

A contradiction in mythology
 Just to compress the triple essence into
 A smaller compass. Let the three be two:
 Consign to me the figure of the third
 For a little while.

1st Phor. This is not so absurd
 As it sounds. There's something in't. What's your
 reply?

2nd Phor. I'm for it; but without the tooth and
 eye.

Meph. In keeping those, you're keeping back the best.
 How can I make a picture of the rest?

Phor. Nothing more easy. It is but to draw
 An eye down, and projecting from the jaw
 Let glare a front tooth. The profile will strike
 As one in every way extremely like.

Meph. Thanks; so be it.

Phor. And be it so.

Meph. [*as a PHORKYAD in profile*]. 'Tis done!
 Look I not Chaos's well-beloved son?

Phor. Daughter! We're daughters, undeniably.

Meph. Daughter or son—all now will laugh at me.

Phor. New triad this! What beauty! We in truth
 Are gainers. An eye more—another tooth!

Meph. I must go hide myself from every eye
 In very hell—the devils to terrify. [Exit

4

ROCKY BAY OF THE ÆGEAN SEA

The Moon staying in the Zenith

SIRENS, NEREIDS, and TRITONS

Sirens [*lying on the cliffs around, piping and singing*].
 In the old time, while Night shuddering heard their daring
 rites malign,
 The Thessalian sorceresses tore from that calm throne of
 thine.
 We, with no unholy magic would disturb thy rest divine.

Rest thee pure in thine own heaven, and from the bow of
thine own night

Look upon the glimmering waters, how they heave and
roll in light.

Oh! gleam softly on the pageant that ascends in noiseless
motion,

Through the phantom stars up-thronging, to the surface
of the ocean.

Lovely Luna, oh! smile on us—on thy worshippers'
devotion.

Nereids and Tritons. Sing aloud, in tones more thrill-
ing!

Sounds that, through the deep sea shrilling,
All its peoples may awaken!

We had sunk to lone recesses,
Under gulfs by tempest shaken—

Caves in Ocean's wildernesses!

From the low depths far away

Now uprising we, and obey

And follow the alluring lay!

We to deck ourselves delight.

See these golden bracelets bright;

Crown, and clasp, and precious stone;

Chain, and brooch, and jewelled zone!

Treasures—the rich spoils that were

Of the shipwrecked mariner

On your fierce rocks flung away—

Your sweet songs have charmed them hither;

You! the demons of our bay.

Sirens. We know, that in the moist sea-waves,

We know, that in the cool sea-caves

Calm live the people of the sea.

A happy, peaceful dream is theirs

Of gliding life. No griefs—no cares.

And such your life, and such are ye.

But, on this day of festival,

Delight it were to us—to all—

To see you in the glorious hour

Wake into life of higher power.

Ner. and Tri. Ere your song had hither brought us,

We had long ago bethought us

Of all this: and sisters, brothers,

In a moment off fleet we

To return, as proud as others
 Of the ocean-family ;
 Sea-shapes though we be, our claim
 Is, as you full soon shall see,
 To a higher rank and name.
 'Tis but over some small space
 Of the moonlight sea to race.
 We shall show you what we be. [Exeunt

Sirens. They are off to Samothrace,
 With a favouring wind ; but what can they find
 In the realms of the Cabiri ;
 Gods that baffle all enquiry ?
 Gods that high up on the shelves
 Of the rough rocks plant themselves.
 We can make nothing of their constitution—
 Unconscious, self-involved self-evolution.

Oh, move not from thy height,
 Fair Luna ! The soft rays
 Shed round us of thy haze,
 And far away be Day's
 Intrusive world of light.

Sea-shore.—THALES, HOMUNCULUS, NEREUS

Thales [to HOMUNCULUS]. I'd take you now to Nereus.

His cave's here ;
 But he's a queer old fellow—an austere
 Odd-tempered being—sour and obstinate.
 Man above everything he seems to hate—
 The human race—he grumbles with such spite
 Against us—men with him are never right.
 Yet, as the future's present to his view ;
 And he, at times, has done good to some few,
 He's in his way respected.

Homun. At his gate
 Let's knock, and test the cross old surly pate
 By what you say of him, there's no great fear
 We spill our flame or crack the glass-case here.

Nereus. Men's voices here ? It makes me savage when
 I think of the absurdities of men.
 Formations, that, 'gainst Nature's laws, would fain

Stretch themselves into gods—but all in vain,
 —Doomed in their own damned likeness to remain!
 Were it not for my zeal to serve mankind,
 I might, in blissful quiet, have reclined
 Godlike among the gods for ages past;
 And what good does there come of it at last?
 Things go on all the same, as though I had
 Not said a word about them, good or bad.

Tha. Yet, Ancient of the Sea, with reverence
 All look upon thee. Do not drive us hence.
 The Flamelet here—shaped like a man, no doubt—
 Oh! look on him, who, wandering long about,
 Seeks thy advice, which he will, out and out,
 Follow.

Nereus. Advice! what good is it? Men hear
 Advice, and then it freezes in the ear.
 Though lessoned by the fierce fact o'er and o'er,
 Yet men are ever self-willed as before.
 Ere for another's wife his snares he wove
 Warned I not Paris with a father's love?
 As on the Grecian shore the bold youth stood
 I told him all that I in spirit viewed:
 The thick and stifling smoke, the fire's red breath—
 Roof-trees in flames—beneath them murder, death—
 The doom of Troy, that for a thousand years
 In the recording song hath waked men's fears.
 He mocked the prophet, scorned the oracle,
 Followed his own wild will and Ilion fell—
 A stark, cold, giant corpse. Its pangs had ceased,
 And Pindus' eagles welcomed their rich feast.
 Ulysses, too.—How often was my theme
 Of Circe's wiles and savage Polypheme:
 His own delays, the rashness of his train.
 Forewarned of all—of all forewarned in vain:
 Till, waves relenting, many a peril past,
 The wanderer found a friendly shore at last.

Tha. This to the Wise, this cannot but give pain.
 The Good even, though it may be all in vain,
 Seeks to do good again and yet again.
 Whole hundreds of ingratitude are less
 In his eyes than one grain of thankfulness.
 This is no common case, and your assistance
 May serve us. What this spark wants is existence.

He would enter upon life. This asks a nice
Discretion, and we come for your advice.

Nereus. Hush! Break not in on this delicious trance
Of rare delight! Far other care employs
My spirit now than of man's cares or joys.
It is no hour for you to trouble me.
To-night is held a solemn festival,
Where I have hope to meet my daughters all—
The Dorides—the Graces of the Sea.
Olympus boasts not, nor Achaia bears
Through all her lands, forms lovelier than theirs,
And then the movements of the Nymphs of Ocean!
Theirs is the perfect harmony of motion,
As from the dragons of the wave they spring
To the fleet coursers of the Ocean King.
While flashing in the moonlight billow's play,
Inseparable from the wave seem they.
One with the element that is their home,
You see them rising with the rising foam.
In coloured play of Venus's pearly car
Comes Galatea, of all now that are,
The loveliest and most beautiful by far;
Who, since on Cyprus Venus ceased to smile,
Is worshipped as the goddess of the isle,
For ages now inherits as her own
The temple-city and the chariot-throne.
Away! and in a holy hour like this,
Oh, break not in upon a father's bliss.
No thought of anger now should stir his heart—
No word of censure from his lips should part.
Away to Proteus! Question the magician
As to the spark's proposed change of condition.
You thus may learn what transformations he
Must pass through to be anything—to Be.

[*Exit, going towards the sea*

Tha. [*to HOMUNCULUS*]. We've not gained much by
this step, I should say.
Catch Proteus! Catch him, and he melts away.
If he stands talk, 'twould seem his only bent
To create wonder and bewilderment.
Still you want counsel and advice. He can
Give it. We'll test him. Come on, little man.

[*Exeunt*

Moonlight Bay.—SIRENS, NEREIDS, and TRITONS

Sirens [on the rocks above]. What far-off gleam moves
o'er the enchanted seas,
As though white sails flowed hither with the breeze,
Lustrous with light? Oh, what a change! Are these
The same wild women of the wave—these the Nereidés?
Let's clamber down the rocks—perhaps to hear
Their words—at least to look at them more near.

Ner. and Tri. In our hands we bring a treasure
That must come to all with pleasure.
See! reflected from the field
Of Chelone's giant shield
Forms of stalwart strength forth spring:
They are gods! and them we bring
With us. Sing, in triumph sing!

Sirens. Tiny! if you mark their size:
Mighty! if their power you prize.
They in hours of shipwreck save
The sinking sailor from the wave.
Gods! that, in the ancient days,
Worshipped were with prayer and praise.

Ner. and Tri. The Cabiri we bring hither,
That the feast may peaceful be.
Where the Holy Ones are present
Friendly is the God of Sea.

We must yield to you, Cabiri!
When a vessel splits in two,
Then come ye, in power resistless,
Saviours of the sinking crew.

Ner. and Tri. Three of them with us we brought,
On the fourth in vain we call;
He resisted: said he ought,
As the Governor of all,
For the common weal take thought.

Sirens. Gods 'gainst gods, with scoff and sneer,
Bickering, clash with joke and jeer,
Counsel sage and safe we give,
With all peacefully to live.
All, that can do good, revere,
Them, that can do mischief, fear.

Ner. and Tri. There should be seven of them, sisters and brothers.

Sirens. There are but four here. Where are the three others?

Ner. and Tri. Can't say. Ask for them at Olympus: there

They say an eighth is. Whence he comes, and where He hath his being, no one yet has stated.

They gladly would have been here, but they waited—'Twould take some little time—to be created.

No making anything of them. Out of the way Strange creatures.

Aboriginal gods are they.
Intuitions; High Volitions;
Longings Unrelievable;
Sentimental Pangs of Hunger
For the Inconceivable.

Sirens. Wherever hath been given
A throne of power in heaven—
Sun, moon, or star—where'er
It is, we worship there—
With all of every creed
We pray. It hath its meed.

Ner. and Tri. Oh, what glory ours must be,
Leading this festivity.

Sirens. The Heroes of the ancient days,
Who from this hour forth shall praise?
If, to Greece, the Golden Fleece
They, in happy triumph, brought—
You a greater feat have wrought:
Bringing o'er the joyous main
The Cabiri in your train.

Universal Chorus. If, to Greece, the Golden Fleece
They, in happy triumph, brought—
You a greater feat have wrought:
Bringing o'er the joyous main
The Cabiri in your train.

[NEREIDS and TRITONS pass on

HOMUNCULUS, THALES, PROTEUS

Homunculus. The stupid things are very like old crocks,
'Gainst which, all covered o'er with grime and dust,
The antiquarians' hard heads get hard knocks.

Thales. Well, this is what they wish: the medal must
Be, to bear any price, all over rust.

Proteus [*invisible*]. Here the old fabulist can feed his love
Of wonders with sights well worth thinking of—
Odd, but as idols better to revere.

Tha. Where art thou, Proteus?

Pro. [*from different places*]. Here I am! Here!
Here!

Tha. [*to HOMUNCULUS*]. The old buffoon is now at his provoking

Play of cross purposes. Let's have an end
Of this. 'Tis out of place and time this joking—
These tricks on an old traveller. Come, friend!
I know your voice, and how it sounds at distance
When you are at my elbow.

Pro. [*as at a distance*]. Fare thee well!

Tha. [*aside to HOMUNCULUS*]. Now flash your light out!
Now, with its assistance,
We'll catch him. He's as curious as a fish,
And lured by light, in whatsoever shape:
If you but flash out strong he can't escape.

Homun. I'll flash my light out strongly; but must take
Precaution that the glass-case do not break.

Pro. [*in the form of a giant tortoise*]. What's that shines
out with charm so exquisite?

Tha. [*veiling HOMUNCULUS*]. If you would see, you
must come nearer it.

Grudge not the trouble. Come, I do entreat!
Come, be a man! Come, on a man's two feet
You want to see a something we have got,
Which we at will may show you, or may not.
We dictate terms.

Pro. [*in a noble form*]. Yours still are sophist's
tricks.

Tha. You still change shapes and on none certain fix.
[Unveils HOMUNCULUS]

Pro. [exhibiting astonishment]. A glittering dwarf. A
show well worth the seeing:
Never knew creature like it was in being.

Tha. He wants your counsel—has come a long dis-
tance:

His object is to get into existence.
He is, by what he told me of his birth,
Miraculously come but half to earth;
A lively spark—has every mental quality;
But, luckless fellow, 'twas his strange fatality,
An active, naked spirit, all alone—
Without a shred of body, blood, or bone,
Into the world to be at hazard thrown—
His glass is all he has to steady him:
He wants and wishes body, life, and limb.

Pro. True love-child this! a boy that would, I wis,
Make his appearance ere his mother is
Disposed to welcome him.

Tha. [whispering]. Boy? Is't so?
If boy or girl, we really cannot know
Till he puts on life.

Pro. Well! let time settle that!
We cannot tell what Fortune's driving at.
For better luck may hap. In the wide sea
Is life. There, there must the first process be.
There in the little all begin—then seize
The less, and so grow larger by degrees:
Shift to new forms of being—every past
Foretells a future—the more perfect last!

Homun. The breeze brings fragrance with it; and the
flow

Of glad green billows, too! I love it so!

Pro. No doubt you do; but further on 'twill be
Still pleasanter. And just here, where the land
Ends in a narrow tongue of sparkling strand,
What a delicious breathing from the sea!
Move onward, where the sky seems yet more clear,
And see the gay procession floating near.
Come with me! Come.

Tha. And me—you must take me.

Homun. A memorable move of spirits three.

5

TELCHINES OF RHODES *on Hippocamps and Sea-dragons.*
SIRENS, PROTEUS, THALES, HOMUNCULUS

Telchines of Rhodes [holding NEPTUNE'S trident].
The trident, with which the vexed billows' commotion
He calms, we have forged for the Monarch of Ocean.
O'er the heavens if his thick clouds the Thunderer spread,
Poseidon replies to the roll overhead.
To the flare of forked lightnings above will the spray
Of billows below flash terrific as they;
And the wreck, by the wild wind in agony tossed,
Whirling round in the sea-gulfs is swallowed and lost.

The Sea-god, propitious this festival night,
To us hath entrusted his sceptre of might,
That our path on the waves may be peaceful and bright.

Sirens. Hail ye, each and every one,
Dedicated to the Sun!
Hail, in the mysterious hour
Sacred to his sister's power.
Priests are ye of Helios bright:
This is Luna's festal night.

Telch. Queen of the bow, whose delight in the skies
Are the songs from the earth to thy brother that rise.
To Rhodes, the glad island, an ear dost thou lend,
Where pæans for ever like incense ascend.
How brightly at morning smiles on us the sun—
How brightly at eve, when his day course is run.
Mountains and cities—shore, waters—all here
In his eyes are well pleasing—are cloudless, and clear.
If a wreath of thin vapour the blue heaven obscure:
A beam and a breeze and the island is pure.
Here a hundred bright forms of himself meet his sight—
Now giant, now stripling—all mildness, all might.
Here, in this glorious land, Sculpture began—
Gods and the godlike to image in Man.

Pro. Let them sing and shout away.
These dead works! Oh! what are they
To the beams of the bright sun—
To the living ray?

They shape, they melt, reshape the mass,
 And deem a something done.
 What is at last the fate
 Of these proud gods of brass?
 Grand stood the image-gods and great:
 An earthquake shook them from their state.
 Melted again, again into new moulds they pass.

Earth's movements, whatsoe'er they be,
 Obstruction are and drudgery.
 Life and the living waves agree.
 To the waters come with me!
 To the Everlasting Sea!
 Proteus-Dolphin carries thee [*changes himself*].
 'Tis done, 'tis done. The triumph's won:
 Thy crowning destiny!
 On my back I carry thee!
 To the Ocean marry thee!

Tha. Go! Sure way the goal of winning
 Is, "begin with the beginning."
 With him to the waters thou,
 Active life awaits thee now.
 On from forms to new forms ranging,
 Still obeying laws unchanging,
 Till at last you're landed at
 Man. 'Twill take some time to that.

[*PROTEUS has assumed the shape of a dolphin, and
 takes HOMUNCULUS on his back*]

Pro. In the spirit come! In ocean
 Sport thee—in the free wave wide.
 Thine own joy to every motion
 Still the impulse, still the guide!
 Happy, while in unforeseeing,
 Unreflecting germs alive;
 But to higher states of being
 In thy yearnings never strive.
 As to Man—once there, you're done up—
 The game's over—all the fun up.

Tha. That's as may happen. Is it nothing, then,
 To be a man distinguished 'mong the men
 Of one's own time?

Pro. [*to THALES*]. One of your stamp and style
 May no doubt be remembered some short while.

'Mong the pale crowds of spirits yours appears
One noticeable for a thousand years.

SIRENS, THALES, PSYLLI, and MARSI. DORIDES, and
their human lovers. NEREUS, GALATEA, PROTEUS,
HOMUNCULUS. *Universal Chorus*

Sirens [on the rocks]. What a lovely ring of cloudlets
Round the moon, in halo bright!
Doves, whom burning love enkindles—
Radiant dove-wings pure as light—
Birds, that Love enflames—'tis Paphos
Sends them on this festal night.
Now the Auguries are perfect.
Think we now but of delight!

Nereus [stepping to THALES]. Gazing on the cloudlets
fair,

A wanderer by night
Might easily believe they were
Meteors that mocked the sight—
Illusions of the air;
But we—that spirits are—but we,
That in the spirit all things see,
We know well that such conclusion
Would indeed be a delusion.
Cytherea's Doves they are
That, in flight miraculous,
Follow now my daughter's car.
In the old day it was thus.

Tha. To the view that you suggest
I would yield with no misgiving,
If, within the calm warm nest,
Something holy still were living,
And had there its place of rest.

