her—she, too, is foundering.

Meph. Nonsense, the fun will ne'er be over.
Advance, my friend, and play the lover.
Look, man, the girl's well worth the winning—
Come, join the dances just beginning.

[FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES take partners

Faust [dancing with the young witch]. 'Twas my fortune
once to see
In a dream an apple-tree ;
Rosy apples—one, two, three—
With a glad smile tempted me ;
And to-night again I seem,
In the trance of that sweet dream,
Lovely is the tree I wis,
And the apple pleasant is.

The Young Witch. Dear little apples—ay ! their price
Was more than gold in paradise—
And pleasant to the sight and touch
I come from gardens rich in such.

Meph. [with the old witch]. I had a troubled dream, and
it
Was haggard as a night-mare fit.
I saw an old tree torn and split,
And yet it pleased me, I admit.

The Old Witch. With lowest courtesy I salute
The gay knight of the Horse's Foot ;
The tree of knowledge, trunk and root,
Is his—and his must be the fruit.

Proktophantasmist. Cursed devils—how they murder
All attempts at keeping order :
All in vain it is to prove
To Spirits by what laws they move ;—
Mocking at all regulation,
Ridiculing demonstration,
See them onward still advancing,
Ghosts ! like men and women dancing.

The Young Witch. Who's this presumes to interfere ?
What means the forward fellow here ?

Faust. What—he ?—why he is everywhere—

He never dances—but he guides
 Opinion—disapproves—decides—
 On carriage and the true division
 Of time gives laws with calm precision.
 While others *dance* he *criticizes*,
 And all is perfect that he prizes ;
 And what he does not prate about
 Is but of small account, no doubt ;
 Nay, such his wondrous powers of seeing,
 What he beholds not has no being ;
 Our careless grouping must perplex him,
 But dancing forward's sure to vex him.
 The only figures he approves
 Are where the set in circles moves,
 Still turning his own humdrum round
 Within the same contracted bound,
 Holding, at times, grave consultation,
 Listening to him with veneration,
 As he with magisterial rigour
 Commands a change of tune and figure.

Prok. Still here ! defying me ! this rabble
 Of rude ghosts !—'tis intolerable !
 What ! restlessly still thronging hither ?
 Vanish from my sight—fade—wither—
 How can men say that spectres haunt 'em ?
 —The mind, does it not make the phantom ?
 Who and what are they ?—mere relations
 That we may see or not at pleasure—
 And here they come and—grant me patience—
 Mix in the dance—converse at leisure.
 I thought, that, by my labours brightened,
 The world for this was too enlightened.
 These devils—they rise, and in derision
 Of all I say, still cross my vision.
 What—beings, that have no existence,
 To mock each law of time and distance !
 Why, after this, the Tegel ghost
 May grin again at his old post.
 I thought I'd swept away these fancies
 Of plays, and poems, and romances !
 Still here ! with all the noise of Babel !
 These dreams of a forgotten fable !
The Young Witch. Silence, silence, old intruder !

Prok. What! the ghosts are growing ruder—
 How they beard me, in defiance
 Of every inference of science!
 Fiends, I tell you to your faces,
 I will make you know your places!
 What! in public thus to fool us!
 A mob of ghosts, forsooth, to rule us! [*The dancing goes on*
To-night—why this is Goblin-hall,
Spirits and spectres all in all.
 My comments—what are they?—the cavils,
 Of a sour cynic on his travels,
 A passing stranger's jealous spite.
 —But Time will set the matter right,
 Good sense assert its proper power,
 Dethrone the tyrant of the hour,
 And take revenge on my tormentors.
 Goblins, and ghosts, and ghost-inventors!

Meph. He'll throw himself into a puddle!
 There will he, stupefying, muddle,
 Till leeches, clinging to his body,
 Are weary of their banquet bloody:
 For spirits sinking—spirits rising
 The one cure is phlebotomizing;
 Delusions vanish soon—the leech
 Diseases of the head can reach
 And cure them—biting on the breech—
 Blue devils fade fast, and, disappearing,
 Smile on the sage with aspect cheering.
 The brain will thus correct and clear its
 Vague whims, and vexing thoughts of spirits.
 —Why have you quitted thus already
 Your sweet and captivating lady,
 Who sang so lovingly and well,
 And danced so——

Faust. Why, I fear to tell;
 But from her mouth, while she was singing,
 I saw a little red mouse springing.

Meph. Why start at trifles, my good fellow?
 'Tis well it was not grey or yellow.
 What can these dull suspicions profit?
 The mouse—why make a mountain of it?
 A pretty sort of reason this is
 To fly a loving lady's kisses.

Faust. And then I saw——

Meph.

What?

Faust.

Look, Mephisto, there,

See you far off, and shadow-like, a fair
Pale form—a lovely girl—almost a child—
Standing alone—with sweet eyes, sad and mild?
She looks on us—she moves—she leaves the place—
Her feet are bound—she slides with mournful pace.
I cannot from my heart dispel the wild,
Strange thought, that her's is my own Margaret's face.

Meph. Repel that thought; 'tis but an idle trick
Of heated fancy, and the form you see
Is nothing but a magic mockery,
To gaze on it most dangerous may be.

