

A pretty pair they are !—true kith and kin—
 Having a natural fancy for each other,
 Have gendered what the world at once should smother—
 The mis-shaped miserable monster Doubt—
 Sexless, or double-sexed.

In the wide borders
 Of the old Empire, two—and but two orders
 To speak of—have risen up to guard the throne :
 The Spirituality and the Knights ; and they form
 A sure protection against every storm,
 And for their pay make Church and State their own.
 Plebeian arrogance and self-willed spite
 Lead some mad spirits to contest the right ;
 Dealers with fiends they are, and heretics :
 Country and town infesting and destroying.
 And these this jester, with his fool-born tricks,
 Which you are unsuspectingly enjoying,
 Is now to this high circle smuggling in.
 To cling to reprobates itself is sin :
 The scorers and Court fool are close akin.

Meph. There spoke the veriest bigot of book-learning.
 What you discern not, sir, there's no discerning :
 All, that you touch not, stands at hopeless distance ;
 All, that you grasp not, can have no existence ;
 All, that eludes your weights, is base and light ;
 That, which you count not, is not counted right ;
 All measurement is false, but where you mete ;
 All coin without your stamp is counterfeit.

Emp. These wise saws will not make our suffering less ;
 What mean you by this lengthened Lent-address ?
 I'm weary of this endless " if " and " how " ;
 Get me the money—that's what we want now.

Meph. Aye, all you want, and more ; 'tis easy, yet
 The easy's difficult enough to get.
 There's plenty of it—plenty—not a doubt of it—
 In th' heart of th' earth, but how to get it out of it ?
 Think of the old days, when invading bands
 Came like a deluge, swamping men and lands ;
 How natural it was that many should
 Hide their best valuables where they could.
 'Twas so in times of the old Roman sway :
 So yesterday—and so it is to-day ;—
 And all lies dead and buried in the soil.

The soil is Cæsar's—his the splendid spoil.

Trea. Not bad for a fool. It stands to reason quite :
The soil is doubtless the old emperor's right.

Chan. His golden meshes Satan spreads, I fear :
And something more than good is busy here.

Mar. If what we want at Court he'd only give,
I'd hazard th' other place in this to live.

General-in-Chief. The fool's the man for us all. The soldier's dumb :

He takes his dollars—asks not whence they come.

Meph. And if, perhaps, you fancy me a rogue,
Why not take counsel of the Astrologue ?
There stands he — Truth itself ;—reads what Heaven
writes

Distinctly in the planetary lights—
Cycle encircling cycle, Hour and House—
And what he sees in Heaven will say to us.

Murmurs of the Crowd

*Rascals a pair !—they understand—
And play into each other's hand—
Phantast and Fool. Easily known
Why they two so beset the throne.
Aye the old song—so often sung—
The fool suggests—the wise gives tongue.*

Astrologer [*Meph. prompts*]. The Sun himself is gold
without alloy ;

Swift Mercury, still at his sly employ,
For friends that pay speeds messages of joy.
Venus, with every man of you in love,
Early and late, keeps twinkling from above.
Coy Luna's whimsical ; and Mars, belike,
With red glare threatens, but delays to strike ;
And Jupiter is still the brightest star.
Dim glooms the mass of Saturn from afar :
Small to the eye, and small our estimate
Of him in value, vast as is his weight.
The world is cheered, when, in conjunction shines,
Luna with Sol—with silver, gold combines.
Anything else one wishes for or seeks—
Park, palace, pretty bosom, rosy cheeks—
Fellows of course. This highly-learned man
Makes or procures it—what none else here can.

Emp. A second voice upon my ear,
That doubles every sentence, rings—
The matter yet is far from clear,
And nothing like conviction brings.

Murmurs. *What's that to us? . . . What wretched fuss—
Chemist and quack . . . Old almanack.
I've heard it oft . . . I was too soft;
And should it come—'Tis all a hum.*

Meph. Here stand they, all amazement! staring round
At the high discovery; gave no credit to it.
One has his story of a strange black hound;
One has a blind legend of a mandrake root.
Aye, let them laugh, or try to laugh it off;
Say 'tis a juggle—tricks of knaves or witches;
Yet—all the sooner for their sneer and scoff—
Odd sudden tinglings come; limbs shake; foot itches.

One of Nature's never-ending
Secret wonders here you find;
From the lowest rings ascending,
Living traces upwards wind.
When and where, all over twitching,
Every limb feels sudden seizure,
Then and there keep digging, ditching;
There's the fiddler—there's the treasure!

Murmurs. *My foot—I cannot move about;
My arm is cramped . . . 'Tis only gout;
And my big toe, it pains me so,
From all these signs, my mind divines
That here the treasure is.*

Emp. Come, no delay;
Escape for you is none. This very day
Shall bring these froth-lies of yours to the test.
Show us these chambers where these treasures rest.
I'll throw down sword and sceptre of command,
And labour with my own imperial hand;
Work heart and hand at the great enterprise:
But if all you are uttering be but lies—
As I do fear—I'll send you straight to hell.

Meph. [*aside*]. Broad is the way from this, as I know well.

[*Alone.*] I have not words enough truly to tell
 Of all the treasure everywhere that lies :
 None claiming it—none knowing of such prize.
 The peasant with his plough who scrapes the sod,
 Sees a gold crock beneath the upturned clod,
 Crusted and clammy—blesses his good luck
 In having on a lump of nitre struck ;
 And with delight and terror manifold,
 Feels in his meagre hand, that scarce can hold
 The treasure, *rouleaus* of gold—actual gold.
 Down to what clefts—through what drear passages
 Must he who knows of hidden treasure press
 On the verge of the under-world ! What vaults to be
 Blown up !—what cellars, well secured : the sun
 For ages has not seen them open thrown !
 There golden salvers, goblets, beakers fair—
 All for the sage—and ruby cups are there.
 And, should he wish to use them—plenty of
 Good old wine, too—I warrant you true stuff.
 And you may credit me—I know it well—
 The wood casks all are dust ; and, strange to tell,
 The wine makes new ones of its own old crust.
 And such wine—'tis not only gems and gold,
 But the essential spirit of noblest wine
 That night and horrors here imprisoned hold.
Here doth the Sage his search untired pursue.
 Day has no light whereby deep truth to see,
 In darkness is the home of Mystery.

Emp. Darkness and Mystery I leave to thee.
 What's good for anything will dare the day.
 At night your rascal can skulk out of view—
 When every cow is black and all cats grey.
 Handle the plough, then ; and let us behold
 Your share turn up these pans and pots of gold.

Meph. Take spade and hoe yourself. Throw off all
 state :

The labour of the peasant 'tis makes great.
 A herd of golden calves shall from the soil
 Start up—of earnest will and ardent toil
 Instant reward ! Enraptured then you may
 Adorn yourself—adorn your lady gay.
 Jewels in the imperial diadem
 Add splendour to the monarch ; the rich gem

Makes beauty lovelier in the coloured play
Of light.

Emp. [*impatiently*]. Quick! quick! how long, how long, will you delay?

Ast. [*Meph. prompting*]. Sire! moderate this fervour of desire.

Best now the merry masquerade to act,
And end it. Double purposes distract.

Then through the above, in self-communion learn,
The under to deserve, and so to earn,

Who seeks for goodness, should himself be good;
For cheerfulness, should calm his fevered blood.

Tread hard the ripe grapes, if thy wish be wine;
If miracles, increasing faith be thine!

Emp. Well then! Ash Wednesday will, I trust, uphold
The promises you're giving me of gold.

I never did so long for Lent.

The Astrologer's advice is, after all,

The best; and so in merriment

Let the interval be spent.

We'll have our ball, whate'er befall,

And a gay time of carnival. [*Trumpets. Exeunt*

Meph. [*to the audience*]. You never can get fools to understand

How luck and merit still go hand in hand:

Your born fool never yet was Fortune's prizeman.

The stone of the philosopher,

In such hands, no great treasure were—

The wise man's talisman minus the wise man.

III

MASQUERADE

*A spacious Hall, with Side-chambers adorned and prepared
for a Masquerade*

Characters Introduced.—GARDEN-GIRLS, GARDENER, MOTHER
AND DAUGHTER, WOOD-CUTTERS, &c. PULCHINEL-
LOES, PARASITES, DRUNKARD, SATIRICAL POET, THE
GRACES, THE FATES, THE FURIES, HOPE, FEAR,
PRUDENCE, ZOÏLO-THERSITES, BOY CHARIOTEER,
PLUTUS, STARVELING, WOMEN, FAUNS, SATYRS,
GNOMES, GIANTS, NYMPHS, PAN

Enter HERALD

Herald. Fancy not that our scene is laid,
Or that to-night our play is played,
In the drear bounds of German grounds—
Of dead men's dances, devilry—
Court fools and Gothic revelry :
Ours is a cheerful masquerade.

Feel yourselves now in an Italian home ;
And that the Emperor, on his way to Rome,
For his advantage, and for your delight,
Hath crossed the high Alps, and is lord to-day
Of a new kingdom, beautiful and gay ;
Having already in himself full might,
Has sued the holy slipper for full right ;
Come for himself a brilliant crown to gain—
The cap and bells have followed in his train,
And we are all born as it were again ;
Put on the cap of folly, and are in it
Such paragons of wisdom for the minute.
A clever fellow's comfortable plan
Is, " draw it cosily o'er head and ears,

And play the fool as little as you can."
 A prudent course ; the world in a few years
 Is pretty sure of teaching any man.
 They come in troops, they form in groups,
 And into knots the masses sever,
 And in and out they move about,
 And out and in again they range.
 For ever changing, yet no change,
 Its hundred thousand fooleries,
 The world's the world ! 'Twas—'twill be—'tis
 The World—the same one Fool for ever.

*Enter GARDEN-GIRLS, some adorned with artificial flowers ;
 some with bouquets in their hands*

Garden-girls [Song, accompanied by mandolins].

We, to-night, to win your favour,
 Trick us out in masquerade ;
 Young girls, that our way from Florence
 With the German Court have made.

O'er our dusky tresses glisten
 Roses from no common bowers ;
 Threads of silk, and silken laces,
 Shape we into mimic flowers.

Ours is sure a happy service :
 Waking at our touch appear
 Buds that have no fear of winter—
 Flowers that blossom through the year.

Divers-coloured shreds arranging,
 Hue and hue symmetrical ;
 Worthless each, yet, thus united,
 Feel you not the charm of all.

Garden-girls, with neatness dress we,
 Ornamentally in part ;
 Woman's love of graceful Nature
 Blends so gracefully with Art.

Herald [to the GARDEN-GIRLS]. Let us see the laden
 baskets,

Balanced on your heads that rest ;
Show the fair flowers—bud and blossom—
Each select what suits her best.
Let a garden, as by magic,
Walks and arbours, meet the eyes :
Crowds will throng round the fair merchants,
And the lovely merchandise.

Garden-girls. 'Tis a pleasant mart. No higgling,
No dispute for prices here ;
In a few short words expressive,
What each offers will appear.

Olive-branch [with fruit]. I no flower its blossoms envy ;
I with none will have dispute ;
Peaceful, and of peace the emblem,
Marrow of the land my fruit.
Oh ! that this day, it were mine
The brightest, fairest brow to twine.

Wheat-wreath [golden]. Gifts of Ceres form my chaplet,
Brown with the maturing sun.
Crown of Life ! be still the Useful
And the Ornamental one.

Fancy Chaplet. Flowers of mosses, many-coloured,
Mimics of the mallow grey—
Nothing half so bright in Nature—
Are the fashion of the day.

Fancy Bouquet. These—their family and tribe—
No Theophrastus could describe :
Some have little love for these,
But there are whom they will please.
Flowers to beauty dedicated,
Chaplets through the tresses plaited ;
Or delightedly that rest
Near the fond heart, on the soft breast.

Challenge. Let your motley fancies blossom
In the fashion of the hour ;
In strange guise be shaped and moulded.
Be they such as Nature never,
In her wildest freaks, unfolded—
Green stalks—bells of golden glimmer
From the flowing tresses shimmer ;
But we——

Rose-buds. Love to lurk unseen.
Happy finder ! he for whom

We a sweet surprise have been,
 Breathing fresh in dewy bloom.
 When the summer comes again—
 And the rose-bud kindles then
 Into blushes—who of men
 But must yield him to the charm?
 Can of love his heart disarm?
 Lovely flower! and love's own emblem!
 Timid promise—rich revealing!
 Rose! Of all in Flora's kingdom
 Dear to eye, and heart, and feeling!

[The GARDEN-GIRLS arrange their goods under the green leafy walks. GARDENER enters with GARDEN-BOYS, who arrange themselves as a CHORUS]

GARDENER

[Song, accompanied by theorbos.]

Flowers! my lady's brow entwining;
 Pretty things in show and shining!
 Fruits—in them no false decoying—
 Are the true stuff for enjoying.

Buy them! try them! Plums, pears, cherries.
 Show their brown and honest faces;
 Tongue and palate, better judges
 Than the eye, to try such cases.

Come! my ripe fruit's a true treasure;
 Here to feast is actual pleasure:
 Rose-buds speak to the ideal;
 Bite the fruit—the taste is real.

[To the GARDEN-GIRLS.]

Yours the pride of glowing flowers,
 And the wealth of autumn ours;
 For our mutual delight—
 What say you, if we unite?

Into this enchanted garden
 Come ye, each his fancy suit;
 Bowers are here, and walks and windings;
 Bud and leaves, and flowers and fruit.

[Amid alternate song, accompanied with guitars and theorbos, both Choruses proceed to arrange their goods so as to set them off to advantage]

Enter MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

Mother. When first I saw the infant smiles,
Dearest of living creatures,
On thy small face, with hood and lace
I decked those baby features,
And fancied all thy future pride,
The richest winning as his bride
The fairest of all creatures.

Many a day has passed away,
My own dear child—Heaven love it—
And wooers came and wooers went;
And little good came of it.
'Twas all the same with every wile,
The merry dance, the sly soft smile,
Time lost, with little profit.

Was never ball or festival
But you were in the dances;
Round games, or forfeits—all in vain;
Away the luck still glances.
Spread wide your nets again to-day—
The fools are out: who knows what may
Turn up in this day's chances?

[Girls, playfellows young and beautiful, enter and join in loud confidential chatting. Fishermen and Birdcatchers now enter with nets, lines, and limed twigs and other tackle, and join the group of girls. Alternate attempts to win, catch, escape, and hold fast, give opportunity for most agreeable dialogues]

*Enter WOOD-CUTTERS, CHARCOAL-BURNERS, &c.,
violently and roughly*

Wood-cutters. Room! make room! we want and crave
it;
Want but room—and we must have it.

Trees we fell—down come they crashing;
 Bear them with us—crushing, smashing.
 What we wish, is to impress on
 All and each the true old lesson—
 If the coarse and clumsy hand
 Kept not working in the land;
 If there were not such as we are,
 Could the world have such as ye are?

Ye are the chosen;
 Yet do not forget it,
 That ye would be frozen,
 If we had not sweated.

Enter PULCHINELLOES and PARASITES

Pulchinelloes [stupidly, almost like fools].

Ye are the born fools,
 Toiling and trudging;
 Nature hath made you
 With bent back, for drudging.
 We are the clever:
 Nothing whatever,
 That you call lumber,
 Our backs to encumber.
 All our pleasure,
 Easy leisure;
 All our traps,
 Flaps and caps;
 Hose and jackets, and such tight wear—
 No great burthen is such light ware;
 Slim foot, then, in thin pantoufle,
 Through the Court we shift and shuffle.
 We are met in market-places,
 Painted masks upon our faces,
 At street corners we stand gaping—
 There, like cocks, keep flapping, clapping
 Wings as 'twere; and, thus set going,
 Take to clattering and crowing—
 Together three or four of us
 Will step aside—like eels we glide—
 And nobody sees more of us,
 Till, by-and-by, up starts a brother,
 And we crow out to one another.

Praise us, blame us—try to shame us—

What care we? Ye cannot tame us.

*Parasites [flattering and fawning on the WOOD-CUTTERS,
CHARCOAL-BURNERS, &c.].*

Porters! there are no men truer—

Charcoal-burner! and wood-hewer!

After all, there are but few men

Do the world's work like these true men.

Where were bowing, suing, smiling;

Blowing hot and cold; beguiling

Words and watching looks; and nodding

Sly assent, but for their plodding?

Fire from heaven comes unexpected—

Providentially directed—

To the kitchen hearth; but is it

Better for the sudden visit?

If no faggots had been placed there,

Would not fire have gone to waste there?

And the faggots' blaze would dwindle,

If there were no coals to kindle;

But, with them, comes bubbling, boiling,

Roasting, toasting, baking, broiling.

And the man of true taste,

With instincts æsthetic,

Scents roast meat, smells paste,

And of fish is prophetic.

He smiles in the pantry—

He shines at the table.

Performer—none warmer,

More active, more able!

Enter A DRUNKEN MAN [scarce conscious].

Drunken Man. Everything is right and merry

When in wine our cares we bury.

Cheery hearts, 'tis we that bring them!

Cheery songs, 'tis we that sing them!

Drink, boys, drink; and still be drinking—

Clashing glasses, drinking, clinking.

See, behind, that fellow blinking!

Why decline, boys? Drink your wine, boys!

Come and clash your glass with mine, boys!

[These lines repeated by CHORUS.]

If my wife, with rout and racket,
 Scoff at my embroidered jacket—
 Call me mummer, masquerader,
 I'll show fight to the invader.
 Spite of her—amid the clinking,
 Clashing glasses—I'll keep drinking,
 Of good wine bad wives are jealous:
 Keep the women off, young fellows!
 Maskers, mummers—take your wine, boys!
 Clash your glass, as I clash mine, boys!
Clash your glass; keep up the fun, boys!
Till the work of life is done, boys! [Chorus.]

Of our host I'm still the debtor:
 Plan of life I know no better.
 Looks he sulkily, my boast is
 Of my credit with the hostess.
 Does the landlady run rusty,
 Still the maid is true and trusty:
 She's my sure and safe sheet-anchor;
 And, when all else fail, my banker.
 So I drink, and still keep drinking;
 With the glasses clashing, clinking.
Clash your glasses, each, my fine boys!
Clear them off, as I clear mine, boys! [Chorus.]

I'll stay where I am at present;
 No place else can be more pleasant.
 Let me lie where I am lying;
 I cannot stand, no use in trying.
 A new toast! Let all keep drinking!
 Brothers all, their glasses clinking.
 Drink away, like men of mettle;
 Hold to chairs, and cling to settle.
 Sit up each who still is able,
 Or lie snug beneath the table.
 Come, my fine boys—drink your wine, boys!
Every drop, as I drink mine, boys! [Chorus.]
 [HERALD announces different poets, Courtly and
 Knightly minstrels, sentimental and enthusiastic. In
 the pressure of rival poets, none will let another be
 heard. One sneaks by, and contrives to say a few
 words

Satirist. In my character of Poet
How my spirits it would cheer,
Dared I say or sing a something
Nobody would wish to hear.