Psylli and Marsi [on sea-bulls, sea-calves, and rams].
In the rocky caves of Cyprus—
Never by the god of Ocean
Shaken, never by the dread
Spasms of Seismos visited—
We, as in the days of old,
In calm of heart—in joy that hath no voice
To speak its conscious rapture—we rejoice

To guard the Car of Cypris. Our delight
 Is, in the murmuring hours of the soft night,
 O'er lustrous billows, tremulously heaving,
 In whispers low their lovely network weaving,
 The pearly chariot from its secret grot
 To bear in triumph o'er the glad water ;
 And, all unseen of men who know her not,
 Still worship Beauty in her loveliest daughter.

We, our gentle task pursuing,
 Care not what the world is doing.
 Let the Eagle's plumeless pinion,
 Or Winged Lion, claim dominion ;
 Be it Cross, or be it Crescent,
 With alternate victory.
 For their battle-field, incessant,
 Tears and triumph, what care we ?

While they do their work of ruin,
 Devastating, without pity,
 Harvest-field, and storming city,
 We, our gentle task pursuing,
 On her moonlight path serene
 With us bring our lovely queen.

Sirens. Gently move, with measured speed,
 Round the chariot, ring in ring :
 Then flow on, a twofold line,
 Side by side, and intertwine
 In your windings serpentine !
 Nereidés, come ye !
 Wild women of the sea,
 Built in robustest mould,
 Free, vigorous, and bold,
 With joyous gambolling.
 Tumultuous jubilee
 Of Nature's savage glee !
 Come, gentle Dorides !
 Of forms more delicate,
 Whom joy doth not elate,
 To Galatea bring
 In every sister face
 Features, in which we trace
 The Mother of the Race—

A more than earthly, more than heavenly grace.
The godlike earnestness of mien—flower of immortal birth—
The winningness, the smile serene, of daughters of the
earth.

Dorides [passing NEREUS, on dolphins]. Lend us, Luna,
light and shadows! Let thy tender radiance all
—We, the while, in shade half-hidden—on these human
blossoms fall.

They are ours! to our fond father we would show each
chosen youth.

[To NEREUS]. They are ours, whom we have rescued from
the tempest's savage tooth.

Them on moss and softest seaweed, warming to new life,
we laid.

Warmed to life, with burning kisses they our tender cares
repaid.

Father! hear our fond entreaty!

Look on them with love and pity!

Nereus. A twofold gain you find in this employment—
Compassion for distress, and self-enjoyment.

Dor. Father! if we find favour in thy sight—
If thou dost sympathize in our delight—

Oh! to these dear ones give

For ever thus to live:

Young heart to heart replying

Love endless, love undying!

Nereus. You've caught them—keep them. Aye! hold
while you can

Your glittering prey, and mould the youths to man.

But as to immortality—

Zeus has the gift of it—not I.

The waves, you rock on, still must move:

Their restlessness knows nothing of

This fancy of abiding love.

Let the dream play its moment and

Forget it; and with gentle hand

Lay the youths tenderly on land.

Dor. Dearest youths! we love you well.

You and we, alas! must sever.

Oh! that love could last for ever!

But the gods the prayer repel!

The Youths. Love us, love us still! More pleasant
Fortune never can befall

Sailor-lads, to whom the Present,
Evermore is all in all.

[GALATEA is now seen approaching on her chariot of
shell

Nereus. 'Tis thou, my love.

Gal. What rapture! father, dear!
Linger, ye dolphins! the glance holds me here.

[The chariot moves on rapidly

Nereus. Already! what so far away already?
Onward and onward wheeling by, in swift and sparkling
eddy?

For the heart's inner beatings, what care they?
Oh! had they ta'en me with them! Yet the sight,
A moment's lustre as it speeds away,
Will make the whole year bright.

Tha. [exultingly and with solemnity]. Hail! hail! again,
all hail! Life blooms anew.

My spirit is pierced through
By the Beautiful, the True.
In Water all hath had its primal source;
And Water still keeps all things in their course.
Ocean, still round us let thy billows proud
Roll in their strength—still send up mist and cloud.
If the rich rivers thou didst cease to spread—
If floods no more were from thy bounty fed—
And the thin brooklet died in its dry bed—
Where then were mountains—valleys? Where would be
The world itself? Oh! thou dost still, great Sea,
Sustain alone the fresh life of all things.

Echo [chorus of the collective circles]. From Thee! from
Thee! that fresh life still outsprings.

Nereus. Rocked on the waves, the gay procession bends
Circle in circle—chain in chain extends.
Such is the ordered festival. No chance
Again of greeting smile, or glance encountering glance.
Back winds the innumerable company;
But Galatea's shell-throne still I see,
Where through the crowd it glitters like a star,
The Loved, 'mong thousands, still is seen afar—
And seen, however far, shines bright and clear:
Is no illusion—still is true—is near.

Homun. In the calm moisture all on which my light
Cast its strong beam is exquisitely fair.

Pro. Life's moisture 'tis that makes the lamplet bright,
And 'twill chime proudly in Life's ambient air.

Nereus. What are we next to see? A something shines
Far, far away among the seaward lines:
Round Galatea's feet flames pant and play—
Now in strong blaze, now languishing away—
As if the throbbings were the throbbings of
The wildly agitated pulse of love.

Tha. It is Homunculus. It must be he.
Proteus, no doubt, has tempted him to sea.
This comes of his ambition; and the end
I venture—'tis no hard task—to portend:
Already do I hear his anguished moan—
He'll dash himself against the sparkling throne.
Aye—as I said—there goes he—spilled about—
Flame flashing thick and fast—all gushing out!

Sirens. What fiery wonder spreading o'er the sea
Clothes it with such surpassing brilliancy?
Billows on billows dash with lightning flash.
Bodies, that through the ocean move to-night,
Move ringed with fire, and in a path of light.
Everywhere fire! Hail, Eros! hail! With thee
The world began: oh! still its ruler be!

Hail! O Sea! All hail, ye bright
Billows fringed with holy light!
Fire, all hail! Hail, Ocean range!
Hail! all hail! Adventure strange!

All. Air, with all thy breezy waves,
Hail! Hail, Earth's mysterious caves!
Honour now and evermore
To the Elemental Four.

ACT III

BEFORE THE PALACE OF MENELAUS AT SPARTA

*Enter HELENA with a CHORUS of captive Trojan women.
PANTHALIS, Leader of the CHORUS*

Helena. I, whom men looked upon with love and wonder,
And whom men so reviled—I, Helena,
Come from the shore where we but now have landed,
Still giddy with the swinging of the waves
That on their high and bristly backs have, through Posei-
don's favour
And the wings of the strong East Wind, home from the
Phrygian plain,
To the land of our fathers borne us—to our own native bay.
Glad of his safe return, on the strand, King Menelaus
Rests yonder, with the bravest and best of his warriors
rejoicing.
And hast thou not a welcome home for thy mistress,
High House, that my father Tyndarus, near the slope,
Built for himself when he from Pallas Hill returned,
And, while in sister love I played with Clytemnestra,
With Castor here, and Pollux, in the growing days of
childhood,
So gloriously adorned above all homes of Sparta?
And hail! all hail! wings of the brazen gate:
Ye that were thrown wide open to all guests!
Never with more inviting hospitality
Than when King Menelaus came a bridegroom—
The one, the chosen one of many princes.
How he shone before my eyes in that early happy time!
Fly open swiftly, wings of the brazen gate!
That the king's mandate, which admits not of
Delay, I, as beseems his wife, may now fulfil.
Fly open to receive me! but shut out
The strange disastrous destiny that still
Storms round me. Since the day I left this place—
Without one grief, without one care to seek
Cythera's temple, in obedience to

High duties ; but the robber there, the Phrygian
 Seized me—have many things occurred that men
 Love to spread far and wide ; he, of whom such are told,
 But little loves to hear the still-increasing rumour,
 Where his own acts he finds spun to a tale of wonder.

Chorus. Disdain not, glorious lady,
 The honour that accompanies 'mong men
 This thy possession of the highest good.
 To thee, alone, of all—to thee alone
 This highest favour of the gods was given ;
 The fame of beauty—fame above all others.

Before the hero moves the hero's name
 And onward doth he march in pride ;
 Yet he, the warrior—he, who to no other
 Would bend the neck, in spirit bows him down
 Before the Beautiful, the All-subduing !

Hel. No more ! I have sailed hither with my husband,
 And now by him am to his city sent on ;
 But what thought he may have in heart, I guess not.
 Come I a wife ? Come I, indeed, a queen ?
 Come I a victim, destined to atone
 The prince's pangs, the people's sufferings,
 So long endured ? And am I hither brought
 For sacrifice ? Or, by the event of war
 Won, am I but a prisoner ? I divine not.
 A fame and fate ambiguous the Immortals
 Have doomed for me, unenviable attendants
 Of Beauty, ever with me—aye, for ever ;
 Even here—upon this threshold—here beside me
 Gloomily stands the evil-boding presence.
 Ere yet we left the hollow ship but seldom did my husband
 Look on me, and he spake no cheery word.
 Opposite me he sate, and seemed the while
 Gloomily meditating something evil ;
 But scarcely had the beaks of the first ships,
 Within the curving shore of the Eurotas
 Steered safely, greeted land, when thus spake he—
 Seemed it that with his voice the inspiring God
 Spake :—“ Here, my warriors, each in his due order,
 Move, disembarking : I will muster them,
 Rank after rank, drawn up on the sea strand.

But go thou on! Go up along the bank
 Of the holy river, where Eurotas flows
 Through his fertile valley. Turn thy swift steeds up
 Over the emerald depths of the moist meadow,
 Till thou hast reached the high plain and the buildings
 Of Lacedæmon, late a rich wide field
 Hemmed in by solitary hills severe.
 Enter the palace there high turreted;
 Gather the maids, whom I left there at parting,
 Together; and the sage old stewardess,
 Let her show thee the rich collected treasures,
 Thy father's gathering, and those, too, that I,
 In peace and war ever increasing them,
 Have piled together. All in order due
 Wilt thou find standing—for it is the right
 Undoubted of the prince, that, to his home returning,
 He finds all things in their place as he hath left them:
 For of himself the slave hath power to alter nothing."

Chor. With the rich treasures now, that, day by day,
 And year by year, have added to—oh feast
 Thine eyes and breast.

The chainlet's graceful charm,
 The diadem that the high brow adorns,
 There are they resting proud—they deemed themselves
 Even in themselves a something.

Step thou on
 Into the treasure chamber. Challenge them!
 Up start they. They in pride
 Array them for the battle.
 'Tis a delight to me to see the contest—
 Beauty 'gainst gold and pearls and gems of price.

Hel. So spake my lord—this farther mandate followed:
 "When thou hast seen through all things in their
 order,
 Then take as many tripods as thou deemest
 Needful—as many vessels as the priest
 Requires when perfecting the holy rite—
 Caldrons and bowls and flat round altar-plates—
 The purest water, from the holy fount,
 Be in high pitchers;—a short space apart
 Have dry wood ready, quick to catch the flame;—
 And let not a well-sharpened knife be wanting!
 All else I leave it to thy sole concern."

So spake he, urging me to part ; but nothing
 Of living breath doth the orderer of the rite
 Designate to be slain in dedication
 Of solemn sacrifice to the Olympians.
 I know not what to think—and—think I will not—
 My present duty is now my sole concern.
 Let all be as the high Gods order it,
 Who what they have decreed accomplish ever :
 Men may esteem it good—men may esteem it
 Evil—but good or evil man must bear.
 Often ere now the sacrificing priest
 Hath raised the heavy axe, devoting it
 To the neck of the beast bent down to earth ;
 And the blow could not perfect, for there came
 Preventing foe, or intervening god.

Chor. What is to be thou never canst think out.
 Oh ! queen, with cheery spirit move thou on !
 To mortals good and evil
 Will unexpected come.
 Even if predicted, we do not believe.
 Troy was on fire already ; we, already
 Saw death before our eyes—a death of shame—
 And yet are we not here,
 Associated with thee,
 Thy joyous hand-maidens ?
 And yet we see the dazzling sun of heaven ;
 We see the brightest glory of the earth,
 Thee, gracious lady ! Happy ! happy we !

Hel. Be what may be ! Me doth it now beseem,
 Whate'er may interpose of evil or of good,
 To ascend at once and move into the palace—
 The royal house that many a year unseen,
 Longed for, deemed lost for ever, here stands out
 Before my eyes, I know not how. My feet
 Bear me not now with the same cheery bound
 Up the high steps o'er which I sprang in childhood.

Chor. Cast, oh, my sisters, mournful captives, cast
 All mourning far away !
 Rejoice we in the fortune of our mistress !
 Rejoice we in the joy of Helena !
 Who to the hearth of her ancestral home
 Returning late, but with a foot more firm

Even for that late return,
Approaches in her joy.

Praise ye the holy ones,
The joyous, who bring back in happiness
Exiles to their own homestead. Praise the Gods,
The holy ones! the glad home-bringing Gods!
The freed one, he whose fetters are unbound,
Over the roughest flies as if with wings;
While the pale captive, with vain longings filled,
Stretching his arms beyond the battlement,
Within his prison pines.

But her in a far-off land a god did seize,
And, back from Ilion's ruins,
And hither to the old ancestral house,
Hath borne and brought, after long joys and sorrows,
Sorrow and joy unspeakable,
To live her youth again.

Panthalis [as *Chorus-leader*]. Leave now the joy-sur-
rounded path of song.

Look towards the portal's wings. What see I there,
Sisters? Is't not the queen returning hither,
Hurrying with eager agitated steps?
What is it, mighty queen, what can it be,
In the halls of thine own house, instead of the greeting
Of thine own, hath come to wound and shatter thee thus?
Thou dost not, canst not hide it. On thy brow
Is undisguised abhorrence—noble anger—
That with surprise is struggling unsubdued.

Hel. Jove's daughter common fear doth not beseem.
Light terrors pass her by, and touch her not.
But a horror, from the bosom of old Night
And primal Chaos, rising many-shaped,
Like lurid clouds from the fire-caverned mountain
Up-whirling, shatters even the hero's breast.
The Stygian powers to-day so gloomily
Have marked my entrance to the palace, that
Even from the old, familiar, often-trod,
Long-wished-for threshold, I almost desire
To part for ever, as though I were but
A chance guest—as though this were not my home.
I have shrunk back from them thus far. I am now

In the light ; and farther, Powers, whate'er you be,
Ye shall not drive me. I will think upon
Some ritual form, that, purified, the hearth
Glowing may greet the lady as the lord !

Chorus-leader. Oh, noble lady ! make known to thy
servants,
Devotedly who love thee, what hath happened.

Hel. What I saw, ye with your own eyes shall see,
If ancient Night belike have not drunk back again
Instantly the dire shape, her own foul work,
Into her bosom's monster-teeming depths.
Yet it is meet I tell it you in words.

As I paced the gloom of the inner court of the palace
With staid religious steps, in my thoughts weighing
That which concerned me first, I felt amazement
At the strange silence and the emptiness
Of the passages. No sound of rapid step
Came to my ear—no stir of busy haste
Meeting my eye—and no attendant maid
Came forward as of old—no stewardess—
Such as were wont to welcome every stranger.
But as I reached the bosom of the hearth,
There saw I cowering o'er the last faint heat
Of embers dying, muffled up, the strange
Shape of what seemed a woman. Gaunt was she,
And huge. She was not, so it seemed, asleep ;
But rather was as one lost in her own deep thoughts.
I, as her mistress, called her up to work,
Believing that she was the stewardess
My husband's foresight had, when he left home,
Placed here. Still muffled doth she sit and stirs not.
I chide her. Then, at length, uprears she her right arm,
As though from hearth and hall to motion me away.
I turn in wrath from her, and hasten on
Toward the high steps leading where the Thalamos
Rises adorned, and the near treasure-room.
Swift from the ground upstarts that marvellous shape—
Straight in my way, with gesture of command,
Stands—shows itself in its full meagre vastness,
With hollow troubled eyeballs, blood-begrimed.
Dire spectre, eye and mind alike distracting !
I speak but to the winds. Words, all in vain,
Seek to build up and to embody shapes.

But see her!—and she ventures to the light!—
 Here, till our lord and king returns, we rule.
 Such drear abortions, Phœbus, friend of Beauty,
 Drives to their night-caves down, or he subdues.

[PHORKYAS steps out on the threshold between the
door-posts

Chor. Much have I lived through, much have I suffered,
 Though the ringlet still youthfully rolls round my temples;
 Much have I seen, and have suffered of sorrow,
 Affliction of war—that last sad night of Ilion,
 When it fell.

Through the cloud and the whirl, and the dust and the
 tumult,
 And the loud din of warriors crushing down warriors,
 Over all heard I the gods shouting fearfully—
 Heard I the brassy-tongued accents of Eris
 From the battle-field sound, as move on the Immortals,
 Nearer each moment, and evermore nearer
 To the walls of the city devoted to ruin.

They yet were standing, the proud walls were standing,
 Of Ilion; but red flames already were running
 Hither and thither, from roof-tree to roof-tree,
 Ever extending; and ever the sound of
 The restless flames rolling seemed as of tempest,
 In the gloom of black night, breaking over the city.

And as I fled, I saw through mist and fire,
 And light of flames that started up in tongues,
 The approach of gods. All in their wrath they moved—
 Shapes wondrous—onward striding—giant forms
 Seen through the deepening gloom of fire-illumined vapour.

Saw I them? Or did the anguish of my spirit
 Shape the wild phantomry? This never can I say;
 But that I now with my body's eyes behold
 The frightful shape before me I know well.
 With my hands I could grasp it, did not Fear,
 Did not Horror hold me back.