Charmed by its marble stare, the blood grows thick
And hardens into marble; but ere now
You must have heard of pale Medusa's brow.

Faust. Ah, no! a corpse's eyes are those
Whose lids no loving fingers close.
'Tis she—that form—that face—that breast
So often to my bosom prest.

Meph. Fool! 'tis delusion! every lover
Would there his charmer's looks discover.

Faust. What mirth is here—and, oh! what grief—my
glance
Still—still returns to that pale countenance;
And see around her neck a slender chain,
That stripes the snowy skin with crimson stain:
Scarce broader than a knife's thin edge it gleams—
A strangely chosen ornament it seems.

Meph. Yes, you are right; for I can see it too.
—But think no more of it than others do.

Be not surprised, if you should see her carry
Her head under her arm—'twere like enough;
For since the day that Perseus cut it off,
Such things are not at all extraordinary.

But see, all others here are pleasant;
Cease moping, and enjoy the present:

All around the hill is merriment—

Try thou the same experiment.

Never did crowded capital

A gayer throng together call;

And if my senses do not err,

Yonder's an open theatre.

—Well, what's your business?

Servibilis. We are just beginning—

'Tis a new piece—the last of seven—seven is
The customary number here—'twas written
By a young amateur of fancy—the actors
Are dilettanti all—your pardon, gentlemen,
But I must vanish—I'm an amateur
Myself—and for this one night draw the curtain.

Meph. Blocksberg for ever!—not a player
On earth but merits to be there!

XXII

WALPURGIS-NIGHT'S DREAM

OR,

THE GOLDEN BRIDAL OF OBERON AND TITANIA

AN INTERLUDE

Manager. To-day our trouble is but small.

No need of nice machinery;
A valley moist and hill are all
The necessary scenery.

Herald. 'Mong mortals with the fiftieth year
Of wedlock comes the Golden Feast—
A happier feast of gold is here
Commemorating discord ceast.

Oberon. Subject spirits, crowd the scene,
Celebrate, with exultation,
The union of your king and queen,
This happy reconciliation.

Puck. Here comes Puck—you'll always find me
Circling in the merry dance,
And a hundred more behind me
Twinkling joyous feet advance.

Ariel. Sweet, heavenly sweet is Ariel's song.
 What a crowd of hideous features
 The music wins, and what a throng
 Follows me of lovely creatures!

Oberon. Men and wives who would agree,
 We invite your imitation;
 The only certain recipe
 For dying love is separation.

Titania. If wife be cross, and husband fuming,
 To make them know each other's worth,
 To the South Pole take the woman,
 And her husband to the North.

The Whole Orchestra. Insect swarms, in murmuring
 flight,
 Our musicians of the night,
 Fly, and gnat, and bee, and beetle,
 Ply mouth, nose, and winglet little,
 Crickets, chirping, 'mong the bushes,
 And hoarse frogs croaking from the rushes.

Solo. Hear the drowsy bagpipe groan,
 The bag's a soap-blown bubble airy,
 And grumbling through the winding drone
 Come sullen sounds extraordinary.

Embryo Spirit. Spider's foot and lizard's belly,
 And winglets for the embryo!
 The animated lump of jelly
 Writes verses of the smoothest flow.

Partners dancing. Little steps—light, springy leaps
 Through honey-dew and field-flowers fragrant;
 How pleasant, but that something keeps
 From fields of air the willing vagrant!

Inquisitive Traveller. A thousand figures here bur-
 lesque
 A masquerade's wild gaiety,
 And mingling with the groups grotesque,
 See Oberon the little deity.

Orthodox Divine. What! without claws — without a tail!

Yet all whose thoughts are sober on
Such serious subjects know too well
The "Gods of Greece" and Oberon.

Artist from the North. As yet my works are sketches merely,

Though you'll admit done prettily,
But I've made my arrangements nearly
For travelling in Italy.

Formalist. What sinful, riotous excesses!

Fool that I was to join the crowd here—
Such shockingly indecent dresses!
And but a witch in two wears powder!

Young Witch. Keep powder, patch, and petticoat

For grey-haired hags — skins smeared and sooty—

While I sit fearless on my goat
In the free pride of naked beauty.

Matron. For scolding we've too much politeness—

Sneers like this are best forgotten.

Rosy cheek, and soft neck's whiteness,
May they soon be coarse and rotten!

Leader of the Band. Insect-harpers, as you wander

Round the hall in many a ringlet,

Spare the naked beauty yonder

Wound of sting, or touch of winglet.

Grasshoppers from the green bushes,

Brown frogs croaking from the rushes,

Brave musicians for the night,

Watch that the tune and time go right.

Weathercock [*pointing in one direction*]. Well, what a brilliant company!

The girls how fair and unaffected!

And not a man but seems to be

For beauty from mankind selected!

Weathercock [*pointing in the opposite direction*]. What devils all! unless the ground Should cleave asunder to receive them, I'll fly from this place, with one bound, To hell, or any where, to leave 'em.

Xenien. Small as insects, here we bring Our little shears; the crops we gather Will be a grateful offering To Satan, our liege lord and father!

