

Your medicine's soundness in his person. Wait,  
Good Pütter!

*Festus.* He who sneers thus, is a God!

*Paracelsus.* Ay, ay, laugh at me! I am very glad  
You are not gulled by all this swaggering; you  
Can see the root of the matter!—how I strive  
To put a good face on the overthrow  
I have experienced, and to bury and hide  
My degradation in its length and breadth;  
How the mean motives I would make you think  
Just mingle as is due with nobler aims,  
The appetites I modestly allow  
May influence me—as I am mortal still—  
Do goad me, drive me on, and fast supplant  
My youth's desires: you are no stupid dupe;  
You find me out! Yes, I had sent for you  
To palm these childish lies upon you, Festus!  
Laugh—you shall laugh at me!

*Festus.* The past, then, Aureole,  
Proves nothing? Is our interchange of love  
Yet to begin? Have I to swear I mean  
No flattery in this speech or that? For you,  
Whate'er you say, there is no degradation,  
These low thoughts are no inmates of your mind;  
Or wherefore this disorder? You are vexed  
As much by the intrusion of base views,  
Familiar to your adversaries, as they  
Were troubled should your qualities alight  
Amid their murky souls: not otherwise,  
A stray wolf which the winter forces down  
From our bleak hills, suffices to affright  
A village in the vales—while foresters  
Sleep calm though all night long the famished troops  
Snuff round and scratch against their crazy huts:  
These evil thoughts are monsters, and will flee.

*Paracelsus.* May you be happy, Festus, my own friend!

*Festus.* Nay, further; the delights you fain would think  
The superseders of your nobler aims,  
Though ordinary and harmless stimulants,  
Will ne'er content you . . .

*Paracelsus.* Hush! I once despised them,  
But that soon passes: we are high at first  
In our demands, nor will abate a jot  
Of toil's strict value; but time passes o'er,  
And humbler spirits accept what we refuse;  
In short, when some such comfort is doled out  
As these delights, we cannot long retain  
The bitter contempt which urges us at first  
To hurl it back, but hug it to our breast

And thankfully retire. This life of mine  
Must be lived out, and a grave thoroughly earned :  
I am just fit for that and nought beside.  
I told you once, I cannot now Enjoy,  
Unless I deem my knowledge gains through joy ;  
Nor can I Know, but straight warm tears reveal  
My need of linking also joy to knowledge :  
So on I drive—enjoying all I can,  
And knowing all I can. I speak, of course,  
Confusedly ; this will better explain—feel here !  
Quick beating, is it not ?—a fire of the heart  
To work off someway, this as well as any !  
So, Festus sees me fairly launched ; his calm  
Compassionate look might have disturbed me once,  
But now, far from rejecting, I invite  
What bids me press the closer, lay myself  
Open before him, and be soothed with pity ;  
And hope, if he command hope ; and believe  
As he directs me—satiating myself  
With his enduring love : and Festus quits me  
To give place to some credulous disciple  
Who holds that God is wise, but Paracelsus  
Has his peculiar merits. I suck in  
That homage, chuckle o'er that admiration,  
And then dismiss the fool ; for night is come,  
And I betake myself to study again,  
Till patient searchings after hidden lore  
Half wring some bright truth from its prison ; my frame  
Trembles, my forehead's veins swell out, my hair  
Tingles for triumph ! Slow and sure the morn  
Shall break on my pent room, and dwindling lamp,  
And furnace dead, and scattered earths and ores,  
When, with a failing heart and throbbing brow,  
I must review my captured truth, sum up  
Its value, trace what ends to what begins,  
Its present power with its eventual bearings,  
Latent affinities, the views it opens,  
And its full length in perfecting my scheme ;  
I view it sternly circumscribed, cast down  
From the high place my fond hopes yielded it,  
Proved worthless—which, in getting, yet had cost  
Another wrench to this fast-falling frame ;  
Then, quick, the cup to quaff, that chases sorrow  
I lapse back into youth, and take again  
Mere hopes of bliss for proofs that bliss will be,  
—My fluttering pulse, for evidence that God  
Means good to me, will make my cause his own ;  
See ! I have cast off this remorseless care  
Which clogged a spirit born to soar so free,

And my dim chamber has become a tent,  
 Festus is sitting by me, and his Michal . . .  
 Why do you start? I say, she listening here,  
 (For yonder's Würzburg through the orchard-boughs)  
 Motions as though such ardent words should find  
 No echo in a maiden's quiet soul,  
 But her pure bosom heaves, her eyes fill fast  
 With tears, her sweet lips tremble all the while!  
 Ha, ha!

*Festus.* It seems, then, you expect to reap  
 No unreal joy from this your present course,  
 But rather . . .

*Paracelsus.* Death! To die! I owe that much  
 To what, at least, I was. I should be sad  
 To live contented after such a fall—  
 To thrive and fatten after such reverse!  
 The whole plan is a makeshift, but will last  
 My time.

*Festus.* And you have never mused and said,  
 "I had a noble purpose, and full strength  
 "To compass it; but I have stopped half-way,  
 "And wrongly give the first fruits of my toil  
 "To objects little worthy of the gift:  
 "Why linger round them still? why clench my fault?  
 "Why seek for consolation in defeat—  
 "In vain endeavours to derive a beauty  
 "From ugliness? Why seek to make the most  
 "Of what no power can change, nor strive instead  
 "With mighty effort to redeem the past,  
 "And, gathering up the treasures thus cast down,  
 "To hold a steadfast course till I arrive  
 "At their fit destination, and my own?"  
 You have never pondered thus?

*Paracelsus.* Have I, you ask?  
 Often at midnight, when most fancies come,  
 Would some such airy project visit me:  
 But ever at the end . . . or will you hear  
 The same thing in a tale, a parable?  
 It cannot prove more tedious; listen then!  
 You and I, wandering over the world wide,  
 Chance to set foot upon a desert coast:  
 Just as we cry, "No human voice before  
 Broke the inveterate silence of these rocks!"  
 —Their querulous echo startles us; we turn:  
 What ravaged structure still looks o'er the sea?  
 Some characters remain, too! While we read,  
 The sharp, salt wind, impatient for the last  
 Of even this record, wistfully comes and goes,  
 Or sings what we recover, mocking it.

This is the record ; and my voice, the wind's.  
*[He sings.]*

Over the sea our galleys went,  
 With cleaving prows in order brave,  
 To a speeding wind and a bounding wave—

A gallant armament :  
 Each bark built out of a forest-tree,  
 Left leafy and rough as first it grew,  
 And nailed all over the gaping sides,  
 Within and without, with black-bull hides,  
 Seethed in fat and suppled in flame,  
 To bear the playful billows' game ;  
 So each good ship was rude to see,  
 Rude and bare to the outward view,

But each upbore a stately tent ;  
 Where cedar-pales in scented row  
 Kept out the flakes of the dancing brine :  
 And an awning drooped the mast below,  
 In fold on fold of the purple fine,  
 That neither noon-tide, nor star-shine,  
 Nor moonlight cold which maketh mad,  
 Might pierce the regal tenement.

When the sun dawned, oh, gay and glad  
 We set the sail and plied the oar ;  
 But when the night-wind blew like breath  
 For joy of one day's voyage more,  
 We sang together on the wide sea,  
 Like men at peace on a peaceful shore ;  
 Each sail was loosed to the wind so free,  
 Each helm made sure by the twilight star,  
 And in a sleep as calm as death,  
 We, the strangers from afar,

Lay stretched along, each weary crew  
 In a circle round its wondrous tent,  
 Whence gleamed soft light and curled rich scent,

And with light and perfume, music too :  
 So the stars wheeled round, and the darkness past,  
 And at morn we started beside the mast,  
 And still each ship was sailing fast !

One morn, the land appeared !—a speck  
 Dim trembling betwixt sea and sky—  
 Avoid it, cried our pilot, check

The shout, restrain the longing eye !  
 But the heaving sea was black behind  
 For many a night and many a day,  
 And land, though but a rock, drew nigh ;  
 So we broke the cedar pales away,  
 Let the purple awning flap in the wind,

And a statue bright was on every deck !  
 We shouted, every man of us,  
 And steered right into the harbour thus,  
 With pomp and pœan glorious.

An hundred shapes of lucid stone !  
 All day we built a shrine for each—  
 A shrine of rock for every one—  
 Nor paused we till in the westering sun  
 We sate together on the beach  
 To sing, because our task was done ;  
 When lo ! what shouts and merry songs !  
 What laughter all the distance stirs !  
 What raft comes loaded with its throngs  
 Of gentle islanders ?  
 “ The isles are just at hand,” they cried :  
 “ Like cloudlets faint at even sleeping,  
 “ Our temple-gates are opened wide,  
 “ Our olive-groves thick shade are keeping  
 “ For the lucid shapes you bring ”—they cried.  
 Oh, then we woke with sudden start  
 From our deep dream ; we knew, too late,  
 How bare the rock, how desolate,  
 To which we had flung our precious freight :  
 Yet we called out—“ Depart !  
 “ Our gifts, once given, must here abide :  
 “ Our work is done ; we have no heart  
 “ To mar our work, though vain ”—we cried.

*Festus.* In truth ?

*Paracelsus.* Nay, wait : all this in tracings faint  
 May still be read on that deserted rock,  
 On rugged stones, strewn here and there, but piled  
 In order once ; then follows—mark what follows—  
 “ The sad rhyme of the men who proudly clung  
 “ To their first fault, and withered in their pride ! ”

*Festus.* Come back, then, Aureole ; as you fear God, come !  
 This is foul sin ; come back : renounce the past,  
 Forswear the future : look for joy no more,  
 But wait death’s summons amid holy sights,  
 And trust me for the event—peace, if not joy !  
 Return with me to Einsiedeln, dear Aureole.

*Paracelsus.* No way, no way : it would not turn to good.  
 A spotless child sleeps on the flowering moss—  
 ’Tis well for him ; but when a sinful man,  
 Envyng such slumber, may desire to put  
 His guilt away, shall he return at once  
 To rest by lying there ? Our sires knew well  
 (Spite of the grave discoveries of their sons)

The fitting course for such ; dark cells, dim lamps,  
A stone floor one may writhe on like a worm ;  
No mossy pillow, blue with violets !

*Festus.* I see no symptom of these absolute  
And tyrannous passions. You are calmer now.  
This verse-making can purge you well enough,  
Without the terrible penance you describe.  
You love me still : the lusts you fear, will never  
Outrage your friend. To Einsiedeln, once more !  
Say but the word !

*Paracelsus.* No, no ; those lusts forbid :  
They crouch, I know, cowering with half-shut eye  
Beside you ; 'tis their nature. Thrust yourself  
Between them and their prey ; let some fool style me  
Or king or quack, it matters not, and try  
Your wisdom then, at urging their retreat !  
No, no ; learn better and look deeper, Festus !  
If you knew how a devil sneers within me  
While you are talking now of this, now that,  
As though we differed scarcely save in trifles !

*Festus.* Do we so differ ? True, change must pro-  
ceed,  
Whether for good or ill ; keep from me, which !  
God made you and knows what you may become—  
Do not confide all secrets : I was born  
To hope, and you . . .

*Paracelsus.* To trust : you know the fruits !

*Festus.* Listen : I do believe, what you call trust  
Was self-reliance at the best : for, see !  
So long as God would kindly pioneer  
A path for you, and screen you from the world,  
Procure you full exemption from man's lot,  
Man's common hopes and fears, on the mere pretext  
Of your engagement in his service—yield you  
A limitless license, make you God, in fact,  
And turn your slave—you were content to say  
Most courtly praises ! What is it, at last,  
But selfishness without example ? None  
Could trace God's will so plain as you, while yours  
Remained implied in it ; but now you fail,  
And we, who prate about that will, are fools !  
In short, God's service is established here  
As he determines fit, and not your way,  
And this you cannot brook ! Such discontent  
Is weak. Renounce all creatureship at once !  
Affirm an absolute right to have and use  
Your energies ; as though the rivers should say—  
“ We rush to the ocean ; what have we to do  
“ With feeding streamlets, lingering in the marshes,

“ Sleeping in lazy pools ? ” Set up that plea,  
That will be bold at least !

*Paracelsus.* Perhaps, perhaps !  
Your only serviceable spirits are those  
The east produces :—lo, the master nods,  
And they raise terraces, spread garden-grounds  
In one night's space ; and, this done, straight begin  
Another century's sleep, to the great praise  
Of him that framed them wise and beautiful,  
Till a lamp's rubbing, or some chance akin,  
Wake them again. I am of different mould.  
I would have soothed my lord, and slaved for him,  
And done him service past my narrow bond,  
And thus I get rewarded for my pains !  
Beside, 'tis vain to talk of forwarding  
God's glory otherwise ; this is alone  
The sphere of its increase, as far as men  
Increase it ; why, then, look beyond this sphere ?  
We are his glory ; and if we be glorious,  
Is not the thing achieved ?

*Festus.* Shall one like me  
Judge hearts like yours ? Though years have changed  
you much,

And you have left your first love, and retain  
Its empty shade to veil your crooked ways,  
Yet I still hold that you have honoured God ;  
And who shall call your course without reward ?  
For, wherefore this repining at defeat,  
Had triumph ne'er inured you to high hopes ?  
I urge you to forsake the life you curse,  
And what success attends me ?—simply talk  
Of passion, weakness, and remorse ; in short,  
Any thing but the naked truth : you choose  
This so-despised career, and rather praise  
Than take my happiness, or other men's.  
Once more, return !