Tell me! tell me!
 Which art thou of Phorky's daughters?
 For of that kin and kind no doubt thou art,
 One of the dames belike born with grey hairs—

With one eye and one tooth,
 Which they in turns employ :
 One of the Graiæ showing thy face here.
 Dost venture—horror that thou art—dost venture
 Into the presence of Beauty ? Dost venture
 To show thyself here to the piercing eye
 Of Phœbus ? But come on—yes ! come on boldly—
 For he doth never look upon the Hideous :
 His holy eye hath never yet seen shadow.

But we ! alas !—mortals ! but we must bear
 —Compelled by our unhappy fate—
 The anguish of such sight,
 The misery unspeakable,
 This loathsome offal, this unblessed thing,
 Wakes up in hearts that feel the love of beauty.

But hear thou—as, in wanton insolence,
 Thou wilt encounter us—hear thou our curse !
 Hear imprecation ! hear abuse, abhorrence,
 And threats, and words of loathing from the lips
 Of the beautiful—the happy—from the lips
 Of us, whom gods have formed !

Phorkyas. Old is the word, but high and true its import,
 That Modesty and Beauty never hand in hand
 Together walk over the earth's green path.
 Deep in the hearts of both inveterate hate
 Dwells rooted, so that whensoever they meet
 Each turns her back upon her adversary—
 Each moves on faster. Modesty with downcast
 Heart, Beauty waxing bold and insolent,
 Till Orcus' hollow night at last hath caught her—
 If long ere that Age hath not tamed her down.
 But you, ye haughty wantons—refuse of foreign lands—
 To me ye seem a cloud of clamorous cranes,
 From overhead that send down their shrill croak.
 The traveller, unconcerned, upon his walk
 Hears and looks up ; but they pursue their way—
 He his—and thus it is with you and me.

Who are ye, then, that thus ye dare rave round
 The palace, Mænad-like, as though ye were
 Drunk ? Who, then, are ye, that ye howl against
 The stewardess, as crowds of dogs the moon ?

Think ye I know you not and of what kind
 Ye are?—ye war-begotten, battle-nursed, young fry
 —Lascivious brood, seducers and seduced—
 Enervating alike the warrior's
 And the burgher's strength. See there, the swarm of you
 Seems to me like a locust-cloud's descent,
 Covering the harvest-field in its green promise.
 Ye wasters of the industry of others,
 Whose luxury ruins the hard-earning man—
 Captives of war—bought, sold, and bought again—
 Ware, worse than worthless, auctioned off, flung away.

Hel. Who, in the lady's presence, chides her maidens,
 O'ersteps the clear rights of domestic life.

It only for the mistress is to give
 Reward of praise; and hers it is to punish.
 I with the duteous service was pleased well
 Which they to me rendered when the proud strength
 Of Ilion was besieged, and fell, and sank.
 Nor less when came the wretched wandering time
 Of our voyaging—a time, when each on self thinks only.
 A cheerful group!—here, too, will serve me cheerfully.
 “Not what the slave,” we ask; “but how he serves.”
 Be silent, then, nor snarl thou thus at them.
 Hast hitherto kept duly the king's house,
 Supplying the mistress's place? Be that thy praise!
 The Mistress now is here. Step thou then back,
 Lest chastisement, not praise, be thy just meed.

Phor. The inmates and dependants of a house
 To menace is no unimportant right;
 And the heaven-favoured ruler's noble consort
 By many a year of prudent conduct earns it.
 Therefore, as undisputed thou dost tread
 Again our queen and mistress the old ground—
 Seize on the long-abandoned reins of empire.
 Possess thou the king's treasure, and us, too,
 As yours,—and me, in my old age, protect
 From this young fry, that near thee, swan of beauty,
 Seem coarsely-feathered, clattering cackling geese.

Chorus-leader. How hideous in the neighbourhood of
 Beauty,
 More than deformed doth seem Deformity.

Phor. How more than foolish, seen near Wisdom and
 Prudent Discretion, Foolishness appears.

[*The CHORUS reply, each member of the CHORUS singly stepping forward as she speaks*

Choretid First. Tell of thy father Erebus; tell of thy mother Night.

Phor. Tell thou of Scylla—speak of thy sister bloodhound whelp.

Choretid Second. From the same root with thee sprung many a monster.

Phor. Away to Orcus—there thy kinsfolk search out.

Choretid Third. All who dwell yonder are too young for thee.

Phor. Away with thee—go, court there old Tiresias.

Choretid Fourth. Orion's nurse was thy great-granddaughter.

Phor. Harpies, in filth, did feed and fatten thee.

Choretid Fifth. How wert thou fed, to have preserved such leanness?

Phor. 'Twas not with blood, for which thou dost so thirst.

Choretid Sixth. For corpses thou dost hunger—foul corpse thou.

Phor. A vampire tooth glares from thy insolent jaws.

Leader of Chorus. Thine will I close, by telling who thou art.

Phor. Name but thyself, then were the riddle read.

Hel. Not angry, but in grief, step I between you,
 Forbidding this wild tempest of conflicting words:
 For to the ruler nothing can occur
 Worse, or attended with more disrepute,
 Than hatred growing up among his faithful servants.
 The echo of his mandates now no longer
 Returns in harmony of instant act
 Responsive; but, self-willed, reels here and there.
 Perplexed, he knows not what to make of it:
 Chides every one and everything in vain.
 Not this alone; but your unmannered bickering
 Hath called up shapes unhallowed—fearful imagery—
 That still are pressing round me, till I am
 Myself, despite of this paternal land, torn down,
 As 'twere, from it to Orcus. Is it memory,
 Or fancy is it, that thus seizes me?
 Was I all that? Am I it? Am I yet
 To be it? Dreadful dream! Dream is it?—dream!

Am I then—I—the fearful fatal form,
The horror, that hath desolated cities?
The maidens shudder. Thou, whose age hath calmed thee
down,

Alone art self-possessed. Speak thou! say how things are.

Phor. Who thinks on years of unmixed happiness,
To him, at last, the gods' best gifts seem dreams.
Favoured beyond all bounds! above all measure!
Thou, in the flow of years, sawest none but lovers—
Bold men, whose burning passions stopped at nothing.
There was Theseus! He was first—he lost no time—
A greedy wooer—he snapped thee up, a young thing:
He, strong as Hercules—a princely well-built man.

Hel. He bore me off—a slender ten-years' roe—to Attica.
There the fortress of Aphidnus safely walled me round.

Phor. Castor and Pollux freed you, and you were then
wooed

By a whole army of illustrious worthies.

Hel. Yet, will I own, of all those chiefs, Patroclus,
Pelides' image, won my silent favour.

Phor. Yet thee thy father's prudent choice gave to
King Menelaus.

Both robber on the seas was he, and his own home's bold
defender.

Hel. To him he gave his daughter, and to him he gave
his kingdom;

And from our union sprang Hermione.

Phor. King Menelaus warred far off at Crete. To thee,
left lonely,

An all too lovely guest made his appearance.

Hel. Why call back now that sad half-widowhood?
What dread misfortunes have grown out of it!

Phor. To me that voyage, too, a free-born Cretan,
brought

Weariness captivity—long servitude.

Hel. He placed thee here as stewardess of the palace,
Confiding to thy care household and hard-won treasure.

Phor. All which you left for Ilion's tower-girt city,
And love's own raptures inexhaustible.

Hel. Speak not of raptures! Woe it was unending,
Evermore showered down on my breast and head.

Phor. Yet, say they, you appeared a twofold image—
In Ilion seen, and seen, at the same time, in Egypt.

Hel. Oh, make not wholly mad this desolate madness.
Even now what I now am I do not know.

Phor. They say from the void realm of shades, Achilles,
Burning in deathless love, did make thee his—
He who erewhile had loved—but Fate denied.

Hel. A vision with a vision I was wedded:
A shadowy phantom he, a gleamy apparition.
It was a dream—only a dream—and so the very words say.
I faint—I fall away from life—am fading into phantom.

[*Sinks into the arms of the SEMICHORUS*

Chor. Silence thee! Silence thee!
Evil-eyed, evil-tongued!
Oh!—the savage lips, from which their one tooth glares!
Oh! the foul breath from that abominable gulf!

Malignity, acting benevolence—
The fierce wolf under the sheep's woolly fleece—
To me is more fearful by far
Than the jaws of the three-headed hound.
We stand in dread expectancy
Of when—how—where—the rabid fury, that lurks
In act to spring upon us, will leap forth?

Now, instead of kindly word,
Bringing balm of consolation,
Lethe's sweet dew of oblivion,
Thou dost, from the whole hoarded records of
The times gone by, stir only evil up,
Darkening at once the brightness of the present
And the mild glimmering hope-light of the future.
Be silent! Be silent!
That the soul of the queen,
Ready to fly,
May yet remain—may yet not cease to hold
That form of forms—the loveliest that the sun
Of earth hath ever seen.

[*HELENA recovers and resumes her place in the midst*

Phor. From the flying clouds, oh! step forth, lofty sun
of this bright day.
Thee, even veiled, we saw with rapture. Dazzling splen-
dour now is thine!

Joyous earth smiles out to meet thee, and thy smile is
over all.

He they rail against as hideous, yet I know the beautiful.

Hel. Fainting, step I from the blank void—from the
whirl that round me pressed.

I am weak, and sick, and weary—would sink back into
repose.

Yet to queens—yet to all living—it is a beseeming thing
With calm heart to meet the future—with calm heart
whate'er may be.

Phor. Now you stand in your full greatness—in your
beauty you stand there.

In your glance I read a mandate. Speak the mandate,
lady, speak!

Hel. The delay, that your bold quarrel caused me, hasten
to repair.

Haste the sacrifice to perfect, as the king directed me.

Phor. All's within—all's ready: dishes—tripod—keen
axe, sharpened well—

Water for lustration—incense. Designate the victim thou.

Hel. It the king hath not appointed.

Phor. Told thee not? Oh! sad, sad word!

Hel. What's the sadness that comes o'er thee?

Phor. Queen, 'tis thou—'tis thou art meant.

Hel. I?—

Phor. And these—

Chor. Oh woe! Oh sorrow!

Phor. Thou wilt fall beneath the axe.

Hel. Fearful, yet I felt it would be!

Phor. Unavoidable it seems.

Chor. Ah! and we! What is to happen?

Phor. She will die a noble death;

But within there, on the high beam that supports the
gable-roof,

Like the thrushes in a bird-snare, you in a long row will
flutter.

[HELENA and CHORUS stand astonished and terrified
in expressive, well-arranged groups

Phor. Phantoms! forms numbed to very stone by
terror,

Aghast at the thought of parting from the daylight!

Yet in the day you have no natural right.

'Tis the same case with men—they, too, are phantoms:—

Little love they to quit the holy sunlight.
 Yet the end comes no force or prayer can stay :
 All know it—few contemplate it with pleasure.
 Enough—all's over with you.

Quick to work !

[Claps her hands, on this appear at the door masked
 dwarf figures, who actively perform everything as
 she directs

Hither, swarth goblinry—squab, sooty scrubs—
 Roll yourselves round ! Here's the work that you love—
 Misery and mischief to your heart's content.
 Trundle the altar out with the golden horns—
 Over the silver rim let shine the hatchet.
 Fill the water-crocks, to wash away the soil
 Of the black polluting blood. Spread o'er the dust
 The splendid carpet, that the victim may
 Kneel down in royal wise : then wrapt in it—
 The head, no doubt, clipped off—be, as beseems
 Her rank, borne gracefully to honoured burial.

Leader of Chorus. Apart the Queen stands, thinking, as
 'twould seem.

The maidens, like the mown grass of the meadow,
 Droop.

[To PHORKYAS]. It would seem my sacred duty, then,
 As far the eldest here, to have a word with thee,
 Whose birth I deem coeval with the world.
 You are experienced—wise, and seem to us
 Benevolently disposed, although this giddy,
 Unthinking, petulant group have scoffed at you.
 Tell what you know of any possible rescue.

Phor. 'Tis easily told. It on the Queen alone
 Depends to save herself and you, her people.
 She must decide—must decide instantly.

Chor. Worthiest of the Parcae sisters—of the Sibyls
 wisest thou—
 Hold in sheath the golden scissors—tell us, tell of life and
 daylight ;
 For we feel already waving—dangling—swinging, back and
 forward,
 Joylessly, the little limbs, that, in the dance, with cheerful
 movement
 Love to play, and then to rest them softly on a lover's
 bosom.

Hel. They! Let them quail and tremble! Pain I suffer, not terror:

Yet, if you know of rescue, with thanks be it received.
To the sagacious, who, far on, and wide
Around them, look, the Impossible shows itself
Possible. Speak on. Tell us what you know?

Chor. Speak and tell—and tell us quickly—how we may
escape the savage
Odious noose, that we feel threatening, like a most un-
welcome necklace,
To wind round our throats. We feel it—wretched victims
—clinging, clasping,
Choking utterance, nay, life-breath—if thou dost not,
Parent Rhea—

Thou, most venerable mother of all gods, have mercy on us.

Phor. Have ye patience, then, to listen in silence to
The details of my plan? There are long stories to tell.

Chor. Patience enough—for while we listen we live.

Phor. To him who tarrying at home guards well a noble
treasure,

And saves by daily care the walls of his house from decay,
Secures the roof against the pressure of rain,
To him will it go well through the long days of his life;
But who o'er-strides lightly the holy bounds
Of his threshold with a rash and hasty foot,
On his return, perhaps, finds the old place—
But everything there changed, if not destroyed.

Hel. Wherefore these out-worn proverbs? What thou
wouldest tell,

Tell on. Stir not up matter that offends.

Phor. 'Tis part of my tale—true history—no offence.
His pirate barque did Menelaus steer
From bay to bay. The main shore and the islands
He ravaged, and swept off all he could plunder,
Returning with the spoils you have seen there piled within.
Ten weary years he wore out before Ilion;
In the voyage home how many more I know not.
How stands it here, meanwhile, with the high house
Of Tyndarus? How stands it with the realm around?

Hel. Are foul words, then, so wound into your nature
That you cannot move your lips without abuse?

Phor. For years neglected stood the valley-ridge
That north of Sparta rears its terraces,

Backed by Taygetus. There doth the Eurotas
 Roll down a merry brook—thence through our glen,
 Flows widening among reeds, and rears your swans.
 There, unobserved, in that same mountain valley
 Nestled a bold race. From Cimmerian night
 Forth pressing, they have built them up a fastness—
 A hold impregnable—whence they descend
 To harass land and people as they please.

Hel. Could they effect this? It would seem impossible.

Phor. They had time enough—perhaps full twenty years.

Hel. Does one bear rule? Are the robbers many?—a
 gang?

Phor. They are not robbers, and one man does rule.
 I speak no foul words of him, though he did
 Visit me here. He might have taken everything;
 But he was satisfied with a few free gifts.
 Such was the word—he did not call it tribute.

Hel. What kind of looking man?

Phor. By no means ill.
 He pleases me—a merry fearless man,
 Well built; has few among the Greeks his equals
 In understanding. We with foul tongues brand
 The people as barbarians, but I fancy
 Not one of them as savage as at Ilion
 Was many a hero feeding on man's flesh.
 His honour I can speak to confidently;
 I have trusted my own person in his hands.
 And his castle—that you should see with your own eyes—
 'Tis quite another thing than the coarse masonry
 Of the rude walls that your fathers all confusedly
 Together rolled—Cyclopean—aye, like the Cyclops were
 they,

Heaping rough stones on rough stones as they came.
 Far other the structure there, for all with them
 Is fixed by rule and line and measurement.
 Look at it from without—it strives to heaven—
 Straight, well adjusted, smooth as a steel mirror.
 —Climb up that wall? The very thought slides down.
 Within, a far-extending court, and round it
 Buildings of every kind, for every use.
 Pillar, pilaster, archlet, arch are there;
 Balconies, galleries looking out and in,
 And scutcheons.

Chor. What are scutcheons ?

Phor. Ajax bore in shield
A coiled snake—you yourselves remember to have seen it.
The Seven, too, before Thebes bore figured emblems
Each on his shield. On one was the moon and the stars
And the field of the heavens in the night. And on
another
Was a goddess. One shield had a chief with scaling-
ladder.
Some had swords,—torches, too ; and all with which the
violence
Of bold besiegers shaves down mighty cities.

And such devices bear the hero band I speak of ;
Theirs have, from their original ancestors,
Come down with all variety of colour.

There you see lions—eagle's claw and beak—
Buffalo horns—a wing—roses—a peacock's tail—
And stripes—gold, black and silver, blue and red.

These and the like hang in their halls—proud banners, row
on row—
In boundless halls, that seem wide as the world,
There were a place for your dances !

Chor. Are there dancers there ?

Phor. The best in the world. Crowds of boys, golden-
haired

And fresh-complexioned : and they so breathe youth !
Paris alone so breathed, when he too near the Queen
Came——

Hel. You forget your character. Let us hear
What you drive at. Say the last word ; end your tale at
once.

Phor. You 'tis that have to say the last word here, and
end it.

Say but distinctly “ Yes,” and I surround you
With that castle.

Chor. Oh ! speak, speak the little word,
And rescue thus thyself and us alike.

Hel. How ? Can I fear, then, that King Menelaus
Could so change ?—do such savage injury to me ?

Phor. Have you forgotten your Deiphobus,

The brother of your Paris, slain in battle—
 How the king maimed and mutilated him?
 —You cannot, sure, forget Deiphobus,
 With whom you did so struggle, an obstinate widow;
 But the happy man had his own way at last,
 And for it, too, got slit up nose and ears,
 And other gashes horrible to look at.

Hel. To him he did it—on my account he did it.

Phor. And now, on his account, to you he'll do it.
 Beauty is never held in partnership:
 He, who hath once enjoyed it all his own,
 Sooner destroys than shares it with another.

[*Trumpets in the distance*

Hark! 'twas the trump's shrill thrill. How it tears
 through
 Ear-drum, heart, all within us! Thus does Jealousy
 Fasten her fangs into the breast of the man
 Who, having once possessed, forgets not ever
 What he hath had—hath lost—and now no more pos-
 sesses.