Hennings. What merry groups are crowding there: Up to every frolic started; And when they're gone—I won't say where— We call them foolish, but good-hearted.

Musaget. Oh happy, happy bard! whom chance To such a circle introduces. With these I'd rather lead the dance Than be Apollo with the muses.

Genius of the Old Times. Come, follow me through smooth and rough; Cling close—there's little need of ceremony. On Blocksberg we'll find room enough, The wide Parnassus 'tis of Germany.

Inquisitive Traveller. What's yonder pompous fellow's name? With long and solemn strides he's pacing, And, like a dog that snuffs the game, The Jesuits, methinks, he's tracing.

Crane. I seek my prey in waters clear, I seek it in the troubled rivers; This scene is my delight, for here Are devils mixed with true believers.

Worldling. For true believers every thing Works good in all ways unexpected; With hymns the Blocksberg rocks shall ring, From many a convent here erected.

Dancer. Is this another company,
With trumpets sounding—banners glittering?
No; 'tis the boreal lights I see;
From marshes hear the booming bittern.

Dancing-master. Devils—how they fling and jump—
Through the figure flounce and scuffle;
Spite of wooden leg and hump,
How they caper, cut, and shuffle!

Fiddler. Hatred in every heart! the tone
Of Orpheus' lyre, with charm celestial,
Soothed brutes; to-night the bagpipe's drone
Tames into peace the blind and bestial!

Dogmatist. Well, I'll maintain it—spite of sneer,
Or argument, or gibe uncivil—
I see a thousand devils here,
Which proves the being of a devil.

Idealist. Imagination's power to-night
For my sensorium too intense is;
If I be all that meets my sight,
Then surely I have lost my senses.

Realist. Reality . . . is torturing me;
I'm wearied with this scene of wonder;
The ground—it seems the ground to be—
Gives way my tottering feet from under.

Supernaturalist. Here, for my system, as I rove,
Delighted I derive assistance;
If there be devils, it must prove
Of angels also the existence.

Sceptic. Misled they follow fairy rays,
That promise gold with gay delusion:
Devil and Doubt, the proverb says,
And both increase to-night's confusion.

Leader of the Band. Grasshopper among the bushes,
Brown frog croaking from the rushes,

Hell and all its devils haunt ye,
 Good-for-nothing dilettanti—
 Pretty sort of harmony,
 Nose of gnat and snout of fly.

Shrewd Fellows. Call us *Sans-souci*—for you know
 That each of us, a gay philosopher,
 If on his feet he cannot go,
 Walks on his head, nor fears a toss over.

Awkward Clumsy Creatures. Oh once, Heaven help us!
 we could dance;
 How pompously we then did swagger!
 Now shoes out-worn, and sore feet torn,
 Along the course we faintly stagger.

Will-o'-the-Wisps. From the sink and slough we come,
 From the hole of steaming nitre;
 And yet, in all this dazzling room,
 Shine there sparks more gay or brighter?

Falling Star. Rapidly I shot from high,
 With fiery course in brightness starry;
 Here broken on the grass I lie,
 With none to help me, none to carry.

Heavy Bodies. Places—places—round go we—
 Where we dance how bare the sod is;
 Spirits move, and all may see
 Spirits have substantial bodies.

Puck. Like awkward elephants they thump
 The ground with clumsy hoofs and heavy,
 Strange shadows! Puck alone is plump,
 The sleekest spirit at the levee.

Ariel. If wings be yours—boon Nature's gift—
 And if the spirit so disposes,
 Then follow Ariel—follow swift—
 Your guide to yonder hill of roses.

Orchestra [pianissimo]. Daylight!—the cloud-built stage
 —the wreaths
 Of vapour,—where are they?
 On reed and rush the free air breathes,
 And sweeps the dream away.

XXIII

GLOOMY DAY

A PLAIN

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES

Faust. In misery—in despair—long wandering in wretchedness over the wide world; and now taken up—shut up in the prison as a malefactor—this gentle, unhappy creature—for horrid tortures. To this—and has it come to this? Treacherous, worthless Spirit! and this hast thou been concealing from me! Stand, there, stand! Ay! roll the devil eyes furiously round in thy head—ay! stand and defy me with thy unsupportable presence. Taken up—in distress irretrievable—given over to evil spirits—abandoned to—man—man that passes judgment, and is devoid of feeling; and all this, while you have been lulling and rocking me and deluding me among loathsome dissipations, and hiding from me her continually increasing wretchedness, and have left her to perish without help!

Meph. She is not the first!

Faust. Dog! abhorred monster! turn him, oh, thou infinite Spirit, turn the reptile again into his dog's shape, in which it was often his pleasure to scamper before me by night, to roll before the feet of the unthinking passer-by, and as he fell to fasten on his shoulders. Turn him again into his darling shape, that he may crouch upon his belly before me in the sand, and that I may trample upon him with my foot—the outcast! Not the first! Misery—misery—by no human soul is it to be fathomed how more than one creature should have sunk into the depths of this distress—that the first should not have suffered enough in her agonising tortures to secure the atonement of all the rest before the eyes of the All-merciful! I feel marrow and life harrowed up by the misery of this one—

only this one! thou art grinning calmly over the fate of thousands!