[*The Night and Churchyard poets send apologies, as they are engaged in an interesting conversation with a newly arisen vampire, from which they anticipate the development of a new school of poetry. The HERALD is compelled to admit their excuse, and calls up the GREEK MYTHOLOGY, which, though in modern masks, loses neither character nor charms*

Enter THE GRACES

Aglaia. The charm of manners we bid live
In life. With graceful kindness give.

Hegemone. And gracefully be still received
The granted wish—the want relieved.

Euphrosyne. And graceful be the tone subdued,
And home-felt charm of gratitude.

Enter THE PARCÆ

Atropos. I, the eldest, am invited
At this festival to spin—
Much for you and me to think of
In this tender life-thread thin.

That the threads be soft and pliant,
Must the flax be sifted fine;
And, that they flow smooth and even,
Fingers skilled must press the twine.

If, at revels or at dances,
Blood beats high; oh! then let wake
Caution. Think how short the measure:
Think that the frail thread may break.

Clotho. Be it known, to me the scissors,
In these last days, they confide:
By the late Administration,
None were pleased or edified.

Husky yarns the dull old woman
Left to drawl a weary time;

Clearest threads, of brilliant promise,
She cut off in youthful prime.

Of impatient inexperience,
That might make me go astray,
Danger now is none. My scissors,
In the sheath remain to-day.

Glad am I that, thus made powerless,
I can smile on all I see ;
That, all apprehension banished,
You may dance and revel free.

Lachesis. Happy maintenance of order
To the sagest was decreed :
Mine the wheel that ceases never,
Circling still with equal speed.

Threads flow hither, threads flow thither,
And their course my fingers guide :
None must overpass the circle—
Each must in its place abide.

I—should I a moment slumber—
Tremble for the fate of men :
Hours are numbered, years are measured,
And the weaver's time comes then.

Enter THE FURIES

Herald. Had you an eye as keen as an inquisitor's,
Or were you ever so deep read in books,
You'd never guess who these are by their looks,
But fancy them every-day morning visitors.

These are the Furies. None would think the thing
Credible. Pretty, shapely, friendly, young,
You scarce can think with what a serpent tongue
These doves, all harmless as they look, can sting.

They're wicked ; and, no doubt of it, are witty.
Could mask their nature ; but, on such gay day—
When fools do fool—they have no secret ; they
Boast themselves plagues of country and of city.

Alecto. No help for it; you cannot but believe us,
For we are pretty, young, fond, flattering kittens.
Is any here in love? We'll find admittance
To that man's heart and home: he must receive us.

We'll court and coax him; say to him all that would be
Damning; say how she winked at this or that—
Is dull—is crook-backed—limps—is lean—is fat;
Or, if betrothed, no better than she should be.

And we it is can deal with the fiancée;
Tell her what he said of her weeks ago,
In confidence, to Madame So-and-so.
They're reconciled: the scars remain, I fancy.

Megæra. This is mere child's play. Let them once have
married,
I take it up; turn, with pretences flimsy,
Honey to gall, helped out by spleen or whimsey,
Or jest, at some rash moment too far carried.

Man, when what once was dearest he possesses,
Will feign or fancy soon a something dearer;
Fly charms that pall, seen oftener and seen nearer;
Fly warm love, seek some chill heart's dead caresses.

I at manœuvring am shrewd and supple.
I, and friend Asmodæus, who apace
Sows tares, destroying thus the human race
One by one—rather couple, say, by couple.

Tisiphone. I than words have darker engines—
Poison—daggers—for the traitor,
Mixed and sharpened! Sooner, later,
Life—thy life—shall glut my vengeance?

Sweetest hopes that love can offer
Changed to keen embittered feeling;
With such wretch there is no dealing:
He hath sinned, and he must suffer.

Let none tell me of forgiving,
To the rocks I cry. "Revenge" is
Their reply. Hark! he who changes
Dies—as sure as I am living.

Enter THE GROUP described in the following speech

Herald. Now, may it please you, stand back one and all :
 Make way for another group ! Those whom I see
 Differ in character and in degree—
 Aye, and in kind—from all the maskers here.
 See, pressing hitherward, what would appear
 A mountain : variegated carpets fall
 Adown its flanks, and it moves on in pride—
 A head, with large long teeth, and serpentine
 Proboscis wreathed. Their secret they would hide ;
 But it will open to this key of mine.
 A graceful lady, sitting on the neck,
 Wields a thin wand that mighty bulk to guide,
 And bend all his brute motions to her will.
 Archly smiles she, as though at her own skill
 Amused and happy, holding him in check.
 The other stands high up : a glory there
 Encircles that grand form—a light divine,
 Too dazzling for this eye of mine to dare.
 Two noble women—one at either side—
 Are chained ; and one is trembling, as in fear,
 And one moves gracefully with joyous cheer ;
 And one would break the chain she loathes to wear.
 One looks, in bondage, as though she were free :
 Let them, in turn, each tell us who they be.

Fear. Mad feast, this ! Drear lamps—dusk tapers—
 Waving with uncertain glimmer.

Oh ! this chain ! Through smoky vapours,
 Faces strange around me shimmer.

Fools, avaunt ! Peace, idle laughter,
 Grinning—I distrust your grin :
 All my enemies are after
 Me to-night, and hem me in.

I know that mask. As I suspected,
 'Tis an old friend—now my worst foeman :
 He'd stab me ; sees himself detected,
 And steals away, and speaks to no man.

To the far-off world, oh ! could I
 Flee away, how glad I were ;
 But to this I cling with trembling—
 Horror here, and Darkness there.

Hope. If the masking of the night,
Sisters dear, be a delight;
Yet, be sure to-morrow's coming
Will bring with it joy more bright
Than your gayest masking, mumming.
Oh! for the uncertain haze
Of the torches' glimmering blaze,
That the cheerful daybreak glow
Over all its light would throw!
Then, at our own will, would we,
Now in groups, and now alone,
Or with one—some dearest one—
Roam through lawn and meadow free;
Rest at leisure, roam at pleasure,
And in life that knows no care,
All things to our will replying,
No repulse, and no denying,
Wander, welcomed everywhere:
Doubting not there still must be
To be found some region blest—
Happy home of all that's best.

Prudence. Two of men's chief enemies—
See you how I curb and chain them—
Fear and Hope. Make way for these:
All is safe while I restrain them.

With the tower above him swaying,
See! the live Colossus paces,
Step by step, my will obeying,
Unfatigued, the steepest places.

From the battlement, far gleaming,
Quivers fast each snowy pinion,
As looks round the goddess, deeming
All she sees her own dominion.

Who can see without admiring?
Light divine around her is—
Victory her name—Inspiring
Queen of all activities!

Enter ZOÏLO-THERSITES

Zoïlo. Ho! ho! this is the very place for me,
To set all right, for you're all wrong I see.

What I may think of small game is small matter.
 See! the fair lady, up there; I'll be at her.
 Oh! yes; be sure it is no other than
 The Lady Victory. Well, if I'm a man,
 She, with the two white wings, cocked up there, thinks
 Herself an eagle—and that east and west,
 And north and south, and every point between them,
 Are hers—of her wide empire are but links:
 All things are hers, if she has only seen them;
 Aye, aye, the lust of empire has its charms.
 They praise her; aye, they praise her. I protest
 That to praise anything sets me in arms.
 What's low I would lift up; what's high make low;
 What's crooked I'd make straight; not only so,
 But make straight crooked. I was, from my birth,
 One who saw always all things wrong on earth.
 The round earth! Why should it be round? Aye,
 there

Matters require reform—I'd have it square.

Herald. Aye, ragged rascal! thou shalt not escape
 The good staff's welcome on thy crooked nape.
 Aye, turn and writhe, and wind and wheel away,
 And crawling, lick the dust. Begone! I say.
 Strange how the fellow, with his broken hump,
 Whirls on the floor—the round, rough, loathsome lump.
 The porcupine—no head, or arms, or leg.
 How the thing puffs!—'tis very like an egg.
 Look there! it swells, it lengthens, bursts asunder;
 And a twin birth behold!—a double wonder!—
 Adder and bat: through dust the one you track,
 And one up to the roof is flitting black.
 They're making their way out to meet again,
 And reunite—oh! save me from the twain.

[ZOÏLO-THERSITES disappears as described
Murmurs of the Crowd. "Up! up! another dance comes
 on."

"Not I, indeed: would we were gone!
 Felt you how the spectres breathe
 From above and from beneath?
 A thrilling whizzed along the root
 Of my hair."—"It crawled along my foot.
 But no one's hurt."—"Well, well—all's right;
 But we have had such a fright."

All the fun, any way, is ended :

This was what the brute intended."

[*The HERALD sees a group approaching, which he describes before they are seen by the general company*

Herald. Since first I took upon myself the task
To play the herald's part, at mime or mask,
I always watched the doors, that nothing might
Find entrance in, that could in any way
Disturb, even for a moment, the delight
That in a theatre, on holiday,
You have in truth a title to expect.
I waver not, I yield not, have no fear ;
I keep the door well watched and guarded here.
But through the window spectres may glide in,
From tricks of magic. Even could I detect
Such tricks, I have no power to keep you free.
I cannot but acknowledge that about
The dwarf was something to create grave doubt ;
But now in pour the spectres, in full stream,
Resistless. Who each figure is, and what
The characters assumed are, it would seem
The Herald's fitting duty to explain.
But here to try would be an effort vain :
I cannot tell you, for I know it not.
Here there is mystery beyond my reach.
Here you must help me ; here you, too, must teach.
See you a roll and rustling through the crowd ?
A gallant team of four—a splendid car—
Sweeps swiftly hitherward. It glitters far.
It doth not part the crowd, nor doth there seem
Tumult or pressure round that glorious team.
In coloured light on moves it far and fast,
And wandering stars of fire are from it cast,
As from a magic lantern. How it speeds
Hither ! and with the roar of a strong blast.
Make way for it !—I shudder, and——

[*The car described by the HERALD now appears on the stage*

Boy Charioteer. Halt, steeds !
Stay your wings ! stay ! and feel the accustomed rein ;
Restrain yourselves : be still when I restrain ;
Rush on when I inspire ; respect the ground
On which we are ! Look everywhere around !

Circle on circle—how spectators throng.
Up, Herald! up! and ere we speed along,
And are far out of sight, be it your aim
To paint and to present us each by name,
As suits your office. Allegories be
The matters that you trade in—such are we.

Herald. I do not know your name, but I
Would venture on description.

Boy Char. Try!

Herald. First, looking at you, I admit
You have youth—and beauty goes with it.
'Twixt man and boy; the fair beholder
Thinks you'll look better, too, when older.
You seem to me one, upon whom to gaze
May give them danger in the future days—
A dear deceiver from your very birth.

Boy Char. Prettily said. Go on; make it appear
How far the riddle of this acted mirth
Your skill can solve—your comment let us hear.

Herald. The eyes' swart fire—the jewelled band that
presses
With starry glow the midnight of thy tresses—
The graceful, showy, ornamental gown,
That from the shoulders to the sock falls down
In glittering tissue, and the glowing fringe
That streams along the sides with purple tinge—
Your person from a girl's one scarce would know;
But the girls think of it, for weal or woe:
They have already given you, it may be,
Some little lessons in the A B C.

Boy Char. The splendid figure on the chariot throne!
Give us your notion of who it may be.

Herald. The King in every look of his is shown;
And opulent, I guess, and mild is he:
Who win his favour they from care are free—
May rest them at their ease. His active eyes
Spy out their wants, his lavish hand supplies:
The liberal hand is more than house or land.

Boy Char. Your vague description will not help us much.
You may improve your sketch with little trouble:
Add in another and another touch.

Herald. Noble he is! No words can paint the Noble!
A hale moon face, full mouth, and cheeks that glow

Under the diamonded turban's snow ;
A sumptuous robe, that falls with easy flow ;
And in his gestures, and his graceful mien,
The calm of long-accustomed sway is seen.

Boy Char. 'Tis Plutus ! god of wealth. In happy hour
Come on a visit to the Emperor,
In all his pomp and prodigality.
I fancy he'll be very welcome now.

Herald. But of yourself tell us the What and How.

Boy Char. I am Profusion—I am Poesy.
I am the Poet who feels his true power,
And is himself, indeed, but in the hour
When he on the regardless world hath thrown,
With lavish hand, the wealth, peculiarly his own.
And I am rich—am rich immeasurably :
Plutus alone in riches equals me.
Through me his banquets charm, his dances live :
That which they could not else have had, I give.

Herald. The bragging tone sits gracefully on you ;
But show us something of what you can do.

Boy Char. I do but snap my fingers, and around
The car are sparks and lightning-flashes found.

[*Snaps his fingers*

Here goes a string of pearls, and here
Are golden clasps for neck and ear ;
Comblet and crown the next snap brings,
And gems of price in costliest rings ;
And flamelets here and there I throw,
In the fond hope that some may glow

Herald. How they crowd, and grasp, and snatch at
Everything that they can catch at !
They'll crush his life out. Toy and trinket
He flings to them. Only think it—
All snatch at them, gem and jewel,
As in dreams ; but oh, how cruel !
As I live 'tis but a juggle.

After a poor devil's struggle
For a gem—and he has got it—
For a ring—and he has caught it—
When he thinks he has a treasure,
It takes wings at its own pleasure.
Pearl-strings snap, the beads are falling—
Beetles in the hand are crawling.

Flung impatiently away,
 Humming round his head they play.
 Another clutches for his prize
 A very swarm of butterflies,
 That flutter off capriciously;
 I'd almost say maliciously.
 Scamp! to have promised them so much,
 And put them off with rubbish such.

Boy Char. The Herald's business is of masks to tell,
 But not to penetrate below the shell
 Into the essence. This is not your right
 Or proper province: it asks sharper sight.
 From all discussions I would keep me free.
 Master, to thee I turn, and ask of thee [*turning to PLUTUS*]
 Hast thou not given me full dominion o'er
 The glorious team, the tempest-footed four?
 Do I not, at thy will, their motions sway?
 Am I not where thy impulse points the way?
 Was it not mine to rush on daring wing
 Triumphantly along the Chariot-ring,
 And home to thee the palm of victory bring?
 And, in War's splendid game, the conqueror's meed
 When did I seek for thee, and not succeed?
 The laurel-wreath, that shines thy brows above,
 Was it not I with mind and hand that wove?

Plu. Gladly—oh! would that all the world could hear it—
 Do I proclaim thee spirit of my spirit;
 To aid my wishes still thy wishes fly;
 Richer thou art—oh! far more rich than I!
 The green bough and thy wreath, I value them
 More—'twill delight thee—than my diadem.
 Thou art—let all men know it—my best treasure:
 Thou art my son, in whom my soul hath pleasure.

Boy Char. [*to the crowd*]. The choicest gifts I have to
 give—
 See! I've scattered them around—
 Are the flamelets fugitive,
 That for a little moment shed
 Their fire on this or that one's head;
 From one to one away they bound;
 O'er this brow halo-like they sit,
 From that in restless brilliance flit:
 A light loose blaze of flickering gauze

That dies before we know it was.
Alas ! how seldom will the light,
Shed anywhere, rise high or bright ;
With many a one burned out before
They know—it fades—falls—is no more.

Chatter of Women. Look at the crouching rascal on
The carriage roof—a charlatan—
Hans Merryman—poor Jack ; but very
Far now looks Merryman from merry.
Hunger and thirst have bared his jaw-bones ;
None ever saw such sorry raw bones.
Pinch him ! there's nothing here to pinch ;
Skin and bone—if he's flesh he'll flinch.

Starveling. Off ! touch me not, vile women ! Ye
Have never a good word for me.
Until my lady was too grand
To house-affairs to give a hand ;
Too grand to answer every call,
Work hard, and have an eye to all :
Things went on well. No room for doubt—
All running in and nothing out.
I kept the key of chest and strong box :
But I am always in the wrong box.
You scoffed such poor economist,
And called me Lady Stingy-fist.
Oh ! yes, I always am to blame,
Old screw and skin-flint then my name.
But now the woman has grown daring—
No thought of stinting or of sparing ;
No, nor of paying. Think of paying,
With wants increasing—means decaying !
Her good man scarce can walk the streets—
In debt to every one he meets.
And all that she can filch, she flings
Away on dress or junketings.
She drinks more wine—aye, too, and better—
With the young rascals that beset her.
New wants are every day arising—
Old times are gone. Is it surprising,
That thirst for gold, no more your peevish vice
Of pinch-gut parsimonious Avarice,
Puffs itself out—puts on Man's mask ? In me,
Lo ! the new Science of Economy !

Ringleader of the Women. With dragons let the old drake
grabble ;

Skin-flint with Flint-skin grin and gabble :

Why with them keep up a struggle ?

Is not all a lie—a juggle ?

The men—were they not bad enough ?—

Are stung to madness by this stuff.

Mob of Women. At him ! At his dragons made of
Pasteboard ! What are you afraid of ?

Nothing here but lie, cheat, trick :

Wizard ! juggler ! heretic !

Destined shortly to exhibit

At the stake, or on the gibbet.

Herald. Peace ! or my staff the coast will clear :

Yet is my help scarce wanting here.

See you how, in their wrath, the monsters raise

Their scales, and each his double wings displays ?

Their jaws breathe fire, and the crowd flies apace :

I thank the dragons, they have cleared the place.

[PLUTUS steps from the car

Herald. See ! he descends ; and with what kingly grace

He moves—approaching hither. At his beck

The dragons rouse, and from the chariot bear

The chest with all its gold, and the poor wreck

Of man that seems to guard the treasures there.

How accomplished, who can tell ?

'Tis little less than miracle.

Plu. [to BOY CHAR.]. It was a heavy burden. Thou art
free :

Away to thine own sphere. Away with thee !

Thy place—thy true place—is not here, among

A wild, ree-raw, self-willed, tumultuous throng,

Together here in mad confusion hurled.

There, where the clear eye sees in calm the clear ;

There, where the good, the beautiful is dear ;

Where the pure impulse of the heart alone

Doth guide thee, and thou art indeed thine own.

In solitude : oh ! there create thy world.

Boy Char. Dear to myself as envoy true of thine,

I love thee ; for thy nature, too, is mine.