Chor. Hear you not the horn resounding? See you
 not the flash of weapons?

Phor. Welcome is my king and master: my account I
 fain would render.

Chor. But—but we——

Phor. You know all plainly—her death, here,
 and yours, within.

There is no help for it—no—none.

Hel. I have thought out what I may venture on.
 Thou art a dæmon of cross purposes—
 This I do feel. I fear that good to evil
 Thou dost invert; but I will follow thee
 On to the castle. This say I; but what more
 May come, after this step, and in the Queen's
 Deep heart dwell hidden, unrevealed must it
 To all remain. On! Old One, lead the way.

Chor. How gladly go we hence, with hastening
 foot!

Behind us Death—before us once again
 Unscaleable walls of a
 Towering fortress.

Oh! that the fortress may give shelter such

As Iliion's tower, that yielded but at last
To despicable craft.

[Mists spread around, hide the background, and also
the front scene gradually

How? but how?

Sisters, look round!

Was it not cheerful daylight?

Shreds of vapour waver rising

Up from Eurotas, from the holy river.

Already vanished hath the lovely bank;

The fringed bank already, with its reeds,

Hath vanished from the eye.

And the free swans—the proud, free, graceful swans,

That, gliding soft, delightedly swim down

Together in their joy,

See I, alas! no more.

But yet, but yet,

Toning hear I them,

Toning far off—a hoarse tone—

Announcing death, men say.

Ah! that to us it may not also be,

Instead of promised rescue,

Augury but of ruin,

—To us, to us, the swanlike,

With white long necks, beautiful as the swan!—

Ruin to us, and her, our Queen and Mistress,

The Daughter of the Swan!

Woe! Woe to us! Woe! woe!

And the mist still thickens. Round us

Everything already hidden.

Now we see not one another.

What is doing?—Move we onward?

Or do we with light steps hover

O'er the ground, still unadvancing?

—Saw you nothing? Floats not Hermes

Yonder? Gleamed there not the waving

—Gleams it not? Is it illusion?—

Of his golden wand of empire,

Bidding us back to the joyless

Gloomy land of shapes unbodied,

O'er-filled, ever-empty Hades.

Suddenly the darkness deepens—deepens, though the fog
hath vanished,
Darkness as of brown walls round us, that admit no gleam
of sunshine.

Walls, indeed, they are, that front us, freedom to the eye
forbidding.

Court-yard is it? Deep trench is it? Be it this or be it
th' other,

Equally is it a horror. Sisters, we, alas! are captives;
Here as there, and now as ever,
Destined still to be but captives!

*The fog has cleared off, and the inner court of the Castle is
seen, surrounded with rich fantastic buildings of the
Middle Ages*

Chorus-leader. Impatient ever and foolish!—type of
woman,

Dependent on the moment-play of the wild winds!

Good or ill fortune still incapable

Of meeting with serenity.

Still warring are you each with other. One

Says this, and what she says is straight gainsaid.

Laughing or wailing, the self-same tone 'tis always,

—Sorrow or joy. Be silent and attend ye!

Listen to what our noble Queen for herself,

And us—having weighed all in thought—determines.

Hel. Where art thou, Pythonissa? Come, be thy name
what it may,

Come thou from out the vaults of this dismal castle.

Or if, perchance, thou art going to tell of my arrival

To this wondrous hero-lord, and secure me meet reception,

Receive my thanks and lead me at once to him.

I wish my wanderings at an end. Repose is all I long
for.

Chorus-leader. In vain lookest thou, O Queen! on all
sides, round thee here.

Vanished is that foul shape. She hath, perhaps, remained

Behind in the fog, from the bosom of which hither

We have, I know not how, come swiftly, without step;

Or it may well be that she still is wandering,

Having lost herself in the labyrinthine windings

Of this strange castle made of many castles,

While she seeks the master to announce your coming,
And to demand for you princely reception.

But yonder see, above, bustle of preparation!
At galleries, at windows, and in portals,
Hither and thither hurrying crowds of servants.
This speaks a welcome here of gracious courtesy,
Princely reception as of honoured guest.

Chor. How my heart flows forth to meet them! Look!
only look

At the long line of beautiful youths streaming hitherward,
Timing their leisurely movements to melody.
Onward, still on, flows the ordered procession.
Oh, what composure! what grace! and what dignity!
Youths, but in bloom and in beauty of boyhood.
Bright apparition! But who hath evoked it?
Whose is the mandate their ranks are obeying?
Whose is the spirit unseen that hath moulded them?
With what delight and what wonder I look on them!
What is it wins me to love them?—thus love them?
Is it their beauty? their courteous demeanour?
Or the ringlets that roll round the dazzling white forehead?
Or the dear little cheeks, with blush red as the peach's,
And, soft as the peach's, the tender down shading them?
Fain would I bite into fruit so delicious!
But I shudder and shrink back in fear and in horror,
Knowing well, that lips pressed to the lips of such charmer,
Have—dreadful to think of—been choked up with ashes.

But the fairest
Lo! come hither.
What are they bearing?
Steps to the throne,
Tapestry, seat,
Hangings and ornaments
For a pavilion.
Rolling above in folds,
Are formed, as 'twere, garlands of clouds,
To wave o'er the head of our Queen.
And now, invited, she already hath
Ascended the high couch.
Advance ye slowly, step by step.
Range yourselves gracefully.

Worthy, worthy, three times worthy,
Be such reception cordially received!

[*All that the CHORUS has indicated is gradually done. FAUST appears, after a long train of pages and squires have descended, on the steps, in Court dress of the Middle Ages, and comes down slowly and with dignity*

Chorus-leader. If the gods have not now, as oft they do,
To this man lent but for a little while
A form of such exceeding dignity;
And if the lofty grace, the aspect, that
Wins us to love, be not their transient boon,
All he at any time essays will be
Successful; be it in battle-strife with men
Or in the little war of Love with lovely ladies.
He is, in truth, to be preferred to many,
Whom I have seen, the prized ones of the earth.
With staid, deliberate, respectful step,
I see the Prince advance. Turn thee, O Queen!

[*FAUST steps forward with a man, LYNCEUS, in chains*

Faust. Instead of solemn ceremonial greeting,
Instead of deferential welcoming,
My bounden service—I bring here to thee
In chains this faithless serf, who, failing in
His duty, caused it that I fail in mine.
[*To LYNCEUS.*] Here! Kneel down. To this noblest lady
make
Confession of thy guilt. This man, high Queen,
Is he, who, gifted with rare power of vision,
Hath his appointed province to look round
From the tall tower; and with sharp eye to range
Over the heaven-space, over the broad earth;
To give report of all that here or yonder
Shows itself, stirring from the circling hills
Into the valley or towards the castle;
Be it a drove of cattle in long wave,
Or army in its march. That we secure,
And this defy. To-day—oh! what neglect!
You were approaching, and he tells it not:
Thus our reception of such honoured guest
Is all deficient in solemnity.
His is the guilt—the forfeit is his life.

Already in the blood of death deserved
 He now should lie ; but thine it is alone
 To punish—to show mercy—at thy will.

Hel. High though the dignity that you concede
 Of Judge and Ruler ; and though it may be
 That as I much suspect, you do but tempt me ;
 Yet will I the first duty of the Judge
 Fulfil in hearing the accused. Speak then.

Lynceus [*warder of the tower*].

Let me kneel down ! Gazing on her,
 Let me perish ! let me live !
 —Gift of Gods—Divinest Lady—
 Heart, life, all to her I give.

Eastward was my glance directed
 Watching for the sun's first rays.
 In the south—oh ! sight of wonder—
 Rose the bright orb's sudden blaze.

Thither was my eye attracted.
 Vanished bay and mountain height,
 Earth and heaven unseen and all things,
 All but that enchanted light.

Though mine eye is as the lynx's
 From his tree-top, here its beams
 Failed. I struggled with the darkness
 As when one awakes from dreams.

Strangely, suddenly, the turrets,
 Towers and barred gates disappear ;
 Mist-wreaths heaving, waving, clearing
 Pass, and leave a Goddess here.

Eye and heart I turned toward her,
 Feeding on that gentle light ;
 Beauty, Hers, all-dazzling Beauty,
 Dazzled and entranced me quite.

I forgot to play the warder,
 And the trumpet-welcome give.
 Threaten !—slay not wholly ! Beauty
 Tempers anger, bids me live !

Hel. The evil I brought with me I may not punish.
Woe is me! How strange a destiny pursues me,
Everywhere so to fool men's hearts that they
Respect not their own selves, nor what erewhile was
honoured.

Forcing, seducing, warring, violating.
Demigods, heroes, gods and demons even
Dragging me here and there about with them.
A strange wild life of hurrying to and fro.
I, when I was but one, drove the world mad;
'Twas worse, when seen a second apparition;
And now a threefold, fourfold self, I bring
Bewilderment still with me—trouble on trouble.
Discharge the good man here—let him be free;
Blame should not strike him whom a god hath fooled.

Faust. Entranced with wonder, Queen, I here behold

The unerring archer, here the stricken quarry;
The bow that sped the arrow and the wounded.
Arrows fly thick on arrows, piercing me;
And, glancing crosswise, everywhere, methinks,
Are whirring feathered round in court and castle.
What am I now? All in a moment you
Make rebels of my faithfullest—make my walls
Unsafe; and henceforth will my warriors serve
None but the conquering, unconquered lady.
What can I, but transfer myself and all
I fancied mine to thee? At thy feet let me
Do homage, free and true to thee, my mistress—
Thee to whom, soon as seen, in sovereign right
All became subject—wealth, possessions, throne!

[LYNCEUS returns, bearing a chest—others follow him
with chests

Lyn. See me, Queen, returning, see!
The wealthy beg a glance from thee:
He looked on thee, and feels since then
The poorest and most rich of men.

How moved I still from triumph on
To triumph! Here, enslaved! undone!
Avails not now the sharp eye's aid:
Back from thy throne it sinks dismayed.

We from the far East hither prest,
Pouring our armies o'er the West:
A mass of peoples, long, broad, vast,
And the first knew not of the last.

The first hath fallen. The next his stand
Made good. The third came spear in hand.
Each man a hundred's strength supplied,
And thousands slain unnoted died.

In storm we rushed along. Our hordes,
From place to place, of all were lords.
Where I to-day held lordly sway,
To-morrow others seized their prey.

A quick glance o'er our spoils—one laid
Hard grasp upon the fairest maid,
One on the steer of firmest tread,
And all with horses onward sped.

But I, with glance of boundless range,
Sought everywhere the rare, the strange.
What others shared its charm of power
Lost straightway, like a withered flower.

And thus for treasures hid from light,
Led only by my own keen sight,
Chest, casket, shrine, with searching look
I pierced, and every secret nook.

Thus have I gathered heaps of gold,
And star-like gems of price untold.
Of all, the emerald, on thy breast
Alone is pure enough to rest.

And waving between lip and ear
Be the deep sea-bed's oval tear:
While in faint blush beside thy cheek
The ruby fades, abashed and weak.

And here I bend in homage meet,
And lay my tribute at thy feet;
To thee, to thee my treasures yield,
The crops of many a bloody field.

Though here be treasure-chests full store,
 Yet have I iron coffers more :
 Let me but in thy orbit be,
 And vaults of wealth I heap for thee.

Form of all forms ! Earth saw thee. Power,
 Wealth, Reason, in that glorious hour
 Bowed, and adoring bent the knee,
 Type of all loveliness, to thee !

All that with guarding grasp for mine
 I held—flows fast away, is thine !
 How bright it was—how pure—how high !
 How dimmed, how pale—when thou art nigh !

Thus all, I once possessed, decayed
 Like grass mown down, is left to fade :
 Oh ! with approving glance, once more
 The splendour it has lost restore.

Faust [to LYNCEUS]. Off with your heap of gatherings—
 trophies of
 Deeds desperate and daring—off with them !
 Hence ! unreprieved indeed, but unrewarded.
 Hers is already all that in its heart
 The castle hides. Why special gifts to her,
 Then, offer ? Go : range treasure upon treasure ;
 In imagery sublime set forth the spirit
 Unseen of grandeur. Let the arched ceilings glow
 As 'twere a second heaven-cope. Paradises
 Of lifeless life prepare.
 Hastening before her steps let flowering carpets
 On carpets roll—let the soft ground swell up
 To meet her foot. To woo and win her glance
 Let splendour shine from everything around :
 Splendour o'erpowering all eyes but a god's.

Lyn. Light order ! Easy to obey !
 Say, rather, pastime 'tis, and play.
 It is not wealth, it is not lands,
 But love and life that she commands.
 Before the splendour thus revealed
 Of heavenly Beauty armies yield :
 The warrior's sword is blunt and dull,

Powerless beside the beautiful:
 And cold and dim, the sun's own light
 Is darkened in her presence bright.
 How poor are all things to one glance
 Of that divinest countenance!

[Exit

Hel. [to FAUST]. I would speak to you. Come up to my side.

The vacant place demands its master, and
 Makes mine secure.

Faust [kneels, as doing homage to HELENA]. First suffer me to kneel;

And, noble lady, let my true allegiance
 Please thee; and suffer me to kiss the hand
 That lifts me to thy side. Support me as
 Regent with thee of thy unmeasured kingdom,
 And to thyself thus win adorer, servant,
 Protector—all in one.

Hel. Everywhere wonders
 I see and hear, and I have much to ask:
 I would particularly wish to learn
 How that man's speech sounded at once so strange—
 Strange, yet familiar. One tone fits another:
 If a word strikes the ear, another comes
 To fondle and to make love to the first.

Faust. If the familiar spoken language of
 Our peoples, flowing in these forms, give pleasure,
 Song, satisfying ear and feeling in
 Their inmost depths, song must be ecstasy.
 Shall we try to wed the sweet sounds? Dialogue
 Allures, and draws them out.

Hel. And could I speak
 So beautifully? Can you teach the art?

Faust. 'Tis easy. 'Tis but speaking from the heart.
 The happy still looks round for sympathy.
 Overflowing joy still says——

Hel. Rejoice with me.

Faust. We think not now of future or of past.
 The Present——

Hel. Oh! that it could always last!

Faust. What can arrest the moment's falling sand,
 And to delight give permanence?

Hel. My hand.

Chor. Who can blame her—blame our princess—
 If she look with kindly aspect
 On the lord of this high castle?
 Here we all to-day are captives—
 She and we alike imprisoned—
 Captives, as too oft we have been,
 Since in ignominious ruin
 Ilium fell. The sad days followed
 Of our wanderings labyrinthine.
 Houseless, homeless, wandering women!

Women to men's loves accustomed
 Choosers are not.—They are adepts,
 Though, in all the art of charming;
 And upon shepherds, golden-ringleted,
 Or black and bristly Fauns,
 Lavish the moment's smile.

Near, and more near, our lovers, see! are sitting:
 Hand in hand they rock them
 Over the sumptuous throne's high-pillowed pride.

Princely Majesty denies not
 To itself the full revealing
 Of the fond heart's secret raptures,
 With the world around to witness.

Hel. I feel so far away, and yet so near:
 How fondly do I say, "Here! happy here!"

Faust. I scarce can breathe. I tremble, words are none.
 It is a dream, and time and place are gone.

Hel. What dream comes o'er me of a former day?
 Methinks I lived and died and passed away.
 And now I live anew, wound up with thee!
 Him, whom I know not, love confidingly!

Faust. Oh! analyse not thy strange destiny:
 Be—if it were but for the moment—Be!

Phor. [entering hurriedly]. Pretty time to give and get
 Lessons in Love's alphabet.
 Lispering love-songs, analysing
 Feelings, kissing, criticising.
 Feel you not your spirits wither?
 Hear you not the trumpets' clangour?

Waves of men are rolling hither.
 Menelaus comes in anger :
 'Tis the husband—the avenger.
 Seize the sword, bind on the armour,
 Guard you from the coming danger.
 Know you not how for this charmer
 Poor Deiphobus was treated ?
 Would you have the scene repeated ?
 Ears and nose sliced off repaid his
 Fond attentions to the ladies.

Such doom is thine. The light one from the roof-tree
 Shall dangle. For the Queen a new-edged axe
 Is at the altar ready.

Faust. Audacious interruption. In she presses
 Evermore mischievous. Even were there danger,
 I do detest such senseless agitation.
 The comeliest messenger, brings he a tale
 Of evil—it blots all his beauty out
 And makes him hideous. Thou, that art the Hideous
 —All-hideous—absolutely dost delight
 Only in bringing messages of evil.
 But now for once you are out in your reckoning.
 Aye! shake the air with empty breath! Here danger
 Is none; and were there danger, danger here
 Itself would be but idle threatening.

*[Signals, explosions from the towers, trumpets and
 cornets, martial music. An army marches across
 the stage*

Faust. Crowding, see the ring of heroes,
 How they bouned them for the field.
 Would a man win lady's favour,
 Be his breast her fence—her shield!

*[To the leaders, who detach themselves from their
 columns and advance*

With pent-in, silent rage, sure pledge of
 Conquest in the coming hour,
 Of the North the ripening blossoms,
 Of the East the full-formed flower,
 Steel-clad host! They shattered kingdoms,
 Realm on realm with ruin spread;

Hark! their step—or is it earthquake?
And their march!—the thunder's tread.

'Twas at Pylos we first landed;
And old Nestor—where is he?
—Vainly did the puny kinglings
Face the armies of the Free.

From these walls drive Menelaus
—Plunderer! to roam the sea,
Rove and rob—the lurking pirate's
Life his choice and destiny!—

Dukes—I greet you with the title
By command of Sparta's queen—
Lay at her feet vale and mountain.
Yours the empire you thus win.

German! guard the bays of Corinth,
Fence and rampart round it be!
With its hundred vales Achaïa
Goth! do I confide to thee!