Meph. At our wits' end we are again, it would seem, already—just where you mortals find the overstrained faculties snap. Why seek our society, if you cannot go through with it? Think of flying, and yet art not proof against dizziness! Did we force ourselves upon thee? or thou thyself upon us?

Faust. Show not thy thirsty teeth thus defyingly—I loathe thee. Great, glorious Spirit! thou who didst deign to appear to me, thou who knowest my very heart and soul; why hast thou chained me with this companion who feeds on mischief, and battens on destruction?

Meph. Are you done?

Faust. Save her, or woe to thee! the most horrible curse on thee for thousands of years.

Meph. I cannot loosen the avenger's fetters—I cannot open his bolts. Save her! Who was it that threw her into ruin—I or thou? [FAUST looks wildly around

Art thou grasping for the thunder? Well that it has not been given to you wretched mortals! To dash to pieces one who stands in your way—however innocent—that is just the tyrant's way of rescuing himself in every perplexity.

Faust. Take me thither—she shall be free!

Meph. The danger to which you expose yourself—have you thought of that? The guilt of blood shed by your hand still lies on the town. Over the place where the murder was committed avenging spirits are hovering and watching for the returning murderer.

Faust. That, too, and from thee? Murder and death of a world upon thee, monster! Take me thither, I say, and set her at liberty.

Meph. I will,—and all I can do I will. What that all is, listen till I tell you. Have I all power in heaven and on earth? I will cloud the gaoler's senses. Do you possess yourself of the keys, and carry her off with human hand. Meanwhile I watch; the magic horses are ready, and I take you away. This much I can do.

Faust. Up and away!

XXIV

NIGHT

OPEN PLAIN

FAUST *and* MEPHISTOPHELES *rushing along on Black
Horses*

Faust. What are the figures near the gibbet doing?
Weaving, 'twould seem!

Meph. No—rather boiling, brewing
Some filthy broth—mumbling some incantation.

Faust. East they move, and west they move—now kneel,
now bend down in prostration.

Meph. Witches worshipping their master.

Faust. They scatter something on the earth, and now
seem pouring a libation—
They sprinkle something in the air.

Meph. Forward! forward!—faster! faster!

XXV

DUNGEON

Faust [*with a bunch of keys and a lamp, before an iron
wicket*]. 'Tis many a day since I have trembled thus.
Misery on misery heaped—a heavy burden,
More than man can endure, has weighed me down.
And here within these damp walls doth she live,
And is to die because she was deluded—
To die for that her brain was wild and frenzied.
And thou dost hesitate to go to her!
Dost fear to look upon that face again!
Onward, irresolute!—this wavering
Delays not death.

[He takes hold of the lock.—Singing from within
My mother! my mother!

The wanton woman—My mother hath slain me.
My father, inhuman, for supper hath ta'en me—
My little sister hath, one by one,
Laid together each small white bone,
'Mong almond blossoms to sleep in the cool;
And I woke me a wood-bird beautiful.

Fly away, fly away, all the long summer-day,
Little bird of the woods, fly away! fly away!

Faust [opening the wicket]. She feels not that her love
is listening—

Hear the chains, as they clank, and the straw rustling.

[He enters

Marg. [hiding her face in the straw of her bed]. Woe!
woe! they come! they come!—death, bitter death!

Faust [in a low voice]. Hush! hush! 'tis I who come
to rescue thee!

Marg. [rolling herself at his feet]. Art thou a man?
Have pity upon me.

Faust. Hush! hush! these screams and shrieks will
wake the keepers.

[He takes hold of the chains to unlock them

Marg. [throwing herself on her knees to him]. Savage,
who gave this cruel power to thee?

It is not more than midnight now—have mercy!

Is it too long a time to wait till morn? [She stands up

And I am still so young—so very young!

And must I die so soon?—and I was fair—

And I was fair, and that was my undoing.

Oh, if my love were here—but he is gone—

Torn is my garland—scattered all its flowers—

Oh, do not grasp me with such violence—

Ah, spare me! sure I have not injured thee:

Let me not weep and pray to thee in vain!

Spare me—I never saw thy face before.

Faust. I must—I must endure this misery!

Marg. I know that I am wholly in thy power—

Only permit me first to give my breast

To this poor child of mine: all the long night

I hugged it to my heart, they took it from me;

They took away my child to torture me,

And now they say that I have murdered it,

And never never more shall I be happy :
 And they sing songs about me—'twas ill done ;
 It was ill done—so the old ballad runs.

Who told them I was meant in it ?

Faust [*throws himself down*]. A lover, Margaret, lies at
 thy feet ;

He comes to undo these bonds—unloose these fetters.

Marg. [*throws herself beside him*]. Let us kneel down,
 and call upon the saints.

See ! see ! beneath us hell boils up—the devil
 Is raving there below in hideous din !

Faust [*aloud*]. Margaret—Margaret.

Marg. [*with eager attention*]. That is my love's voice.

[*Springs up—her fetters fall off*]

Where is he ?—Where ?—I heard my own love's voice !

Now am I free, none, none shall keep me from him.