Fulness is ever where thou dost remain,

And where I am men feel it glorious gain ;

And many a one will all his life debate—
 “To thee, to me, shall he be dedicate?”
 Thine may at will lie down and rest. For those
 Who follow me there never is repose.
 Nor sleep my acts in secret and in shade:
 Do I but breathe, my presence is betrayed.
 Farewell! I seek the joy you give full fain;
 But whisper low, and I am here again. [*Exit as he came*]

Plu. Now for the imprisoned treasures of the box!
 Just with the Herald's rod I touch the locks.
 'Tis open! Look you here: in brazen kettles
 It boils out—golden streams—and now it settles,
 And stiffens into chains, crowns, trinkets, rings.
 And now it bubbles and boils up again:
 Seizing on, melting, swallowing all the things
 It had created.

Alternate Cries of Crowd. Look! look there! how fast
 'tis going:
 Bubbling, boiling, overflowing.
 Gushing streams of many colours;
 Golden cups, and minted dollars;
 Ducats, ducats following
 See the monster swallowing!
 Now of rouleaus flings a heap up,
 And I feel my bosom leap up;
 Now the cauldron's boiling over,
 And the ground all round 'twill cover.
 All of which we have been dreaming—
 All for which we have been scheming—
 'Tis your own—'tis but to snatch it;
 Yours, if only you can catch it.
 Snatch it! catch it! seize the offer,
 While we carry off the coffer!

Herald. The fools! what are they at? What do you
 mean?

Know you not that all this is but a scene
 In a masquerade? You've spoiled the evening's play.
 Think you that men their money give away,
 And money's worth, so lightly? Counters would,
 To throw about among you, be too good.
 Clowns! they imagine that a show, forsooth,
 Should at the same time be the plain coarse truth.
 Truth! why your whole life is a lie. The True—

What meaning, rascals, could it have for you ?

Up, thou, that mummett thee in Plutus' part—

Thou that the hero of our revels art—

Sweep the field clear of these scoundrels.

Plu.

Aye, your wand

Will do the work : entrust it to my hand.

The road—I promise you that this will keep it

Clear. See ! the wand, into the fire I dip it.

Now, then, for it, Maskers—now of yourselves take care.

How it does crackle !—with what lightning glare

It flashes out ! And now the wand is lit,

And every one who ventures too near it

Will be singed and scorched.

I say, take care of your skins :

Be warned in time, my circuit now begins.

Cries and Crush. “How he does whisk the rod about !”

“’Tis over with us all, no doubt.”

“Back ! back ! I say.” “I’ll keep my place.”

“The fire-spray flashed into my face.”

“Ha ! but ’twas heavy—that hot mace.”

“Back, there ! back ! back, Maskers ! vile pack !”

“Back, stupid rascals ! back, I say !”

“Aye, had I wings to fly away.”

Plu. The circle’s wider now, and all is right ;

None singed or scorched, though all pushed back in fright :

Yet, to secure some order, it were well

Round us to draw a cord invisible.

Herald. You have done wonders ; forced back to the ranks

These noisy mutineers ; accept my thanks.

Plu. There still is need of patience, noble friend ;

Signs many tumults manifold portend.

Starv. Now, with this charmed ring round me, at my ease

I may deal with the ladies as I please.

There’s something comic in their forward paces—

They always so crowd up to the front places ;

Where anything is to be seen worth seeing,

At mask or merry-make, they’re sure of being,

With eager lips and eyes ;—are young and lusty,

The jades—and I’m not altogether rusty.

A pretty girl’s a pretty girl, do you see ?

And, let me tell you, is not lost on me.

To-day ’twill cost me nothing : I’ll do lover.

Words in the crowd can scarce be made intelligible

To the quickest ear ; but could we not discover
 A language of expression much more eligible ?
 I have been pondering o'er it this some time,
 And think that I could play a pantomime.
 Gestures—hand—foot—significant shrug of shoulders—
 To reach the eyes of the crowd would scarcely answer ;
 I've something else to show, that all beholders
 Will recognise at once. I'm no romancer.
 Gold—pliant gold—I'll mould it. The moist clay
 Takes any shape—and everywhere makes way.

Herald. What is the fool at ? The lank fool ! can it
 Be that this hunger-bitten thing has wit ?
 He is in an odd humour. See ! the gold
 Under his hand into a paste is rolled.
 He kneads it—presses it : the red soft ball
 He shapes, reshapes, leaves shapeless after all.
 He turns him to the women. At the sight
 They scream, and, if they could, would take to flight.
 Disgust is in their glances ; but for ill
 The rascal is at his devices still.
 With him to scoff down decency is quite
 A matter of amusement and delight.
 To suffer this in silence were disgrace :
 Give me the staff to drive him from the place.

Plu. The danger from without he does not see.
 His mad pranks let him play out at his will ;
 They'll soon be over, for Necessity,
 Strong as is Law, than Law is stronger still.

*Enter FAUNS, SATYRS, GNOMES, NYMPHS, &c., Attendants
 on PAN, and announcing his approach*

Tumult and Song. The savage host comes suddenly
 From wooded vale, from mountain high—
 Worshipping their mighty Pan—

With a resistless cry !
 They know that which to none but them is known :
 Straight to the empty circle sweep they on.

Plu. I recognise you and your mighty Pan.
 A daring step to take, a rash bold thing ;
 I know what is not known to every man,
 And open as I ought this narrow ring.
 Oh ! may the issue favourable be !

Whither this strange step leads they do not see.
The world may gaze on wonders unforeseen
To spring to life from what to-night has been.

Wild Song. Ye, in holiday array,
Decked with gaud and glitter gay,
See, where rough they come and rude—
The powerful, active, strong-built brood—
With rapid run, with active spring,
Leaping light into the ring.

Fauns. The Fauns, a merry group, in pleasant dance,
With oak-leaf wreath on their crisp curls, advance.
A fine sharp-pointed ear up presses,
To meet the curly tresses.

A stumpy little nose, a broad flat face,
Are no bad passports to a lady's grace.
In dances, from the paw of the young faun
The fairest lady's hand is not withdrawn.

Satyr. The goat-foot Satyr now hops in,
With shrunk leg—sinewy and thin.
He, chamois-like, from mountain height,
Looks round him with a proud delight.
In the keen air breathes freedom—life;
Despises homestead, child, and wife,
Who in the valley's depth contrive,
'Mid stream and smoke, to keep alive,
Nor envy him his world on high—
His solitudes of cliff and sky.

Gnome. And now trips in a tiny band;
Not two and two, or hand in hand.
With lamplet bright, in mossy dress,
In intermingling lines we press.
Each mannikin on his own labours
Intent, nor thinking of his neighbours.
Thus hither, thither, in and out,
Like shiny ants, we run about.
A kindly crew, a thrifty race;
Our haunt, the poor man's dwelling-place;
Chirurgeons of the rocks well known,
Our skill in mountain practice shown.
We cup and bleed the hills; we drain
Of its best wealth the mineral vein;
Fling liberally the metals out:
"Cheer up! cheer up!" our joyous shout.

Benevolent is our intent,
And good is still to good men meant.
The good man's friend; yet from the earth
We drag into the light of day
The gold for which men steal and slay,
And woman gives her soul away.
Nor, thanks to us, shall iron brand
Be wanting to the proud man's hand,
Who murders wholesale. Take man's life,
Or steal, or take another's wife:
Break these commandments three, the rest
Will soon be slighted or transgressed.
We grieve not: we are clear of blame,
Guiltless and calm. Be thou the same!

Giants. Here come the wild men, fierce and fell—
Among the Hartzberg heights that dwell:
Tumultuously down they throng,
In nature's naked vigour strong;
The pine-stem in each rough right hand;
Below the waist a padded band,
A leafy screen above the knees:
The Pope hath life-guards none like these.

Nymphs in Choir [surrounding the great PAN, who now
appears]. He comes! The Universe is here
In Pan presented. Round him dance,
All ye that be of happiest cheer,
With antic measure, sportive glance!
Earnest he is, and kindly, and his will
Is to see all around him happy still.
Under the blue roof of the vaulted sky,
He sits reposing with a wakeful eye;
Lists to the lullabies soft waters keep,
And breezes that would rock him into sleep.
When he sleeps at middle day
No leaflet stirs upon the spray—
Spirits of sweet herbs silently
Are breathing through the still soft sky;
Nor may the Nymph be gay
In that hush of noontide deep;
And, where she stood, she stands, in languorous sleep.
When, with unexpected shout,
His tremendous voice rings out,

Like lightning among crashing trees,
 Or the roaring of the seas,
 As the sound rolls hither, thither,
 All would fly; but how? or whither?
 Hosts in battle hour are quailing,
 Heroes' hearts with terror failing:
 Honour to whom honour's due,
 To the leader of the crew!

Deputation of Gnomes [to the great PAN].

If a rich and sparkling treasure
 Winds through cliffs its secret threads,
 'Tis the rod of the diviner
 Shows the labyrinthine beds.

Troglodytes, in sunless grottoes,
 Vaults below the earth, we live;
 Thine, the wealth that thence we bring thee,
 To the eye of day to give!

We have found a wondrous fountain,
 Well of wealth that, overflowing,
 More than a whole life could gather
 In a moment is bestowing.

Without thee it is imperfect;
 Thou, for others still possessing,
 Take it. Wealth to thee entrusted,
 To the whole world is a blessing.

Plu. [to HERALD]. Keep cool! for strange things are
 about to be;

But what will come, let's bear it cheerfully.
 You're not a man without some self-control,
 An incident comes on that well may try it—
 Stiffly will this age and the next deny it:
 Set it down truly in your protocol.

Herald [laying his hand on the staff which PLUTUS holds].
 With what soft steps these miniatures of man
 Lead to the fount of fire majestic Pan;
 Up from the deep abyss the torrents seethe,
 Then sink into a lower gulf beneath.
 The open mouth stands for a moment black,

Till whirl the many-coloured billows back.
The monarch of the woodlands, in delight,
With a child's wonder, gazes on the sight;
And the gold-river, like a living thing,
Seems to enjoy the rapture of the king—
Leaps up exultingly, and in its play
Scatters all round foam-showers of pearly spray.
There he stands musing, o'er the fountain bent:
—Oh! trust not that wild wilful element.
But see! his beard drops down, falls in.
Who is he? who?—the smooth soft chin
Hid by his hand? The beard takes fire,
Flies back, the blaze is mounting higher!
The garland crackles on his brow,
And head and breast are burning now.
The flames, the efforts to subdue them
And beat them under, but renew them.
Caught in the blaze the masks are all
Burning. Disastrous festival!

But what's the rumour, that I hear
That whispered runs from ear to ear.
Oh! luckless evil-omened night!
What suffering hast thou brought and sorrow!
On what a scene the morning light
Will dawn!—sad night!—unhappy morrow!

The cry swells louder than before,
“The Emperor! the Emperor!”
He is in danger, is in pain—
The Emperor's burned, and all his train.
A curse on them who would advise,
And lead him on in this disguise,
Laced up in this fantastic trim,
And these pitch twigs, to ruin him
And themselves, with their mad roar
And song and revel evermore:
He and they together go,
'Tis universal overthrow!

Oh! Youth, impetuous Youth, and wilt thou never
Curb the wild impulse of life's happy season?
And Power, imperious Power, wilt thou not ever,
Acting Omnipotence, give ear to Reason?

See! on our mimic forest fierce flames play,
And lapping here and there and everywhere,
Up to the raftered roof sharp fire-tongues play.
In smouldering ashes, work of one black night,
Imperial splendour meets the morning light.

Plu. Fear thus far hath had its sway,
Now bring Help into the play.
See! the holy staff we bring—
With it smite and smite the ground
Till it tremble, rock, and ring,
And obey the magic sound.

Hush! the cool airs from beneath
A delicious fragrance breathe.
Vapours of the valley, rise!
Float and flow into the skies!
Come, ye mists that from the plain
Loaded are with the soft rain;
Cloudy fog-streaks, be ye spread
O'er the fire-waves raging red;
Languid winds, from all sides blow,
Waft the soft dew sailing low,
That in upper air encamping,
Curl the cloudlets drizzling, damping;
Hither come, ye moist ones, playing;
Fleecy folds come darkening, brightening,
Come, with gentle winds allaying—
Calm the ire of the false fire
Into peaceful summer lightning,
Or faint sunset's watery glow!

When Spirits threaten is the hour
For Magic to assert its power.

IV

PLEASURE GARDEN

MORNING SUN

The EMPEROR—His Court—FAUST and MEPHISTOPHELES, dressed becomingly in the usual Court dress of the day: both kneel. LORD HIGH STEWARD, GENERAL, TREASURER, PAGES, FEUDAL LORD, and COURT FOOL

Faust. Sire, pardon you of flames this magic show!

Emperor. Oh! that I often were deluded so!

All of a sudden a new realm I trod,
Seemed of the world of fire the very God;
Coal-rocks, more black than night, for ever fed
Bright flamelets, bursting from that marble bed;
While here and there from seething gulfs would rise
A thousand flames that whirled into the skies,
Where, playing loose in air, they hung aloof,
Flickered and waved, and formed a vaulted roof;
Whence tongues of light, that intermingling crost,
Gave to the eye a dome, now seen, now lost.
Between far fire-shafts, wreathed with curling flame,
Long lines of nations, onward moving, came
Toward me: in wide rings streamed the pressing crowd—
My subjects all—and all to me in homage bowed.
And evermore some courtier's well-known face,
'Mong the strange visages that thronged the place,
Would catch my glance, and claim a moment's grace.
With thousand salamanders circled round,
I seemed the prince of that enchanted ground.

Meph. Thou art! The Elements owe thee allegiance!
Fire! thou hast tested it—gave prompt obedience.
Throw thee into the boiling Ocean's waves,
And straightway all sea-spirits are thy slaves!
Here, too, in pride of conquest, shalt thou tread
Triumphantly the ocean's pearl-strewn bed;

See billows ever round thee rise and fall,
 And guard thee with their undulating wall.
 The tender green waves, purple-tinged, are swelling
 To form in the drear deep thy royal dwelling.
 The billows do thee homage. Through the brine
 A palace moves with every step of thine.
 The walls are happy in the magic gift
 Of life, exulting as, with arrow-swift
 To and fro gambollings, their place they shift.
 And the sea-monsters float up from their caves,
 To the mild lustre glimmering through the waves,
 Throng to the light, till now unseen; but they
 Fear to come nearer thee, and dart away:
 And dragons, golden-scaled, their high crests rear,
 And sharks, whose jaws gape wide, but cause no fear.
 Thou art a prince! but ne'er on Levée-day
 Hast thou beheld so brilliant a display.
 Beauty smiles on thee: the Nereidés
 Come to the very windows, if you please,
 Of the fresh-water palace in the seas—
 The young ones, shy and rather curious fish,
 The older, sober girls as one could wish.
 Thetis has heard it—holds out hands and lips:
 A second Peleus will the first eclipse;
 —Then on Olympus height thy place to be!

Emp. The realms of Air I'd rather leave to thee:
 We are in no hurry to ascend that throne.

Meph. And Earth, great prince, already is thine own.

Emp. Through what good fortune have I chanced upon
 This wonder of the Thousand Nights and One?
 If, like Scheherazadé, most prolific
 Of story-tellers, you would every day
 Give something new—oh! that were a specific
 'Gainst dulness that I never could repay.
 Be ready still with such delightful tales
 Of wonder when despondency prevails,
 And cares upon the sinking spirit weigh—
 Still cheer me when all else to cheer me fails.

Lord High Steward [steps hastily in]. May it please your

Highness, I had never thought
 That it at any time could be my lot
 Such joyous tidings to communicate
 As fill me now with rapture—every debt

Has been paid off, the usurers' claws are dulled,
My tortures—sharper than hell's torments—lulled.
There cannot be in heaven a happier man.

General [follows hastily]. The army's paid whatever
had been due,

The soldiers to their colours pledged anew,
The merry Lanzknecht's got a large advance,
And girls and vintners bless the lucky chance.

Emp. You breathe more freely, and your careworn face
Has actually assumed a cheerful grace;
And what a step!—why, I protest, you run!

Trea. [entering]. Ask these men, they will tell what they
have done.

Faust. The Chancellor will please to state the case;
It falls in with the duties of his place.

Chan. [advancing slowly]. Who could have ever dreamed
such happiness

Would come the days of my old age to bless.
Listen! and look upon the heaven-sent leaf,
That into joy hath changed a people's grief.

[Reads]—"To all whom it concerneth, and so forth:—

This note of hand, that purports to be worth
A thousand crowns, subjects to such demand
The boundless treasure buried in the land.

And furthermore, said treasure underground,
To pay said sum is, whensoever found,
And wheresoever, firmly pledged and bound."

Emp. Audacity unheard of!—foul deceit!
Who signed the Emperor's name to such vile cheat?
What punishment can for such crime atone?

Trea. Forget you, Sire, the writing is your own?
This last night you were in the character
Of Pan: we saw the Chancellor prefer

The suit. He said, "A few strokes of your pen
Will bless the people over whom you reign.
Do make them happy on this festal night."

And then you did take up the pen and write.
No time was lost. A thousand artists plied,
A thousandfold the scroll was multiplied;

And that the good to every one might fall,
We stamped at once the series, one and all.

Tens—thirties—fifties—hundreds off we strike!
Never was anything that men so like:

Your city, mouldering and in despair,
Has caught new life, and joy is everywhere.
Long as your name was by the world held dear,
Never did it so brightly shine as here—
The alphabet! what is it to this sign?—
To this “hoc signo vinces” note of thine?

Emp. For good gold, then, in Court and camp it passes,
And for good gold is taken by the masses?
I must permit it, though it does seem odd.

Lord High Steward. The papers flying everywhere
abroad—

Stop it—oh yes!—the lightning flashes stop—
At every banker's booth and money-shop,
For each leaf you can have (deducting still
Some discount) gold and silver, if you will.
Then off with you to butcher and to baker,
Vintner, and such like—tailor, sausage-maker.
Half the world passes—wealth is such a blessing—
Its days in feasting—the other half in dressing.
Flaunting in their new clothes—show their new riches—
The mercer cuts away—the stitcher stitches—
And “Long live Cæsar!” blurt out, 'mid the ringing
Of plates—of boiling, broiling, swearing, singing.

Meph. And he who walks alone the public ways,
And fixes on the fairest there his gaze,
And sees her move, with bland attractiveness,
In all the splendour of imposing dress;
The peacock's proud plume shades one eye, the while
She smirks, and simpers by with meaning smile—
Methinks she sees, and seems to understand
The import of this little note of hand.

Aye! and it wins from her, as by a spell,
The favours that my lady has to sell.

When words are weak, and wit all out of joint,

'Tis this that brings a woman to the point:

Close in the bosom, hidden there from view,

It lies so nicely in a *billet-doux*.

The priest—he now no purse or srip need bear—

Devoutly folds it in his Book of Prayer.

The soldier moves more freely, at his loins

No longer carrying a weight of coins.

Pardon me, Sire; on such details to dwell,

No doubt seems trifling with the miracle.