Hosts of France, advance to Elis!
In Messene, Saxon, reign!
Norman! sweep the seas triumphant,
Argolis bring back again!

In his happy home each dwelling
Shall his strength abroad make known.
Over all be Sparta mistress,
Our fair queen's time-honoured throne!

And she sees them, while enjoying,
Each and all, this glorious land,
At her feet seek Light and Wisdom,
Rightful title to command.

[FAUST descends. The princes close round him in a narrow circle to hear his commands and directions

Chor. Who would hold in his possession
The most beautiful of women,

Round him, let him, first of all things,
 Look for the support of weapons.
 Fond words may have won her to him,
 Won the highest of earth's treasures.
 Unassailed he cannot hold her :
 Flatterers artfully wile her away from him—
 Spoilers daringly tear her away from him—
 This to guard against, he must think well on it.

Our prince for this I praise,
 —Esteem him wise o'er others—
 That, brave and prudent, he with him hath leagued
 Forces ; that strong men, obedient,
 Watch every glance of his that speaks his will,
 Loyally obey his mandates,
 Find their own gain in such fealty ;
 Have thus from the liege lord reward and thanks,
 And lord and vassal, both, win the high meed of fame.

Who now can tear away the Beautiful
 From the well-armed and powerful possessor ?
 His is she. Who but must rejoice,
 That she is his ? and most must we rejoice,
 Whom he with her protects ; proud walls securing
 Perfect defence within,
 A mighty army our sure shield without.

Faust. The gifts that we on these bestow,
 Each man's feof an ample land,
 Are great and lordly.—But enow !
 Midst of all take we our stand !

Home, round which the waves leap joyous,
 Island-home ! though hill-chains light
 The last mountain-branch of Europe
 With thy placid shore unite.

Rival nations all shall shield thee,
 Land above all lands of earth !
 For my queen the land is conquered,
 That first smiled upon her birth.

While Eurotas' reeds were rustling,
 She, whom wide earth worships, first

—Dazzling sisters! mother! brothers!—
From the shell all-radiant burst.

Lo! the land its bright flowers offers!
Thee it welcomes, thee doth call.
Though all earth be thine, fair lady,
Love thy own land best of all!

That, though the sunbeams bright like arrows keen
And cold pierce mountain ridge and jagged peaks,
Let 'mong the rocks glance any speck of green,
And the goat gnawing there its scant meal seeks.

Springs leap aloft. In concert down rush rills,
And green are meadows, vales, declivities.
The glad eye, ranging o'er a hundred hills,
Sheep-flocks spread far and wide unnumbered sees.

Cautious, apart, measuring each footstep grave,
Kine tread the brink, yet danger none; for all
Is ample shelter: vault is here, and cave,
The ready refuge of the mountain wall.

Pan shields them yonder. Nymphs of Life are dwell-
ing

'Mong bushy clefts, where moist fresh spots you see.
With instincts, as of higher regions telling,
Strives branch-like up tree crowded close on tree.

Old woods! The oak majestic there plants foot:
Bough jags to bough—self-willed, athwart, awry.
Fed with sweet dews, serene the maple-shoot
Sports with her burthen as she seeks the sky.

In shady nooks, from founts maternal, here
Warm milk for little child and lamb flows free;
And fruit, the valley's ready food, is near,
And honey dropping from the hollow tree.

Here "to be happy" is the right of birth—
The sparkling cheek and lip man's proper wealth.
Each in his sphere is as a god on earth,
And everywhere is calm of heart and health.

How in this pure air doth the flower unfold
Of human life! and the glad child attain
His father's strength! in wonder we behold,
And "are they Gods?" we ask, "or are they men?"

A shepherd's form and face Apollo wore,
And human shepherds seemed of heavenly race,
Where Nature is true Nature, evermore
Such likeness is. Each world doth all embrace.
[Sits down beside HELENA

Such gain is mine and thine. The past be thrown
Behind us! Feel, that thou the true child art
Of the highest Jove—of that first world, alone,
'Mong all that now on earth are, rightful part.

Thee shall no fastness chain with jealous mound.
Eternal in its youth—exulting—free—
Still close to Sparta winds the enchanted ground,
Wooing our stay, of blissful Arcady.

Happy land! that thou hast fled to,
Won to cheeriest destiny;
Bowers for thrones, and our free spirits
Blithe as gales of Arcady!

*The scene changes quite. Secret bowers resting on a range of
caverned rocks, shady groves extending to the rocks.
FAUST and HELENA are not seen. The CHORUS lie
scattered about—asleep*

PHORKYAS, CHORUS

Phor. How long the maidens have been asleep I know not.
If they have been seeing everything in dreams,
That I saw bright and clear before my waking eyes,
I know not; and I wish to know; and therefore will I
rouse them.

The young things will be all astonishment:
—And ye, too, Bearded Ones, who tarry yonder
On the audience-seats, in the earnest hope of seeing
Something to make the marvellous credible.

Up, up, girls ! be awake !—be alive ! shake your bright tresses,
Shake sleep from your eyes—blink not, but listen to me.

Chor. Do but speak, and tell us, tell us what of marvelous hath happened.

Dearly we do love to listen to the legends we believe not.
On these walls to gaze for ever is a sad thing—we are weary.

Phor. Children, are ye so soon weary—sleep scarce rubbed off from your eyes—

Listen. In these caves, these grottoes—in these bowers were shade and shelter

Given, as to idyllic lovers, to my lord and to my lady.

Chor. What ? within there ?

Phor. All secluded lived they from the world around them.

Me, and me alone, they trusted. In their service confidential

Mine was the high place of honour ; but, as is you know befitting

One so placed, I still looked round me, everywhere but towards the lovers :

Looked for herbs of sovereign virtue—sought on barks of trees rare mosses—

Showed deep skill in herbs and simples. They were all alone together.

Chor. You would have us think, within there that whole worlds of space were spreading—

Wood and meadows, lakes and brooklets. What a fable 'tis you weave.

Phor. Inexperienced ! ye may doubt ; but here are unexplored recesses.

Halls on halls and courts unnumbered in my musings I discovered :

Suddenly a burst of laughter from the hollow cave comes echoed.

I look in. A boy is leaping, from the bosom of the Lady, To the husband—from the father, to the mother. And the kissing,

And the kissing, and the toying—foolish love's fond playfulnesses—

Shout of mirth, and shriek of pleasure, in their quick succession stun me,

Happy child he is, and fearless. See him springing naked,
wingless,

—Wingless, or he were like Eros, Life's glad Genius be-
nignant—

Playful frolic, as the young Faun, could the Faun forget
the nature

With the wild woods that unites him, and had he a human
heart.

On the firm ground see him springing! And the ground,
with life elastic,

Heaves him like an arrow upward; and again, again re-
bounding,

The high-vaulted roof he touches. And the anxious Mother
warns him:

“Bound on Earth at thy free pleasure—leap again and
yet again there;

But repel the thought of flying; but resist the wild rash
impulse.

Wings to bear thee onward, upward, thou hast none. Re-
sist the impulse.”

The fond earnest father warns him: “In the earth is all
the virtue

That so swiftly darts thee upward: touch but with light
foot the surface,

Like the son of Earth, Antæus, thou with instant strength
art gifted.”

So from summit on to summit, all along these jagged
ridges

Leaps he, bounding and rebounding, like the ball you
strike in play.

Suddenly into a hollow of a rough glen he hath vanished,
And we deem him lost. The mother wails. The father
offers comfort.

I stand shrugging up my shoulders. But what glorious
re-appearance!

Are there treasure-chambers yonder?—hidden stores of
rich apparel?

Robes with stripes of living brightness, splendid as the
flowers of summer,

On the glorious boy are shining. Proud and princely youth
looks he!

Tassels from his arms are waving. Round his breast are
ribands fluttering.

In his hand the golden lute-harp. Every way a little
 Phœbus.
 Onward, in the flush of spirit, in the dauntless joy of boy-
 hood,
 Moves he to the mountain summit, treads the high cliffs
 overhanging.
 Wondrous Child! we gaze upon him—with delight and
 love and wonder;
 And his parents, in wild transport, clasp them in each
 other's arms:
 But the soft light round his temples—who can tell what
 there is shining?
 Golden glitter? Or the bright flame of irradiating spirit?
 In his bearing, in his gestures, the proud boy even now
 proclaims him
 Future master of all Beauty—him the Melodies Eternal
 Have through all his members moulded. You shall hear
 him, you shall see him—
 Hear him with delight and wonder—with delight unfelt till
 now.

Chor. And callest thou this a marvel, Cretan born?
 Thou to the Poet's teaching word
 Hast never lent, belike, a listening ear;
 Never to Ionia's legends;
 Never, mayhap, hast heard what Hellas tells
 Of the fathers of the land,
 Tales rich in feats of heroes and of gods.

All, done in this our day,
 Is but a melancholy echo of
 Glorious ancestral times.
 Thy tale is nothing comparable with
 That which their lovely fable
 —Fiction, more to be believed
 Than what the world calls truth—
 Sang of the son of Maia.

A shapely boy was he—a small, strong, wily rogue.
 Him in his birth-hour did the fondling nursemaids—
 Patting and playing with the wily rogue,
 Swathing in softest, finest, purest fleece—
 Leave cradled in a purple coverlet.
 They fancied that he thus was fastened down:

An idle fancy! an unreasoned dream!
Behold! the shapely, strong, small, wily one
Draws gently out his light elastic limbs—
Displacing not the purple shell
That would with painful pressure hold him down—
As the freed butterfly
From the stiff chrysalis spreads out his wings,
To wander through the sunbeam-lighted air
At his own happy will—bold voyager!

And Hermes, thus—that he to thieves and scoundrels,
And all who seek a scrambling livelihood,
Might be in every way their favouring demon—
Soon plays his dexterous tricks.
Swift from the ruler of the seas he steals
The trident, and from Ares self his sword
Slily out of the sheath;
From Phœbus, bow and arrows; from Hephæstos
His tongs. Even Father Jupiter's own lightnings
He would have made his own, did not the fire
Frighten him. Eros he overthrew in wrestling:
And from the Queen of Cyprus, as she kissed him,
He filched away the girdle from her breast.

*An enchanting purely melodious strain, as of a harp, sounds
from the grotto. All attend, and appear inwardly
affected. From this to the next marked pause the whole
is accompanied with full-toned music*

Phor. Listen to this loveliest music;
Cast these fables far away.
The old crowds of gods fling from you—
Think not of them. Past are they.

None will understand you. Critics
Of a higher school of art
Say, that from the heart must flow forth
All that works upon the heart.

Chor. If to flattery thou art softened,
—Thou whom Nature hates and fears—
Is it strange, from trance awaking,
That we find a joy in tears?

Let the cheery sunshine vanish.
 In the heart if day arise,
 We shall find in our own bosoms
 What the outer world denies.

HELENA. FAUST. EUPHORION.

Euph. When I sing my childlike carols
 You are happy as your child ;
 When I bound, as though to music,
 The parental heart leaps wild.

Hel. Love, to give man Earth's best blessing,
 Heart to noble heart leads on ;
 But, to yield us Heaven's own rapture,
 Shapes a third—our precious one.

Faust. All is found that love can give us :
 I thine own—thou, part of me.
 Oh ! as we are now united,
 Could it but for ever be !

Chor. Many years of crowded pleasure,
 In the mild gleam of this boy
 Bless our happy pair with promise.
 Oh ! the union gives me joy.

Euph. Let me bound, let me spring !
 To the heavens would I haste.
 'Tis my longing, my passion :
 It seizes me fast.

Faust. But gently, but gently,
 Dear son, I entreat thee ;
 That downfall and ruin
 O'ertake not or meet thee.
 In thy fall
 Perish all.

Euph. Prisoned no longer
 On earth will I be !
 Let my hands go,
 Let my tresses wave free.
 My robes, they are mine :
 All in vain ye hold me.

Hel. Think, oh ! think

Whose thou art—
 How our heart
 Will sink and sink :
 The bliss that we have won—
 Mine, thine, and his—undone :
 All, all by thee, rash son.

Chor. The union that their bliss did make,
 Fate, I fear, will shortly break.

Hel. and Faust. Dear son, for thy parents' sake
 Be this fiery frenzied mood
 Over-mastered and subdued.
 Rural bliss thy life employ !
 Be Arcadia's pride and joy !

Euph. 'Tis but to please you I refrain.
 [*Whirls through the CHORUS; draws them forth
 to dance*

Cheerful race, how light I hover
 Here where happy maidens be.
 Goes the music well?—the measure ?

Hel. Lead the fair ones out with thee
 To the graceful dance, and gaily
 Play the momentary lover.

Faust. These poor tricks give me small pleasure.
 How I wish it all were over.
 [*EUPHORION and CHORUS dancing and singing
 move about, interweaving*

Chor. When thy arms in the dance thou so gracefully
 spreadest,
 When thy dark locks are floating and flashing around,
 When the foot glances light from the floor that thou
 treadest,
 And the limbs to the magic of melody bound—
 Sweet child ! how thy heart must be swelling with joy :
 We love thee—all love thee—oh ! beautiful boy !

Euph. [*to the CHORUS*]. Away and away.
 Let us play a new play :
 A race let us run,
 And as you are many and I am but one,
 Let all of you here
 Be a swift herd of deer.
 And away ! and away !
 With me for the hunter and you for the prey !

Chor. Why this eager mad pursuing?
 Your own object thus undoing?
 We, like you, can fancy blisses
 In a shower of burning kisses;
 And our heart we feel incline
 To that fair young face of thine.
 If some little time be past
 With us in respectful wooing,
 You will find us yours at last.

Euph. Pursue them! Pursue them!
 O'er stock and o'er stone,
 Through brake and through forest,
 The wild game has flown.
 What is easily won
 Hath no charms in my sight:
 'Tis the pride of the conquest
 That is the delight.

Hel. and Faust. Madness his beyond all hope!
 Hearken! Heard you not a horn
 Threatening wood and hillside slope?
 —What a tumult? What a cry?

Chor. [*entering quickly one by one*]. Oh! how swiftly he
 rushed by,
 Looks on us with slight and scorn.
 See, the wildest of our group,
 He hath grasped her, he hath clasped her,
 Hither in his arms hath borne.

Euph. [*bearing in a young girl*]. She is mine. I've
 caught the coy one,
 What care I that uncomplying
 She resists me? I enjoy one
 That attracts me by denying.
 Let me still to mine feel prest
 Breasts in proud reluctance swelling:
 Give me Passion's burning zest,
 Lips rebelling, hands repelling,
 Let me feel triumphant still
 Over hers my ardent will.

Maiden. Loose me! In this little frame
 Spirit with as fierce a flame
 Burns; and know this will of mine
 Not less resolute than thine.
 Think you, then, that force can chain me?

Or your violence constrain me?
 Hold me still! Aye, dare the danger!
 I can be my own avenger.
 Ha! you're scorched! and I am free.
 Fool! rash fool! remember me
 Laughing, wheresoe'er I be,
 Laughing, laughing still at thee.

[Flames up, and flies off in a blaze

*Follow to the fields of air,
 Hope to meet the vanished there!
 Follow to the caverned hollow
 Of the deep earth. Follow! follow!*

Euph. [shaking off the flames]. Rock and forest!

Rock and forest,
 —Chains around me flung!
 What to me such chains, such fetters?
 I am active, I am young.

Yonder rave the tameless tempests,
 Yonder rage the mighty billows,
 Voices of the free!

Me they call! me! me!

Both from far I hear;

Oh, that I were near! *[Springs higher up the rock*

*Hel., Faust, and Chor. Would'st thou, like the mountain
 wild-goat,*

Clamber? Oh, we fear! we fear!

Euph. Higher must I rise, yet higher—

*Wider must the prospect be,
 Well I know the land where I am.*

*In the middle of the island,
 Pelops, in the midst of thy land,
 Loved alike by earth and sea.*

*Chor. [with affectionate tone]. If the woodland and the
 wold*

*Have no charms thy heart to hold,
 Other spells have we to gain thee,
 To allure thee, to detain thee.*

*From the hill-side slope will we
 Grapes in clusters bring to thee;
 Grapes and dusk figs, and the yellow
 Rich gold of the orange mellow.*

*Happy is the land possessing
 Peace, and with it every blessing!*

Euph. Oh, dream ye of peace, then? Dream on, whose
delight
Is in dreams; but for me be the joy of the fight!
War is the word. Where the broad banners shine,
Let me rush to the battle. The conquest is mine.

Chor. When a land is at peace,
Who would call back the day
Of war—all of Love
And of Hope flings away.

Euph. To the children of Achaia,
Heroes in the battle-strife.
Daring danger, breathing freedom,
Ever prodigal of life—
With a holy sense that peril
Damps not, lavishing their blood;
Everything brings to such warrior,
To such country, gain and good.

Chor. Higher! higher! see him press,
Nor in distance seems he less.
Victory before him beaming,
Light of armour round him gleaming,
Onward! onward! see him rise.

Euph. Not on wall or wave relying,
On himself let each man rest;
Fortress every foe defying
Is the brave man's iron breast.

Would ye dwell unconquered? Haste ye,
Haste ye, to the battle-plain!
Women Amazons becoming,
Every child a hero then.

Chor. [*gazing on EUPHORION*]. Holy, holy Poesie,
Oh, ascend thy native sky!
Shine on, thou brightest star,
Farther, and yet more far!
Still the light beams down to cheer,
And the voice with joy we hear.

Euph. No! I am a child no longer.
Armed behold the youth move on
With the strong, the free, the mighty,
Who ere now in heart was one.

Onward, to the field of glory!
On to victory! On! On!

Hel. and Faust. Scarcely numbered with the living,
Scarcely given to cheerful day,
Would he to the fearful distance
Whirl in giddy flight away?
And, the kindly tie between us,
Was it but the gleam
Of a transient dream?