I'll clasp his neck—will lean upon his bosom ;

I heard him call,—he's standing on the threshold,—

I heard him call the name of Margaret ;—

Amid the noises and the howls of hell,

And threats, and taunts, and laughs of devilish scorn,

I heard my own love's voice—his loving voice !

Faust. 'Tis I.

Marg. 'Tis thou !—oh, tell me so once more !

[*Presses him to her bosom*]

'Tis he, 'tis he—my pangs, where are they now ?

Dungeon, and chains, and scaffold, where are they ?

'Tis thou, and thou hast come to rescue me.

I am already free : look—there's the street

Where we first met—where first I saw my love—

And yonder is the cheerful garden, smiling,

Where I and Martha waited to receive thee.

Faust [*striving to take her away*]. Come, come with me.

Marg. Oh, stay a little while—

Some moments more—I love to stay with thee !

[*Caressing him*]

Faust. Haste—haste—a moment lost we dearly rue it.

Marg. So short a time away from me, my love,

Already hast forgotten how to kiss !

Why do I feel so sad upon your neck ?

Time was all heaven was pressing down upon me

In all thy words,—in every look of thine,

Yes, very heaven,—and then, then you did kiss me

As if you would smother me with your kisses!
Kiss me—now kiss me, love—or I kiss thee!

[*She embraces him*

Ah me! your lips are cold—are dumb—are dead—
Where are my kisses, where? with whom have you left
them?

Where is my love? who robbed me of your love?

[*Turns from him*

Faust. Come, come—take courage, follow me, my love.
I love thee with unutterable love;
But follow me,—this one—this one request.

Marg. [*turning to him*]. And is it thou, and is it thou
indeed?

Faust. Yes, yes! But come!

Marg. And do you break my chains!
And do you take me to your heart again!
How is it you do not shudder at my sight?
And knowest thou whom thou art delivering?

Faust. Come!—the deep night is fading fast away.

Marg. My mother, I have murdered her—my child,
I drowned my child—Oh was it not a gift
To thee and me?—yes thee! yes, thine! and thou art
here,

I scarcely can believe it is thyself.
Give me thy hand—it is not then a dream;
Thine own dear hand. Oh, God! his hand is moist
Wipe, wipe it off! methought it felt like blood!
What hast thou done? Put up the bloody sword;
I pray thee do.

Faust. Oh think not of the past;
That which is done, is done. You are killing me.

Marg. No, you must live. No, you have to remain,
I will describe to you the graves which you
To-morrow must see made; the best place give
To my poor mother—near her lay my brother—
And by their side, a little space away,
But not too far from them must be my place—
And lay the little one on my right breast;
No other will lie with me in that bed!
To nestle down in quiet side by side
To thee—oh what a happy thing it was—
A happy thing that never more can be.
I feel as if I forced myself on thee,

And that thou wert repelling my embrace ;
 And yet thou art the same—and yet thy looks
 Are good and kind, as they have ever been.

Faust. Oh, if thou feelest that 'tis I, come, come.

Marg. What ? out there ?

Faust. Yes ! out into the free air.

Marg. Ay, to the grave—does not death lurk without ?

Come to the bed of everlasting rest—

Yes, yes—that's all—that's all—not a step farther—

Are you going, Henry ? may I go with you ?

Faust. Come, come : the gates are open, only come.

Marg. I dare not go ; there is no help for me.

What good is it to fly ? My steps are watched.

It is a hard thing to be forced to beg,

And harder, harassed by an evil conscience.

'Tis hard to wander in a foreign land,

And then, whate'er I do, at last they'll seize me.

Faust. I will be with thee.

Marg. [*wildly*]. Fly, fly,

Save thy poor child ;

Away to the road,

By the side of the stream,

And across the path

That leads to the wood ;

Then turn to the left,

And over the plank,

It lies in the pond.

Loiter not, linger not.

Still does it stir

With the motion of life.

The little hands struggle

More faintly and faintly,

Rescue ! Oh rescue !

Faust. Recall thy wandering mind—be calm ! be calm !
 One step, and you are free.

Marg. Oh, that we had but left that hill behind !
 See there, my mother sitting on a stone—
 Icy-cold comes a dead hand on my temples.

My mother there is sitting on a stone,

And her grey head is trembling, and her eyes

Close, and she now has ceased to nod ; her head

Looks heavy, and she sleeps too long—too long—

Oh, when she sank to sleep how blest we were !
It was a happy time !

Faust. She listens not ;
Words have no weight with her. There is no way,
But forcibly to bear thee hence.

Marg. Touch me not ; no, I will not suffer violence :
Seize me not with that murderer's grasp ; whate'er
I did was done for thee, my love. I did
Every thing my love asked me, willingly.

Faust. Day dawns—oh, hasten hence, my love ! my
love !

Marg. Day ! yes, 'tis day, the last, the judgment-day ;
My bridal-day it should have been ; tell none
That thou hast been with poor weak Margaret.
Alas ! my garland is already withered ;
We'll meet again, but not at dances, love :
The crowd is gathering tumultuously,
The square and street are thronged with crushing thou-
sands ;

The bell hath sounded ; the death-wand is broken ;
They bind and blindfold me, and force me on :
On to the scaffold they have hurried me ;
Down in the chair of blood they fasten me :
And now, through every neck of all that multitude
Is felt the bitter wound that severs mine.
The world is now as silent as the grave !