Faust. The treasure that within the land lies deep
Entranced, as 'twere, in an enchanted sleep,
Frozen and fixed—useless, while unemployed—
This may be disemprisoned, be enjoyed.
Man, in imagination's boldest hour,
To reach such treasure's limit has no power.
The intellect strives ever, strives in vain,
Some dim anticipation to attain;
But Spirits grasp it—see beyond the sense—
Have in the Boundless boundless confidence.

Meph. An easy substitute for gold and pearls
This paper is, and its convenience such,
We know at once how little, and how much
We have: no need of testing and of weighing;
No chaffering, cheapening, proving, or assaying,
But to the vintner's, or the merry girl's,
Off with us! Wish we specie—little danger
Of waiting long to find a money-changer.
At worst it is but digging—in a trice
You shovel up cup and trinkets plenty; call
An auction, for the bill make quick provision,
To the discomfiture and shame of all
Who looked upon our project with derision.
Once used to them, men will have nothing but
These leaves—so easy to receive and spend;
And the realm circulates, from this hour out,
Jewels, and gold, and paper to no end.

Emp. [*to FAUST and MEPH.*]. You've done the State
some service, and a meed
Appropriate to such service I've decreed.
We do appoint you now, of our good pleasure,
Our custodees of subterranean treasure.
Wealth from all other eyes that Earth holds hid,
Guard; let none dig or delve but as you bid.

[*To the OFFICERS OF THE TREASURY*]

And, Treasurers, as behoves in your high place,
Aid with becoming dignity and grace,
Thus shall we see, with profit and delight,
The Upper- and the Under-world unite.

Trea. No danger, Sire, of discord or debate,
Or deficit, now that my happy fate
Makes the magician my associate.

[*Exit with FAUST*]

Emp. If I distribute gifts among my Court,
How will they use them? let each tell me now.

1st Page [receiving his gift]. I'll pass my life in gaiety
and sport.

2nd Page [receiving]. I'll buy a frontlet for my lady's
brow:

Rings in her ear and on her hand shall shine.

Chamberlain [taking his present]. I'll drink two flasks
for one, and better wine.

Another. The dice, I feel them—and the itch of play.

Feudal Lord [thoughtfully]. I'll free my castle from its
debts to-day.

Another. A treasure!—yes, a treasure!—with the rest,
I'll hoard it up securely in a chest.

Emp. I thought to have waked the ardour that inspires
Bold enterprise—new deeds and new desires.
Wealth leaves you each employed at his old game—
The same! I should have known you—still the same.

The COURT FOOL (who had been supposed dead) presents
himself

Fool [approaching]. You shower down gifts, let me
have part of the shower.

Emp. What! you alive! you'd drink them in an
hour.

Fool. Drink?—magic leaves! I comprehend you not.

Emp. Strange if you did! you'd use them badly, sot!

Fool. There, more are dropping—I do not know what
To do.

Emp. Do! take them, they fell to your lot.

[Exit EMPEROR]

Fool. Five thousand crowns! the words are written
plain.

Meph. What, two-legged bladder, on thy feet again?

Fool. Aye! down, then up, seldom so well as now.

Meph. How glad you look, the sweat runs down your
brow.

Fool. And is this money? look at it; what do you
think?

Meph. Money, no doubt of it, and meat and drink.

Fool. And will it buy me corn, land, house, and
kine?

Meph. No doubt of it: bid only, they are thine.

Fool. Castle and park, and forest, fish-pond, chase?

Meph. All these—and then the title of Your Grace.

Fool. I'll have the castle; sleep to-night in it. [*Exit*

Meph. [*alone*]. Who but will now acknowledge our fool's wit?

V

A DARK GALLERY

FAUST. MEPHISTOPHELES

Mephistopheles. Why drag me down these dismal passages?

A pleasant notion of what pleasant is
You seem to have. The merriment within,
The gay throng of great people crowding thick—
Why drag me from it? 'tis the very scene
For drollery, cajolery, and trick.

Faust. Speak not of that. You cannot but have been
Out-wearied with its sameness long ago,
The glitter is all gone of that poor show.
The purpose—or I take it so to be—
Of all your restless shuffling to and fro,
Is to escape a moment's talk with me.
Now I am tortured into act though loth—
The Chamberlain and Marshal at me both.
The Emperor's impatient for the play
Of Helena and Paris, so they say:
He wills it, and there must be no delay.
The model forms of man's and woman's beauty
He would behold as they appeared in life:
Swift to the task—up, Spirit! do thy duty.
The Emperor waits—I may not break my word.

Meph. So lightly to have promised was absurd.

Faust. This comes, companion, from the arts you use:
We made him rich, and now we must amuse.

Meph. You think the thing is done as soon as said.
Here before steepers more perilous we stand,
That guard the frontier of a foreign land.
Art rash enough the hostile ground to tread?

Aye! with the devil to pay, 'tis mighty cheap,
 Worlds of new debt upon your head to heap.
 Would you call up their Helena of old,
 Like those pale paper phantoms of false gold?
 Of witch materials from the yielding sex—
 Of dwarfy men, with puffed and pursy necks—
 Of midnight ghosts and goblins, and the stuff
 That ghosts are made of, you shall have enough.
 But devils' drabs—though good things in their way—
 Would not quite do your heroine parts to play.

Faust. Aye, twanging on the same old string again!
 Why is it that you never can speak plain?
 Consult with you! that always is about
 One's worst expedient—you suggest new doubt.
 The father of all hindrance—your advice,
 An agent's—for each job who has his price;
 Mumble but a few sounds, and, quick as thought,
 While one looks round, you have them on the spot.

Meph. I and the Heathen never hit it well.
 They're none of mine, and they have their own hell.
 But there are means——

Faust. Speak! speak! delay me not.

Meph. But there are means—reluctantly do I
 Unveil a higher Mystery—Goddesses
 August enthrone themselves in loneliness.
 Place none around them, glimpse of Time still less.
 They are—we speak not of them, scarce will think—
 They are the Mothers——

Faust. Mothers!

Meph. Do you shrink?
 Are you shuddering?

Faust. Mothers! mothers! It sounds strange.

Meph. And is so. Goddesses beyond the range
 Known to you mortals. We of them would keep
 Strict silence. For their homes you may scrape deep
 Under the undermost. Aye, go there, do.
 You have yourself to blame for it; but for you
 We'd have no need of them.

Faust. The road?

Meph. The road!
 There's no road. Road!—road to where none have trod
 Ever—none ever will tread!—road to where
 I warrant never suppliant bent in prayer,

Nor ever will hereafter ! Art thou ready ?
No locks are there—no bolts to be pushed back ;
But solitudes whirl round in endless eddy.
Canst grasp in thought what no words can express—
Vacuity and utter loneliness ?

Faust. You might have spared, methinks, this solemn
speeching ;
Something of the old time it seems to smack ;
Brings back the very smell of the witch kitchen.
Have I not dealt in the world ? and have I not
There learned the empty ?—there the empty taught ?
What I saw clearly, if I spoke out plain,
Was I not doubly contradicted then ?
And to escape the blows from all sides given,
To savage solitude was I not driven,
Till sick of life in such dull sameness passed,
I gave me over to the Devil at last ?

Meph. And hadst thou swum through ocean, even within
Its shoreless desolation, thou wouldst see
Wave on wave coming everlastingly,
In the very jaws of ruin ; something still
Would meet the eye—say, dolphins on the green
Of the smooth surface, sporting at their will ;
Cloud-shadows trailing—sun, moon, many a star,
In the illimitable void afar
Nothing whatever—nothing there is seen.
Where your foot falls the unsubstantial ground
Sinks down—still sinks ; you move—you hear no sound.

Faust. The very rant of the hierophant
When he is wheedling some poor neophyte.
Your promise though is the reverse of his,
And its results in all things opposite.
You'd send me to the empty to increase
Science, Art, Power. I see what you are at—
The old tale of the chestnuts, and the cat
Scorching his paws in the cinders. Never mind,
I'll sift it to the depth : in this, your evil
Find good—in this your nothing all things find.

Meph. We part ; but I must own you know the devil.
Here take this Key.

Faust. That little thing !

Meph. Aye, take
And hold it tight, nor little of it make.

Faust. It swells!—it shines!—it flashes in my hand!

Meph. The virtue there is in it, understand!
The Key will scent the Mothers to their lair.
Follow his guidance down, and you are there.

Faust. The Mothers! it falls on me like a blow.
How can a word—a sound—affect me so?

Meph. Such narrow-mindedness! At a new word
Quailing!—wouldst never hear but what you've heard?
If—pardon me—a meaning's to be found,
Beyond what your thoughts reach to, in a sound,
Is that a matter to astonish us,
So long inured to the Miraculous?

Faust. Think not in torpor that I place my weal.
'Tis man's—'tis man's to shudder and to feel
The Human in us, though the world disown
And mock at feeling, seized and startled thus,
In on itself by strong revulsion thrown,
Thrills at the Vast—the Awful—the Unknown.

Meph. Sink then! I might say rise—'tis one. Fly
far

From earth—from all existences that are,
Into the realms of Image unconfined.
Gloat upon charms that long have ceased to be:
Like cloud-wreaths rising, rolling, the combined
Army of Apparitions rush on thee.
Wave high the Key, and keep them at far length—
From thy person keep them.

Faust. As I grasp the Key,
My heart expands to the great work, and strength
Is given me. Onward!

Meph. A burning Tripod tells thee thou hast found
The deepest—art below the deepest ground;
And by its light the Mothers thou wilt see—
Some sit, and others stand, or, it may be,
In movement are. Formation, Transformation,
Eternal Play of the Eternal Mind,
With Semblances of all things in creation,
For ever and for ever sweeping round.
Onward! They see thee not, for they but see
Shapes substanceless. There's risk—be bold—be brave:
Straight to the Tripod; touch it with the Key.

[FAUST takes a firm commanding attitude with the
Key

Meph. [looking at him]. All's right! it clings!—it follows! Faithful slave!

Thou reascendest—Fortune raising thee—
Calm, self-possessed, as one that knows not fear;
Ere they have marked thine absence, thou art here.
Bring but the Tripod hither, and from night
Hero and Heroine you may raise to light—
The first to venture on such bold design.
'Tis done; to have accomplished it is thine—
And now as the magician bids, the clouds
Of waving incense shape them into Gods.

Faust. And now? what now?

Meph. Thy being downward strain.
Stamp, and you sink; stamp—you ascend again.

[FAUST stamps and sinks

Meph. [alone]. If the Key lead him but in the right track!

—I wonder, is he ever to come back?

VI

BRILLIANTLY LIGHTED HALLS

EMPEROR and PRINCES. *The COURT in motion.* CHAMBER-
LAIN, LORD HIGH STEWARD, MEPHISTOPHELES, BLONDE,
BRUNETTE, DAME, PAGE

Chamberlain [to MEPH.]. Give us the Spirit scene without delay—

The Emperor's impatient for the play.

Lord High Steward. 'Twas but a moment since his Grace did ask

About it. Haste! The party was made for
This show of yours, and the thing must be done,
Or you will compromise the Emperor.

Meph. My friend's this very moment at his task;
He has gone away to work at it—has gone
To his study; has begun it; 'twill go on
Well—I've no doubt of it. Closeted close, none dare
Disturb him as he works in secret there.

Who would raise up such treasure—would bid rise
The Beautiful—needs for the enterprise
The highest Art—the Magic of the Wise.

Lord High Steward. It matters not what arts you call
to aid ;

The Emperor's will is that the play be played.

A Blonde [to MEPH.]. A word, an't please you, sir. You
see my face

Is now quite clear ; but 'tis another case
When summer comes. In the hot horrid weather
A hundred brown-red spots sprout out together,
Hiding the white skin, clouding it with freckles.
A cure, sir !

Meph. Pity, that a face so pretty,
That smiles so dazzlingly on me to-day
Should look so in the month of merry May,
Like a young panther's hide—all spots and speckles.
Take frog-spawn, toads' tongues—stew all in a skillet,
And when the moon is at the full distil it ;
And in the wane, be sure to spread it on.
Spring comes and goes—the freckles, too, are gone.

A Brunette [having made her way to him]. The crowd
throng round, they fawn on you and flatter ;
May I a plain word speak ? A little matter
Ails me. A cure, my lord ! A frozen foot
Mars walking, dancing, spoils even my salute
When I would curtsy.

Meph. If you would but grant
Me just to press your foot——

Brunette. With a gallant—
A lover—I might do it.

Meph. Child ! the print
Of my foot hath a deeper meaning in't.
A cure will follow if my foot but strike,
Whatever the disease. 'Tis like to like
Forms the great secret of the healing art.
Thus foot cures foot, and so with every part.
Now for the tread, which you need not return.

Brunette [screaming]. Pain ! pain ! it was a hard stamp,
like a burn,
As of a horse-hoof. How can I endure
The torture ?

Meph. With the torture take the cure.

At dances you can now with pleasure move,
At table mix feet with the man you love.

Dame [*pressing forward*]. Me!—let me through! I
cannot bear the pain;
It boils up from my heart—it burns my brain.
Last night he lived but in my glances; he
Chats with her now, and turns his back on me.

Meph. A case of difficulty 'tis and doubt.
You must press gently up to him—hear me out—
This cinder keep, and with it on his cloak
Or on his sleeves or shoulder make a stroke,
Or any part that may your fancy take:
Remembrance and repentance will awake.
The cinder you immediately must swallow;
Wine must not touch your lips, nor water follow
This food. He sighs before your door to-night.

Dame. There is not poison in it?

Meph. [*enraged*]. Honour bright!
Think who you speak with. Long enough in vain
Might a man search to find the like again.
It came from one of the old wizard-pyres.
—We've not been lately stirring up the fires.

Page [*approaching*]. They scorn my love—they say 'tis
but a boy's.

Meph. [*aside*]. Whom shall I listen to? What crowds!
what noise!

[*To the PAGE*]. Tell not to growing girls your hopes and
fears;

Youth is not valued but by those in years.

[*Others press up to him*]. There—more; no end of comers
—age and youth.

My last, sad, only refuge is the truth.

Oh, Mothers! Mothers! let but Faustus loose.

[*Looks round*]. The lights already glimmer in the hall

The whole Court's moving thither, one and all.

Each pressing after each in their degrees,

Through the long walks, down the far galleries.

And now they gather in the ample space

Of the old Knight's Hall, and scarce find place.

O'er the broad walls the tapestry hangs rich,

And armour gleams from every nook and niche.

It needs no charm to bid the Spirits come:

Your ghosts are here if anywhere at home.

VII

HALL OF THE KNIGHTS, *dimly lighted*

EMPEROR and COURT *have entered.* HERALD, ASTROLOGER,
MEPHISTOPHELES, ARCHITECT, FAUST, LADIES,
KNIGHTS, &c.

Herald. The usage of announcing our new play
Must to necessity for once give way.
The Spirits keep their secrets, and in vain
We seek the hidden magic to explain.
The seats arranged, the chairs are ready all—
The Emperor placed in front of the high wall.
There, worked in tapestry, he may behold
In peace the wars of the great days of old.
Now the Court circle's filled, and all around
Crowds throng the benches, lining the background.
Lovers find room near lovers, and their fear
Will press them closer when the Ghosts appear.
And so, all being settled and at ease,
We are quite ready. Rise, Ghosts, if you please.

[*Trumpets*

Astrol. Begin the Drama! 'tis the Sire's command.
Obedient to his will, ye Walls expand!
Magic for everything that we require,
In any exigency, is at hand.
The curtain, curling as though touched by fire,
Is gone—the wall divides—turns round, and there
Before us stands, far in, a theatre,
With light mysterious—none can say whence come;—
And I ascend to the Proscenium.

Meph. [peeping out of the prompter's box]. No player
like me, so up to all stage trick!
And prompting is the devil's rhetoric.
[*To the ASTROLOGER.*] The tune, to which the Stars keep
time, you hear,
You'll catch my whispers with but half an ear.

Astrol. By Magic raised a temple here behold,
A massive structure of the days of old—
Like Atlas, who propped heaven up long ago,
Stand pillars, plenty of them, in a row.
Their load of stone such columns well may bear;
'Twere a large building asked more than a pair.

Arch. And this is the Antique! You cannot force
Me into praising it—'tis cumb'rous, coarse.
But rough, it seems, is noble; clumsy, grand.
Give me the structure men can understand.
Our long, thin, narrow pillars, I so love,
Striving into the boundlessness above.
The sharp-arched zenith lifts us to the skies.
Give me the edifice that edifies!

Astrol. Welcome with reverence this star-favoured hour;
Be Reason bound in words of magic power;
Let Fancy lord it, wandering, wild and free;
All the mind images the eye will see;
All the eye sees, the mind as true receive:
It is impossible, and so believe.

[*FAUST is seen ascending on the other side of the
proscenium*

Astrol. In priestly robe attired, with flower-wreathed
brow,
A great magician stands before you now,
Redeeming the bold promise that he gave—
A tripod with him from a hollow cave
Of the realms under earth is rising up:
I scent the fragrance of the incense-cup.
He arms himself now the mighty work to bless,
And we can augur nothing but success.

Faust. In your name, oh, ye Mothers! you, whose
throne
Is in the boundless—you, who dwell alone,
Yet not in uncompanioned loneliness.
Around your head the flitting fantasies press
Of life, yet without life. What was, what cast
The splendour of its presence on the Past,
Yonder, as erst, abides eternally—
It was, and having been, will ever be.
It you distribute, beings of all might,
To-day's pavilion, to the vault of night:
Some through life's cheerful pageant sport their hour,

Some the bold magian seeks, and subjects to his power,
And, fearless now, to the expectant gaze
His wonder-works he lavishly displays.

Astrol. The burning Key hath scarcely touched the
bowl,

When round us undulating vapours roll,
And in, like rising clouds, the dense mists slide,
Wave—lengthen—form a sphere—unite—divide—
Are two—and they—surpassing wonder of
The spirits' skill!—make music as they move.
It comes, one knows not how, from tones of air;
The melody moves with them everywhere
The pillar-shaft, the very triglyph rings;
I do believe that all the temple sings.
From the light veil, as by the music led,
A lovely youth steps forth with measured tread.
The waving mist-wreath falls. He stands out clear.
Who does not see the graceful Paris here?

Lady. What vigour there! and with such youthful
grace!

2nd Lady. How fresh the peach-bloom on that fair soft
face!

3rd Lady. How finely carved each sweet and swelling lip.

4th Lady. From such a cup delicious 'twere to sip.

5th Lady. He's handsome, but I cannot think refined.

6th Lady. More elegant he might be, to my mind.

Knight. I see the traces of the shepherd-boy;
No manners—nothing of the Prince of Troy.

2nd Knight. Yes, thus half naked he looks pretty well:
Show him in armour—that's the way to tell.