*Paracelsus.* And soon. Oporinus  
Has pilfered half my secrets by this time :  
And we depart by day-break. I am weary,  
I know not how ; not even the wine-cup soothes  
My brain to-night . . .  
Do you not thoroughly despise me, Festus ?  
No flattery ! One like you, needs not be told  
We live and breathe deceiving and deceived.  
Do you not scorn me from your heart of hearts ?  
Me and my cant—my petty subterfuges—  
My rhymes, and all this frothy shower of words—  
My glozing, self-deceit—my outward crust  
Of lies, which wrap, as tetter, morphew, furfair

Wrap the sound flesh?—so, see you flatter not!  
 Why, even God flatters! but my friend, at least,  
 Is true. I would depart, secure henceforth  
 Against all further insult, hate, and wrong  
 From puny foes: my one friend's scorn shall brand me—  
 No fear of sinking deeper!

*Festus.* No, dear Aureole!  
 No, no; I came to counsel faithfully:  
 There are old rules, made long ere we were born,  
 By which I judge you. I, so fallible,  
 So infinitely low beside your spirit  
 Mighty, majestic!—even I can see  
 You own some higher law than ours which call  
 Sin, what is no sin—weakness, what is strength;  
 But I have only these, such as they are,  
 To guide me; and I blame you where they blame,  
 Only so long as blaming promises  
 To win peace for your soul; the more, that sorrow  
 Has fallen on me of late, and they have helped me  
 So that I faint not under my distress.

But wherefore should I scruple to avow  
 In spite of all, as brother judging brother,  
 Your fate to me is most inexplicable:  
 And should you perish without recompense  
 And satisfaction yet—too hastily  
 I have relied on love: you may have sinned,  
 But you have loved. As a mere human matter—  
 As I would have God deal with fragile men  
 In the end—I say that you will triumph yet!

*Paracelsus.* Have you felt sorrow, Festus?—'tis because  
 You love me. Sorrow, and sweet Michal yours!  
 Well thought on; never let her know this last  
 Dull winding-up of all: these miscreants dared  
 Insult me—me she loved; so grieve her not.

*Festus.* Your ill success can little grieve her now.

*Paracelsus.* Michal is dead! pray Christ we do not craze!

*Festus.* Aureole, dear Aureole, look not on me thus!  
 Fool, fool! this is the heart grown sorrow-proof—  
 I cannot bear those eyes.

*Paracelsus.* Nay, really dead?

*Festus.* 'Tis scarce a month . . .

*Paracelsus.* Stone dead!—then you have laid her  
 Among the flowers ere this. Now, do you know,  
 I can reveal a secret which shall comfort  
 Even you. I have no julep, as men think,  
 To cheat the grave; but a far better secret.  
 Know then, you did not ill to trust your love  
 To the cold earth: I have thought much of it:  
 For I believe we do not wholly die.



*Festus.* Aureole . . .

*Paracelsus.* Nay, do not laugh ; there is a reason  
For what I say : I think the soul can never  
Taste death. I am, just now, as you may see,  
Very unfit to put so strange a thought  
In an intelligible dress of words ;  
But take it as my trust, she is not dead.

*Festus.* But not on this account alone ? you surely,  
—Aureole, you have believed this all along ?

*Paracelsus.* And Michal sleeps among the roots and dews,  
While I am moved at Basil, and full of schemes  
For Nuremberg, and hoping and despairing,  
As though it mattered how the farce plays out,  
So it be quickly played. Away, away !  
Have your will, rabble ! while we fight the prize,  
Troop you in safety to the snug back-seats,  
And leave a clear arena for the brave  
About to perish for your sport !—Behold !

## V.—PARACELSUS ATTAINS

SCENE.—*A cell in the Hospital of St. Sebastian, Salzburg.*  
1541.

FESTUS, PARACELSUS

*Festus.* No change ! The weary night is well nigh spent,  
The lamp burns low, and through the casement-bars  
Grey morning glimmers feebly—yet no change !  
Another night, and still no sigh has stirred  
That fallen discoloured mouth, no pang relit  
Those fixed eyes, quenched by the decaying body,  
Like torch-flame choked in dust : while all beside  
Was breaking, to the last they held out bright,  
As a strong-hold where life intrenched itself ;  
But they are dead now—very blind and dead.  
He will drowse into death without a groan !

My Aureole—my forgotten, ruined Aureole !  
The days are gone, are gone ! How grand thou wert :  
And now not one of those who struck thee down—  
Poor, glorious spirit—concerns him even to stay  
And satisfy himself his little hand  
Could turn God's image to a livid thing.  
Another night, and yet no change ! 'Tis much  
That I should sit by him, and bathe his brow,  
And chafe his hands—'tis much ; but he will sure

Know me, and look on me, and speak to me  
 Once more—but only once! His hollow cheek  
 Looked all night long as though a creeping laugh  
 At his own state were just about to break  
 From the dying man: my brain swam, my throat swelled,  
 And yet I could not turn away. In truth,  
 They told me how, when first brought here, he seemed  
 Resolved to live—to lose no faculty;  
 Thus striving to keep up his shattered strength,  
 Until they bore him to this stifling cell:  
 When straight his features fell—an hour made white  
 The flushed face and relaxed the quivering limb;  
 Only the eye remained intense awhile,  
 As though it recognised the tomb-like place;  
 And then he lay as here he lies.

Ay, here!

Here is earth's noblest, nobly garlanded—  
 Her bravest champion, with his well-won meed—  
 Her best achievement, her sublime amends  
 For countless generations, fleeting fast  
 And followed by no trace;—the creature-god  
 She instances when angels would dispute  
 The title of her brood to rank with them—  
 Angels, this is our angel!—those bright forms  
 We clothe with purple, crown and call to thrones,  
 Are human, but not his: those are but men  
 Whom other men press round and kneel before—  
 Those palaces are dwelt in by mankind;  
 Higher provision is for him you seek  
 Amid our pomps and glories: see it here!  
 Behold earth's paragon! Now, raise thee, clay!

God! Thou art Love! I build my faith on that!  
 Even as I watch beside thy tortured child,  
 Unconscious whose hot tears fall fast by him,  
 So doth thy right hand guide us through the world  
 Wherein we stumble. God! what shall we say?  
 How has he sinned? How else should he have done?  
 Surely he sought thy praise—thy praise, for all  
 He might be busied by the task so much  
 As to forget awhile its proper end.  
 Dost thou well, Lord? Thou canst not but prefer  
 That I should range myself upon his side—  
 How could he stop at every step to set  
 Thy glory forth? Hadst Thou but granted him  
 Success, thy honour would have crowned success,  
 A halo round a star. Or, say he erred,—  
 Save him, dear God; it will be like thee: bathe him  
 In light and life! Thou art not made like us;

We should be wroth in such a case ; but Thou  
 Forgivest—so, forgive these passionate thoughts,  
 Which come unsought, and will not pass away !  
 I know thee, who hast kept my path, and made  
 Light for me in the darkness—tempering sorrow,  
 So that it reached me like a solemn joy ;  
 It were too strange that I should doubt thy love :  
 But what am I ? Thou madest him, and knowest  
 How he was fashioned. I could never err  
 That way : the quiet place beside thy feet,  
 Reserved for me, was ever in my thoughts ;  
 But he—Thou shouldst have favoured him as well !

Ah ! he wakes ! Aureole, I am here—'tis Festus !  
 I cast away all wishes save one wish—  
 Let him but know me—only speak to me !  
 He mutters—louder and louder ; any other  
 Than I, with brain less laden, could collect  
 What he pours forth. Dear Aureole, do but look !  
 Is it talking or singing this he utters fast ?  
 Misery, that he should fix me with his eye—  
 Quick talking to some other all the while !  
 If he would husband this wild vehemence,  
 Which frustrates its intent !—I heard, I know  
 I heard my name amid those rapid words :  
 O he will know me yet ! Could I divert  
 This current—lead it somehow gently back  
 Into the channels of the past !—His eye,  
 Brighter than ever ! It must recognise !

Let me speak to him in another's name.  
 I am Erasmus : I am here to pray  
 That Paracelsus use his skill for me.  
 The schools of Paris and of Padua send  
 These questions for your learning to resolve.  
 We are your students, noble master : leave  
 This wretched cell ; what business have you here ?  
 Our class awaits you ; come to us once more.  
 (O agony ! the utmost I can do  
 Touches him not ; how else arrest his ear ?)  
 I am commissioned . . . I shall craze like him—  
 Better be mute, and see what God shall send.

*Paracelsus.* Stay, stay with me !

*Festus.* I will ; I am come here  
 To stay with you—Festus, you loved of old ;  
 Festus, you know, you must know !

*Paracelsus.* Festus ! Where's  
 Aprile, then ? Has he not chaunted softly  
 The melodies I heard all night ? I could not

Get to him for a cold hand on my breast,  
 But I made out his music well enough,  
 O, well enough! If they have filled him full  
 With magical music, as they freight a star  
 With light, and have remitted all his sin,  
 They will forgive me too, I too shall know!

*Festus.* Festus, your Festus!

*Paracelsus.* Ask him if Aprile  
 Knows as he Loves—if I shall Love and Know?  
 I try; but that cold hand, like lead—so cold!

*Festus.* My hand, see!

*Paracelsus.* Ah, the curse, Aprile, Aprile!  
 We get so near—so very, very near!

'Tis an old tale: Jove strikes the Titans down  
 Not when they set about their mountain-piling,  
 But when another rock would crown their work!  
 And Phaeton—doubtless his first radiant plunge  
 Astonished mortals; though the gods were calm,  
 And Jove prepared his thunder: all old tales!

*Festus.* And what are these to you?

*Paracelsus.* Ay, fiends must laugh  
 So cruelly, so well; most like I never  
 Could tread a single pleasure under foot,  
 But they were grinning by my side, were chuckling  
 To see me toil, and drop away by flakes!  
 Hell-spawn! I am glad, most glad, that thus I fall!  
 You that hate men and all who wish their good—  
 Your cunning has o'ershot its aim. One year,  
 One month, perhaps, and I had served your turn!  
 You should have curbed your spite awhile. But now,  
 Who will believe 'twas you that held me back?  
 Listen: there's shame, and hissing, and contempt,  
 And none but laughs who names me—none but spits  
 Measureless scorn upon me—me alone,  
 The quack, the cheat, the liar,—all on me!  
 And thus your famous plan to sink mankind  
 In silence and despair, by teaching them  
 One of their race had probed the inmost truth,  
 Had done all man could do, yet failed no less—  
 Your wise plan proves abortive. Men despair?  
 Ha, ha! why they are hooting the empiric,  
 The ignorant and incapable fool who rushed  
 Madly upon a work beyond his wits;  
 Nor doubt they but the simplest of themselves  
 Could bring the matter to triumphant issue!  
 So pick and choose among them all, Accursed!  
 Try now, persuade some other to slave for you,  
 To ruin body and soul to work your ends:  
 No, no; I am the first and last, I think!

*Festus.* Dear friend; who are accursed? who has done . . .

*Paracelsus.* What have I done? Fiends dare ask that? or you,  
 Brave men? Oh, you can chime in boldly, backed  
 By the others! What had you to do, sage peers?  
 Here stand my rivals, truly—Arab, Jew,  
 Greek, join dead hands against me: all I ask  
 Is, that the world enrol my name with theirs,  
 And even this poor privilege, it seems,  
 They range themselves, prepared to disallow!  
 Only observe: why fiends may learn from them!  
 How they talk calmly of my throes—my fierce  
 Aspirings, terrible watchings—each one claiming  
 Its price of blood and brain; how they dissect  
 And sneeringly disparage the few truths  
 Got at a life's cost; they too hanging the while  
 About my neck, their lies misleading me,  
 And their dead names brow-beating me! Grey crew,  
 Yet steeped in fresh malevolence from hell,  
 Is there a reason for your hate? My truths  
 Have shaken a little the palm about each head?  
 Just think, Aprile, all these leering dotards  
 Were bent on nothing less than being crowned  
 As we! That yellow blear-eyed wretch in chief,  
 To whom the rest cringe low with feigned respect—  
 Galen, of Pergamos and hell; nay speak  
 The tale, old man! We met there face to face:  
 I said the crown should fall from thee: once more  
 We meet as in that ghastly vestibule:  
 Look to my brow! Have I redeemed my pledge?

*Festus.* Peace, peace; ah, see!

*Paracelsus.* Oh, emptiness of fame,  
 Oh Persic Zoroaster, lord of stars!  
 —Who said these old renowns, dead long ago,  
 Could make me overlook the living world  
 To gaze through gloom at where they stood, indeed,  
 But stand no longer? What a warm light life  
 After the shade! In truth, my delicate witch,  
 My serpent-queen, you did but well to hide  
 The juggles I had else detected. Fire  
 May well run harmless o'er a breast like yours!  
 The cave was not so darkened by the smoke  
 But that your white limbs dazzled me: Oh, white,  
 And panting as they twinkled, wildly dancing!  
 I cared not for your passionate gestures then,  
 But now I have forgotten the charm of charms,  
 The foolish knowledge which I came to seek,  
 While I remember that quaint dance; and thus

I am come back, not for those mummeries,  
But to love you, and to kiss your little feet,  
Soft as an ermine's winter coat!