Faust. Oh, that I never had been born !

Meph. [*appears at the door*]. Away, or you are lost.
This trembling, and delay, and idle chattering,
Will be your ruin ; hence, or you are lost ;
My horses shiver in the chilling breeze
Of the grey morning

Marg. What shape is that which rises from the earth ?
'Tis he, 'tis he, oh, send him from this place ;
What wants he here ? Oh, what can bring him here ?
Why does he tread on consecrated ground ?
He comes for me.

Faust. Oh, thou shalt live, my love.

Marg. Upon the judgment-throne of God, I call ;
On God I call in humble supplication.

Meph. [*to Faust*]. Come, or I leave thee here to share
her fate.

Marg. Father of heaven, have mercy on thy child.

Ye angels, holy hosts, keep watch around me.

Henry—I am afraid to look at thee.

Meph. Come—she is judged!

Voice [from above].

She is saved!

Meph. [to Faust].

Hither to me!

[Disappears with FAUST

Voice [from within, dying away]. Henry! Henry!

THE TRAGEDY OF FAUST

SECOND PART

ACT I

I

A PLEASING LANDSCAPE

TWILIGHT

FAUST, *lying on a flowery grass-plot, weary, restless, striving to sleep. Spirits flit, hovering about—beautiful little forms.*

ARIEL

[*Song, accompanied by Æolian harps.*]

IN the spring, soft showers of blossoms
Sink down over all the earth;
And the green fields—a wide blessing—
Smile for all of mortal birth.
And the generous little Fairies
Haste to help whom help they may.
Is he good? or is he evil?
What know they? or what care they?
He is man—he is unhappy;
And they help whom help they may.

[*Addresses the FAIRIES.*]

Ye, round this head who sweep in airy rings,
Here, generous, gentle spirits, noble Elves,
In your true nature manifest yourselves.
Make soft the heart—assuage its savage strife;
Chase back remorse—repel his burning stings;
Cleanse from the thoughts foul bygone wreck of life.
Four are the pauses of the lingering night—
To speed and charm them be it your delight.
First in cool pillows let his head sink deep;
Then bathe him in the dew of Lethe's stream.

Soon, his cramped limbs relaxing them, sweet sleep
Comes strengthening him to meet the morning's beam.

Then, brightest proof of fairy might,
And, kindest boon of fairy wight,
Give him back to holy light!

*Chorus of FAIRIES, at first singly; then two, and more,
alternately and together*

When the twilight mists of evening
Darken the encircling green,
Breezes come with balmy fragrance—
Clouds sink down with dusky screen;
And the heart—sweet whispers soothe it,
Rocked to infant-like repose;
And the eyes of the o'er-wearied
Feel the gates of daylight close.

Night hath now sunk down—and rising
Star comes close on holy star;
Sovereign splendours—tiny twinklers—
Sparkle near and shine from far:
Sparkle from the glassy waters—
Shine high up in the clear night;
While, of peace the seal and symbol,
Reigns the full moon's queenly light.

On have flown the hours—and sorrows
Vanish; nor can joy abide.
Feel through sleep the sense of healing!
In the purpling dawn confide!
Green vales brightening—hills out-swelling;
Flowering copses—budding tree—
In the young corn's silver wavelets
Bends the harvest soon to be.

Wake to Hope, and Hope's fulfilment;
In the sunrise see the day!
Thin the filmy bands that fold thee:
Fling the husk of sleep away!
Dare—determine—act. The many
Waver. Be not thou as these.

All things are the noble spirit's
Clear to see, and quick to seize.

[*A tremendous tumult announces sunrise*

Ariel. Harken! hark! the storm of sunrise—
Sounding but to Spirits' ears—
As the Hours fling wide the portals
Of the East, and Day appears.
How the rock-gates, as the chariot
Of the sun bursts through, rebound
Roll of drum, and wrath of trumpet,
Crashing, clashing, flashing round;
Unimaginable splendour—
Unimaginable sound!
Light is come; and in the tumult,
Sight is deadened—hearing drowned.

In the bells of flowerets hide,
Or beneath the green leaves glide;
Deeper, deeper in the rock,
Shrink ye from the deafening shock!

[*FAIRIES disappear*

Faust [alone]. Life's pulses reawakening leap anew,
The gentle twilight of the dawn to greet;
And thou, O Earth!—for nature still is true—
Didst, this night, of the common boon partake;
And, breathing in fresh vigour at my feet,
Already, with thy charms of new delight,
Dost in my heart the earnest wish awake
To strive towards Being's unascended height.
Half seen, half hid, in twilight gleams the world;
The dawning woodland rings with ceaseless sound,—
Life's thousand voices: rapture infinite;
And, to and fro the valley, mist-wreaths curled
Gush in loose streaks;—yet downward pierces deep
Heaven's brightness. From the vaporous gulf profound
Start boughs and branches, disenthralled from sleep;
And sparks of colour leap up from the ground
In trembling flower and leaflet dew-impearled.
A paradise is everywhere around.