Lady. How calmly he inclines him—he would rest.

Knight. A pleasant couch for you were that soft breast.

Lady. He bends his arm above his head—what grace!

Cham. Rudeness—'gainst all proprieties of place.

Lady. Yon chamber-knights find fault for evermore.

Cham. To stretch and yawn before the Emperor!

Lady. He acts his part—he thinks himself alone.

Cham. The Theatre should not forget the Throne.

Lady. Sleep on the fair youth softly seems to fall.

Cham. Belike he'll snore; you know 'tis nature all.

Young Lady [enraptured]. What fragrance mixes with
the incense-wreaths,
And on my heart delicious freshness breathes!

Elderly Lady. Yes, all hearts feel a breath of rapturous power !

It flows from him.

Old Lady. It is the growing flower
Of human life, that as ambrosia here
Blooms in the youth, and fills the atmosphere.

[HELENA advances

Meph. This, then, was she ! My rest she'll never break.
Fair, doubtless ; but with me she does not take.

Astrol. Here all at fault, I own it, I must seem.
She comes ! the all-beautiful ! Oh that a tongue
Of fire were mine ! The poets, who have sung
Of Beauty, did but picture their own dream.
They saw not. Who hath seen her—sees her—is
Entranced, is dumb. To win, to call her his—
Oh ! that it could but be !—Wish wild and vain !

Faust. Do my eyes see ? or deep within the brain
Doth the full fountain of all beauty shed
Its gushing torrents ? Oh ! what glorious gain
Is mine ! bright issue of that journey dread—
The world—yet undeveloped, undisclosed,
How mean ! how abject !—rose up in the hour
Of my initiation, robed with power
And on its own eternity reposed.
No painted cloud, no transitory gleam,
No sand-drift now of unsubstantial dream,
But kindred with man's heart, indeed divine.
If that in thought I ever part from thee,
Oh ! may I in that moment cease to be !
The shape that won me from myself away
Amused me in the magic mirror's play—
How faint ! how feeble, to these charms of thine !
In thee life's springs of power and passion live.
Life of my life ! to thee myself I give !
Love ! adoration ! madness of the heart !

Meph. [from the prompter's box]. Collect yourself—you
fall out of your part.

Elderly Lady. Shapely and tall—only the head too
small.

Younger. Look at the foot—'tis clumsy after all.

Diplomatist. I have seen princesses ; from head to foot
I do pronounce her beauty absolute.

Courtier. Softly she steals to where he sleeping is.

Lady. She shocks me.—Near that pure young form of his !

Poet. He is illumined in the light serene.

Lady. Endymion !—Luna !—'tis the very scene
As painted.

Poet. Yes ; the goddess downward sinks,
And o'er the sleeper bends ; his breath she drinks.
How enviable !—a kiss !—the measure's full.

Duen. What ! before all the people—that is cool.

Faust. Distracting favour to the boy !

Meph. Be still.

Do let the phantom lady have her will.

Cour. She glides away on light foot ; he awakes.

Lady. Looks back—I thought so—I make no mistakes.

Knight. He's stricken dumb ! “ Is this the work of
dreams ? ”

Thinks he : “ what strange things came on me in sleep ! ”

Lady. She is, methinks, a dame that knows, not “ seems,”
And her experience holds such strange things cheap.

Cour. And now she turns to him with such calm grace.

Lady. I see there's a new pupil in the case—
An unformed boy belike of tender age ;
And she would take him into tutelage.

In such things all men are so very dull.

Poor lad ! he fancies he's the first she has taught.

Knight. What dignity ! so calmly beautiful !

Lady. A vile coarse wretch ! no better than she ought.

Page. Oh that I were in that young shepherd's place !

Cour. Who would not in a net like this be caught ?

Lady. The gem from time to time, with many a one,
Has been from hand to hand still shifted on—
The gilding rubbed off many a year ago.

Another Lady. From ten years old she has been but
so-so.

Knight. Yes, Fortune favoured them. Yet how divine
The precious relic—would that it were mine.

A Learned Man. I see her, but it is not free from doubt
That she's the Helen men so talk about.

The danger of illusion here is great ;

The eye misleads and will exaggerate.

“ Stick to the written letter ” is my creed :

I look into my Homer, and I read

How she so pleased all the old men of Troy ;

And here methinks the self-same thing we see ;
I am not young, and she so pleases me.

Astrol. He hath cast off the dreamy shepherd-boy ;
Wakes into hero—into man. See ! see !
He seizes her—she hath no power to flee—
With his nerved arm uplifts her. Can it be ?
Thinks he to force her hence ?

Faust [to PARIS]. Rash fool ! give o'er.
Dare it ! defy me ! I can bear no more.

Meph. These spirit-freaks, these odd extravagancies
Are mere stage-trick—they but act out your fancies.

Astrol. One word. From what we see, I think we may
Presume “ The Rape of Helen ” is the play.

Faust. What !—Rape !—Am I then nothing here ? The
Key—

Is't not still in my hand ? It guided me
Through waves, and horrors, and the hollow roar
Of wildernesses waste, to this firm shore.
Here do I plant my foot—here actual life
Is, and reality—high 'vantage ground
From which the spirit with spirits may well dare strife,
And for itself a double empire found.
She was—how far away she is !—how near !
Rescued, is doubly mine—is doubly dear.
Crown, Mothers, crown the daring with success.
Who hath known her must perish or possess !

Astrol. What dost thou, Faust ! Faust ! look at him !
He grasps at her—the phantom shape grows dim.
Now to the youth he points the Key—and, lo !
He touches ; he hath touched him ! Woe ! woe ! woe !

[*Explosion.* FAUST lies on the ground. The Spirits
dissolve in vapour

Meph. [takes FAUST on his shoulder]. Aye, now he
has it, aye. Yes, yes, just so ;
Your fool's a heavy load in any case,
And brings the devil himself into disgrace.

[*Darkness.* Tumult

ACT II

I

A HIGH-ARCHED NARROW GOTHIC CHAMBER,
FORMERLY FAUST'S—UNALTERED

MEPHISTOPHELES, CHORUS OF CRICKETS, FAMULUS,
BACCALAUREUS

MEPHISTOPHELES *steps out from behind a curtain ; while he raises it, and looks back, FAUST is seen stretched out on an old-fashioned bed*

Meph. Lie down there, luckless ! lie down, wretched thrall

Of this inexplicable, inextricable
Love-tangle ! His is the worst case of all.
Whom Helen paralyses, little chance
Has of recovering ever from the trance. [*Looks round him*
As I look up—down—round me—here,
Nowhere does any change appear.
Perhaps some slight shade in the colour
Of the stained glass—a trifle duller.
The spiders' webs are spread more wide ;
The paper's yellower, the ink's dried.
All things in their old position—
All things in their old condition.
The very pen with which he signed away
Himself to the devil, look at it there still !
Aye, and the drop of blood I coaxed from him,
A dry stain crusts the barrel of the quill.
What a rare object of vertu to seek
For your collector !—happiest of men,
Could he but get possession of the pen !
Envied proprietor of such unique !
And the old sheepskin on its own old hook,
Brings back that comic lecture, which so took

With the poor boy, who ever since, no doubt,
All its deep meaning still keeps puzzling out.

My old warm furry friend, I like thy look !
I long again to wrap me round in thee,
And put on the Professor, in full blow
Of lecture-room infallibility !
How is it, that these sorry bookmen know
So well to get the feeling up ? Ah me !
In the devil it has died out, ages ago.

*[He takes down and shakes the old fur gown ; crickets,
chaffers, moths, and other insects fly out]*

Chorus of Insects. Hail to thee ! hail to thee !
Patron and father ;
Welcome and welcome be !
Swarm we and gather
To welcome thy coming,
Hovering and humming.
In the faded and rotten,
Of chambers neglected,
In darkness forgotten,
One by one, unperceived,
Didst thou silently plant us ;
Now thousands on thousands,
In sunlight and glee,
We sport and we flaunt us.
Dust is rife
With dancing life,
Buzzing and welcoming,
Welcoming thee.
The scoundrel still skulks him
The bosom within,
More close than the moth
In the furry old skin.
Many are we—many are we,
Every one of us welcomes thee.

Meph. With what surprise and rapturous delight
This young creation glads its maker's sight ;
If a man do but sow, he may be sure
Time in due season will the crop mature.
I give the old fleece another whisk about,

And here and there an odd one flutters out ;
 Up and around, in corners, holes, and shelves,
 My darlings, find out snug berths for yourselves.
 Yonder, where broken boxes block the ground,
 And here in the old parchments time-embrowned ;
 In dusty potsherds, faded curtain shreds,
 And in the eye-holes there of dead men's heads—
 Come, moth and maggot, people once again
 The rubbish that in life was called the brain !

[Slips into the gown]

Up on my shoulders, furry friend ! and then
 I for the hour am Principal again.
 But I must summon them o'er whom I claim
 Dominion, or there's nothing in the name.

*[He pulls the bell, which gives a harsh piercing sound,
 at which the halls shake, and the doors spring
 open]*

Famulus [tottering up the long dark passage]. What a
 sounding ! what a shaking !

Stairs are trembling, walls are quaking ;
 Through the window's colour-flashes
 Lightnings tremble !—tempest crashes !
 Is the floor asunder parting,
 Roof in ruins downward falling,
 And the bolted doors back starting
 Through some wonder-work appalling ?
 And look yonder, where a giant
 Stands in Faust's old fur, defiant ;
 And, with beck and glance and winking,
 Me he silently is calling :

And I faint ! my knees are sinking.

Shall I stand my ground ? or fly him ?

Stay ! what ?—stay ! be murdered by him ?

Meph. Come hither, friend ; your name is Nicodemus.

Fam. *[crossing himself].* High honoured master ! 'tis
 my name—*Oremus*.

Meph. Sink the *Oremus* !

Fam.

I'm so glad to see,

Kind master, that you've not forgotten me.

Meph. I know you well—in years, but still in love
 With study—books you're always thinking of,
 Most learned ! most mossy ! even a deep-learned man
 Still studies on because 'tis all he can :

'Tis like one building to a certain height
 A house of cards which none can finish quite.
 Your master, he is one, it may be said,
 Who always hits the nail upon the head—
 The well-known Doctor Wagner—anyhow
 The great man of the world of letters now:
 His genius 'tis, that all inspires, unites,
 While science mounts with him to prouder heights.
 There gathers round his chair an eager ring
 Of hearers—men who would learn everything.
 He, like Saint Peter, holds the keys—can show
 The secrets of above and of below;
 He shines in all; no reputation is
 In any way to be compared to his—
 None anywhere now to be placed with him.
 Even Faust's fame's beginning to grow dim—
 He has made the great discoveries of our days.

Fam. Pardon, most noble sir; permit me to
 Speak, sir; permit me just to say to you
 That he is one who would shrink from such praise.
 His is a modest mind—he does not aim
 At rivalling the mighty master's fame.
 Since the great master's disappearance, he
 Seems ever wrapt in strange perplexity.
 For his return he looks, for health and hope
 From it—and thus his spirits he keeps up.
 The chamber as in Doctor Faust's day
 Remains—no change made since he went away:
 There, 'tis kept waiting for its own old master.
 Myself—I scarcely venture to go in.
 What say the stars? does the hour bode disaster?
 The walls, as though with terror struck, still shake;
 The doors flew open, every bolt sprang back;
 Else you had not come in here—you, even you.

Meph. Where is he?—bring me to him—bring him
 here.

Fam. Ah, sir, the prohibition's too severe—
 'Tis scarce a thing that I could venture on.
 Intent on the great work, he has lived alone
 For months in the stillest stillness. Only think,
 Think of this neatest, nattiest of all
 Our bookmen, blacked with soot from ear to nose;
 And his eyes blearing, and their raw red blink,

As with throat parching at the fire he blows ;
 For the true moment every moment longs—
 His music still the clatter of the tongs !

Meph. To me he'll scarce deny the entrée. I'm
 The lucky man, and this the lucky time.

[*Exit FAMULUS*

[*MEPHISTOPHELES sits down gravely*]. I scarce have sate
 down in my place,

When, hark ! a stirring from behind,

And I behold a well-known face :

My old friend, sure enough, again I find.

But now he comes in the bold bearing

Of our newest schools ; spares nothing, nobody—

Dashing 'gainst all things, no bounds to his daring

Baccalaureus [storming along the passage]. Gateway free,
 doors loose, locks broken,

Are a promise and a token

That the living, as of old here,

Shall not now like dead men moulder ;

Pining, festering, putrefying,

Where to live itself is dying.

Walls are bending in and crumbling,

Tumble-down partitions tumbling ;

Roof and joist will fall asunder,

Crushing everybody under.

Than myself of spirit few are

More courageous, with heart truer ;

Yet the prospect is so cheerless

As to force back the most fearless.

One step farther into danger

I'll not take for friend or stranger.

Very odd to-day the changes

Seem, as back my memory ranges,

When I was "the fox" well hunted,

And with jibe and jeer affronted ;

When the grey-beard old deceivers

Classed me with their true believers—

One who all their figments hollow

As the bread of life would swallow.

Lying rascals, dry and crusty,

Primed from their old parchments musty

What they taught, and disbelieved it,
But as handed down received it;
What they taught with no misgiving
Robbed themselves and me of living.

But see sitting in brown study
One of these same bright and muddy,
In the clear obscure, the glimmer
Of the grey light growing dimmer;
There he sits as first I found him,
With the rough brown sheepskin round him.
Then he seemed to me right clever,
Great man of the place; however,
That was all in the gone-bye time
—The world's nonage: now 'tis my time.
I know him now; he cannot catch me now—
That day is over: at him, anyhow.

If, old sir, your bald head in Lethe's pool
Hath not been soaked, you may with those
 slant eyes
The scholar of an old day recognize.
But now remember I am out of school,
And rid of academic rods and rule.
You, sir, are just the same as long ago;
I am not what I was, I'd have you know.

Meph. I am so glad my bell hath hither brought you—
Even when a boy, no common boy I thought you:
The grub and chrysalis denote
The future butterfly's gay coat.
I well remember your delighted air,
Your peaked lace collar and your flowing hair:
Proud, child, you were of that same curly pate.
You never wore the queue and crown—
It had not to your day come down.
And now to find you in a Sweden tête,
Determined, resolute, from head to foot.
Oh! come not home with that imperious frown,
The barefaced terrors of the Absolute.

Bac. Old gentleman, we are in the old place;
But change of time has come and changed the case.
'Tis out of season to affect

This motley two-edged dialect,
 You long ago might play at make-believe :
 Small art need any man employ,
 To fool an unsuspecting boy,
 Whom no one now will venture to deceive.

Meph. If, speaking to the young, pure truth one speaks,
 It little suits the callow yellow beaks ;
 Years come and, what they heard from us, when brought
 Back by their own experience dearly bought,
 They deem it all the fruit of their own skull—
 Speak of their master as supremely dull.

Bac. Or—as a knave, for who that deals with youth
 Speaks, face to face, direct the honest truth ;
 Your teacher still will strengthen or dilute,
 Palates of pious children as may suit.

Meph. Learning and Teaching—there's a time for each ;
 Your time for learning's over : you can teach.
 Moons many since we met—some suns have rolled ;
 You must have gained experience manifold.

Bac. Experience ! foam and bubble, and its name
 Not to be mentioned with the Spirit's claim.
 Confess it ! nothing was till this day done
 Worth doing in Science—Science there was none.

Meph. I have thought so long—I had always a thick
 skull ;
 I now confess to “silly—shallow—dull.”

Bac. That so delights me !—some hope of you yet !
 The first old man with brains I have ever met.

Meph. I dug for gold, I found but cinders horrid ;
 I cried them up for treasures rich and rare.

Bac. Confess then that your barefaced bald old fore-
 head
 Is nothing better than the dead skulls there.

Meph. [*calmly*]. Friend ! you are most discourteously
 replying.

Bac. Courtesy ! in plain German, that means lying.

Meph. [*moving with his wheel chair towards the proscenium,
 addressing the audience*]. Light—air—no quarter up
 there ! You'll be civil !

You're sure to show your kindness to the devil.

Bac. It is the very height of impudence,
 That what is dead and gone should make pretence
 Of being in existence. Man's life lives

But in the blood—and the blood, where, in truth,
Stirs it so vigorously as in youth?

The young blood lives, aye! and in eager strife
Shapes to itself a new life out of life.

There all is progress! something still is done—
The feeble falls, the active presses on.

We have won half the world—yes! youthful man
Hath won it; meanwhile what have you been doing?
Slept, nodded, dreamed, weighed, thought, plan after
plan

Suggesting still, and languidly pursuing?

Old age is a cold fever's feeble flame,
Life's peevish winter of obstruction chilling,
Man is at thirty dead, or all the same—

'Twere better kill you while you are worth killing.

Meph. To this the devil himself can nothing add.

Bac. Devil? Devil there can be none without my
willing.

Meph. [*aside*]. The devil's close by to trip you up, my
lad.

Bac. [*exultingly*]. This is the noble mission of the
young—

Earth into being at my bidding sprung;
The sun in pomp I led up from the sea,
The moon in all her changes followed me.
For me in beauty walked the glorious day,
The green earth blossomed to adorn my way.
'Twas at my beck upon that primal night,
The proud stars shed through heaven their spreading
light.

Rescued is Man, and by what hand but mine,
From galling bondage of the Philistine?
I—for the Spirit speaks within me—freed
Follow the inward light where it may lead,
Fearless and fast, with rapture-beaming mind,
Glory before me, and the Dark behind.

Meph. Original! move onward in your pride.
Oh! how the spirit would sink mortified,
Could you but know that long ago
All thoughts, whatever, dull or clever,
That cross the twilight of your brain,
Have been o'er and o'er again
Occupying other men.

Yet, have no fears for him ;—in a few years
 The absurd works off, the ferment clears,
 The folly will subside, perhaps refine ;
 The must at last is wine, and no bad wine.

*[To the younger part of the audience who do not
 applaud]*

Too bad to see the auditors so cold !
 And yet I must forgive the young beholder
 His lack of sympathy. The devil is old.
 To understand him better, boys, grow older !

II

LABORATORY

*In the fashion of the Middle Ages. Cumbersome, heavy ap-
 paratus for fantastic purposes*

Wagner *[at the furnace]*. The bell ! how fearfully it
 chimed !

With what a shudder, thrilling through
 These old walls, smoke-begrimed !

The agony of hopes and fears
 That tortured me is at an end.
 The cloudy darkness clears.
 From deep within the phial glows
 A living ring of fire, that throws
 Far its red light, and through the night,
 As from the carbuncle, in bright
 Lightning-like lustre flows.

And now !—and now !—at last 'tis come ! a pure clear
 pearly white !

Oh ! that I may not lose it this time—Hark !
 Again ! A something rattling at the door.