*Festus.* A sense  
Will struggle through these thronging words at last,  
As in the angry and tumultuous west  
A soft star trembles through the drifting clouds.  
These are the strivings of a spirit which hates  
So sad a vault should coop it, and calls up  
The past to stand between it and its fate:  
Were he at Einsiedeln—or Michal here!

*Paracelsus.* Cruel! I see her now—I kneel—I shriek—  
I clasp her vesture—but she fades, still fades;  
And she is gone; sweet human love is gone!  
'Tis only when they spring to heaven that angels  
Reveal themselves to you; they sit all day  
Beside you, and lie down at night by you,  
Who care not for their presence—muse or sleep—  
And all at once they leave you and you know them!  
We are so fooled, so cheated! Why, even now  
I am not too secure against foul play:  
The shadows deepen, and the walls contract—  
No doubt some treachery is going on!  
'Tis very dusk. Where are we put, Aprile?  
Have they left us in the lurch? This murky, loathsome  
Death-trap—this slaughter-house—is not the hall  
In the golden city! Keep by me, Aprile!  
There is a hand groping amid the blackness  
To catch us. Have the spider-fingers got you,  
Poet? Hold on me for your life; if once  
They pull you!—Hold!

'Tis but a dream—no more.

I have you still—the sun comes out again;  
Let us be happy—all will yet go well!  
Let us confer: is it not like, Aprile,  
That spite of trouble, this ordeal passed,  
The value of my labours ascertained,  
Just as some stream foams long among the rocks  
But after glideth glassy to the sea,  
So, full content shall henceforth be my lot?  
What think you, poet? Louder! Your clear voice  
Vibrates too like a harp-string. Do you ask  
How could I still remain on earth, should God  
Grant me the great approval which I seek?  
I, you, and God can comprehend each other,  
But men would murmur, and with cause enough;  
For when they saw me, stainless of all sin,  
Preserved and sanctified by inward light,  
They would complain that comfort, shut from them,

I drank thus unespied ; that they live on,  
 Nor taste the quiet of a constant joy,  
 For ache, and care, and doubt, and weariness,  
 While I am calm ; help being vouchsafed to me,  
 And hid from them !—'Twere best consider that !  
 You reason well, Aprile ; but at least  
 Let me know this, and die ! Is this too much ?  
 I will learn this, if God so please, and die !

If thou shalt please, dear God, if thou shalt please !  
 We are so weak, we know our motives least  
 In their confused beginning : if at first  
 I sought . . . But wherefore bare my heart to thee ?  
 I know thy mercy ; and already thoughts  
 Flock fast about my soul to comfort it,  
 And intimate I cannot wholly fail,  
 For love and praise would clasp me willingly  
 Could I resolve to seek them : Thou art good,  
 And I should be content ; yet—yet first show  
 I have done wrong in daring ! Rather give  
 The supernatural consciousness of strength  
 That fed my youth—one only hour of that  
 With thee to help—O what should bar me then !

Lost, lost ! Thus things are ordered here ! God's  
 creatures,  
 And yet he takes no pride in us !—none, none !  
 Truly there needs another life to come !  
 If this be all—(I must tell Festus that)  
 And other life await us not—for one,  
 I say 'tis a poor cheat, a stupid bungle,  
 A wretched failure. I, for one, protest  
 Against it—and I hurl it back with scorn !

Well, onward though alone : small time remains,  
 And much to do : I must have fruit, must reap  
 Some profit from my toils. I doubt my body  
 Will hardly serve me through : while I have laboured  
 It has decayed ; and now that I demand  
 Its best assistance, it will crumble fast :  
 A sad thought—a sad fate ! How very full  
 Of wormwood 'tis, that just at altar-service,  
 The rapt hymn rising with the rolling smoke,  
 When glory dawns, and all is at the best—  
 The sacred fire may flicker, and grow faint,  
 And die, for want of a wood-piler's help !  
 Thus fades the flagging body, and the soul  
 Is pulled down in the overthrow : well, well—

Let men catch every word—let them lose nought  
Of what I say ; something may yet be done.

They are ruins ! Trust me who am one of you !  
All ruins—glorious once, but lonely now.  
It makes my heart sick to behold you crouch  
Beside your desolate fane ; the arches dim,  
The crumbling columns grand against the moon :  
Could I but rear them up once more—but that  
May never be, so leave them ! Trust me, friends,  
Why should you linger here when I have built  
A far resplendent temple, all your own ?  
Trust me, they are but ruins ! See, Aprile,  
Men will not heed ! Yet were I not prepared  
With better refuge for them, tongue of mine  
Should ne'er reveal how blank their dwelling is ;  
I would sit down in silence with the rest.

Ha, what ? you spit at me, you grin and shriek  
Contempt into my ear—my ear which drank  
God's accents once ? you curse me ? Why men, men,  
I am not formed for it ! Those hideous eyes  
Follow me sleeping, waking, praying God,  
And will not let me even die : spare, spare me,  
Sinning or no, forget that, only spare me  
That horrible scorn ; you thought I could support it,  
But now you see what silly fragile creature  
Cowers thus. I am not good nor bad enough,  
Not Christ, nor Cain, yet even Cain was saved  
From hate like this : let me but totter back,  
Perhaps I shall elude those jeers which creep  
Into my very brain, and shut these scorched  
Eyelids, and keep those mocking faces out.

Listen, Aprile ! I am very calm :  
Be not deceived, there is no passion here,  
Where the blood leaps like an imprisoned thing.  
I am calm ; I will exterminate the race !  
Enough of that : 'tis said and it shall be.  
And now be merry—safe and sound am I,  
Who broke through their best ranks to get at you ;  
And such a havoc, such a route, Aprile !

*Festus.* Have you no thought, no memory for me,  
Aureole ? I am so wretched—my pure Michal  
Is gone, and you alone are left to me,  
And even you forget me : take my hand—  
Lean on me, thus. Do you not know me, Aureole ?

*Paracelsus.* Festus, my own friend, you are come at last ?  
As you say, 'tis an awful enterprize—



But you believe I shall go through with it :  
 'Tis like you, and I thank you ; thank him for me,  
 Dear Michal ! See how bright St. Saviour's spire  
 Flames in the sunset ; all its figures quaint  
 Gay in the glancing light : you might conceive them  
 A troop of yellow-vested, white-haired Jews,  
 Bound for their own land where redemption dawns !

*Festus.* Not that blest time—not our youth's time, dear  
 God !

*Paracelsus.* Ha—stay ! true, I forget—all is done since !  
 And he is come to judge me : how he speaks,  
 How calm, how well ! yes, it is true, all true ;  
 All quackery ; all deceit ! myself can laugh  
 The first at it, if you desire : but still  
 You know the obstacles which taught me tricks  
 So foreign to my nature—envy, and hate—  
 Blind opposition—brutal prejudice—  
 Bald ignorance—what wonder if I sunk  
 To humour men the way they most approved ?  
 My cheats were never palmed on such as you,  
 Dear Festus ! I will kneel if you require me,  
 Impart the meagre knowledge I possess,  
 Explain its bounded nature, and avow  
 My insufficiency—whate'er you will :  
 I give the fight up ! let there be an end,  
 A privacy, an obscure nook for me.  
 I want to be forgotten even by God !  
 But if that cannot be, dear Festus, lay me,  
 When I shall die, within some narrow grave,  
 Not by itself—for that would be too proud—  
 But where such graves are thickest ; let it look  
 Nowise distinguished from the hillocks round,  
 So that the peasant at his brother's bed  
 May tread upon my own and know it not ;  
 And we shall all be equal at the last,  
 Or classed according to life's natural ranks,  
 Fathers, sons, brothers, friends—not rich, nor wise,  
 Nor gifted : lay me thus, then say " He lived  
 " Too much advanced before his brother men :  
 " They kept him still in front ; 'twas for their good,  
 " But yet a dangerous station. It were strange  
 " That he should tell God he had never ranked  
 " With men : so, here at least he is a man ! "

*Festus.* That God shall take thee to his breast, dear  
 Spirit,

Unto his breast, be sure ! and here on earth  
 Shall splendour sit upon thy name for ever !  
 Sun ! all the heaven is glad for thee : what care  
 If lower mountains light their snowy phares

At thine effulgence, yet acknowledge not  
 The source of day? Men look up to the sun:  
 For after-ages shall retrack thy beams,  
 And put aside the crowd of busy ones,  
 And worship thee alone—the master-mind,  
 The thinker, the explorer, the creator!  
 Then, who should sneer at the convulsive throes  
 With which thy deeds were born, would scorn as well  
 The winding sheet of subterraneous fire  
 Which, pent and writhing, sends no less at last  
 Huge islands up amid the simmering sea!  
 Behold thy might in me! thou hast infused  
 Thy soul in mine; and I am grand as thou,  
 Seeing I comprehend thee—I so simple,  
 Thou so august! I recognise thee first;  
 I saw thee rise, I watched thee early and late,  
 And though no glance reveal thou dost accept  
 My homage—thus no less I proffer it,  
 And bid thee enter gloriously thy rest!

*Paracelsus.* Festus!

*Festus.* I am for noble Aureole, God!

I am upon his side, come weal or woe!  
 His portion shall be mine! He has done well!  
 I would have sinned, had I been strong enough,  
 As he has sinned! Reward him or I waive  
 Reward! If thou canst find no place for him,  
 He shall be king elsewhere, and I will be  
 His slave for ever! There are two of us!

*Paracelsus.* Dear Festus!

*Festus.* Here, dear Aureole! ever by you!

*Paracelsus.* Nay, speak on, or I dream again. Speak on!  
 Some story, any thing—only your voice.  
 I shall dream else. Speak on! ay, leaning so!

*Festus.* Softly the Mayne river glideth  
 Close by where my love abideth;  
 Sleep's no softer: it proceeds  
 On through lawns, on through meads,  
 On and on, whate'er befall,  
 Meanderin' and musical,  
 Though the niggard pasture's edge  
 Bears not on its shaven ledge  
 Aught but weeds and waving grasses  
 To view the river as it passes,  
 Save here and there a scanty patch  
 Of primroses, too faint to catch  
 A weary bee . . .

*Paracelsus.* More, more; say on!

*Festus.* The river pushes  
 Its gentle way through strangling rushes,

Where the glossy king-fisher  
 Flutters when noon-heats are near,  
 Glad the shelving banks to shun,  
 Red and steaming in the sun,  
 Where the shrew-mouse with pale throat  
 Burrows, and the speckled stoat,  
 Where the quick sand-pipers flit  
 In and out the marl and grit  
 That seems to breed them, brown as they.  
 Nought disturbs the river's way,  
 Save some lazy stork that springs,  
 Trailing it with legs and wings,  
 Whom the shy fox from the hill  
 Rouses, creep he ne'er so still.

*Paracelsus.* My heart! they loose my heart, those  
 simple words;

Its darkness passes, which nought else could touch;  
 Like some dark snake that force may not expel,  
 Which glideth out to music sweet and low.  
 What were you doing when your voice broke through  
 A chaos of ugly images? You, indeed!  
 Are you alone here?

*Festus.* All alone: you know me?  
 This cell?

*Paracelsus.* An unexceptionable vault—  
 Good brick and stone—the bats kept out, the rats  
 Kept in—a snug nook: how should I mistake it?

*Festus.* But wherefore am I here?

*Paracelsus.* Ah! well remembered:  
 Why, for a purpose—for a purpose, Festus!  
 'Tis like me: here I trifle while time fleets,  
 And this occasion, lost, will ne'er return!  
 You are here to be instructed. I will tell  
 God's message; but I have so much to say,  
 I fear to leave half out: all is confused  
 No doubt; but doubtless you will learn in time.  
 He would not else have brought you here: no doubt  
 I shall see clearer soon.

*Festus.* Tell me but this—  
 You are not in despair?

*Paracelsus.* I? and for what?

*Festus.* Alas, alas! he knows not, as I feared!

*Paracelsus.* What is it you would ask me with that  
 earnest,  
 Dear, searching face?

*Festus.* How feel you, Aureole?