Look up! O' th' mountains, how each giant height
Reveals the unrisen sun with solemn glow;

They are the first to enjoy the eternal light
 That later will to us its way have found.
 Now, on the green-sunk Alpine meadows low
 The dawn-streaks a distincter radiance shed ;
 And, downward speeding still in gradual flow,
 The wide illumination here is spread.
 Forth comes the sun—insufferably bright.
 I shrink with wounded eyes—I cower as from a blow !

Thus, too, it is, when yearning Hope hath striven
 Trustfully toward the Highest, and at last
 Finds open flung Fulfilment's portal wings ;
 But then o'er-powering burst—we stand aghast—
 Flames rushing from those deep eternal springs :
 Life's torch we would have lit with light from heaven,
 A fire-sea whirls about us—and what fire !
 Is't Love ? is't Hate ? that glowing round us clings—
 With pain and joy, and passion and desire—
 So that again we would our eyes depress
 To earth ; again would hide us in the veil
 Of childhood—unforeseeing, passionless.

Behind me, then, let burn the sun's fierce blaze !

Where roars the cataract thro' the rent rock
 I gaze—delight increasing as I gaze ;
 From fall to fall, in thousand thousand streams,
 He leaps—down plunges he with thunder-shock—
 Whirls, rushes, raves—mad foam on foam uptost ;
 But, see ! where springs—glad bud of this wild storm—
 A tranquil presence thro' the storm that gleams.
 The heaven-illumined Rainbow's glorious form ;
 Distinctly now limned out, and now it seems
 To flow away, in airy atoms lost,
 Spreading around a cool and fragrant shower.
 Man's strivings, are they not the torrent's strife ?
 Think, and yet more you feel the emblem's power :
 The colour, the reflected light, is Life.

II

THE IMPERIAL PALACE

HALL OF THE THRONE

COUNCIL OF STATE. *Trumpets.* COURTIERS of every rank, splendidly dressed, enter. The EMPEROR ascends the throne, on his right the ASTROLOGER

Emperor. Trusty and well-beloved, from far and near Assembled, I am glad to meet you here. I see the Wise Man at my side ; but where's The Fool ?

Squire. He stumbled as he climbed the stairs ; He trod too close upon the spreading train Of the robe, and tripped. They bore him off amain ; But whether dead or drunk, who knows or cares ?

2nd Squire. And lo ! preferment comes apace. Another's pushing for the place ; Tricked out in so superb a trim, That every eye is fixed on him. The palace guards would stop him fain, And cross their halberds : all in vain. See where he has got, foolhardy fool !

Enter MEPHISTOPHELES dressed as Court Fool ; he kneels at the foot of the throne

Meph. That which men execrate, yet welcome to them ; Long for, and yet would from their presence chase it ; Protect, and yet they say it will undo them ; Declaim against, deride, and still embrace it ? He, whom you may not call to your assistance, Yet smile when any have to him alluded ; What from thy throne now stands at no great distance— What from this circle hath itself excluded ?

Emperor [to MEPHISTOPHELES]. Enough! your riddles here are out of place.

These gentlemen, in their own, have a hard case
To deal with; solve it for us if you can.

I should be too well pleased to have the man
Who could do that. My old Fool's gone, I fear,
To the—— Take his place at my side: stand here.

[MEPHISTOPHELES steps up and places himself at the
EMPEROR'S left hand

Murmurs of the Crowd. A new fool! . . . I like old things best.

How came he in? . . . What interest?

Struck down at once. . . . How he did sip!

That was a tub. . . . And this a chip.

Emp. Welcome, my well-beloved, from near and far,
Convened beneath this favourable star.

Who reads the heavens sees in the horoscope
Prosperity there written—Welfare, Hope.

Why, at such time when we would drown all cares
But of decorum beards and masquing dress—

When we would feast upon our happiness—

This Council about plaguy State affairs?

Yet if it can't but be so—and you see it

Fit that it should so be—why then so be it!

[The COUNCIL being thus formally opened by the EM-
PEROR, the CHANCELLOR, who is also Archbishop,
makes his Report on the general state of the Empire.
His Report is followed by similar statements from
the other High Functionaries

Chancellor. Justice, man's highest virtue, loves to shed
Its saintly halo-wreath round Cæsar's head.

Inviolable Justice—the demand

Of all, the absence of which all deplore—

'Tis his to minister and to protect.

But what avails high reach of intellect,

Goodness of heart, or willingness of hand,

Where evil hatches evil evermore,

And a mad fever rages through the land?

Down from this height look on the realm: 'twould seem

That you are struggling in a powerless dream,

Where monstrous things o'er monstrous things bear sway,

And misrule is the order of the day,

And lawlessness is law—the one law men obey.

One from your homestead sweeps off steed or steer,
 Or carries away a woman, or a pix
 From the altar—chalice, cross, or candlesticks—
 And boasts of his exploits for many a year:
 Skin safe and sound—and wherefore should he fear?
 Appellants crowd the justice-hall—
 The proud judge sits on his high pillows;
 Meanwhile rave on with savage squall
 The uproar's swelling billows,
 And glorying in his shame stands forth the criminal.
 His crime protects him. He comes aided by
 Accomplices on whom he can rely.
 "Guilty," the sure award, when Innocence
 Is all a man can plead in his defence.