Meph. *[entering]*. Welcome ! I bring such luck as in
 my power.

Wagner *[anxiously]*. Welcome ! To come just at the
 planet hour !

[*In a low voice*]. Hush! not a breath, while you look on intent.

A mighty work of wonderful event
Is at the moment of accomplishment—
A man is being made!

Meph. [*in a whisper*]. A man! and will it
Be soon done? are your lovers in the skillet?

Wagner. Heaven help you! the romance of action,
passion,

Father and mother, is quite out of fashion.
I've shown up pretty well that idle pother—
The thought of child by no means implies mother:
The tender point from which life sprang and started
Is gone—clean gone—the glory all departed.
The eager impulse from within that pressed,
Received and gave, and, prompt to manifest
Itself, went on advancing by degrees,
The nearest first, the foreign next to seize,
Is from its dignity deposed, dethroned,
From this day forward, disallowed, disowned.
No doubt the old views may still for the brute
beast

Answer, but man, high-gifted man at least,
Will have a higher, purer form of birth.

[*Turns to the hearth*

Look yonder! see the flashes from the hearth!
Hope for the world dawns there, that, having laid
The stuff together of which man is made,
The hundredfold ingredients mixing, blending
(For upon mixture is the whole depending),
If then in a retort we slowly mull it,
Next to a philosophic temper dull it,
Distil and re-distil, at leisure thin it,
All will come right, in silence, to a minute.

[*Turning again to the hearth*

'Tis forming—every second brings it nearer—
And my conviction becomes stronger, clearer.
What Nature veils in mystery, I expect
Through the plain understanding to effect;
What was organization will at last
Be with the art of making crystals classed.

Meph. Who has lived long will never be surprised—
Nothing in the world is new. I've long ago

Met, in my years of going to and fro
And up and down in earth, men crystallized.

Wagner [gazing intently on the phial]. It forms ! glows !
gathers ! in a moment more

The work's accomplished never done before !
Broach an unfolded project, men suspect it,
Scoff at it, as a madman's dream reject it ;
We, in our turn, may laugh when the event
Is placed beyond the reach of accident.

Think of the thinker able to produce
A brain to think with fit for instant use !
[Gazing on the phial with complacency]. The glass rings
low, the charming power that lives
Within it makes the music that it gives.
It dims ! it brightens ! it will shape itself.

And see !—a graceful dazzling little elf.
He lives ! he moves ! spruce mannikin of fire,
What more can we ? what more can earth desire ?
Mystery is no longer mystery.

Listen ! a sound ! a voice ! and soon will be
Intelligible words addressed to me.

Homunculus [in the phial, to WAGNER]. Ha ! father
dear ! how goes it ? 'twas no jest ;

Clasp me affectionately to your breast.
Not quite so tight. So fervent an embrace
Incurs the risk of breaking the glass case.

Essentially distinct, the Natural
Finds in the Universe no resting-place,
The Artificial needs restricted space.

[To MEPHISTOPHELES]. Ha ! rascal ! my old cousin, are
you here ?

Good fellow at such moment to appear.
What luck has brought you ? nothing could in fact
Be timelier. While I am, I still must act ;
I would address myself to work at once,
And you're the very fellow for the nonce.

Wagner. A word, just one short word : till now I blushed
At my own ignorance, when thousands rushed
Up to my chair, and young and old perplexed
My brain with problems intricate and vexed ;
As, for example, none can comprehend
How soul and body in such union blend,
Inseparably bound together they,

Yet battling with each other every day.

So then——

Meph. A moment! pray, resolve the doubt,
How happens it that man and wife fall out?
On this, my friend, we'll get no satisfaction.
Here's work to do we had better set about:
The little fellow's attribute is action.

Homun. What's to be done?

Meph. [*pointing to a side-door*]. Thy talents here employ.

Wagner [*still looking into the phial*]. Thou art indeed a very lovely boy!

[*The side-door opens. FAUST seen stretched on a couch. The phial slips from WAGNER'S hands, hovers over FAUST, and shines on him*

Homun. Expressive!—

Lovely scenery all around!

A clear lake in the dusk grove's deep recess;
Nymphs playfully that to the water press;
And—what a pretty picture!—they undress.
Well! that's not bad; and near the lake's green bound,
Distinct from all, that countenance divine!
—To look on her is to adore and love.
Daughter seems she of old heroic line,
Or of the children of the Gods above.
Her foot she dips into the light serene
Of the waves' trembling crystal, cools the flame
Of life that glows through all that noble frame.
But what a rush and rustle of quick wings,
With splash and crash through the smooth mirror rings!
The maidens fly in terror; but the Queen
In womanly composure smiles to see
The prince of swans wind gently to her knee,
Nestling up to her—how familiarly!
Bold suitor, not to be denied is he!
—But suddenly a rising vapour draws
A curtain close of thick-inwoven gauze,
Hiding the loveliest scene.

Meph. Why, what a world in all you do relate!
For such a little fellow, you're a great
Romancer—visionary, rather. I
See nothing.

Homun. That I do believe, for why,

While Asmodæus—this none calls to mind—
Still goads them on, and mocks them from behind.
They fight, they say, where Freedom's banner waves :
Seen truly, 'tis a war of slaves with slaves.

Homun. Leave them to wrangle on. Man's nature and
Condition everlasting war demand ;
Each has to guard himself as best he can
From boyhood up, and so grows into man.
But that's for them, not us. The matter now
Before us is to cure this man—but how ?
If you have any remedy, apply it ;
If you have none, then there's mine, let me try it.

Meph. Oh ! I know many a charm and Brocken spell
Should in a common case soon have him well ;
But here, where heathen bolts resist, repel,
I can do nothing. These Greeks never were
Worth anything ; yet do they dazzle you
With the free play of the senses, that so wins
The human breast, and lures to cheerful sins.
Ours are of soberer cast and graver hue ;
And now——

Homun. 'Twas not your habit to be coy ;
You'll find Thessalian witches there, my boy !

Meph. Thessalian witches ! They are persons whom
I have been asking after. I wish to
Make their acquaintance—just an interview ;
Night after night with them would never do.
It were, I fancy, dreary merriment
But for a visit—but for an experiment.

Homun. The mantle—trot him out—'tis good strong
stuff,
And carries double—'twill do well enough ;
Come wrap the knight in it, neck and feet.
Off with us ! Here, leap up into your seat—
Here, catch the skirt ; I'll light you on your way.

Wagner. And I——

Homun. And you—oh ! you at home may
stay,

The main pursuit of life, as now, pursuing.
Spread the old parchments out as you are doing ;
The scattered elements of life collect,
Combine them as the recipes direct ;
In nothing from the letter deviate thou :

Think of the "what," but still more of the "how";
 While o'er a section of the world I fly,
 To hit, perhaps, the dot upon the "i."
 The triumph's won, the mighty work attained,
 The well-earned meed of thousand efforts gained;
 Gold, honour, reputation, long life, health,
 —Science, perhaps, and virtue—surely wealth.
 Farewell!

Wagner. Farewell! The cold word chills my heart:
 Never to meet again, I feel, we part.

Meph. Away we go! swift to Peneios tend!
 There's something in my bright young cousin's aid.
 [*To the SPECTATORS confidentially.*] In the end, we all
 depend
 On the creatures we have made!

III

CLASSICAL WALPURGIS-NIGHT

1

THE PHARSALIAN FIELDS

Darkness

Erichtho. To this night's shuddering festival, as often-
 times ere now,
 Once more I come, once more, Erichtho, I the gloomy,
 Not quite the hideous hag o'erslandering poets picture—
 Their praise and blame is ever in the Infinite.

Already o'er the vale, in shadowy undulation,
 Roll glimmering before mine eye what seem to be grey
 tents,
 Spread wavelike far and wide: phantomly reappearance
 Of that all-anxious night—dread night of deepest sorrow.

How oft doth it repeat itself!—how oft to be repeated!
 Evermore and for ever! None of his own free will
 Yields empire to another; none to him

Who by strength gained it, who by strength would govern.
Who cannot rule his inner self would fain his neighbour's
will

Strain to the stubborn measure of his own proud thoughts.

In these fields, by armed hosts, in conflict and in conquest,
Memorably was it exemplified.

Force 'gainst superior force for mortal strife is marshalled ;
Freedom's fair wreath, rich with its thousand flowers,
Breaks. The stiff laurel bends to crown the ruler's brow.
Here Magnus saw in dreams the unforgotten day
Of earlier greatness spreading into glorious blossom ;
Cæsar lay sleepless there, and watched the wavering
balance—

And they will measure strengths. The world knows who
prevailed.

Watchfires burn bright, diffusing their red beams around—
The soil breathes up, in crimson stain, blood, outpoured
here of old :

And by its strange glare, streaming far through the night's
magic brightness,

Allured, the legion gathers of Hellenic story.
Round every fire flit with uncertain glimmer,
Or rest at ease, some of the fabulous shapings
Of the days of old. The moon, not yet at full,
But bright, uprising now spreads over all
A softening lustre mild. The phantom tents
Are gone. Illusion fades off. Fires burn blue.
But over me what a strange sudden meteor !
It guides, and with its light illumines, a ball
Corporeal. I scent life ! 'twould ill beseem
Me, to life noxious, to be near the living.

'Twould bring me ill repute, and profit me
Nothing. Already it sinks down. 'Twill land
Here. Ere it touch the ground I move away. [Exit

Moonlight.—HOMUNCULUS, MEPHISTOPHELES, GRIFFINS,
COLOSSAL ANTS, ARIMASPIANS, SPHINXES, SIRENS, &c.

The AERONAUTS seen above, before they have descended

Homun. Sweep o'er flames and sights of horror
Once again in circling flight !

Spectral shapes through gorge and valley
Flit in the phantasmal light.

Meph. Spectres, hideous as the phantoms
That I gazed on from the gloom
Of that drear old Northern window!
Here I feel almost at home.

Homun. See, with rapid steps before us,
A tall female figure stride!

Meph. As through air she saw us gliding,
She retreated terrified.

Homun. Let her stride on! think not of her!
Set the knight upon the ground;
Here in the charmed land of Fable,
Will the life he seeks be found. [*They descend*

Faust [*touching the ground*]. Where is she?

Homun. That I cannot say;

But here would seem the very place t' inquire.

No time to lose! from fire to fire,

Pursue the chase till break of day.

He, who has dared the adventure of the Mothers,
Has little reason to fear any others.

Meph. I've my own objects here, and our best play,
It strikes me, for the good of us all three,
Is that each take his own course, and that we
Among the fires, as fancy guides us, stray.
'Tis so much pleasanter when one pursues
His own adventures just as he may choose.
And, small chap, when 'tis time to reunite,
Let chime your glass, let flare and flash your light.

Homun. [*the glass rings and shines out wonderfully*].
Thus shail it ring—thus flash forth ray on ray.
Now to the scene of wonders haste away!

[*They separate*

Faust [*alone*]. Where is she? why ask where?
If it be not the sod, on which her feet
Trode, and the wave that beat
To welcome her, it is the air
That spoke her language. Here! and I am here—
In her own Greece, miraculously here!
I felt at once the earth on which I stood—
In sleep there came a spirit that through my blood
Poured, as it were, the fire of burning levin.
Now, like Antæus, as I touch the ground,

I find the strength of inspiration given,
Roam this wild maze of fires with happy cheer
Where all things strangest are together found.

[Withdraws]

Meph. [prying about]. At every step, as 'mong these
fires I roam,
I find myself still less and less at home.
What an odd crowd of creatures brought together!—
Birds' claws, dogs' paws, men's faces, fleece, fur, feather.
Their decency is little sure to brag on—
Most of them naked! here and there a rag on!
The Sphinxes unabashed, the Griffins shameless,
Making no secret of what should be nameless.
We all are rakes at heart—each likes a touch of it;
But the antique, to my taste, has too much of it:
It is too lifelike—dealers with old story
Are never at a loss for allegory.
And so with the antique, we too should cover it,
Find one thing or another to paste over it.
A nasty set, I'll never know them rightly;
A stranger should, however, speak politely.
Hail! Ladies fair! Hail! Very Reverend
Grey-beards!

Griffins [gruffly]. What! means the fellow to offend?
Grey-beard, or grey bird, what does he think to say?
My name is Griffin—do not call me grey:
Grey! bird or beast, none likes to be called grey.
Grey-beard, forsooth! However far they range,
Words ring their origin in every change;
In “grey,” “grief,” “graveyard,” “grim,” and each such
sound,
The thought, etymologically bound,
Offends, puts the best temper out of tune.

Meph. And yet, not to give in to you too soon,
The “gri” in Griffin, your own honoured name,
Is not unpleasing.

Grif. [in the same tone]. Aye, and for the same
Reason; the kindred thought you still can trace—
Our “gri” is grip or grasp—we grasp at place
And honours, grasp at kingdoms, girls and gold
Nor we alone—though some affect to blame,
In practice 'tis the universal game.
Fortune still aids the Griffin, grasper bold.

Colossal Ants. Gold! —Said you gold? laboriously we
plied,
And heaps of it had grubbed, and sought to hide
In cave and crannied rock far out of sight;
Our hoarded gold the Arimaspians eyed,
Made off with it—and, proud of their success,
Look at them laughing there at our distress!
Grif. Be at ease—we'll bring the rascals to confes-
sion.

The Arimaspians. But not to-night; not this free festival
night:
Ours for the nonce is undisturbed possession,
And ere the morning 'twill have vanished quite.

Meph. [*who has placed himself between the SPHINXES*].
Here is a spot that I can cotton to!
At home quite—I so understand them all!

Sphinxes. We breathe our spirit tones—by you
They are made corporeal.

By-and-bye we may know something more of you;
But now just tell us what's your name? pray do.

Meph. Name? Men are fond of giving names to me,
And thus it is I've many a name. Let's see—
Are any Britons here? No doubt there are,
And they will vouch for me. They travel far
To visit fields of battle, waterfalls,
Your dreary classic ruins, broken walls.
This were the very place for such as they;
They will bear witness how in the old play
They saw me there as "Old Iniquity."

Sphinx. Why so called?

Meph. 'Tis a mystery to me.

Sphinx. Likely enough. Know you anything of the
power

Of the stars? What says the aspect of the hour?

Meph. [*looking up*]. Star after star shoots fast and far,
and bright

And sharp shines down the crescent moon to-night.
Here in this comfortable spot and snug,
I'll nestle close to your warm lion-rug:
Go farther and fare worse.—To climb up would
Be dangerous, in no case do much good.
Out with a riddle—I've some small skill in
Riddles—or tip me a charade,—begin.

Sphinx. Thyself—take that—there were a riddle indeed.
The strange enigma shall we try to read?

“Needful alike to good man and to bad,
Target, the ascetic’s zeal to test and prove,
Accomplice in mad projects of the mad,
At all times nothing but a jest to Jove?”

1st Grif. [snarling]. I do not like him—what a face!

2nd Grif. [snarling more gruffly]. The rascal does not
know his place;

He’s none of ours—what brings him here?

Both. A vile beast!—nothing good, I fear.

Meph. [brutally]. Aye, pretty treatment of a guest,
because

You think his nails can’t scrape like your sharp claws.
Let’s try them.

Sphinx [mildly]. If you like it, you may stay;
But you’ll be off soon—are on thorns to go;
—And yet such suitor for a lady’s grace
Is pretty sure at home to make his way.
Here you seem out of spirits, out of place.

Meph. I’m half in love—admire your upper show
Of woman—shudder at the beast below.

Sphinx. Liar! for this you’ll suffer—scoffing thus—
Our claws are sound and sharp, we’d have you know—
The shrivelled horse-shank! he! too good for us!

[SIRENS are heard preluding from above]

Meph. And the Birds yonder on the poplar bough
That rock them to and fro, say, what are they?

Sphinx. Beware! beware!—the siren’s song ere now
Hath lured the wisest and the best away.

Sirens [singing]. Where no beauty is, why linger?
’Mong these strange shapes wherefore dwell?
Listen!—hither, grouped together,
We have come, and time our voices
As beseemeth sirens well.

Sphinxes [mocking and mimicking them]. Force them
from the branches green,
Where their falcon claws they screen;
Fear to lend a listening ear
To their song! their talons fear!

Sirens. Hate and Envy—hence begone!
All the joys, that Nature scatters
Over earth and over waters,

Ours to gather into one.
 Ever in our welcomings
 Still is seen the best, the "gayest,
 Happiest attitude of things."

Meph. [*mimicking*]. These are their new and pretty things.

From the throat and from the strings
 Tone round tone still winds and weaves.
 This thrilling is all lost on me,
 Tickles the ear—the heart, left free,
 Nothing of the song receives.

Sphinxes. Heart! why a leathern bag fills up the place
 Of heart with you, as shrivelled as your face!

Faust [*stepping forward*]. How wonderful all here!
 Strange spectacle!

But not unpleasing—nay, it augurs well.
 In these repulsive aspects, oh, what vast
 Features of power! what alien grandeur massed!
 Gazing on them, my hopes anticipate,
 And feel even now a favourable fate.
 To what far distant days—what far-off lands—
 This deep glance bears me!— [*Pointing to the SPHINXES*
 Before such as these

Ædipus stood—

And before such as these

[*Pointing to the SIRENS*

Ulysses crouched him down in hempen bands.—

[*Pointing to the colossal ANTS*

Such were the far-famed gatherers of gold!—

[*Pointing to the GRIFFINS*

These guarded it in firm and faithful hold.

New life thrills through me as I gaze on these.

Forms! Oh, how grand!—How grand the Memories!

Meph. Such erewhile you'd have scouted; but at present

They seem to you delectable and pleasant.

When a man's amorous, and has in chase

The girl he wants, no monster's out of place.

Faust [*to the SPHINXES*]. Shapes, that seem woman,
 ye must answer me:

Have any of you seen Helen? Where is she?

Sphinxes. Seen Helen?—we? We reach not to her days.

The last of us was killed by Hercules.
From Cheiron you, perhaps, may make it out;
He's pretty surely galloping about
In this wild-spirit night;—catch him who can—
It is no easy task: but he's your man.

Sirens. Oh, go not from us!—go not from us!
Heed not what old fablers say
Of Ulysses onward speeding
From the Sirens of the bay.
With us he, in sweet repose,
Loitered long, and legends many
Had we of the times of Troy.
All to thee will we disclose,
All confide to thee with joy,
Dearer thou to us than any!
Come! oh, come! the glad green sea
Longs, with us, to welcome thee!

Sphinxes. Oh! let them not delude thy noble mind.
As ropes Ulysses, let our counsel bind
Thee! If the mighty Cheiron thou dost find,
'Twill prove us right. [Exit FAUST]

Meph. [fretfully]. What's that croaks by in flapping
flight?

'Tis gone too quick to catch the sight!
One—two—three—ten—like shadows past—
Who thinks to catch them must fly fast.