*Paracelsus.* Well!  
 Well: 'tis a strange thing. I am dying, Festus,  
 And now that fast the storm of life subsides,

I first perceive how great the whirl has been :  
 I was calm then, who am so dizzy now—  
 Calm in the thick of the tempest, but no less  
 A partner of its motion, and mixed up  
 With its career. The hurricane is spent  
 And the good boat speeds through the brightening weather ;  
 But is it earth or sea that heaves below ?  
 For the gulf rolls like a meadow, overstrewn  
 With ravaged boughs and remnants of the shore ;  
 And now some islet, loosened from the land,  
 Swims past with all its trees, sailing to ocean ;  
 And now the air is full of up-torn canes,  
 Light strippings from the fan-trees, tamarisks  
 Unrooted, with their birds still clinging to them,  
 All high in the wind. Even so my varied life  
 Drifts by me. I am young, old, happy, sad,  
 Hoping, desponding, acting, taking rest,  
 And all at once : that is, those past conditions  
 Float back at once on me. If I select  
 Some special epoch from the crowd, 'tis but  
 To will, and straight the rest dissolve away,  
 And only that particular state is present,  
 With all its long-forgotten circumstance,  
 Distinct and vivid as at first—myself  
 A careless looker-on, and nothing more !  
 Indifferent and amused, but nothing more !  
 And this is death : I understand it all.  
 New being waits me ; new perceptions must  
 Be born in me before I plunge therein ;  
 Which last is Death's affair ; and while I speak,  
 Minute by minute he is filling me  
 With power ; and while my foot is on the threshold  
 Of boundless life—the doors unopened yet,  
 All preparations not complete within—  
 I turn new knowledge upon old events,  
 And the effect is . . . But I must not tell ;  
 It is not lawful. Your own turn will come  
 One day. Wait, Festus ! You will die like me !  
*Festus.* 'Tis of that past life that I burn to hear !  
*Paracelsus.* You wonder it engages me just now ?  
 In truth, I wonder too. What's life to me ?  
 Where'er I look is fire, where'er I listen  
 Music, and where I tend bliss overmore.  
 Yet how can I refrain ? 'Tis a refined  
 Delight to view those chances,—one last view.  
 I am so near the perils I escape,  
 That I must play with them and turn them over,  
 To feel how fully they are past and gone.  
 Still it is like some further cause exists

For this peculiar mood—some hidden purpose ;  
 Did I not tell you something of it, Festus ?  
 I had it fast, but it has somehow slipt  
 Away from me ; it will return anon.

*Festus.* (Indeed his cheek seems young again, his  
 voice

Complete with its old tones : that little laugh  
 Concluding every phrase, with up-turned eye,  
 As though one stooped above his head, to whom  
 He looked for confirmation and applause,—  
 Where was it gone so long, being kept so well ?  
 Then, the fore-finger pointing as he speaks,  
 Like one who traces in an open book  
 The matter he declares ; 'tis many a year  
 Since I remarked it last : and this in him,  
 But now a ghastly wreck !)

And can it be,

Dear Aureole, you have then found out at last  
 That worldly things are utter vanity ?  
 That man is made for weakness, and should wait  
 In patient ignorance till God appoint . . .

*Paracelsus.* Ha, the purpose ; the true purpose : that  
 is it !

How could I fail to apprehend ! You here,  
 I thus ! But no more trifling ; I see all,  
 I know all : my last mission shall be done  
 If strength suffice. No trifling ! Stay ; this posture  
 Hardly befits one thus about to speak :  
 I will arise.

*Festus.* Nay, Aureole, are you wild ?

You cannot leave your couch.

*Paracelsus.* No help ; no help ;

Not even your hand. So ! there, I stand once more !

Speak from a couch ? I never lectured thus.

My gown—the scarlet, lined with fur ; now put

The chain about my neck ; my signet-ring

Is still upon my hand, I think—even so ;

Last, my good sword ; ha, trusty Azoth, leapest

Beneath thy master's grasp for the last time ?

This couch shall be my throne : I bid these walls

Be consecrate ; this wretched cell become

A shrine ; for here God speaks to men through me !

Now, Festus, I am ready to begin.

*Festus.* I am dumb with wonder.

*Paracelsus.* Listen, therefore, Festus !

There will be time enough, but none to spare.

I must content myself with telling only

The most important points. You doubtless feel

That I am happy, Festus ; very happy.

*Festus.* 'Tis no delusion which uplifts him thus !  
Then you are pardoned, Aureole, all your sin ?

*Paracelsus.* Ay, pardoned ! yet why pardoned ?

*Festus.* 'Tis God's praise  
That man is bound to seek, and you . . .

*Paracelsus.* Have lived !  
We have to live alone to set forth well  
God's praise. 'Tis true, I sinned much, as I thought,  
And in effect need mercy, for I strove  
To do that very thing ; but, do your best  
Or worst, praise rises, and will rise for ever.  
Pardon from Him, because of praise denied—  
Who calls me to Himself to exalt Himself ?  
He might laugh as I laugh !

*Festus.* Then all comes  
To the same thing. 'Tis fruitless for mankind  
To fret themselves with what concerns them not ;  
They are no use that way : they should lie down  
Content as God has made them, nor go mad  
In thriveless cares to better what is ill.

*Paracelsus.* No, no ; mistake me not ; let me not work  
More harm than I have done ! This is my case :  
If I go joyous back to God, yet bring  
No offering, if I render up my soul  
Without the fruits it was ordained to bear,  
If I appear the better to love God  
For sin, as one who has no claim on him,—  
Be not deceived : it may be surely thus  
With me, while higher prizes still await  
The mortal persevering to the end.  
For I too have been something, though too soon  
I left the instincts of that happy time !

*Festus.* What happy time ? For God's sake, for man's  
sake,  
What time was happy ? All I hope to know  
That answer will decide. What happy time ?

*Paracelsus.* When, but the time I vowed my help to  
man ?

*Festus.* Great God, thy judgments are inscrutable !

*Paracelsus.* Yes, it was in me ; I was born for it—  
I, Paracelsus : it was mine by right.  
Doubtless a searching and impetuous soul  
Might learn from its own motions that some task  
Like this awaited it about the world ;  
Might seek somewhere in this blank life of ours  
For fit delights to stay its longings vast ;  
And, grappling Nature, so prevail on her  
To fill the creature full she dared to frame  
Hungry for joy ; and, bravely tyrannous,

Grow in demand, still craving more and more,  
 And make each joy conceded prove a pledge  
 Of other joy to follow—bating nought  
 Of its desires, still seizing fresh pretence  
 To turn the knowledge and the rapture wrung  
 As an extreme, last boon, from Destiny,  
 Into occasion for new covetings,  
 New strifes, new triumphs :—doubtless a strong soul  
 Alone, unaided might attain to this,  
 So glorious is our nature, so august  
 Man's inborn uninstructed impulses,  
 His naked spirit so majestic !  
 But this was born in me ; I was made so ;  
 Thus much time saved : the feverish appetites,  
 The tumult of unproved desires, the unaimed  
 Uncertain yearnings, aspirations blind,  
 Distrust, mistake, and all that ends in tears  
 Were saved me ; thus I entered on my course !  
 You may be sure I was not all exempt  
 From human trouble ; just so much of doubt  
 As bade me plant a surer foot upon  
 The sun-road—kept my eye unruined mid  
 The fierce and flashing splendour—set my heart  
 Trembling so much as warned me I stood there  
 On sufferance—not to idly gaze, but cast  
 Light on a darkling race ; save for that doubt,  
 I stood at first where all aspire at last  
 To stand ; the secret of the world was mine.  
 I knew, I felt, (perception unexpressed,  
 Uncomprehended by our narrow thought,  
 But somehow felt and known in every shift  
 And change in spirit,—nay, in every pore  
 Of the body, even,)—what God is, what we are,  
 What life is—how God tastes an infinite joy  
 In infinite ways—one everlasting bliss,  
 From whom all being emanates, all power  
 Proceeds ; in whom is life for evermore,  
 Yet whom existence in its lowest form  
 Includes ; where dwells enjoyment there is He !  
 With still a flying point of bliss remote,  
 A happiness in store afar, a sphere  
 Of distant glory in full view ; thus climbs  
 Pleasure its heights for ever and for ever !  
 The centre-fire heaves underneath the earth,  
 And the earth changes like the human face ;  
 The molten ore bursts up among the rocks,  
 Winds into the stone's heart, outbranches bright  
 In hidden mines, spots barren river-beds,  
 Crumbles into fine sand where sunbeams bask—

God joys therein! The wroth sea's waves are edged  
 With foam, white as the bitten lip of Hate,  
 When in the solitary, waste, strange groups  
 Of young volcanos come up, cyclops-like,  
 Staring together with their eyes on flame;—  
 God tastes a pleasure in their uncouth pride!  
 Then all is still: earth is a wintry clod;  
 But spring-wind, like a dancing psaltress, passes  
 Over its breast to waken it; rare verdure  
 Buds tenderly upon rough banks, between  
 The withered tree-roots and the cracks of frost,  
 Like a smile striving with a wrinkled face;  
 The grass grows bright, the boughs are swoln with blooms,  
 Like chrysalids impatient for the air;  
 The shining dorrs are busy; beetles run  
 Along the furrows, ants make their ado;  
 Above, birds fly in merry flocks—the lark  
 Soars up and up, shivering for very joy;  
 Afar the ocean sleeps; white fishing-gulls  
 Flit where the strand is purple with its tribe  
 Of nested limpets; savage creatures seek  
 Their loves in wood and plain; and God renews  
 His ancient rapture! Thus he dwells in all,  
 From life's minute beginnings, up at last  
 To man—the consummation of this scheme  
 Of being, the completion of this sphere  
 Of life: whose attributes had here and there  
 Been scattered o'er the visible world before,  
 Asking to be combined—dim fragments meant  
 To be united in some wondrous whole—  
 Imperfect qualities throughout creation,  
 Suggesting some one creature yet to make—  
 Some point where all those scattered rays should meet  
 Convergent in the faculties of man.  
 Power; neither put forth blindly, nor controlled  
 Calmly by perfect knowledge; to be used  
 At risk, inspired or checked by hope and fear:  
 Knowledge; not intuition, but the slow  
 Uncertain fruit of an enhancing toil,  
 Strengthened by love: love; not serenely pure,  
 But strong from weakness, like a chance-sown plant  
 Which, cast on stubborn soil, puts forth changed buds,  
 And softer stains, unknown in happier climes;  
 Love which endures, and doubts, and is oppressed,  
 And cherished, suffering much, and much sustained,  
 A blind, oft-failing, yet believing love,  
 A half-enlightened, often-chequered trust:—  
 Hints and previsions of which faculties,  
 Are strewn confusedly everywhere about



The inferior natures ; and all lead up higher,  
 All shape out dimly the superior race,  
 The heir of hopes too fair to turn out false,  
 And Man appears at last : so far the seal  
 Is put on life ; one stage of being complete,  
 One scheme wound up ; and from the grand result  
 A supplementary reflux of light,  
 Illustrates all the inferior grades, explains  
 Each back step in the circle. Not alone  
 For their possessor dawn those qualities,  
 But the new glory mixes with the heaven  
 And earth ; Man, once descried, imprints for ever  
 His presence on all lifeless things ; the winds  
 Are henceforth voices, in a wail or shout,  
 A querulous mutter, or a quick gay laugh—  
 Never a senseless gust now man is born !  
 The herded pines commune, and have deep thoughts,  
 A secret they assemble to discuss,  
 When the sun drops behind their trunks which glare  
 Like grates of hell : the peerless cup afloat  
 Of the lake-lily is an urn, some nymph  
 Swims bearing high above her head : no bird  
 Whistles unseen, but through the gaps above  
 That let light in upon the gloomy woods,  
 A shape peeps from the breezy forest-top,  
 Arch with small puckered mouth and mocking eye :  
 The morn has enterprise,—deep quiet droops  
 With evening ; triumph takes the sun-set hour,  
 Voluptuous transport ripens with the corn—  
 Beneath a warm moon like a happy face :  
 —And this to fill us with regard for man,  
 With apprehension for his passing worth,  
 Desire to work his proper nature out,  
 And ascertain his rank and final place ;  
 For these things tend still upward—progress is  
 The law of life—man's self is not yet Man !  
 Nor shall I deem his object served, his end  
 Attained, his genuine strength put fairly forth,  
 While only here and there a star dispels  
 The darkness, here and there a towering mind  
 O'erlooks its prostrate fellows : when the host  
 Is out at once to the despair of night,  
 When all mankind alike is perfected,  
 Equal in full-blown powers—then, not till then,  
 I say, begins man's general infancy !  
 For wherefore make account of feverish starts  
 Of restless members of a dormant whole—  
 Impatient nerves which quiver while the body  
 Slumbers as in a grave ? O, long ago

The brow was twitched, the tremulous lids astir,  
 The peaceful mouth disturbed ; half-uttered speech  
 Ruffled the lip, and then the teeth were set,  
 The breath drawn sharp, the strong right-hand clenched  
 stronger,  
 As it would pluck a lion by the jaw ;  
 The glorious creature laughed out even in sleep !  
 But when full roused, each giant-limb awake,  
 Each sinew strung, the great heart pulsing fast,  
 He shall start up, and stand on his own earth,  
 And so begin his long triumphant march,  
 And date his being thence,—thus wholly roused,  
 What he achieves shall be set down to him !  
 When all the race is perfected alike  
 As Man, that is : all tended to mankind,  
 And, man produced, all has its end thus far ;  
 But in completed man begins anew  
 A tendency to God. Prognostics told  
 Man's near approach ; so in man's self arise  
 August anticipations, symbols, types  
 Of a dim splendour ever on before,  
 In that eternal circle run by life :  
 For men begin to pass their nature's bound,  
 And find new hopes and cares which fast supplant  
 Their proper joys and griefs ; and outgrow all  
 The narrow creeds of right and wrong, which fade  
 Before the unmeasured thirst for good ; while peace  
 Rises within them ever more and more.  
 Such men are even now upon the earth,  
 Serene amid the half-formed creatures round,  
 Who should be saved by them and joined with them.  
 Such was my task, and I was born to it—  
 Free, as I said but now, from much that chains  
 Spirits, high-dowered, but limited and vexed  
 By a divided and delusive aim,  
 A shadow mocking a reality  
 Whose truth avails not wholly to disperse  
 The flitting mimic called up by itself,  
 And so remains perplexed and nigh put out  
 By its fantastic fellow's wavering gleam.  
 I, from the first, was never cheated so ;  
 I never fashioned out a fancied good  
 Distinct from man's ; a service to be done,  
 A glory to be ministered unto,  
 With powers put forth at man's expense, withdrawn  
 From labouring in his behalf ; a strength  
 Denied that might avail him ! I cared not  
 Lest his success ran counter to success  
 Elsewhere : for God is glorified in man,