The world's disjointed all; decency quite
 Extinct. How can the feeling, in man's breast,
 That leads him to discern and love the right,
 Live as a thought, or be in act expressed?
 Men, whom as meaning well we may describe,
 To flattery yield, or to some coarser bribe.
 The judge, who cannot punish, will in time
 Connive at, nay, participate in crime.
 These are dark colours, would that I could draw
 A thick gauze o'er such picture! [*Pause.*]

Measures strong

Must be adopted; it brooks no delay:
 When every man fears wrong, and lives by wrong,
 The prince dishonoured suffers more than they.
General-in-Chief. How they do rave and rage in these
 wild days!

Every one, every where—madness outright.
 Command—aye, say command—when none obeys.
 The burgher, safe within his walls—the knight,
 Perched on his rocky nest, stand there defying
 All we can do—on their own strength relying.
 The hireling, for his pay, makes blustering claim.
 They're with us yet; but were the debt
 Once paid, 'tis little that we'd see of them.
 Enforce, where all resist it, a command!
 'Twere into a wasp's nest to thrust your hand.
 The kingdom, which they should protect,
 Look at it—devastated, plundered, wrecked!

We cannot pay them ; and we must permit
 Violence, rapine, wrong. All suffer it.
 The Empire ! What's the Empire ? Half the lands
 Utterly lost to us—in rebel hands,
 And foreign princes, not one of them cares
 For it or us : 'tis our concern, not theirs.

Treasurer. Who on allies can reckon ? The supplies,
 That were to have come in from our allies,
 —Pipewater, when the conduit pipes are cut !
 And, in your realm, is property secure ?
 Go where one will, 'tis a new man keeps house :
 One who would seem to have no object but
 To hold his own, and with no thanks to us.
 We must look on, and helplessly endure !
 So many flowers of our prerogative
 We have given away, scarce one remains to give ;
 And Parties—as they call them—little weight,
 Nowadays, place I on their love or hate.
 Parties ? where are they ?—Ghibelline or Guelph ?
 Combine ? combine ! where each thinks but of self.
 They scrape, they screw, and what they get they guard—
 Our chests left empty, every gold-gate barred.

Lord High Steward. And what distress must I, too, bear ?
 Every day striving still to spare ;
 My efforts to retrench attended
 With this result—that more's expended.
 The cooks, they want for nothing : wild boars, bucks,
 Does, hares, and hens and turkeys, geese and ducks.
 Duty-rents paid in kind, we still can dine.
 But what in the wide world to do for wine ?
 'Tis all out, how supply it—there's the rub.
 'Tis not so long ago since, tub on tub,
 It lay piled in the cellars—tun on tun
 Of the best vintage-years, and the best run
 Of the best hill-slopes. Now, what with the drain
 Of the nobles on it, who will never stop
 Their swilling, I'm not left a single drop :
 And the town council, too, has tapped its store.
 This too the nobles swill, and brawl for more ;
 They snatch at wine-cups—seize no matter what
 Comes first to hand—drain goblet, pan, and pot,
 Till under the broad table, bowl and beast
 Fall mixed with broken relics of the feast.

I!—I must pay for all, provide for all.
 The Jew! for me his pity is but small.
 He his anticipation-bond prepares
 Swallowing the years to come: he never spares.
 The pigs—plague take them!—never come to brawn.
 The very pillow on the bed's in pawn.
 The loaves upon the table still to pay;
 To-morrow's bread-stuff eaten yesterday!

Emp. [after some reflection, to MEPH.]. And, Fool, have
 you no grievance to propound?

Meph. I?—None. Upon this splendour to look round—
 With thee and thine and all this grand array
 Around us!—Must not confidence arise?
 —With such a prince, so ruling such a land;
 With such a host, that so the foe defies;
 With such intelligence at your command;
 With such activity of enterprise—
 Can any powers malevolent unite
 For darkness where these stars are shedding light?

Murmurs. *The rascal's quick. . . . Aye, up to trick—*
Liar, romancer. . . . When lies answer:
Be sure there's something in the wind; . . .
Aye, something always lurks behind. . . .
To me 'twould seem a settled scheme.

Meph. Search the world round, and is there to be found
 On earth one quiet corner that has not
 A something wanting, which, are we unable
 To come at it, makes life uncomfortable?
 This man wants that thing, and that man wants this.
 Here, our want is hard cash; and hard cash is,
 When men most want it, cash hard to be got.
 'Tis not a thing that from the streets you sweep;
 It lies deep down, but Science lifts the deep.
 In mountain veins—in walls—and underground—
 Much gold in coins, or uncoined, may be found;
 And, if you ask who brings this gold to light?—
 The gifted man, ruling the Infinite
 Of Nature, mighty in the Spirit's might.

Chan. *Nature and Spirit!* Words that, in my mind,
 No Christian man should utter; 'tis for this
 That we burn atheists. Speeches of the kind
 Are highly dangerous. *Nature!* aye—that is
 Sin; *Spirit*—that means Devil;—and Devil and Sin—