Sphinxes. Swift as the winter tempest these,
Swift as the darts of Hercules;
They are the Stymphalides.
Their vulture-beak and gander-foot
Look well; but that is as one thinks.
Their croak is meant for a salute.
These croakers say they're cousins: count the links
Between them and the family of Sphinx.

Meph. [seeming terrified]. Beside the croakers, there's
some other stuff,
Hissing abominably——

Sphinx. Like enough.
You—scared at hissing!—nothing, sure, in this.
They're always hissing who can only hiss.
These are the heads of the Lernæan snake,
Cut from the main stump off. What airs they take
On the strength of the separation!—shine as proudly

As the old serpent, and they hiss as loudly.
 But what are you now about? This restlessness,
 These gestures of such comical distress!
 What do you want, what is't you would express?
 Off with you! How his neck turns round awry—
 Oh! now I see what has so caught his eye.
 Don't think of us. He's off! They're pretty faces,
 No doubt of it; but have done with these grimaces.
 The group of Lamiæ—smart girls—no great matter
 Of beauty—bold fronts—red lips—smiles that flatter,
 And looks that have allurements for a Satyr.
 The goat-foot's sure to win such ladies' grace.

Meph. When I return shall you be in this place?

Sphinx. Thou and they may sport and play,
 —Airy shapes, that pass away;
 From Egypt we—and one of us is known
 For a full thousand years on the same throne.
 On our position fix your earnest gaze;
 We rule the lunar—rule the solar days.
 We sit before the Pyramids, we see
 Judgment done upon the Nations,
 War, and Peace, and Inundations.
 Change of feature none know we.

2

THE PENEIOS

Surrounded by WATERS and NYMPHS

PENEIOS, FAUST, NYMPHS, CHEIRON, MANTO

Peneios. Lull me still with thy faint whispers,
 Soft sedge! sister reeds, sigh low!
 Willow, wave with languorous breathing!
 Poplars, ye, that tremble so,
 Rocking still beside my stream,
 Murmur back my broken dream!
 A thick dense heat—a shudder dread,
 Secret, through all Nature spread,
 Wakes me in my rolling bed.

Faust. Is it that my ear deceives ?

Sure I heard behind the leaves
Other sounds than of the stream,
That like human accents seem ;
Tittering among the trees—
Prattling ripple—laughing breeze.

Nymphs [singing]. Weary and way-sore,
Oh ! were it not best,
In the cool, for the tired limbs
To lie down and rest ?
To lie down, enjoying
The rest that would fly thee,
Enjoying the rest
That the world would deny thee ;
While we lull thee, and soothe thee,
And linger close by thee.

Faust. Awake—I am awake—yes, yes
I am awake ! Fade not away,
Fair forms ! but still pursue your play
Where my eye yonder shapes the scene.
Dreams are they ?—are they memories ?
How strange the feeling ! All that is
Seems as though it before had been.

Where the cool bowering copse-wood weaves
Its dance of agitated leaves,
I hear—scarce hear—the water's flow !
From all sides round, in hundred rills,
It ripples down, unites and fills
A clear bright space below,
Where, in a pure bed, nothing deep,
The crystal currents have their sleep.

Nymphs bathing—and from the moist glass we see,
Amused, of sleek young limbs the double gleam.
Grouped, swimming boldly, wading timidly.
Hark ! splash of water ; laugh, and shriek, and scream !

This were enough to satisfy
And charm the fascinated eye ;
But the sense onward, onward still would press,
Would pierce with searching glance the screen
Of the rich bower, whose green recess
Conceals the lofty Queen.

Strange! very strange! and swans, swans too are here!
 Majestically borne from cove and creek,
 In slumber-seeming motion on they steer.
 Companionable, kindly; but what pride!
 Contemplating the softened image of
 Breasts snow-white, stately head, and arching neck,
 As though with their own lovely forms in love,
 O'er the still mirror peacefully they glide.
 And one before the rest,
 Bold with expanded breast,
 Moves with imperial dignity and grace:
 His feathers, roughed out wide—wave on the waves—
 Through snowy foam that his white plumage laves,
 He presses to the dear, the dedicated place.
 And see the rest—reposing light illumines,
 While to and fro they float, their tranquil plumes.
 And lo! they rouse them; see! the splendid strife:
 Fain would they chase away these maidens coy,
 Whose mistress, can she now their thoughts employ?
 Their one thought is security—is life!

Nymphs. Sisters, listen! lay your ear
 To the river's green marge here.
 Do I hear, or do I dream,
 Sound of horses' hoofs that seem
 Swift as of a courier's flight
 Bringing tidings of the night?

Faust. Shocks, as of leaping thunder!
 Earth! will it spring asunder?
 Nearer and nearer now, and ringing loud
 Under the quick feet of a courser proud.
 Thither, mine eye, glance thither! Favouring Fate!
 Is it to be? Am I the Fortunate?
 Wonder unparalleled! and will it be
 A rider gallops hither. In his air
 What courage! what intelligence is there!
 Borne by a courser white—blindingly bright.
 I err not; 'tis no mockery of the sight.
 It is, it is the son of Philyra.
 Halt, Cheiron! halt! I have much to say to thee.

Cheiron. What say'st? what is't?

Faust. A moment check thy pace.

Chei. I rest not.

Faust. Take me.

Chei. Up! then. As we race,
You may give me the happiness of knowing
What you're about, and which way you are going.
We're on the bank; I'll take you 'cross the river.

Faust. Oh! as for that, I'll go whithersoever
You go.

And I must thank thee evermore,
Noblest of men, whose fame 'tis to have taught
The Heroes of the glorious days of yore,
The Poet's world of Chief and Argonaut.

Chei. Pass over that—Pallas's own success
When she played Mentor could not well be less.
'Tis little matter what is taught, men will,
Taught or untaught, go on the same way still.

Faust. Physician, learned in names of herbs and fruits,
Who to the very deepest knowest all roots;
Wounds thou dost mitigate, and sick men cheer,
In spirit and in body art thou here?

Chei. Was a man wounded, I was in a trice
Upon the field with aid and with advice.
What I did, much or little, anyhow
The herb-women and priests inherit now.

Faust. There spoke the genuine great man, who dis-
claims
Peculiar merit in his acts or aims;
And though of all in every way the best,
'Gainst any praise still enters his protest.

Chei. You seem to me a flatterer of skill,
A practised hand in winding at your will
People and prince.

Faust. But, tell me,—you have seen
The great men of your time, and you have been
Rival, in everything that wins man's praise
Of the very noblest, didst live out thy days
True hero, demigod—say in thy thoughts
Who of all, that thou now rememberest,
Then figuring on earth 'mong men, seemed best.

Chei. In the high circle of the Argonauts,
Each, as the soul breathed power, distinction held;
Each in his own peculiar path excelled.
The Dioscouri brothers won their way
Where youthful bloom and manly beauty sway;
In the Boreades, for others' weal

Sprang instant action from determined zeal.
 A thoughtful man, strong, energetic, clear,
 Such was Prince Jason, to the ladies dear.
 And tender Orpheus swayed the lyre—calm heart
 Was his—and his true miracles of art.
 Sharp-sighted Lynceus, he by day and dark,
 Through rock and strand steered safe the holy bark.
 In danger's hour true brotherhood is shown,
 Each works, and all praise each. Each works alone.

Faust. Will you say nothing then of Hercules?

Chei. Oh! call not back that feeling, wake thou not
 The longing for the old days that have been.
 Phœbus or Hermes I had never seen,
 Or Ares, or the rest; in Hercules
 The godlike stood before these eyes of mine
 Impersonated—all that of divine
 In dreams of heaven man's fancy hath conceived,
 All the mind imaged or the heart believed!
 A king by Nature made. What dignity
 In youth's first bloom!—How gentle, too, was he
 Gave to his elder brother service true,
 And loved the ladies with devotion due.
 Son such as he will never more be given
 By Earth for Hebe to lead up to heaven;
 Songs all in vain to make him know,
 Would strive, and sculptors torture stone.

Faust. Never did sculptor, labour as he might,
 Bring out such perfect image to the sight
 Of that imperial look, that godlike mind.
 But now that the most beautiful of men
 You thus have showed me, try your hand again
 With the most beautiful of womankind.

Chei. What? Woman's beauty!—The words, thus combined,
 Seem meaningless—the shape of faultless mould
 Too often a stiff image, marble-cold.
 Only the Being, whose glad life flows free,
 And sheds around it the perpetual cheer
 Of joyousness, hath interest for me.
 The Beautiful in its own placid sphere
 Rests all apart. Grace charms resistlessly,
 As Helen, when I carried her, and she——
Faust. You—carried—her?

Chei. Yes—I—upon this back.

Faust. Was there not hitherto perplexity
Enough? What more?—here sitting where she sate.

Chei. She grasped into my hair, as you do now.

Faust. My brain whirls round—oh! tell me when and
how

It was. She is my sole desire; say when.
And whence, and whither, whither?

Chei. The Dioscuri brothers had just freed
Their little sister from the spoiler's hand;
And now upon their homeward road they speed.
Again the robbers pluck up courage, and
The brothers, with whom Helena then was,
Would clear Eleusis' swamp in rapid flight:
They waded, and I, pawing, swam across.
Then sprang she off, and my moist mane she smoothed,
Patted me with her fondling hand, and soothed.
And then she thanked me, and with such address,
Such self-possession, such calm consciousness!
She was—how charming!—young and the delight
Of the aged.

Faust. Then just seven years old, not quite
Seven.

Chei. What! the philologues have been with you,
Puzzling your brains, themselves deceiving too;
Your mythologic lady has no age,
Is from her very birth-time all the rage.
Like nothing but herself: in childhood carried
By spoilers off—recovered—wooed—won—married.
Years but increase her charms, bring lovers plenty;
She's never old—nay, never comes to twenty.
Lovely, and to be loved! The Poet seizes
The fair form and does with her what he pleases.
The Poet is not bound by time or distance.

Faust. Time for her! time then can have no existence.
And so Achilles found her—Time the while
Ceasing to be—on Leuke's lonely isle
Strange hap was theirs of blissful ecstasy—
Love wrung from unrelenting Destiny!
And would my powerful longings, all in vain,
Charm into life that deathless form again—
Eternal as the gods? Yes! gentleness
And winning grace are hers, and not the less

Hers the calm sway of dignity serene.

You saw long since whom I *to-day* have seen.

And she is beautiful. 'Tis not the spell,

'Tis not the spell of gracefulness alone—

'Tis beauty, beauty irresistible !

We see, we love, we long to make our own.

With her enraptured soul, sense, being twine—

I have no life if Helen be not mine.

Chei. Stranger ! this rapture men would call the flame
Of love ! with spirits madness is its name.

'Tis lucky that the fit has seized you here,

And on this night, of all nights of the year ;

It is my wont each year, upon this night,

For one short moment in my circling flight,

To visit Manto, Æsculapius' child,

Who in her father's temple, priestess there,

Still lifts her supplicating hands in prayer,

That he illumine the physician's mind,

And from their rash destroyers save mankind—

The best loved of the sibyls' guild ; no wild

Mad raving there, but ever good and mild.

Health will come soon from simples of the field

Applied by her.

Faust. But I would not be healed ;

My mind is now all-powerful. Dispossessed

I sink to man, no better than the rest.

Chei. In the noble fount is healing—scorn it not.

Now, down ! Down quickly ! we are at the spot.

Faust. Whither hast brought me in the grey of night,
Landing me in the splash and pebbles here ?

Chei. See ! on the left Olympus. On the right

Peneios. Here strove Rome and Greece in fight ;

A mighty kingdom melts in sand away—

The monarch's flight—the burgher's triumph-day.

The eternal temple resting in the clear

Light of the moon stands out—how very near !

Manto [*dreaming, from within*].

This a something doth import.

Threshold rings, and temple-court,

Horses' footfalls echoing.

Demigods are entering.

Chei. All's right ! Open your eyes, and see all's
right.

Manto [awaking]. Welcome ! I see you have not missed the night.

Chei. Unfallen still stands your ancient temple-home.

Manto. Unwearable you still range and roam !

Chei. You rest in changeless bower of quiet deep,
And *I* in everlasting circuit sweep.

Manto. I tarry—round me still wheels rolling Time.
But—this man——

Chei. The mad night hath seized him in
Its whirls, up flung him in its sludge and slime ;
And Helen—madman—Helen he would win,
And knows not how or where he should begin.
With Æsculapian aid he may do well.

Manto. I love him who desires th' impossible.

[CHEIRON is already far off

Manto [to FAUST]. Onward ! Adventurous ! with joy
proceed !

Enter in boldly ! Down the dark path speed
Whose windings to Persephoneia lead
Beneath Olympus, where with longing eyes
She seeks the smile of interdicted skies.
There did I smuggle Orpheus in of old.
Fare better thou ! Be fortunate ! Be bold !

[They descend

THE UPPER PENEIOS, as before

SIRENS, SEISMOS, SPHINXES, GRIFFINS, ANTS, PIGMIES,
DACTYLS, CRANES OF IBYCUS, &c.

Sirens. Dash we into the Peneios,
Swim we with him down in glee,
With the charm of song inviting
All to seek the spreading sea.

There be those who will not listen—
Hapless ! yet with song we call,
To the festival of Ocean,
To the healing waters, all.
Were we there, oh ! with what rapture

Would we raise our lofty pæan ;
 In the wave is every blessing—
 Come with us to the Ægean. [Earthquake

Waves foam back to the spring-head,
 Nor stream, as wont, down the river's bed ;
 The trembling ground starts and recoils,
 And the tainted water boils.
 The gritty bank swells. Moisture soaks
 Through pebbly sand. 'Twill burst !—it smokes !
 Fly hence ! all, all—oh ! fly we hence ;
 This wonder-work of violence
 Bodes good to none—is an offence
 To nature's truth. Fly hence ! fly hence !

Come, joyous noble guests—come ye
 To the glad feast of the sea,
 Where tremulously wavelets shine,
 And swelling lap the white sea-line ;
 Above, below, in double glow,
 In sky and sea smiles Luna calm,
 And sheds in dew her holy balm.
 Yonder is movement !—Freedom ! Life !
 Here, suffering and constraint and strife :
 The throes of agonising earth
 In travail with a monstrous birth.

All that are prudent, fly apace ;
 There is a horror o'er the place.

Seismos [still in the depths of the earth, struggling upward and grumbling ; his voice makes itself heard].

One shove more—one shove will do it ;
 Put but sides and shoulders to it ;
 One tug more and I am through it.
 Thus I tear my way before me,
 Sure to rise o'er all that's o'er me.
 One tug more—another shove now :
 I am in the world above now. [Appears as described

Sphinxes. What a shudder ! what a taking
 Earth must be in—trembling, quaking !
 What a going 'gainst the grain !

What a struggle, stress, and strain
What a rocking, what a wringing!
Back and forward, swaying, swinging!
But we'll keep the post we've taken,
Though all round about be shaken,
Though all Hell in horror break in.

And behold a vault ascending!
Wonderful!—'tis he! 'tis he!
'Tis the Old Man of the Sea!
He, who built amid the foam—
Ocean's bed before him rending—
Delos, the bright island-home,
That, when earth denied all other
Shelter to a wandering mother,
There her sorrows might have ending.
He with striving, squeezing, driving,
Arms extending, broad back bending,
Very Atlas in his gesture,
Tears his way through earth's green vesture,
Carries with him in his travel
Land and sand, and grit and gravel;
All that hitherto was sleeping,
An unbroken quiet keeping,
In the river bed at rest,
Or upon the valley's breast.
Unfatigued and still defiant,
See the Caryatid giant!
Loads of stony scaffolding
To his sides and shoulders cling.
From his subterranean prison
One half of him up hath risen.

Now this is going too far—this must end,
The Sphinxes their position must defend.

Seis. I've done it all alone—'twas my sole act.
They now believe—they've seen me in the fact.
Had I not toiled and tugged with push and pull,
Would the world have been half so beautiful?
The mountain-summit's pure ethereal blue,
That, as from some enchanted heaven above,
So smiles upon the raptured painter's view;

Where would it be, did I not shake and shove?
 My proud progenitors were looking on—
 Swart Night and Chaos gloried in their son—
 As in my strength, I 'mong the Titans tall,
 With Pelion played and Ossa, as at ball.
 We then were young, and, as young blood inspired,
 We raved and raged. At last, like children tired,
 In half-malicious mirth the hills we clap
 Upon Parnassus-head—a double cap.
 And there Apollo lingers with his lyre,
 Or listens, as the Muses sing in choir.
 Even Jove's high stretcher I it was heaved out,
 Where his loose thunder-bolts lie strewn about.
 And now, with might and main, with stress and strain,
 I haste head-foremost from the depths again.
 In upper air have worked myself a place,
 And shout out for some animated race
 Of occupants—and doubtless not in vain—
 With joyance and new life to people the new space.
Sphinxes. We might have thought him one of the true
 stock

Of the primitive old Hills—a real Rock—
 Had we not seen the struggles of his birth,
 As the poor upstart wriggled out of earth.
 Now bushy woods come clothing his gaunt sides—
 Stone pressing upon stone his bald pate hides.
 But what care we?—the intruder must retreat—
 The Sphinx will never yield her holy seat.

Grif. Gold in leaflet—gold in glitter—
 Take good care that thieves get none of it;
 Through the chinks I see it glitter:
 Up! ye Emmets, make your own of it.

Chorus of Ants. Giants, with shattering

Strength, have up sped it;

Little feet pattering

Joyously tread it.

O'er the hill, in and out,

Tiny things many

Wander in groups about

Fissure and cranny.

Swifter come—swifter come.

Each chink has in it

Rich gold in every crumb:

Hasten to win it.
 Loiter and linger not;
 Hasten to snatch it;
 The treasure is yours
 If you only can catch it.
 Be earnest—be active—
 Come quick to the fountain
 Of wealth—seize the gold,
 And good-bye to the mountain!

Grif. In with the gold! In with it!—swell the heap!
 We'll lay our claws upon 't—the best bolts they:
 I warrant safe the treasure that they keep.

Pigmies. We're here—we have our place. We cannot
 say
 How it came to be, but so it is. Ask not
 Whence 'tis we came—here we are, on the spot,
 Here, undeniably. And here and there,
 Where'er there is but room to breathe—where'er
 You find a region meet for joyous life,
 If but a rocky crevice shows itself,
 Up springs your dwarf; and with the tiny elf
 Be sure ere long to find his tiny wife.
 The active little man, the dwarfess fair,
 You find them here, and there, and everywhere;
 Diligent little people—pair and pair.
 I do not know if things in the old day
 Went on in Paradise the self-same way;
 That here they do so happily we know,
 And thank our stars delighted that 'tis so.
 Life, joyous life, everywhere, east and west,
 Springs evermore from Earth's maternal breast.