And to man's glory, vowed I soul and limb.  
 Yet, constituted thus, and thus endowed,  
 I failed : I gazed on power till I grew blind—  
 On power ; I could not take my eyes from that—  
 That only, I thought, should be preserved, increased  
 At any risk, displayed, struck out at once—  
 The sign, and note, and character of man.  
 I saw no use in the past : only a scene  
 Of degradation, imbecility—  
 The record of disgraces best forgotten,  
 A sullen page in human chronicles  
 Fit to erase : I saw no cause why man  
 Should not be all-sufficient even now ;  
 Or why his annals should be forced to tell  
 That once the tide of light, about to break  
 Upon the world, was sealed within its spring ;  
 I would have had one day, one moment's space,  
 Change man's condition, push each slumbering claim  
 To mastery o'er the elemental world  
 At once to full maturity, then roll  
 Oblivion o'er the tools, and hide from man,  
 What night had ushered morn. Not so, dear child  
 Of after-days, wilt thou reject the Past,  
 Big with deep warnings of the proper tenure  
 By which thou hast the earth : the Present for thee  
 Shall have distinct and trembling beauty, seen  
 Beside that Past's own shade, whence, in relief,  
 Its brightness shall stand out : nor on thee yet  
 Shall burst the Future, as successive zones  
 Of several wonder open on some spirit  
 Flying secure and glad from heaven to heaven ;  
 But thou shalt painfully attain to joy,  
 While hope, and fear, and love, shall keep thee man !  
 All this was hid from me : as one by one  
 My dreams grew dim, my wide aims circumscribed,  
 As actual good within my reach decreased,  
 While obstacles sprung up this way and that,  
 To keep me from effecting half the sum,  
 Small as it proved ; as objects, mean within  
 The primal aggregate, seemed, even the least,  
 Itself a match for my concentrated strength—  
 What wonder if I saw no way to shun  
 Despair ? The power I sought for man, seemed God's !  
 In this conjuncture, as I prayed to die,  
 A strange adventure made me know, One Sin  
 Had spotted my career from its uprise ;  
 I saw Aprile—my Aprile there !  
 And as the poor melodious wretch disburthened  
 His heart, and moaned his weakness in my ear,

I learned my own deep error ; love's undoing  
Taught me the worth of love in man's estate,  
And what proportion love should hold with power  
In his right constitution ; love preceding  
Power, and with much power, always much more love ;  
Love still too straitened in its present means,  
And earnest for new power to set it free.

I learned this, and supposed the whole was learned :  
And thus, when men received with stupid wonder  
My first revealings, would have worshipped me,  
And I despised and loathed their proffered praise—  
When, with awakened eyes, they took revenge  
For past credulity in casting shame

On my real knowledge, and I hated them—

It was not strange I saw no good in man,

To overbalance all the wear and waste

Of faculties, displayed in vain, but born

To prosper in some better sphere : and why ?

In my own heart love had not been made wise

To trace love's faint beginnings in mankind,

To know even hate is but a mask of love's,

To see a good in evil, and a hope

In ill-success ; to sympathize, be proud

Of their half-reasons, faint aspirings, dim

Struggles for truth, their poorest fallacies,

Their prejudice, and fears, and cares, and doubts ;

Which all touch upon nobleness, despite

Their error, all tend upwardly though weak,

Like plants in mines which never saw the sun,

But dream of him, and guess where he may be,

And do their best to climb and get to him.

All this I knew not, and I failed. Let men

Regard me, and the poet dead long ago

Who once loved rashly ; and shape forth a third,

And better tempered spirit, warned by both :

As from the over-radiant star too mad

To drink the light-springs, beamless thence itself—

And the dark orb which borders the abyss,

Ingulfed in icy night,—might have its course

A temperate and equidistant world.

Meanwhile, I have done well, though not all well.

As yet men cannot do without contempt—

'Tis for their good, and therefore fit awhile

That they reject the weak, and scorn the false,

Rather than praise the strong and true, in me.

But after, they will know me ! If I stoop

Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,

It is but for a time ; I press God's lamp

Close to my breast—its splendour, soon or late,

Will pierce the gloom : I shall emerge one day !  
 You understand me ? I have said enough ?

*Festus.* Now die, dear Aureole !

*Paracelsus.* Festus, let my hand—  
 This hand, lie in your own—my own true friend !  
 Aprile ! Hand in hand with you, Aprile !

*Festus.* And this was Paracelsus !

#### NOTE

THE liberties I have taken with my subject are very trifling ; and the reader may slip the foregoing scenes between the leaves of any memoir of Paracelsus he pleases, by way of commentary. To prove this, I subjoin a popular account, translated from the "Biographie Universelle, Paris," 1822, which I select, not as the best, certainly, but as being at hand, and sufficiently concise for my purpose. I also append a few notes, in order to correct those parts which do not bear out my own view of the character of Paracelsus ; and have incorporated with them a notice or two, illustrative of the poem itself.

"PARACELSUS (Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus ab Hohenheim) was born in 1493 at Einsiedeln, <sup>(1)</sup> a little town in the canton of Schwyz, some leagues distant from Zurich. His father, who exercised the profession of medicine at Villach in Carinthia, was nearly related to George Bombast de Hohenheim, who became afterwards Grand Prior of the Order of Malta : consequently Paracelsus could not spring from the dregs of the people, as Thomas Erastus, his sworn enemy, pretends.\* It appears that his elementary education was much neglected, and that he spent part of his youth in pursuing the life common to the travelling *literati* of the age ; that is to say, in wandering from country to country, predicting the future by astrology and cheiromancy, evoking apparitions, and practising the different operations of magic and alchemy, in which he had been initiated whether by his father or by various ecclesiastics, among the number of whom he particularizes the Abbot Tritheim, <sup>(2)</sup> and many German bishops.

"As Paracelsus displays everywhere an ignorance of the rudiments of the most ordinary knowledge, it is not probable that he ever studied seriously in the schools : he contented himself with visiting

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\* I shall disguise M. Renaudin's next sentence a little. "Hic (Erastus sc.) Paracelsum trimum a milite quodam, alii a sue exectum ferunt : constat imberbem illum, mulierumque osorem fuisse." A standing High-Dutch joke in those days at the expense of a number of learned men, as may be seen by referring to such rubbish at Melander's "Jocoseria," etc. In the prints from his portrait by Tintoretto, painted a year before his death, Paracelsus is *barbatulus*, at all events. But Erastus was never without a good reason for his faith—*e.g.* "Helvetium fuisse (Paracelsum) vix credo, vix enim ea regio tale monstrum ediderit." (De Medicina Nova.)

the Universities of Germany, France, and Italy; and in spite of his boasting himself to have been the ornament of those institutions, there is no proof of his having legally acquired the title of Doctor, which he assumes. It is only known that he applied himself long, under the direction of the wealthy Sigismond Fugger of Schwatz, to the discovery of the Magnum Opus.

“Paracelsus travelled among the mountains of Bohemia, in the East, and in Sweden, in order to inspect the labours of the miners, to be initiated in the mysteries of the oriental adepts, and to observe the secrets of nature and the famous mountain of loadstone. (3) He professes also to have visited Spain, Portugal, Prussia, Poland, and Transylvania; everywhere communicating freely, not merely with the physicians, but the old women, charlatans and conjurers of these several lands. It is even believed that he extended his journeyings as far as Egypt and Tartary, and that he accompanied the son of the Khan of the Tartars to Constantinople, for the purpose of obtaining the secret of the tincture of Trismegistus from a Greek who inhabited that capital.

“The period of his return to Germany is unknown: it is only certain that, at about the age of thirty-three, many astonishing cures which he wrought on eminent personages procured him such a celebrity, that he was called in 1526, on the recommendation of Œcolampadius, (4) to fill a chair of physic and surgery at the University of Basil. There Paracelsus began by burning publicly in the amphitheatre the works of Avicenna and Galen, assuring his auditors that the latchets of his shoes were more instructed than those two physicians; that all Universities, all writers put together, were less gifted than the hairs of his beard and of the crown of his head; and that, in a word, he was to be regarded as the legitimate monarch of medicine. ‘You shall follow me,’ cried he, ‘you, Avicenna, Galen, Rhasis, Montagnana, Mesues, you, gentlemen of Paris, Montpellier, Germany, Cologne, Vienna,\* and whomsoever the Rhine and Danube nourish; you who inhabit the isles of the sea; you, likewise, Dalmatians, Athenians; thou, Arab; thou, Greek; thou, Jew; all shall follow me, and the monarchy shall be mine.’ †

“But at Basil it was speedily perceived that the new Professor was no better than an egregious quack. Scarcely a year elapsed before his lectures had fairly driven away an audience incapable of

\* Erastus, who relates this, here oddly remarks, “mirum quod non et Garamantos, Indos et Anglos adjunxit.” Not so wonderful neither, if we believe what another adversary “had heard somewhere,”—that all Paracelsus’ system came of his pillaging “Anglum quendam, Rogerium Bacchonem.”

† See his works *passim*. I must give one specimen:—Somebody had been styling him “Luther alter.” “And why not?” (he asks, as he well might). “Luther is abundantly learned, therefore you hate him and me; but we are at least a match for you.—Nam et contra vos et vestros universos principes Avicennam, Galenum, Aristotelem, etc. me satis superque munitum esse novi. Et vertex iste meus calvus ac depilis multo plura et sublimiora novit quam vester vel Avicenna vel universæ academix. Proдите, et signum date, qui viri sitis, quid roboris habeatis? quid autem sitis? Doctores et magistri, pediculos pectentes et fricantes podicem.” (Frag. Med.)

comprehending their emphatic jargon. That which above all contributed to sully his reputation was the debauched life he led. According to the testimony of Oporinus, who lived two years in his intimacy, Paracelsus scarcely ever ascended the lecture-desk unless half drunk, and only dictated to his secretaries when in a state of intoxication: if summoned to attend the sick, he rarely proceeded thither without previously drenching himself with wine. He was accustomed to retire to bed without changing his clothes; sometimes he spent the night in pot-houses with peasants, and in the morning knew no longer what he was about; and, nevertheless, up to the age of twenty-five his only drink had been water. (5)

"At length, fearful of being punished for a serious outrage on a magistrate, (6) he fled from Basil towards the end of the year 1527, and took refuge in Alsatia, whither he caused Oporinus to follow with his chemical apparatus.

"He then entered once more upon the career of ambulatory theosophist.\* Accordingly we find him at Colmar in 1528; at Nuremberg in 1529; in St. Gall in 1531; at Pfeffers in 1535; and at Augsburg in 1536: he next made some stay in Moravia, where he still further compromised his reputation by the loss of many distinguished patients, which compelled him to betake himself to Vienna; from thence he passed into Hungary; and in 1538 was at Villach, where he dedicated his 'Chronicle' to the States of Carinthia, in gratitude for the many kindnesses with which they had honoured his father. Finally, from Mindelheim, which he visited in 1540, Paracelsus proceeded to Salzburg, where he died in the Hospital of St. Stephen (*Sebastian* is meant), Sept. 24, 1541."—(Here follows a criticism on his writings, which I omit.)

(1) *Paracelsus* would seem to be a fantastic version of *Von Hohenheim*; *Einsiedeln* is the Latinized *Eremus*, whence *Paracelsus* is sometimes called, as in the correspondence of Erasmus, *Eremita*; *Bombast*, his proper name, probably acquired, from the characteristic phraseology of his lectures, that unlucky signification which it has ever since retained.

(2) Then Bishop of *Spanheim*, and residing at *Würzburg* in *Franconia*; a town situated in a grassy fertile country, whence its name, *Herbipolis*. He was much visited there by learned men, as may be seen by his "*Epistolæ Familiares*," Hag. 1536: among others, by his staunch friend *Cornelius Agrippa*, to whom he dates thence, in 1510, a letter in answer to the dedicatory epistle prefixed to the treatise *De Occult. Philosoph.*, which last contains the following ominous allusion to *Agrippa's* sojourn: "*Quum nuper tecum, R. P. in cœnobio tuo apud Herbipolim aliquamdiu con-*

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\* "So migratory a life could afford *Paracelsus* but little leisure for application to books, and accordingly he informs us that for the space of ten years he never opened a single volume, and that his whole medical library was not composed of six sheets: in effect, the inventory drawn up after his death states that the only books which he left were the Bible, the New Testament, the Commentaries of *St. Jerome* on the Gospels, a printed volume on *Medicine*, and seven manuscripts."

versatus, multa de chymicis, multa de magicis, multa de cabalisticis, cæterisque quæ adhuc in occulto delitescunt, arcanis scientiis atque artibus una contulissemus," etc.