Euph. Thunder on the sea!—and thunder,
How it rolls from vale to vale!
Host 'gainst host in dust and billows,
Throng on throng, and pang and bale!
Destiny
Here bids die,
And the mandate we know well.

Hel., Faust, and Chor. Oh, what horror!—oh, what
terror!

Is thy destiny, then, death?

Euph. Shall I look on war at distance?
—I would in the battle breathe!

Hel., Faust, and Chor. Rashness! danger! and—to
die!

Euph. Yet—and, look you, wings unfolding!—
Thither, thither would I fly!
I must! I must! Grudge not the joy of flight!

*[He throws himself up into the air, his clothes bear up
for a moment. His head beams, a stream of
light follows]*

Chor. Icarus! Icarus!
This—this is grief to us!

*[A beautiful youth falls at the feet of the parents. In
the dead the audience think they recognise a well-
known form; but the corporeal immediately fades
away, the aureola rises like a comet to heaven.
Clothes, mantle, and harp remain lying on the
ground]*

Hel. and Faust. Pain and joy, each follows other,
Anguish comes, and plaintive moan.

Euph. *[from the depth]*. In the realm of shadow, mother,
Let me not abide alone!

Chor. [*dirge*]. Not alone! Where'er thy dwelling,
 If, indeed, on earth we knew thee,
 Though thy home be far from daylight,
 All hearts still with love pursue thee!
 Lost—yet how can we lament thee!
 Gone—we weep and envy thee!
 Bright thy day; but bright or clouded
 Song and heart were proud and free.
 Born to all that makes earth happy!
 Lofty lineage, sense of power!
 Lost, alas! too soon. Youth's promise
 Torn by tempest, leaf and flower!
 Eye not to be baffled. Human
 Indignation at all wrong.
 Best of women loved thee. Magic
 All its own was in thy song.

How the whirl of passion bore thee
 Self-devoted to the snare!
 With what rage all laws and usage
 Didst thou rend, proud captive there!
 Yet, at last, in generous feeling,
 True stay thy pure spirit gained;
 All that noblest is and brightest
 Sought by thee—but unattained.

Unattained—oh! who attains it?
 Ask—will Destiny reply
 This day when a bleeding people,
 Dumb with sorrow, sees him die?
 —Yet fresh bursts of song awaken!
 Droop in helpless grief no more,
 For the earth again will blossom,
 And bear fruit as heretofore!

[*Perfect pause. The music ceases*

Hel. [*to FAUST*]. An old saying, alas! proves itself
 true in me—

Beauty and Happiness remain not long united;
 The ties of life and love both are asunder torn.
 Sadly, for love of both, I say to each farewell,
 And once again, yet once again, into thine arms I throw
 me!

Take, Persephone, oh! take the boy and me!

*[She embraces FAUST. The corporeal part vanishes,
Her dress and veil remain in his arms*

Phor. *[to FAUST]*. Hold tight what still survives to you
of all

That was hers. Don't let the cloak go; demons are
Tugging and tearing at its skirts, and fain
Would pluck it down from you to their underworld.
Hold fast! 'Tis not the goddess you have lost,
But it is godlike; make the best use of the lady's
Invaluable favours. Up! off with you!
'Twill lift you quickly,—that it will—high up
Above the vulgar, up into the air
As long as you can keep there. We two meet
Again—far off, far, very far away!

*[HELENA'S clothes dissolve into clouds, surround
FAUST, raise him into the air, and bear him
away*

Phor. *[takes EUPHORION'S dress, mantle, and lyre from
the ground, steps into the proscenium, lifts up these
remains and speaks]*

Well! Finding this is some luck. All the fire
Is gone—gone, not a doubt of it; but never fear,
The world will get on very well. We have
Enough—aye, quite enough to consecrate
A poet or two—aye, quite enough to madden
Your master-masons and apprentices
In the gay art of building rhymes, with envoy.
I cannot give them talents, but no matter,
The singing-ropes are no bad things in themselves,
And I'll lend them the dress.

[Sits down, leaning against a pillar, in the proscenium

Panth. Swift speed we, maidens, now that we are at
freedom,

Disenthralled from the dreary spell of the old Thessalian
hag,

And from the giddy crash of the tangled sounds that
jingle

Confusedly on the ear and cloud the inner sense!

Descend we now to Hades! swiftly thither

Already hath the Queen with solemn step down glided.

Where she hath trod, her faithful maids should follow.

We find her at the throne of the Inscrutable.

Chor. With queens, where'er they be, it still goes right ;
 In Hades even will they stand up erect
 In unsubmitting pride, rank as of old maintaining—
 Queens still ! fast friends of Queen Persephone.
 But we—to pine away in lone recesses,
 Deep meadows of asphodel,
 Our sole companions being,
 For ever and for ever,
 The lengthy poplars and the barren willows !—
 What life were this !—Like flitter-mice to twitter,
 Whining, and whispering, unenjoying, spectral !

Leader of Chorus. Who has not earned a name, nor wills
 the noble,
 Belongs to the elements. Away with you !
 My one abiding passionate desire
 Is to be with my Queen.
 Not high desert alone ; fidelity,
 Too, hath its meed : it too preserves to us Person.

CHORUS—ALL

We to the daylight are given back,
 The cheery day. Not persons now, indeed,
 As once we were. That feel we, that we know.
 But we to Hades never more return.
 Spirits are we, and ever-living Nature
 Makes on us, we on her,
 Claims irresistible.

A PART OF THE CHORUS

Ever in the murmured whispers of the thousand boughs
 here trembling,
 We with gentle play lure upward from the root the living
 currents
 To the branches ; soon with leaflets, soon with buds to
 deck, and blossoms,
 As with glimmering gems, the tresses floating lavishly in
 air.
 Autumn comes, with ripe fruit falling ;—joyous con-
 course ! men and cattle
 Crowding, crushing, grasping, cranching, rushing eagerly,
 down pressing,

All regardless each of other. See them bowing, bending
 round us,
 As they, in old days undated, bent before the earliest
 gods!

ANOTHER PART

Where these walls of rock far gleaming shine in pure and
 glassy mirror,
 We in peaceful waves are winding evermore our gentle
 way ;
 Lurk for every sound, and listen song of birds or wild reed's
 music.
 Is it Pan's own voice affrighting?—We with voice, like
 his, reply.
 Whisper is it?—We, too, whisper. Thunder?—We reply
 in thunders.
 Earthquake shocks of repercussion, threefold, tenfold, roll
 we back.

A THIRD PART

Sisters, you would call us truant. With the streams we
 hasten onward,
 Where the richly-cultured hill-slope, smiling, far away
 allures us,
 Ever downward, ever deeper, lead the life-diffusing waters
 To the meadow-land, the trim lawn, and the garden round
 the house.
 Cypresses with spiry summits, rising yonder into ether,
 Tell where they have found a mirror, tell the banks through
 which we glide.

A FOURTH PART

Wander ye at will where lists you! We will linger, we
 will rustle
 Round the richly-planted hill-slope, where, upon its staff
 supported,
 Leans the vine; and the green berry, day by day, is
 deepening, darkening.
 Hour by hour, and through the whole day long, the vin-
 tager's emotion
 Shows to us the doubtful issue of the labours he so loves.

Now with spade and now with mattock, and now earthing,
pruning, binding,
To all gods he prays, at all times; above all, prays to
the Sun-god.
Little of his faithful servant's toil thinks Bacchus, the
enervate;
Rests in bowers, reclines in grottoes, fondling there the
youthful Faun.
Dissolute sits he, and dreaming, half with wine inebri-
ated
Round him heaped in skins, jars, vases, right and left of
the cool cavern,
That might serve for endless ages. But when all the gods,
when Helios,
More than all, has, blowing, moistening, warming, glow-
ing, drying, ripening,
Swelled the wine-bestowing berries, heaped the cluster-
horn of Plenty,
Where the vintager in silence worked, see! sudden life
and bustle.
Stir there is in every arbour; rattling round from stake
to stake;
Baskets, buckets, crackle, clatter; vine-troughs groan
beneath their burthen;
All to the great vat move onward, to the strong dance of
the wine-press.
Now the holy, heaven-sent fulness of the pure-born dewy
berries
Daringly is crushed and broken; trampled down what was
their beauty
To a mass none love to look on—squeezed together, foam-
ing, splashing.
Now the sharp clash of the cymbal, with the timbrel's
brazen discord,
Tears the ear, and Dionysos is from mysteries unveiled.
Here he comes with goat-foot Satyrs, goat-foot Mænads
thyrsus-swinging.
Evermore, amid the discord, brays the ass of old Silenus.
Nothing's spared; the cloven feet are trampling down all
laws and manners.
Reel the senses all; the ear is by the din distracted,
deafened.

Drunken men for cups are groping, head and belly over-
burthened ;
Here and there a few are working. They but add to the
confusion ;
For they must, to hold the new wine, have the old skins
emptied fast.

[The curtain falls. PHORKYAS in the proscenium extends herself to giant height, steps down from the cothurni, throws off mask and veil, and shows herself as MEPHISTOPHELES, in order, as far as is necessary, to comment on the piece in epilogue

ACT IV

I

A HIGH MOUNTAIN

Bold, jagged, rocky summit. A cloud moves on, rests against the rock, and sinks down on a projecting ledge. The cloud opens. FAUST steps out

Faust. Below me, spreading far away, are deepest
solitudes,
And here, on this projecting ridge of the high mountain-
summit,
Choose I the place of my descent, dismissing
The car of cloud that hath so softly hither,
Through bright heaven, borne me over land and ocean.
It leaves me slowly—trails away—it breaks not into vapour.
In massy globes it rolls. Its course is striving to the east.
The eye is striving after it in awed astonishment.
It breaks—it wanders into waves—it changes, and it
changes.
A something there would shape itself.—The eye does not
deceive me ;
On sun-illumined pillows, in grandeur, see ! reclining,
Of more than woman's height, a godlike female figure.
I see it there—like Juno, Leda, Helena—
In majesty and love waving before mine eyes.

Alas! already change hath come, and formless, broad,
 uptowering,
 Rests in the east as 'twere a far-off glacier dazzling,
 Mirroring the mighty import of the flying days.

O'er me still hovers a thin tender cloud-streak,
 Round breast and forehead—cheering, cooling, soothing!
 And now it rises lingeringly, and high and higher yet
 Condenses. Is the winning form I see
 But an illusion, that from my own fancy
 Moulds itself into Youth's first longed-for, still withheld,
 And highest good? From the heart's depths up-gushing,
 As in the days of long ago are the heart's first, best
 treasures,
 Symbol of the aurora-love—alas! too swift to vanish!—
 Of that first glance, how quickly felt! which but the heart
 interprets—
 The rosy dawn-light of the heaven of boyhood's happy
 dreaming—
 That, could it linger here with us, all else would seem but
 shadow.

Like Beauty of the Soul, the lovely form grows lovelier,
 Dissolves not; upward floats—slowly—into the ether;
 And with it, of my heart and mind draws the best part
 away.

[A seven-league boot stamps down. Another follows
 instantly. MEPHISTOPHELES descends. The
 Boots stride hastily on

Meph. [to FAUST]. Aye! well stepped out! But what
 could be the freak

That led you to descend upon this peak?
 Was there no place, then, to alight upon
 But yawning wilderness and horrid stone?
 I know the objects round. I know them well.
 Where we are standing was the floor of Hell.

Faust. Still the same foolish legends, evermore,
 On every subject! Will you ne'er give o'er?

Meph. [earnestly]. When long ago, down from the upper
 sky,

The Lord had banished us—and I know why—
 To the far depths, where in the centre glow
 Fires everlasting, round and round that throw
 Red restless flames, we found that we had got

Into a place too crowded, and too hot.
 The Devils got sick, and feeling ill at ease
 In their new prison, began to cough and sneeze.
 With sulphur-stench and acid Hell boiled o'er—
 Foul vapour—then more foul it grew and more,
 Till the smooth crust was parched and burst asunder;
 And topsy-turvy Science tells, with wonder,
 How to earth's surface rose what had been under.
 We made our way out of the red-hot caves
 Into pure air—are princes who were slaves.
 An open secret—mystery well concealed,
 And only to the latter times revealed.

Faust. To me the mountain mass is nobly dumb:
 I ask not, whence uprisen? or wherefore come?
 Nature—that in herself is all in all—
 When her pure will first shaped the round earth's ball,
 Formed depth and summit for her own delight,
 Heaped rock on rock, linked height to mountain height;
 Moulded and led, as 'twere, with gentlest hand,
 The hill-side slope to meet the level land.
 Then came soft green and growth. She doth not seek
 For her delight wild ferment or mad freak.

Meph. Aye! so you say, and think it clear as light;
 But he, who then was present, must be right.
 Why, I myself was by when flames upwreathed
 From the abyss, and sulphurous vapour breathed;
 When Moloch's hammer, linking rock to rock,
 Struck chips in thousands from the rough old block,
 And scattered, as he forged the mountain chain,
 Huge granite fragment-splinters o'er the plain.
 Masses of foreign substance load the land;
 How whirled down there, no man can understand.
 Philosophers—they can make nothing of it;
 They've thought and thought: but what does thinking
 profit?

There lies the rock, your theorists defying—
 There lies the rock—there must they leave it lying.
 The common people—they alone receive,
 And with faith, not to be disturbed, believe
 The plain broad fact. In their undoubting creed
 'Tis miracle. 'Tis Satan's work indeed.
 Doubt never troubles them—the shrewd old judges,
 Propt on the crutch of faith, my pilgrim trudges,

Limping with pious foot o'er devil-ridges
To devil-stones, devil-chapels, devil-bridges.

Faust. 'Tis after all not un-amusing to
See Nature from a devil's point of view.

Meph. What is't to me? Be Nature what it
may?

My honour's touched—the devil was in the fray.

'Twas we—we did it—we, the boys that shine
Unequall'd actors in the lofty line.

See you our sign and cypher written clear—
Convulsion, tumult, devil's work, madness here.

But, to have done with topics that but tease you,

Let's come to business. In your journeying

O'er earth, and through the air; while on the wing,

Did nothing on our upper surface please you?—

You, who have seen from your observatory

The kingdoms of the world and all their glory?

—Still that unsatisfied impatient air?—

Did nothing give you any pleasure there?

Faust. There did. A mighty project lured me on—
Guess what it was.

Meph. That easily is done.

We'll fancy a metropolis,

—The heart and kernel of which is

A sewer and sink of nastiness;

The dense spot where his food the burgher seeks;

Lanes crooked, narrow gables; slender peaks;

The crowded market-place—kale, turnips, leeks;

Shambles, where flies on joints well fattened,

Making themselves at home, have battened.

Thither at any hour repair,

Activity and stench are there,

Enough for you, if anywhere.

—Then come wide squares, and streets, that claim

Distinction from their very name;

And spreading, where no gate confines,

The suburbs flow in boundless lines.

There how delightful is the roar

And roll of coaches evermore;

The bustling motion, in and out,

And to and fro, and round about,

And out and in, they heave and drive—
 A swarming ant-hill all alive.
 There let me ride, or on the car
 Of splendid state be seen from far—
 Alone, aloft, admired, revered,
 By hundred thousands gazed on, feared.

Faust. Small pleasure from such source should I derive.

We seek to make men happy as they may
 Be made, and happy each in his own way;
 Would mould the manners, educate the mind:
 And our reward for all is that we find
 We have made rebels.

Meph. [*in continuation, disregarding FAUST'S remark*].
 —Then would I build me up a place of pleasure
 For the sweet moments of a prince's leisure.
 Wood, hill, and valley, lawn, and meadow ground
 Are all within the sumptuous garden's bound.
 By verdant walls the long strait pathways drawn
 Through formal shades to reach the velvet lawn;
 Cascades that roll with regulated shock
 In channels carved from rock to answering rock;
 Water, in all diversity of dyes,
 Taught artificially to fall and rise,
 A stately column soars, and, breaking, sheds
 Swift down the sides thin, tiny, tinkling threads.
 Then would I have, in many a close recess,
 Lodges, with ladies there, all loveliness!
 Pass countless hours—and let no care intrude—
 In that delicious social solitude.
 Ladies, do you mark me?—*ladies.* Womankind
 Comes always as a plural to my mind.

Faust. Degenerate—modern—base!—Abandon all
 That makes life life?—A vile Sardanapal!

Meph. Could but a man make out what you're about,
 It must be something quite sublime, no doubt.
 You have of late been wandering through the air—
 Near the moon. Don't you wish that you were there?

Faust [*earnestly*]. No, doubtless, no. Our own earth is
 a place
 That for bold enterprise gives ample space.
 Something may still be done that in the event
 Will waken in the world astonishment.

Within me lives a power that must succeed
In earnest, active, energetic deed.

Meph. Aye, and the Fame that such achievement wins!
This comes of communing with heroines.

Faust. Dominion, Power, Possession, is my aim;
The Fact is all—an idle breath the Fame!

Meph. Yet Poets will arise to sing thy story,
Tell times to come thy grandeur and thy glory,
With folly kindling folly.

Faust. What know you
Of this or anything that Man desires?
Thy nature, adverse, cross-grained, bitter, sharp,
What can it do but criticise and carp?
How can it know what Man—true Man—requires?

Meph. Well, have your will and way. I give up mine.
Communicate this notable design.

Faust [*with earnestness*]. I had been gazing on the
mighty sea,
That, tower on tower, swelled up exultingly;
Then did it fall, and its wide waves expand;
As laying siege to yon flat breadth of strand.
Sickness of heart I felt. Resentment strong,
Keen indignation at imagined wrong,
The pang, that to behold oppression gives
To freedom's instinct that within us lives,
Wrath at the usurpation of the wave,
And sympathy with what it would enslave,
Came o'er my spirit; and the frenzied mood
Worked like a fever through my human blood.
"Can it be chance?" I said. "Can it be chance?"
I said, and eyed the waves with sharper glance.
A moment motionless, then, from the goal,
Their late-won conquest, back the recreants roll.
The hour returns; again begins their play.