Dactyls. In one creative night, if Earth
 Hath brought these little things to birth,
 Be sure the same life-giving power
 To lesser folk will lend their hour,
 Who, led by the same law of kind,
 Will everywhere fit partners find.

Eldest of the Pigmies. 'Tis a time of peace, and there-
 fore
 The true moment to prepare for

War. Then build the smithy! heap on
 Coals! and cuirass shape and weapon!
 All our vassals should be arming.
 Come, ye Emmets, hither swarming;
 Come, in thousands come, and with ye
 Bring the metals for the smithy.
 Dactyls, come with logs and tinder;
 Come with coals, and coke, and cinder.

General. Stand together in a row,
 Fix the arrow, strain the bow;
 Aim, secure and steady, take
 At the Herons of the lake.
 Nestling high, how proud they seem!
 And their plumes, how bright they gleam!
 Slay them—lay the proud ones low;
 Fix the arrow, strain the bow;
 Stand together, one and all.
 Darts fly thick, and thousands fall.

Wide waving o'er our helmets shall the crest
 Of heron-plumes the victory attest.

Emmets and Dactyls. None now to rescue—all resistance
 vain.

We knead the iron, and *they* forge the chain.
 We are and must be slaves—oppressors *they*;
 And helpless *we*, but hope a better day,
 And till its dawn, repine, but must obey.

The Cranes of Ibycus. Dying wail! and the insulting
 Cry of murderers exulting!

Wings in torture agonizing
 Quiver—anguish of the dying!
 Shrieks of pain from earth are rising
 To the heights where we are flying.
 Mingled all in one fell slaughter,
 Reddening with their blood the water!
 Self-conceit, and the ambition
 To affect a high condition,
 And reduce to servile homage
 Brother dwarflings, brought these troubles,
 Led the mannikin land-nobles

To the murder, for their plumage,
Of the Herons. See, it waves there,
O'er the helms of the proud slaves there,
Paunchy, bandy-legged, and crooked.

Come with beaks and talons hooked,
Ye that of our army be,
Heron-wanderers of the sea;
Come, as Nature bids, with engines
Nature gives, awake to vengeance.
They have slain your near relations.
Root their name from out the nations;
Give no quarter—show no favour—
Root the rascals out for ever.

[Disperse, croaking in the air]

Scene changes to the low ground

MEPHISTOPHELES, LAMIÆ, OREAD, HOMUNCULUS

Mephistopheles [alone]. The Northern hags at will I wind
about—

These foreign spirits put one sadly out.
The Blocksberg is firm ground where'er you stray,
And well defined—you cannot lose your way;
Dame Ilse at her stone is watching still,
And Henry cheers you from his faithful hill;
The Snorers growl and snarl, and Elend hears
No change to speak of for a thousand years.
Here, who can say if he moves swift or slow,
When the ground boils and bubbles from below?
On a smooth field you take a quiet stroll,
When—thump!—behind, a mountain will uproll
Its waves: 'tis scarce a mountain—but of height
Enough to screen me from the Sphinxes' sight.
Adown the valley fires are flickering dun,
And groups dance round, that promise lots of fun.
See there a knot of girls that smirking, smiling,
Would seem to welcome me with looks beguiling.
That coyly, now retreating, now advances,
And pours upon me showers of merry glances.
But softly, softly, on them. Fond of sweets,
The traveller must snap up what he meets.

Enter LAMIÆ, who seek to attract MEPHISTOPHELES

Lamiæ. Quicker come—quicker come,
Faster and faster;
Luring on after us
The old witch-master.

Now for a little while
Loiter and linger;
Lure him with merry smile;
Beckon with finger.

Precious the prize to hold:
Happy the winners,
If we can catch the old
Prince of all sinners.

O'er the uneven ground,
Stumping and stumbling;
O'er the uneven ground,
Tripping and tumbling.

'Twere pleasant to lead
To the path of repentance—
Staggering—swaggering—
Our new acquaintance.

Dragging his game-leg
Leave him behind,
He with his lame leg—
We like the wind.

Meph. [hesitating]. Deceivers that they are! Oh, fate
accursed!

Every man tricked and tempted like the first!
Yes, all grow older, but none grows more steady.
Poor devil! wert thou not fooled enough already?
They're good for nothing. We know how the case is,
With their tight laces and patched painted faces,
Rotten in every limb—peep where you will,
Not a sound spot in them—all rotten ripe.
We know it, see it, feel it, too—and still
What man but dances when the carrions pipe?

Lam. [stopping]. Look sharp—he halts—he hesitates—he lingers.

At him, girls, now, or he'll slip through our fingers.

[Advancing boldly]

Meph. Pluck up your courage! Why these twitches Of doubt? Pluck up and join the revel. If in the world there were no witches, The devil a one would be a devil.

Lam. [gracefully]. Round this hero let us twine A sportive ring, till in his eyes One seems most fair—till love arise, And that soft heart to one inclines.

Meph. Yes! Could one judge by this uncertain light, Women, ye seem; of rank, if I see right; You're handsome—that is, I've nothing to say To the contrary—you're beauties in your way.

Empusa [rushing in]. And I too. Cousins, you must let me in As one of you.

Lam. No, if her way she win To our circle, she'll—she is a spoil-sport quite.

Emp. [to *MEPH.*]. Empusa with the ass's foot Waits your affectionate salute. You've but a horse's shank, 'tis true, Yet, cousin, I acknowledge you.

Meph. Here travelling without any ostentation, Incognito, and in a foreign nation, How could one think of meeting a relation? But the old proverb still holds here and there, From Hartz to Hellas cousins everywhere.

Emp. You see me as I am—I speak out plain. I could take many shapes; but I retain My own to-night—the ass's head does best To compliment my cousin and my guest.

Meph. Clanship and kin is all in all, I see, With these folks, but—unpleasant though it be To meet what seems a compliment with slight— The ass's head, I must ignore it quite.

Lam. Beast! nasty beast! she comes to scare Away the lovely and the fair. The beauty and the love, that shone Till she came, when she comes is gone.

Meph. And the fair cousins, slender slips and tender—

Something about them still makes me suspicious.
Behind the roses of their little cheeks,
A man may meet, perhaps, more than he seeks,
And transformations other than he wishes.

Lam. Try us, we're many—try it, if you've pluck :
Here, take your choice of us. I wish you luck.
What means this leer and languish ? You had best
Speak plainly—make up to the prettiest.
You act the lover wretchedly—your air
Of pride amuses and repels the fair.
Do mix with girls with somewhat more of sense,
With somewhat less, too, of magnificence.
Now, girls, let fall your masks, and show the man—
He well deserves such favour—all you can.

Meph. I've made my choice ; come, dearest, love-
liest,
Come to my arms ! A broomstick, I protest !
And this one—horrid face, avaunt !

Lam. Just served you right ; what did you want ?

Meph. The little one, I caught her ; but she shapes
Herself into a lizard and escapes :
As sliding through my hands she presses,
I feel the soft smooth serpent tresses.
I catch the tall one next—the Bacchanal
Is off—the thyrsus staff, I have it all :
Pine-stem and prickly cone, instead
Of the tall girl with the high head.
—Now for the fat one, there a man shall
Regale himself with the substantial :
For such girl what a price would your Easterns give !
I'll try, for the last time, what my luck may do.
The skinny fungus shrivels—falls in two,
Leaving but dust and ashes, as I live !

Lam. Break the chain, and, hand from hand
Disengaging, loose the band.

On the bat's wing sweep and hover !

Lightning glance of dusky pinions !

He with us to play the lover ?

Foreign rascal ! restless rover !

Hunt him out of our dominions.

Witch's son—what strange confusion—
Subject of another empire,

Make him pay for his intrusion !
 Scare him, flitter-mouse and vampire !

[LAMIÆ vanish

Meph. [*shaking himself*]. I've not learned much in my travels, on my word.

Absurd 'tis here, and in the North absurd.
 Spectres are cross-grained creatures everywhere,
 People and poets stupid here as there.
 Here and there the same sensual game is played ;
 And here as there illusion lends its aid.
 The smile of beauty tempted me to grasp,
 And horrors to my shuddering breast I clasp.
 Yet would the spell had been a little stronger,
 And the illusion lasting somewhat longer !

[*Losing his way among the rocks*

Where am I ? where's the road ? what tricks they play us !

There was a path here ; path—why all is chaos.
 'Twas a smooth road on which I hither bore me,
 And now see what a mountain stands before me !
 Here I go scrambling up and down in vain,
 Where shall I find my Sphinx-women again ?
 The thing must be a madman's dream outright—
 A chain of mountains risen up in one night.
 Witch-ride ! why this outdoes our witch-rides all :
 They bring their Blocksberg with them to the ball.

Oread [*from the natural rock*]. Climb up here ! reverence the old

Last rock-stairs of the Pindus range.
 By Nature formed, in me behold
 A hill that knows no shock of change.
 I stood unmoved the same unshattered head,
 When over me Pompeius, conquered, fled.
 These are but fancy-forms, the sight that mock.
 They vanish with the crowing of the cock.
 Such fables oftentimes I see uprise,
 And sink as suddenly before the eyes.

Meph. Honour to thee, time-honoured Headland ;
 crowned

With the high strength of oaks that bower thee round.
 The clearest moonshine hath no spear
 To pierce the ebon darkness here.

But, 'mong the bushes lo ! a modest light
 Glides near—how strangely everything comes right !—
 It is no other than Homunculus !
 Whither, young fellow, are you going thus ?

Enter HOMUNCULUS

Homun. Hither and thither, up, down, in and out ;
 From place to place still hovering about,
 Impatient the free air of life to breathe,
 Longing to break the glass that is my sheath—
 My chrysalis ; but everywhere I see
 Such sights ! I could not venture yet to be.
 Now for a secret—I am on the track
 Of two Philosophers. Their tongues, clack ! clack !
 Went evermore, and “Nature !”—“Nature !” was
 The word. Keep me not from them. Of the laws
 Of earthly being they must somewhat know :
 Between them I may learn some little ; so
 Pass into life by their experience wiser.

Meph. Shape your own course yourself—trust no adviser.
 Philosopher and phantom chum together,
 And phantast is a fool of the same feather ;
 Spectres in dozens the philosopher,
 For some new creed your credence to obtain,
 Will conjure up, or coin out of his brain.

You never will get sense except you err.

BE, if you must—but into Being rise
 By your own impulse.

Homun. Yet it were not wise
 The good advice chance offers here to miss.

Meph. Away with you ! We shall see more of this.

[*They separate*]

ANAXAGORAS, THALES, HOMUNCULUS.

Anaxagoras [to THALES]. Your mind resist all reason-
 ing. Can there be
 Imagined stronger proof than what we see ?

Thales. The willing waves, each little wind obey ;
 But, meeting with the rough rock, roll away.

Anax. Vapours of Fire have forced this rock through earth.

Tha. In Moisture still the Living has its birth.

Homun. [*joins them*]. Let me with both of you walk side by side :

I have for Birth and Being to provide.

Anax. Have you, O Thales ! ever in one night, Seen a hill rise up out of mud to light ?

Tha. Never was Nature, and her effluent powers Of Life, referred to days and nights and hours ; She acts in calm and regulated course— Knows nothing of this accidental force ; Even in her works of most sublimity, As in the least, no violence knows she.

Anax. But here such was. Here fierce Plutonic flame With Æolus's stormy vapours came, Burst through the earth's flat crust with monstrous throes, And in the moment a new hill arose.

Tha. Now, how does this assist your case ? the Hill Is there—there let it be with my good will : Time's lost in such dispute that no fruit brings, But holding patient folks in leading-strings.

Anax. Not long unpeopled is our new hill left, Its Myrmidons are crowding every cleft— Pygmies, Emmets, Fingerlings, —And other active little things.

[*To HOMUNCULUS*]. To royalty in thought hast never risen ?

Been still sealed up a hermit in your prison ?

If you can learn the arts of government,

I'll make you king——

Homun. What says my Thales ?

Tha. Not with my consent.

I would not have my friend accept the crown.

Among the little all one does dwarfs down,

Even as the little placed amid the great

Partakes of greatness. Why deliberate ?

See you the Cranes in blackening cloud ?

Look yonder, where they gather proud,

The insurgent people threatening.

Think you they would spare the king ?

Talons sharp and pointed beak

Wrath upon the small folk wreak.

The Pygmies were no doubt the first
Offenders, but how short a time
Brings the vengeance-cloud to burst
In tempest on their crime !
The Pygmy folk the Herons slew,
As round their peaceful lakes they flew,
Or lay at rest in the calm nest.
Their arrowy death-shower brings ere long,
Fearful reprisals for foul wrong—
A righteous shedding of the blood
Of the malignant little brood.
The Cranes—the Cranes are coming, in
Thousands, to avenge their kin.
What now avails them shield or spear ?
What now the Herons' plundered pride ?
Pygmies and Dactyls shrink in fear,
And where shall the poor Emmets hide ?
Their armies waver—shrink—fly—scatter.
All's over with them—little matter.

Anax. [after a pause, with solemnity]. Gods, that the
world beneath the earth obeys,
Erewhile have had my praise ;
Now to celestial power,
In this terrific hour,
My supplicating eyes and voice I raise.

Thou, in thy sky, who still on high
Dost in deathless youth shine on—
Thou, with thy threefold name
And thy aspects three, art one ;
Ever changing, still the same.
In this dread calamity,
Boding the fall of nations—all
My people—I do call on thee
Diana, Luna, Hecaté !
Thou, that to thoughts beyond man's thoughts his breast
Expandest—thou, that symbol art of rest—
Calm in thy heavens—serenest—stormiest—
Be thy dread gulfs of shadow open thrown,
Thine ancient power, though magic bids not, shown.

Am I too quickly heard, and has my prayer
Risen up to heaven, disturbed the regular

Order of Nature? Large, still larger—near,
 Still nearer, comes the goddess's round throne:
 Glares on the eye a thing of fright and fear,
 Its fire to gloomier red each moment grown.
 Come not more near: or this earth—land and sea—
 Will perish, into atoms crushed by thee.
 'Tis true, then, that the hags of Thessaly
 In daring incantation sang thee down
 From thy high path, and wrung, by fearful charm,
 Through thy torn disk all that hath power to harm?

While I speak the bright shield darkles,
 Splits, blazes out, and sparkles.
 Rattling, hissing, crash of thunder,
 Tempest.—Will it burst asunder?
 At the steps of thy throne behold me lie,
 Humbled. 'Twas I brought down the judgment, I——
[Casts himself on his face]

Tha. What a world in all he hath seen and heard!
 I don't well know what has occurred.
 I have not felt like him. No doubt
 This mad hour puts one sadly out.
 And Luna, careless of these shocks,
 In her own place, as usual, rocks.

Homun. Look over to the Pygmy ground.
 The hill-top, that till now was round,
 Is angular. A sudden shock
 Thrilled through me, and I saw a rock
 Fall from the moon:—with little care for
 This questioning of why and wherefore,
 Or friends or foes, or loss or gain,
 It has crashed, and smashed, and slain.
 Yet do I see with admiration,
 This great contrivance of creation,
 Convulsive spasms below that move,
 And agitations from above,
 In one night bringing up and down
 The mountain and the mountain's crown.

Tha. Peace! 'twas but imagination;
 Think not of that wretched nation.
 Leave their hill—the nasty thing there,
 Very well you were not king there.

But come along. The world is all commotion,
 Preparing to receive with honour due,
 The guests this night of wonder summons to
 The solemn festival of joyous Ocean. [Exeunt]

The other side of SEISMOS' Hill

MEPHISTOPHELES, DRYAD, PHORKYADS

Meph. [clambering up]. Up the steep rock-stairs must
 I make my way,
 And 'mong the old oaks' stiff roots stumbling stray.
 O'er my own Hartz the vapour of the pine
 Breathes pitch, and that is a delight of mine :
 I love it next to brimstone. 'Mongst the Greeks
 The slightest smell of it in vain one seeks.
 Without it, how they light their fires in Hell,
 Or plague the inmates there, I cannot tell,

Dryad. In your own country you perhaps are shrewd !
 But, as a foreigner, unwise and rude.
 Your thoughts should not revert to home-scenes here :
 While in this land, the holy oak revere.

Meph. What one has lost, he deems beyond all price ;
 The customary is man's paradise.
 But what's that clump of three in the weak light ?
 Crowding down in the cave it cowers from sight.

Dryad. The Phorkyads ! Speak to them, if you are
 bold
 Enough for it—if your blood runs not cold.

Meph. Bold ! That I am. I see it with amaze—
 I never saw the like in my born days :
 Worse than the mandrake's writhings. One begins,
 Looking on them, to think the deadly sins
 Less horrible, compared with the enormity
 Of this vile three-coiled tangle of deformity.
 Monsters like these we never would let dwell
 Even on the threshold of our murkiest Hell.
 Here—in the land of beauty, where men pique
 Themselves upon the fame of the antique—
 Here to strike root ! Hark ! Stirring in their cell !
 They scent the stranger near them. They would speak—
 The vampire-bat's thin twittering feeble squeak.

Phorkyads. Sisters, hand me the eye! Let it look forth
And see who treads our temple without leave.

Meph. Bending in reverential awe I seek
Your threefold benediction to receive.
I am a stranger here; but you will give
Kind welcome to a distant relative.
Of your old gods I've seen some of great worth:
Ops, Rhea—bowed before both down to earth.
The Parcæ, of the good old family
Of Chaos's: I know them well—the three—
They're sisters of yours. I have met them all
A few days since, in costume, at a ball:
But never, never have I seen before,
Among the things men honour and adore,
Anything any way resembling you.
Words have I none to say how your charms move
My admiration. What shall I then do?
In silence think of you—in silence love.

Phor. There's much good sense in what this spirit says.

Meph. I am amazed no poet hymns your praise.
How comes their silence? How can it have been
No sketch of you in painting I have seen?
Here were Art's perfect triumph! and how blest
The sculptor who such charmers fixed in stone,
Not Juno, Venus, Pallas, or the rest!

Phor. Living in depths of night, and all alone,
Thought of the kind never occurred to us.

Meph. How could it? You, in deep den hidden thus,
Know nobody—by nobody are known.
Had the world seen you, you ere now would grace
With your peculiar beauties some high place,
Where Art and princely Splendour share the throne.
'Tis there your marble block in every street
Steps into life a hero on two feet.
'Tis there——

Phor. Hush! leave us where we are, resigned!
Wake not ambitious longings in our mind!
Born of the Night, of kin with Night alone;
Scarce to ourselves and to none other known.

Meph. 'Twill give no trouble: you need take no journey.
It may be done by proctor or attorney.
I'll manage it. As one eye for you three,
And one tooth does, surely it would not be