(3) "Inexplebilis illa aviditas naturæ perscrutandi secreta et reconditarum supellectile scientiarum animum locupletandi, uno eodemque loco diu persistere non patiebatur, sed Mercurii instar, omnes terras, nationes et urbes perlustrandi igniculos supposebat, ut cum viris naturæ scrutatoribus, chymicis præsertim, ore tenus conferret, et quæ diuturnis laboribus nocturnisque vigiliis invenerant una vel altera communicatione obtineret." (Bitiskius in Præfat.) "Patris auxilio primum, deinde propria industria doctissimos viros in Germania, Italia, Gallia Hispania, aliisque Europæ regionibus, nactus est præceptores; quorum liberali doctrina, et potissimum propria inquisitione ut qui esset ingenio acutissimo ac fere divino, tantum profecit, ut multi testati sint, in universa philosophia, tam ardua, tam arcana et abdita eruisse mortalium neminem." (Melch. Adam. in Vit. Germ. Medic.) "Paracelsus qui in intima naturæ viscera sic penitus introierit, metallorum stirpiumque vires et facultates tam incredibili ingenii acumine exploraverit ac perviderit, ad morbos omnes vel desperatos et opinione hominum insanabiles percurandum; ut cum Theophrasto nata primum medicina perfecta que videtur." (Petri Rami Orat. de Basilea.) His passion for wandering is best described in his own words: "Ecce amatorem adolescentem difficillimi itineris haud piget, ut venustam saltem puellam vel fœminam aspiciat: quanto minus nobilissimarum artium amore laboris ac cujuslibet tædii pigebit?" etc. ("Defensiones Septem adversus æmulos suos." 1573. Def. 4ta. "De peregrinationibus et exilio.")

(4) The reader may remember that it was in conjunction with Œcolampadius, then Divinity Professor at Basil, that Zuinglius published in 1528 an answer to Luther's Confession of Faith; and that both proceeded in company to the subsequent conference with Luther and Melanchthon at Marpurg. Their letters fill a large volume.—"D.D. Johannis Œcolampadii et Huldrici Zuinglii Epistolarum lib. quatuor." Bas. 1536. It must be also observed that Zuinglius began to preach in 1516, and at Zurich in 1519, and that in 1525 the Mass was abolished in the cantons. The tenets of Œcolampadius were supposed to be more evangelical than those up to that period maintained by the glorious German, and our brave Bishop Fisher attacked them as the fouler heresy:—"About this time arose out of Luther's school one Œcolampadius, like a mighty and fierce giant; who, as his master had gone beyond the Church, went beyond his master (or else it had been impossible he could have been reputed the better scholar), who denied the real presence; him, this worthy champion (the Bishop) sets upon, and with five books (like so many smooth stones taken out of the river that doth always run with living water) slays the Philistine; which five books were written in the year of our Lord 1526, at which time he had governed the see of Rochester twenty years." (Life of Bishop Fisher, 1655.) Now, there is no doubt of the Protestantism of Paracelsus, Erasmus, Agrippa, etc., but the nonconformity of Paracelsus was always scandalous. L. Crasso ("Elogj d'Huomini Letterati," Ven. 1666) informs us



that his books were excommunicated by the Church. Quenstedt (de Patr. Doct.) affirms "nec tantum novæ medicinæ, verum etiam novæ theologiæ autor est." Delrio, in his *Disquisit. Magicar.*, classes him among those "partim atheos, partim hæreticos" (lib. i. cap. 3). "Omnino tamen multa theologica in ejusdem scriptis plane atheismum olent, ac duriuscule sonant in auribus vere Christiani." (D. Gabrielis Clauderi *Schediasma de Tinct. Univ. Norimb.* 1736.) I shall only add one more authority:—"Oporinus dicit se (Paracelsum) aliquando Lutherum et Papam, non minus quam nunc Galenum et Hippocratem redacturum in ordinem minabatur, neque enim eorum qui hactenus in scripturam sacram scripserunt, sive veteres, sive recentiores, quenquam scripturæ nucleum recte eruisse, sed circa corticem et quasi membranam tantum hærerere." (Th. Erastus, *Disputat. de Med. Nova.*) These and similar notions had their due effect on Oporinus, who, says Zuingerus, in his "Theatrum," "longum vale dixit ei (Paracelso), ne ob præceptoris, alioqui amicissimi, horrendas blasphemias ipse quoque aliquando pœnas Deo Opt. Max. lueret."

(5) His defenders allow the drunkenness. Take a sample of their excuses: "Gentis hoc, non viri vitium est, a Taciti seculo ad nostrum usque non interrupto filo devolutum, sinceritati forte Germanæ coævum, et nescio an aliquo consanguinitatis vinculo junctum." (Bitiskius.) The other charges were chiefly trumped up by Oporinus: "Domi, quod Oporinus amanuensis ejus sæpe narravit, nunquam nisi potus ad explicanda sua accessit, atque in medio conclavi ad columnam τετυφωμένος adsistens, apprehenso manibus capulo ensis, cujus κοίλωμα hospitium præbuit, ut aiunt, spiritui familiari, imaginationes aut concepta sua protulit:—alii illud quod in capulo habuit, ab ipso Azoth appellatum, medicinam fuisse præstantissimam aut lapidem Philosophicum putant." (Melch. Adam.) This famous sword was no laughing matter in those days, and it is now a material feature in the popular idea of Paracelsus. I recollect a couple of allusions to it in our own literature, at the moment.

Ne had been known the Danish Gonswart,

Or Paracelsus with his long sword.

"Volpone," act ii. scene 2.

Bumbastus kept a devil's bird

Shut in the pummel of his sword,

That taught him all the cunning pranks

Of past and future mountebanks.

"Hudibras," part ii. cant. 3.

This Azoth was simply "*laudanum suum*." But in his time he was commonly believed to possess the double tincture—the power of curing diseases and transmuting metals. Oporinus often witnessed, as he declares, both these effects, as did also Franciscus, the servant of Paracelsus, who describes, in a letter to Neander, a successful projection at which he was present, and the results of which, good golden ingots, were confided to his keeping. For the other quality, let the following notice vouch among many others:—"Degebat Theophrastus Norimbergæ procitus a medentibus illius urbis, et

vaniloquus deceptorque proclamatus, qui, ut laboranti famæ subveniat, viros quosdam authoritatis summæ in Republica illa adit, et infamiæ amoliendæ, artique suæ asserendæ, specimen ejus pollicetur editurum, nullo stipendio vel accepto pretio, horum faciles præbentium aures jussu elephantiacos aliquot, a communione hominum cæterorum segregatos, et in valetudinarium detrusos, alieno arbitrio eliguntur, quos virtute singulari remediorum suorum Theophrastus a fœda Græcorum lepra mundat, pristinaque sanitati restituit; conservat illustre harum curationum urbs in archivis suis testimonium." (Bitiskius.) \* It is to be remarked that Oporinus afterwards repented of his treachery: "Sed resipuit tandem, et quem vivum convitiis insectatus fuerat defunctum veneratione prosequutus, infames famæ præceptoris morsus in remorsus conscientiæ conversi pœnitentia, heu nimis tarda, vulnera clausere exanimi quæ spiranti inflixerant." For these "bites" of Oporinus, see Disputat. Erasti, and Andreae Jocisci "Oratio de Vit. bob Opori;" for the "remorse," Mic. Toxita in pref. Testamenti, and Conringius (otherwise an enemy of Paracelsus), who says it was contained in a letter from Oporinus to Doctor Vegerus.†

Whatever the moderns may think of these marvellous attributes, the title of Paracelsus to be considered the father of modern chemistry is indisputable. Gerardus Vossius, "De Philos<sup>a</sup> et Philos<sup>um</sup> sectis," thus prefaces the ninth section of cap. 9, "De Chymia"—"Nobilem hanc medicinæ partem, diu sepultam avorum ætate, quasi ab orco revocavit Th. Paracelsus." I suppose many hints lie scattered in his neglected books, which clever appropriators have since developed with applause. Thus, it appears from his treatise "De Phlebotomia," and elsewhere, that he had discovered the circulation of the blood and the sanguification of the heart; as did after him Realdo Colombo, and still more perfectly Andrea Cesalpino of Arezzo, as Bayle and Bartoli observe. Even Lavater quotes a passage from his work "De Natura Rerum," on practical Physiognomy, in which the definitions and axioms are precise enough: he adds, "though an astrological enthusiast, a man of prodigious genius." See Holcroft's translation, vol. iii. p. 179—"The Eyes." While on the subject of the writings of Paracelsus, I may explain a passage in the third part of the Poem. He was, as I have said, unwilling to publish his

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\* The premature death of Paracelsus casts no manner of doubt on the fact of his having possessed the Elixir Vitæ: the alchemists have abundant reasons to adduce, from which I select the following, as explanatory of a property of the Tincture not calculated on by its votaries:—"Objectionem illam, quod Paraclesus non fuerit longævus, nonnulli quoque solvunt per rationes physicas: vitæ nimirum abbreviationem fortasse talibus accidere posse, ob Tincturam frequentiore ac largiore dosi sumtam, dum a summe efficaci et penetrabili hujus virtute calor innatus quasi suffocatur." (Gabrielis Clauderi Schediasma.)

† For a good defence of Paracelsus I refer the reader to Olaus Borrichius' treatise—"Hermetis etc. Sapiientia vindicata," 1674. Or, if he is no more learned than myself in such matters, I mention simply that Paracelsus introduced the use of Mercury and Laudanum.

works, but in effect did publish a vast number. Valentius (in Præfat. in Paramyr.) declares "quod ad librorum Paracelsi copiam attinet, audio, a Germanis prope trecentos recenseri." "O fœcunditas ingenii!" adds he, appositely. Many of these were, however, spurious; and Fred. Bitiskius gives his good edition (3 vols. fol. Gen. 1658) "rejectis suppositis solo ipsius nomine superbientibus quorum ingens circumfertur numerus." The rest were "charissimum et pretiosissimum authoris pignus, extorsum potius ab illo quam obtentum." "Jam minime eo volente atque jubente hæc ipsius scripta in lucem prodisse videntur; quippe quæ muro inclusa ipso absente, servi cujusdam indicio, furto surrepta atque sublata sunt," says Valentius. These have been the study of a host of commentators, amongst whose labours are most notable, Petri Severini, "Idea Medicinæ Philosophiæ. Bas. 1571;" Mic. Toxetis, "Onomastica. Arg. 1574;" Dornei, "Dict. Parac. Franc. 1584;" and "Pi Philos<sup>m</sup> Compendium cum scholiis auctore Leone Suavio. Paris." (This last, a good book.)

(6) A disgraceful affair. One Liechtenfels, a canon, having been rescued *in extremis* by the "laudanum" of Paracelsus, refused the stipulated fee, and was supported in his meanness by the authorities, whose interference Paracelsus would not brook. His own liberality was allowed by his bitterest foes, who found a ready solution of his indifference to profit in the aforesaid sword-handle and its guest. His freedom from the besetting sin of a profession he abhorred—as he curiously says somewhere, "Quis quæso deinceps honorem deferat professione tali, quæ a tam facinorosis nebulonibus obitur et administratur?"—is recorded in his epitaph, which affirms—"Bona sua in pauperes distribuenda collocandaque erogavit," *honoravit, or ordinavit*—for accounts differ.

PIPPA PASSES

NEW YEAR'S DAY AT ANOLO IN THE TREVISAN

SCENE—A large, roomy, airy chamber. A girl Pippa, sitting up in bed, looking out of the window.

PIPPA PASSES

A DRAMA

1841

Oh, Day, if I squander a wavelet of thee,  
 A mite of my twelve hours' treasure,  
 The least of thy gazes or glances,  
 (Be they grants thou art bound to, or gifts above measure)  
 One of thy choices, or one of thy chances,  
 (Be they tasks God imposed thee, or tasks of thy pleasure)  
 --My Day, if I squander such labour or leisure,  
 Then shame fall on Anolo, mischief on me!

Thy long blue solemn hours serenely flowing,  
 Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help and good--  
 Thy still sunshine minutes, coming, going,  
 In which, earth takes from work its gossamer mood--  
 All shall be mine! But what must that me not  
 As the prosperous are granted, those who live  
 At hand here, and enjoy the lighter lot,  
 In readiness to take what they will give,  
 And free to let alone what they request;  
 For, Day, my holiday, if thou wilt best



## III

## PIPPA PASSES

## NEW YEAR'S DAY AT ASOLO IN THE TREVISAN

SCENE.—*A large, mean, airy chamber. A girl, PIPPA, from the silk-mills, springing out of bed.*

DAY!

Faster and more fast,  
O'er night's brim, day boils at last;  
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim  
Where spurting and supprest it lay—  
For not a froth-flake touched the rim  
Of yonder gap in the solid grey  
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;  
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,  
Till the whole sunrise, not to be supprest,  
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast  
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the world.

Oh, Day, if I squander a wavelet of thee,  
A mite of my twelve hours' treasure,  
The least of thy gazes or glances,  
(Be they grants thou art bound to, or gifts above measure)  
One of thy choices, or one of thy chances,  
(Be they tasks God imposed thee, or freaks at thy pleasure)  
—My Day, if I squander such labour or leisure,  
Then shame fall on Asolo, mischief on me!