Meph. [*to the audience*]. 'Tis nothing new; I've seen
them every day
A hundred thousand years roll the same way.

Faust [*continues vehemently*]. On creep they hither, here
at all points press;
Barren themselves, and spreading barrenness.
It swells, and spreads, and rolls, and spends its strength
O'er the repulsive coast-line's desert length.

Imperious wave o'er wave in power moves on,
 Lords it awhile—retreats—and nothing's done.
 In anguish and despair my mind resents
 This waste power of the lawless elements.
 Here with a strife to make my spirit ascend
 Above itself. From these their prey to rend,
 Here to win conquests, were a victory true.
 Here would I combat, these would I subdue!

And it is possible; at full flood still
 The wave bends, yields, and winds round every hill.
 Even in its hour of most imperious will,
 Before each little sand-heap, lo! it shrinks,
 And into any tiny hollow sinks.

This when I saw, a sudden project ran
 Crossing my brain, and plan came after plan.
 Methought it were a joyous thing, could we
 Force from the shore the domineering sea;
 To narrower bounds the moist expanse restrain,
 And crush far off into itself the main.
 From step to step I've thought out the design;
 This is my wish, to further it be thine!

[Drums are heard from behind on the right]

Meph. How easy 'tis!—Hear you the drums afar?

Faust. What?—war? The prudent has no love for war.

Meph. Why, war or peace, the prudent man still sees
 In all that comes but opportunities.
 We plan, watch, catch each favouring chance, and, now,
 Such smiles, or never—Faust, seize it thou!

Faust. Speak out at once; spare me this riddling stuff.

Meph. I saw it long ago, and plain enough.
 The kind good Emperor is perplexed with care.
 You know him. You remember when we were
 Amusing him. Into his hand we played
 False riches; and the show of riches made
 All seem as nothing to him. The effect
 Was self-indulgence, indolence, neglect.
 Young to the throne he came, and he thought good
 To reason 'gainst all reason, and conclude
 That 'twas not out and out impossible

But Power and Pleasure might together dwell ;
 And thus, that it was his prerogative
 To rule a kingdom and at ease to live.

Faust. A grievous error. None can both unite.
 To rule must be the ruler's sole delight.
 If high resolves and fixed his bosom fill,
 Yet none may look into that sovereign will.
 Scarce to the trustiest breathes he his intent
 In the close ear : accomplished, the event
 Startles the world into astonishment.
 The ruler's power still rests on what first made
 Man's power to rule. Indulgences degrade.
 Ruler o'er men must never cease to be
 Man highest, worthiest.

Meph. No such man is he.
 Oh ! what a life of luxury was his !
 With the realm falling by no slow degrees
 To anarchy, still the prince takes his ease.
 Everywhere, high and low, each warred with other ;
 'Twas brother plundering, chasing, slaughtering brother.
 Castles with castles, towns with towns pursued,
 And guilds with nobles—an eternal feud.
 Chapter and churchman against bishop rose ;
 Men looked but on each other and were foes.
 Merchants and travellers at the very gates
 Of cities lost, and none to tell their fates.
 Life—to such daring heights had rapine gone—
 Was but defensive war. So things moved on.

Faust. Say you moved on ? They staggered, limped,
 fell, rose,
 And stumbled and rolled helpless down. Sad close !

Meph. And such a state of things need no one blame.
 Each had his chance of winning in the game ;
 Each wished to be a somebody, and each
 The object of his wishes now might reach.
 Boys would be men, and sober men went mad.
 At last the thing was felt to be too bad :
 The better classes, that, too long inert
 Had slumbered, rose this evil to avert,
 Determined that such state of things should cease ;
 Let him be Lord, they say, who gives us Peace.
 The Emperor cannot, will not. Choose we then
 A ruler. Let another Emperor reign,

Make each man's rights secure, and animate,
As with a better soul, the sinking State,
Till renovated Earth see blessings spread
From land to land, and Peace with Justice wed.

Faust. This has a priestlike twang.

Meph. Aye, priests they were;
The well-fed belly made they their prime care.
Aye—insurrection was their interest.
The people rose, the priests the rising blest;
And now our Emperor—our old friend whom
We so amused and rendered happy—is come,
Perhaps, to his last battle-field.

Faust. I grieve
For him—so good, so open-hearted.

Meph. We have
An eye to him. While there is life there is
Hope. But first let us get him out of this.
He is caught and caged here in the narrow valley.
Saved once is saved for ever. My advice
Is, never give up. Who knows what on the dice—
Turn but the luck, and friends around him rally.

*[They ascend the middle range of mountains, and view
the arrangement of the army in the valley. Trum-
pets and warlike music from below]*

Meph. Well chosen the position is.
We join. The victory is his.

Faust. We?—join?—What there to do?—Repeat
Illusion? Sleight of hand? Deceit?

Meph. Aye—stratagems of war to gain
A battle and your ends obtain.
Be wide awake. You save his throne
And kingdom for the Emperor.
Kneel down, are granted as your own,
In feudal right, the boundless shore.

Faust. You have seen much in your time.—Win a battle
now.

Meph. No; you will. Generalissimo art thou
On this occasion.

Faust. I command? You flatter.
Command? Why, I know nothing of the matter—
Am in the art of war a very novice.

Meph. Not the worse General. Assume the office;
Let the Staff think for you, and the General

Is safe. For some short time back, I could snuff
 War in the wind, and saw what must befall.
 I've formed a military council of
 The original elemental mountain stuff
 Of the primitive mountain-man, in the unmixed power
 Of his rude natural self. Fortunate he,
 Who scrapes together, in a lucky hour,
 Such customers!

Faust. But who are those I see
 Yonder, and bearing arms? Thou hast, I trow,
 Roused all the mountaineers up?

Meph. Not quite so;
 But in the manner of Herr Peter Squenze,
 Of all the rubbish there the quintessence.

Enter "THE THREE MIGHTY MEN," MEPHISTOPHELES'
Bullies

Meph. My fellows now are drawing near—in age, arms,
 clothing
 Differing—the rascals are alike in nothing;—
 And, though I say it, who should not have said it,
 They are the very boys to do me credit.
 [To the audience]. There's not a child on earth but
 loves

Gorget, and greaves, and gauntlet-gloves;
 And though the rags be allegorical,
 Yet will they be the better liked by all.

Bully [a youth, gaily dressed, lightly armed].
 Look straight into my eyes;—aye, if you dare!
 Into your jaws, my lad, I thrust my fist;
 And if you run away, 'tis I that twist
 My hand into the flying coward's hair.

Havequick [a man, well-armed, richly dressed].
 In blows and bluster time's but thrown away—
 Plunder's the word, and Pillage. Beg, steal, borrow.
 I make my own of all I find to-day,
 And for a fresh instalment call to-morrow.

Holdfast [an old man, in armour, otherwise naked].
 But little is in that way won—
 "Easily got, easily gone!"
 To take's not bad; but to hold fast
 Is the one way to make it last.

The old man's hand is very slow
 What it once clutches to let go ;
 And my advice is, getting all you can,
 Give it to keep for you to the old man.

[All descend to lower ground

II

ON THE HEADLAND

Drums and warlike music from beneath. The EMPEROR'S tent

EMPEROR. GENERAL IN COMMAND. LIFE-GUARDSMEN

General. Placed as we were, we could not risk attack :
 Our plan of leading the whole army back
 To this convenient ground was duly weighed.
 I have good hope the choice will turn out well.

Emperor. That's as it may be. The event will tell.
 But I dislike this yielding—this half flight.

Gen. Prince, only cast your eyes upon the right.
 Could we idealise the thought of war,
 This would appear the very station for
 Our army. Sloping hills, to hostile powers
 A check ; and a protecting wall to ours ;
 Half by the undulating plain concealed.—
 No cavalry will venture up that field.

Emp. I can but praise. Along that gentle slope
 Our soldiers' genius will have ample scope.

Gen. In front on the flat meadows see you there
 Our phalanx burning for the fight ? The gleam
 Of pikes and lances glimmers through the air,
 In sunlight o'er the morning's breezy steam.
 Now glooms the mighty square in the wavering light
 Of the fresh dawn ; thousands there all aglow
 For the coming action ! Prince, this is a sight
 The power of multitudes in mass to show ;
 On them I reckon with no doubtful hope,
 The enemy's lines to scatter and break up.

Emp. Never before was it my chance to see

The brilliant sight: thus ranged, it seems to me,
The army's strength must more than doubled be.

Gen. Sire, of our left I need say nothing now;
Stout heroes occupy the steep crag's brow,
And bright with gleaming arms the rocky pile
Guards the close entrance of the deep defile.
There will the foe seek first to force their way.
—Raw in the bloody game of battle they,
And, broken there, will fall an easy prey.

Emp. There march my lying kinsfolk! There they go!
See, uncles, cousins, brothers, join the foe.
In arms against us;—they, who robbed the throne
Of everything; made everything their own;
Deprived, encroaching more and more each hour,
The Crown of honour, and the Sword of power.
Their discord made the kingdom desolate;
Their union is a plot against the State.
The wavering crowd, unknowing right or wrong,
Where the stream hurries them are borne along.

Gen. A faithful man, for information sent,
Runs down the rocks—I trust for good event.

First Spy. Safely went we up the country,
Safely back have made our way,
And but little favourable
Of our mission can we say.
Many proffered thee allegiance,
But they added, things were then
Such, that, for their own protection,
They must keep at home their men.

Emp. Self-seekers, they! the doctrine of that sect
Rests not on friendship, gratitude, respect.
A neighbour's house on fire, self-interest
Some danger to their own might well suggest.

Gen. The second comes. He moves down heavily,
Every limb shaking—weary man is he.

Second Spy. Unarranged and undirected
First we found the outbreak's course—
On a sudden a new Emperor
Starts up—leads the rebel force.
Now 'tis plan and pre-arrangement—
Crowds behind his banner sweep,
And their leader they all follow—
Follow, as sheep follows sheep.

Emp. He comes, this rival Emperor! Welcome be
 His coming!—this is glorious gain for me.
 Now for the first time am I Emperor!
 Never till now was life worth living for!
 Only as soldier armed I breast and brow—
 Buckler and helm have higher purpose now:
 At every fête, however bright and fair,
 One thing I missed—the danger absent there.
 You said, “With the safe ring-game be content;”
 My blood leaped—I breathed lance and tournament.
 Had you not held me back from arms, ’twere mine
 Ere now in high heroic deeds to shine.
 When mirrored in the realm of fire I stood,
 What self-reliance then! what fortitude!
 Against me pressed the elemental glow—
 A show, in seeming, but a glorious show—
 In turbid dreams of fame and victory won
 I have lived too long. Be, what I dreamed of, done!

[*Heralds are sent with a challenge to the Rival*
 EMPEROR

Enter FAUST (in armour, with half-closed helmet). The
 “THREE MIGHTY MEN,” *armed and clothed as before*
described

Faust. We come, I trust unblamed. Precaution here
 Can do no harm, though needless it appear.
 A thoughtful and imaginative race
 High in the mountains have their dwelling-place,
 And secrets strange the rocks to them have shown,
 By Nature traced in cyphers of her own.
 Spirits, that long have left the lowlands, still
 Cling even more fondly to the lonely hill.
 ’Mong labyrinthine chasms, where in rich wreaths
 Of noble gas metallic fragrance breathes,
 In silence there, they sort, and sift, and sever,
 Combine, create, and seek the new for ever.
 With soft and silent hand of gentlest power
 —The strength serene of mind’s creative hour—
 Build swiftly up transparent shapes, and see
 In crystal and its calm eternity,
 As in a waveless mirror, imaged forth
 The stirrings of the agitated earth.

Emp. This have I heard, and can suppose to be,
But of what moment is it, friend, to me?

Faust. The Norcian necromancer guards thee now,
In him a fast and faithful friend hast thou.

Have you no recollection of the day
When 'mid the brush-wood crackling near, he lay,
And tongues of fire were panting for their prey?
Round the poor Sabine dry twigs heaped, and fixed
Between them, sulphur-rods and pitch were mixed.
Hope none in man, or god, or devil, remains—
You, with your mandate, burst the burning chains.
This was at Rome, and pledged since then to thee,
No other thought, no other care hath he.
He watches still the safety of thy throne:
Explores the stars, the depths, for thee alone.
For this he bade us hither speed. Strange might
Dwells in the mountains. Nature infinite
Works there, is all in all, fearless and free.
This is what stupid priests call sorcery!

Emp. On festal day, when to the palace proud,
Guest pours on guest, and courtiers courtiers crowd,
We greet with joy the thousands that pour in,
Smiles round them to diffuse and smiles to win;
But higher welcome give we to the brave
Who, when above us ominously wave
The scales of Destiny, and ills impend,
In that disastrous twilight comes—a friend.
Yet, in this lofty moment, be implored,
Draw back the strong hand from the eager sword:
The awful moment, the dread *now* revere,
For or against me arming thousands here.
Man's self is man, and his be crown and throne,
Whose title is by higher prowess shown;
And be the spectre that defying stands,
Calls himself "Emperor," "Liege Lord of our Lands,"
"Duke of the Army," and would seize our crown,
With my own hand back to his hell thrust down!

Faust. Great though the gain were, glorious though the
strife,

It is not for the Prince to peril life.
Shines not the helm with crest and plumage gay?
It guards the head, the spirit's strength, and stay.
What without head were limbs? Should it repose,

They sink in languor down and with it doze ;
 If it be wounded, they will sympathize ;
 Restore its health, and they in vigour rise ;
 The arm's strong right the arm is swift to wield,
 And lifts to screen the skull a ready shield ;
 Well doth the eager sword its duty know,
 Wards strongly off, and then returns the blow ;
 The foot is happy too to aid the head,
 And, stamping on his neck, treads down the dead.

Emp. You speak my passionate mind ; so would I
 treat

His proud head, trampling it beneath my feet.

[HERALDS, who have been sent with the EMPEROR'S
 challenge to the Rival EMPEROR, return

Her. Little profit, less of honour,
 Did you from our mission gain ;
 They received your noble challenge
 With derision and disdain.

“ Like the valley's feeble echo,
 Faint your Emperor's voice of power ;
 But in village tales remembered,
 ‘ There was once an emperor.’ ”

Faust [to the EMPEROR]. Beside thee stands a firm and
 faithful host,
 And what has happened is what they wished most.
 The foe draws near ; with burning ardour, thine
 Wait but the word for onset. Give the sign—
 Now is the fortunate moment.

Emp. [to the GENERAL]. To command
 I yield all claim, and, Prince, into thy hand
 That duty do I give.

Gen. Then, march on, right !
 The foeman's left, that now ascends the hill,
 Before our young men's loyal ardour will
 Be soon dashed back in ignominious flight.

Faust [pointing to the Mighty Man on the right].
 Permit this merry fellow, then,
 To mix himself among your men ;
 His spirit its own zeal will give
 To all your soldiers, in them live.

Bully [coming forward]. If they dare to look at me with
 face unabashed,
 Their cheeks shall be shattered, their jawbones be smashed.

The scoundrel that turns his back to escape,
Shall have head and scalp dangling down neck and down
nape.

[Sings]. "Like me if thy soldiers the enemy drub,
As I dash on in fury with sabre and club,
Man by man shall they fall to the ground:
Man by man in their own blood drowned!" [Exit

Gen. The phalanx of the centre follow slow!
And in full force deliberate meet the foe!
—Already to the right there's shrinking back,
Their plan is all deranged by our attack.

Faust [pointing to the middle one].
Permit this man of mine, too, to obey
Your orders; and work with you through the day.

Havequick [comes forward, singing out].
"In the Emperor's army true soldier is Courage,
And helpers good are Plunder and Forage.
Let Forage and Plunder and Courage too
Keep the mock Emperor's tent in view!
We'll strip it clean when the rascal's gone;
I'll head the phalanx and lead it on."

Speedbooty [sutler-woman, sidling up to HAVEQUICK].
He with me did never wive—
For this we two the fonder thrive.

[Sings]. "The harvest-crop is heavy and ripe,
We gather it in, and grasp and gripe.
Woman works well in rapine and ravage,
For her eye is fierce and her heart is savage.
Win the day, and to woman abandon
Everything that she can lay hand on!"

[Exeunt both]

Gen. Upon our left, as I expected,
Their right is in full force directed.
But man to man, oh! with what rage
Among the rocks they now engage,
To win the pass, and to defend.

Faust [beckons to the Mighty Man on the left].
Sir, may I ask you to attend
To this man?—see his powerful arm:
Add strength to strength. 'Twill do no harm.

Holdfast. For the left wing take thou no care—
'Tis safe enough while I am there.

[Sings]. "To hold his own let the old man alone:

What he has he is sure to keep for ever.
 Once in his clutch, be it little or much,
 Not the lightning-flash from his hand can sever." [Exit
Meph. [coming from above]. Leaning forward in the dis-
 tance,

From each jagged rocky gorge,
 Weaponed men for bold resistance,
 Hither seem their way to urge.
 Swords they wield; and helm and shield,
 Behind us frown a dense dead wall:
 All waiting for the wink of the director
 Upon the foe to fall.

[*Aside, to the knowing ones*
 Now, as to where they come from, one and all,
 Ask me no questions, and—Yet 'twere as well you
 Knew it. Then keep the secret, and I'll tell you.
 I have lost no time in the matter. I have taken
 My officers from armour-halls forsaken,
 Have cleaned out corridors and chambers dusty
 Of their old iron warriors dim and rusty,
 Where—horse and foot—in the proud attitude
 Of rulers, lording it o'er earth, they stood.
 Once were they knights, kings, emperors in their mail-
 shells,

And now are nothing more than empty snail-shells.
 I'll tell you another secret. Many a spectre
 Hath got into these spoils of old-world strife,
 Acting the mediæval to the life.

Some tiny devil-fry have for the nonce
 Stuck themselves in—I hope 'twill do for once.
 [*Aloud*]. Hark! how they clink and clatter—with what
 pother

The tin-plates dash, clash, crash on one another!
 Banners round banner-staffs are flapping free,
 That for the air of earth had longed impatiently.
 Look well on them—would it not seem to be,
 A people of old-times in war-array,
 Uprisen to mingle in this modern fray?

[*Fearful trumpet-sounds from above; the enemy waver*
Faust. The whole horizon darkles,
 Save for a red and boding light
 Portentously that sparkles.
 Stained as with blood are sword and spear;

And wood, and rock, and atmosphere,
And heaven, and earth, are mingling in the fight.

Meph. The right flank's holding firm: the giant frame
Of the Bully there works out his bloody game.

Emp. I saw *one* arm uplifted; as I gazed
Twelve were distinctly by one impulse raised.
This cannot sure be natural or right?

Faust. Think of the cloud-streaks floating by the sea,
In dawnlight, on the coasts of Sicily;
Where mists peculiar give to all men's sight,
Raised midway above earth, and mirrored bright
—Strange apparition—cities to and fro
Waving, and gardens rising, sinking there,
As picture after picture breaks the air.

Emp. The thing looks doubtful and suspicious, though.
See you not lightnings from the spear-tops play?
And of our phalanx, how on every lance,
Along its bright edge flamelets glide and glance?
Spirits, I fear.

Faust. Sire! suffer me to say,
Of spirit-natures—natures passed away—
You see the trace. The Dioscuri here,
Familiar friends, to every seaman dear,
Propitious meteors, a last parting ray
Flash ere they vanish. These are friendly gleams.

Emp. But why should I be thus among the dreams
Of guardian Nature?—have for my own share
This gathering of all things odd and rare?
To whom is all this due?

Meph. To him alone,
The mighty Master—him, who to his own
Prefers thy safety—bears thee in his heart;
His is true gratitude, and his the art
That bids the marvels of all Nature rise,
To pour confusion on thy enemies.

Emp. [*thoughtfully*]. They led me forth in state—and
round me pressed
Crowds in congratulation and applause.
I now was something, and I wished to test
To my own self the something that I was;
And so it happened, without much thought, that there
I chose to exert my high prerogative,
And bade on that white beard the cool fresh air

To breathe once more—in mercy bade him live.
 Thus for the priests I spoiled their holiday,
 And little love since then for me have they.
 And—can it be, that after many a year
 Fruits of such accidental act appear?

Faust. The impulse of a generous breast
 In kind act unawares expressed
 Brings rich reward of interest.
 Look up to the sky. If rightly I divine,
 He sends us an intelligible sign.

Emp. An Eagle sweeps through heaven's blue height:
 A threatening Griffin dogs his flight.

Faust. Attend! the sign is favourable.

Seen in the light of the Ideal,
 The Griffin monster is—a fable;

Thy type—the royal bird—is real.

Emp. Now, in widespread circles see them,
 In the air wheel round and round:

Darting now at one another,

Head and neck, and breast, they wound.

Faust. Rascal Griffin! see him! hear him,
 Tugged and torn, with wail and shriek,

Now to save his lion-carcass,

The high tree-top's refuge seek.

Emp. Would all were, as I behold it

In this symbol strange unfolded!

Meph. [*towards the right*]. To our strokes, poured thick
 and fast,

Must the foeman yield at last;

In the wavering, doubtful fight,

Down they press upon their right,

And their army's left the foes,

Weak and straggling, thus expose.

See! its point our phalanx bring

To the right, and on the wing

Pour its lightnings. Now like ocean

Tossed with storm, both hosts rage on—

Wilder is the strife of armies.

Well devised our plan of battle!

We the victory have won!

Emp. [*to FAUST on the left*]. Are we not in danger yonder?

Look! must not the pass be taken?
 No stones flying to defend it.
 The crags below are now ascended,
 And the rocks above forsaken.
 See the foe, a solid mass,
 Nearer, ever nearer, pressing!
 Now, methinks, they force the pass.

Sad results of arts unholy!
 Oh this magic hath no blessing!

[Pause. Two ravens appear

Meph. My two ravens come to me!
 What may now their message be?
 I fear me, it goes ill with us.

Emp. Loathsome birds! still ominous
 Of evil! Wherefore do they steer
 With black sails hither, from the shock
 Of warring men on yonder rock?
 —Evil-boding birds! Why here?

Meph. [to the RAVENS]. Come to me nearer, yet more
 near;
 Come, take your seats, one at each ear;
 Whom you protect need feel no fear—
 Your counsel is so shrewd and clear;
 And the event is still what you predict.

Faust [to the EMPEROR]. Have you not heard of doves
 that come
 From far lands to their brood, their home?
 Like them, our ravens here. No doubt
 There is a difference. The dove
 Brings embassies of peace and love.
 War has its ravens to send out.

Meph. And now the message tells of our distress.
 See round the rampart rock how foemen press!
 The heights are theirs! and, could they gain
 The pass, to guard the rock were vain.

Emp. So I am trapped by you at last,
 Caught in the net around me cast;
 I shuddered from the hour you came.

Meph. Courage, we yet may win the game—
 It is not yet played out: the luck
 May turn—have patience—keep up pluck.

The hardest tug is just before
 The moment that the fight is o'er.
 I've trusty messengers to send
 For aid on which we may depend ;
 Give me your order for it, and
 Command me that I may command.

Gen. [*who has in the meantime come up*]. You have allied
 yourself with these strange men ;
 Through the whole time it has been giving me pain.
 No lasting good comes of these juggling tricks ;
 I don't see why I should at this stage mix
 Myself up with them—I see nothing, in
 Which I could now aid. You let them begin
 The battle ; they may end it. I give back
 The staff to you.

Emp. Keep it for better hours,
 That fortune may have yet in store for us.
 I shudder, thinking of the villainous
 Fellow, and his intimacy with those black
 Foul carrion birds, his privy counsellors.
 [*To MEPHISTOPHELES*]. Give you the baton ? that would
 scarcely do !—

For it, I fancy, you're not just the man ;
 But make your orders. Do the best you can
 For us. My whole dependence is on you.
 [*Exit with GENERAL*]

MEPHISTOPHELES. FAUST

Mephistopheles. The stupid piece of stick !—much good
 may it do him,
 Give power and honour and protection to him !
 Something of a cris-cross was on the baton,
 But little luck 'twould bring to us with that on.

Faust. What is to do ?

Meph. Just nothing. All is done.
 [*Addresses the Ravens*]. Swart serviceable cousins, good at
 need,

To the great lake among the mountains speed !
 Greet the Undines in their solitudes,
 And beg from them a show of phantom floods
 Perfect illusion this. Through female art
 What is, from what makes it so seem, they part.

How they do this is difficult to tell—

Women such secrets as they wish, keep well! [Pause

Faust. Why, our black friends, to judge by the event,

Can flatter ladies to their hearts' content;

Your cousins must have more than courtier's skill,

So soon to win the women to their will.

Already, see! 'tis dripping, drizzling down,

And now from many a tall rock's dry bald crown,

The full free waters rapidly gush out.

All's over with their victory, not a doubt.

Meph. Strange greeting this! What will come next?
The boldest climbers are perplexed.

Faust. Already gurgling hill-top springs unite
With the strong rush of waters from below.

Now swell they to a river bold and bright,

Now, o'er the smooth rock spread in widening flow,

Race down its sides in thousand threads of light:

Precipitated thence with foam and flash,

From ledge to ledge into the valley dash.

Where now the hero's strength? where shield or
helm?

Down come the waters wild, o'erpower, o'erwhelm.

Even I—I cannot see unterrified

The inundation spreading far and wide.

Meph. I can see none of these same water-lies,

They are deceptions but for human eyes.

I am amused at the confusion

Rising from a mere illusion—

Idiots rushing helter-skelter,

Deeming waves above them welter:

From a death by water shrinking,

Kicking, plunging, shrieking, sinking.

Hear them snorting, puffing, blowing!—

All is up with them—they're going.

A droll mistake—men absolutely drowned,

Or swimming hard for life, on the dry ground.

[*The Ravens return*

To the high Master I will sound your praise.

Now for the crowning feat—come, no delays!

Now—now for our last master-stroke. Off with ye

To the dwarf people—oif to the far smithy,

Where with unwearied toil 'mong mines unknown,

They pound to sparkling glitter steel or stone.
 Some of their fire we want—coax, chaffer, chatter,
 Get it—if got, how got is little matter.
 Fire that will glitter, blaze, and run, and scatter—
 Fire such as earth has seldom seen or can see—
 Fire such as I have felt and men may fancy.

Mere lightning-flashes no doubt are
 Seen often in the sky afar.
 The sparkle of a shooting star
 May chance on any summer night ;
 But stars that hiss on the damp ground,
 Lightnings on tangled bushes found,
 Are sure no common sight. [Exeunt Ravens

[All is done as described.]

Meph. Darkness thick upon the foemen—
 Wandering fires of doubtful omen—
 Steps, that know not where to light,
 In the misdirecting night—
 Lightning flashes everywhere
 Blinding with their sudden glare.
 So far the effect is marvellously fine,
 And now for music in the terror-line.

Faust. The hollow spoils of the old armories
 Are all alive and active in the breeze.
 There they go bang,
 Clatter and clang.
 Clash of diabolic glee,
 Dissonant exceedingly.

Meph. Now that they are at it, see if it be feasible
 To stop 'em ! Now for knightly knocks and
 blows !
 Together in right earnest now they close.
 The fights of the old glorious days renewed :
 Gauntlets and steel sheaths for the shins
 Fighting like Guelphs and Ghibellines
 In the eternal unsubduing feud,
 Hereditary—unappeasable.

At every devil's-festival
 Works Party-spirit best of all.
 The never-ending Hate, that still begins,
 Heard o'er war-shout, rout and rally—

Harsh, malignant, sharp, satanic,
 Scattering terror, horror, panic,
 Down the hill-slope—through the valley.

[*War tumult in the orchestra—at last passing
 into clear military music*

III

THE RIVAL EMPEROR'S TENT

THRONE. RICH FURNITURE

HAVEQUICK. SPEEDBOOTY

Speedbooty. We're first then from the field of fight.

Hav. Aye, swift as any raven's flight.

Speed. What treasure-heaps are here to win!

Where shall we finish? where begin?

Hav. There's so much everywhere to catch;

I know not what I first shall snatch.

Speed. This tapestry will match me quite,

My bed's so cold and hard at night.

Hav. A steel club hanging from the shelf.

—I've long been wishing one myself.

Speed. A long red robe with golden seams!

—Like one I've often seen in dreams.

Hav. [*taking the weapon which he refers to*].

With this a man's business soon is done—

Knock him down dead—and then move on

You've been picking up so much

Mere rags! how could you think of such?

Throw all this rubbish out again;

Have at the pay-chest of the men!

Speed. It is too heavy; I have got

No strength to lift it from the spot.

Hav. Duck down there—lose no time—I'll pack

And bundle it upon your back.

Speed. What pain! I hear my sinews crack;

The heavy load will break my back.

[*The chest falls and springs open*

Hav. See there! a heap of red gold lies—

Swift to it! sweep away the prize.

Speed. [*stoops down*]. Into my lap, aye! throw it swift.

With what we've got we'll make a shift.

Hav. Now you've enough—away with you!

[*SPEEDBOOTY stands up*

Your apron's torn—the coins drop through.

Where'er you go, and where you stand,

You're sowing gold-seed o'er the land.

Enter GUARDSMEN of the Emperor

Guardsmen. What! here upon this holy ground!

Pillaging Cæsar's treasure found!

Hav. We lavished life and limb in fight.

To share the booty is our right;

'Tis prize of war—our custom'd due—

Remember, we are soldiers too.

Guar. Soldiers!—scarce so in our belief.

Soldiers! what, soldier too and thief!

None near our Emperor's person dear,

But honest soldiers suffered here!

Hav. Pillage with us may be the name—

Yours, contribution—'tis the same;

On others' means alike we live,

'Tis all one trade—'tis "give," still "give."

[*To SPEEDBOOTY*]. Off with your booty!—off—keep clear
Of these folks—we've no welcome here.

[*Exeunt HAVEQUICK and SPEEDBOOTY*

1st Guar. You did not hit him going out:

The rascal! What were you about?

2nd Guar. I do not know—all strength forsook

My arm; so spectral was their look.

3rd Guar. A something bad came o'er my sight;

It glimmered—I saw nothing right.

4th Guar. For my part, I do not know what

To say—the whole day was so hot.

Such clinging heat, so terrible:

And this one stood, and that one fell.

On groped we, hitting at the foe,

A man was down at every blow.

My ear hummed, hissed, whizzed, and there was

Before my eyes a wavering gauze.

And on it went; and here are we,

And know not how it came to be.

[*Exeunt*

EMPEROR. PRINCES. CHANCELLOR

Enter the EMPEROR and four PRINCES

Emp. Well, be it as it may be, then the day at last is ours,
 In hurried flight the scattered foe along the lowland pours.
 Here stands the traitor's empty throne, with tapestry
 hung round ;
 The Rival Emperor's treasure see, where it usurps the
 ground.
 And here in honoured pomp we stand, guarded by our
 own bands,
 The Emperor, waiting to receive the envoys of his lands.
 From all sides happy tidings come—the people's discords
 cease,
 Everywhere exultation is—the Empire all at peace.
 And if it be that in our aid the arts of magic wrought,
 Yet we it was, and only we, in very truth that fought.
 The chances of the hour must still in battle's scale be
 thrown ;
 From heaven there falls a shower of blood, from heaven
 a meteor-stone—
 Strange sounds from rocky caverns rise. Our swelling
 hearts rejoice.
 The enemy is smit with fear by that portentous voice.
 The conquered lasting scorn abides ; the happy victor
 boasts,
 And praises in his hour of pride the favouring God of
 hosts ;
 All voices now chime in with him, there needs no mandate
 —“ Lord,
We give Thee thanks, we praise Thee,” is from thousand
 throats outpoured.
 Then comes, alas ! and not till then, the better hour apart,
 When, all alone, the conqueror looks in on his own heart.
 A youthful prince will waste his day, misled by mirth
 and power—
 Years come, and then we feel the deep importance of the
 hour.
 Therefore, delaying not the act, will I now bind me down,
 With you four worthies, evermore for household, court,
 and crown.

[*To the first*]. The army's well-placed station, Prince, hath tested well thy skill,
And, in the crisis of the day, thine was the guiding will ;
Work, therefore, as befits the time, when peace is now restored,

Hereditary Marshal, rise—to thee I give the sword.

Hereditary Marshal. Now in the centre of the realm the army's faith is shown,
Soon at the Empire's bounds to guard thy person and thy throne.

When thy paternal town is thronged at splendid festival,
Then be it granted me to range the banquet in the hall.
Before thee bear I the bright sword, or hold it up beside
Thy princely steps—the bright sword still in peace or war
thy pride !

Emp. [to the second]. Thou who high courtesy with valour dost unite,
High Chamberlain be thou—the duties are not light.
First be thou of all the servants of the household—over all :

Sorry servants do I find them, evermore in strife and brawl.

Now in this high post of honour let thy fair example teach
Honour meet to lord and subject—courtesy to all and each.

High Chamberlain. Thy high thought to express in act,
and show with fitting grace
Distinction ever to the best—forbearance to the base ;
Without one touch of seeming show or shadow of disguise—
Type of the Emperor's dignity to move in all men's eyes,
The heart within at peace, and thus diffusing its own calm,
And Cæsar's presence, who approves and knows me as I am—

High boon is this ; but on bold wing should Fancy, far away,

Move onward to that feast of feasts, that long-expected day :

When thou goest to the table, the lordly ewer of gold
I reach to thee—and in that hour for thee the rings I hold,
When the imperial hand would seek refreshment and delight,

Rejoicing in the water, as I gladden in thy sight.

Emp. Too serious cares unfit me now for all festivity ;
But to begin with cheerfulness is best—so let it be.

[*To the third*]. Thee I choose as the Chief Butler, and from henceforth unto thee,
Chase, and poultry-yard, and homestead, farm, and farm-yard subject be,
To myself the choice reserving of such dish as I love best ;
As each month in its succession brings them. See them fitly drest.

Chief Butler. Fasting strict be mine for ever, till before my lord is placed,
Each month, in its due succession still, the dish that meets his taste.

All whose service is in kitchen shall with me in union here,
Still anticipate the seasons — make the distant climate near ;

But thy simple tastes are better pleased by meats that strengthening are,
Than by those before their season forced, or hither brought from far.

Emp. [to the fourth]. As ordering of feasts must now our only topic be,
Young hero, into Cupbearer I metamorphose thee.
Chief Cupbearer from this day forth, an anxious duty thine,
That richly stored our cellar be with best of generous wine ;
But thine own course in festive hour still temperately steer,
Nor tempted be to overstep the bounds of sober cheer.

Cupbearer. Youth, Prince—if you in youth full confidence repose—
To manhood's strength and stature in a moment grows ;
And such great change shall this high office work in me,
To bear me meetly when that feast of crowning joy shall be.
Then shall the Emperor's buffet shine with silver and with gold,

From cups and vases glittering there in splendour manifold ;
But for thyself shall I select the brightest cup and best :
The Venice glass that virtue hath unknown to all the rest.
Joy lurks in the bright Venice glass that in the wine creates
A finer flavour ; thus it cheers and not inebriates.
In such a treasure as this cup one may too much confide :
Prince ! your own temperance is still a safer guard and guide.

Emp. These gifts, in seriousness conferred, the Emperor's word makes sure ;