Thy long blue solemn hours serenely flowing,  
Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help and good—  
Thy fitful sunshine minutes, coming, going,  
In which, earth turns from work in gamesome mood—  
All shall be mine! But thou must treat me not  
As the prosperous are treated, those who live  
At hand here, and enjoy the higher lot,  
In readiness to take what thou wilt give,  
And free to let alone what thou refusest;  
For, Day, my holiday, if thou ill-usest

Me, who am only Pippa—old-year's sorrow,  
 Cast off last night, will come again to-morrow—  
 Whereas, if thou prove gentle, I shall borrow  
 Sufficient strength of thee for new-year's sorrow.  
 All other men and women that this earth  
 Belongs to, who all days alike possess,  
 Make general plenty cure particular dearth,  
 Get more joy, one way, if another, less :  
 Thou art my single day, God lends to leaven  
 What were all earth else, with a feel of heaven ;  
 Sole light that helps me through the year, thy sun's !  
 Try, now ! Take Asolo's Four Happiest Ones—  
 And let thy morning rain on that superb  
 Great haughty Ottima ; can rain disturb  
 Her Sebald's homage ? All the while thy rain  
 Beats fiercest on her shrub-house window-pane,  
 He will but press the closer, breathe more warm  
 Against her cheek ; how should she mind the storm ?  
 And, morning past, if mid-day shed a gloom  
 O'er Jules and Phene,—what care bride and groom  
 Save for their dear selves ? 'Tis their marriage-day ;  
 And while they leave church, and go home their way  
 Hand clasping hand,—within each breast would be  
 Sunbeams and pleasant weather spite of thee !  
 Then, for another trial, obscure thy eve  
 With mist,—will Luigi and his mother grieve—  
 The Lady and her child, unmatched, forsooth,  
 She in her age, as Luigi in his youth,  
 For true content ? The cheerful town, warm, close,  
 And safe, the sooner that thou art morose  
 Receives them ! And yet once again, outbreak  
 In storm at night on Monsignor, they make  
 Such stir about,—whom they expect from Rome  
 To visit Asolo, his brothers' home,  
 And say here masses proper to release  
 A soul from pain,—what storm dares hurt his peace ?  
 Calm would he pray, with his own thoughts to ward  
 Thy thunder off, nor want the angels' guard !  
 But Pippa—just one such mischance would spoil  
 Her day that lightens the next twelvemonth's toil  
 At wearisome silk-winding, coil on coil !  
 And here I let time slip for nought !  
 Aha,—you foolhardy sunbeam—caught  
 With a single splash from my ewer !  
 You that would mock the best pursuer,  
 Was my basin over-deep ?  
 One splash of water ruins you asleep,  
 And up, up, fleet your brilliant bits  
 Wheeling and counterwheeling,

Reeling, broken beyond healing—  
 Now grow together on the ceiling!  
 That will task your wits!  
 Whoever quenched fire first, hoped to see  
 Morsel after morsel flee  
 As merrily, as giddily . . .  
 Meantime, what lights my sunbeam on,  
 Where settles by degrees the radiant cripple?  
 Oh, is it surely blown, my martagon?  
 New-blown and ruddy as St. Agnes' nipple,  
 Plump as the flesh-bunch on some Turk bird's poll!  
 Be sure if corals, branching 'neath the ripple  
 Of ocean, bud there,—fairies watch unroll  
 Such turban-flowers; I say, such lamps disperse  
 Thick red flame through that dusk green universe!  
 I am queen of thee, floweret;  
 And each fleshy blossom  
 Preserve I not—(safer  
 Than leaves that embower it,  
 Or shells that embosom)  
 —From weevil and chafer?  
 Laugh through my pane, then; solicit the bee;  
 Gibe him, be sure; and, in midst of thy glee,  
 Love thy queen, worship me!

—Worship whom else? For am I not, this day,  
 Whate'er I please? What shall I please to-day?  
 My morning, noon, eve, night—how spend my day?  
 To-morrow I must be Pippa who winds silk,  
 The whole year round, to earn just bread and milk:  
 But, this one day, I have leave to go,  
 And play out my fancy's fullest games;  
 I may fancy all day—and it shall be so—  
 That I taste of the pleasures, am called by the names  
 Of the Happiest Four in our Asolo!

See! Up the Hill-side yonder, through the morning,  
 Some one shall love me, as the world calls love:  
 I am no less than Ottima, take warning!  
 The gardens, and the great stone house above,  
 And other house for shrubs, all glass in front,  
 Are mine; where Sebald steals, as he is wont,  
 To court me, while old Luca yet reposes;  
 And therefore, till the shrub-house door encloses,  
 I . . . what, now?—give abundant cause for prate  
 About me—Ottima, I mean—of late,  
 Too bold, too confident she'll still face down  
 The spitefullest of talkers in our town—  
 How we talk in the little town below!



But love, love, love—there's better love, I know !  
 This foolish love was only day's first offer ;  
 I choose my next love to defy the scoffer :  
 For do not our Bride and Bridegroom sally  
 Out of Possagno church at noon ?  
 Their house looks over Orcana valley—  
 Why should I not be the bride as soon  
 As Ottima ? For I saw, beside,  
 Arrive last night that little bride—  
 Saw, if you call it seeing her, one flash  
 Of the pale, snow-pure cheek and black bright tresses,  
 Blacker than all except the black eyelash ;  
 I wonder she contrives those lids no dresses !  
 —So strict was she, the veil  
 Should cover close her pale  
 Pure cheeks—a bride to look at and scarce touch,  
 Scarce touch, remember, Jules !—for are not such  
 Used to be tended, flower-like, every feature,  
 As if one's breath would fray the lily of a creature ?  
 A soft and easy life these ladies lead !  
 Whiteness in us were wonderful indeed—  
 Oh, save that brow its virgin dimness,  
 Keep that foot its lady primness,  
 Let those ankles never swerve  
 From their exquisite reserve,  
 Yet have to trip along the streets like me,  
 All but naked to the knee !  
 How will she ever grant her Jules a bliss  
 So startling as her real first infant kiss ?  
 Oh, no—not envy, this !

—Not envy, sure !—for if you gave me  
 Leave to take or to refuse,  
 In earnest, do you think I'd choose  
 That sort of new love to enslave me ?  
 Mine should have lapped me round from the beginning ;  
 As little fear of losing it as winning !  
 Lovers grow cold, men learn to hate their wives,  
 And only parents' love can last our lives :  
 At eve the son and mother, gentle pair,  
 Commune inside our Turret ; what prevents  
 My being Luigi ? while that mossy lair  
 Of lizards through the winter-time, is stirred  
 With each to each imparting sweet intents  
 For this new-year, as brooding bird to bird—  
 (For I observe of late, the evening walk  
 Of Luigi and his mother, always ends  
 Inside our ruined turret, where they talk,  
 Calmer than lovers, yet more kind than friends)

Let me be cared about, kept out of harm,  
 And schemed for, safe in love as with a charm ;  
 Let me be Luigi ! . . . If I only knew  
 What was my mother's face—my father, too !  
 Nay, if you come to that, best love of all  
 Is God's ; then why not have God's love befall  
 Myself as, in the Palace by the Dome,  
 Monsignor ?—who to-night will bless the home  
 Of his dead brother ; and God will bless in turn  
 That heart which beats, those eyes which mildly burn  
 With love for all men : I, to-night at least,  
 Would be that holy and beloved priest !

Now wait !—even I already seem to share  
 In God's love : what does New-year's hymn declare ?  
 What other meaning do these verses bear ?

*All service ranks the same with God :  
 If now, as formerly He trod  
 Paradise, His presence fills  
 Our earth, each only as God wills  
 Can work—God's puppets, best and worst,  
 Are we ; there is no last nor first.*

*Say not a "small event?" Why "small?"  
 Costs it more pain than this, ye call  
 A "great event," should come to pass,  
 Than that? Untwine me from the mass  
 Of deeds which make up life, one deed  
 Power shall fall short in, or exceed!*

And more of it, and more of it!—oh, yes—  
 I will pass by, and see their happiness,  
 And envy none—being just as great, no doubt,  
 Useful to men, and dear to God, as they !  
 A pretty thing to care about  
 So mightily, this single holiday !  
 But let the sun shine ! Wherefore repine ?  
 —With thee to lead me, O Day of mine,  
 Down the grass-path grey with dew,  
 Under the pine-wood, blind with boughs,  
 Where the swallow never flew  
 As yet, nor cicale dared carouse—  
 Dared carouse !

[She enters the street.]

I.—MORNING. *Up the Hill-side, inside the Shrub-house.*  
 LUCA'S Wife, OTTIMA, and her Paramour, the German  
 SEBALD

*Sebald (sings).* *Let the watching lids wink!*  
*Day's a-blaze with eyes, think—*  
*Deep into the night, drink!*

*Ottima.* Night? Such may be your Rhine-land nights,  
 perhaps;  
 But this blood-red beam through the shutter's chink,  
 —We call such light, the morning's: let us see!  
 Mind how you grope your way, though! How these tall  
 Naked geraniums straggle! Push the lattice—  
 Behind that frame!—Nay, do I bid you?—*Sebald,*  
 It shakes the dust down on me! Why, of course  
 The slide-bolt catches.—Well, are you content,  
 Or must I find you something else to spoil?  
 Kiss and be friends, my *Sebald!* Is it full morning?  
 Oh, don't speak then!

*Sebald.* Ay, thus it used to be!  
 Ever your house was, I remember, shut  
 Till mid-day—I observed that, as I strolled  
 On mornings thro' the vale here: country girls  
 Were noisy, washing garments in the brook—  
 Hinds drove the slow white oxen up the hills—  
 But no, your house was mute, would ope no eye—  
 And wisely—you were plotting one thing there,  
 Nature, another outside: I looked up—  
 Rough white wood shutters, rusty iron bars,  
 Silent as death, blind in a flood of light;  
 Oh, I remember!—and the peasants laughed  
 And said, "The old man sleeps with the young wife!"  
 This house was his, this chair, this window—his!

*Ottima.* Ah, the clear morning! I can see St. Mark's:  
 That black streak is the belfry. Stop: Vicenza  
 Should lie . . . There's Padua, plain enough, that blue!  
 Look o'er my shoulder—follow my finger—

*Sebald.* Morning?  
 It seems to me a night with a sun added:  
 Where's dew? where's freshness? That bruised plant,  
 I bruised  
 In getting thro' the lattice yestereve,  
 Droops as it did. See, here's my elbow's mark  
 In the dust on the sill.

*Ottima.* Oh, shut the lattice, pray!

*Sebald.* Let me lean out. I cannot scent blood here,  
 Foul as the morn may be—

There, shut the world out!

How do you feel now, Ottima? There—curse!  
The world, and all outside! Let us throw off  
This mask: how do you bear yourself? Let's out  
With all of it!

*Ottima.* Best never speak of it.

*Sebald.* Best speak again and yet again of it,  
Till words cease to be more than words. "His blood,"  
For instance—let those two words mean "His blood"  
And nothing more. Notice—I'll say them now,  
"His blood."

*Ottima.* Assuredly if I repented  
The deed—

*Sebald.* Repent? who should repent, or why?  
What puts that in your head? Did I once say  
That I repented?

*Ottima.* No—I said the deed—

*Sebald.* "The deed," and "the event"—just now it was  
"Our passion's fruit"—the devil take such cant!  
Say, once and always, Luca was a wittol,  
I am his cut-throat, you are—

*Ottima.* Here is the wine—  
I brought it when we left the house above—  
And glasses too—wine of both sorts. Black? white, then?

*Sebald.* But am not I his cut-throat? What are you?

*Ottima.* There, trudges on his business from the Duomo  
Benet the Capuchin, with his brown hood  
And bare feet—always in one place at church,  
Close under the stone wall by the south entry;  
I used to take him for a brown cold piece  
Of the wall's self, as out of it he rose  
To let me pass—at first, I say, I used—  
Now—so has that dumb figure, fastened on me—  
I rather should account the plastered wall  
A piece of him, so chilly does it strike.  
This, Sebald?

*Sebald.* No—the white wine—the white wine!  
Well, Ottima, I promised no new year  
Should rise on us the ancient shameful way,  
Nor does it rise: pour on! To your black eyes!  
Do you remember last damned New Year's day?

*Ottima.* You brought those foreign prints. We looked  
at them  
Over the wine and fruit. I had to scheme  
To get him from the fire. Nothing but saying  
His own set wants the proof-mark, roused him up  
To hunt them out.

*Sebald.* 'Faith, he is not alive  
To fondle you before my face!

*Ottima.* Do you

Fondle me, then!—who means to take your life  
For that, my Sebald?

*Sebald.* Hark you, Ottima,  
One thing's to guard against. We'll not make much  
One of the other—that is, not make more  
Parade of warmth, childish officious coil,  
Than yesterday—as if, sweet, I supposed  
Proof upon proof was needed now, now first,  
To show I love you—yes, still love you—love you  
In spite of Luca and what's come to him  
—Sure sign we had him ever in our thoughts,  
White sneering old reproachful face and all!  
We'll even quarrel, love, at times, as if  
We still could lose each other—were not tied  
By this—conceive you?

*Ottima.* Love—

*Sebald.* Not tied so sure—  
Because tho' I was wrought upon—have struck  
His insolence back into him—am I  
So surely yours?—therefore, forever yours?

*Ottima.* Love, to be wise, (one counsel pays another)  
Should we have—months ago—when first we loved,  
For instance that May morning we two stole  
Under the green ascent of sycamores—  
If we had come upon a thing like that  
Suddenly—

*Sebald.* “A thing” . . . there again—“a thing!”

*Ottima.* Then, Venus' body, had we come upon  
My husband Luca Gaddi's murdered corpse  
Within there, at his couch-foot, covered close—  
Would you have pored upon it? Why persist  
In poring now upon it? For 'tis here—  
As much as there in the deserted house—  
You cannot rid your eyes of it: for me,  
Now he is dead I hate him worse—I hate—  
Dare you stay here? I would go back and hold  
His two dead hands, and say, I hate you worse  
Luca, than—

*Sebald.* Off, off; take your hands off mine!  
'Tis the hot evening—off! oh, morning, is it?

*Ottima.* There's one thing must be done—you know  
what thing.

Come in and help to carry. We may sleep  
Anywhere in the whole wide house to-night.

*Sebald.* What would come, think you, if we let him lie  
Just as he is? Let him lie there until  
The angels take him: he is turned by this  
Off from his face, beside, as you will see.

*Ottima.* This dusty pane might serve for looking-glass.

Three, four—four grey hairs! Is it so you said  
A plait of hair should wave across my neck?  
No—this way!

*Sebald.* Ottima, I would give your neck,  
Each splendid shoulder, both those breasts of yours,  
That this were undone! Killing?—Kill the world  
So Luca lives again!—Ay, lives to sputter  
His fulsome dotage on you—yes, and feign  
Surprise that I returned at eve to sup,  
When all the morning I was loitering here—  
Bid me dispatch my business and begone.  
I would—

*Ottima.* See!

*Sebald.* No, I'll finish! Do you think  
I fear to speak the bare truth once for all?  
All we have talked of is, at bottom, fine  
To suffer—there's a recompense in guilt;  
One must be venturous and fortunate—  
What is one young for, else? In age we'll sigh  
O'er the wild, reckless, wicked days flown over;  
Still we have lived! The vice was in its place.  
But to have eaten Luca's bread, have worn  
His clothes, have felt his money swell my purse—  
Do lovers in romances sin that way?  
Why, I was starving when I used to call  
And teach you music—starving while you plucked me  
These flowers to smell!

*Ottima.*

My poor lost friend!

*Sebald.*

He gave me

Life—nothing less: what if he did reproach  
My perfidy, and threaten, and do more—  
Had he no right? What was to wonder at?  
He sate by us at table quietly—  
Why must you lean across till our cheeks touch'd?  
Could he do less than make pretence to strike me?  
'Tis not for the crime's sake—I'd commit ten crimes  
Greater, to have this crime wiped out—undone!  
And you—O, how feel you? feel you for me?

*Ottima.* Well, then—I love you better now than  
ever—

And best (look at me while I speak to you)—  
Best for the crime—nor do I grieve, in truth,  
This mask, this simulated ignorance,  
This affectation of simplicity,  
Falls off our crime; this naked crime of ours  
May not, now, be looked over—look it down, then!  
Great? let it be great—but the joys it brought,  
Pay they or no its price? Come—they or it!  
Speak not! The past, would you give up the past

Such as it is, pleasure and crime together ?  
 Give up that noon I owned my love for you—  
 The garden's silence—even the single bee  
 Persisting in his toil, suddenly stopt  
 And where he hid you only could surmise  
 By some campanula's chalice set a-swing  
 As he clung there—" Yes, I love you ! "

*Sebald.* And I drew  
 Back ; put far back your face with both my hands  
 Lest you should grow too full of me—your face  
 So seemed athirst for my whole soul and body !

*Ottima.* And when I ventured to receive you here,  
 Made you steal hither in the mornings—

*Sebald.* When  
 I used to look up 'neath the shrub-house here,  
 Till the red fire on its glazed windows spread  
 To a yellow haze ?

*Ottima.* Ah—my sign was, the sun  
 Inflamed the sere side of yon chestnut tree  
 Nipt by the first frost.

*Sebald.* You would always laugh  
 At my wet boots—I had to stride thro' grass  
 Over my ancles.

*Ottima.* Then our crowning night—

*Sebald.* The July night ?

*Ottima.* The day of it too, Sebald !  
 When the heaven's pillars seemed o'erbowed with heat,  
 Its black-blue canopy seemed let descend  
 Close on us both, to weigh down each to each,  
 And smother up all life except our life.  
 So lay we till the storm came.

*Sebald.* How it came !

*Ottima.* Buried in woods we lay, you recollect ;  
 Swift ran the searching tempest overhead ;  
 And ever and anon some bright white shaft  
 Burnt thro' the pine-tree roof—here burnt and there,  
 As if God's messenger thro' the close wood screen  
 Plunged and replunged his weapon at a venture,  
 Feeling for guilty thee and me : then broke  
 The thunder like a whole sea overhead—

*Sebald.* Yes !

*Ottima.* —While I stretched myself upon you, hands  
 To hands, my mouth to your hot mouth, and shook  
 All my locks loose, and covered you with them—  
 You, Sebald, the same you—

*Sebald.* Slower, Ottima—

*Ottima.* And as we lay—

*Sebald.* Less vehemently ! Love me—  
 Forgive me—take not words—mere words—to heart—

Your breath is worse than wine! Breathe slow, speak slow—  
Do not lean on me—

*Ottima.* Sebald as we lay,  
Rising and falling only with our pants,  
Who said, "Let death come now—'tis right to die!  
Right to be punished—nought completes such bliss  
But woe!" Who said that?

*Sebald.* How did we ever rise?  
Was't that we slept? Why did it end?

*Ottima.* I felt you,  
Fresh tapering to a point the ruffled ends  
Of my loose locks 'twixt both your humid lips—  
(My hair is fallen now—knot it again!)

*Sebald.* I kiss you now, dear *Ottima*, now, and now!  
This way? Will you forgive me—be once more  
My great Queen?

*Ottima.* Bind it thrice about my brow;  
Crown me your queen, your spirit's arbitress,  
Magnificent in sin. Say that!

*Sebald.* I crown you  
My great white queen, my spirit's arbitress,  
Magnificent—

[From without is heard the voice of PIPPA, singing—

*The year's at the spring,  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hill-side's dew-pearled:  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn;  
God's in his heaven—  
All's right with the world!*

[PIPPA passes.

*Sebald.* God's in his heaven! Do you hear that? Who  
spoke?

You, you spoke!

*Ottima.* Oh—that little ragged girl!  
She must have rested on the step—we give them  
But this one holiday the whole year round.

Did you ever see our silk-mills—their inside?

There are ten silk-mills now belong to you.

She stoops to pick my double heartsease . . . Sh!

She does not hear—you call out louder!

*Sebald.* Leave me!

Go, get your clothes on—dress those shoulders!

*Ottima.* Sebald?

*Sebald.* Wipe off that paint. I hate you!

*Ottima.* Miserable!



*Sebald.* My God! and she is emptied of it now!  
 Outright now!—how miraculously gone  
 All of the grace—had she not strange grace once?  
 Why, the blank cheek hangs listless as it likes,  
 No purpose holds the features up together,  
 Only the cloven brow and puckered chin  
 Stay in their places—and the very hair,  
 That seemed to have a sort of life in it,  
 Drops, a dead web!

*Ottima.* Speak to me—speak not of me!

*Sebald.* —That round great full-orbed face, where not  
 an angle  
 Broke the delicious indolence—all broken!

*Ottima.* To me—not of me!—ungrateful, perjured cheat—  
 A coward, too—but ingrate's worse than all!  
 Beggar—my slave—a fawning, cringing lie!  
 Leave me!—betray me!—I can see your drift—  
 A lie that walks, and eats, and drinks!

*Sebald.* My God!  
 Those morbid, olive, faultless shoulder-blades—  
 I should have known there was no blood beneath!

*Ottima.* You hate me, then? You hate me, then?

*Sebald.* To think  
 She would succeed in her absurd attempt,  
 And fascinate by sinning; and show herself  
 Superior—Guilt from its excess, superior  
 To Innocence. That little peasant's voice  
 Has righted all again. Though I be lost,  
 I know which is the better, never fear,  
 Of vice or virtue, purity or lust,  
 Nature, or trick—I see what I have done,  
 Entirely now! Oh, I am proud to feel  
 Such torments—let the world take credit thence—  
 I, have done my deed, pay too its price!  
 I hate, hate—curse you! God's in his heaven!

*Ottima.* —Me!

Me! no, no, Sebald—not yourself—kill me!  
 Mine is the whole crime—do but kill me—then  
 Yourself—then—presently—first hear me speak—  
 I always meant to kill myself—wait, you!  
 Lean on my breast—not as a breast; don't love me  
 The more because you lean on me, my own  
 Heart's Sebald! There—there—both deaths presently!

*Sebald.* My brain is drowned now—quite drowned: all I feel  
 Is . . . is at swift-recurring intervals,  
 A hurrying-down within me, as of waters  
 Loosened to smother up some ghastly pit—  
 There they go—whirls from a black, fiery sea!

*Ottima.* Not to me, God—to him be merciful!

Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from the hillside to Orcana. Foreign Students of painting and sculpture, from Venice, assembled opposite the house of JULES, a young French statuary.

1st Student. Attention! my own post is beneath this window, but the pomegranate clump yonder will hide three or four of you with a little squeezing, and Schramm and his pipe must lie flat in the balcony. Four, five—who's a defaulter? We want everybody, for Jules must not be suffered to hurt his bride when the jest's found out.

2nd Student. All here! Only our poet's away—never having much meant to be present, moonstrike him! The airs of that fellow, that Giovacchino! He was in violent love with himself, and had a fair prospect of thriving in his suit, so unmolested was it,—when suddenly a woman falls in love with him, too; and out of pure jealousy he takes himself off to Trieste, immortal poem and all—whereto is this prophetic epitaph appended already, as Bluphocks assures me—“*Here a mammoth-poem lies,—Fouled to death by butterflies.*” His own fault, the simpleton! Instead of cramp couplets, each like a knife in your entrails, he should write, says Bluphocks, both classically and intelligibly.—*Æsculapius, an Epic. Catalogue of the drugs: Hebe's plaister—One strip Cools your lip. Phœbus' emulsion—One bottle Clears your throttle. Mercury's bolus—One box Cures . . .*

3rd Student. Subside, my fine fellow! If the marriage was over by ten o'clock, Jules will certainly be here in a minute with his bride.

2nd Student. Good!—Only, so should the poet's muse have been universally acceptable, says Bluphocks, *et canibus nostris . . .* and Delia not better known to our literary dogs than the boy—Giovacchino!

1st Student. To the point, now. Where's Gottlieb, the new-comer? Oh,—listen, Gottlieb, to what has called down this piece of friendly vengeance on Jules, of which we now assemble to witness the winding-up. We are all agreed, all in a tale, observe, when Jules shall burst out on us in a fury by and bye: I am spokesman—the verses that are to undeceive Jules bear my name of Lutwyche—but each professes himself alike insulted by this strutting stone-squarer, who came singly from Paris to Munich, and thence with a crowd of us to Venice and Possagno here, but proceeds in a day or two alone again—oh, alone, indubitably!—to Rome and Florence. He, forsooth, take up his portion with these dissolute, brutalised, heartless bunglers!—So he was heard to call us all: now is Schramm brutalised, I should like to know? Am I heartless?

*Gottlieb.* Why, somewhat heartless; for, suppose Jules a coxcomb as much as you choose, still, for this mere coxcombry, you will have brushed off—what do folks style it?—the bloom of his life. Is it too late to alter? These love-letters, now, you call his . . . I can't laugh at them.

*4th Student.* Because you never read the sham letters of our inditing which drew forth these.

*Gottlieb.* His discovery of the truth will be frightful.

*4th Student.* That's the joke. But you should have joined us at the beginning: there's no doubt he loves the girl—loves a model he might hire by the hour!

*Gottlieb.* See here! "He has been accustomed," he writes, "to have Canova's women about him, in stone, and the world's women beside him in flesh; these being as much below, as those, above—his soul's aspiration: but now he is to have the real." . . . There you laugh again! I say, you wipe off the very dew of his youth.

*1st Student.* Schramm! (Take the pipe out of his mouth, somebody)—will Jules lose the bloom of his youth?

*Schramm.* Nothing worth keeping is ever lost in this world: look at a blossom—it drops presently, having done its service and lasted its time; but fruits succeed, and where would be the blossom's place could it continue? As well affirm that your eye is no longer in your body, because its earliest favourite, whatever it may have first loved to look on, is dead and done with—as that any affection is lost to the soul when its first object, whatever happened first to satisfy it, is superseded in due course. Keep but ever looking, whether with the body's eye or the mind's, and you will soon find something to look on! Has a man done wondering at women?—There follow men, dead and alive, to wonder at. Has he done wondering at men?—There's God to wonder at: and the faculty of wonder may be, at the same time, old and tired enough with respect to its first object, and yet young and fresh sufficiently, so far as concerns its novel one. Thus . . .

*1st Student.* Put Schramm's pipe into his mouth again! There, you see! Well, this—Jules . . . a wretched fribble—oh, I watched his disportings at Possagna, the other day! Canova's gallery—you know: there he marches first resolvedly past great works by the dozen without vouchsafing an eye: all at once he stops full at the *Psiche-fanciulla*—cannot pass that old acquaintance without a nod of encouragement—"In your new place, beauty? Then behave yourself as well here as at Munich—I see you!" Next he posts himself deliberately before the unfinished *Pietà* for half an hour without moving, till up he starts of a sudden, and thrusts his very nose into—I